



**Ministry of Environment of Spain**

**Guidance for CEPA Plans**  
(Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness)  
**in Spanish Wetlands**

**September 2005**

This work was developed in the framework of the 'Spanish Ramsar CEPA Seminar' facilitated by the Environmental Education Unit of the Ministry of Environment. Environmental education and wetland management officers from the state, autonomous communities and local Administrations, NGO members, private companies working in this sector, researchers and experts on relevant themes participate in the Seminar. (See the list of participants in Annex I.)

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# Presentation

Spain is making an increased effort to incorporate into its legislation, and to establish the norms and procedures necessary to faithfully carry out the commitments made when ratifying multilateral environmental treaties. This publication is a further step in so doing, in this case in connection with the Convention on Wetlands, also known as the Ramsar Convention, specifically with regards to the recently adopted resolutions on the crucial themes of communication and public participation in the conservation and wise use of wetlands.

It is encouraging that the various prominent conventions on environmental issues such as Ramsar, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Climate Change Convention are stimulating their Contracting Parties to launch national plans related to communication, education and public awareness and participation. It is encouraging because this obliges us to rethink our own position on these issues, to attempt to make what we have been doing more coherent and to strengthen the mechanisms in our own democratic system. It is also crucial that the multilateral conventions be the ones to elaborate these standards because action at the country level, no matter how efficient, would not be sufficient to tackle problems whose nature transcends national borders.

Spain must harmonize its environmental actions, in the first instance, with the European Union but also with our partners and neighbours from Northern Africa and from the rest of the Mediterranean, and with the rest of the world on issues such as climate change. But there is no better way to exercise influence over others than by setting the example.

This *Guidance for CEPA Plans in Spanish Wetlands* constitutes an important step to preserve what still remains of these rich and significant habitats—ignored, and even mistreated for a long time—that are wetlands, and to try to recover what we have lost when possible. I trust that the *Guidance* will be very useful, especially due to the participatory approach with which it was developed, and I hope that the Seminar that prepared it will remain active to help put into practise, throughout Spain, the proposed actions.

From our part, we commit this Ministry to maintain its support to this effort in order to guarantee that wetland ecosystem services are able to continue functioning adequately, so as to benefit not only the ecological processes that are essential for a healthy natural system but also important sectors of our society.

Cristina Narbona  
Minister of Environment





# Introduction

The Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971) has evolved from its initial, almost exclusive, preoccupation with the habitat of waterbirds to its current mission: *"the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local, regional and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world"* (underline added). To this date, (July 2005) 146 States have joined the Convention as Contracting Parties and 1,458 wetlands across the world, with a surface area of more than 125 million hectares, have been included by the Parties in the List of Wetlands of International Importance.

Spain is the European Union country with the greatest variety of wetland types, including some ecosystems unique in the context of Western Europe. However, it is estimated that 60% of the national surface area of wetlands and natural lakes has disappeared, primarily in the second half of the last century.

The Spanish State ratified the Ramsar Convention in 1982 and has since incremented its contribution to the List of Wetlands of International Importance to currently include 49 Spanish wetlands with a surface area of 173,000 hectares. Furthermore, heeding the Convention's initiative, it has developed the *Plan Estratégico Español para la Conservación y Uso Racional de los Humedales* (1999) (*Spanish Strategic Plan for the Conservation and Wise Use of Wetlands*), completed in collaboration with all the autonomous communities and relevant social sectors under the framework of the Wetlands Committee coordinated by the General Directorate for Biodiversity of the Ministry of Environment.

This Spanish Strategic Plan was based on the Strategic Plan of the Ramsar Convention, and was the first sectoral plan that developed the *Estrategia Española para la Conservación y Uso Sostenible de la Diversidad Biológica* (1998) (*Spanish Strategy for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity*), which proposes the use of four instruments for achieving its objectives: scientific, institutional and normative, economic and social.

## **Social Instruments**

The growing understanding that conservation and sustainable use are concepts that belong to the social realm have driven a growing international preoccupation with social instruments. Sustainability objectives can be attained only through capacity building of the population—that is, of key sectors, of administrators and of the political class—to appreciate ecosystems and use them wisely.

The challenges facing protected areas managers today entail the need to make natural and cultural conservation compatible with improving the quality of life of people. Experience shows that, for protection measures to be effective, they must have the support of wetlands users, whether traditional or recent.

Social instruments are useful tools available to this new approach to management focused on sustainability, which emerges from a concern with the increase in social conflicts and the ongoing deterioration of vital systems. The functionality of social

instruments is based on the fact that they seek complementarities and to consolidate beneficial practices, that is, on facilitating management. Legislation and other traditional systems remain indispensable but are insufficient for the sought-after objectives.

The Ramsar Convention formally recognized the relevance of social instruments in including these in the guidelines for the application of the wise use concept approved in 1990 by the Fourth Conference of the Parties (COP4). The first Resolution germane to CEPA (communication, education and public awareness) was approved in 1996, at COP6.

The subsequent Conferences of the Parties have reiterated the importance of CEPA, even requesting, in Resolution VII.9 on the *Convention's Outreach Programme 1999-2002: Actions to promote communication, education and public awareness to support implementation of the Convention on Wetlands*, that each Party elaborate national action plans for CEPA.

### **CEPA National Plans**

Each country undertakes its plans according to its own political, legislative and conceptual reality and to its institutional capacities. In Spain, environmental management competencies are decentralized. Thus, we have converted this collective work into the *Orientaciones para planes de CECOP en humedales españoles (Guidance for CEPA Plans in Spanish Wetlands)*, with the understanding that the respect for the competencies of each Administration can and should be associated with this collaboration of all.

In the same manner, the development of this work has taken into account the conceptual framework of the *Libro Blanco de la Educación Ambiental en España (1999) (White Paper of Environmental Education in Spain)*, a widely accepted strategy with directives for the integration of social instruments in environmental management policies. These social instruments—information and communication; training and capacity building; research and evaluation, as well as participation—have a learning thrust. They are powerful tools for conciliating conflicts over use, and are coherent with participatory and democratic management based on the letter and the spirit of International Conventions, on environmental legislation and on our own Constitution.

The acronym CEPA, translated as "CECoP" in Spanish, in this *Guidance* stands for **C**ommunication, **E**ducation, **P**articipation and **A**wareness. Following this logic, we also based this work on Ramsar Resolution VIII.36 on *Participatory environmental management*, with the understanding that participation is a learning process for all those involved, and on Resolution VIII.19 on *Guiding principles for taking into account the cultural values of wetlands*.

### **The Guidance**

We propose this *Guidance* as a learning exercise, a piece of creative work in itself. Over the course of two years environmental education and wetland management officers from the state, autonomous communities and local Administrations, NGO members, private companies working in this sector, researchers and experts have

exchanged knowledge and experience in the framework of the 'Spanish Ramsar CEPA Seminar' facilitated by the Environmental Education Unit of the Ministry of Environment.

The values of a given society are also reflected in the conservation status of its wetlands. The problems faced by these ecosystems go beyond the circumstances of each individual wetland, and the current reality is that social uses are far from guaranteeing conservation and sustainable use in the long term. We must reach a mode of social change that enables us to make conservation and sustainable use a reality.

We talk therefore of the creation of a culture of sustainability, in which wetlands can also serve as case studies in an exercise that, through a deepening of democracy, seeks common denominators between different social sectors. Judicious and well-designed participation becomes the hub by which to articulate new procedures. The combined use of all instruments can be the key to this modernization through which conservation and wise-use can be effectively attained.

## **Objectives**

The general objective of this initiative is to facilitate managers' work by proposing new procedures and instruments. To make contributions so that the policies and management plans of each wetland in Spain come to include the definition and full extent of information, training, research and participation tools, and that these are integrated into concrete operational programmes, conceived as instruments that serve the objectives of managers and of the Administrations responsible.

This proposal must adapt to the expectations, needs and obstacles encountered in the daily management of each wetland.

## **Audience**

The target audience of this *Guidance* are wetland managers and the officials in the different Administrations with decision-making power over land uses, all of whom are guarantors of the application of the legislation.

The target audience also includes social instruments professionals; environmental educators involved in management structures or doing work in this area; NGOs working in wetlands; and environmental education and public use teams or private companies undertaking activities in these areas in coordination with the management team of each wetland.

## **The preparatory process of this *Guidance***

The development of this *Guidance* has been a learning experience in itself.

Developing this *Guidance* through a participatory process not only positions them within the framework of social instruments advocated, but it is also the only means of guaranteeing its use in the field.

Four meetings of the Seminar were held in the National Centre for Environmental Education (CENEAM) for the preparation of this work:

#### NETWORK BUILDING

First meeting, October 2001: to foster an encounter and understanding between the parties involved and reach consensus on the procedures for a diagnostic of the uses of social instruments in wetlands management.

The obstacles derived from the diversity of participants are noted—educators, managers, public officials, NGOs—each one being an expert in different areas of knowledge and implementation, and with different languages and definitions, and different values with regards to the social instruments.

#### DIAGNOSTIC

Second meeting, June 2002: to present and revise the analysis of the state of education and communication in Spanish wetlands. Information exchanged to enable a deepening of the diagnostic and to connect it with the development of the *Guidance*.

The use of CEPA in Spanish wetlands does not respond to the needs perceived by managers, although the managers promote them. Actors who have significant impact on wetlands are not the favoured target of CEPA activities, which are primarily aimed at schools and visitors.

#### DESGIN

Third meeting, May 2004: to reach consensus on the contents and basic outline of what is named *Guidance for CEPA Plans in Spanish Wetlands*. Delineation of a document, a guide for the integration of social instruments in management, with the aim that management itself becomes a learning exercise.

#### WRITING

Fourth meeting, February 2005: to conclude the writing of a *Guidance* draft.

In addition, the participants maintained an active exchange in the periods between meetings. Many participants undertook concrete responsibilities to develop or finalize different components of this effort.

We must thank the disinterested effort of all the Seminar participants, who have been willing to contribute their diverse knowledge bases to the creation of this *Guidance*, in a process of rapprochement that has not been without difficulties. The result is a step further towards the objective, which is also a process, of achieving the conservation and wise use of Spanish wetlands.

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# Chapter 1 – Background

## The Ramsar Convention Guidance

The Ramsar Convention approved its first Strategic Plan in 1996 for the 1997-2002 timeframe. This plan already contemplates CEPA actions, in particular in Operational Objective 3.2: *"To develop and encourage national programmes of EPA [education and public awareness] on wetlands, targeted at a wide range of people, including key decision-makers, people living in and around wetlands, other wetland users and the public at large."*

Since then, the Conference of the Parties (COP), which brings the member countries together every three years, has adopted a series of Resolutions and a set of initiatives relevant to this *Guidance*. The most important of these are mentioned below.

- **7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the COP** (Costa Rica, 1999)

- **Resolution VII.9:** *The Convention's Outreach Programme, 1999-2002 - Actions to promote communication, education and public awareness to support implementation of the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971).* The term 'CEPA' is used for the first time.

The Resolution "strongly urges each Contracting Party to seek to develop and implement their National Wetland CEPA Action Plans as integrated components of their broader environment, biodiversity, wetland and water management policy instruments and programmes, to ensure that communication, education and community awareness are recognised as underpinning the effective delivery of these activities".

The Resolution also requests that Parties nominate "Government and Non-government Focal Points for Wetland Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA)". In response to this request, the General Directorate for Biodiversity, as the Ramsar Administrative Authority in Spain, officially designated in 1999 an official of the Ministry of Environment and a member of the NGO Friends of the Earth as CEPA coordinators for wetlands.

- **Resolution VII.8:** *Guidelines for establishing and strengthening local communities' and indigenous people's participation in the management of wetlands.* The Resolution "calls upon Contracting Parties to apply these Guidelines so as to encourage active and informed participation, and the assumption of responsibility, by local communities and indigenous people in the management of Ramsar-listed sites and other wetlands and the implementation of the wise use principles at the local, watershed, and national levels".

- **8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the COP** (Spain, 2002):

- **Resolution VIII.25:** *The Ramsar Strategic Plan 2003-2008.* Operational Objective 9 of the Plan is aimed at Communication, Education, and Public Awareness. The proposed actions include to: "Ensure that, based on a review of relevant activities, target groups, and threats, a national action plan for wetlands

CEPA has been formulated, has been made widely available, and is being implemented". The general goal for 2003-2005 established by the Conference was that: "At least 50 Contracting Parties to have established national CEPA action plans".

Another of the actions contemplated is that of contributing, through the Ramsar CEPA programme to the Decade for Education for Sustainable Development established by the United Nations, in line with the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002) targets.

The COP requested that the Parties prepare and submit to the Ramsar Secretariat, their National Goals and Activities for putting in practise the Convention Strategic Plan during the 2003-2005 timeframe. Spain developed and communicated its National Goals and Activities, including those related to CEPA and to its commitment to move forward in this area, and will give an account on what is taking place in the national reports presented at each meeting of the COP.

- **Resolución VIII.31:** *The Convention's Programme on communication, education and public awareness (CEPA) 2003-2008*, which completes and expands the Operational Objective 9 of the afore mentioned Strategic Plan.

The Resolution "encourages the Contracting Parties to adopt the concept '*Ramsar CEPA for Sustainable Development*' to effectively address the ecological, social, cultural and economic values of wetlands through this programme". Furthermore, it urges Contracting Parties "to establish appropriately constituted Task Forces, where no mechanism exists for this purpose currently, to undertake a review of needs, capacities and opportunities in the field of wetland CEPA, and based upon this to formulate their Wetland CEPA Action Plans (at national, sub-national, catchment, or local levels)."

The Resolution also "strongly urges all Contracting Parties to seek to develop and implement their Wetland CEPA Action Plans as integrated components of their broader environment, biodiversity, wetland and water management policy instruments and programmes, and to ensure that CEPA is recognized as underpinning the effective delivery of these activities".

- **Resolución VIII.19:** *Guiding principles for taking into account the cultural values of wetlands for the effective management of sites*. These guiding principles acknowledge that "there is a strong link between wetland conservation and benefits to people. In addition, a positive correlation between conservation and the sustainable use of wetlands has been repeatedly demonstrated. Therefore, conservation requires the involvement of indigenous peoples and local communities and cultural values offer excellent opportunities for this." Guiding principle 25 states "to improve wetland-related communication, education and public awareness (CEPA) in the matter of the cultural aspects of wetlands."

The Resolution "Invites the Contracting Parties to consider conducting appropriate joint educational and training activities with regard to the cultural values of wetlands...".

- **Resolución VIII.36:** *Participatory Environmental Management (PEM) as a tool for management and wise use of wetlands*. The Resolution "recognises

Participatory Environmental Management (PEM) as a useful tool for achieving sustainability in the use and management of wetlands”.

The Annex to the Resolution specifies the benefits of PEM, including:

- a) Optimizes resources (technical, financial and cultural) available for environmental management strategies;
- b) By incorporating knowledge from many sources and points of view (especially those directly related to the wetlands in question), facilitates the exchange of knowledge;
- c) Promotes capacities from the base up and the cultural appropriation of the territory;
- d) By improving communication and exchange of information among actors, creates an environment of confidence;
- e) Can be used for settling environmental conflicts; and
- f) Promotes opportunities for participation in other areas.

### **Other Relevant International Conventions**

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) also provides a global framework of this *Guidance*. The 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the CBD COP (2002) approved Decision VI/19 on *Communication, education and public awareness* in support of article 13 of the Convention. Through this Decision the COP adopted the programme of work for a Global Initiative on Communication, Education and Public Awareness”. This programme recognizes that social instruments are essential to achieve conservation objectives and is composed of three elements:

- 1 Towards a global communication, education and public awareness network
- 2 Exchange of knowledge and expertise
- 3 Capacity-building for communication, education and public awareness

This CBD Decision was recognized by the 5<sup>th</sup> Pan European Ministerial Conference on “Environment in Europe” held in Kiev, Ukraine in May 2003, which set the year 2008 as the target by which time at least half of the European countries would develop CEPA plans on biodiversity.

It must also be underscored that the Ramsar Convention has a Joint Work Plan with the CBD that addresses all aspects of common interest between the conventions. With regards to this, the previously mentioned Ramsar Resolution VIII.31 directs the Secretary General to strengthen the collaboration with CBD under the framework of the Joint Work Plan in order to harmonize “the respective CEPA programmes of the two conventions, and to further investigate and pursue, as appropriate, opportunities to do likewise with other conventions and programmes”.

The *Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation In Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention)*, constitutes a fundamental contribution in terms of criteria for the application of and ties between the promotion of access to information and public participation in decision making.

The *Plan de Acción para los espacios naturales protegidos del Estado español (Action Plan for Natural Protected Areas of the Spanish State)* developed by EUROPARC-

Spain (member of the Federation of Natural and National Parks of Europe) also constitutes a frame of reference with regards to a participatory process, a matter that is explicitly included in the Recommendations of this Action Plan ([www.europarc-es.org/](http://www.europarc-es.org/)).

Lastly, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) also contemplates developing CEPA actions (Decision 11/CP.8 of the New Delhi Work Programme for the implementation of article 6 of the Convention), with the aim of coordinating with other CEPA plans of other global conventions.

In summary, all these instruments and strategies designate objectives that serve as a conceptual base for the development of CEPA plans in Spanish wetlands at the national scale, keeping in mind that the paramount objective is always to contribute to the conservation and wise use of wetlands.

### **Application of the Ramsar Convention in Spain**

A series of actions have been implemented in Spain for the application of the Ramsar Convention, by the different Autonomous Communities and the State. The action is coordinated by the Spanish Wetlands Committee, which brings together representatives from all the Autonomous Communities. The General Directorate for Biodiversity of the Ministry of Environment acts as the secretariat of the Committee.

However, the most important step for the application of the Convention took place on 19 October 1999, when the National Commission for the Protection of Nature approved the *Plan Estratégico Español para la Conservación y el Uso Racional de los Humedales (Spanish Strategic Plan of the Conservation and Wise Use of Wetlands)*. The Spanish Strategic Plan constituted the national-level adaptation of the Ramsar Convention's Strategic Plan 1997-2002.

The Spanish Strategic Plan was conceived as the first sectoral plan that developed the *Estrategia Española para la Conservación y Uso Sostenible de la Diversidad Biológica, (Spanish Strategy for the Conservation and Wise Use of Biological Diversity)* approved in 1998 by the National Commission for the Conservation of Nature. The guidelines for the sectoral plans to be developed under the framework of the Strategy include that of promoting education and public awareness. The Strategy also highlight, among other issues, the need for the creation of participatory frameworks and suitable information mechanisms, and the promotion of knowledge and public awareness building.

In addition to these strategic planning instruments, numerous Autonomous Communities have developed their own instruments and strategies for biodiversity, wetlands and environmental education.

### **The White Paper of Environmental Education in Spain**

With regards to the social instruments contemplated in the Spanish Biodiversity Strategy and then taken up by the Wetlands Strategic Plan, these have been developed in greater depth in the *Libro Blanco de la Educación Ambiental en España (White Paper of Environmental Education in Spain)* (Ministry of Environment, 1999),



which constitutes the framework for the development of actions and activities related to environmental education (EE) in our country.

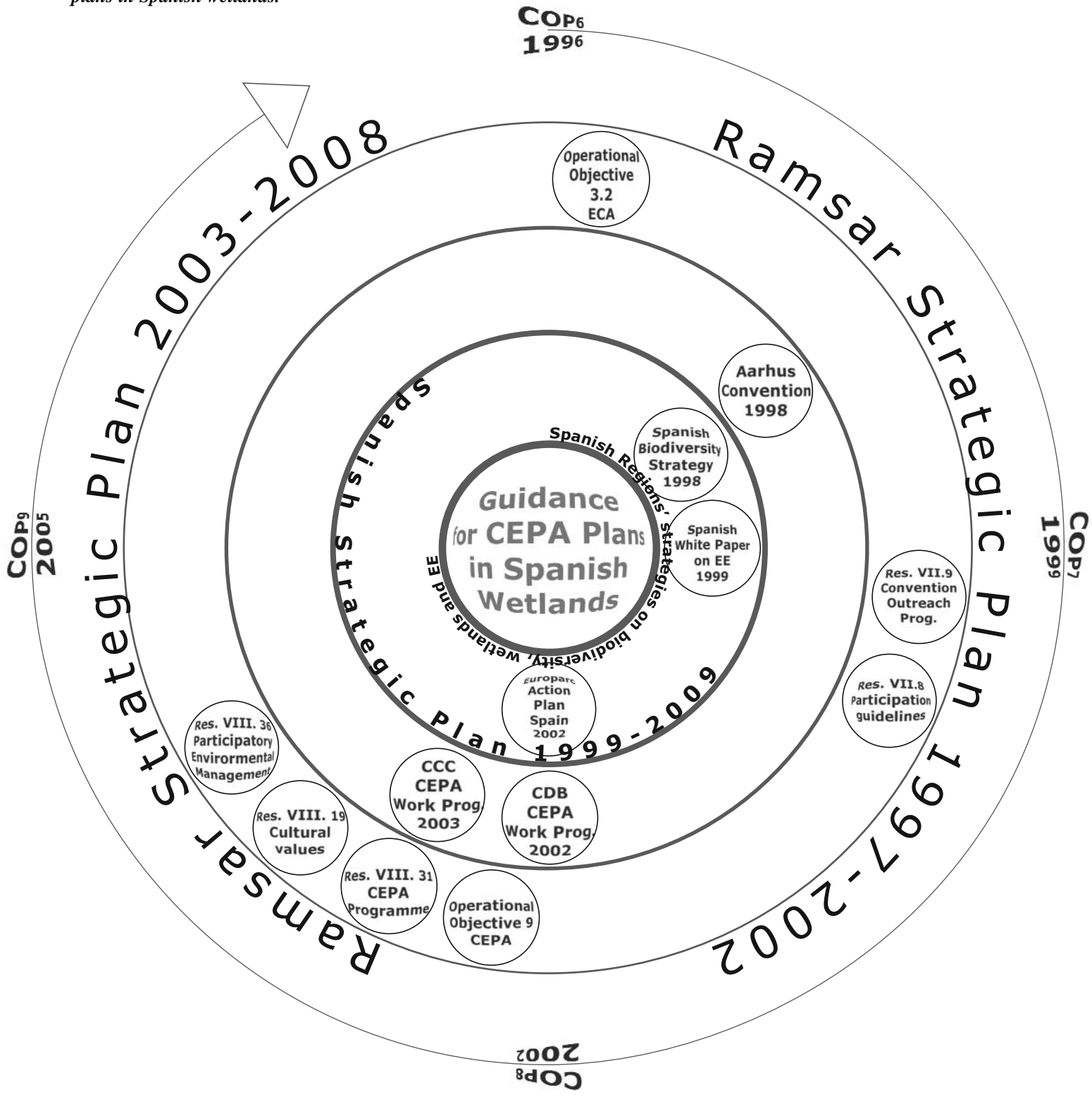
The basic principles that constitute the foundations of the *White Book*, which are by extension adopted in this *Guidance*, can be synthesised as follows:

1. All sectors of society have to be involved, taking into account that EE *...should generate in people awareness of their capacity to intervene in the resolution of problems...*
2. To adopt a wide and open approach that incorporates *...the different viewpoints on conflicts and appreciates the diverse factors that influence these conflicts, including social, cultural and economic aspects, as well as the values and sentiments of the population..."*
3. ITo promote participation, favouring the practical application of learning through actions directed at solving concrete problems.
4. ITo incorporate education into environmental policy initiatives in order to count on the inhabitants to which the actions are directed, and make them participants in the processes that lead to the adoption of measures.

By assuming the principles inspired by these documents, this *Guidance* is based on the conviction that CEPA activities are a general obligation for the Administrations in terms of their application, since participation of all sectors of society is necessary for a conceptual advance in the deepening of democratic rights.

CEPA plans are also considered to be an appropriate setting for learning, with the target of designing and applying new management models for the development of environmental education procedures in wetlands, as well as a new experience of communication with local inhabitants, tied to the development of these natural environments and their sustainability.

Figure 1 - Overview of the general frame of reference for communication, education, participation and awareness (CEPA) plans in Spanish wetlands.



## Chapter 2 – Diagnostic

Spain is not an exception with regards to the lack of knowledge that still exists at the global scale on the extent, hydrology, functioning and values of wetlands.

Officially, the only current inventory of wetlands is that foreseen in the Water Law and completed in 1991. The inventory has not been published, but it can be consulted at the General Directorate for Biodiversity of the Ministry of Environment. The data mentioned in the 1999 Wetlands Strategic Plan is from this inventory.

However, Law 4/1989 on *Conservación de los espacios naturales y de la flora y fauna silvestres* (Conservation of natural spaces and of wild flora and fauna) establishes, in article 25, that the Ministry of Environment shall develop and maintain permanently updated a Wetland National Inventory with the information provided by the Autonomous Communities in whose territory these are found, in order to know their evolution and, as the case may be, indicate the protection measures that should be ascertained by the watershed hydrological plans. The development of this article was included in the Royal Decree 435/2004 that establishes that task of developing and permanently updating a Wetland National Inventory falls to the Ministry of Environment through the General Directorate for Biodiversity, with the information provided by the autonomous communities. The Decree contemplates that for this there shall be established and maintained updated the database of the Wetland National Inventory.

Thus, a more up-to-date information on Spanish wetlands will be available after all the Autonomous Communities have submitted their data, for which the Royal Decree does not establish a deadline, although the technical information form included in the Royal Decree does not contemplate all the technical data important to collect in order to carry out a precise diagnostic of the situation.

Meanwhile, various Autonomous Communities have developed inventories based on their own legislation, while others have collected detailed data although they do not yet have specific legislation for this.

Lastly, it is worth mentioning that on the 10 October 2002, shortly before the Ramsar COP-8 meeting in Valencia, the Council of Ministers approved the establishment of the State Foundation for the National Wetlands Centre, with headquarters in the city of Valencia. The accord of the Council of Ministers establishes that the Centre's function is to increment, disseminate and divulge scientific and technical information on wetlands, promote their sustainable use and encourage collaboration between public administrations, academic authorities and public and private actors for the conservation of these ecosystems. After a hiatus, the steps necessary for opening the Centre are currently being taken.

Meanwhile, it is important that those dedicated to heading CEPA plans for a particular wetland, or for a group of wetlands, seek to collect as much information as possible on each site, not only that contributed by the biological sciences but also the contributions from the social sciences, in particular taking into account local culture and traditional uses.

## A SWOT of Wetlands

A WTSO (Weaknesses, Threats, Strengths and Opportunities) analysis of wetlands undertaken during the CEPA Seminar revealed the situation described below:

<p><b><u>Weaknesses:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Heterogeneity of wetlands and of their management.</li> <li>- Negative perception of wetlands and their potential.</li> <li>- Insufficient scientific knowledge on the functioning of wetlands.</li> <li>- Lack of communication between managers and scientists, with lost of opportunities for mutual support.</li> <li>- Management decisions are made <i>ex situ</i>, are not holistic and resources are not assigned to what is important.</li> <li>- Lack of resources and management personnel.</li> <li>- Reticence from the part of administrators to recognize the problems of the wetland.</li> <li>- Lack of incentives for the participation of stakeholders.</li> <li>- Lack of evaluation of activities.</li> <li>- Information is unidirectional (it is emitted but not received), and inadequate relationships with the media.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Strengths:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enormous distinctiveness of wetlands as natural, cultural and economic heritage.</li> <li>- Large capacity of wetlands to respond to positive actions (such as rehabilitation, regeneration and environmental improvements).</li> <li>- Ecosystem attractive to people: pleasant surroundings with much biodiversity where it is easy to observe life.</li> <li>- Wetlands are bioindicators of a large area.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Threats:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Abandonment and lost of traditional knowledge and activities, and the social values of these.</li> <li>- Disparity of criteria among groups with interests in wetlands.</li> <li>- Insufficient social awareness.</li> <li>- Enormous urbanization pressure on many wetlands.</li> <li>- Differences in decision-making capacity and influence between groups and administrations that provide opinions and make decisions on wetlands (for example, regional ministries of environment vs. regional ministries of public works).</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Opportunities:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ecolabeling for environmentally friendly products.</li> <li>- Promotion of the concept of 'sustainability'.</li> <li>- There is a trend towards respect for the environment in general, and of wetlands in particular.</li> <li>- Inclusion of many wetlands in the Natura 2000 Network, as a means to reach a holistic and participatory management.</li> <li>- Experience of those working with CEPA for 25 years.</li> <li>- Collaborative work of technicians and researchers.</li> <li>- Existing synergies between the big environmental action plans.</li> <li>- New uses (sport and recreation) help revalorise wetlands.</li> </ul>

## Social Perception of Wetlands<sup>1</sup>

The perception of wetlands in Spain began to evolve beginning in the second half of the last century. Until well into the 1970s, wetlands were habitats condemned to disappear. The very terminology used to designate wetlands (swamp, bog, quagmire,

<sup>1</sup> This section of the text has been edited based on the work of Oscar Cid (2004).

marsh) used for centuries evoked a distasteful and sometimes fearful character, deeply entrenched in the collective subconscious. In summary, wetlands were perceived as unhealthy and unproductive places and were often the object of all sorts of legends charged with drama and mystery.

In the mid-1970s, naturalists and biologists began to disseminate the values of these ecosystems and a trend of opinion in favour of their conservation began to emerge. They began to be designated generically as "wet zones" and more recently as "wetlands". The change in terminology was not irrelevant: the National Parks of the Tablas de Daimiel and Doñana are established and some waterbird hunting practices begin to be regulated.

Spain joins the Ramsar Convention in 1982, concurring with an important social change: the approval of environmental norms for the conservation and protection of natural areas and the beginning of instilling of environmental education. All this contributes to a change in social perception of wetlands that slowly begin to be considered as sanctuaries for conservation, not without tensions and conflicts between different groups of stakeholders.

In conclusion, the attitude towards conservation and social function of wetlands has matured, perhaps as part of a greater awareness that has developed with regards to environmental issues in general.

However, there remain evident deficits in the area of public awareness that impact the conservation status and wise use of wetlands. Thus, while in some cases actions have been taken together with the public and the local population that have resulted in a change in perception of residents and visitors, in other cases wetlands still suffer from pressures and impacts derived from a negative perception or a lack of appreciation for the values, functions and products of wetlands, that is, for what is being termed "ecosystem services".<sup>2</sup>

However, one can still clearly distinguish a difference between social perception when we talk of awareness in general, and, in many cases, when referring to those involved in a concrete wetland, where different interests are in play, in particular interests related to the final use of the wetland, which could be that of long-term conservation or transformation for other uses.

This means that wetlands are still under threat, especially in areas with strong human intervention. The change of perception does not necessarily bring about a change in lifestyles, nor does it always translate into an appreciable change in management. It is therefore necessary to increase efforts to develop awareness programmes for the general public and specific plans for the wise use of each wetland.

These programmes should 'reveal' the values, functions and attributes of wetlands (that is, their services) that are not yet appreciated by the inhabitants, and work with the relevant sectors and key actors in the wetland, using in each case the appropriate language and tools.

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<sup>2</sup> The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (2005) report discusses, including with reference to wetlands, three types of ecosystem services that directly benefit human society: 'provisioning', 'regulating', and 'cultural services'. In addition, there are 'support services' which allow the other three to function. (<http://www.millenniumassessment.org/en/products.aspx>)

Finally, we must point out the need to consider these actions as necessary on par with the other management measures. For this, the necessary financial and personnel resources must be envisioned.

### Evolution of CEPA Activities

When analysing what has thus far taken place with regards to CEPA in wetlands, we observe that activities respond primarily to diffusion objectives through actions directed mainly at student and/or youth populations or at the so-called 'general public'.

The most common content of these actions tend to be descriptive and of little relevance to the interests of the target audience, and are sometimes disconnected from management objectives and designed without consideration of the specificity of an ecosystem as unique as wetlands.

A paradoxical situation detected in the analysis of the current situation is that environmental educators sometimes work with actors that have little or nothing to do with the problems of the wetland. The graph below, the result of an exercise undertaken under the framework of the CEPA Seminar, is an illustration of this.

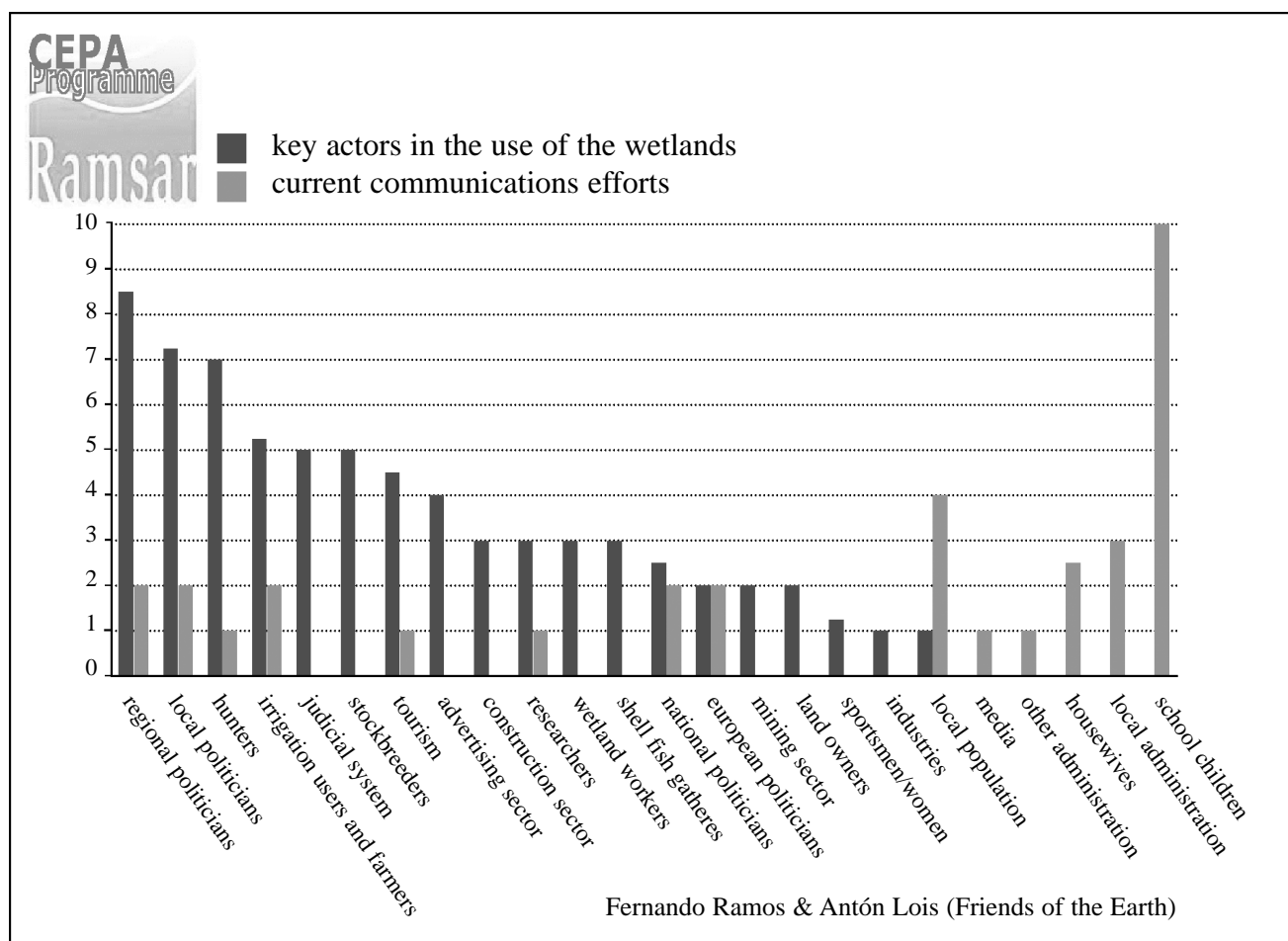


Figure 2 - Contrast between key actors and communication efforts

## **Relationship between CEPA Activities and Wetlands Management**

Management of Spanish wetlands has, in recent times, incorporated numerous social and public use activities. Nevertheless, CEPA activities are frequently contemplated as an addendum to management, disconnected from the management objectives.

Some authors have reflected on the role of this type of activities in natural areas in general and their observations are applicable to wetlands:

- there exists an interest from the part of area managers in promoting activities to make know the values of the area;
- important investments in awareness-related buildings are being made: ecomuseums, observatories, exhibition centres, visitor centres;
- the tourism attraction potential is being promoted, as reflected in visitor statistics;
- there is a limited technical preparation for the use of social instruments in management;
- frequently, there are no evaluation criteria or processes that enable advancing towards the attainment of some objectives, which are generally poorly defined;
- these activities are viewed more as a visitor service than as a management instrument;
- there exists a high level of precariousness in the equipment and personnel charged with developing CEPA activities. The task is frequently left in the hands of companies and/or hired personnel that generally work in inadequate conditions;
- although all institutional statements frequently contain reference to the local population as targets of these programmes, it is difficult to find specific programmes that respond to the expectation of the different stakeholders: farmers, landowners, fishermen, local administration, etc.; and
- frequent methodological deficits can be observed which thwart participation as a process necessary for the emergence of consensual trade-offs (Cid 2004).

The following elements, which emerged as result of the reflections that took place during the CEPA Seminar, must also be taken into account:

- it is necessary to improve the planning of CEPA activities, and to better define the objectives of these activities;
- it is necessary to evaluate, in each case, whether or not it is worthwhile to promote the public use of a wetland (for example, it may not be appropriate in small wetlands);
- sometimes there is a separation between management of conservation and management of public use;
- CEPA programmes frequently only discuss values and do not discuss problems;
- the management objectives are not explain to the stakeholders;
- CEPA is consider as an add-on, not as a management tool;
- it is necessary to incorporate new target audiences of CEPA and not limit it to school children;
- it is important to incorporate new tools, such as participation;

- it is necessary to explain management to educators so that they may incorporate the content of management in educational programmes;
- the CEPA practitioner must also be a mediator between management and the public;
- the public must recognise the CEPA practitioner as an additional management agent;
- it is necessary to promote more coordination between Administrations with regards to CEPA; and
- it is urgent to adopt quality parameters in the activities and resources destined to interpretation. The Association for the Interpretation of the Patrimony (AIP) has tools available for evaluating the quality of these services ([www.interpretaciondelpatrimonio.org](http://www.interpretaciondelpatrimonio.org)).



# Chapter 3: Social Instruments: Actors, Objectives and Actions

This chapter presents a proposal with respect to the social instruments that can be utilized to plan and implement CEPA plans, the objectives sought by each of these instruments, the actions of those who develop them and the actors to whom they are directed.

For this, we propose a guidance series regarding the actions to follow, always departing from a focus that promotes participation. To achieve CEPA objectives, it is important that the actors implicated, both directly as well as indirectly in the use and management of wetlands, be involved in the process from the beginning. This can help to significantly reduce the level of conflict that sometimes exists between the different actors.

This *Guidance* places high stakes on **participation**. However, it must be taken into account that participation is a slow process that requires patience, prudence, consistency, and the generation of a high degree of confidence in the process and in those leading it. But it is also certain that, in spite of the difficulties involved, the first results can occur fairly rapidly.

## **Social Instruments**

Four types of instruments for CEPA plans are described below:

- **Information and communication**
- **Training and capacity building**
- **Research**
- **Participation**

Diverse actions directed at different actors with influence over a wetland are proposed for each instrument. These instruments should be used in a mutually reinforcing manner, without neglecting any of them, since the correct development of each plan depends on this.

The instruments and actions presented here have been conceived such that they can be applicable to any Spanish wetland. However, those responsible for the management of each area should distinguish and determine **the actors most decisive, relevant or with most influence** for conservation and wise use of resources, in order to prioritize their participation in the process. The table below offers a non-exhaustive list of possible actors in a wetland.

## Possible actors in a wetland

**1. Decision-makers.** Administrators with direct competency over the management of the wetland:

- \* Conventions, institutions and international norms that imply obligations from part of the State
- \* State administration
- \* Autonomous community administration
- \* Local administration

Note: Those responsible for each wetland must be aware of the need of maintaining decision-makers informed on CEPA matters given the frequent renewal of public officials.

**2. Property owners and direct users.** Those having direct interests and rights over the wetland:

- \* Owners of land, homes and other real estate
- \* Owners of tourism and other enterprises
- \* Local and non-local users: farmers, irrigators, stockmen, collectors, fishermen, clam harvesters, hunters, artisans, tourism employees, transportation providers, tourists and visitors, artists

**3. Possessors or depositors of traditional culture and knowledge.** People with knowledge of the traditional use and management of the environment, and those practising different manifestations of the traditional culture.

**4. Other actors within and outside the watershed.** They also have an influence in the wetlands but their relation with it is of a professional/business nature. These actors are not as active in the community as the ones previously mentioned but they also exercise considerable influence. This group also includes those who affect the quality and/or quantity of water in the wetland through interventions in any part of the watershed.

**5. Organisations.** Local or external development associations, interest groups, churches or religious groups, foundations, corporations, labour unions, cooperatives, NGOs, etc.

**6. Communications media.** Radio, television and press at local, regional and national levels; websites, bulletin and/or publicity billboards.

**7. Education and research centres.** Primary, secondary or university level, including professional training institutions, which maintain a relationship with the wetland in some manner.

**8. The population in general.**

The sections below describe, for each of the proposed instruments, the objectives sought, the actors involved and the actions to develop with the goal of ensuring the conservation and wise use of a wetland. The lists of actions are not mandatory or exhaustive, but rather provided as examples. The actions necessary must be considered in the case of each particular wetland.

## **A) Information and Communication**

**Information:** means to make known the facts, situations or processes, transmitting these to the addressees in a manner that is comprehensible to them (unidirectional systems).

**Communication:** is the bi-directional interchange of information that seeks to generate a predetermined attitude, provoke a reaction or motivate a predetermined behaviour in all the interested parties, offering arguments or valuations in support of an established position.

### ***Objectives:***

- \* Introduce a corporative image, the brand identity of CEPA actions in general and of those that promote them.
- \* Make know the values and functions of wetlands, as well as the opportunities offered by them and the benefits (ecosystem services) of their wise use. This will be done through the design of materials necessary for the diffusion of this information.
- \* Accomplish a predetermined attitude and behaviour in users regarding the sustainable use of wetland resources.
- \* Put in place a process of interaction and make participation channels known.
- \* Detect existing informal information channels and analyse their potential and possibility of using them.

### ***Actions:***

#### **1. By decision-makers:**

- \* Disseminate the CEPA plan and provide human, financial and institutional resources for its implementation.
- \* Reconsider the use of resources available in light of the CEPA plan, to ensure that resources are destined to the actors with most influence over the conservation and wise use of the wetland.
- \* Guarantee, facilitate and promote access to the information available on the wetland.
- \* Inventory and evaluate the resources that serve to ensure the sustainability of the wetland (equipment, networks, NGO, research) and disseminate them.
- \* Carry out information seminars about the wetland on themes requested by the stakeholders.
- \* Initiate (or maintain active when these already exist) fora and websites on the CEPA plan, with personnel to keep them updated and act as animators.
- \* Release the results of the evaluation and reorientation of the CEPA plan.

## **2. Aimed at property holders and users:**

- \* Produce printed and audiovisual materials that directly respond to the interests of property holders and other users, using a language that is familiar to them.
- \* Find common spaces of encounter in which to listen to property holders and users.
- \* Promote transparency in environmental information from corporations (corporate social responsibility) and, when possible, provide assistance to put this into practise.

## **3. Aimed at possessors of traditional knowledge and animators of traditional cultural expressions:**

- \* Inventory and register the traditional knowledge relevant to the wetland in a participatory manner.
- \* Identify possible opportunities so that traditional knowledge may be disseminated and utilized in order to ensure its preservation.
- \* Create encounter spaces for fostering relationships and exchanging experiences.
- \* Promote the celebration of cultural events related with the wetland (popular fairs, gastronomy).

## **4. Aimed at other actors within and outside the watershed:**

- \* Identify fora in which to contact actors that have been detected, and make known the repercussions of certain distant activities on the wetland, as well as the opinions of those affected.
- \* Establish permanent communication lines with these actors.

## **5. Aimed at organisations:**

- \* Detect and inventory the more active organisations or those with potential for action in the wetland.
- \* Facilitate and promote the exercise of the right to environmental information.
- \* Make known the CEPA plan among organisations.
- \* Create tools for environmental information related to wetlands.

## **6. Aimed at communications media:**

- \* Promote the treatment of environmental information with divergent opinions.
- \* Foster the use of an accessible and rigorous language in communications or materials aimed at the media.
- \* Generate a positive and attractive type of information that invites participation.
- \* Do not treat environmental news as an isolated event, valuing the process and not just the issue of the day.

## **7. Aimed at education and research centres:**

- \* Identify education centres in the vicinity of the wetland.
- \* Identify research centres that can help advance the conservation and wise use of the wetland.

- \* Communicate and transmit to those interested the experiences and results of research related to the sustainable use of the wetland.
- \* Foster R&D of priority for the conservation of the wetland.

## 8. Aimed at the population in general

- \* Promote the knowledge on and the exercise of the right to information.
- \* Create interpretative services coherent with the CEPA plan and with the standards of the Association for the Interpretation of the Patrimony (AIP).
- \* Systematise information from each sector, update it and exchange it.
- \* Establish information and communication channels through public events.

<b>Publications</b>	Brochures, guides, maps, books, manuals, conference and convention minutes, theses, etc.
<b>Mass communication media</b>	Radio (slots, interviews, campaigns, etc.) television, digital press, magazines, newspapers (news, articles, announcements, interviews, etc.)
<b>Internet</b>	Web pages, links, fora, e-mail, etc.
<b>Mobile telephone</b>	SMS, MMS
<b>Audiovisual</b>	Slides, video, transparencies, CDs (interactive, explanatory)
<b>Logos, slogans</b>	In documents, stickers, t-shirts, bulletin boards etc.
<b>Expositions and exhibitions</b>	Models, posters, information sheets, files, collections, etc.
<b>Mass communication</b>	Campaigns, competitions, fairs, activities, workshops, games, street animation, theatre, etc.
<b>Technical communication</b>	Conferences, seminars, meetings, round tables, informational talks, workshops etc.
<b>Interpretation</b>	Self-guided itineraries, visitor centres and guided tours
<b>Informal channels</b>	Individuals who without being key players can act as transmitters of messages with a high degree of acceptance from part of certain audiences.

**Table 1. Channels and Tools for the Transmission of Information**

Modified from Viñals (2002[v1])<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Viñals, M.J. (ed.). 2002. Herramientas para la gestión del turismo sostenible en humedales (Tools for Sustainable Tourism Management in Wetlands). Ed. Organismo Autónomo Parques Nacionales. Ministerio de Medio Ambiente (4 vols.).

## **B) Training and Capacity Building**

**Training** is the systematic work based on facts, ideas, technical abilities and values that enables a person to undergo the process of configuring a view of the world and one's position in it.

**Capacity building** is a continuous training adapted to the needs determined by current socio-environmental problems and future goals.

Training and capacity building should always be adapted to those to whom they are directed.

### ***Objectives:***

- \* Facilitate the understanding by all stakeholders of the complexity of wetlands (speaking a common language).
- \* Practise and dominate techniques, abilities and procedures useful for implementing participatory processes.
- \* Train and build capacity on the environmental reality, conservation, wise use and management of wetlands, as well for the development of plans and strategies.
- \* Promote best practices in wetlands.

### ***Actions:***

#### **1. By decision-makers:**

- \* Promote environmental training that facilitates the understanding of the functioning of wetlands, the appreciation of their values and functions and the promotion of wise use.
- \* Promote training about participatory processes.
- \* Develop a training system based on the different target groups, which is sufficiently flexible to be adapted according to needs.
- \* Make available to the different actors case studies of best environmental practices for different activities.
- \* Take advantage of synergies with other training actions.
- \* Promote training on interpretation in a coherent manner at all levels of CEPA.
- \* Promote continuing training on CEPA matters.

Possible courses:

- \* For management teams: social instruments/CEPA plans
- \* For educators: wetland management and social instruments
- \* Workshop where managers and educators interact

#### **2. Aimed at property holders and users:**

- \* Design and put into practise sectoral programmes that respond to particular needs but always in view of conservation and wise use of wetlands.
- \* Implement the training and capacity building courses proposed by stakeholders.
- \* Include training and capacity building in the management plan of the wetland.

- \* Develop the actions identified in the courses.

### **3. Aimed at possessors of traditional knowledge and animators of traditional cultural expressions:**

- \* Prioritise which types of traditional knowledge are necessary to include in training and capacity building plans, with the goal that these be made known.
- \* Identify who among the possessors and users of traditional and cultural knowledge will act as trainers in the courses undertaken.
- \* Demand and foster the implementation of this type of courses.

### **4. Aimed at actors within and outside the watershed:**

- \* Organize and implement training courses on best practices and risk prevention.
- \* Create, in these courses, learning networks using the experience gained in similar activities, depending on the activity in question.
- \* Maintain a level of organized training that allows for continuous recycling (lifelong training).

### **5. Aimed at organisations:**

- \* Foster and promote training courses or workshops on CEPA and on management problems in wetlands.
- \* Create incentives for organizations with the capacity to do so to impart courses on CEPA matters.
- \* Exchange information on the different courses.
- \* Promote training and capacity building by sector.
- \* Create databases of foundations, cooperatives, etc. that finance, organise and/or facilitate these types of courses.
- \* Serve as a base for the channelling, coordination and promotion of courses.

### **6. Aimed at communications media:**

- \* Offer the necessary training so that the communication media function in the best manner in CEPA matters.
- \* Organise seminars for journalists on wetlands and on CEPA.
- \* Promote and foster the existence of this type of training courses and capacity building in general, and in particular in journalist associations.

### **7. Aimed at education and research centres:**

- \* Offer training and capacity building courses.
- \* Encourage education and research centres to organize the programme of the course and to provide content and teaching personnel for them.
- \* Promote the inclusion CEPA plans in university coursework.
- \* Promote the use of wetlands as 'living' laboratories.
- \* Promote the creation of self-teaching and learning 'online'.

### **8. Aimed at the population in general:**

- \* Carry out courses on participatory management.

- \* Offer quality CEPA services.
- \* Promote activities that favour a change of attitude towards wetlands.

## **C) Research and Evaluation**

**Research** is the elaboration of rigorous and socially relevant scientific information that guides the design and implementation of more effective educational interventions.

**Evaluation** is the systematic collection of qualitative and quantitative information in all the phases of the intervention, which enable the evaluation of results. (See Chapter 4 dedicated to this topic).

### *Objectives:*

- \* Identify and characterise existing problems and conflicts in wetlands, and the possible causes at their origin.
- \* Develop tools for the resolution of conflicts, mediation methods and participation mechanisms.
- \* Carry out and/or update knowledge on the socio-economic context of the wetland as well as on the relationships between people and wetlands.
- \* Generate feedback in the ongoing processes.
- \* Foster the application of results and their extrapolation, carrying out the necessary adaptations to make these accessible to the target audience.
- \* Include correctional activities and follow-up studies, as well as the development of new techniques.
- \* Integrate universities and research centres in the development of the CEPA plan.
- \* Complete the research phase with the communication and transfer of results.

### *Actions*

#### **1. By decision-makers:**

- \* Include the content of CEPA in research and development (R&D) programmes.
- \* Establish collaboration agreements with universities and other entities for the realisation of basic and applied research projects in wetlands.
- \* Share and take advantage of the results of research.
- \* Carry out research seminars on active participation.
- \* Illustrate with examples: demonstration projects with social benefits in wetlands.

#### **2. Aimed at property holders and users:**

- \* Investigate or promote research to identify the more environmentally appropriate and productive uses (better efficiency and sustainability of productive processes and \* reduction of environmental impact).
- \* Identify bad practices and evaluate their consequences.



### **3. Aimed at possessors of traditional knowledge and animators of traditional cultural expressions.**

- \* Seek new uses or applications for old uses (new ideas for old uses).
- \* Favour anthropological research tied to traditional conservation practices and the wise use of wetland resources.
- \* Research methods of recording traditional knowledge.

### **4. Aimed at actors within and outside the watershed:**

- \* Research the development of interrelationships systems between distant users.
- \* Foster research on phenomena that apparently do not have repercussions because they take place in points distant from the wetland, and study their connections.

### **5. Aimed at organisations:**

- \* Promote the realization of auto-evaluations of their activities to provide feedback to the system and make it more efficient.
- \* Encourage research and its evaluation, broadening their offer of activities.

### **6. Aimed at communications media:**

- \* Stimulate permanent and fluid channels of communication with scientific experts and technicians.
- \* Research new forms of information transmission.
- \* Share research results.

### **7. Aimed at education and research centres:**

- \* Foster research on education in the centres, and attempt to incorporate wetland environmental and social themes in the curricula (as alternative options).
- \* Promote the integration of CEPA tools in national and regional research programmes.
- \* Promote research on CEPA in wetlands in doctoral and postgraduate university programmes.

### **8. Aimed at the population in general:**

- \* Foster a collaborative attitude towards research and make the public party of the research results, in an accessible and amenable manner.

## **D) Participation**

**Participation** is the process of sharing decisions on matters that affect the personal and community life where one lives.

### ***Objectives:***

- \* Promote and facilitate social participation in the development of the CEPA plan.

- \* Identify the adequate communication channels for the different social actors relevant to the correct management of the wetland.
- \* Involve the population in an active participation process, from the design of strategies for the wetland to their application.
- \* Jointly advance the resolution of conflicts, ensuring a more rational management.
- \* Develop and improve existing participation channels, and create new ones that facilitate the involvement of local communities.

## *Actions*

### **1. By decision-makers:**

- \* Promote the sponsorship and participation of private entities in CEPA plans and activities.
- \* Establish or improve planning procedures, organs and instruments relative to active participation in each wetland.
- \* Implement public use plans in wetlands in a participatory manner.
- \* Support the social network related to the wetland.
- \* Encourage the development of agreements between the Administration and other actors.
- \* Establish stable personnel teams to guarantee the continuity of participatory management.
- \* Create permanent seminars on participation.
- \* Develop manuals and catalogues of best practices for participatory management.
- \* Promote the use of existing equipment and infrastructure to motivate participation. The local population must 'take possession of' the installations.

### **2. Aimed at property holders and users:**

- \* Foster the creation of an association of property holders and users to have better access to and communication with them.
- \* Invite property holders and users to meetings of the management organs and make them participants.
- \* Incorporate property holders and users in planning and management of wetlands.

### **3. Aimed at possessors of traditional knowledge and animators of traditional cultural expressions:**

- \* Value and integrate traditional knowledge into the wetland's management.
- \* Establish permanent participation channels in the transmission and valuation of this type of knowledge and expressions.

### **4. Aimed at actors within and outside the watershed:**

- \* Identify possibilities of participation by these actors in relevant events.
- \* Identify planning and management activities in the watershed where consideration of the wetland would be important.

## **5. Aimed at organisations:**

- \* Encourage organisations to collaborate in management and CEPA activities.
- \* Invite them to participate in wetland management organs.
- \* Stimulate them to act as facilitators and/or mediators in social participation processes.
- \* Create incentives for organizations to visit natural areas.
- \* Create incentives for organizations to foster participation among their associates.

## **6. Aimed at communications media:**

- \* Create teams to provide information on the CEPA plan.
- \* Set up encounters with journalist associations.

## **7. Aimed at education and research centres:**

- \* Create incentives for centres to involve professors and researchers in the CEPA plan.
- \* Motivate the centres to create incentives for students' participation.
- \* Connect to the centres in the vicinity of the wetland to facilitate information and visits.

## **8. Aimed at the population in general:**

- \* Foster associations to have better access to participatory processes.
- \* Involve the local population in the initiatives taking place in the wetland.

**Table 2. Proposed Indicators for the Application and Follow-up of CEPA Instruments**

PARTICIPATION	COMMUNICATION	INFORMATION	TRAINING
Identification of agents.	Interchange of information and opinions with other social agents.	Analysis of characteristics of different social groups, their interests, needs, preconceptions, etc.	Studies of training needs within their social sphere exist and are taken into account in the design of training programmes.
Existence of participation organs	Key communication media have been identified for the wetland, both the traditional ones (interpretation in situ, press, radio, TV), as well as new technological applications (multimedia technologies, internet).	Benefits and shortcomings of different information media are known and are selected according to the concrete characteristics of each group.	Training actions work on both conceptual content as well as on the procedural and emotional, building capacity of the participants in an integrated manner.
Existence of other participation channels.	Relationship with media and presence in these.	Information on events, situations or processes to be transmitted is developed in a comprehensive, reliable, current, accessible, usable and rigorous manner.	Active and theoretical-practical activities are promoted, where critical analysis, reflection and democratic participation are fostered.
All of the agents in these organs/channels are called upon.	Promotion of diffusion of reports and results to social agents.	Information processes, both general and personalised are addressed.	Capacity building in the society in general, but also of professional sectors directly related to environmental aspects of wetlands.
Response of key actors.	A comprehensible language is used in the communication with social agents.	Law 38/95 on access to environmental information is applied.	Courses on management and wetland values undertaken.
Management decisions are impacted by these organs/agents.	Communication campaigns are undertaken with objectives relevant to social and environmental plans, avoiding propaganda-like and superficial campaigns.	Is there diffusion of the management plan?	Training courses on CEPA undertaken.
Modification of budgets in function of the decisions of the participation organ.	Communication programmes or campaigns are designed by multidisciplinary teams (managers, educators and communication professionals).	Is there diffusion of the CEPA plan?	Involvement of other institutions in training plans/activities.
Are conflicts with agents reduced with increase of CEPA activities?			

# Chapter 4 – Evaluation

## Why evaluate CEPA plans?

Evaluation is important to demonstrate the usefulness of the social tools used, at least with regards to two aspects: a) conservation and improvement of the wetland; and b) the perception, involvement and assumption of responsibility by the social agents with regards to the wetland values. Evaluation is also important for promoting and improving participatory management procedures.

## Evaluation Criteria

Some of the basic criteria for evaluation are the following:

- **Indicators** must permit and facilitate not only quantitative valuation, but also, and especially, qualitative valuation. The indicators must be scientifically valid, representative, significant and straightforward to apply;
- The necessary **information sources** must be accessible; and
- The **results** must be easy to apply and interpret by the different agents interested (that is, they must be transmissible); comparable across different levels (regional, state, European); and useful for valuation as well as for facilitating decision-making.

The application of these criteria requires an open process that must evolve with time. Furthermore, the application must be contextual, that is, it must adapt to the needs and circumstances of each wetland and its social context, while ensuring that the data can be compared to that of other CEPA plans.

## Reference Indicators

The table below proposes a series of indicators for conducting the follow-up of CEPA plans at regional and national levels.

**Table 3. Indicators for the Follow-up of CEPA Plans**

General Indicators
* Number of wetlands that have Use and Management Plans that incorporate CEPA Plans..
* Total budget allocated to CEPA activities and percent of overall budget allocated to CEPA.
* Number and types of CEPA initiatives carried out by NGOs or by the private sector.
* Number of wetlands that participate in the celebration of World Wetlands Day <sup>5</sup> . Target groups and activities carried out.
* Number of 'live observatories'.

<sup>5</sup> 2 February each year is World Wetlands Day, established by the Ramsar Convention to mark the date on which the treaty was signed, on 2 February 1971.

<b>CEPA Instruments</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
<b>Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Number of publications or web pages on CEPA experiences.</li> <li>* Number of wetlands with environmental information activities.</li> <li>* Number of informational activities that publicise participation channels existing in the wetland.</li> </ul>
<b>Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Number of wetland with plans and/or communications departments.</li> <li>* Number of CEPA actions aimed at communications media professionals.</li> <li>* Typology of communication channels, in percentages.</li> </ul>
<b>Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Number of training-capacity building programmes aimed at all the social agents interested in a better understanding and valuation of wetlands and in their sustainable use.</li> <li>* Number of training-capacity building programmes for participatory management of wetlands and for the implementation of social management instruments aimed at managers, technicians, educators and wetlands interpreters.</li> <li>* Percent of environmental managers, technicians and educators/interpreters who work in wetlands who have participated in capacity building plans.</li> <li>* Number of participants in wetlands training programmes.</li> <li>* Typology of participants, in percentages</li> </ul>
<b>Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Number of wetlands with Environmental Education and/or Interpretation Plans.</li> <li>* Number of participants in wetland education programmes.</li> <li>* Typology of participants, in percentages by age and occupation.</li> </ul>
<b>Participation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Number of eco-social conflicts in wetlands resolved through participatory processes.</li> <li>* Number of wetlands with registry of key persons representative of the different agents and interest groups.</li> <li>* Number of organs and/or public participation measures established in wetlands.</li> </ul>
<b>Research</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Number of published research works on CEPA instruments in wetlands.</li> <li>* Typology of wetland research themes, in percentages.</li> <li>* Number of universities and qualified research groups collaborating with CEPA activities in wetlands</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Number of wetlands that have and apply an evaluation and follow-up plan.</li> <li>* Number of decisions made for improvements and changes based on the results of evaluations at different moments.</li> </ul>
<b>Organisation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Number of persons assigned responsibility for the implementation of participatory management in wetlands.</li> <li>* Number of wetlands registered in networks for the exchange</li> </ul>

## **Application of the Indicators by Field Managers**

### **General Indicators**

- Does your wetland: have a Use and Management Plan? Does it incorporate a CEPA Plan?
- Total budget allocated to CEPA and what percent of overall budget does this represent.
- Number of CEPA initiatives carried out by an NGO or by the private sector in your wetland. What types of social instruments are used, in what percentages?
- Does your wetland participate in the celebration of World Wetlands Day?
- Number of 'live observatories' or CEPA best practices developed in your wetland and what social instruments were utilised, in percentages.
- Has the ecological quality of the wetland improved as result of the launch and development of CEPA plans?

### **Information**

- Number of publications or web pages on CEPA experiences in your wetland.
- Has your wetland developed an environmental information plan?
- Number of information plans that publicise participation channels existing in your wetland.

### **Communication**

- Does your wetland have communication plans?
- Typology of communication channels utilised, in percentages.
- Number of CEPA actions aimed at communication media professionals.

### **Training**

- Number of training-capacity building programmes for participatory management in your wetland and for the implementation of social management instruments aimed at managers, technicians, educators and wetlands interpreters.
- Number of training-capacity building programmes aimed at all the social agents interested in a better understanding and valuation of the wetland and in its sustainable use.
- Number of participants in wetlands training programmes.
- Typology of participants, in percentages by occupation or interest.
- Percent of environmental managers, technicians and educators/interpreters working in the wetland who have participated in these capacity building plans.

### **Education**

- Does your wetland have education and/or environmental interpretation plans?
- Number of participants in wetland education- interpretation programmes.
- Typology of participants, in percentages by age and occupation.
- Do you use the interpretation programme standards of the Association for the Interpretation of the Patrimony (AIP)?

## **Participation**

- Does your wetland have a registry of key persons representative of the different agents and interest groups?
- Number of organs and/or public participation measures established in the wetland.
- Number of eco-social conflicts in your wetland that have been resolved through participatory processes.

## **Research**

- Number of published research works on CEPA instruments in your wetland.
- Typology of research themes of your wetland, with percentages.
- Number of universities and qualified research groups collaborating with CEPA activities in your wetland.

## **Evaluation**

- Does your wetland have an evaluation and follow-up plan?
- Number of decisions made for improvements and changes based on the results of evaluations at different moments.

## **Organization**

- Number of persons assigned responsibility for the implementation of participatory management in your wetland.
- Is your wetland registered in networks for the exchange of experiences with CEPA?



# Chapter 5 – Recommendations and Epilogue

## Recommendations

In conclusion, the different working groups of the Seminar developed the following recommendations:

1. Grant preferential attention to the communication and training of policy sectors with regards to the authentic needs of the wetland.
2. Promote the formal inclusion of CEPA activities as a requirement in all wetland management plans.
3. Take advantage of all the possible financial channels: European, autonomous communities, local and the private sector. Enable the inclusion of CEPA projects in the line items of funding destined to biodiversity conservation.
4. Approach CEPA plans as structural and integrated processes in general plans throughout all the phases of their development, and not as isolated actions.
5. Increase transparency in the management of environmental administrations and in all the lines of action in order to foster confidence among the interested parties and social agents.
6. Establish, promote and maintain appropriate for a communication and exchange between the different groups.
7. Consider the diversity of uses as a social patrimony that unites rather than separates, and face conflicts from an educational and constructive perspective.
8. CEPA plans must be based on concepts that are authentically relevant to the local population, such as economic wellbeing, quality of life and sustainability.
9. Treat the interested sectors as collaborators, that is as co-managers and not as 'those affected'.
10. Disseminate results of participatory processes as well as of the effects of these on conservation.
11. Take the measures necessary to optimise the inter-institutional coordination and the coordination between institutions and society in general on CEPA matters.
12. Create a network of CEPA centres, integrating those already in existence, in order to open lines of collaboration and exchange of experiences and equipments.

Promote joint and interdisciplinary work on CEPA topics in wetlands with similarities and/or geographical proximity.

13. Maintain the different administration levels informed and involved on developments regarding CEPA matters.
14. Take care that, to the extent possible, traditional knowledge contributes to the economic viability of local communities.
15. Promote the acceptance of social trade-offs between actors.
16. Promote the development of a training plan for those responsible for CEPA in terms of management of the social instruments (education, information, communication, participation, training, research and evaluation).
17. It is important to determine a time schedule with responsibilities for action designated at all levels (local, regional, state and European).
18. With regards to evaluation, the following recommendations were made:
19. Evaluation must be taken into account from the moment the CEPA plan is conceived and information must be collected in each phase to be evaluated point by point and in its sum, also taking into account the interactions throughout the length of the processes.
20. It is important to depart from an established objective and reliable diagnostic.
21. It is necessary to take keep in mind the opinion/values of all those interested, establishing explicit procedures for participation.
22. It is advisable to use a limited but significant number of indicators that allow to indisputably determine the condition as well as the eco-social problems of the wetland system, in addition to the social answers aimed at its conservation and improvement.
23. The use of a diversity of methods and evaluation procedures must be sought, adapting to the concrete reality of each wetland.
24. Not only should the results of the evaluation be readily available to all the interested agents, it is also necessary to actively promote their diffusion.
25. An evaluation of the progress of CEPA plans at the national level should be conducted at least every three years.
26. The existence of a figure responsible for the application and follow-up of CEPA plans at the regional and national level would be convenient.

# Epilogue

## **The Culture of Participation: Beyond Consultation**

Over the course of more than two years, four meetings and permanent reflection through electronic means, approximately forty professionals have collectively reflected on their work, their frustrations, their dreams, and their realities with regards to the future of wetlands in Spain. We believe that we have done large a part of the transition from those CEPA programmes where one only found transmission of knowledge and diffusion of natural values—with the intent that the recipients would magically change their daily habits—towards a focus aimed at generating change in production and consumption patterns, true culprits of the state of wetlands and of natural systems in general.

We have been driven by a strong desire to influence this reality and by the conviction that participatory processes are a response to the social conflicts at the heart of environmental problems. We do not offer solutions because no one has these in their hands, but we do offer instruments that can help generate change in the direction of the scenario we want to reach. We must achieve a predisposition to learn, and an understanding and recognition of the legitimate interests of actors, and of these actors' own obstacles to this change we wish to generate. Learn to manage collectively, learn to participate.

The social primacy of economic values is the reality from which we must depart, to go about creating a new culture where long term sustainability is possible, keeping in mind that there are marvellous places, full of natural and constructed life, which are not appreciated until they are lost. Consultation is not sufficient; until each actor has in his hands the possibility of intervening, feels the necessity for conciliation and is prepared to seek collective improvements, it will not be easy to change. And, as one of the most relevant figures of environmental education, John Smyth, used to say, everyone must change for himself or herself, no one can change for someone else.

We are demanding a social change that also implicates environmental education professionals, too often isolated in their programmes. Entering the management arena to propose scenarios where learning is possible, will be the means by which to reach a greater social involvement more in tune with the relevance we grant social instruments; but do this to serve management.

We are not alone in this attempt. The international Conventions place growing emphasis on participation, faced with the evidence that the failures in environmental policies are due in large part to not having generated interest, that is, participation of the sectors involved.

To integrate social instruments in management it is necessary to also modify management itself. The time of making policies and managing from administrative offices has definitely passed. There already are sufficient professionals with the knowledge, skills and willingness to manage participation processes, both in the active use of communication, information, social research and training and in eval-

uation. Overcoming the management obstacles in these processes is part of our obligation as managers and educators.

### **The Necessary Evaluation**

We evaluate little and late. The desired practise would be one of permanent evaluation, formative and incorporated into management, which would have for aim the coherence, relevance and efficiency of CEPA plans. However, there is in general no demand for evaluation from the part of the management organisations, leaving evaluation to the whim of the administrators, who are in many cases aware of the need to evaluate but who do not carry these out due to lack of time or knowledge, or because the context is not suited for it.

The techniques exist and it is not difficult to access them. The important aspect is that every plan, and even every isolated CEPA activity, contemplates in its initial planning the corresponding evaluation (or evaluations) at the appropriate moments of the process.

Just as important as how to carry out evaluations, is having the willingness and capacity to make use of the results. This should also be part of the evaluation: who, when and how, and with what resources will the results of the evaluation be disseminated and applied.

### **New Perceptions**

Nowadays, CEPA programmes and activities are not perceived as a tool that will help to achieve management objectives, and in many cases CEPA programmes have been reduced to school audiences, perhaps because it is an audience that is captive and easy to control, and that enables the easy generation of statistics.

However, it must be taken into account that from the point of view of the cost, a programme with schools can be just as expensive as a social communication programme.

This situation is also explained by the fact that the concep of natural areas as patrimony is something recent. Also recent is the acceptance by managers of the function and usefulness of social instruments. It is now necessary to advance a step further and gain social recognition of the usefulness of CEPA plans. This also implies the challenge to make that the interested parties perceive the CEPA managers as useful and efficient agents.

### **We have not finished**

The truth is that we do no consider our collective work as the Spanish CEPA Seminar to be finished. This Seminar will continue. We are aware of the fact that this *Guidance* is only the first step towards the objectives of integration of CEPA instruments in order to achieve the conservation and wise use of wetlands.

The first task is that of establishing measures and procedures that enable us to go about measuring the use of this *Guidance*. The compilation of successful or failed cases will allow us to offer examples and sharpen our instruments. The availability

of this forum, intended for the proposal of actions and the reflection over the results, provides the opportunity to share accomplishments and frustrations, dreams and realities. A forum designed as a stage where learning is possible.

The importance of plans is in their implementation.



# Annex 1

## **List of Participants in the Spanish Ramsar CEPA Seminar<sup>6</sup>**

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Association for the Defence of the Natural Resources of Extremadura (ADENEX)

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<sup>6</sup> Some participants were present at the four meetings of the Seminar where this Guidance was prepared, while others only attended some of the meetings

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