

Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)
5th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties
Kushiro, Japan
9-16 June 1993

Resolution 5.1: The Kushiro Statement and the framework for the implementation of the Convention

CONVINCED of the need for the Convention to respond positively to global environmental challenges and to the decisions of other international fora, in particular the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in June 1992;

CONSIDERING that, in relation to the implementation in the immediate future of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Ramsar Convention can and should play the leading role in the conservation of wetland biodiversity and that projects related to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in wetlands should benefit from the new sources of finance envisaged for the Convention on Biological Diversity;

NOTING further that the Resolution on International Cooperation attached to the final Act of the Convention on Biological Diversity and Articles 23(4) and 24(1) of the said Convention call for full cooperation between the managing bodies of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the secretariats or executive bodies of major national and international environmental conventions, agreements and organizations dealing with matters covered by that Convention;

RECOGNIZING the value of the 'Framework for the Implementation of the Ramsar Convention', adopted by the Fourth Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention held at Montreux, Switzerland in 1990, as a basis from which a general triennial programme of priority activities for the Contracting Parties, the Standing Committee, and the Bureau derives;

RECOGNIZING that the implementation of the Convention is a partnership between the Contracting Parties, the Standing Committee, and the Bureau;

RECALLING the function of the Standing Committee to supervise the conduct of the Bureau's programmes, which should be based upon a permanent framework of action to implement the Convention;

EMPHASIZING the importance of linking the triennial programme of activities of the Bureau to the triennial budget;

NOTING the need to update the Framework in the light of decisions of the Conference of the Contracting Parties;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

1. **ADOPTS** the Kushiro Statement attached as Annex 1 as the basis for the Contracting Parties' priorities in the 1994-1996 triennium;

2. TAKES NOTE of the “Framework for the Implementation of the Ramsar Convention” attached as Annex 2 as the basis for determining Convention activities;
3. ADOPTS the “Programme Overview for the Bureau 1994-1996” attached as Annex 3;
4. DIRECTS the Bureau to transmit to the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development a copy of the Kushiro Statement and appropriate information on the Ramsar Convention; and
5. DIRECTS the Bureau to prepare for each year of the 1994-1996 triennium, for adoption by the Standing Committee, a detailed annual work plan, based upon the approved general programme for the triennium.

Annex 1: The Kushiro Statement

Annex 2: Framework for the Implementation of the Ramsar Convention

Annex 3: Programme Overview for the Bureau 1994-1996

Annex 1

THE KUSHIRO STATEMENT

The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands was the first modern global treaty on conservation and wise use of natural resources and habitats. Since its adoption in Ramsar, Iran, in 1971, it has provided the framework for intergovernmental co-operation on wetlands.

Wetlands are important for the biological diversity they support - the characteristic flora and fauna found in the rich and varied habitats covered by Ramsar's definition of wetlands: 'areas of marsh, fen, peatland or water, whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, with water that is static or flowing, fresh, brackish, or salt, including areas of marine water the depth of which at low tide does not exceed six metres'. From the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Agenda 21 (Chapter 18.39) suggests that all States could set participation in Ramsar as a target. It will be natural for the Ramsar Convention to work closely with the Convention on Biological Diversity and to continue to play the leading role in conservation of wetland biodiversity.

Yet Ramsar has recognized from its earliest days that the importance of wetlands goes beyond the need for conservation of specific sites for their intrinsic value and diversity. The sustainability of wetlands is crucial to human life. Ramsar's 'Guidelines for the Implementation of the Wise Use Concept' show the benefits and values of wetlands for 'sediment and erosion control; flood control; maintenance of water quality and abatement of pollution; maintenance of surface and underground water supply; support for fisheries, grazing, and agriculture; outdoor recreation and education for human society; and contribution to climatic stability'.

Despite the successes achieved by Ramsar since 1971 - notably in raising consciousness of the importance of wetlands - loss, destruction, degradation, and misuse of wetlands continue in many areas of the world. The Dublin Statement, made by the 1992 International Conference on Water and the Environment (which in Section 4.15 calls on Ramsar Contracting Parties to support its recommendations), states that the fulfilment of Ramsar's objectives 'can only be brought about through political commitment and involvement from the highest levels of government to the smallest communities. Commitment will need to be backed by substantial and immediate investments, public awareness campaigns, legislative and institutional changes, technology development, and capacity building programmes'.

In response to Agenda 21 and to the challenge of promoting conservation of biological diversity and the wise use of wetlands, and in the interests of the immediate application of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Ramsar Convention will in the coming triennium reinforce these fundamental principles in pursuit of global environmental solutions.

In the next triennium the Contracting Parties will aim to meet their commitments under the Convention through the following actions:

1. Conservation and management of wetlands of international importance

- establish coherent national networks of Ramsar sites;
- monitor the status of these sites and adopt measures to maintain their ecological character;
- establish and apply methodologies to manage these sites, incorporating consideration of their catchments; and

- restore degraded wetlands and compensate for lost wetlands.
2. **Formulation and implementation of planning so as to promote the conservation and wise use of wetlands**
- develop national and regional wetland policies, as provided in the Ramsar 'Guidelines for the Implementation of the Wise Use Concept' adopted at Montreux;
 - manage wetlands in accordance with wise use principles;
 - take account of wetland functions and values in developing and applying other national policies.
3. **Promotion of international cooperation through development assistance and management of shared wetland ecosystems, water resources, and species**
- promote cooperation with other global and regional conventions and organizations, inter alia by the active cooperation of the Bureau of the Ramsar Convention with the Interim Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, with a view to enabling this secretariat to fulfil its tasks;
 - review the impact of current development assistance on wetlands in order that it contributes to their conservation and wise use;
 - generate support from bilateral and multilateral funding agencies;
 - strengthen regional coordination on wetland issues of common concern; and
 - establish international networks of wetlands with significant ecological or hydrological links, which require coherent management, and develop joint management programmes for shared wetlands.
4. **Increasing awareness of the Convention and promotion of its aims**
- promote understanding of wetland functions and values;
 - increase opportunities for the training of appropriate staff in disciplines essential for wetland conservation; and
 - prepare educational and information materials to publicize the Convention at regional, national and local levels.

Annex 2

FRAMEWORK FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RAMSAR CONVENTION

SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION

What is the Convention?

The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar, 1971) is an intergovernmental agreement which provides for the conservation and wise use of wetlands within the territory of each Contracting Party. It is the principal instrument for intergovernmental co-operation on global conservation and the wise use of wetlands. It provides a mechanism by which Parties which share a wetland resource can consult on its conservation and so organize their planning and development processes that use of the wetland by either Party will not have an adverse effect on its ecological character or be detrimental to the human inhabitants, fauna, or flora on either side of the territorial boundary. Training of personnel in wetland management and conservation is one of its prime objectives.

Elements of the Convention

The Convention has three distinct elements. These are:

(a) Conference of the Contracting Parties

Meetings of the governmental representatives take place every three years and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) accredited by the Contracting Parties may participate as non-voting observers. The Conference is the policy-making organ of the Convention, which enables the Contracting Parties to hold wide-ranging discussions of grass-roots implementation of the Convention and to adopt decisions, resolutions, or recommendations to improve the way in which the Convention works. The Conference approves the Convention's budgetary arrangements for the coming triennial programme of activities.

(b) Standing Committee

This Committee consists of representatives of the Contracting Parties from each of the Ramsar regions, plus the host countries of the present and next meetings of the Conference. It is responsible for the follow-up and application of the Conference's decisions between Conferences and for supervision of the activities of the Ramsar Bureau.

(c) Bureau

This is the permanent secretariat for the Convention, which carries out the day-to-day coordination of the Convention's activities.

It is staffed by a small team of professionals whose operations are designed to have a catalytic effect either by working through consultants, rather than being directly responsible for a large programme of projects, or by influencing the activities of other partner organizations.

Working with Other Organizations

Wherever possible the Ramsar Convention works with other international, intergovernmental, and nongovernmental organizations to achieve its objectives. Two of the founding organizations, which provided the Bureau facilities for many years and still play a very large part in providing the administrative and scientific back-up to the Convention, are IUCN - the World Conservation Union and IWRB (International Waterfowl and Wetlands Research Bureau). Programme cooperation is pursued with many other organizations, as well as with the secretariats of other conventions dealing with conservation and wise use of natural resources, to achieve a strategic alliance for wetland conservation.

Who are the Members of the Convention?

All members of the United Nations or its specialized agencies may join the Convention, but present membership is unevenly scattered throughout the Ramsar regions. One of the main emphases of Convention activities is to recruit membership from countries of Africa, Asia, the Neotropics (including South and Central America, and the Caribbean), and Oceania, and to complete the network of members in Europe.

What does the Convention do for its Members?

As the major international legal instrument for intergovernmental cooperation in the field of conservation and wise use of wetlands, the Convention provides a unique framework and a mechanism for preventing loss of wetland resources. It provides opportunities for international cooperation through the Ramsar Bureau and the Convention's Wetland Conservation Fund. Mechanisms for encouraging bilateral cooperation, both North-South and South-South cooperation, are being developed.

By accepting the commitments of the Convention, a Contracting Party indicates its wish to conserve its wetlands and to make wise use of them. The experience of existing members has been drawn together to produce a set of criteria by which wetlands of international importance can be identified for designation for the 'List of wetlands of international importance'. The Convention has also adopted guidelines for the wise use of wetlands and their resources.

The Convention is developing standardized international methods of describing and classifying wetlands and of approaching their conservation and management. The accumulated experience of members may be drawn upon to help solve the intractable problems which arise from the multiple use of wetlands by humans, as well as animals, birds, fish, and plants. Where this involves a wetland serving more than one country, there is an obligation to consult on any proposal which may change the ecological character of the wetland, and in cases of difficulty, the Convention has mechanisms - such as the Monitoring Procedure and the Montreux Record - which may help to resolve these issues. Training of personnel and exchange of information are also areas where the Convention assists in finding sources of expertise or funds. This means that Ramsar can provide direct concrete advantages for Contracting Parties by helping them to conserve biodiversity in wetlands and to plan the wise use of their wetland resources.

The Ramsar Wetland Conservation Fund was established at the Montreux Conference in 1990 to provide developing countries with financial support in acceding to the Convention, or in executing their commitments, in particular in the fields of designation and management of listed sites, and the wise use of wetlands. In relation to Central and Eastern European countries with economies in transition and undergoing a privatization process, it is recognized that there is a need for financial support for wetland projects, either through bilateral arrangements, multilateral agencies or other mechanisms.

By setting international standards for wetland conservation and providing an international forum for discussion of long-term global issues, such as the effects of climatic change, the Ramsar Convention permits a continuous flow of information on wetland matters between Contracting Parties.

SECTION 2. COMMITMENTS BY CONTRACTING PARTIES

The commitments of the Contracting Parties, as derived from the text of the Convention and from decisions, resolutions and recommendations of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, are set out below:

(a) Conservation of wetlands

- I To designate wetlands for the List of Wetlands of International Importance (Article 2.1); to formulate and implement planning so as to promote conservation of listed sites (Article 3.1); to advise the Bureau of any change in their ecological character (Article 3.2); to compensate for any loss of wetland resources if a listed wetland is deleted or restricted (Article 4.2); to use Ramsar criteria for identifying wetlands of international importance (Recommendations Cagliari 1.4, Groningen 2.3, Regina 3.1, and Montreux 4.2 and Resolutions Kushiro 5.3 and 5.9); to use the Ramsar datasheet and classification system for describing listed sites (Recommendation Montreux 4.7 and Resolution Kushiro 5.3); to consider appropriate management measures after designation (Recommendation Montreux 4.2, Annex II and Resolution Kushiro 5.7); and where appropriate, to use the Montreux Record and Monitoring Procedure (Montreux Recommendations 4.7 and 4.8 and Resolution Kushiro 5.4);
- II to formulate and implement planning so as to promote the wise use of wetlands (Article 3.1); to adopt and apply the Guidelines for Implementation of the Wise Use Concept, notably as regards elaboration and implementation of national wetland policies (Recommendation Montreux 4.10, Annex), and the Additional Guidance on Wise Use (Resolution Kushiro 5.6); to make environmental and impact assessments before transformations of wetlands (Recommendations Cagliari 1.6, Groningen 2.3, Regina 3.1, and Montreux 4.10; Resolution Kushiro 5.6);
- III to establish nature reserves on wetlands and provide adequately for their wardening (Article 4.1); to increase waterfowl populations through management of appropriate wetlands (Article 4.4); and to make national wetland inventories (Recommendations Cagliari 1.5, Groningen 2.3, Regina 3.1, Montreux 4.6, and 4.10) which will identify major sites for wetland biodiversity;
- IV to train personnel competent in wetland research, management, and wardening (Article 4.5).

(b) Promotion of international cooperation in wetland conservation

- V To promote conservation of wetlands by combining far-sighted national policies with co-ordinated international action (Preamble to the Convention text); and to consult with other Contracting Parties about implementing obligations arising from the Convention, especially about shared wetlands and water systems and shared species (Article 5);

VI to promote wetland conservation concerns with development aid agencies (Recommendations Cagliari 1.6, Groningen 2.3, Regina 3.4 and 3.5, and Montreux 4.13);

VII to establish wetland restoration projects (Montreux Recommendation 4.1).

(c) **Fostering communications about wetland conservation**

VIII To encourage research and exchange of data (Article 4.3);

IX to produce national reports for Conferences of the Parties (Recommendations Groningen 2.1, Montreux 4.3);

X to increase the number of Contracting Parties (Recommendations Cagliari 1.1, Groningen 2.3, and Regina 3.6, 3.7, and 3.10).

(d) **Supporting the work of the Convention**

XI To convene and attend Conferences of the Parties (Article 6.1);

XII to adopt the Paris Protocol (Recommendations Cagliari 1.7 and Groningen 2.2) and Regina amendments (Recommendation Cagliari 1.8 and Regina Resolution);

XIII to make financial contributions to the Convention budget (Recommendations Cagliari 1.10 and Groningen 2.4, Resolutions Regina and Montreux) and to the Wetland Conservation Fund (Resolution Montreux 4.3).

SECTION 3. STANDING COMMITTEE

The Standing Committee was established by the Regina Meeting of the Conference following recommendations from the Task Force established at the Groningen Meeting. Its tasks, as set out in the Regina Resolution on the establishment of a Standing Committee and confirmed in the corresponding Montreux Resolution, are:

- to carry out interim activity between Meetings of the Conference on matters previously approved by the Conference;
- to make recommendations for consideration at the next Conference;
- to supervise implementation of policy by the Bureau, execution of the Bureau's budget, and conduct of the Bureau's programmes and personnel matters;
- to review and decide upon applications for allocations from the Wetland Conservation Fund;
- to guide and advise the Bureau;
- to promote regional cooperation for the conservation of wetlands;
- to act as the Conference Steering Committee;
- to report on its activities to the Conference; and
- to perform any other functions entrusted to it.

The Standing Committee is made up of not more than nine Contracting Parties, nominated by the Conference. Seven represent regions, namely Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Neotropics (including Central America and the Caribbean region), Northern America, Oceania, and Western Europe; the other two are the host countries of the present and next Meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

The Contracting Parties which host the Bureau are invited to participate as observers. Any other Contracting Party may, at its request, participate as an observer.

The Director General of IUCN and the Director of IWRB (or their representatives) are invited to participate in an advisory capacity at meetings of the Standing Committee. Other observers may be invited to participate in all or part of the meeting.

The Standing Committee should at a minimum meet on an annual basis, normally at the seat of the Convention Bureau.

SECTION 4. BUREAU

Article 8.1 provides that IUCN 'shall perform the continuing bureau duties under this Convention until such time as another organization or government

is appointed by a majority of two-thirds of all Contracting Parties'. The Regina Resolution on secretariat matters, also acknowledging the services provided by IWRB, established a permanent Bureau. The functions of the Bureau, as articulated in Article 8, the Regina Resolution, and the Montreux Resolution on secretariat matters are as follows:

- to assist in convening and organizing Conferences;
- to maintain the List and be informed of any changes to the List;
- to be informed by Parties of any changes in the ecological character of listed sites;
- to make known the decisions, resolutions, and recommendations of the Conference;
- and
- to provide administrative, scientific, and technical support.

Several other resolutions and recommendations of the Conference of the Contracting Parties have assigned numerous specific duties for the Bureau in promoting the implementation of the Convention by the Contracting Parties.

The Conference of the Contracting Parties establishes a triennial budget linked to the programmes of the Bureau. The Standing Committee guides and advises the Bureau on the execution of its programmes and its formulation of three annual work plans between Conferences.

SECTION 5. FRAMEWORK FOR BUREAU ACTIVITIES

A detailed outline of the permanent work of the Bureau follows. Each activity is marked with asterisks according to whether it is considered by the Conference of the Contracting Parties to be 'essential' (three asterisks), of 'high priority' (two asterisks), of 'medium' priority (one asterisk), or 'low' priority (no asterisk).

OBJECTIVE 1: TO ASSIST CONTRACTING PARTIES TO MEET THEIR OBLIGATIONS TO CONSERVE WETLANDS

Activities

I List of Wetlands of International Importance:

*** (a) maintaining the List and the relevant information base, including the Montreux Record;

- * (b) promotion of increased numbers of sites on the List;
- *** (c) operation of the Monitoring Procedure, both to monitor change in ecological character of listed sites and to provide Contracting Parties with assistance (notably through development aid) when needs are identified; and
- *** (d) development of concepts and promotion of measures for the conservation and management of listed sites.

II Wise use of wetlands:

- *** (a) assisting in the implementation of the wise use concept, in line with the principles, recommendations, guidelines and additional guidance of the Convention, in particular as regards the formulation and implementation of national wetland policies, incorporating: improved institutional and organizational arrangements; review of legislation and existing policies; improved knowledge and awareness of wetland values; review of the status of all wetlands in a national context; and action at particular wetlands.

III Establishment of nature reserves:

- *** (a) assisting in the formulation of the concept of nature reserves for wetlands and promoting the establishment of such reserves;
- * (b) promoting the provision of adequate wardening and management measures at wetland reserves, including action to increase waterfowl populations (not only in reserves, but also at all appropriate wetlands); and
- * (c) promoting the establishment of national wetland inventories.

IV Training of land-use planners, conservation personnel, wetland managers, and staff:

- ** (a) promotion of training through institutions and bodies which organize training courses, through fund-raising, and through the Wetland Conservation Fund;
- * (b) participation in training courses and provision of documents and information; and
- (c) encouraging the incorporation of training as an integral part of projects concerning wetlands.

OBJECTIVE 2: TO PROMOTE INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN WETLAND CONSERVATION

Activities

I Focal point:

- *** (a) provision of a focal point for contacts between Contracting Parties on international wetland conservation;
- ** (b) promotion of cooperation among Contracting Parties concerning shared wetlands, species dependent upon wetlands, and flyway networks; and

(c) support for further training of selected individuals in countries other than their own.

II Development assistance:

*** (a) initiation, in collaboration with other conservation organizations, of contacts with multilateral and bilateral development aid agencies in order to sensitize them to the need for wetland conservation;

** (b) promotion of an enhanced contribution from international development assistance for the environmentally sound management of wetlands by assisting in the elaboration and realization of requests (for example on wetland management or restoration, educational facilities, training, twinning opportunities, or development aid); and

** (c) promotion of the Convention's Wetland Conservation Fund.

III International coordination:

*** (a) liaison with international convention secretariats and other governmental and non-governmental bodies active in wetland conservation; and

* (b) organization, between meetings of the Conference of the Parties, of regional meetings of Contracting Parties and their experts.

OBJECTIVE 3: TO FOSTER COMMUNICATION ABOUT WETLAND CONSERVATION

Activities

I Promotion of the Convention:

** (a) production of Convention documents (notably the Ramsar List, Montreux Record, brochure, Newsletter, and Annual Report), products (especially certificates and plaques), and publicity materials (particularly slide shows, films, and pins);

* (b) preparation and delivery of lectures and articles; and

(c) contributions to literature of other wetland organizations.

II Increasing the number of Contracting Parties:

*** (a) efforts, with the guidance of the Standing Committee, to gain more Contracting Parties, notably in Africa, Asia, the Neotropics, and Oceania as well as among the States of Europe which are not yet Parties, initially using opportunities (notably visits) arising from the Bureau's other work; and

(b) encouragement of efforts to recruit more Contracting Parties made by other wetland organizations (both governmental and non-governmental) which have specific regional programmes or operations in non-Party States.

III Dissemination of information about wetland conservation:

- ** (a) dissemination of documentation on wetland conservation (including research results) through Convention publications and by publicizing documents provided by Parties and other bodies; and
- (b) exchange of information with other convention secretariats and bodies involved in wetland conservation.

OBJECTIVE 4: TO ADMINISTER THE CONVENTION

Activities

I Administration:

- *** (a) communications with Contracting Parties, via Bureau notifications, and by visits to Contracting Parties;
- *** (b) servicing the work of the Standing Committee;
- *** (c) maintaining contacts with governments and organizations which host the Bureau and with UNESCO (Depositary);
- *** (d) contacts with international convention secretariats and organizations involved in wetland conservation to coordinate programmes and to harmonize the timing of and participation in meetings; and
- *** (e) management of Convention funds, including those of the Wetland Conservation Fund.

II Conference of the Contracting Parties:

- *** (a) liaison with the host country and development of logistic arrangements;
- *** (b) development, with the guidance of the Standing Committee, of programme and structure, and preparation of documents;
- *** (c) search for financial support;
- *** (d) provision of secretariat services; and
- *** (e) preparation of Proceedings.

Annex 3

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW FOR THE BUREAU 1994-1996

Introduction

The Kushiro Statement emphasizes the need for the Convention to focus on a limited number of fundamental principles dictated by world-wide environmental challenges. This overview aims to translate these principles into precise actions which the Bureau can implement on behalf of the Contracting Parties in the coming triennium.

The 'Communications Plan' approved by the Standing Committee at its Tenth Meeting in November 1991 sets out the Convention's messages and the communication methods to be used by the Bureau to convey these messages effectively to carefully targeted audiences.

The efficient implementation of the Bureau's programme will be guided by the following operational objectives:

- (a) To make the best use of the Bureau's resources: The Bureau will concentrate its efforts in areas where it can offer the best services and where its abilities are recognized. It will thus give priority to intensifying contacts with the Contracting Parties and will focus upon technical assistance for their activities, in particular by seeking to further application of the Monitoring Procedure and application of the wise use concept.
- (b) To utilize effectively the recognized strengths of its partners: The Bureau will aim to strengthen partnership activities and will develop written agreements with collaborating organizations.
- (c) To strengthen the international effort for wetland conservation: As instructed by the Conference of the Contracting Parties and with the guidance of the Standing Committee, the Bureau will continue to seek funds to support technical projects, in particular under the Wetland Conservation Fund, prepared in close cooperation with the Party or Parties concerned and appropriate partner organizations. The Bureau will seek to extend its own technical competence and to develop the Convention's regional activities by strengthening links with regional representatives, working with partner organizations where appropriate.

Programme of the Bureau 1994-1996

The Bureau's 1994-1996 programme of activities, as reviewed and approved by the Standing Committee, is set out below. It is based upon the priority areas identified in the Kushiro Statement and the 'Framework for Bureau Activities.'

The Standing Committee has identified two categories of activities:

- 'essential activities' without which the Convention would face serious difficulties in functioning;
- 'desirable activities' which include all other work specifically requested by the Conference of the Contracting Parties.

The activities in the 'desirable' category are many and wide-ranging and in order to establish priorities for undertaking them, the Standing Committee has subdivided the category into three priority groups: high, medium, and low. This subdivision aims to identify the most pressing needs for the 1994-1996 triennium.

In developing the programme, the Standing Committee has determined that sufficient financial and other resources should be provided to allow, as a minimum, the Bureau to undertake all of the 'essential' and certain 'highly desirable' activities, and has prepared the budget for the 1994-1996 triennium accordingly. Contracting Parties are encouraged to make additional voluntary contributions to enable the remaining items of the 'highly desirable' category to be undertaken.

Any change in the order of priorities of these activities has budgetary implications; conversely, changes to the proposed budget will affect the priorities outlined below. Thus, granting a higher priority to any activity will lead to an increase in the budget, while any reduction of the budget will lead to lower priority for some of the activities listed below.

A. ESSENTIAL ACTIVITIES

Note: References are to items in the full 'Framework for Bureau Activities' document.

1.I (a) Maintaining the List

The Ramsar Bureau will work to maintain the formal 'List of wetlands of international importance', using the datasheets and wetland classification system approved by the Contracting Parties, and to enter data on Ramsar sites on to the Ramsar database, housed at IWRB headquarters in Slimbridge, UK, which will be used in the various conservation activities of the Bureau. The Bureau will also maintain the Montreux Record.

1.I (c) Operating the Monitoring Procedure

The Monitoring Procedure adopted by the Standing Committee in 1988 has proved to be an effective mechanism for assisting Contracting Parties in the conservation of listed sites. The Bureau will work with seven to ten countries each year in identifying specific requirements for Ramsar sites in particular need of external support or assistance. Cooperation will also be sought with the relevant non-governmental organizations such as IUCN, IWRB, and WWF for this work.

1.I (d) Development of concepts and promotion of measures for the conservation and management of listed sites

The Bureau, in cooperation with partner organizations such as IUCN and IWRB, will develop the guidelines approved by the Conference of the Parties for conservation and management of listed sites, and will promote their application, in cooperation with Contracting Parties and with appropriate technical bodies, in particular in the context of the Monitoring Procedure.

1.II (a) Assisting in implementation of the wise use concept

The Bureau will pursue the recommendations of the Conference of the Contracting Parties on wise use by working with Contracting Parties and partner organizations to apply the concept of wise use. The aim will be to promote sustainable activities for wetland conservation, in particular by encouraging the development of national wetland policies or specific wise use activities through

initiatives such as support of projects exemplifying wise use, scientific/management studies, and legal/policy studies on legislative and institutional requirements.

1.III (a) Promoting the establishment of wetland nature reserves

The Bureau will work with Contracting Parties and with appropriate technical bodies in promoting the establishment of wetland nature reserves on the basis of the concepts formulated by the Conference of the Contracting Parties.

2.I (a) Providing a focal point for communication

One of the chief activities for the Bureau will be to serve as the focal point for the Contracting Parties and non-Party States for communication about wetland conservation. Previous experience suggests that the Bureau will continually receive requests for information on subjects such as the status of listed wetlands, methodologies, publicity materials, and documentation.

2.II (a) Sensitizing development agencies

The Bureau will continue its contacts with existing multilateral development agencies such as the World Bank, EEC, OECD, and regional development banks and will develop contacts with any new agencies in order to bring them to take full account of wetland conservation requirements in their lending policies. Similar contacts will be maintained with selected development agencies in order to persuade them to take account of wetland conservation obligations accepted under the Ramsar Convention by providing bilateral assistance for wetland conservation in developing countries. Where appropriate the Bureau will make use of the opportunities offered by the Wetland Conservation Fund to promote this end.

2.III (a) Liaison with other convention secretariats/organizations

The Bureau will work in close cooperation with convention secretariats and partner organizations. This will include at least annual meetings of all global conservation convention secretariats; bilateral consultations with individual secretariats (for example Biological Diversity, Migratory Species, CITES, World Heritage, Global Change, and Bern); cooperative activities with some intergovernmental bodies (for example UNESCO, UNEP, FAO, EEC, OECD and the Council of Europe); and regular programme consultations with the Convention's principal partner organizations (IUCN, IWRB, WWF and BirdLife International - formerly ICBP).

3.II (a) Promoting new Ramsar Parties

In line with the guidance of the Standing Committee, the Bureau will devote considerable attention to promoting the accession of additional States, especially countries of the African, Asian, Neotropical, and Oceanian regions, and with states of Europe that are not yet Parties.

4.I (a)

to

4.I (e) Administering the Convention

The major task of the Bureau is the administration of the Convention. This work entails formal communications and visits to Contracting Parties, servicing the work of the Standing Committee, maintaining contacts with host governments and the Depositary, and managing Convention funds, in particular projects approved under the Wetland Conservation Fund.

4.II (a)

to

4.II (e) Convening and organizing the Conference of the Parties

The Bureau has considerable responsibility for the preparation and servicing of the triennial Conference of the Contracting Parties. This work entails liaison with the host country and development of logistic arrangements, development of the programme and preparation of documents, organization of finances, servicing the meeting, and production of proceedings.

B. DESIRABLE ACTIVITIES

Note: As indicated above the proposed triennial budget has been based upon the Bureau having the capacity to undertake 'Essential' and some 'High Priority' activities.

If the items listed below are to be carried out in full, then extra funding will be required. If the full amount of extra funding should not be available, Bureau staff will endeavour to cover these activities, as far as possible, in the course of other work.

B1) HIGH PRIORITY:

1.IV (a) Promoting training

The Bureau will work in close cooperation with Contracting Parties and partner organizations (such as BirdLife International - formerly ICBP, IUCN and its regional offices, IWRB, Wetlands for the Americas and the Asian Wetland Bureau) to promote the training of wetland managers.

2.I (b) Promoting cooperation on shared wetlands and species

The Bureau will promote cooperation among Contracting Parties which share a transborder wetland complex or an international river course. It will promote the conservation of wetland species, particularly waterfowl, which depend on wetlands in different countries, and will support the establishment of international flyway networks.

2.II (b) Assisting in submitting requests to development agencies

As a specific application of its work to sensitize development agencies, the Bureau will facilitate the elaboration of appropriate wetland conservation projects to be carried out in developing countries with financial support from multilateral and bilateral agencies, where appropriate with the use of the Wetland Conservation Fund.

The Bureau will assist in submitting such applications to appropriate agencies and may, in certain cases, assist in the implementation.

2.II (c) Promotion of the Convention's Wetland Conservation Fund

The Bureau will seek contributions to the Fund from Contracting Parties, appropriate international sources, and non-governmental organizations. It will promote the Fund among countries eligible to receive financial support from the Fund and, in collaboration with partner organizations, will help Contracting Parties to ensure that projects are of a high technical standard and are well executed.

3.I (a) Producing Ramsar documentation

The Bureau will produce the Ramsar List and Montreux Record, other regular Convention documents including the Ramsar Newsletter and Annual Report, and occasional publications such as Convention brochures, features, and other promotional materials. As appropriate it will issue press releases on news relating to the Convention.

3.III (a) Disseminating information and research via Convention publications

The Bureau receives extensive documentation from Contracting Parties and other sources on important developments in wetland conservation and new research findings. Such documentation will be disseminated as widely as possible through Notifications to Parties, the Newsletter, or the Proceedings of the Meetings of the Conference of the Parties or of regional meetings.

B2) MEDIUM PRIORITY:

1.I (b) Promoting the designation of more sites on the Ramsar List

The Bureau will, as appropriate, assist Contracting Parties in identifying wetlands for the List (through preliminary consultations with Parties as decided at Kushiro or application of the Ramsar criteria), in extending the network of listed sites (through reference to national scientific inventories of potential Ramsar sites and regional inventories), and in carrying out the formalities for new designations.

1.III (b) Promoting wardening and management measures at reserves

As an extension of its work in assisting in the establishment of wetland reserves, the Bureau will help Contracting Parties to ensure such reserves have adequate wardening and management arrangements. This will include help with training - see 1.IV (a) - and management measures - see 1.I (d) - as well as advice on action to increase waterfowl populations.

1.III (c) Promoting the establishment of wetland inventories

By provision of technical support and by seeking appropriate funding, the Bureau will encourage Contracting Parties to carry out national wetland inventories in execution of Recommendation 4.6, in particular in the case of developing countries which wish to acquire more detailed data than those available in regional inventories.

1.IV (b) Taking part in training projects

As well as cooperating in the planning and organizing of training courses, Bureau staff will, as far as possible, participate in courses, especially in developing countries, by delivering lectures, directing fieldwork, and providing documentation.

2.III (b) Convening and organizing regional meetings

The Bureau will, when the opportunity arises, support regional representatives on the Standing Committee in the organization of regional meetings where Contracting Parties can exchange experiences on the application of the Convention and where countries which are not yet Contracting Parties can learn about the benefits of membership.

3.I (b) Preparing lectures

As part of their work to promote the Convention, Bureau staff will prepare and deliver lectures to appropriate audiences, using slides, videos, and other audio-visual techniques. Such lectures will often focus on a specific Contracting Party, illustrating its implementation of the Convention against an international background. Where appropriate such lectures may be published.

B3) LOW PRIORITY:

1.IV (c) Promoting training elements in projects

In addition to promoting and occasionally taking part in training courses, the Bureau will promote the concept that training should be an integral element in any wetland project. This would apply both to projects developed by the Bureau and to wetland projects developed by others.

2.I (c) Promoting support for overseas training

Organization of training courses - see 1.IV (a) and 1.IV (b) - will identify individuals who would benefit from further, possibly long-term instruction in another country in a practical attachment or an academic course. The Bureau will use its contacts with other Contracting Parties to find suitable training opportunities for such individuals.

3.I (c) Contributing to external publications

As part of their promotional work, Bureau staff will prepare articles on the Ramsar Convention for publication in conservation journals published by other wetland organizations.

3.II (b) Helping other organizations to recruit new Contracting Parties

Many wetland organizations have programmes concentrating on specific countries or regions. Through their local contacts, they may have increased opportunities to promote the Convention and recruit new Parties. The Bureau will provide background information and documentation to such organizations.

3.III (b) Exchanging information with other secretariats and organizations

As part of its liaison work - see 2.III (a) - the Bureau will ensure there is a full exchange of documentation with other conservation secretariats and wetland organizations.