

**"Wetlands: water, life, and culture"
8th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties
to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)
Valencia, Spain, 18-26 November 2002**

Resolution VIII.46

Thanks to the people and governments of Spain

1. AWARE the generous support provided by the Spanish authorities at all levels for the 8th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties;
2. GRATEFUL for the thorough and comprehensive preparations that they have made, in the physical facilities, the reliable and modern services provided to the secretariat and the participants, and the other events which have so enriched the experience of the delegates;
3. PAYING PARTICULAR TRIBUTE to the Autonomous Community of Valencia and the Municipality of Valencia for their extraordinary hospitality and the warmth with which they and the people of the city have welcomed the participants;
4. MINDFUL of the enormous amount of work that has been done by the Spanish staff and volunteers, who have made the events of the largest and most complicated of all the meetings of the Ramsar COP proceed with efficiency, speed, reliability, warmth and good humor; and
5. REGRETTING the accident involving the *Prestige* oil tanker and the resultant oil spill that has recently occurred off the northwest coast of Spain and EXPRESSING concern at the negative effects on marine and coastal ecosystems as well as the local populations dependent upon them for their livelihood;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

6. RECORDS its thanks and appreciation to its Spanish hosts, in particular the Ministry of Environment, the Autonomous Community of Valencia, the Municipality of Valencia, the authorities of the Museo de la Ciencias Príncipe Felipe, and the Spanish non-governmental organizations;
7. ACKNOWLEDGES the significance of the financial contributions made by the Government of Spain towards the organization of the 8th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties;
8. RECORDS its appreciation to the other Contracting Parties and organizations which have contributed materially to assisting delegates from developing countries and countries in transition to participate in COP8;
9. EXPRESSES its solidarity with the Kingdom of Spain and its deep concern over the serious consequences of the accident of the *Prestige* oil tanker, especially the potential damage to the ecological character of the Ramsar sites and wetlands of the Atlantic coast;

particularly the coast of Galicia, as well as the severe repercussions on local populations whose livelihood depends on the sustainable use of its natural resources;

10. ENCOURAGES the actions currently being undertaken on an urgent basis by the different administrations, countries of the area, NGOs and volunteers to control the spill and its effects on the area; and
11. EXPRESSES the expectation that competent International Organizations and States will adopt the relevant measures to avoid the repetition of this type of disaster in the future.