

**MedWet Initiative Progress Report 2008**

The MedWet Initiative established in 1991 and joined over the few years by all 27 countries of the Mediterranean Region, have guided its strategy and activities through the Mediterranean Wetlands Committee (MedWet/Com). MedWet/Com is a forum for collaboration on wetland issues in the Mediterranean, acting as an advisor to the Convention in this region (Ramsar COP7 Resolution VII.22, paragraph 3) and constituting the decision-making body of the Initiative, which operates within the framework of the Ramsar Convention.

***AIM OF THE REGIONAL INITIATIVE******1. Implementation of the Ramsar approach***

*1.1 Describe briefly how your initiative is promoting the objectives of the Convention and how it is implementing the Ramsar Strategic Plan through cooperation in your region:*

**a) Conservation and wise use of wetlands and water resources.**

In order to provide support to MedWet/Com members in monitoring and managing listed Ramsar Sites, web-based tool "MedWet Information and Knowledge Network for the Sustainable Development of Wetland Ecosystems" (MedWet/CODDE) has been developed and finalized in the beginning of 2008, which:

Provides comprehensive information on the location, ecological characteristics and socio-economic importance of water-related ecosystems;

Offers assistance to MedWet/Com member states in establishment of wetland inventories

**b) Implementation capacity:**

Enhancement of the Initiative's capacity to achieve its mission through the establishment of the new governance structure in 2007.

Technical implementation capacity is leveraged by the participation of five major wetland centres in the MedWet Scientific and Technical Team (STT) and by the collaboration with five international NGOs.

Assistance to member states (and Ramsar Contacting Parties) in implementation of the Convention through promotion of training and capacity-building schemes.

**Implementation of Ramsar Strategic Plan through cooperation on wetland-related issues of common concern**

GWP-Med MedWet continued to participate in the Partnership Committee of the Global Water Partnership-Mediterranean as its member and also as a leader of the Program Component: *Water, Food & Environmental Interaction*.

SAP-BIO MedWet is a full member of the Advisory Board of the SAP-BIO initiative operated by UNEP/MAP and is following up various Regional Priority Actions of the SAP-BIO programme, in particular the completion of an integrated inventory of Mediterranean coastal wetland habitats, monitoring coastal protected areas and assisting countries to protect coastal sites of particular interest.

Middle East Regional Training Board The MedWet Coordinator will continue to represent MedWet at the ME Regional Training Board according to the agreement reached at the meeting between the MedWet Coordinator and the WOW Capacity Build-up Officer based at the Birdlife International Regional Office in Jordan.

UNEP/MAP The co-organization of an event in October 2007 with UNEP/MAP to mark Coast Day aimed to raise awareness on the necessity of sustainably managing the coastal area.

MedWet Participation in Prespa Park Monitoring and Conservation Working Group (MCWG), established (October 2007) in the framework of the UNDP-GEF Prespa Park Project with the task to guide the development of a consensus-based transboundary monitoring program. The MedWet Coordinator will represent MedWet at the new forthcoming meeting.

#### ***SUBSTANTIVE ELEMENTS OF THE REGIONAL INITIATIVE***

### ***2. Complete regional adherence and bottom-up approach***

#### ***2.1 Describe briefly if your initiative is based on a bottom-up approach:***

The MedWet Initiative achieves its bottom-up approach by drawing interest and input from very different stakeholders: ministerial departments, major regional NGOs and Research and Wetlands centres, i.e. a large circle of local and national stakeholders.

#### ***2.2 List the countries in the region that your initiative covers:***

Albania, Algeria, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Syria, The FYR of Macedonia, Tunisia, Turkey and the Palestinian Authority.

#### ***2.3 Specify those countries in your region that do not participate in the initiative (if any):***

All states around the Mediterranean participate officially in the MedWet Initiative. However this participation should be enhanced and strengthened with countries such as Israel, Libya, the Palestinian Authority and Syria.

### ***3. Active involvement of all relevant stakeholders***

#### ***3.1 List the participants in your initiative and their affiliation:***

The MedWet initiative consists of 42 Voting members. These include:

- 27 countries and entities (listed under 2.2)
- 5 IGOs: Barcelona Convention, Bern Convention, European Commission, Ramsar Convention, United Nations Development Programme
- 5 International NGOs : Birdlife International, IMWI (International Water Management Institute) IUCN, Wetlands International, WWF International
- 5 Wetland Centers: ARPAT (Agenzia regionale per la protezione ambientale della Toscana)-Italy, EKBY (Greek Biotope / Wetland Centre)-Greece, CEZH (Centro de Zonas Humidas)-Portugal, ENHEA/ SEHUMED (Sede para el Estudio de los humedales mediterráneos)-Spain, Station Biologique de la Tour du Valat-France
- 2 Non-voting members: Luc Hoffmann, Thymio Papayannis

#### ***3.2 Indicate if only Ramsar administrative authorities at national level or also other relevant stakeholders (including ministries, intergovernmental bodies, NGOs, academia and economic actors) are actively involved***

All the above-mentioned members participate through their membership in MedWet/Com. States also contribute financially to MedWet.

### ***4. Development of collaboration based on commonly agreed terms***

*4.1 Describe briefly how your regional network or centre is operating [attach the terms of reference (or other agreements) elaborated to guide its activities as separate documents where they exist]:*

The MedWet Initiative is an endogenous mechanism based on voluntary participation, mutual trust and mutual benefit. **MedWet/Com (44 members)**, is the decision-making body of the Initiative, providing strategic guidance and governance through the decisions taken during its meetings. MedWet/Com meetings take place every 18 months. Decisions are, as a rule, taken by consensus.

The MedWet **Steering Group (5 members)** provides operational guidance and governance to the Initiative on behalf of the Committee in between MedWet/Com meetings. It takes operational decisions and resolves problems identified during the implementation of MedWet/Com decisions.

The MedWet **Scientific and Technical Team** composed of the Mediterranean Wetland Centres that are members of the Mediterranean Wetlands Committee (MedWet/Com), delivers the best available scientific and technical advice to the MedWet Initiative, through collaboration between the MedWet Wetland Centres, the Ramsar International Organization Partners (IOPs), the MedWet Secretariat and other invited experts.

The MedWet **Secretariat** is legally established in Athens, Greece, since 2002, as an “Association of a non-trading, non profit-making partnership”. Its aim is to coordinate and facilitate the Initiative in carrying out its mission. It operates under the authority and supervision of the MedWet/Com, MedWet Steering Group and the Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention. It is headed by the MedWet Coordinator and staffed by a number of personnel members, as decided by MedWet/Com.

To assure that the MedWet Secretariat operates according to the Terms of Reference adopted by MedWet/Com, a **Governing Board** was established for the “MedWet Secretariat Association”.

The MedWet **Coordinator** is the central person to drive and support the Initiative. S/he is leading the Secretariat, providing support to the members of the Committee, the Scientific and Technical Team, the Steering Group and other MedWet partners.

## ***5. Involvement of other regional partners***

*5.1 List relevant intergovernmental or international organizations operating in your region:*

UNEP/MAP, UNESCO, Ramsar Convention, Bern Convention, European Commission, UNDP, BirdLife International, Wetlands International, WWF-International, IWMI, INWENT, GWP-Med, Friends of the Earth Middle East, Green Cross and IUCN.

*5.2 List those with which you have established common activities:*

Ramsar Convention, UNEP/MAP, European Commission, IWMI, INWENT, GWP-Med.

*5.3 List your activities in common:*

Integrated Water Resources Management (GWP-Med, European Commission), Local dialogues and participative approaches (INWENT), wetland conservation [EC funded LIFE North African Wetlands Network (NAWN) Project], Coastal wetlands conservation (UNEP/MAP).

## **6. Scientific and technical backing**

*6.1 List the scientific and technical partners that provide a solid backing to your initiative:*

Agenzia Regionale per la Protezione Ambientale della Toscana (ARPAT), Greek Biotope Wetland Centre (EKBY), Portuguese Wetland Centre (CEZH/ICNB), Sede para el Estudio de los Humedales Mediterráneos (SEHUMED), Station Biologique de la Tour du Valat (TdV).

## **7. Targets of the initiative and their links with Ramsar**

*7.1 List your initiative's strategic and operational targets for the period 2009-20011:*

A new 2008-2009 work plan was prepared; its main objectives are:

- a) The preparation of two Strategic Documents, i.e. the *MedWet Strategic Vision* for the next 25 Years and the *2009-2011 MedWet Work Plan* for submission to MedWet/Com9, including identification of related costs.
- b) The effective completion of all on-going projects by the MedWet Secretariat, while the Scientific and Technical Team will evaluate the outcome of each one and promote the dissemination of results.
- c) The assessment of the Secretariat's structure, costs, human resources, as well as the timeline, targets and indicators of the 2008 activities, according to MedWet needs, by the New Coordinator.
- d) Completion, by the Secretariat, of all non-project related pending matters (i.e. financial, administrative, legal) which affect the main activities of the Secretariat.

*7.2 Specify the relations of these targets to the objectives of the Ramsar Strategic Plan (attach your workplan for 2009-2011, or for 2009, where it exists):*

Target (a) is related to Op. Obs :2, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 19, 20

Target (b) is related to Op. Obs : 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 14, 15, 18, 19, 20

Targets (c) & (d) are related to the efficient and cost-effective operation of the MedWet Secretariat, with the ultimate objective to assist in the achievement of the Initiative's mission, i.e. the sustainable use and conservation of wetlands in the Mediterranean region through synergies, within the framework of the Ramsar Convention.

(attached: the new work plan 2008 was submitted to the Steering Group and is currently undergoing re-adjustment)

## **8. Raising awareness of Ramsar objectives**

*8.1 Describe briefly your activities in the fields of communication, education, and participatory processes with relevant stakeholders:*

Bi-monthly MedWet Newsletter produced in English and French and disseminated to a list of over 700 recipients, and the MedWet website are the main means of information dissemination related to the work of the Initiative. MedWet activities are also promoted through the websites of the MedWet Scientific and Technical Team members.

In 2007-08 MedWet took significant steps to integrate CEPA into the planning, development and implementation of projects by undertaking CEPA activities related to four projects: MedWet CODDE, Water Dialogues in the MENA Region, TwinMed and LIFE- NAWN.

To foster awareness about the value of wetlands a number of events were hosted in countries around the Mediterranean for World Wetlands Day 2008 (of which four coordinated by the Secretariat).

Finally, with the help of national experts and institutional partners, MedWet is promoting and implementing in Morocco and Jordan, through participatory techniques, Dialogues on water use in agriculture and the interaction with wetlands.

*8.2 Describe briefly the increased support for Ramsar objectives resulting from these activities. (This information may be used by Ramsar's CEPA Oversight Panel, according to Standing Committee Decision 35-14)*

MedWet assists towards raising support for Operational Objective 1.1 of the Convention's CEPA program to integrate CEPA processes into all levels of policy development planning and implementation of the Convention. (Op Obj 1.1<sup>1</sup>) by developing a program of activities on CEPA according to the strategic document (the CEPA Strategy) that aims among others to ensure that the CEPA processes of MedWet are in line with those of the Ramsar Convention.

Co-hosting of a public awareness event on the occasion of the MedCoast Day in October in collaboration with the Barcelona Convention (UNEP/MAP) increased support for the objective of the Ramsar Convention's CEPA program to provide cohesive frameworks to support and catalyse CEPA for the wise use of wetlands (Op Obj 2.1).

MedWet also contributed to the objective of the Ramsar CEPA program to produce, disseminate and share resource materials for CEPA by developing a number of CEPA tools for the following projects: "MedWet CODDE" (CD-ROM, leaflets and promotion through the website), "Water Dialogues in the MENA Region" (promotion through the website), "TwinMed" (promotion through the website) "LIFE NAWN" (promotion through the website), as well as producing support materials for CEPA events including materials for World Wetlands Day.

MedWet also contributed to supporting the objective of the Ramsar CEPA Program to foster sustained national campaigns, programmes and projects to raise community awareness. (Op Obj 3.1) by undertaking awareness raising activities around World Wetlands Day.

#### ***FINANCIAL AND OTHER SUPPORT FOR THE REGIONAL INITIATIVE***

#### ***9. Who provides political and financial support?***

All MedWet/Com countries provide political and financial support to the initiative.

*9.1 List all your sources and the amounts of financial support for the triennium 2009-2011. Specify the amounts which are already confirmed:*

According to COP9 Resolution IX.7, Annex II, the budgeted income for 2008 was:

Greece 263,483 CHF – also in kind: hosting of the MedWet Secretariat

Ramsar 10,849 CHF

MedWet countries 153,716 CHF (calculated on the basis of the UN scale of contributions for 2008).

The MedWet Secretariat is in the process of preparing a list of country contributions adjusted to the UN scale of contributions for 2009-2011, to submit to COP10 for approval. It is also working on

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<sup>1</sup> Operational objectives mentioned above refer to the Ramsar Convention's Programme on CEPA 2003-2008 – Resolution VIII.31 of the 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties.

securing an extension to the current Memorandum of Collaboration with Greece, which only covers the financial contribution of Greece, as well as the hosting of the Secretariat, until the end of 2008.

9.2 List your sources and amounts of financial support for the year 2009. Specify the amounts which are already confirmed:

See Question 9.1

9.3 List concisely (according to main budget lines) your expenditures planned for 2009

The 2008 budget, submitted by the MedWet Secretariat to the MedWet Steering Group in early January and awaiting approval, stands as follows:

MedWet Initiative expenditures for 2008

<b>Standard Secretariat expenditures</b>	
1. STAFF COSTS	255.471,20
2. EXPERTS& CONSULTANTS	22.568,00
3. TRAVEL ON OFFICIAL BUSINESS	11.610,00
4. OFFICE COSTS	6.200,00
5. OUTREACH/CEPA	10.430,00
6. MISCELLANEOUS	9.300,00
7. STEERING GROUP MEETINGS	5.000,00
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>320.579,20€</b>
<b>Non-recurrent expenditures*</b>	
8. COP10 MEETING KOREA	15.400,00
9. CREATION OF RESERVE FUND	32.457,33
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>47.857,33€</b>
<b>Grand TOTAL 2008 (1-9)</b>	<b>368.436,53€</b>

\*The cost of the transformation of the Association into an international organization hasn't been included. To be submitted soon after consultations with members and Secretariat.

## 10. Financial planning

10.1 Summarize your funding needs for 2009 that are not yet covered by confirmed donations, according to the main budget lines used above:

The 2009 budget to be submitted by the MedWet Secretariat to the MedWet Steering Group in early January for approval, stands as follows:

MedWet Initiative expenditures for 2009

<b>Standard Secretariat expenditures</b>	
1. STAFF COSTS	280.000,00
2. EXPERTS& CONSULTANTS	25.000,00
3. TRAVEL ON OFFICIAL BUSINESS	30.000,00
4. OFFICE COSTS	8.000,00
5. OUTREACH/CEPA	12.000,00
6. MISCELLANEOUS	10.000,00
7. STEERING GROUP MEETINGS	6.000,00
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>371.000,00€</b>
<b>Non-recurrent expenditures*</b>	
9. CREATION OF RESERVE FUND	40.000,00
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>40.000,00€</b>
<b>Grand TOTAL 2008 (1-9)</b>	<b>411.000,00€</b>

*10.2 Provide information about your fundraising plan to cover such outstanding needs:*

To encourage partners from Government and NGOs including IOs to cover additional costs not covered by countries. And target regional funding agencies in North Africa and Middle East.

#### **11. Request for Ramsar core budget support**

*11.1 If you request a financial contribution from the Ramsar core budget, specify the amount for 2009 and for the triennium 2009-2011:*

The MedWet Initiative does not request a financial contribution from the Ramsar core budget for the triennium 2009-2011.

#### **GOVERNANCE OF THE REGIONAL INITIATIVE**

#### **12. Governance mechanisms in place**

*12.1 Describe the governance and advisory mechanisms and structures (e.g. committees) in place or to be established to provide guidance and insight to your initiative (attach terms of reference, rules of procedure or operational guidelines, where such exist):*

**MedWet/Com** is a forum for collaboration on wetland issues in the Mediterranean and acts as an advisor to the Convention in this region (Ramsar COP7 Resolution VII.22, paragraph 3). It is the decision-making body within the framework of the **MedWet Initiative** and has been entrusted by the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention to implement the Ramsar strategy and activities with relevance to the Mediterranean Region. In 2007, the 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the MedWet/Com approved a new MedWet governance structure, in order to improve the operation of the Initiative and the functions of its implementing bodies. The new developments include: the approval by MedWet/Com of the full composition of the **Steering Group** (5 members); approval of the modifications of the bylaws of the MedWet Secretariat Association and of the new synthesis of its **Governing Board** (5 members); the assignment of specific strategic tasks (e.g elaboration of 25 year Vision and Strategic Work Plan 2009-2011; launching of the process for the transformation of the MedWet Association into an international organization structure) to the relevant implementing bodies of the Initiative (Steering Group, Scientific and Technical Team, Secretariat).

#### **13. Coordination with the Ramsar Secretariat**

*13.1 Specify the established or anticipated operational arrangements between the governance structures of your initiative and the Ramsar Secretariat:*

The Ramsar Convention has been one of the key founders of MedWet and a member of the MedWet/Com, which is co-chaired by the Ramsar Secretary General. The Ramsar Secretariat is also a permanent observer in the MedWet Steering Group and a member of the Governing Board. In addition, it should be noted that MedWet has been officially recognised as a Ramsar regional initiative by decisions of the Conference of the Contracting Parties and its Secretariat maintains strong links with the Ramsar Secretariat.

*13.2 List the full name, telephone and e-mail contact of the main focal point of your initiative:*

Mr Adnan Budieri, MedWet Coordinator (as of 1-2-2008), Tel: + 30-210-8089270

#### **Attachments:**

Re. 4.1: a) MedWet Terms of Reference, b) MedWet/Com Rules of Procedure,  
c) Scientific and Technical Team Modus Operandi

Re 7.3: d) MedWet Work plan for 2008: Submitted to the MedWet Steering Group for comments