



## Resolution VII.3

*“People and Wetlands: The Vital Link”*  
7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties  
to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971),  
San José, Costa Rica, 10-18 May 1999

### Partnerships with international organizations

1. CONSIDERING that a number of international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) played a significant role in the inception of the Convention and that they have been instrumental in the development and application of the treaty over the years;
2. RECOGNIZING FULLY the important contribution that BirdLife International, IUCN - The World Conservation Union, Wetlands International, and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) continue to make to the implementation of the Convention in their capacity as International NGO Partners of the Convention;
3. AWARE that the status of “International NGO Partner” emerged as a consequence of the historical relationship between the above-mentioned INGOs with the Convention, though it was never formalized through a decision of the Conference of the Contracting Parties; and
4. FURTHER AWARE that other international organizations, both intergovernmental and non-governmental, have the potential of contributing to the Mission of the Convention as stated in the Strategic Plan 1997-2002, which reads: *“The Convention’s mission is the conservation and wise use of wetlands by national action and international cooperation as a means to achieving sustainable development throughout the world”*;

#### THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

5. ADOPTS the attached rules for conferring the status of International Organization Partner of the Convention to organizations that meet the criteria established in those rules;
6. FORMALLY CONFIRMS this status for the following organizations: BirdLife International, IUCN-The World Conservation Union, Wetlands International, and the World Wide Fund for Nature;
7. DECIDES that international organizations interested in formal recognition as Partners to the Convention should present an application to the Convention’s Bureau for its inclusion in the agenda of the next meeting of the Standing Committee, which in turn shall make a recommendation to the Conference of the Contracting Parties for final decision; and
8. FURTHER DECIDES that the performance of International Organization Partners vis-à-vis the Convention may be reviewed from time to time by the Conference of the Contracting Parties on the basis of a report submitted by the Standing Committee when deemed necessary.

**Annex**

**Rules for conferring the status of International Organization  
Partner of the Convention on Wetlands**

1. International organizations, both intergovernmental and non-governmental, formally recognized as Partners of the Convention on Wetlands by its Conference of the Contracting Parties will be expected to contribute on a regular basis and to the best of their abilities to the further development of the policies and technical and scientific tools of the Convention and to their application.
2. Partners shall be invited to participate in an observer capacity and as advisors in all activities of the Convention, including the meetings of the Conference of Contracting Parties, the Standing Committee, and the Scientific and Technical Review Panel, as well as regional and subregional meetings.
3. Partners may also be invited, if required, to contribute to the evaluation of project proposals, project implementation, and the evaluation of project results, as well as to participate in the development of policy and technical and/or scientific instruments for the application of the Convention.
4. Thus, the status of Partner shall be conferred to international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations taking into account the following characteristics:
  - 4.1. Have a programme of activities that is global or at least covers many countries in one or more regions of the world.
  - 4.2. Have a statement of purpose that explicitly, or by clear implication, includes the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands.
  - 4.3. Have a track record of experience in providing support to and/or implementing on-the-ground projects that contribute to wetland conservation and sustainable use.
  - 4.4. Have demonstrated experience in implementing partnership ventures such as training and education, technical and/or scientific expertise, policy development, and/or evaluation and assessment, particularly where such ventures would bring new and additional benefits to the functioning of the Ramsar partnership.
  - 4.5. Have a positive reputation for being willing and able to cooperate with national and international bodies, including both governmental and non-governmental ones.
  - 4.6. Have stated their readiness to actively contribute on a regular basis to the further development of the policies and tools of the Convention on Wetlands and their application on the ground, particularly by assisting Contracting Parties to meet their obligations under the Convention.

- 4.7. Are prepared to sign a Memorandum of Cooperation with the Bureau of the Convention, where the partnership agreement should be spelt out fully.