



Memorandum of Cooperation

between

The Bureau of the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

and

The Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa

RECOGNIZING the fundamental ecological functions of wetlands as regulators and providers of water, as habitats supporting characteristic flora and fauna, and which provide invaluable services and benefits for human populations around the world;

CONSIDERING that, in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas, combating desertification includes activities which are part of the integrated development of land, land meaning the terrestrial bio-productive system that comprises soil, water, vegetation, other biota, and the ecological and hydrological processes that operate within;

AWARE that the Convention on Wetlands (hereafter referred to as the "Ramsar Convention") promotes national actions and international cooperation for the conservation and sustainable (wise) use of wetlands and the hydrological systems of which they are intrinsic parts;

FURTHER CONSIDERING that, pursuant to the provisions of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa (hereafter referred to as the "CCD"), affected developing country Parties and any other affected country Party in the framework of its regional implementation annex or, otherwise, that has notified the Secretariat of its intention to do so, shall prepare, make public and implement national action programmes which should provide for effective participation, *inter alia*, at the local level of the non-governmental organizations and local populations, both women and men, particularly resource users, including farmers and pastoralists and their representative organizations, in policy planning and decision-making;

ALSO AWARE that through Recommendation 6.3, from its Sixth Conference of the Contracting Parties, the Ramsar Convention recognized the importance of involving local and indigenous people in the management of wetlands, prescribed a range of actions to foster such involvement through policy, planning and communication instruments and directed that guidelines be developed for encouraging participatory processes for wetland conservation and wise use;

NOTING that both CCD and the Ramsar Convention encourage research and the exchange of data as well as the development of training activities;

RECALLING that Article 23(2)(d) of the CCD identifies as one of the functions of the Permanent Secretariat to "coordinate its activities with the secretariats of other relevant international bodies and conventions";

FURTHER RECALLING that the first Conference of the Parties to the CCD, held in Rome, Italy from 29 September to 10 October 1998, requested the head of the CCD secretariat to strengthen further the collaboration with other relevant conventions, including the Ramsar Convention;

REAFFIRMING that the national focal points for CCD function as a catalyst or are responsible for the preparation, coordination and implementation of national action programmes (article 9 of Regional Implementation Annex for Africa (RIAA); article 4(a) of Regional Implementation Annex for Asia (RIAAS); article 7(1)(a) of Regional Implementation Annex for Latin America and the Caribbean (RIALAC); and article 5(a) of Regional Implementation Annex for the Northern Mediterranean (RIAM) and that the Administrative Authorities of the Ramsar Convention, in addition to these same functions, also seek to foster international cooperation for shared wetlands and their river basins as well as migratory wetland-dependent species;

CONSCIOUS that the Sixth Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention (March 1996) adopted the Strategic Plan 1997-2002 which notes that the Convention's Standing Committee and Bureau will "Participate in, or initiate, consultations with related conventions to foster information exchange and cooperation, and develop an agenda for potential joint actions" (Operational Objective 7.2.1.);

NOTING ALSO that at its first session held from 29 September to 10 October 1997, the Conference of the Parties requested the CCD interim secretariat to, *inter alia*, consolidate work previously undertaken at the request of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for Desertification on identifying bodies of other relevant organizations and conventions performing work similar to the work envisaged to be undertaken by the Committee on Science and Technology, established under Article 24 of the CCD, which includes the Scientific and Technical Review Panel of the Ramsar Convention;

AND NOTING ALSO that both CCD and the Ramsar Convention promote sustainable development (called "wise use" by the latter) and that within drier parts of the world both conventions aim to conserve precious water resources;

EMPHASIZING that the Ramsar Convention Bureau and the CCD Secretariat have been requested by their respective governing bodies to promote cooperation and coordination with other relevant convention secretariats; and

AWARE that the Ramsar Convention Bureau has a Memorandum of Cooperation with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and a Memorandum of Understanding with the Secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species both of which are aimed at, *inter alia* avoiding duplication of efforts and to encouraging a more integrated implementation of these Conventions at the national and regional levels;

NOW THEREFORE the Secretariat of the CCD and the Bureau of the Ramsar Convention, hereinafter referred to as "secretariats", agree as follows:

ARTICLE I INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION

1. The secretariats of each Convention will invite representatives of the other to participate as observers at key meetings of the other.
2. The secretariats will inform their respective focal points for each Contracting Party of their cooperative activities, and will seek to promote consultation and cooperation between focal points in those Contracting Parties where the focal points for the two conventions are different, including in the preparation of national reports for the respective Conferences of the Contracting Parties.
3. The secretariats will provide each other with details of the respective work programmes of their scientific bodies and, where appropriate, invite observer participation of the chairs of these bodies and representatives of the secretariats to the respective meetings of these scientific bodies.

ARTICLE II EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND EXPERIENCE

1. The secretariats will institute procedures for regular exchanges of information in their respective fields of action, in particular for areas where guidance is provided to Contracting Parties.
2. The secretariats will establish modalities for exchanging relevant data contained in their databases.
3. The secretariats will ensure that their respective Internet sites are clearly "hotlinked" and that their respective webmasters institute measures which will allow for regular promotion of the new information added to the respective sites.
4. The secretariats will ensure the establishment of consultative arrangements for the preparation of relevant documents under each Convention.
5. The secretariats will maintain and update on a regular basis a common list of designated Wetlands of International Importance and other significant sites in arid, semi-arid and sub-humid areas covering Contracting Parties to both Conventions to be used for the identification of joint activities, as resources permit.

ARTICLE III CAPACITY BUILDING (OR TRAINING)

1. The secretariats will endeavour to coordinate their respective activities in research, training and public awareness activities. In doing so they will take all necessary measures, as appropriate, to fully associate respective focal points, technicians, decision-makers and NGOs.

ARTICLE IV SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. The secretariats will consult their Contracting Parties with a view to encouraging joint activities on key areas of common interest such as:

- i) Rosters of experts. In this regard, the secretariats shall establish linkages between their respective rosters, in order to improve the identification of existing expertise in the field of water and wetland management in arid lands;
- ii) Traditional knowledge; and
- iii) Benchmarks and indicators for monitoring.

ARTICLE V COORDINATION OF PROGRAMMES OF WORK

1. The secretariats shall exchange annual work programmes, identify those areas where collaboration and coordination would be advantageous, and develop a Joint Work Plan for these activities.
2. The secretariats shall arrange for relevant members of their staff who are charged with regional liaison and coordinating implementation to exchange information on their respective priorities and projects, where possible, develop joint projects and to cooperate in their implementation.
3. The secretariats will explore the possibility of harmonizing the reporting requirements of Contracting Parties under both Conventions.

ARTICLE VI JOINT ACTIONS

1. The secretariats will consult their Contracting Parties with a view to encouraging harmonization between national and local integrated development programmes under the CCD and National Wetland Policies/Strategies under the Ramsar Convention.
2. The secretariats will consult their Contracting Parties with a view to encouraging the identification and development of pilot projects targeting both the restoration of wetlands and surrounding degraded land.

ARTICLE VII CONSULTATION, REPORTING AND FURTHER GUIDANCE

1. The secretariats will institute measures for consulting on the implementation of this Memorandum of Cooperation and will report accordingly to their respective governing bodies and seek further guidance on new areas of cooperation.

ARTICLE VIII REVIEW AND TERMINATION

1. This agreement may be reviewed at the request of either party and may be terminated by either party giving written notice of one year to the other.

DONE at Dakar, Senegal on the 5 day of December 1998.

SECRETARIAT OF THE CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION IN THOSE COUNTRIES EXPERIENCING SERIOUS DROUGHT AND/OR DESERTIFICATION, PARTICULARLY IN AFRICA (CCD)

**Hama Arba Diallo
Executive Secretary**

BUREAU OF THE CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (RAMSAR, IRAN, 1971)

Delmar Blasco
Secretary General