

Memorandum of Understanding
between
The Secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
and
The Bureau of the Convention on Wetlands
(Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

On Ramsar:

The Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971) is one of the oldest of the global multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). The Convention's mission is “the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local, regional and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world.”

Since its inception, the Convention has progressively developed its scope and approach to address the sustainable utilization of wetland resources in the context of integrated territorial and water resource planning and management. The Convention stresses that it is essential to integrate the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands as a contribution to the health and well-being of people through sustainable development everywhere.

It encourages and assists its Contracting Parties to develop, adopt and use the necessary and appropriate instruments and measures to ensure the wise use of all wetlands within their territories, by:

- a) improving the provision of incentives to promote, and removing incentives acting against, the conservation and wise use of wetlands; and
- b) involving the private sector in the conservation and wise use of wetlands.

On UNCTAD:

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) was established in 1964 as a permanent intergovernmental body and is the principal organisation of the United Nations General Assembly dealing with trade, investment and development issues.

The BIOTRADE Initiative of UNCTAD was launched in November 1996 with the mission of promoting trade and investment in biological resources to further sustainable development in line with the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The programme seeks to enhance the capability of developing countries to produce value-added products and services derived from biodiversity, for both domestic and international markets.

The BIOTRADE Initiative supports the implementation of Agenda 21, as well as the CBD, particularly Art. 10 on “Sustainable use of components of biological diversity” and Art. 11 on “Incentive measures”.

The BIOTRADE Initiative comprises three complementary components: 1) country and regional programmes (through national and regional focal points); 2) policy development and trade promotion; 3) Internet services. UNCTAD BIOTRADE collaborates with Governments, civil society and international organisations to achieve its objectives.

On the Collaboration between the UNCTAD and Ramsar Secretariats:

The Ramsar Convention recognises the importance of the sustainable use of wetlands, including amongst other ways, by promoting the sustainable trade of wetland products. UNCTAD recognises the trade potential of wetlands products and services. UNCTAD and the Ramsar Secretariats have agreed to collaborate and join forces on issues related to trade and sustainable use of wetland resources. To this end, they have agreed to:

- 1) Regularly exchange information and experiences on issues relevant to the joint objectives of the BIOTRADE Initiative of UNCTAD and to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, 1971);
- 2) Attend relevant meetings of each other's organisations and contribute to relevant research, publications, newsletters, among others;
- 3) Inform Member States and relevant partners about the collaboration and its potential;
- 4) Encourage Member States and relevant partners to integrate issues of sustainable use of wetlands, and trade and investment in products and services derived from wetlands in their respective work programmes;
- 5) Develop joint programmes and projects that promote trade and investment in wetlands products and services.

On Implementation, Review, Amendment and Termination:

This MOU will be implemented in accordance with the respective administrative procedures and practices, and the budgetary and other resources of UNCTAD and the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, 1971).

This MOU may be reviewed and amended in writing at the request of either party and may be terminated by either party giving a three months' written notice.

Delmar Blasco
Secretary General
Convention on Wetlands
(Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

Rubens Ricupero
Secretary General
United Nations Conference on
Trade and Development

[signed in Johannesburg, 1 September 2002]