

CONVENTION ON WETLANDS OF INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE ESPECIALLY AS WATERFOWL HABITAT (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

6th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties

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OVERVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION IN THE AFRICA REGION

A. General Overview of Developments in the Region

1. In the three years following the Fifth Conference of the Contracting Parties in Kushiro, Japan in 1993, Kenya has been the Region's representative on the Standing Committee, with Senegal as Alternate Representative. The Standing Committee has met on several occasions to deliberate on Convention matters, while the Scientific and Technical Review Panel, in which Dr. Yaa Ntiamou Baidu from Ghana is a member, has been equally active.
2. The first Ramsar African Regional Meeting was held in Nakuru, Kenya in August-September 1994. This important meeting brought together all but one of the 18 Contracting Parties at the time, to exchange views and draw up action plans for the conservation and wise use of wetlands in their territories and particularly in transboundary sites. The report and recommendations are available from the Ramsar Bureau.
3. Other meetings aimed at giving greater focus to common issues at sub regional level were held in Senegal, West Africa (September 1994); Tunisia, North Africa (March 1995); and in Uganda, East Africa (September 1995).
4. The response by the Contracting Parties to the Bureau's request to submit National Reports for the Brisbane Conference has, for the first time, been very encouraging with a record 20 out of the 22 Contracting Parties having sent their reports to the Bureau in time for compilation into a regional overview. There were no reports from The Comoros or from Guinea Bissau. This commendable response from the majority of member states has facilitated compilation of a more holistic regional report on the general status of wetland conservation and wise use, and the implementation of the Convention in Africa. The full country reports are available from the Ramsar Convention Bureau.
5. There were 22 Contracting Parties to the Convention in Africa as of 31 January 1996. Four of these, namely Togo, Namibia, The Republic of Comoros, and Zaire have joined the Convention since the Kushiro CoP in 1993. The total number of sites designated as wetlands of International Importance increased in the same period from 53 to 65 sites, a total of 12 sites as follows:

Namibia	<i>Etosha Pan, Lake Oponono and Cuvelai drainage</i> (6,000 ha)
	<i>Walvis Bay</i> (12600 ha)
	<i>Sandwich Harbour</i> (16,500 ha)
	<i>Orange River Mouth</i> (500 ha)
Togo	<i>Parc national de la Keran</i> (163,640 ha)
	<i>Réserve de faune de Togodo</i> (31,000 ha)
Kenya	<i>Lake Naivasha</i>

Zaire	<i>Virunga National Park</i> (800,000 ha), <i>Parc national des Mangrove</i> (66,000 ha)
Guinea	<i>Ile Blanche</i> (10 ha)
Comoros	<i>Lac Dziani Boudouni</i> (30 ha)
Mauritania	<i>Parc National du Diawling</i> (15,600 ha)

6. There have been no changes of administrative authorities or the geographic coordinates of designated wetland sites in any member state. However, new contact addresses are noted in a few countries. It is important that any future changes in postal, telephone and physical address and names of administrative authorities, be conveyed to the Bureau and to the regional representative as soon as possible so as to facilitate efficient communication.

7. The National Reports confess to a generally poor remittance of annual contributions to the Ramsar Budget by most countries over the years. This is attributed to lack of allocation of funds for this purpose and different national authorities responsible for such finances in many of the countries. All member states with outstanding dues to the Convention are urged to pay, and to implement the recommendation of the African Regional Meeting held in Nakuru, Kenya in 1994, which urged member states to show solidarity to the Convention by paying dues annually, even though contributions to the Ramsar budget may be small.

8. Some general points of interest mentioned by Contracting Parties are listed below.

9. **Algeria** intends to accept **Paris Protocol & Regina** amendments in the near future.

10. **Guinea** gives details of the five Ramsar sites, and their geographic coordinates. However, the 6th site (added 23.6.93) is not mentioned.

11. **Mali**. Three Ramsar sites are confirmed. Furthermore, Mali is considering acceptance of Regina amendments and payment of arrears of national contributions.

12. **Mauritania** notes that *Banc d'Arguin National Park* and *Diawling National Park (PND)* were designated as Ramsar sites in 1976 and 1994 respectively. The objectives of the latest site, *Diawling National Park (PND)* are as follows:

- ◆ conservation and sustainable development of the natural resources and of a sample of the ecosystem of the lower delta;
- ◆ harmonious and permanent development of the various activities of the human populations;
- ◆ coordination of pastoral and fishing activities carried out in the area.

13. **Namibia** acceded to the Convention on 23 August 1995 and designated 4 wetland sites to the list of wetlands of international importance. These are Etosha Pan, Walvis bay, Sandwich Harbour, and *Orange River Mouth*, a transboundary site shared with S. Africa.

14. **Togo**, in acceding to the Convention in 1995 designated two sites: *Togodo National Reserve* and *Keran National Park*. Togo expects funding of preparatory project entitled "Inventory and cartography of Ramsar sites, and public awareness" before proposing other sites for listing. (*Bureau comment*. Funding has already been provided from the Ramsar Bureau).

15. **Zaire** is the latest country to join the Convention. The general geographical descriptions of Zaire emphasize that the country includes 47% of African tropical rain-forest and that it covers nearly all the basin of the Zaire River basin. The report notes the ornithological importance of Zaire with the highest diversity (1086 species) in Africa. 27 endemic species are noted in a list of species in the Annex. It further describes Zaire as a well-watered country with many rivers, and a series of lakes in the East, partly in the territory of Zaire. The country has designated the Virunga National Park and the Marine Mangrove Park as its two Ramsar sites.

16. **Zambia** notes that coordination of wetland conservation programme is carried out by the National Environmental Council of Zambia (ECZ) formed in 1992.

B. Further information on wetlands designated for the List of wetlands of international importance

19. The following are reports on change in ecological character and legal status on listed sites, information on the status of Ramsar Sites in the territory of specific Contracting Parties (Recommendation 5.1), and the position regarding formulation and implementation of management plans for Ramsar sites and other wetlands in fulfillment of Recommendation 5.7.

20. **Algeria:** No deletions or change in legal status of the Listed Sites is noted, though both Algerian listed sites are on Montreux Record. A Monitoring Procedure was carried out in November 1990, but both sites are still experiencing change in ecological character as follows.

In *Lac Oubeira* effects have resulted from; second introduction of exotic fish species, building of Mexenna dam upstream with no preliminary EIA, and the shores have been affected by anarchic land uses, conditioned by socio-economic demands. The National Park authorities are trying to restore shorelines by a series of water control and grazing control measures.

In *Lac Tonga* is threatened by rapid eutrophication, caused by invasion of plants and blocking of outlet channel. Efforts are under way to find funding for clearing the outlet channel.

21. Management of listed sites is through local authorities and park administration. Management is however, complicated because of fragmented land ownership. This slows decision-making and highlights the need for a wetland committee.

22. **Burkina Faso:** Three Ramsar sites namely, *La Mare d'Oursi*, *la Mare aux Hippopotames*, and *Parc du 'W'* are discussed.

23. **Chad:** Has only one Ramsar site, but there are other potential sites: *Lac Léré*, *Lac Iro*, *Eastern section of Lac Chad*, all of which will be listed later. Studies are underway to facilitate designation of *Fauna Réserve Binder-Léré* (Lac Léré, Trené) and *Lac Iro* through support by the European Union and the GTZ.

24. **Egypt.** Lake Burullus has been proposed as a protected area. This will affect its legal status.

25. The current and future of ecological change of the two Ramsar sites both currently on the Montreux Record is as follows:

Lake Bardawil: The current status of the lake is noted as satisfactory. However, future housing developments are threatening to substantially alter the ecological character of the lake, and there is a likely reduction in salinity of the lake and increased pollution due to reclamation of 400,000 feddans by the North Sinai Agricultural Development Project.

Lake Burullus: There is a continuous decrease in size due to on-going drainage and reclamation of the Lake's east, west and south margins, and as a result of landward migration of coastal sand dunes (coastal erosion). Increasing quantity of agricultural drainage water with heavy fertilizer and pesticide loads contribute to eutrophication and pollution of lake, while occasional siltation and closure of the Barrage and increased drainage water have lead to reduction in salinity of the Lake and expansion of reed swamps.

26. Development of management plans for *Lake Bardawil* through EEC was suspended until local conflicts in interest are resolved. There is no management plan for *Lake Burullus* yet.
27. **Gabon:** The administrative and technical management of *Wongha-Wonghé* is not covered by Ministry of Water and Forests, but by Presidency of the Republic. Other two sites are managed by Water and Forest Ministry. Field studies have been carried out by WWF experts, German cooperation and French cooperation with the aim to establish management plan.
28. **Ghana:** No change in list of sites or their legal status. The report notes likely pollution by domestic waste materials on the northern part of Densu Delta due to recent unauthorized housing development. However, measures have been taken to delineate the most sensitive zone and to instituting mitigatory measures, in close collaboration with involved developers. The report further notes that the boundaries of all six Ramsar sites have been surveyed and demarcated.
29. **Guinea:** There is no deletion or restriction of the Ramsar sites. No change in legal status 'before receipt of Ramsar diplomas'. The report notes that there is change in ecological character at four sites (except Alcatraz) because of "intensive exploitation of the floristic potential by local people, especially for rice and salt-making. SFr. 45,000 was received from WCF for the 'safeguard of Tristao Islands' project, under the management of the Environmental Department.
30. **Kenya:** The proposed new sites are Diani Chale Marine National Reserve, Tana River Delta, Lake Bogoria, and the Ndere Islands on L. Victoria.
31. **Mali:** No additional Ramsar sites and no withdrawals. None of the 3 sites have any special legal status.
32. There has been a grave crisis in the Inner Delta of the Niger caused by inadequate pollution control in ground and surface water and poor water management. These problems are provoked by features such as the legal and institutional framework, the absence of ecological awareness and lack of policies. Inadequate rainfall and the dam construction upstream flooding at Sélingué and Manantal have also played a role.
33. Other noteworthy parallel factors that exacerbate the problem are agricultural drainage, intensive agricultural practice using pesticides and canal construction for irrigation.
34. In order to solve above problems, the report notes the need for better management of country's water resources: better management of irrigation systems, strengthening of rural development organizations like the "Office du Niger", raising of public awareness and training. This would improve water supplies downstream, would help control malaria and bilharzia. There is no need in a country like Mali to persuade people of the value of wetlands - they know already.
35. A number of waterfowl nesting in woods in the Ramsar sites have been disturbed by grazing animals and by taking of nestlings. In order to reduce the effects of human predation, three woods have been protected and acacias are regenerating. At the same time, campaigns for replanting natural vegetation ("bourgou") have been carried out in 27 villages; in the areas covered there are measures to control grazing.
36. Such activities are in conformity with the Ramsar Convention, which should be seen not merely as a tool to conserve wetlands of international importance, but to promote their wise use. Further to the above comments, ecotourism is contemplated in the Central Niger Delta.
37. **Mauritania.** Problems in wetland conservation include delays in the operation of the water structures at Cheyal and Bell which are likely to imperil the regeneration of the species observed in 1994 and 1995, and to have negative effects on the ecosystems of Diawling, Chott Boul and the

Ntiallakh basin. In the Banc d'Arguin Ramsar site there is a large and growing human population. The local community has been doing artisanal fishing in the site for the last 400 years. However, many other activities except scientific research are prohibited.

38. Projects to close off the Ntiallakh basin, leading to the destruction of the ecosystem (mangroves and associated species), still threaten the area. The proposal to direct run-off water from the rice fields of Keur Macène (north of the park) towards Chott Boul, risks producing negative effects on the zone. Poaching (pelicans, flamingos) and collection of young birds from colonies of nesting fish-eating birds (cormorants) remains an important activity in the lower delta.
39. **Morocco:** No change in legal status of four listed sites, but protection measures strengthened, and management plans are being established.
40. A motorway being built from Rabat to Larach passes close to two Ramsar sites of Merja Zerga and Sidi Boughaba. Although an EIA was carried out on the motorway construction, possibility was noted of; (1) destabilizing coastal sand dunes; (2) preventing natural water flows (3) effects on fauna and flora.
41. Compensatory measures have been envisaged, though in general no serious effects are envisaged on Merja Zerga.
42. Two workshops were organized on Merja Zerga and Sidi Boughaba; management plans drafted and currently being finalized with help of CPCN (national NGO group). Work at Sidi Boughaba should be complete by end of 1995. Two other Ramsar sites (Khniwiss and Affenourrir) were studied as part of the national study on Moroccan protected areas and classified as highest priority. Management plans will be drawn up when funds have been acquired.
43. **Namibia:** A trans-frontier management committee has been established to manage the newly designated *Orange River Mouth*. There are major problems affecting the supply of water to the site, which will affect the ecological character of the wetland. However, the site should not be placed on the Montreux Record until a decision is made by a joint management committee with South Africa.
44. Proposed change of the international boundary between S. Africa and Namibia will increase the size of the Orange river mouth wetland in Namibia's control. Management Plans are in preparation for *Sandwich Harbour* and *Orange River Mouth* wetland sites.
45. **Niger:** There are no reductions in the number of sites and no change in the legal status of "*W National Park*" Ramsar site. No change in ecological character of the site, but an increase in human pressure because of lack of management plan, lack of awareness of biological potential of wetlands, poaching, illegal grazing, bush fires and lack of resources to combat them, and agricultural encroachment. (Note that the area is rich in iron and phosphate, and that risk of exploitation may occur at any time.)
46. **South Africa:** No wetlands have been deleted, though alteration of boundary is expected on *Orange River Mouth* wetland, now shared with Namibia. *Greater St. Lucia Wetlands Park* has been proposed for World Heritage Status once the South African Government signs the Convention. Furthermore, the St. Lucia system boundary is to be extended to include the wetland system lying within Mkuzi Game Reserve.
47. The ecological character of the following sites has changed, is changing, or is likely to change as a result of technological development;

- i. *Barberspan* - slow siltation of the pan is likely to change the ecological character of the site. However, there is no confirmation, hence, so the site should not be placed on the Montreux Record.
- ii. *Blesbokspruit* - Possible alteration of the hydrological regime and change in water quality on the site if decision to pump underground water from the adjacent mines to the site is accepted. An EIA has been commissioned to look into the possible effects. But there is no sufficient information to warrant placing on Montreux Record.
- iii. *Langebaan* - Possible threat from an increase of oil tanker activities in the Bay and large quantity oil storage at Saldana Bay. However, it is not necessary to place the site on the Montreux Record.
- iv. *Orange River Mouth wetland* - Collapse and rapid degradation of the salt marsh on the southern bank of the Orange River owing to a number of factors. This has led to reduction in back-flooding frequency. Upstream dam construction reducing the incidence of short return period floods, leakage of process water into the marsh, causing die-back of affected vegetation and mobilization of marsh sediments. The site should be placed on the Montreux Record.
- v. *Verlorenvlei* - Change in salinity and hydrological regime due to restriction of water entering the lake through erection of illegal barrages. This is having effect on the bird and fish life of the system. Following local complaints, mitigatory measures that involve removal of the illegal barrages will be put in place. The site should not be placed on the Montreux Record.
- vi. *St. Lucia* - The status remains unchanged. The site should be retained on the Montreux Record.
48. Management plans exist for Barberspan, Blesbokspruit, De Hoop, De Mond, Langebaan, Orange river mouth, St. Lucia, Turtle bay and coral reef of Tongaland, Verlorenvlei, Wilderness lakes, and Natal Drakensburg Park, a total of eleven management plans.
49. **Senegal:** Conservation of Ramsar sites is a permanent preoccupation of the authorities. Devaluation of the CFA franc has caused reduction of budgets for carrying out important conservation work on Ramsar sites. The structural adjustment programme has restricted recruitment of new personnel without replacement of those whose leave. In spite of all this, there are efforts to conserve Ramsar sites and to ensure the minimal changes in ecological character.
50. Change in ecological character: For some years the *Djoudj* has continued to have ecological perturbation due to the construction of the Diama dam on River Senegal, thus reducing the salinity of the Park. This has led to an infestation by the aquatic weed *Pistia Stratiotes* that colonised large parts of the favourable habitat for migratory birds. The park is on the Montreux Record.
51. *Ndiaël* is also on the Montreux Record due to its drainage caused by the construction of the national road from St. Louis to Matam, which occasionally stops the flow of water in the Ngalam and the three Niétiyone tributaries. The canal has been functional since January 1995.
52. **Togo:** There has been reduction in area of protected sites "because of the socio-political problems in Togo since 1990. A National Commission on redefinition of protected areas has been working since 1992. Because of the redefinition, change in ecological character is occurring and will continue to occur as a result of claims by local people. Illegal tree cutting, establishment of agricultural plots and houses, uncontrolled hunting.

53. **Tunisia:** Threat to ecological character of Lake Ichkeul due to construction of dams on the water courses that feed the lake with fresh water during wet season. The programme of dam building was established before Ichkeul listing under Ramsar, and three dams have now been built. Three other proposed dams were cancelled while awaiting the results of the study on safeguarding Ichkeul. Previous studies did not take account of the development-environment issues, so an international seminar was held in 1990. Some of the recommendations noted in the report made for adoption at Ichkeul are: need to complete scientific data, establishment of data base for management, and adoption of an integrated management of the National Park with plan for Northern water resources, in order to satisfy Ichkeul's needs.

54. Studies on Ichkeul have been commissioned and consultants final report is due at the end of October 1995. Various interim reports with the conclusions have been received.

55. **Uganda:** Lake George is the only Ramsar site, and still on the Montreux Record since 1990 due to problem of pollution from cobalt dump. Preliminary Monitoring Procedure was carried out in September 1994. In May 1995 a National Environment legislation was enacted to provide standards for discharge of effluent into water, and a management plan for the site was developed as part of the Queen Elizabeth National Park management plan.

56. **Zaire:** Most protected wetlands are inside national Parks, seven of which currently exist (four of them on World Heritage list). Aim to make protected area cover 12-15% of national territory. Describing the status of Zaire wetlands, the report notes problems on three sites including two listed sites as follows:

- ◆ In the *Marine Mangrove park*, water hyacinth problem (controlled by Dugongs) has lead to increase in bilharzia and Malaria; effects of hydrocarbon pollution from petrol industry which has caused decline of fisheries and especially shellfish; there is uncontrolled urbanization; A construction project for a deep water port has been carried out; and perhaps up to 40% of mangrove area lost.
- ◆ In *Virunga National Park*, there are problems of human pressure, especially around the park peripheries where wood cutting and un authorised fishing takes place; plans are underway to build dams on upper Rusindi and Rutshuru rivers; pollution from SOMINKI factory and existence of high tension electric lines in the park, and intrusion by refugees from Rwanda.
- ◆ *Upemba* (Not a Ramsar site) - Used to be the biggest National Park in Africa, but has decreased somewhat. There are problem of conflict with local people.

57. **Zambia:** There has been no change in the status of the two Ramsar sites, and there is a proposed new Ramsar site namely, Lukanga Swamp on the Kafue river. Wetland Conservation Fund support was provided through bilateral agreement with the UK government to carry out Natural Resource inventory and delineation.

C. Wise Use of Wetlands

58. The following areas are covered in the national reports in relation to implementation of the wise use concept;

- ◆ Progress in formulation and application of National Wetland Policies
- ◆ Existence of National Ramsar Committees(Rec. 5.7)
- ◆ National Scientific Inventories of potential Ramsar sites (Rec. 4.6)
- ◆ Additional guidance for implementation of the Wise Use concept (Rec. 5.6)

59. **Algeria:**

- ◆ There is no National Wetland Policy yet. Though issues of wetland conservation would be included in overall Algerian Environmental Policy. There is an intention to formulate a wetland policy which will commence with an evaluation of the wetland resource.
- ◆ Formation of a Ramsar Wetland Committee which will consist of multi-disciplinary team is planned.
- ◆ A national inventory of flora and fauna was established in 1995, and an IWRB waterfowl counts already exist.

60. Among wise use measures, the report cites the GEF grant of 9.2 million \$US for El Kala and the eastern wetlands complex. The most important components of the project are; to carry out basic studies of wetland functions and sustainable use of resources, take urgent actions to prevent current degradation, purchase the necessary equipment, and to undertake programmes of public awareness, training and development of integrated management plan.

61. Burkina Faso:

- ◆ Burkina Faso is in the process of revising the legislative text on the management of forests and fauna and fisheries so that the legislation can take account of management of wetlands.
- ◆ Socio-economic and ecological studies (including inventory of migratory waterfowl) at *la mare d'Oursi* have been carried out. The objective of the studies was to enable the drawing up of a management plan for the wetland.
- ◆ Monographs of the three Ramsar sites have been prepared with the objective of promoting the wise use of the wetlands and identifying actions for improving the management of the sites.

62. **Chad:** There has been no formulation of a proper National Wetland Policy, as recommended by the Convention, due to military-political disruption and economic crisis. The State has made efforts for the management of wetlands with support from NGOs.

63. Egypt.

- ◆ A National Wetland Policy is planned within the framework of a National Nature Conservation Strategy currently under development.
- ◆ An identification of all wetlands of international importance has been carried out through cooperation with Birdlife International and Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agencies. There is however, a need to inventory and list other small wetlands as well.

64. **Gabon:** Under the National Biodiversity Strategy, several sites are proposed as protected areas: Minkebe, Mingouli, Bay of Mondah. The report notes Gabon does not have a National Wetland Committee and that scientific inventory of the three sites has not been carried out.

65. **Ghana:** The 1996 National survey of wetlands will act as a basis for information toward formulation of National Wetland Policy, and inventory of wetlands will be carried out in 1996.

66. **Guinea:** A National Wetland Policy does not exist, though management of wetlands is incorporated as a priority in National Forestry Policy, and integrated into the National Agricultural Development Policy. At present no Ramsar Committee has been formed, but one comprising of 15 members representing various ministries and NGOs will be formed soon.

67. A national inventory of wetlands has begun in cooperation with Secretariat of Fauna and Flora of the Natural History Museum in Paris. Unfortunately, it is not yet completed .

68. **Kenya.** Although there is no specific national wetland policy, an interministerial National Wetland committee has been formed to develop and coordinate a National Wetland Policy and EIA framework. There is no National Ramsar Committee, though there is the Kenya Wetland Working Group which addresses all wetland issues adequately. A national wetland standing committee was recently established to undertake formulation and implementation of the Wetland Policy throughout the country.

69. National Inventory is an ongoing process, and its first report was published in 1994. Plans to expand Inventory coverage to new wetlands. The necessary equipment to carry out the inventory has been purchased. Although there exist databases in a number of organizations in which inventory data can be stored, there is a need to harmonize these databases to ensure the compatibility of data exchange. A mechanism for disseminating information to the district development officers is being developed.
70. An application of Ramsar's Management Planning Guidelines has been tested on a number of wetlands such as Lake Nakuru, Naivasha, the Tana delta Wetlands and the Mombasa Marine National Park.
71. An EIA manual which is aimed at formalizing a process for evaluating likely effects of development projects on habitats has been developed. EIAs have also been carried out at a number of wetland sites on Mzima Springs bulk water supply to Mombasa, and on the Grand falls/Mutonga Hydropower dam where special emphasis was placed on the inadequacy of the data used for developing the hydrological model.
72. **Mali:** The report notes the need for a holistic management scheme for the highly fertile wetlands in the valleys of the Niger and Senegal owing to conflict between different users, and development projects such as dams, which have many negative impacts on biotic features of the wetlands.
73. Within Mali, management of wetlands is not entrusted to one organization (though the Ministry of Rural Development and Environment is the most important). Despite this administrative inadequacy, Mali is a country which is a victim of frequent drought and attaches great importance to its wetlands.
74. Water legislation in Mali (Law 90-17) establishes that water, like air, is unalienable, and cannot be appropriated for private purposes. This law also regulates water uses. Current reforms work towards decentralization, thus transferring real power to rural communities.
75. Apart from the studies carried out by IUCN and the Ministry to establish the three Ramsar sites, no other scientific studies have been carried out.
76. An inventory of wetlands, development of a national wetland policy and development of management plans and awareness campaigns are all urgently needed.
77. **Mauritania:** The two Ramsar sites are discussed as follows:
- ◆ *Diawling National Park* has been heavily affected by the drought and by the consequences of the water projects (Diama dam and embankment along the right bank) in the delta of the Senegal River. Thanks to finance from the Caisse Française de Développement (CFD, France), African Development Bank, and Netherlands (via IUCN), the park is establishing hydraulic structures which will make it possible to re-establish flood conditions, at times of flooding, over 11,100 hectares. The other 4,500 ha. are permanently flooded, since they form part of the lake retained by the Diama dam. Water passing through the park is used to restore the estuarine system and the area around the park, particularly in the Ntiallakht basin to the west of the park and Chott Boul to the North.
 - ◆ In *Parc national du Banc d'Arguin* (PNBA), a policy relating to the development of ecotourism is being formulated with assistance from the Wetland Conservation fund. A major objective of the Park is to put in place an effective management system that will ensure the protection of the park and its resources. A detailed plan of action exists for the period 1994-1997.

The Plan spells out specific measures for execution and evaluation of the plan. There is an independent scientific group which guides research orientation in the park.

78. A management plan is currently being drawn up. The plan, apart from its objectives of conservation and restoration of wetland functions, will define activities to be undertaken for sustainable development of the surrounding area, in consultation with the local communities.
79. IUCN has supported the Department of Land Planning and Regional Action (DATAR) for the production of the report on the national workshop for land use planning along the Mauritanian Coast, for the terms of reference of the study, for organization of two exploratory missions with the government technical services, for the production of reports etc. A mission by a coastal planning expert was organized by IUCN to plan further activities.
80. At the request of the Mauritanian Navy, IUCN has contributed to a request to have Chott Boul included on the Ramsar List. IUCN supported several geography students from Nouakchott University working on coastal planning. Technical support was given for the organization of a workshop on "Environment and the Mauritanian Coast" organized in connection with the project on "Biodiversity of the Mauritanian Coast".
81. **Morocco:** There is no National Wetland Policy, though wetlands are managed within the framework of a national policy on conservation of wetlands and protected areas.
82. Exhaustive evaluation of all wetlands in Morocco was carried out under the national study of Moroccan Protected areas. The study sets out an overall plan for protected areas in Morocco, and identifies sites worthy of protection, including all coastal and inland wetlands. Some of the sites in priority 1 will be listed under Ramsar.
83. In addition to gazetting as hunting reserves and Ramsar designations, another procedure is 'Classified Natural sites'. Six wetlands are so classified (including Sidi Boughaba) and Merja Zerga is being classified in this way before entry into force of the new nature Conservation Law.
84. There is no National Wetland Committee in Morocco, though it is accepted that one needs to be established.
85. A policy of strengthening management measures, notably by granting increasing sums for management, both at listed sites like Merja Zerga and Sidi Boughaba, and at non-listed sites like Massa or Iriqui is continuing. Forestry engineers are assigned to each protected area, and Separate technical, and consultative committees have been formed for each site, with the respective tasks of drawing up management plan, and overseeing the application of the management plans.
86. Most Moroccan wetlands situated in the areas classified as permanent or 3 year hunting reserves; which give them good protection via annual hunting and fishing decrees. Traditional utilization is maintained, which sometimes harms Biodiversity. A general law on nature protection has been drawn up and submitted to the appropriate authorities. This will strengthen existing arsenal measures. Funds have been made available for wetlands conservation through national parks surrounding wetlands e.g. National Park of souss-Massa (already established), and National Park of Al Hoceima and eastern High Atlas, Toubkal and Tazekka, and Iriqui (being set up).
87. **Namibia.** The Policy on wetlands is incorporated in the national land use planning policy. This specifically states that wetlands are to be managed under the Ramsar Convention philosophy. Other policies following a similar philosophy are the Policy on Conservation of biotic diversity and habitat protection, and Namibia's Environmental Assessment Policy.

A National Inventory of wetlands is in preparation, and most wetlands of international importance have been identified, though further inventory and classification is required.

88. **Niger.** There is a national wetland policy sponsored by the water department, but their plans are not in accordance with conservation and sustainable management of water resources. Niger policy is based on involvement of local people in management of natural resources.

89. A national wetland plan is required. Public Awareness campaigns are underway and funding is being sought. A workshop held to review the situation regarding the conservation of wetlands in the country called for a plan of management of wetlands within the framework of the "Rural Code". Funds and resources will be needed to facilitate implementation of the recommendation. The lack of coordination between government services should be noted.

90. There is no National Wetland Committee yet, but the wetland workshop noted above strongly recommended the establishment of such an inter-ministerial committee under the auspices of IUCN.

91. Although a National Inventory has not yet been carried, this will be a task of the future wetland committee.

92. **Senegal:** For some years, the new national policy of wetlands has created an opportunity to address adequately improved incorporation of local population in the management of renewable resources and the cost of the decision.

93. The initiation of a pilot national research study on wetlands in Senegal by IUCN will contribute to the accounting of all wetlands which are not categorized in the World Conservation system initiated by IUCN. Diagnostic studies for preparation of management programmes for Saloum biosphere reserve has been carried out.

94. **South Africa:** A National Wetland policy is in the process of development. The National Ramsar Committee was established in 1991. The National Inventory is in progress, with information on 690 wetlands having been collected from literature and 1200 wetlands mapped on GIS. Field verification is in progress.

95. **Togo:** On the Wise Use concept, Togo plans to formulate a National Wetland Policy and a National Wetland Committee in coming months. An inventory of wetland sites is in progress.

96. **Tunisia:** An Inventory of all wetlands undertaken with WCF support, and production of awareness material is all being done to lead toward formulation of National Wetland Policy.

A National Scientific Inventory of Potential Ramsar sites is being translated into French, and a National Wetland Committee will be formed in future.

97. **Uganda:** The National Wetland Policy was officially launched in November 1995.

- ◆ A National Ramsar Committee comprising 15 members was formed to assist with the Implementation of the Convention.

- ◆ A physical and biological inventory of wetlands is being undertaken with the aim of defining the wetland resources, threats and human values, and to recommend to the Government new Ramsar sites.

98. **Zaire:** It is noted that it is not appropriate in the present context to establish a sectoral wetland Policy, but this should be included in National Environmental Strategy currently being drawn up.

- ◆ A National Wetland Committee initially established to follow up UNCED (RIO) conference of 1992 exists already and could deal with wetland issues.

- ◆ A National Inventory of Wetland has not yet been done, but good survey has been carried out on Virunga National Park and on three major areas for migratory birds, namely; mouth of Zaire River, Great lakes of the East, and wet plains of the south east (Kasai and Shaba)

99. **Zambia.** A framework for the draft National Wetland Policy document is being drawn up by a team of four experts following numerous field trips by a multi-disciplinary consultancy team. Final Draft to be ready by end of 1995.

D. International cooperation on shared wetlands and species

100. **Chad.** Chad is a member of the Commission of the Lake Chad Basin (CBLT); other members being Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon, and recently the Central African Republic. The Commission oversees activities in agriculture, fishery, pastoralism, tourism and forestry in the basin. The designation of Lake Chad as a wetland of International Importance is being studied by the CBLT. The two big rivers and their tributaries, which drain into Lake Chad are also under the control of the Commission.

101. **Egypt:** Assistance is needed to resolve problem of a massive increase in wintering cormorants "Phalacrocorax carbo" in wetlands, due to their severe effect on fisheries. Cooperation between local NGOs and German NGOs in initiating activities aimed at conservation of white stork Ciconia ciconia during migration. A Memorandum of Agreement on conservation of the slender billed curlew 'Numenius tennirotris' with Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) has been signed. And participation in the CMS Agreement on conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Water birds has been approved.

102. **Gabon:** No international consultations with neighbours has taken place. No grants from Ramsar to Gabon. However, WWF, World Bank, GTZ and French cooperation have supported certain field projects and studies.

103. **Ghana:** There are efforts to manage the Abby Lagoon jointly with Cote d'Ivoire. GEF is to provide US\$ 7.1 million and Ghana to provide 1.1 mil US\$ toward the implementation of a coastal wetlands management project aimed at maintaining and restoring the ecological integrity of the five Ramsar sites.

104. **Guinea:** There is no cooperation with neighbouring countries, although there are shared rivers. Iles Tristao was with WCF finances in October 1994. Guinea notes the fundamental role of International funding agencies, though the department dealing with wetland issues has not received funding from such agencies.

105. **Kenya:** There exists various bilateral agreement with the neighbouring states; regular consultative meetings with Ethiopia on the wise use of river Omo; Cooperation with Tanzania on River Ewaso Ngiro which feeds in Lake Natron; and a tripartite Agreement between Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania for joint Environmental Management Programme of Lake Victoria to be funded by GEF. International support for wetland conservation has been received from GEF, UNDP, Ramsar Bureau, Netherlands, and Japan.

106. Kenya received 40,000 SFR in 1992 from the WCF for training of wetland monitors. This enabled establishment of a long term monitoring of wetlands and enabled establishment of regional cooperation in waterbird monitoring with Tanzania, Uganda and Ethiopia.

107. **Mali:** No international consultations are cited, but the "W" national park is shared by three states. The whole area should be listed under Ramsar and the management plans harmonized. "W" national park never received funding from any international funding agency. There is however, a

planned grant for the region (Niger, Mali, and Benin) from the European Development Fund (EEC).

108. **Mauritania:** In *Diawling National Park*, a cooperation agreement has been proposed with the nearby Djoudj national park in Senegal and is to be signed in early 1996. There has also been an establishment of the Diawling National Park and definition of its management plan which began on 1.9.93 with support from IUCN and the Netherlands government for three years, aimed to promote sustainable development of the Mauritanian part of the lower Senegal delta by integrating conservation and development, and by restoring natural habitats which are heavily degraded. Project has equipped PND with a four wheel drive vehicle, a motor boat, office and communications equipment, and instruments for ecological monitoring. Park headquarters built using "no wood" construction methods (bricks and vaulting). Support from the Environment Ministry of Catalonia (Spain). Small pilot projects carried out, and a national consultant has instructed groups of women in agricultural techniques. Funding provided for fishery material. Studies made for ecotourism and handicrafts. Training for park staff.
109. There has been participation (with Wetlands International and Office National de la Chasse, ONC France) in midwinter waterfowl counts at *Diawling National Park*. While in *Banc d'Arguin* there has been cooperation in conservation matters with the European Community (E.C), Germany (GTZ), France, Netherlands, Japan (JICA), UNDP and FAO. The global role of the programmes in PNBA is to facilitate maintenance or restoration of biological diversity and ecological processes and productivity of the park, together with all the ecosystems associated with it.
110. An external review of the *Banc d'Arguin* project was carried out in May 1995, with positive findings. The second phase of the project is planned with support of the Netherlands and France, concentrating on integrated development in the surrounding area and Biodiversity.
111. A grant was provided to support training and scientific monitoring. Grant was equally used to obtain the SPOT imagery necessary for a vegetation map. Using other funds, other SPOT images have been collected and a map is being drawn up in Germany. Two Mauritanian scientists (a botanist and a fisheries expert) were recruited from 1 January 1995 and are training park staff. Databases on hydrology and birds are in operation. Other databases on fish and fisheries, and on grazing resources are being developed. The project envisages the establishment of a meteorological station at the park headquarters. The equipment has been received and will start operation in early 1996. Three staff took part in a course on statistics at Nouakchott.
112. **Morocco:** There are no cross frontier Ramsar sites in Morocco. The ministry cooperates with national scientific organizations each year in IWRB waterfowl census and organizes various workshops on wetlands and waterfowl. The Wetland Conservation Fund supported preparation of a management plan for Merja Zerga, whose final version is nearly ready.
113. The need for international funding agencies to be more involved in conservation and wise use of wetlands and agreement at national level between ministry and Comité des Programmes de Conservation de la Nature (CPCN).
114. **Namibia:** International consultation with South Africa over the management of the *Orange River Mouth* wetland site is being implemented.
115. **Niger:** A grant of 20,000 SFr was received from WCF, but the funds were not enough to complete the project. The results of the project are described and a request for further assistance to facilitate their application is made.

116. **Senegal:** Senegal and Mauritania are in touch to finalize a protocol for cooperation which will finally make way for the creation of a transfrontier park. Senegal, in collaboration with IUCN as facilitator, held a regional wetlands meeting in 1995.
117. A canal to provide water to Ndiaël was commissioned with financial support from European Commission (EC), and on January 1995 Management plan for Djoudj was completed with financial support from Netherlands, and other donors.
118. **South Africa:** International consultation on shared wetlands (Article 5) with Namibia on *Orange River Mouth*, with Mozambique on the Pongola River-Rio and with Swaziland on the Maputo-Usuthu River floodplain are taking place. International consultation on shared wetland species with the Bonn Convention has been put in place through signing the Agreement on African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds.
119. No support from has been given to S.Africa from the Wetland Conservation Fund and equally, no international support has been received for conservation and wise use of wetlands.
120. **Togo:** Since 1992 there has been no international cooperation between Togo and other countries. However, *Togodo*, one of the country's Ramsar sites is cross-frontier with Benin, and so cooperation required.
121. **Tunisia:** There are no shared wetland sites in Tunisia, though consultation on shared wetland species through accession to the Bonn Convention is underway.
122. Wetland Conservation Funds were received from the Bureau to facilitate translation of the wetland inventory information into French.
123. **Uganda:** A number of activities in international cooperation are noted as follows;
- ◆ Cooperation with Kenya and Tanzania in the implementation of the Lake Victoria Environment Management Programme.
 - ◆ Collaboration between Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi on management and control of water weeds on Lake Victoria, especially Water Hyacinth - *Eichhornia crassipes*
 - ◆ Collaboration with Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi for management of River Kagera through Kagera Basin Organization.
 - ◆ Collaboration with Zaire for management of Lake Albert and Lake Edward.
 - ◆ Collaboration between Uganda and countries of the Nile basin under TECCONILE programme.
 - ◆ Development of a wetland database through GEF East Africa. Biodiversity project.
124. Uganda received a grant in 1992 from the Wetland Conservation Fund for study of avifauna of Lake George.

F. Wetlands reserves, training and public awareness

125. **Algeria:** The midwinter waterfowl counts covers 80 wetland sites, 18 of which qualify for protected status (The site names and maps are shown in the report). Several of these sites also qualify for designations as wetlands of international importance and a number of them will be designated in the near future (names given).
126. The El Kala region has been receiving the priority in public awareness campaign. An eco-museum has been built overlooking *Tonga* Ramsar site, and an information centre has been set up in El Kala town.
127. Training was carried out in 1987-90 to establish midwinter count teams, though this had to be discontinued in 1990 for financial reasons. Tried to resume in 1995, but still finding problems.

- 128.**Burkina Faso:** Various public awareness activities on the wise use of wetlands have been carried out. These included screening of the 'wise use' Ramsar video to administration officials and policy makers at central and regional offices; sensitization programmes in regional directorates and at the National School of Water and Forests; National Television broadcast; and making of a 15 minutes film on the wise use on the Mare d'Oursi wetland. This film looks at the socio-economic importance, its degradation and the proposed management solutions.
- 129.**Chad:** The three wetland reserves are Lac Trené, Lac Léré and Lac Iro, all situated in the interior of the Fauna Reserve. Exploitation of the wetland resources here is carried out using the wise use principle.
- 130.**Egypt:** Although no new wetland reserves have been created, a visitor centre has been established at Zaranik Protected Area (Bardawil) with development of education programmes for children and visitors. Similar facilities are planned for Ahstan El Gamil Protected Area (L.Manzala) and Wadi El Rayan lakes. The priority in capacity building and training of personnel for protected areas department being undertaken.
- 131.**Guinea:** There are no declarations of new reserves, though efforts are currently going on to identify new ones.
- 132.**Kenya:** Diania Chale Marine wetland was gazetted as a National reserve in 1995. Plans are underway to create more wetland reserves.
- 133.A high priority has been accorded to education and public awareness programmes which have been carried out through workshops, seminars, field tours brochures, newsletters, etc., targeted at all levels of society. Community wetland conservation programmes have also been carried out by NGOs. Other education awareness programme has were launched in Lake Victoria Basin, Lake Bogoria, Saiwa swamp National Park and on coastal wetlands, and a Sub regional workshops for East Africa was carried out with support of IUCN East Africa Regional Office and GEF Biodiversity Project.
- 134.**Mauritania:** Two Mauritanian scientists (a botanist and a fisheries expert) were recruited from 1 January 1995 and are training park staff. A long list of recent publications on Diawling is provided in the National report.
- 135.**Morocco:** Current awareness campaigns at are being done at Sidi Boughaba and Merja Zerga, in collaboration with the Committee on programmes for nature conservation (CNCP). A National Centre for Environmental Education was established at Sidi Boughaba and has been receiving 15,000 visitors per annum. The Staff has attended training courses in Canada (1 month), France (2 Weeks).
- 136.Most wetlands in Morocco are hunting reserves, and are very well protected while allowing for traditional subsistence use. Those wetlands which are not in hunting reserves are still protected by law on open and close seasons for hunting. Application of National Study on Protected Areas will be carried out in years to come.
- 137.**Niger:** No reserves have been created yet, no zoning, and no visitor centres outside "W" national park. The report notes that education and training is extremely important, but unfortunately it is still very new in Niger.
- 138.**South Africa:** Three reserves have been established namely: Seekoeivlei, Verlorenvlei and Nylsvley Nature Reserves.

139. **Senegal:** A multi-media programme was financed by FAO for local population participation and for use in all wetland sites and fauna reserves.

139. **Togo:** There is one new wetland reserve being established at Bayémé. The current policy is to involve local people, through establishment of visitors centres at Keran, Togodo and Bayémé. Training and education are very important, but little has been done yet due to lack of financial resources.

140. **Tunisia:** The following wetland reserves have been created: Tourbiere de Dar Fatma, Lac de Djebel Chitane, Sebkhath El Kelbia, and Ile de Kneiss.

141. In addition, an eco-museum which attracts 45,000 people each year has been built in Ichkeul National Park, while an even bigger centre is being built at the Park entrance. Public awareness material has also been produced.

142. **Uganda:** No wetland reserve have been established as yet, but information is being gathered for that purpose and potential site has been identified. Wetland Centre for demonstration is being set up. Seminars and workshops for wetland resource users in four districts, and training of district officials and staff of the ministries and wetland programme is being carried out.

G. General comments on the Convention and its implementation

143. **Algeria:** Efforts are made to apply Convention, but these meet legal problems (see 2.4) and financial difficulties. Recommendations of Monitoring Procedure mission were taken into account in developing El Kala National Park management plan. But funding are still required for measures at Lake Tonga, and a request has been made to WCF.

144. **Burkina Faso:** Lack of sufficient financial resources and inability to formulate management plans for wetland sites hinders proper implementation of the Convention and the general conservation of wetlands in Burkina Faso. A large part of the management actions were only possible due to support from the WCF. A report on the activities carried out with the funds is under preparation.

145. **Chad:** The Government is taking measures to reduce movement of nomadic people through various programmes. Chad has sought funding from the Government of Japan to facilitate the conservation of the Lake Fitri Ramsar site. Wetlands in Chad are very fragile and their preservation requires particular attention. Lack of materials and human resources are a handicap for the implementation of the Convention.

146. **Egypt:** Ramsar has been a useful tool in countering negative development proposals at the two Ramsar sites and others as well. Lack of adequate number of qualified personnel is a major constraint to implementation of the Convention. Large scale human pressure and limited resources are placing exceptional demands on the wetlands.

147. A need for external assistance to establish, fuel and assist local wetland conservation efforts has been identified. Greater emphasis ought to be placed on fund raising and in making more funding opportunities available to developing countries. Capacity building should be a priority area for funding. And coordination with funding mechanisms such as GEF for wetland conservation projects should be explored.

148. **Gabon:** Application of the Convention is carried out 'timidly' in Gabon, though the country has close relations with CITES.

149. **Ghana:** Lack of an effective land-use policy has led to uncontrolled development and land-use practices especially near the urban wetlands of Sakumo and Densu delta. Lack of awareness at

policy and general public levels has been a drawback to wetland conservation. There is a lack of adequate legislation to protect wetlands against abuse at national level.

150. GEF paid for additional cost to divert treated sewerage from Sakumo lagoon Ramsar site to the sea. Collaboration between the Environmental Protection Agency and salt development company to harvest salt on environmentally sound and sustainable basis in Songor Ramsar site is in progress. While overall, greater awareness of the environment by the public is needed.
151. **Guinea:** The difficulty in accessing GEF funds for wetland activities in developing countries, and the need for simpler forms of access is noted.
152. **Kenya:** There has been an increased awareness of the Convention and the wise use concept over the last three years. There has equally been a greater adherence to the convention obligations by the Government and an increase support in wetland conservation by NGOs and partner organizations.
153. Difficulties have however, been encountered in: coordination of all the sectors dealing with wetlands; soliciting for funds and government allocations to support wetland issues; inadequate skills and expertise on management and application of the wise use concept; and an inadequate wetland conservation awareness among the general public.
154. **Mali:** The application of the Convention has met some major difficulties namely: lack of statutes, establishment of nature reserves in wetlands; application of wise use principle especially under the situation of competition between local people, domestic stock and wild fauna; and lack of funding for wetland conservation. Given this situation, IUCN were very supportive and organized a wetland symposium in Mali in April 1994 to suggest with possible solutions.
155. **Morocco:** No major difficulty have been encountered in the application of the Convention, which has been a useful instrument for conservation of wetlands in the framework of sustainable development. WCF is very useful, and should be strengthened by use of GEF funds. Ramsar is commended to work closely with other Conventions (CBD, CITES, CMS).
156. **Namibia:** Namibia notes that there are no difficulties in implementing the Convention at present.
157. **Niger:** Report notes that there is a lack of monitoring of Ramsar sites and recommends that a monitoring committee should be established and a training programme for wetland managers.
158. The report states that Ramsar should help listed sites to obtain funds from international agencies, and that it should aim to set up more appropriate funding mechanism since WCF grants are not adequate for long term work
159. **South Africa:** The Convention is perceived as a rallying point for environmental issues. However, there is a misunderstanding on the role of the Convention to be a policing role rather than a partnership role with member States. The South Africa wetland programme is trying to correct this notion as well as promoting the Convention through local publications.
160. Ramsar Bureau is asked to make a continuous follow-up to the high profile Monitoring Mission to the St. Lucia System and to make regular inquiry through diplomatic channels.
161. **Togo:** There is a general lack of resources, education, and training for wetland conservation. The basic problem is shortage of funds, which is why the country supports Ramsar now and in the future. Equally, Ramsar should help find finances by helping Contracting Parties to have access to GEF.

162. **Tunisia:** Protection of wetlands is addressed in the new legislation on the revised forestry code. The definition of wetlands and their protection is addressed. Tunisia has over 720 wetlands (Chotts, sebkhas, lakes, lagoons, oasis and deltas) to which the Convention would apply.
163. **Uganda:** Notes that implementation of the National Wetland Programme has led to increase in understanding of wetland issues in the central and local governments and in local communities.
164. **Zaire:** Request for financial assistance to aid the drawing up a national wetland inventory is made. A similar request has been sent to Birdlife International. There is need for a collaborative network for countries of central Africa (Zaire, Congo, Angola, Rwanda, Burundi). The country has seen the need to establish a focal Point for Ramsar.
165. **Zambia:** When the National Wetland Policy comes into effect it will help support management of wetlands and affect wise use initiatives.