

## Annex VIII

### EASTERN AFRICA SUB-REGIONAL CONSULTATIVE MEETING ARUSHA, 4 APRIL 2005

#### Consultative Process

Tanzania chaired the deliberations. Kenya served as Rapporteur, with support from IUCN Eastern Africa. In attendance were:

Burundi

Djibouti

Ethiopia (non-contracting party)

Kenya

Rwanda

Tanzania

Uganda sent its apologies.

<b>1. Wise Use of Wetlands</b>	
Inventory, assessment and monitoring	Most countries have some sort of inventory program underway. Though there are different capacities and levels of development in the region for inventory, assessment and monitoring. The great extent of wetlands in some countries poses challenges. Lack of capacity and resources are other constraints. Lack of uniform regional methods and datashystems.
Public awareness	Public awareness programs exist in some few countries that either have dedicated projects which address aspects of this or strong wetlands activities at the national level.
Policy, legislation and institutional arrangements	One country has a finalized policy, draft legislation, and dedicated wetlands institutions. One country has a nearly finalized policy and draft legislation in place. One country has opted to integrate wetlands issues into several sectoral policies and to have a national strategy. These countries merge wetlands with other natural resources management departments. Other countries have not initiated the policy process and currently treat wetlands issues through the national environment agencies.

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Impact of climate change	Some countries are beginning to notice climate change impacts, though monitoring systems for such changes are not well established
Wetland restoration	Wetland restoration initiatives are underway in some countries through invasive species control and catchment management programs.
Alien invasive species	All countries note with alarm the expansion of alien invasive species in the region. Specific efforts are underway in some systems to control these, e.g. LVEMP.
Incentives	Incentives at local level, such as income generating activities, are necessary to ensure community participation.
<p><b>Constraints:</b>            Weak bilateral cooperation, Difficulties with transboundary coordination            Competition with investment and agricultural expansion            Inadequate capacity among institutions –technical skills and resources            Lack of integrated planning (weak intersectoral collaboration) based on ecosystem approach.            In some cases inadequate baseline information            Lack of wetland specific EIA guidelines            Weak uptake and implementation of existing guidelines            Limited alternative livelihood strategies for communities</p>	
<p><b>Recommendations</b></p>	
<p>Strengthen regional wetlands collaboration (e.g. Regional Wetlands Programs) to share experiences in wetlands management at national and local levels;            More attention at the regional level to incentives for wise-use;            Integrated planning for transboundary systems;            Publicize and encourage uptake of EAC and other guidelines for management of transboundary ecosystems;</p>	

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<b>2. Wetlands of International Importance</b>	
Designation of new sites since COP8	All countries are in the process of describing and adding new sites
Change in ecological character	Several countries noted that water abstraction/diversion, catchment degradation, investments and migration of human settlements are beginning to cause changes in some ecosystems. Only a few countries have monitoring programs in place for monitoring such changes.
Implementation of management plans	Countries are at different stages of developing and implementing management plans. Some countries have no plans in place, some countries are developing plans for sites, some countries have plans that are not being implemented and few sites have plans that are being implemented.
Montreux/San Jose Record	No countries have listed sites on either the Montreux or San Jose records.
Transboundary Ramsar Sites	Eastern Africa has many potential transboundary sites, but at this point none have been designated by more than one country.
<b>Constraints</b>	
Funds and capacity for describing sites Funds and capacity for managing sites Negative perceptions of Ramsar by communities who think that it is a means for government to acquire land	
<b>Recommendations</b>	
Government allocations to wetlands descriptions e.g. Tanzania's target of 6 sites; Uganda's Poverty Alleviation Fund Income-generating activities Training, education and awareness, also site specific CEPA plans Participatory process to develop ownership	

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<b>3. International cooperation</b>	
Intensifying international cooperation	Most countries are involved in transboundary water/wetlands management projects. Most of the important transboundary ecosystems already have such initiatives underway (Nile and Kagera River Basins, Lakes Victoria, Tanganyika, Malawi/Nyassa/Niassa).
Coordination with other MEAs and REGs	Some countries cited strong links especially with AEWA, CMS, CBD, UNFCCC, CITES. RECs, like EAC, can be especially helpful in facilitating international cooperation. Most transboundary initiatives are facilitated by a non-riparian party (e.g. EAC, IOPs, GEF, World Bank, AfDB, etc)
Promoting regional sustainable use initiatives	EAC has come up with environmental resource guidelines, including wetlands
Sharing of expertise and information	East Africa hosts the International Course on African Wetlands Management in Kenya each year. The course has become a good training and networking ground for wetlands professionals.
Increasing international financial resources	Joint proposal writing has been undertaken where appropriate, facilitated by IOPs, GEF or others
<b>Constraints:</b>	
Funding Language constraints Lack of political commitment at high levels In security and civil unrest	
<b>Recommendations:</b>	

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<p>Cultivate high-level political commitment          Use Regional Economic Groupings to facilitate transboundary collaboration; create and strengthen bodies to support transboundary collaboration (e.g. commissions or authorities) where no Regional Economic Groupings exist.          “Younger” contracting parties should look to “older” contracting parties within the subregion for technical advice and lessons in implementing the convention.</p>	
<p><b>iv. Implementation Capacity</b></p>	
Support from COP and subsidiary bodies	The COP and its subsidiary bodies are important. The guidelines and handbooks produced are useful.
Institutional mechanisms	Institutional mechanisms in the region vary greatly, from a dedicated and well-staffed national Wetlands Inspection Division (Uganda) with staff at the district level; to National working groups (Tanzania, Kenya) that rely on district environmental committees; to no dedicated institutional arrangements at the national level or staffing arrangements at local levels
Support from Secretariat	Countries noted the limited human capacity of the Ramsar Secretariat arising from limited personnel with a large mandate. Countries noted the utility of the Ramsar Small Grants Program, especially in starting and describing the first sites but added that these small funds usually were not adequate to have much of an impact in wetlands management at the national level.
Support from IOPs	All countries acknowledged support from the Convention’s IOPs.
Training and capacity-building	Countries praised the International Course on African Wetlands Management as a useful training ground for wetlands managers within the region. Other national training institutes have or are adding wetlands curricula (e.g. Mweka, Pasiansi)
<p><b>Constraints</b></p>	

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<p>Low capacity, limited funding, weak political support Retention of staff who move to more lucrative fields Sufficient benefits and incentives to mobilize communities</p>	
<p><b>Recommendations</b></p>	
<p>Real implementation is on the ground. Relevant national policies must be translated into local languages and publicized at the grass roots level. Demands that come from the local level increase the value of wetlands to politicians.</p> <p>Must increase dependency on our own financial resources and advocacy for the Convention. Seek collaboration with other international agencies.</p>	
<p><b>v. Membership</b></p>	
<p>Support needed for non-CPs to join the Convention</p>	<p>Ethiopia is not yet a Contracting Party, though plans for acceding are well underway. Supporting the ratification process has been incorporated into annual work plans and expected soon. There has been a link between sustainable development and wetlands management and this should support its adoption by government. Technical support for preparation of management plan for first Ramsar Site will be critical to successful implementation of the Convention.</p> <p>Ramsar Secretariat should visit Ethiopia and conduct discussions with decision makers.</p> <p>The African Pre-Cop Conference should make a resolution encouraging Ethiopia and other non-contracting parties to ratify.</p> <p>Is it possible for e.g. EAC and other RECs to join? Can countries enter as a block through such organizations?</p>