

**DOC. SC31-21 Additional  
Addendum 2**

Agenda item 9.4

**Proposals for Regional Initiatives within the framework of the  
Convention**

**Note by the Secretariat**

1. Subsequent to deadline of 30 April 2005 established by the Subgroup on COP9 for submission of proposed regional initiatives and the circulation of DOC. SC31-21 Additional, containing the forms submitted by Parties for proposed regional initiatives within the framework of the Convention, the Secretariat has received on 6 June 2005 two further proposals for regional initiatives (“ChadWet” and “NigerWet”) submitted by Nigeria.
2. The proposal forms as submitted are attached to this note.
3. Owing to their late receipt, the Secretariat has not had an opportunity to review these proposals and make recommendations for consideration by the Standing Committee.
4. However, the Standing Committee will recall that Memoranda of Cooperation concerning each of these river basins, between the Secretariat and the Lake Chad Basin Commission and the Secretariat and the Niger Basin Authority, were signed in November 2002 at COP8.
5. The Standing Committee may wish to note that each of these regional initiatives is seeking endorsement as operating within the framework of the Convention, but is not requesting allocation of any core budget funds for the operations of the initiative.

Agenda item 12

**COP9 consideration of Regional Initiatives under the  
Convention (Resolution VIII.30)**

1. One specific issue which will need a COP9 draft Resolution preparing concerns “Regional initiatives for the further implementation of the Convention”, in follow-up to COP8 Resolution VIII.30. This is because the arrangements for the MedWet Coordination Unit, and notably its funding, are confirmed in Resolution VIII.30 only for the current triennium, and such arrangements for the 2006-2008 triennium will need to be considered by COP9 for renewal and/or amendment. In addition to the Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative (MedWet), the secretariat is aware that a number of other regional initiatives under development or starting operations which Parties may wish to bring to COP9 for endorsement and/or consideration for provision of funding from any core budget lines for regional initiatives which may be established by COP9. These include *inter alia* the High Andean Wetland Initiative (see Resolution VIII.39), the Himalayan High Mountain Wetlands Initiative, and several regional training-related initiatives including the Ramsar Panama Centre and the Regional Ramsar Centre for training and research in western and central Asia (see Resolution VIII.41).
2. COP8 adopted Resolution VIII.30: *Regional initiatives for the further implementation of the Convention*. This includes an Annex providing *Guidance for the development of regional initiatives in the framework of the Convention on Wetlands*, and Resolution VIII.30 calls on Contracting Parties to take this guidance into consideration when launching and developing a regional initiative.
3. In Resolution VIII.30, paragraph 9, the Conference of the Contracting Parties “considers appropriate the inclusion of a budget line ‘Support for Regional Initiatives’, when one or more regional initiatives are evaluated by the COP, in accordance with the above *Guidance*, as worthy for financial support from the Convention core budget”. Hence any proposed regional initiative seeking such support will need to provide the COP with sufficient information concerning its operations against each element of the *Guidance*.
4. Therefore, in order that clear advice may be provided by the Standing Committee to COP on any such proposals, it will be important for the Standing Committee and its Subgroups on Finance and COP9 to consider together all such initiatives (including any proposals for the continuation of the MedWet Coordination functions).
5. Furthermore, in line with Resolution VIII.45 and in order to minimize the number of similar draft Resolutions that will go to the COP, the Secretariat considers that it would be most helpful for Parties’ consideration of this matter at COP9 for a single consolidated draft Resolution on regional initiatives to be prepared by the Standing Committee.
6. So as to facilitate this process, the Secretariat recommends that all Parties planning to present any regional initiative proposals for consideration by COP9 be requested to submit information on the initiative in relation to the COP8 *Guidance* prior to the 31<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee (June 2005), so that the Committee may fully consider all such proposals comprehensively.
7. It would assist the Standing Committee and the COP in their work if this procedure was to be followed by all initiatives seeking endorsement under the Convention from the COP, and not just

those requesting financial support. However, it will be appropriate for any initiative requesting financial support from the core budget for 2006-2008 also to provide specific budget information. This information will need to be taken into account by the Standing Committee's Subgroup on Finance as part of its preparation of a proposed 2006-2008 budget for COP9 consideration.

8. To assist Parties in submitting proposals to the Standing Committee and COP for regional initiatives, the Secretariat has prepared (Annex I) a pro-forma table of the elements of the Resolution VIII.30 *Guidance*, against which the COP will need to consider proposals. The Secretariat suggests that this should be made available to all Parties that are considering bringing forward a regional initiative for COP9 consideration, with the request that they submit a completed form to the Secretariat by 30 April 2005, so that proposals can be consolidated in a timely manner for consideration by the 31<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee for onward transmittal to COP9.

# AFRICA

## ChadWet

Countries involved: **Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Niger, Nigeria**

Proposal submitted by: **Nigeria**

COP8 Resolution VIII.30 <i>Guidance</i>	Proposed regional initiative
<b>AIM</b>	
<p>1. The overall aim of regional initiatives should be to <b>promote the objectives of the Convention</b> in general and to implement the Ramsar Strategic Plan in particular, through regional and subregional cooperation on wetland-related issues of common concern.</p>	<p><i>ChadWet</i> is a subregional initiative for the Lake Chad Basin. Its aim is to promote, and to contribute to the implementation, in the Lake Chad Basin, of the three pillars of the Ramsar Convention, ie:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Wetlands of International Importance</li> <li>2) Wise Use of Wetlands</li> <li>3) International Cooperation</li> </ol>
<b>SUBSTANTIVE ELEMENTS</b>	
<p>2. <b>Regional and subregional initiatives should be based on a bottom-up approach.</b> As a matter of priority, the involvement of as many as possible Contracting Parties of the region or subregion(s) covered by the new initiative should be sought from the start.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- in cooperation with the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC), a bottom-up approach has been implemented (mainly since 1999/2000) by the 5 member States of the LCBC.</li> <li>- 3 of the LCBC member States are Ramsar Contracting Parties (Chad, Niger, Nigeria) and 2 (Cameroon and Central Africa Republic) are in the process of joining the Convention on Wetlands - <u>under Ramsar Pillar Nr 1</u>, large-scale designation of Ramsar Sites have been achieved and/or under way since 1999/2000 in the 3 Ramsar Contracting Parties (Chad, Niger, Nigeria), and are currently under preparation (together with their accession to Ramsar) in the other two Countries concerned by <i>ChadWet</i></li> <li>- <u>under Ramsar Pillar Nr 2</u>, field implementation of Wise Use of Wetlands measures have been under way and/or planned in all five member States of the LCBC, mainly - but not exclusively - as part of the GEF Project “Reversing Land and Water Degradation Trends” in the Lake Chad Basin</li> <li>- <u>under Ramsar Pillar Nr 3</u>, basin-wide international cooperation has been developing, since 1999/2000, between all 5 Countries of the Lake Chad Basin, particularly in the framework of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) and with support from the Ramsar Secretariat, Ramsar IOPs (particularly WWF, Wetlands International, IUCN) and other NGOs (such as the Nigerian Conservation Foundation) and institutions</li> </ul>
<p>3. Each initiative should entail the participation, from the start, <b>not only of the Administrative Authorities</b> responsible for the application of the Convention in the</p>	<p>In addition to Ramsar Administrative Authorities in the 3 Ramsar CPs of the Lake Chad Basin (usually under Ministries responsible for Environment) and Wetlands Administrative contact people in the 2 yet non-CPs, the <i>ChadWet</i> subregional initiative entails the participation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ministries/Authorities responsible for Water Resources</li> </ul>

<p>Contracting Parties involved, <b>but also of all other relevant stakeholders</b> with an interest in and directly or indirectly responsible for wetland issues, <b>including the ministries responsible for the environment and water issues</b>, intergovernmental bodies, NGOs, academia, and economic actors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC, representing 5 Countries sharing the Lake Chad Basin), and its regular Council of Ministers Sessions, and Summits of Heads of States and Governments</li> <li>- the Steering Committee of the GEF-LCBC Project “Reversing Land and Water Degradation Trends” in the Lake Chad Basin</li> <li>- International NGOs including WWF, Wetlands International, IUCN, etc.</li> <li>- National NGOs such as the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF)</li> <li>- the Ramsar Secretariat</li> <li>- etc.</li> </ul>
<p>4. A regional initiative should base its operation on the <b>development of networks of collaboration</b> established upon clearly defined terms of reference, thus creating an enabling environment for the involvement of all stakeholders at all levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One of the origins of the <i>ChadWet</i> subregional initiative comes from Decision Nr 3 of the 10th Summit of LCBC Heads of States and Governments held on 28th July 2000 in N’Djamena, Chad: <i>“Within the framework of a strategy to save the Lake Chad, the Heads of States took note of the efforts being made by the Ramsar Convention Secretariat and the World Wide Fund for Nature on Conservation and Restoration of the Lake and declared the Lake Chad a Trans-boundary Ramsar Site. Consequently, they urged all the member States that are yet to ratify the Ramsar Convention to speed up action in doing so”</i> <b>(<a href="http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.chad_summit_e.htm">http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.chad_summit_e.htm</a>)</b></li> <li>- At the 2nd GEF International Waters Conference held in Dalian, China, from 25th to 29th September 2002 (attended by 186 participants representing 55 different GEF-IW projects), the ongoing cooperation between the Ramsar Bureau, WWF and the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) was jointly highlighted by Representatives of these 3 institutions. In his conclusions, Mr. Alfred Duda - Chair of the closing Plenary of the Dalian Conference - <i>“noted that regional assessments of GEF-IW projects should be presented during the next GEF International Waters Conference. in this regard, he proposed the Lake Chad Basin project and another one - still to be identified - in South America”</i> <b>(<a href="http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.gef_intl_waters2.htm">http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.gef_intl_waters2.htm</a>)</b></li> <li>- <i>ChadWet</i> is also based on the <i>Memorandum of Cooperation</i> established between the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) and Ramsar, signed on 23rd November 2002 at Ramsar COP8 in Valencia, Spain <b>(<a href="http://www.ramsar.org/key_lcbc_moc2002.htm">http://www.ramsar.org/key_lcbc_moc2002.htm</a>)</b></li> <li>- the concept of the <i>ChadWet</i> subregional Ramsar Initiative was presented by the LCBC Executive Secretary at the 5th meeting of the Mediterranean Wetlands Committee held from 12th-15th June 2003 in Izmir, Turkey. Paragraph Nr 21 of the MedWet/Com5 meeting highlighted: <i>“The Mediretanean Wetlands Committee NOTES with great satisfaction the launching of the Lake Chad Basin Initiative (ChadWet) in the framework of the cooperation developed between the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC), Ramsar, WWF and the GEF and inspired by the MedWet model, WELCOMES the participation at this meeting of the Executive Secretary of the Lake Chad Basin Commission, Mr. Muhammad Sani Adamu, and REQUESTS the MedWet Coordination Unit in accordance with Resolution VIII.30 to assist the establishment of ChadWet to the best of its ability”</i> <b>(<a href="http://www.ramsar.org/key_medcom5_report.htm">http://www.ramsar.org/key_medcom5_report.htm</a>)</b></li> <li>- the 51th Session of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (Ministerial</li> </ul>

	<p>Council), held from 21st to 22nd June 2004 in Abuja, Nigeria, “expressed satisfaction with the take-off of the Lake Chad Basin Initiative. To this effect, they decided that the five pilot projects undertaken within the framework of the LCBC/GEF project (all of them coinciding with existing or planned Ramsar sites in the Lake Chad Basin) be considered as concrete contribution to the ChadWet Initiative launched in June 2003 at Izmir (Turkey). In addition, they directed that the ChadWet Initiative be presented as a Ramsar Regional Initiative at the next Conference of the Parties in Kampala (Uganda) in November 2005, in accordance with Resolution VIII.30 of Ramsar”</p> <p><b>(<a href="http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.chad_lcbc51.htm">http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.chad_lcbc51.htm</a>)</b></p>
<p>5. At an early stage, a regional initiative should <b>seek collaboration with other intergovernmental or international partners operating in its region</b>, by establishing complementary and non-duplicative activities.</p>	<p>Collaboration already exist, or is being sought by the Lake Chad Basin Commission (including in support to the <i>ChadWet</i>) with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the GEF (in the framework of the GEF-LCBC Project “Reversing Land and Water Degradation Trends” in the Lake Chad Basin</li> <li>- ANBO (African Network of Basin Organisations)</li> <li>- AMCOW (African Ministerial Conference on Water)</li> <li>- AMCEN (African Ministerial Conference on Environment)</li> <li>- ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States), particularly under chapters on Water and on Environment of the NEPAD)</li> <li>- etc.</li> </ul>
<p>6. The operation of a regional initiative should be <b>based upon strong scientific and technical backing</b>, provided by relevant institutions which should be recognized as partners in the initiative.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) has already provided, and will continue to provide scientific and technical backing to the <i>ChadWet</i> subregional initiative.</li> <li>- Additional scientific and technical backing is already available, and will be further developed through:</li> <li>- CILSS (Comité Inter-Etats de Lutte contre la Sécheresse au Sahel), Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso</li> <li>- Wetlands International Database on Water Birds</li> <li>- etc.</li> </ul>
<p>7. The strategic and operational targets of a regional initiative should be <b>fully aligned with the Strategic Plan of the Convention</b> by means of policy and site technical work and activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>ChadWet</i> has already been contributing (since 1999/2000), and is going to further contribute to all five General Objectives of the Ramsar Strategic Plan 2003-2008: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- General Objective 1: the Wise Use of Wetlands</li> <li>- General Objective 2: Wetlands of International Importance</li> <li>- General Objective 3: International cooperation</li> <li>- General Objective 4: Implementation capacity</li> <li>- General Objective 5: Membership (for two more Lake Chad Basin Countries still to join the Convention on Wetlands: Cameroon and Central African Republic)</li> </ul> </li> <li>- <i>ChadWet</i> has already been contributing (since 1999/2000), and is going to further contribute to selected Actions listed under most of the Operational Objectives of the Ramsar Strategic Plan 2003-2008, particularly: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Operational Objective 1: Inventory and Assessment</li> <li>- Operational Objective 2: Policies and Legislation, including Impact Assessment and Valuation</li> <li>- <b>Operational Objective 3: Integration of Wetland Wise Use into Sustainable Development</b></li> <li>- <b>Operational Objective 4: Restoration and Rehabilitation</b></li> <li>- <b>Operational Objective 5: Invasive Alien Species</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Operational Objective 6: Local Communities, Indigenous People, and Cultural Values</li> <li>- Operational Objective 9: Communication, Education, and Public Awareness (CEPA)</li> <li>- <b>Operational Objective 10: Designation of Ramsar Sites</b></li> <li>- <b>Operational Objective 11: Management Planning and Monitoring of Ramsar Sites</b></li> <li>- <b>Operational Objective 12: Management of Shared Water Resources, Wetlands and Wetland Species</b></li> <li>- <b>Operational Objective 13: Collaboration with Other Institutions</b></li> <li>- Operational Objective 14: Sharing of Expertise and Information</li> <li>- <b>Operational Objective 15: Financing the Conservation and Wise Use of Wetlands</b></li> <li>- <b>Operational Objective 18: Institutional Capacity of Contracting Parties</b></li> <li>- Operational Objective 19: International Organizations Partners and Others</li> <li>- <b>Operational Objective 21: Membership of the Convention</b></li> </ul>
<b>FINANCIAL AND OTHER SUPPORT</b>	
<p>8. A regional initiative requires <b>both political and financial support from Contracting Parties and other partners from the region.</b> A substantial support from the host country is especially important if a regional office is to be established.</p>	<p><b><u>The ChadWet subregional initiative benefits from strong basin-wide political support</u></b>, eg.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Decision Nr 3 of the 10th Summit of LCBC Heads of States and Government held on 28th July 2000 in N'Djamena, Chad: <i>“Within the framework of a strategy to save the Lake Chad, The Heads of States took note of the efforts being made by the Ramsar Convention Secretariat and the World Wide Fund for Nature on Conservation and Restoration of the Lake and declared the Lake Chad a Trans-boundary Ramsar Site. Consequently, they urged all the member States that are yet to ratify the Ramsar Convention to speed up action in doing so”</i>  <a href="http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.chad_summit_e.htm">http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.chad_summit_e.htm</a>.....  .....</li> <li>- the 51th Session of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (Ministerial Council), held from 21st to 22nd June 2004 in Abuja, Nigeria, <i>“expressed satisfaction with the take-off of the Lake Chad Basin Initiative. To this effect, they decided that the five pilot projects undertaken within the framework of the LCBC/ GEF project (all of them coinciding with existing or planned Ramsar sites in the Lake Chad Basin) be considered as concrete contribution to the ChadWet Initiative launched in June 2003 at Izmir (Turkey). In addition, they directed that the ChadWet Initiative be presented as a Ramsar Regional Initiative at the next Conference of the Parties in Kampala (Uganda) in November 2005, in accordance with Resolution VIII.8 of Ramsar”</i>  <a href="http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.chad_lcbc51.htm">http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.chad_lcbc51.htm</a></li> <li>- The “Arusha Call for African Wetlands”: <i>“We, Heads and Members of Delegations from the Africa Region, meeting at the Ramsar Africa Regional Preparatory meeting for COP9 in Arusha, Tanzania, from 4th-8th April 2005, hereby declare our resolve to.....(para 7) SUPPORT the sub-regional Ramsar Initiatives for the Lake Chad Basin (ChadWet) and for the Niger Basin (NigerWet) to be presented for endorsement by Ramsar COP9”</i></li> </ul> <p><b>The ChadWet subregional initiative also benefits from <u>already</u></b></p>

	<p><b>available financial support</b>, including originating from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <u>WWF</u>, through technical + funding support to large-scale designation of Ramsar Sites by Lake Chad Basin Countries, and accession process to the Convention on Wetlands by Cameroon and Central African Republic (ca. CHF 280.000.-- so far)</li> <li>- <u>the GEF Project “Reversing Land and Water Degradation Trends”</u> in the Lake Chad Basin (ca. CHF 4.000.000.-- so far, in support to 5 GEF pilot field projects undertaken in existing/planned Ramsar Sites within the Lake Chad Basin)</li> <li>- etc.</li> </ul>
<p>9. The launching of a regional or subregional initiative should rely upon secured start-up funding for planned activities and projects.</p>	<p>The <i>ChadWet</i> subregional initiative can already rely upon secured start-up funding for ongoing, and for various planned activities and projects (as part of various projects already under way and/or planned in the Lake Chad Basin - see provisional list of these projects under Nr 8 above).</p> <p>While COP9 endorsement of <i>ChadWet</i> will be sought in November 2005 in Kampala, Uganda, <u>no funding will be sought from the Ramsar Secretariat to support this subregional initiative for the 2005-2008 triennium</u></p>
<p>10. Financial support from the Convention’s core budget, should the Conference of the Parties so decide, will be provided for a <b>pre-determined period of time</b> – in principle not more than three years. After such a period, the support should be phased out. <b>A regional initiative should generate its own resources and should become financially self-sufficient in the long term.</b> When deciding financial support from the Convention’s core budget, geographically equitable distribution should be taken into account.</p>	<p><u>Same as above (see point Nr 9):</u></p> <p>The <i>ChadWet</i> subregional initiative can already rely upon secured start-up funding for ongoing, and for various planned activities and projects (as part of various projects already under way and/or planned in the Lake Chad Basin - see provisional list of these projects under Nr 8 above).</p> <p>While COP9 endorsement of <i>ChadWet</i> will be sought in November 2005 in Kampala, Uganda, <u>no funding will be sought from the Ramsar Secretariat to support this subregional initiative for the 2005-2008 triennium</u></p>
<b>GOVERNANCE</b>	
<p>11. Regional initiatives <b>should establish their own advisory mechanisms</b>, involving all the stakeholders, in order to provide guidance and insight. The Conference of the Parties and the Standing Committee shall receive, through the Ramsar Bureau, reports on their</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Headquarters of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) in N’Djamena, Chad, is the host of the <i>ChadWet</i> subregional initiative.</li> <li>- the LCBC Executive Secretariat will play a key coordination role for the <i>ChadWet</i> initiative. It will offer in-kind contribution to ChadWet including office space and facilities (electricity, telephone, water, internet, etc.) as well as support staff (mainly as part of the GEF project “Reversing Land and Water Degradation Trends” in the Lake Chad Basin)</li> <li>- Progress and further developments of the <i>ChadWet</i> subregional</li> </ul>



<p>activities and shall oversee their general policies relating to the implementation of the Convention.</p>	<p>initiative will be coordinated, monitored and planned in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- in conjunction with regular, yearly meetings of the LCBC Council of Ministers</li> <li>- in conjunction with (irregular) Summits of the Heads of States and Governments of the Lake Chad Basin Commission/LCBC</li> <li>- in conjunction with future Ramsar Africa Regional Preparatory meetings for Ramsar COPs - beyond COP9</li> <li>- in conjunction with future Ramsar COPs</li> <li>- at any other Workshop, Meeting or Conference which might be relevant for further progressing the <i>ChadWet</i> subregional initiative</li> <li>- beyond the expected endorsement of <i>ChadWet</i> as a subregional Ramsar Initiative for the Lake Chad Basin, a mechanism will be explored and established, by which the Ramsar Standing Committee will be able to receive, through the Ramsar Bureau, reports on the activities of <i>ChadWet</i></li> </ul>
<p>12. <b>Specific arrangements as to the coordination between a regional initiative and the Convention</b> should be worked out by the Ramsar Bureau under the guidance of the Standing Committee, and such arrangements should <b>ultimately be approved by the Conference of the Parties.</b></p>	<p>Same as above (point 11):</p> <p>beyond the expected endorsement of <i>ChadWet</i> as a subregional Ramsar Initiative for the Lake Chad Basin, a mechanism will be explored and established, by which the Ramsar Standing Committee will be able to receive, through the Ramsar Bureau, reports on the activities of <i>ChadWet</i></p>

# NigerWet

Countries involved: **Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Nigeria**

Proposal submitted by: **Nigeria**

COP8 Resolution VIII.30 <i>Guidance</i>	Proposed regional initiative
<b>AIM</b>	
<p>1. The overall aim of regional initiatives should be to <b>promote the objectives of the Convention</b> in general and to implement the Ramsar Strategic Plan in particular, through regional and subregional cooperation on wetland-related issues of common concern.</p>	<p><i>NigerWet</i> is a subregional initiative for the Niger River Basin. Its aim is to promote, and to contribute to the implementation in the Niger Basin, of the three pillars of the Ramsar Convention, ie:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Wetlands of International Importance</li> <li>2) Wise Use of Wetlands</li> <li>3) International Cooperation</li> </ol>
<b>SUBSTANTIVE ELEMENTS</b>	
<p>2. <b>Regional and subregional initiatives should be based on a bottom-up approach.</b> As a matter of priority, the involvement of as many as possible Contracting Parties of the region or subregion(s) covered by the new initiative should be sought from the start.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- in cooperation with the Niger Basin Authority (NBA), a bottom-up approach has been implemented (mainly since 1999/2000) by the 9 member States of the NBA.</li> <li>- 8 of the NBA member States are Ramsar Contracting Parties (Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Nigeria) and 1 (Cameroon) is currently in the process of joining the Convention on Wetlands</li> <li>- <u>under Ramsar Pillar Nr 1</u>, large-scale designation of Ramsar Sites have been achieved and/or under way, since 1999/2000, in at least Guinea, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, and are under way/planned in the other three Countries involved in <i>NigerWet</i></li> <li>- <u>under Ramsar Pillar Nr 2</u>, field implementation of Wise Use of Wetlands measures have been achieved and/or under way, since 1999/2000, in at least Guinea, Mali, Niger, etc., and are under way/planned in the other 6 Countries</li> <li>- <u>under Ramsar Pillar Nr 3</u>, basin-wide international cooperation has been developing, since 1999/2000, between all 9 Countries of the Niger River Basin, including in the framework of the Niger Basin Authority (NBA) and with support from the Ramsar Secretariat, Ramsar IOPs (particularly WWF and Wetlands International) and other NGOs (such as the Nigerian Conservation Foundation) and institutions</li> </ul>
<p>3. Each initiative should entail the participation, from the start, <b>not only of the Administrative Authorities</b> responsible for the application of the Convention in the Contracting Parties involved, <b>but also of all other relevant stakeholders</b> with an interest in and directly or</p>	<p>In addition to Ramsar/Wetlands Administrative Authorities in the 9 Niger Basin Countries (usually under Ministries responsible for Environment), the <i>NigerWet</i> subregional initiative entails the participation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ministries/Authorities responsible for Water Resources</li> <li>- the Niger Basin Authority (NBA, representing all 9 Countries sharing the Niger Basin), and its regular Council of Ministers Sessions, and Summits of Heads of States and Governments</li> <li>- International NGOs including WWF, Wetlands International, etc.</li> <li>- National NGOs such as the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF)</li> </ul>

<p>indirectly responsible for wetland issues, <b>including the ministries responsible for the environment and water issues</b>, intergovernmental bodies, NGOs, academia, and economic actors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Ramsar Secretariat</li> <li>- Academia/Research institutions such as the University of Bamako, the IRD (Institut pour la Recherche et le Développement), etc.</li> <li>- the Civil Society, represented by Mayors of Communities</li> <li>- etc.</li> </ul>
<p>4. A regional initiative should base its operation on the <b>development of networks of collaboration</b> established upon clearly defined terms of reference, thus creating an enabling environment for the involvement of all stakeholders at all levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One of the origins of the <i>NigerWet</i> subregional initiative is Decision Nr 6 of the 7th Summit of NBA Heads of States and Governments held on 16th February 2002 in Abuja, Nigeria: “<i>The 7th Summit..... DECIDES.... that the member countries should initiate the designation of an additional network of wetlands of international importance in the River Niger basin, including those with the highest value in terms of their biological diversity and importance for local communities</i>” (<a href="http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.niger_basin_workshop%2Bletter2.htm">http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.niger_basin_workshop%2Bletter2.htm</a>)</li> <li>- <i>NigerWet</i> partly results from the Ministerial meeting of NBA member States held in Niamey, Niger (as part of the GEF-Niger Basin Regional Workshop) on 18th April 2002 (<a href="http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.niger_basin_workshop%2Bletter4.htm">http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.niger_basin_workshop%2Bletter4.htm</a>), the outcomes of which were conveyed to H.E. Mr. Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the U.N., by joint letter from WWF’s Director General, the NBA’s Executive Secretary and the Ramsar Secretary General dated 19th April 2002 (<a href="http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.niger_basin_workshop%2Bletter3.htm">http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.niger_basin_workshop%2Bletter3.htm</a>)</li> <li>- <i>NigerWet</i> is also based on the <i>Memorandum of Cooperation</i> established between the Niger Basin Authority (NBA) and Ramsar, signed on 23rd November 2002 at Ramsar COP8 in Valencia, Spain (<a href="http://www.ramsar.org/key_nigerba_moc2002.htm">http://www.ramsar.org/key_nigerba_moc2002.htm</a>)</li> <li>- With advice of Mr. Thymio Papayannis (Senior Adviser, MedWet) and support from WWF and the Danone Group, <i>NigerWet</i> was conceived and established in January 2004 in Mopti, Mali, at a Workshop organized under the joint auspices of Ramsar, WWF and the Niger Basin Authority/NBA. (<a href="http://www.ramsar.org/mtg_mali_wwf_niger_reseau_recommendations_f.htm">http://www.ramsar.org/mtg_mali_wwf_niger_reseau_recommendations_f.htm</a>)</li> <li>- <i>NigerWet</i> collaborates with/encompasses the <i>Niger Basin Initiative</i> (NBI): a cooperation framework between WWF, Wetlands International and the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF), in support to Wetlands Conservation and Sustainable Use in the Niger Basin. Supported in particular by funding from DGIS, the NBI’s aims to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- establish and develop the scientific knowledge-base of wetlands and priority areas of high biodiversity in the Niger Basin</li> <li>- promote and support the integrated river basin management (IRBM) of the Niger Basin</li> <li>- support the implementation, in the Niger Basin, of Decisions made under relevant International Institutions/Treaties including Ramsar, CBD, etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>NigerWet</i> also narrowly cooperates with/is associated to/includes components of:</li> <li>- the GEF Project “Reversing Land and Water Degradation Trends” in the Niger Basin</li> <li>- the African Development Bank Project “Combat siltation of the Niger River” (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger)</li> <li>- the ongoing development process of “Shared Vision for the Niger Basin” and of “Sustainable Development Action Plan” (coordinated by the Niger Basin Authority/NBA and supported in particular by the World Bank, the AFD, the CIDA, etc.)</li> <li>- etc.</li> </ul>
<p>5. At an early stage, a regional initiative should <b>seek collaboration with other intergovernmental or international partners operating in its region</b>, by establishing complementary and non-duplicative activities.</p>	<p>Collaboration already exist, or is being sought by the Niger Basin Authority (including in support to the <i>NigerWet</i>) with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ANBO (African Network of Basin Organisations)</li> <li>- AMCOW (African Ministerial Conference on Water)</li> <li>- AMCEN (African Ministerial Conference on Environment)</li> <li>- ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States), particularly under chapters on Water and on Environment of the NEPAD)</li> <li>- ALG (Autorité du Liptako-Gourma)</li> <li>- etc.</li> </ul>
<p>6. The operation of a regional initiative should be <b>based upon strong scientific and technical backing</b>, provided by relevant institutions which should be recognized as partners in the initiative.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Niger Basin Authority (NBA) has already provided, and will continue to provide a strong scientific and technical backing to the <i>NigerWet</i> subregional initiative</li> <li>- Additional scientific and technical backing is already available, and will be further developed through:</li> <li>- CILSS/Agrymet (Comité Inter-Etats de Lutte contre la Sécheresse au Sahel), Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso</li> <li>- PIREM (Plateforme des Institutions Régionales sur l’Environnement et la Météorologie), Niamey, Niger</li> <li>- Wetlands International Database on Water Birds</li> <li>- University of Bamako &amp; University of Niamey (additional exploratory contacts under way with Universities in other NBA Countries)</li> <li>- GWP/Global Water Partnership for West Africa, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso</li> <li>- etc.</li> </ul>
<p>7. The strategic and operational targets of a regional initiative should be <b>fully aligned with the Strategic Plan of the Convention</b> by means of policy and site technical work and activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>NigerWet</i> has already been contributing (since 1999/2000), and is going to further contribute to all five General Objectives of the Ramsar Strategic Plan 2003-2008:</li> <li>- General Objective 1: the Wise Use of Wetlands</li> <li>- General Objective 2: Wetlands of International Importance</li> <li>- General Objective 3: International cooperation</li> <li>- General Objective 4: Implementation capacity</li> <li>- General Objective 5: Membership (for one more Niger Basin Authority still to join the Convention on Wetlands: Cameroon)</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>NigerWet</i> has already been contributing (since 1999/2000), and is going to further contribute to selected Actions listed under most of the Operational Objectives of the Ramsar Strategic Plan 2003-2008, particularly:</li> <li>- Operational Objective 1: Inventory and Assessment</li> <li>- Operational Objective 2: Policies and Legislation, including Impact Assessment and Valuation</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Operational Objective 3: Integration of Wetland Wise Use into Sustainable Development</b></li> <li>- <b>Operational Objective 4: Restoration and Rehabilitation</b></li> <li>- Operational Objective 5: Invasive Alien Species</li> <li>- Operational Objective 6: Local Communities, Indigenous People, and Cultural Values</li> <li>- Operational Objective 7: Private Sector Involvement</li> <li>- Operational Objective 9: Communication, Education, and Public Awareness (CEPA)</li> <li>- <b>Operational Objective 10: Designation of Ramsar Sites</b></li> <li>- <b>Operational Objective 11: Management Planning and Monitoring of Ramsar Sites</b></li> <li>- <b>Operational Objective 12: Management of Shared Water Resources, Wetlands and Wetland Species</b></li> <li>- <b>Operational Objective 13: Collaboration with Other Institutions</b></li> <li>- Operational Objective 14: Sharing of Expertise and Information</li> <li>- <b>Operational Objective 15: Financing the Conservation and Wise Use of Wetlands</b></li> <li>- <b>Operational Objective 18: Institutional Capacity of Contracting Parties</b></li> <li>- Operational Objective 19: International Organizations Partners and Others</li> <li>- Operational Objective 20: Training</li> <li>- <b>Operational Objective 21: Membership of the Convention</b></li> </ul>
<b>FINANCIAL AND OTHER SUPPORT</b>	
<p>8. A regional initiative requires <b>both political and financial support from Contracting Parties and other partners from the region.</b> A substantial support from the host country is especially important if a regional office is to be established.</p>	<p><b><u>The NigerWet subregional initiative benefits from strong basin-wide political support</u></b>, eg.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Decision Nr 6 of the 7th Summit of NBA Heads of States and Governments held on 16th February 2002 in Abuja, Nigeria: <i>“The 7th Summit..... DECIDES.... that the member countries should initiate the designation of an additional network of wetlands of international importance in the River Niger basin, including those with the highest value in terms of their biological diversity and importance for local communities”</i> <b>(<a href="http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.niger_basin_workshop%2Bletter2.htm">http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.niger_basin_workshop%2Bletter2.htm</a>)</b></li> <li>- Resolution Nr 3 of the 23rd NBA Ministerial Council Meeting held on 6th-10th September 2004 in Cotonou, Benin: <i>“The 23rd Meeting of the NBA Council of Ministers.....: ....considering Ramsar Resolution VIII.30..... ....considering Recommendations of the Workshop held in Mopti, Mali... DECIDE: ....establishment of a Ramsar Network for the Niger Basin “NigerWet” under auspices of the Niger Basin Authority (NBA) and of the Ramsar Convention Secretariat</i></li> <li>- The “Arusha Call for African Wetlands”: <i>“We, Heads and Members of Delegations from the Africa Region, meeting at the Ramsar Africa Regional Preparatory meeting for COP9 in Arusha, Tanzania, from 4th-8th April 2005, hereby declare our resolve to.....(para 7) SUPPORT the sub-regional Ramsar Initiatives for the Lake Chad Basin (ChadWet) and for the Niger Basin (NigerWet) to be presented for endorsement by Ramsar COP9”</i></li> </ul>

	<p><b>The <i>NigerWet</i> subregional initiative also benefits from <u>already available financial support</u>, including originating from:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <u>WWF</u>: technical + funding support to large-scale designation of Ramsar Sites by Niger Basin Countries, for the preparation of National Wetlands Policies/Strategies by NBA member States, for preparation and implementation of Sustainable management plans of various Niger Basin Ramsar Sites, etc.)</li> <li>- <u>Wetlands International</u>: technical + funding support to field-based wetlands conservations projects in various Ramsar Contracting Parties of the Niger Basin, including the “Water for Food/Water for Ecosystems Project” in the Niger Inner Delta (funded by DGIS/LNV)</li> <li>- <u>the GEF Project “Reversing Land and Water Degradation Trends”</u> in the Niger Basin</li> <li>- <u>the African Development Bank Project “Combat siltation of the Niger River”</u> (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger)</li> <li>- <u>the ongoing development process of “Shared Vision for the Niger Basin”</u> and of “<u>Sustainable Development Action Plan</u>” (coordinated by the Niger Basin Authority/NBA and supported in particular by the World Bank, the AFD, the CIDA, etc.)</li> <li>- etc.</li> </ul>
<p>9. The launching of a regional or subregional initiative should rely upon secured start-up funding for planned activities and projects.</p>	<p>The <i>NigerWet</i> subregional initiative can already rely upon secured start-up funding for ongoing, and for various planned activities and projects (as part of various projects already under way and/or planned in the Niger River Basin - see provisional list of these projects under Nr 8 above).</p> <p>While COP9 endorsement of <i>NigerWet</i> will be sought in November 2005 in Kampala, Uganda, <u>no funding will be sought from the Ramsar Secretariat to support this subregional initiative for the 2005-2008 triennium</u></p>
<p>10. Financial support from the Convention’s core budget, should the Conference of the Parties so decide, will be provided for <b>a pre-determined period of time</b> – in principle not more than three years. After such a period, the support should be phased out. <b>A regional initiative should generate its own resources and should become financially self-sufficient in the long term.</b> When deciding financial support from the Convention’s core budget,</p>	<p><u>Same as above (see point Nr 9):</u></p> <p>The <i>NigerWet</i> subregional initiative can already rely upon secured start-up funding for ongoing, and for various planned activities and projects (as part of various projects already under way and/or planned in the Niger River Basin - see provisional list of these projects under Nr 8 above).</p> <p>While COP9 endorsement of <i>NigerWet</i> will be sought in November 2005 in Kampala, Uganda, <u>no funding will be sought from the Ramsar Secretariat to support this subregional initiative for the 2005-2008 triennium</u></p>

<p>geographically equitable distribution should be taken into account.</p>	
<p><b>GOVERNANCE</b></p>	
<p>11. Regional initiatives <b>should establish their own advisory mechanisms</b>, involving all the stakeholders, in order to provide guidance and insight. The Conference of the Parties and the Standing Committee shall receive, through the Ramsar Bureau, reports on their activities and shall oversee their general policies relating to the implementation of the Convention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the HeadQuarters of the Niger Basin Authority (NBA) in Niamey, Niger, is the host of the <i>NigerWet</i> subregional initiative.</li> <li>- the NBA Executive Secretariat will play a key coordination role for the <i>NigerWet</i> initiative. It will offer in-kind contribution to NigerWet including office space and facilities (electricity, telephone, water, internet, etc.) as well as support staff (mainly as part of the GEF project “Reversing Land and Water Degradation Trends” in the Niger Basin</li> </ul> <p>(NB: the WWF Freshwater Programme Coordinator for the Niger Basin is also hosted at the HeadQuarters of the Niger Basin Authority, and will cooperate on a daily basis with the NBA to the coordination &amp; further development of the <i>NigerWet</i> subregional initiative)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Progress and further developments of the <i>NigerWet</i> subregional initiative will be coordinated, monitored and planned in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- in conjunction with regular, yearly meetings of the NBA Council of Ministers</li> <li>- in conjunction with (irregular) Summits of the Heads of States and Governments of the Niger Basin Authority/NBA</li> <li>- in conjunction with future Ramsar Africa Regional Preparatory meetings for Ramsar COPs - beyond COP9</li> <li>- in conjunction with future Ramsar COPs</li> <li>- at any other Workshop, Meeting or Conference which might be relevant for further progressing the <i>NigerWet</i> subregional initiative</li> <li>- beyond the expected endorsement of <i>NigerWet</i> as a subregional Ramsar Initiative for the Niger Basin, a mechanism will be explored and established, by which the Ramsar Standing Committee will be able to receive, through the Ramsar Bureau, reports on the activities of <i>NigerWet</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>12. <b>Specific arrangements as to the coordination between a regional initiative and the Convention</b> should be worked out by the Ramsar Bureau under the guidance of the Standing Committee, and such arrangements should <b>ultimately be approved by the Conference of the Parties.</b></p>	<p>Same as above (point 11):</p> <p>beyond the expected endorsement of <i>NigerWet</i> as a subregional Ramsar Initiative for the Niger Basin, a mechanism will be explored and established, by which the Ramsar Standing Committee will be able to receive, through the Ramsar Bureau, reports on the activities of <i>NigerWet</i></p>