

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 10th 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:

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/ Head of International Management
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/ Office of International Cooperation and Management
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/ Ministry of the People's Authority for the Environment

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For the Ramsar Convention Secretariat:

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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.

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 Carnevali” 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

Name	Single	Double
Hotel La Terraza ★★★	US\$ 83.00	US\$ 91.00
Phone number: (58 274) 244 1133 / 1153 / 1224 / 2380 Fax: (58 274) 244 8237 E-mail: hterraza@movistar.net.ve Webpage: www.hotellaterraza.com Address: Avenida Principal Los Chorros de Milla		
La Pedregosa Hotel ★★★★★	US\$ 96,00	US\$ 138
Phone number: (58 274) 266 3181 / 266 4295 / 2663457 E-mail: reservaciones@hotellapedregosa.com Address: Av. Los Próceres, Zona Industrial Los Andes ramal norte La Pedregosa		
Park Hotel ★★★★★	US\$ 82	US\$ 92
Phone number: (58 274) 263 4866 Webpage: http://www.parkhotel.com.ve Address: Calle 37 frente al parque Glorias Patrias		
El Tisure Hotel ★★★	US\$ 37	US\$ 61
Phone number: (58 274) 252 6061 Webpage: http://www.tisure.com E-mail: info@tisure.com Address: Avenida 4 entre calles 17 y 18		
Mistafí Hotel ★★★	US\$ 82	US\$ 82
Phone number: (58 274) 251 0729 E-mail: hotelmistafi@hotmail.com Address: Avenida 3 con calle 15		
Nevada Palace Hotel ★★★	- - -	US\$ 56
Phone number: (58 274) 252 8203 / 252 9931 / 252 9339 Address: Calle 24 entre Avenidas 5 y 6		
Prado Río Hotel ★★★	US\$ 49	US\$ 119
Phone number: (58 274) 252 0633 / 252 0704 / 252 0775 E-mail: pradorio258@intercable.net Address: Avenida 1 Sector Milla frente MINFRA Webpage: http://www.hotelpradorio.com.ve		
Posada Casa Sol	US\$ 42	US\$ 50
Phone number: (58 274) 252 4164 E-mail: info@posadacasasol.com Address: Avenida 1 Sector Milla frente MINFRA Webpage: http://www.posadacasasol.com		

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	Hungry	Portugal	Turkey
Chile	Iceland	Romania	United States of
Costa Rica	Ireland	Saint Kitts & Nevis	America
Croatia	Italy	Saint Lucia	Uruguay
Cyprus	Jamaica	Saint Vincent and the	
Czech Republic	Latvia	Grenadines	
Denmark	Liechtenstein	San Marino	

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.embavenez-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.