

**14th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties
to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands**

**“Wetlands Actions for People and Nature”
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**The protection, conservation, restoration, sustainable use and management
of wetland ecosystems in addressing climate change**

Submitted by the contact group

1. RECALLING:
 - a. Resolution XI.14 on *Climate change and wetlands: implications for the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands*, which urges Contracting Parties to, *inter alia*, maintain or improve the ecological character of wetlands to promote the ability of wetlands to contribute to ecosystem-based adaptation to climate change and to sequester and store carbon as important responses for climate change mitigation;
 - b. Resolution XIII.14 on *Promoting conservation, restoration and sustainable management of coastal blue-carbon ecosystems*, highlighting the value of some wetland types as natural carbon sinks; and
 - c. The *Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016-2024*, highlighting the important ecosystem services that wetlands provide, to contribute to halting biodiversity loss, food security, healthy living, water quality and supply, water security, disaster risk reduction, adaptation and mitigation to climate change;
2. FURTHER RECALLING UN Member States have:
 - a. Decided that “nature-based solutions are actions to protect, conserve, restore, sustainably use and manage natural or modified terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine ecosystems which address social, economic and environmental challenges effectively and adaptively, while simultaneously providing human well-being, ecosystem services, resilience and biodiversity benefits” (UNEP/EA.5/Res.5); and
 - b. recognized that “nature-based solutions may contribute significantly to climate action, while recognizing the need for analysis of their effects, including in the long term, and acknowledging that they do not replace the need for rapid, deep and sustained reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, but can improve action for adaptation and resilience to and mitigation of climate change and its impact” (UNEP/EA.5/Res.5);
3. NOTING the 2018 and the 2021 *Global Wetland Outlook* which states the following facts:

- a. 40% of all the world’s species live and breed in wetlands and 25% of wetland-dependent species are threatened with extinction;
 - b. “Coastal wetlands such as mangroves sequester carbon up to 55 times faster than tropical rainforests” and “peatlands, which cover only 3% of the earth’s land surface, store 30% of all land-based carbon”;
 - c. More than one billion people depend on wetlands for a living; and
 - d. Degraded wetlands can contribute to carbon emissions with drained peatland responsible for about 4% of anthropogenic greenhouse emissions;
4. FURTHER NOTING:
- a. The levels of poverty in wetland-dependent communities and the need to support socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable livelihoods;
 - b. That the restoration of wetland ecosystems has the potential to mitigate the effects of climate change and improve resilience to the effects of climate change, including coastal protection against rising sea levels;
 - c. The policy and other recommendations relating to wetlands and climate in STRP publications, particularly: Policy Brief 5 on restoring drained peatlands; Policy Brief 6 on transforming agriculture to sustain wetlands and people; Briefing Note 10 on wetland restoration for climate change resilience; and Briefing Note 12 on blue carbon ecosystems; and
 - d. The need to promote greater alignment between climate and wetlands policy;

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- 5. RECOGNIZES that nature-based solutions, as defined by the Fifth United Nations Environment Assembly, and ecosystem-based approaches, as identified under the Convention on Biological Diversity, delivered by wetland ecosystems, are among the approaches that can significantly contribute to climate action, while simultaneously providing biodiversity and human wellbeing benefits and addressing other social, economic and environmental challenges;
- 6. FURTHER AFFIRMS the value of protection, conservation, restoration, sustainable use and management of wetlands to achieve multiple benefits, including for climate change, biodiversity and human wellbeing, by addressing social, economic and environmental challenges, in accordance with local, national and regional circumstances, consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- 7. ACKNOWLEDGES that the concept of nature-based solutions is cognizant of and in harmony with the concept of ecosystem-based approaches;
- 8. ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties, in their plans and strategies, to deploy wetland-focused nature-based solutions or ecosystem-based approaches to address climate change, while simultaneously providing biodiversity and human wellbeing benefits, in accordance with local, national and regional circumstances, and with appropriate social and environmental safeguards,

and consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the mandates of other relevant multilateral environmental agreements;

9. REQUESTS the Ramsar Secretariat, subject to the availability of resources and in collaboration with MedWet, other interested RRI, and interested Contracting Parties, to facilitate the establishment of a community of practice on addressing climate change through the protection, conservation, restoration, sustainable use and management of wetland ecosystems, while simultaneously providing biodiversity and human wellbeing benefits, to facilitate global cooperation among regional initiatives and other partners and stakeholders by sharing scientific and technical support and information on accessing financial resources;
10. RECOGNIZES the need to identify options, including innovative financial solutions and incentives, for supporting environmentally, socially and economically sustainable investment in wetland ecosystems protection, conservation, restoration, sustainable use and management to address climate change, while simultaneously providing biodiversity and human wellbeing benefits, in particular for developing countries;
11. STRONGLY ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to urgently phase out or modify policies, to the extent possible, that contribute to wetlands loss and degradation, and pursue policies and projects to conserve and restore wetlands;
12. INSTRUCTS the Ramsar Secretariat to liaise with relevant international conventions and organizations, such as the United Nations Environment Programme, while respecting their independence and respective mandates, to promote the protection, conservation, restoration, sustainable use and management of wetland ecosystem, while simultaneously providing biodiversity and human wellbeing benefits;
13. ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to improve their knowledge base and policy-relevant information on wetland extent and condition to assess progress in the implementation of wetland protection, conservation, restoration, sustainable use and management activities, and on improvements to the services they provide, including but not limited to those related to climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience; and
14. REQUESTS that the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP), subject to available resources, undertake a desktop study of success stories of nature-based solutions or ecosystem-based approaches to protecting, conserving, restoring, sustainably using and managing wetland ecosystems to address climate change and achieve other co-benefits, and share with Contracting Parties.