

# Wetlands and water



**Millennium Development Goals:** *Target 7:* Help to ensure environmental sustainability.



**Rio+20 'The Future We Want':** 122. We recognize the key role that ecosystems play in maintaining water quantity and quality and support actions within the respective national boundaries to protect and sustainably manage these ecosystems.



**Green Economy:** The management of, and investment in, water related ecosystems is essential to address water security for both people and ecosystems in terms of water scarcity, the over-abundance of water (floods) and its quality.



**Aichi Targets:** *Target 14:* safeguarding ecosystems that provide essential services, including services related to water, and contribute to health, livelihoods

# Relevant implementation commitments made by Contracting Parties in COP

## Resolutions & Recommendations

### Resolution VI.23: Ramsar and water

1. RECOGNIZING the important hydrological functions of wetlands, including groundwater recharge, water quality improvement and flood alleviation, and the inextricable link between water resources and wetlands;

### THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

7. CALLS on the Contracting Parties (...)
  - d) to ensure that National Ramsar Committees are involved in national water planning and the development of river basin management strategies; (...)
  - g) to ensure, through partnerships with water related organisations such as the World Water Council, that the Ramsar Convention becomes an audible voice in water debates.

Resolution VIII.1: Guidelines for the allocation and management of water for maintaining the ecological functions of wetlands

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

16. STRONGLY URGES all Contracting Parties to bring the Guidelines for allocation and management of water for maintaining the ecological functions of wetlands (...) to the attention of their national ministries and/or agencies (...) responsible for water resource management, to encourage these bodies to apply the guidance in order to ensure appropriate allocation and management of water for maintaining the ecological functions of wetlands in their territory, and to ensure that the principles contained in the Ramsar Guidelines are incorporated into their national policies on water and on wetlands;
17. FURTHER URGES Contracting Parties to include representatives of national water management ministries and/or agencies in the membership of their National Ramsar/Wetland Committees.

Resolution IX.1: Additional scientific and technical guidance for implementing the Ramsar wise use concept

#### THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

7. WELCOMES the frameworks, guidelines and other advice provided as annexes C, D, and E to this Resolution and URGES Contracting Parties to make good use of them as appropriate, adapting them as necessary to suit national conditions and circumstances and within the frameworks of existing regional initiatives and commitments and in the context of sustainable development.

The Changwon Declaration on human well-being and wetlands

# Principles for development and implementation of Ramsar's water related guidance

## **Sustainability as a goal**

Adequate water has to be provided to wetlands to sustain the functioning of these ecosystems, respecting their natural dynamics for the benefit of future generations.

## **Clarity of process**

The process by which decisions are made on the allocation and management of water and wetlands should be clear to all stakeholders.

## **Equity in participation and decision-making factors**

There should be equity for different stakeholders in their participation in water allocation and water management decisions related to wetlands.

## **Credibility of science**

Scientific methods used to support water allocation and water management decisions related to wetlands should be credible and supported by review from the scientific community.

## **Transparency in implementation**

Once procedures for water allocation and water management decisions related to wetlands have been defined and agreed, it is important that they be seen to be implemented correctly.

## **Flexibility of management**

Like many ecosystems, wetlands are characterized by complexity, changing conditions, and uncertainty. It is essential that an adaptive management strategy be adopted, which requires plans that can be changed as new information or understanding comes to light.

## **Accountability for decisions**

Decision-makers should be accountable.

# Global Water Dialogue

- **water scarcity**
- **Water security**
- **cooperation**
- **Water Governance**
- **Water stewardship**
- **SDG on water**

**For our group- Ramsar strategic plan**



# Feedback requested from participants

- Defining who/what is viewed as water sector  
Level- Regional/Basin/National/Provincial/Site
- 15 min discussion
- 5 min report back

- Identifying the main obstacles impeding engagement of the water sector with other sectors (governmental and non-governmental) at the national/regional/global level
- Is the water-related guidance adopted by Contracting Parties being used by decision makers at the national level in the water sector?
- 15 min discussion
- 5 min report back

- Case studies on good examples of working with the water sectors and/or other sectors (i.e., agriculture, sanitation)?

30 min

15 min report back

- Determining the appropriate scale for Ramsar to better engage with water issues
  - Should it be at the basin/sub-basin level?
  - Should the Convention focus engagement with global organisations such as the World Water Council? Or should the Convention focus engagement with river basin commissions or government across national scales? Or with all of them?
- 15 min discussion
- 5 min report back

- Identify the bodies, organisations or stakeholders who would be more effective for better engagement
- 15 min discussion
- 5 min report back

- How should Ramsar engage (or what should be its role) with existing international water treaties such as the UNECE Transboundary Water Convention, taking into account that it has been opened to universal membership, and the 1997 UN Watercourses Convention, which is not yet in force because it does not have enough member states?
- 15 min discussion
- 5 min report back