INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPANTS

The Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and the Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971) are organizing the **IV Pan American Regional Meeting of the Convention on Wetlands** to take place in Merida, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela from 18-21 September, 2007. This meeting will be held in preparation for the 10\textsuperscript{th} Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP10), which will take place in Changwon, Republic of Korea in 2008.

**Venue of the Meeting**

**Hotel La Terraza**
Avenida Principal Los Chorros de Milla
Merida, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela
Telephone numbers: (58 274) 244 1133 / 1153 / 1224 / 2380
Fax: (58 274) 244 8237
E-mail: hterraza@movistar.net.ve
Website: www.hotellaterraza.com

**Geographic location**

The City of **Santiago de los Caballeros de Merida**, Merida’s official name, was founded on 9 October, 1558, by Juan Rodriguez Suarez. It is one of the most important tourist destinations in the country. At an altitude of 1,063 meters above sea level (m.a.s.l.), it is Venezuela’s highest city and is located at the beginning of the Andes mountain range, which extends to Chile and Argentina. Merida also boasts the longest cable car lift in the world, to the top of Bolivar mountain, 5,007 m.a.s.l. This, and its benign climate, make the city a spectacular place to visit. It is also one of the places in Venezuela which most conserves its colonial traditions.

The distance between Merida and Caracas, the capital, is 582 Km.

**Official language**

Spanish

**Religion**

92\% of the population is catholic.

**Electricity**

The voltage in the country is 110 Volts.
Government and Ramsar Secretariat Contacts for organization and registration

For the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela:

- **Aleidi Sangronis Delgado**  
  Directora de Gestión Internacional  
  / Head of International Management  
  Oficina de Gestión y Cooperación Internacional  
  / Office of International Cooperation and Management  
  Ministerio del Poder Popular para el Ambiente  
  / Ministry of the People’s Authority for the Environment  
  Tel: 58-212-4081501 and 1502 (Direct) 4081508  
  Fax: 58-212-4081503  
  e-mail: asangroni@minamb.gob.ve and osgci@minamb.gob.ve

- **Rossana Franco**  
  Dirección de Gestión Internacional  
  / International Management Section  
  Oficina de Gestión y Cooperación Internacional  
  / Office of International Cooperation and Management  
  Ministerio del Poder Popular para el Ambiente  
  / Ministry of the People’s Authority for the Environment  
  Tel: 58-212-4081501 and 1502  
  Fax: 58-212-4081503  
  e-mail: rfranco@minamb.gob.ve and osgci@minamb.gob.ve

For the Ramsar Convention Secretariat:

- **María Rivera**  
  Senior Advisor - Americas  
  The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands  
  Rue Mauverney 28, 1196 Gland, Switzerland  
  Tel: +41 22 999 0175  
  Fax: +41 22 999 0169  
  e-mail: rivera@ramsar.org

- **Mila Llorens**  
  Assistant Advisor - Americas  
  The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands  
  Rue Mauverney 28, 1196 Gland, Switzerland  
  Tel: +41 22 999 0145  
  Fax: +41 22 999 0169  
  e-mail: americas@ramsar.org
Reservations

The Ramsar Secretariat will be in charge of coordination of hotel and flight reservations for all delegates receiving funds from the Convention to participate in the meeting. Other participants must make their own reservations. La Terraza Hotel will offer special prices to participants of the *IV Pan American Regional Meeting of the Convention on Wetlands*.

Annex I gives details of the cost of rooms in the meeting venue, La Terraza Hotel, as well as in other nearby hotels.

Visas

Citizens of countries which do not appear in the Annex II list require a visa granted by a Consulate of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. To facilitate this meeting, the Venezuelan government has notified its diplomatic and consular missions of the celebration of the *IV Pan American Regional Meeting of the Convention on Wetlands*. Delegates requiring an entry visa to the country, are advised to ask for an invitation letter from the Ramsar Secretariat. If delegates experience any problems in acquiring a visa, please contact the national organization of the event.

Currency

The official currency is the Bolívar. The official exchange rate for buying is Bs. 2.144,60 for US$ 1,00 and for selling Bs. 2.150,00 for US$ 1,00.

*Currency restrictions*: Exchange transactions have to be made at commercial banks and exchange offices at the official exchange rate. Credit Cards are accepted in most places visited by tourists.

*Credit Cards*: Visa, Mastercard, Diners Club and American Express Credit Cards, as well as travelers checks, are accepted in most stores, restaurants, hotels, bars and discotheques.

Documents

Working documents will be sent by the Ramsar Secretariat to registered delegates and observers only. There will be a limited number of documents available at the meeting venue, so it is strongly recommended to bring to the meeting the documents sent to you by the Secretariat.

For more information regarding the documents for this meeting, please visit: [http://www.ramsar.org/mtg/mtg_reg_panamerican2007_index.htm](http://www.ramsar.org/mtg/mtg_reg_panamerican2007_index.htm).

Delegate transportation

Upon arrival at the International Airport of Maiquetía “Simón Bolívar”, delegates and observers will be met by identified Government personnel, and will be informed about the procedure they have to follow to make their national flight connection to Merida.

It is recommended that participants inform the national organization of the date and time of their arrival in Venezuela, as well as flight details. Otherwise, the necessary assistance cannot be guaranteed. This includes free transportation from the “Alberto Carnevalli” Airport in the city of Merida to the hotel, and back to the Airport at the end of the meeting.
The Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela will not reimburse any of these services to delegates who modify the flight itineraries prepared by the Ramsar Secretariat. If an itinerary changes, please inform the Secretariat in advance.

**Communication and Accreditation**

All accreditation of members of official delegations and other participants to the *IV Pan American Regional Meeting of the Convention on Wetlands* must be sent to the Ramsar Secretariat with copy to the national organization of the event, indicating the delegate’s names and position.

**Other Information of Interest**

**Vaccines:** No special vaccines are required to enter the country. Anyone going to tropical forest zones or in general, for more protection, may wish to be vaccinated against yellow fever, malaria and cholera, (however, not without previous medical consultation).

**Field Trip:** The Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela informs participants to the *IV Pan American Regional Meeting of the Convention on Wetlands*, that on 18 September 2007, there will be a field trip to Laguna de Mucubají, located at 3,300 m.a.s.l., in the mountainous area of Merida State. We recommend participants bring suitable clothing and shoes for a cold climate (moor).
### Annex II

### List of Hotels

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Single</th>
<th>Double</th>
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<td>US$ 91.00</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>(58 274) 244 1133 / 1153 / 1224 / 2380</td>
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<td>(58 274) 244 8237</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:hterraz@movistar.net.ve">hterraz@movistar.net.ve</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>(58 274) 266 3181 / 266 4295 / 2663457</td>
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<tr>
<td>(58 274) 263 4866</td>
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<tr>
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<td>El Tisur Hotel</td>
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<td>US$ 61</td>
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<tr>
<td>(58 274) 252 6061</td>
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<tr>
<td>(58 274) 252 8203 / 252 9931 / 252 9339</td>
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<tr>
<td>(58 274) 252 0633 / 252 0704 / 252 0775</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:pradorio258@intercable.net">pradorio258@intercable.net</a></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(58 274) 252 4164</td>
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<tr>
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Please note: Non-funded participants wishing to book their rooms in a different hotel than the one chosen by the Secretariat (La Terraza Hotel) are asked to inform the national organizers of the event.
Annex II

Visas

Specifications for visa requirements for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

List of Countries and Governments whose citizens do not require an entry visa for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

Andorra  Dominica  Luxemburg  Slovak Republic
Antigua & Barbuda  Estonia  Malaysia  Slovenia
Argentina  Finland  Malta  South Africa
Australia  France  Mexico  South Korea
Austria  Germany  Netherlands Antilles  Spain
Barbados  Great Britain  New Zealand  Sweden
Belgium  Greece  Norway  Switzerland
Belize  Grenada  Panama  Taiwan
Brazil  Guatemala  Paraguay  The Netherlands
Bulgaria  Hong Kong  Poland  Trinidad and Tobago
Canada  Hungary  Portugal  Turkey
Chile  Iceland  Romania  United States of America
Costa Rica  Ireland  Saint Kitts & Nevis  Uruguay
Croatia  Italy  Saint Lucia  United States of America
Cyprus  Jamaica  Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Czech Republic  Latvia  San Marino
Denmark  Liechtenstein

The citizens of all other countries need an entry visa for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

For more information regarding visas please visit (information in Spanish):
http://www.embavenz-suiza.com/tramites_12_1.html

The list of visa requirements and the addresses of local Consulates will be provided to citizens of countries in need of visas after receiving the registration form.

Please note:
To obtain a visa at your nearest Consulate General of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, we will provide you with a personal letter of invitation that you will use when making your visa application. For this reason, it is imperative that you return the registration form to us as soon as possible.