



9th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

“Wetlands and water: supporting life, sustaining livelihoods”

Kampala, Uganda, 8-15 November 2005

Resolution IX.19

The importance of regional wetland symposia in effectively implementing the Ramsar Convention

1. TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the need for the establishment of appropriate regional frameworks for fostering international cooperation amongst Contracting Parties and other organizations and stakeholders, in accordance with the *Guidelines for international cooperation under the Ramsar Convention* (Resolution VII.19);
2. RECOGNIZING the critical role of regional cooperation for promoting the aims and objectives of the Convention, as reiterated by the *Regional initiatives for the further implementation of the Convention* (Resolution VIII.30) and the establishment of regional initiatives in the framework of the Convention (Resolution IX.7);
3. CONSIDERING that such regional cooperation can be achieved through closer partnership between and among governmental and non-governmental sectors and scientific, technical and policy-making sectors in different regions of the world;
4. RECOGNIZING that the participation of local communities and indigenous peoples is essential for the conservation and wise use of wetlands, as embodied in the *Guidelines for establishing and strengthening local communities' and indigenous people's participation in the management of wetlands* (Resolution VII.8) and Resolution VIII.36;
5. ALSO RECOGNIZING that the Asian Wetland Symposia (AWS) held in 1992 (Japan), 2001 (Malaysia), and 2005 (India) and organized through the leadership of the Ramsar Center Japan (RCJ), a non-governmental organization (NGO) based in Japan, have contributed substantively to enhancing effective regional cooperation and networking in Asia;
6. UNDERSTANDING that these Symposia provide a single platform for discussions among various sectors including, *inter alia*, national and local governments, NGOs, scientific experts, the private sector, and local and indigenous peoples engaged in wetland management, and that their recommendations embodied in the Recommendation of the Asian Wetland Symposium (1992), the Penang Statement (2001) and the Chilika Statement (2005) have been reported to Ramsar COP5, COP8 and COP9 respectively;
7. MINDFUL that the Asian Wetland Symposia, and a series of local workshops organized by the Ramsar Centre Japan, have been successful in the Asian region in promoting public awareness of the aims and objectives of the Ramsar Convention, and accession thereto;

have encouraged Contracting Parties to identify and designate Ramsar sites; and have promoted participation of local communities and indigenous peoples in the management of wetlands in the context of attaining sustainable development including economic growth and poverty reduction;

8. RECOGNIZING that Ramsar Regional Meetings and Conferences of the Contracting Parties (COPs) focus increasingly on policy and administrative issues, so that the Asian Wetland Symposium series provides an increasingly valuable complementary forum for the discussion of scientific and technical issues and priorities for the conservation and wise use of wetlands in the Asia region;
9. ALSO RECOGNIZING that financial support for the Asian Wetland Symposium series has come from a wide variety of donors, including central and local governments, business entities, academic institutions, international organizations including UN bodies, and international NGOs, and that these contributions have been invaluable to securing the continuity of the Asian Wetland Symposia, as well as the series of local workshops, leading to the establishment of effective, diverse and vibrant networks on wetland conservation and wise use in the Asian region; and
10. NOTING that the fifth meeting of a biennial International Symposium on Wetlands was held in Zapata Swamp, Cuba, with the participation of scientists and wetland managers of different countries from the Americas region;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

11. ENCOURAGES all Contracting Parties and non-Contracting Parties in the Asia Region to give full recognition to the Asian Wetland Symposium (AWS) as an effective forum for information exchange and as a source of good practical advice for the conservation and wise use of wetlands in Asia;
12. ENDORSES the continuation of the periodic Asian Wetland Symposia;
13. REQUESTS Contracting Parties, in cooperation with the Ramsar Secretariat and international NGOs, to facilitate the support to and participation in the Asian Wetland Symposia by a wide range of stakeholders, including but not limited to local governments, NGOs, the private sector, and local communities, noting that this will not have any financial implications for the Convention's core budget;
14. REQUESTS the Ramsar Secretariat and the Standing Committee to encourage and develop linkages between Ramsar Regional Meetings, including subregional meetings, and such regional wetland fora, so as to ensure that the outcomes of the fora are made fully available to Contracting Parties and governments in support of their implementation of the Convention through exchange of experiences and innovative practices discussed at such fora; and
15. RECOMMENDS that Contracting Parties, international NGOs, and other relevant scientific and technical organizations consider the usefulness of establishing similar periodic regional scientific and technical fora where they do not already exist, drawing on the experiences of the Asian Wetland Symposia, as a means of increasing scientific and

technical support for the implementation of the Convention including, *inter alia*, any regional initiatives established under the Convention.