

MR. JOEL MORGAN, MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES AND
TRANSPORT
MR. SHAMLAYE, MINISTER OF EDUCATION
MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT
REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY
REPRESENTATIVES OF THE BUSINESS SECTOR, SPONSORS OF THE WORLD
WETLANDS WEEK
HONORABLE DELEGATES,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN
ALL PROTOCOL OBSERVED

WE ARE AT THE END OF THE CELEBRATION OF THE FIRST EVER WORLD
WETLANDS WEEK CELEBRATION JOINTLY ORGANIZED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF
SEYCHELLES, THE BUSINESS SECTOR, THE RAMSAR CONVENTION, THE UNITED
NATIONS WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION AND THE DANONE GROUP.

DURING THIS WEEK WE HAVE HAD A SERIES OF ACTIVITIES ORGANIZED
AROUND THE THEME OF WETLANDS, THIS CELEBRATION INCULDED SPORT AND
RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES, SOME FIELD VISITS, CULTURAL EVENTS AND A
SEMINAR ON WETLANDS ISSUES.

ALL THESE ACTIVITIES HAVE BENEFITED FROM MAJOR NATIONAL AND
INTERNATIONAL MEDIA COVERAGE WHICH HAS BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION
OF THE ENTIRE PLANET THE IMPORTANCE OF WETLANDS FOR A COUNTRY LIKE
SEYCHELLES AND THE WORLD.

ON BEHALF OF THE RAMSAR SECRETARY GENERAL, I WOULD LIKE TO TELL YOU
HOW PROUD AND HONORED WE ARE TO HAVE PARTICIPATED IN THE SUCCESS
OF THIS MANIFESTATION.

THIS GIVES ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO THANK ALL OF THOSE WHO HAVE MADE
THIS POSSIBLE.

OUR THANKS GO TO THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF SEYCHELLES FOR
HAVING ACCEPTED TO HOST THIS EVENT.

TO THE NGOS AND OTHER CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS WHOSE
INVOLVEMENT AND PARTICIPATION WAS OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE FOR
THE SUCCESS OF THIS WEEK, WE REITERATE OUR THANKS AND SUPPORT.

TO ALL THE PRIVATE COMPANIES, INCLUDING AIRTEL, THE EPHELIA AND
BANYAN TREE RESORTS, WE THANK YOU AND ENCOURAGE YOU TO PURSUE
YOUR ACTIONS IN COLLABORATION WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND THE
GOVERNMENT FOR THE SUSTAINABLE USE OF WETLANDS WHICH ARE WITHIN
OR AROUND YOUR HOTEL INFRASTRUCTURES.

WE WARMLY AND SINCERELY ADDRESS THANKS TO ALL OUR COLLEAGUES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT FOR THEIR TIRELESS EFFORTS AND COMMITMENT IN PREPARING AND ORGANIZING THIS EVENT. PLEASE CONVEY OUR SINCERE APOLOGIES TO YOUR FAMILIES FOR THE LONG DAYS AND SHORT NIGHTS THAT YOU'VE BEEN HAVING BEFORE AND DURING THIS WEEK.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

THE CELEBRATION OF WORLD WETLANDS WEEK WAS FOR US THE OCCASION TO SEE THE MAJOR IMPORTANCE THAT YOUNGSTERS PLAY IN THE SUCCESS OF WETLANDS CONSERVATION IN THE COUNTRY AS THEY WERE WELL REPRESENTED IN MOST OF THE CEREMONIES AND HAVE MADE GENUINE AND POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS. WE ENCOURGAGE THEM TO KEEP UP THE GOOD JOB THAT THEY HAVE STARTED AS THE FUTURE OF SEYCHELLES DEPENDS ON THEM. PLEASE KEEP YOUR COUNTRY CLEAN AND BEAUTIFUL IN THE YEARS TO COME AND RECEIVE OUR THANKS AND CONGRATULATIONS.

FINALLY, WE WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS OUR MOST SINCERE GRATITUDE TO MR. JOEL MORGAN, MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES AND TRANSPORT FOR HIS PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE PREPARATION AND ORGANIZATION OF THIS EVENT. IN SPITE OF HIS BUSY SCHEDULE AND THE OTHER DEPARTMENTS FOR WHICH HE IS RESPONSIBLE, MR. MORGAN HAS BEEN WITH US THROUGHOUT THE CELEBRATION AND HAS MADE EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO MAKE OUR STAY HERE COMFORTABLE. MR. MINISTER, THANK YOU FOR YOUR DEDICATION, YOUR TIME, YOUR COMMITMENT TO THE WETLANDS OF SEYCHELLES AND THE RAMSAR CONVENTION. WITH ALL DUE RESPECT, WE CONSIDER YOU AS A FRIEND OF THE CONVENTION. ONCE AGAIN THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

BEFORE I CONCLUDE MY REMARKS, I WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS OUR GRATITUDE TO THE EVIAN-DANONE GROUP FOR THEIR FINANCIAL AND MORAL SUPPORT WITHOUT WHICH THE SUCCESS OF THIS CELEBRATION WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE.

NOW ON A MORE PERSONAL NOTE; AS YOU KNOW, I AM LEAVING RAMSAR IN THE COMING MONTHS TO JOIN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THIS IS MY LAST OFFICIAL MEETING WITH THE RAMSAR SECRETARIAT. YOU'LL BE SURPRISED TO KNOW THAT MY FIRST MISSION IN THE REGION WAS ALSO IN SEYCHELLES. I WILL BE LEAVING YOUR BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW, BUT SEYCHELLES WILL REMAIN IN MY HEART FOR SO MANY REASONS AND LET ME WARN YOU: BE PREPARED TO SEE ME HERE AGAIN DURING THE YEARS TO COME BY GOD'S WILL!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION.