

CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

29th Meeting of the Standing Committee
Gland, Switzerland, 26-28 February 2003

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Agenda item 5

Ramsar Bureau Work Plan 2003

Action requested: The Standing Committee is requested to review the attached draft Bureau Work Plan 2003, make amendments as appropriate, and approve the Work Plan.

1. This draft Work Plan has been prepared based on the ongoing work required of the Bureau to provide its services to the Convention and the relevant Actions for Bureau work indicated in Ramsar's Strategic Plan 2003-2008 (Resolution VIII.25) and in other Resolutions adopted by Parties at COP8.
2. The Work Plan is divided into two sections: Section I contains the Bureau's Global and Regional Policy and Technical Work Plan, and Section II the General Administration Work Plan. An Annex to the Work Plan provides further information on the tasks proposed to be undertaken by the Bureau's Policy and Technical staff in relation to the specific Actions addressed to the Bureau in the Strategic Plan 2003-2008 and other COP8 Resolutions.
3. A significant part of the Bureau's work during 2002 will be focused UPON undertaking follow-up work to COP8, including finalization and wide dissemination of the Resolutions, guidelines and other materials adopted by the COP and the preparation and support for the work of the new Standing Committee and Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP), once appointed.
4. Many of the other activities in the Bureau's Work Plan are ongoing and thus are largely unchanged from those presented in the 2002 Bureau Work Plan

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Draft Ramsar Bureau Work Plan 2003

Based on Section II of the Convention's Strategic Plan 2003-2005 (Resolution VIII.25), incorporating all relevant Actions called for in Resolutions adopted by the 8th meeting of the Conference of the Parties

SECTION I. GLOBAL AND REGIONAL POLICY AND TECHNICAL WORK PLAN

GLOBAL ACTIONS

1. The global actions described below are to be undertaken by the Secretary General, the Deputy Secretary General, and the Senior Advisor on Environment and Development Cooperation (SAEDC), in consultation with the Regional Coordinators, the MedWet Coordination Unit, and other staff as appropriate. The delivery of some actions will be achieved by regionally-consistent implementation support to Contracting Parties by the Bureau's Regional Teams.
2. The global actions also include most of the work of the Communications Team.
3. Global actions in 2003 will concentrate mainly on the following priorities:
 - a) the follow-up to COP8, including:
finalization and wide circulation of COP8 Resolutions; and
preparation of a 2nd edition of the Ramsar "Toolkit" of Wise Use Handbooks;
 - b) preparation and circulation to Parties of the COP9 National Planning Tool and National Report Format;
 - c) preparation and input of Ramsar issues and opportunities to the 3rd World Water Forum (Japan, March 2003) and World Parks Congress (South Africa, September 2003);
 - d) continuing development of synergies with other multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and organizations in order to increase the profile of the Convention at the international level, as a means in turn to gain more recognition at the national level. Synergies will include further development and implementation of joint work plans and actions between Ramsar and other MEAs and contributions to their COPs and other meetings. This should facilitate the work of the institutions directly responsible for implementation in each country, and at the same time generate the involvement of other key institutions that so far have not been working with the Convention, such as those responsible for water resources management and land use planning;
 - e) continuing engagement in a more wide-ranging dialogue with the development assistance community, so as to generate more funds for wetland-related projects in developing countries and countries in transition; including the provision of support to Parties in their development and fund-raising of wetland projects, and in

particular to promote the Ramsar Endowment Fund, once its *modus operandi* has been established by the Standing Committee;

- f) further development of work strengthening the Convention's capacity to respond to socio-economic issues, including through the promotion of sustainable trade in wetland products as a way to conserve wetlands and alleviate poverty, wetland incentives and disincentives for wetland conservation and sustainable use;
- g) implementation of the Convention's programme on communication, education and public awareness adopted by Resolution VIII.31, through the provision of additional guidance, materials and information networks for the use of Contracting Parties;
- h) further development of the celebration of World Wetlands Day 2003 as a tool to expand the outreach work of the Bureau and to increase the awareness of the role of wetlands in the hydrological cycle and in securing water security and the visibility of the Convention concerning the vital link between wetlands and water, as a means of contributing to sustainable development around the world and heightened understanding of the role of wetlands in this International Year of Water;
- i) preparing for and supporting the work of the STRP and the implementation of its new *modus operandi* established by Resolution VIII.28, including the establishment of the STRP Support Service; and
- j) assistance to the Regional Coordinators in their efforts to encourage and support Contracting Parties, in particular in relation to:
 - i) implementation of actions called for in COP8 Resolutions;
 - ii) delivering on their pledges at COP8 regarding Ramsar site designations and other aspects of the implementation of the Convention;
 - ii) application of the *Strategic Framework for the development of the Ramsar List*, including issues related to the updating of the holdings of the Ramsar Sites Database; and
 - iii) full implementation of Article 3.2 of the Convention¹, and the assessment and reporting of the status and trends of wetland ecosystems.

AFRICA REGION

4. These actions of the Work Plan are to be undertaken mostly by the Regional Coordinator for Africa and the Intern/Assistant to the Regional Coordinator, in consultation with the Administrative Authorities and other staff as appropriate.

Background

¹ Article 3.2: "Each Contracting Party shall arrange to be informed at the earliest possible time if the ecological character of any wetland in its territory and included in the List has changed, is changing or is likely to change as the result of technological developments, pollution or other human interference. Information on such changes shall be passed without delay to the organization or government responsible for the continuing bureau duties specified in Article 8."

5. The Africa region includes the mainland continent and the island states of Cape Verde, Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Sao Tome & Principe, and Seychelles, which makes a total of 53 countries. **Contracting Parties in Africa: (35), January 2003:** Algeria, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia
6. The Bureau has been working effectively with the International Organization Partners, the Contracting Parties, and other players to facilitate the accession of additional countries to the Ramsar Convention. As a result, Benin, Burundi, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritius, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and the United Republic of Tanzania joined the Convention during the last triennium.
7. Angola, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Lesotho, Liberia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Seychelles, and Sudan are taking steps for accession. Djibouti has finished the process of accession and has sent the instruments of accession to UNESCO. Liberia and Equatorial Guinea have ratified the Convention and need only to designate a Ramsar site in order to complete the accession process. It is hoped that Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea and Liberia will become Ramsar Contracting Parties within the first half of 2003.

Issues and priorities

8. The important role of wetlands in sustainable development needs to be underscored and communicated to policy makers and economic planners in Africa, so that their values and functions are more fully recognized and taken into consideration. It must also be acknowledged that for Ramsar to be effective in Africa it must work in partnership with the major political and institutional frameworks, and especially the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). In the framework of NEPAD, there has been an agreement among African Ministers to develop Africa-wide environmental action plans for selected thematic areas, including wetlands. This provides a major opportunity for supporting Parties in their delivery of commitments to the Convention, and supporting its NEPAD development and implementation will be a major priority during 2003.
9. The challenge for Africa is to make the best use of all existing frameworks and emerging opportunities for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands and their resources through the adoption and implementation of a coherent national action plan for wetlands. Bureau support will focus on assisting Parties to address the following issues and challenges, through the application of the Ramsar tools and guidelines adopted by COP8.
 - a) **Knowledge / Capacity-Building (inventories and valuations)**
10. Wetland inventories are a priority in Africa. Until national inventories have been established, it is difficult to select and take long-term actions on wetland management initiatives. In this regard, economic valuation of the goods and services that wetlands provide will help us in convincing decision makers of the importance of wetlands. Environmental evaluations, as well as inventories and assessments, are important tools in wetland management.

b) Links to Poverty Eradication

11. Poverty underlies most problems in the wetlands sector and if our efforts are to be successful, we must link our activities to poverty alleviation and find solutions to these root problems. To this end, wetland and water resource management must be integrated with national livelihood policies.
12. Agriculture is important to livelihoods and food security and is one of the primary target activities in poverty reduction strategies. The NEPAD Wetland Strategy should promote livelihoods and food security through sound irrigation schemes, fisheries management, and range-land management including wetlands, protected areas, and agro-forestry in wetland ecosystems. Coordination and consultation among the relevant sectors and proper legal frameworks are crucial for success.

c) Ecosystem Management & Regional Cooperation

13. River /lake basins are suitable frameworks for ecosystem management: NEPAD highlights transboundary wetlands as an urgent priority because a number of the problems to be addressed (e.g., eradication of alien species, management of coastal zones, and technology transfer) require regional planning and action.
14. In developing the links between NEPAD and Ramsar, there is a need to expand integrated land and water use plans which would serve as the basis for national and regional cooperation.
15. The development of land-use policies must be integrated with water resources management, and countries will be encouraged to adopt uniform water quality standards at the national and subregional levels.
16. Inland waters and coastal areas should be managed together through integrated water resource management and integrated coastal zones management.

d) Funding

17. Funding is severely limited in the region and is needed for a range of actions including inventory, assessment, monitoring of water resources, training, capacity-building, education and public awareness.
18. Funding is also required for the preparation and implementation of wetland management plans for water supply, biodiversity conservation, agriculture, fisheries, range-lands, forestry, and tourism development.

e) The way forward

19. Resolution VIII.44 concerning the role of the Convention in NEPAD provides a strong framework for future actions to secure wetland conservation and wise use in Africa, and during 2003 work will focus on supporting and encouraging Parties to implement the terms of this Resolution, notably that it:

- a) urges Contracting Parties to provide support for the implementation of actions undertaken through the Environment Initiative of NEPAD;
- b) urges Contracting Parties in the African region to use NEPAD, AMCEN (African Ministerial Conference on Environment) and AMCOW (African Ministerial Conference on Water) to advance the objectives of the Convention, mindful of the need to adopt a multi-sectoral approach to the conservation and wise use of wetlands;
- c) urges Contracting Parties to pay specific attention to the development and implementation of initiatives with transboundary elements, particularly where these refer to shared river and lake basins, shared wetlands, migratory species and technology transfer;
- d) calls upon the NEPAD development partners to provide support to African Contracting Parties in the implementation of the Ramsar Strategic Plan, including communication, education and public awareness (CEPA), which is considered an important tool for realising the goals of the programme; and
- e) directs the Ramsar Bureau to develop synergies between the implementation of the Convention and NEPAD in Africa.

AMERICAS REGION

20. These actions of the Work Plan are to be undertaken mostly by the Regional Coordinator for the Americas and the Intern/Assistant to the Regional Coordinator, in consultation with the Administrative Authorities and other staff as appropriate.

Background

21. The Americas region in the Bureau's work includes two of the Ramsar Regions (the Neotropics and North America), involving the following twenty-seven Contracting Parties: Argentina, Bahamas, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, St. Lucia, Suriname, The Dominican Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, United States of America, Uruguay, and Venezuela.
22. In addition, there are in the region a number of dependent territories of France (French Guiana, Guadeloupe and Martinique); the Netherlands (Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles Federation); the UK (Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat, and Turks and Caicos); and the USA (Virgin Islands), which require involving those Contracting Parties.
23. There are a further eight mainland and Caribbean Island States which are not yet Parties to the Convention: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, St. Kitts and Nevis, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Issues and priorities

24. Overall, Canada and the USA are well advanced in their implementation of the Convention, while in general the developing nations in the region still require substantial assistance and advice for the effective implementation of the treaty. Capacity building is a priority, in particular for the newest Parties to the Convention, such as Belize, Cuba, El Salvador, St. Lucia and The Dominican Republic.
25. Eight of the Caribbean Island States have not yet joined the Ramsar Convention despite the efforts made jointly by Bahamas, Trinidad and Tobago, USA and the Ramsar Bureau during 2002. There are complex reasons for this, but essentially they come down to capacity and financial implications. Several of the countries received information on how to select their first Ramsar site, and it is expected that soon they will initiate the accession process. It is encouraging that Antigua & Barbuda, Barbados and Guyana are working seriously towards becoming CPs.
26. As the region hosts 40% of the total area of Ramsar sites world wide, careful attention and technical and financial support will be given to supporting full implementation of the actions described in Operational Objective 11 of the Strategic Plan 2003-2008: "Management Planning and Monitoring of Ramsar sites".
27. Other key priorities related to the Americas are securing the funding and technical assistance to undertake national inventories and assessment of wetlands, drafting of policy and legislation, and identification and restoration and rehabilitation of wetlands.
28. Countries of the Region will continue to be encouraged and to receive technical support for the establishment of National Wetland Committees as well as Ramsar site management committees.
29. The Wetlands for the Future Fund will continue to be used as a vital tool for training and capacity building for developing countries in the region.

ASIA REGION

30. These actions of the Work Plan are to be undertaken mostly by the Regional Coordinator for Asia and the Intern/Assistant to the Regional Coordinator, in consultation with the Administrative Authorities and other appropriate staff members.

Background

31. Contracting Parties: The Asia Region has so far 25 Contracting Parties: Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Krygyzstan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam.
32. It is encouraging that six countries have acceded to the Convention since 1999: Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Kyrgistan, Lebanon, Tajikstan and Uzbekistan. However, progress towards accession by the other 17 countries in the region (Afghanistan, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Maldives, Myanmar, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen) has been generally slow and

requires a continuing concerted effort, particularly in central Asia and the Middle East. Yemen has submitted accession papers to UNESCO, and it is anticipated that Myanmar may join during 2003.

33. Most of the CPs in the region are developing countries, which together host more than 50% of the world population, and heavily depend on water resources for agriculture. The maintenance of the functions of wetlands is crucial for Asian peoples, but they are under great pressure.
34. The Himalaya mountains, the roof of the world, support some of the most important global wetland ecosystems, and are the origin of the seven major rivers in Asia, which flow through 11 countries in the region, so that their sustainable management provides a key to securing water and food security for a major part of the region.
35. Central Asian and Middle East countries are semi-arid or dry areas to which water resources are essential for their survival and development, but which are facing increasing and persistent drought – this is recognized in the region as a major issue for the future of wetlands and supply of adequate water resources.
36. Coastal and marine wetlands are a particularly important feature of countries in East and South East Asia, with coral reefs, mangroves and sea grass beds being particularly important for the maintenance of global biodiversity.

Issues and priorities

37. The importance of wetlands has yet to be fully understood by the decision-makers, the general public, and by the Ramsar Convention Administration Authorities. Wetlands have been understood, to a large extent, only as a habitat for birds, especially migratory birds, and Parties have not fully recognized that this is not the only concern of the Ramsar Convention and its implementation on the ground. For example, most Ramsar sites in the region have been designated for their bird population. Although this has been significant in increasing awareness amongst decision-makers and the general public of the importance of wetlands, it has not yet generally led to the recognition of their many wider values and functions, so that the importance of mainstreaming conservation and wise use of wetlands into national policies and decision-making has not been felt sufficiently strongly.
38. Neither has the importance of maintaining ecological processes of wetlands, and in relation to surrounding land use and economic development, been fully understood by the Ramsar Convention Administration Authorities, and further capacity-building and awareness-raising is needed. Supporting institutional development will be a high priority for the Asia region in the next three years. Capacity in many Administrative Authorities is limited, and implementation of the Convention generally slow.
39. This is also reflected in the current pattern of designation of Ramsar sites in Asia. Increasing the number and area of designated sites, which is small in Asia compared with most other regions, will be a focus of effort. In many countries, there are only one or at most two Ramsar sites, and there is a lack of a strategic approach to designating a coherent network of sites so as to secure their conservation and sustainable use. Further support to strengthening regional and transboundary cooperation among CPs is also needed.

40. With a newly-appointed Regional Coordinator for Asia joining the Bureau in February 2003, a significant element of work will concern familiarization with the implementation status of the Convention in each country and establishing working relationships with Administrative Authority focal points and mission representatives.
41. Activities during 2003 to support and encourage full implementation of the Convention, including the Resolutions adopted by COP8, will seek to cover:
- a) **Communication, Education, and Public Awareness**
 - i) Encouraging CPs to develop communication programmes, especially to publicize the International Year of Freshwater;
 - ii) Encouraging developing education materials that clearly illustrate the functions of wetlands; and
 - iii) Supporting organization of public awareness campaigns, including seeking ways of extending the experience of WWF China's Wetland Ambassador Action to the Asia region.
 - b) **Ecosystem Management & Regional Cooperation**
 - i) Promoting studies/programmes on river basins, large shared water bodies (River Basin programmes by WWF, ADB, etc.; Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Strategy by Wetlands International; Large Marine Programmes by GEF, WWF, etc.);
 - ii) Raising awareness amongst Administrative Authorities of the links between wetland ecosystem services and regional sustainable development, especially water resources, fisheries, etc., and addressing the issues of drought;
 - iii) Promoting regional cooperation through region workshops, forum, etc.; and
 - iv) Encouraging the application of a strategic approach to further Ramsar site designations, and improved monitoring and reporting mechanisms for Ramsar sites in relation to Article 3.2 reporting.
 - c) **Institutional Development and Capacity Building**
 - i) Promoting setting up National, Regional, and Site-specific Ramsar Committees where these do not yet exist;
 - ii) Urging all Parties to designate their National Focal Points for STRP and for CEPA, and encouraging these to contribute fully to implementation of the Convention;
 - iii) Supporting the improvement of training facilities in the region, including at Mai Po in Hong Kong, and providing advice on the development of the proposed regional training and research centre for West and Central Asia in Iran; and

- iv) Seeking opportunities for establishing a Wetland Research and Monitoring Network in Asia, involving national wetland research centers and wetland research laboratory in Asian universities, and for using this network to carry out standardized wetland inventory, monitoring, and information sharing.

EUROPE

- 42. These actions of the Work Plan are to be undertaken mostly by the Regional Coordinator for Europe and the Intern/Assistant to the Regional Coordinator, in consultation with the Administrative Authorities and other appropriate staff members.
- 43. European countries often experience great wetland management problems due to high population densities and intensive land-use pressures in their catchment basins. Given the high number of countries and individual Ramsar sites, and the increasing pressures on European wetlands, this region is arguably also the most complex and demanding region to be served by the Ramsar Bureau.
- 44. It is therefore of high importance and value that Contracting Parties with more advanced national wetland policies and management structures increase their efforts to share their experience with countries in economic transition and those in urgent need for external support.

Issues and priorities

- 45. The **wise use of all wetlands** is a long-standing theme in Europe. Despite remarkable achievements, much still needs to be done in many countries to cover adequately the major issues addressed in Ramsar *Handbook 1*. COP8 provided Ramsar with a framework for wetland inventory (Resolution VIII.6) and a renewed programme on communication, education and public awareness (CEPA) (Resolution VIII.31). Linking agriculture, water resource management and wetlands (Resolution VIII.34) is a European priority, as well as making groundwater management compatible with wetland conservation (Resolution VIII.40).
- 46. **Wetlands of International Importance** are by far more numerous in Europe (though not by surface area) than in any other Ramsar region. To date (January 2003) the European parties have declared 760 Ramsar sites, out of which 28 figure on the Montreux Record and many more are threatened by possible or ongoing ecological change (152 documented cases in the triennium leading to COP8). Europe has many problems with the conservation of its Ramsar sites, and appropriate management and monitoring needs to be improved for many of them. The implementation of the Strategic Framework for the development of the Ramsar List (*Handbook 7*) needs to continue (*Resolution VIII.10*). Progress with the establishment of management and monitoring procedures for an increasing number of sites is anticipated, as well as progress with the designation of new Ramsar sites of under-represented wetland types.
- 47. **International Cooperation** is a particular priority (and is essential) for Europe where so many countries exist in a relatively small area. Individual Contracting Parties are encouraged to progress with the management of shared sites, shared water catchments, and species. The Ramsar guidelines for international cooperation (*Handbook 9*) provide the

tools for increased collaboration between Ramsar and other global, regional and subregional environmental agreements, as well as for technical support to those countries lacking sufficient resources.

48. **Implementation capacity** to achieve the Convention's mission is reasonably developed in many European countries, albeit often too narrowly focused on traditional species conservation aspects only. Developing inter-ministerial cooperation and the involvement of different stakeholders, already at the planning and policy stage, at national and sub-national levels, is a particular challenge for many Contracting Parties. To strengthen existing institutions, precise training needs, and target audiences should be identified. Existing training opportunities should be developed and supported and new initiatives started where they are missing.
49. **Membership** of the Convention is nearly complete in the European region, with 44 Contracting Parties out of a total of 47 states. Andorra has declared its interest to join, leaving only the micro-states Holy See and San Marino as non-Parties. In addition, during COP8, Azerbaijan noted its wish to participate in the activities of the European region during the triennium 2003-2005, subject to approval by the STRP (evoking Resolution VII.1 paragraph 5).

OCEANIA

50. In the absence of a Regional Coordinator for Oceania in the Bureau, the actions related to this region are undertaken by the Deputy Secretary General, with some administrative assistance from the Assistant to the Regional Coordinator for Asia, and working with the Wetlands International and others supported by the Australian Government and WWF. It is recognized, however, that these arrangements continue to limit the capacity of the Bureau to progress accessions and support implementation of the Convention in the region.

Background

51. There are currently four Contracting Parties in this Ramsar region: Australia, New Zealand, Palau, and Papua New Guinea. The Pacific Small Island Developing States remain one of the major gaps in the global membership of the Convention, but several are now progressing towards accession, in large part owing to the assistance of the former Deputy Secretary General (with funding support from Environment Australia and WWF). These include Samoa (accession announced at COP8), Fiji, and the Marshall Islands.
52. Limitations to such progress are complex, but they relate particularly to the need for capacity building and financial implications. Many of these countries have few professionals dealing full time with environmental management and they have already made important commitments to other Multilateral Environmental Agreements. Joint Work Plans and joint actions with other global conventions, such as that with CBD, are considered to help encourage developing the links with Ramsar.
53. The signing in 2002 of a Memorandum of Cooperation with the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and finalization of a Ramsar/SPREP joint work plan provides a valuable advance in Ramsar cooperation in the region and significant

opportunities for strengthening Ramsar and wetland conservation and sustainable use in the region, but current Bureau capacity to fully support this work remains a limitation.

54. COP8 has requested that the Bureau seek to allocate a member of staff to act as Regional Coordinator for Oceania, and to seek resources for an Oceania intern post. It had been intended that such a role would be covered by the Regional Coordinator for Asia, but with the change of staff in this post in early 2003, and the heavy workload occasioned by an increasing number of Contracting Parties in the Asia region, it is not anticipated that the new Asia Coordinator will have the capacity to take on this role during 2003. This option will be kept under review.
55. COP8 also requested the option to be explored of funding and establishing a regionally-based Ramsar support officer post for the Pacific Island States, and this will be pursued as a priority during 2003.

Issues and priorities

56. Within this region, Australia and New Zealand are well advanced in their implementation of the Convention. Therefore, the priority will continue to be assisting PNG and Palau with implementation of the Convention and the Pacific Small Island Developing States of the region to progress towards accession. Assistance to Australia and New Zealand will be largely on an 'as requested' only basis.
57. However, the Bureau will continue to need to raise matters concerning Article 3.2 of the Convention on change in the ecological character of Ramsar sites when these are brought to its attention, and to continue to process Ramsar site designations and other related matters.
58. Bureau work in 2003 will focus on working with SPREP to implement priority areas of activity in the Ramsar/SPREP joint work plan, including assisting in the completion of accessions by Pacific Island States, and seeking ways and means of establishing a regionally-based support post for this work or raising Ramsar awareness in the region.

THE MEDITERRANEAN BASIN

59. These activities and projects of the Work Plan are related to the Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative (MedWet) and are the responsibility of the outposted MedWet Coordination Unit, established in Athens in mid-2001 with financial support from the Government of Greece, including the MedWet Coordinator, a Policy Advisor (part time), a Communications Officer, and a Programme Development Officer.

Background

60. Following the adoption of Resolution VIII.30 at COP8, the MedWet Coordination Unit will continue its operation for 2003-2005 based in Athens, hosted by the Greek Government and with financial support by the host country, all the Mediterranean CPs, and the Ramsar Bureau.
61. The work of the MedWet Unit is supported by four wetland centres:

- i) The Greek Biotope/Wetland Centre (EKBY), Thessaloniki (Greece), which assists the MedWet Coordination Unit with funding from the Greek Government;
 - ii) Sede para el Estudio de los Humedales Mediterráneos (SEHUMED), University of Valencia (Spain), supported financially by the Spanish Government and the Generalitat Valenciana;
 - iii) Station Biologique de la Tour du Valat, Le Sambuc, Arles (France), assisted financially by the French Government; and
 - iv) Centro de Zonas Humidas, Lisbon, Portugal, supported by the Portuguese Ministry of Environment (Nature Conservation Institute)
62. In addition, the newly established North African Wetlands Network, with Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia already fully participating, and Egypt and Libya to join soon, forms an integral part of the MedWet network.
63. The Mediterranean, an area with characteristic ecological, historical and cultural unity, includes 25 countries belonging officially to three Ramsar regions (Africa, Asia and Europe). Participation in the Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative (MedWet) and in the Mediterranean Wetlands Committee (MedWet/Com) which guides it, is broader than that of Ramsar Contracting Parties.
64. MedWet/Com, formally recognized by Resolution VII.22 “as a forum for collaboration on wetland issues in the Mediterranean and as an advisor to the Convention in this region”, is composed of all 25 Ramsar Contracting Parties in the region and the Palestinian Authority, four intergovernmental bodies (European Commission, UNDP, Barcelona and Bern Conventions), and seven non-governmental organizations and wetland centres.
65. The *modus operandi* of MedWet is complementary to that of the Regional Teams of the Ramsar Bureau itself. It focuses more on specific activities and projects, which it initiates and develops and for which, in many cases, it manages implementation. This is in addition to MedWet’s catalytic role in encouraging joint action, sharing of knowledge and expertise, and assisting with training and capacity development for policy and management of wetlands.

Issues and priorities

66. In the Mediterranean, a number of social, economic and political issues result in excessive pressures on wetlands and lead to their degradation or destruction. Thus wetland loss in the region during the 20th century is estimated to average 50%. The major issues for the region are: poverty in the south and east of the region with great inequalities throughout, explosive population growth in the poorest countries of the region, strong economic migration trends, and increasing transient population pressure on the coastal zones due to tourism.
67. The resulting major problems include:
- i) demand for space, especially in the coastal zones, often to the detriment of wetlands;
 - ii) water scarcity due to increased demand for irrigated agriculture and tourism, affecting wetlands;
 - iii) serious water pollution from industrial, domestic, as well as agricultural sources; and
 - iv) unsustainable exploitation of wetland resources, especially fish and game.

68. To confront these problems, the MedWet Initiative has focused on actions at three levels. At the international level, promoting collaboration, financial and technical assistance and sharing of experience and know-how. At the national level, encouraging the preparation of national wetland policies, improving legislation, and strengthening the capacity of services concerned with, or having an impact on, wetlands. On the site level, focusing on catalysing management actions, with the involvement of stakeholders.
69. Most of this work is done through methods and tools designed for the Mediterranean context, and through the establishment and strengthening of active partnerships in the region.
70. In order to develop its pivotal role, MedWet will take all necessary steps to evolve and maintain its dynamic character during 2003 and beyond. This encompasses a number of issues of high importance, including:
- i) identifying the key issues that are of direct relevance to the needs and priorities of the MedWet countries;
 - ii) identifying the strengths and weaknesses in its own capacity, including that of the Coordination Unit, the Technical Network, and all Partners;
 - iii) strengthening the MedWet network by developing its composition and activities; and
 - iv) further developing the MedWet technical tools.
71. It is important for MedWet to be not only a network for the transfer of technical expertise on conservation and management, but also to play a catalytic role for the sustainable use of wetland areas and their resources in the Mediterranean region in order to contribute to the achievement of:
- i) conservation of habitats and biodiversity;
 - ii) wise use of resources;
 - iii) reinforcement of national capacities;
 - iv) sustainable development (also at a local and regional level); and
 - v) poverty eradication through sustainable economic development.
72. Issues that are of high importance for the attainment of this goal, and which will be the focus of the future work of the MedWet Coordination Unit, are to:
- i) have complete and up-to-date information on the distribution, status, importance and conservation state (ecological, socio-economic, cultural) of wetlands of the whole Mediterranean region, by enhancing and applying the MedWet Inventory methodology throughout the region;
 - ii) identify the needs and priorities of all MedWet countries for sustainable development in wetlands, and match them to the capacities of the MedWet network;
 - iii) enhance the active participation of those Partners of the MedWet network that have so far been less active, and promote the active collaboration of NGOs and research institutions;

- iv) develop further methodologies and technical tools for the social and economic assessment of the wetlands values and functions, and refine the use of specific tools, including incentives (economic, social, cultural) and sustainable trade of wetland products;
- v) develop tools and methods supporting integrated water resources management;
- vi) put into practice existing (Barcelona Convention, GWP-Med), and initiate new, collaborations with other global or regional conventions and initiatives on issues of mutual interest (Climate Change, Desertification, Biodiversity, World Heritage);
- vii) enlarge the circle of contacts within the MedWet countries with new partners, including in the sectors of water resources management, agriculture, fisheries, development planning and economy, tourism, etc.; and
- viii) broaden the contacts and collaboration within regional or national institutions to include important actors for designing or implementing activities (national EU delegations, UNEP and UNDP national offices, bilateral or multi-lateral donor organizations).

SECTION II. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION WORK PLAN

73. The actions described in this Section are mostly to be undertaken by the Finance Team and the Administration Coordinator, assisted by the Office Service Assistant .
74. General administration work of the Bureau covers four areas of activity:
 1. Financial administration
 2. Project management and reporting
 3. Personnel management
 4. Meeting preparations and logistics

1. Financial Administration

Core budget administration

In addition to day-to-day management, monitoring and reporting of the core budget, the following actions will be required for 2003 and beyond.

- a) Preparing financial reports, including audited accounts for 2002 and the 2003 budget (as approved by COP8) for consideration by the Standing Committee;
- b) Sending reminders of unpaid invoices twice yearly;
- c) Invoicing Parties for 2003 dues.

General Administration

Monthly:

- Petty Cash
- Long distance telephone calls
- Annual contributions - to date (acknowledge each with a Diplomatic Note)
- Projects - Income and Expenditures
- Investment of surplus funds

Year-End Statements for:

- Core Budget
- Projects with earmarked contributions
- Annual Contributions

Standing Committee Statements:

- Core Budget
- Projects with earmarked contributions
- Annual Contributions
- Bureau budget for 2004 (following COP8 approval of budget for 2003-2005)

COP8

- Finalize COP8 financial account

2. Project management and reporting

Small Grants Fund (activities in conjunction with Regional Coordinators and Interns)

Implement the SGF in accordance with the Operational Guidelines 2003-2005 and the internal system for the SGF projects administration established in early 2000.

Wetlands for the Future, Swiss Grant for Africa, and Evian Projects

During 2003 the Bureau will continue to administer funds provided by the USA for the Wetlands for the Future Initiative and by Switzerland for projects in Africa, as well as the Bureau's corporate sector partnership with the Danone Group – the Evian project.

Other projects supported or administered by the Bureau

As required, administer projects supported by either core or external funds, including funds for the MedWet Initiative, for example.

Reporting to donors

Continue the reporting to donors and generally build on the good relations with donors that the Bureau currently enjoys.

Support the Senior Advisor on Environment and Development Cooperation in his work in general and in particular in relation to his efforts for the establishment of a funding mechanism for the SGF.

3. Personnel Management

As required, provide general support to the senior managers of the Bureau with respect to all aspects of staff recruitment and termination of services.

Support necessary personnel management activities as instructed by the Secretary General. This includes but is not limited to the following:

- maintain staff files (on current staff, past staff, applicants, and general directives)
- liaise with IUCN's Human Resources Management Division on Ramsar staff issues, including the drawing up of staff contracts as required
- prepare draft position vacancies
- prepare letters for staff who have successfully completed their probation period
- prepare or draft letters of reference
- recruit and interview for administrative support positions within the Bureau
- write appointment or rejection letters.

Provide support to Standing Committee for the recruitment process for the new Secretary General.

Finalize Bureau Procedures Manual.

The Internship program (4 interns for a period of 12 to 18 months each)

- Respond to inquiries
- Receive and acknowledge applications
- Process rejection, short list letters and final rejection letters.

- Assist interns with their arrival, settling in, and departure arrangements.
- Manage the four apartments rented by the Bureau in Gland to provide accommodation to the interns.

4. Meeting preparations and logistics and general office administration

Preparations for the 29th and 30th meetings of the Standing Committee

Provide organizational and logistical support for the 29th meeting of the Standing Committee, to be held on 26-28 February 2003, and for the 30th meeting, proposed to be held in January 2004. This will include all general meeting arrangements (travel, accommodation, venue arrangements) as well as the distribution of papers, etc.

General office administration

Ensure an efficient functioning of the office concerning use of space, office supplies and equipment, publications and documents storage and distribution, archives and files maintenance, mail reception and dispatching, etc.

ANNEX

RAMSAR BUREAU WORK PLAN 2003:

SPECIFIC POLICY & TECHNICAL BUREAU ACTIVITIES TO DELIVER
STRATEGIC PLAN AND COP8 RESOLUTION ACTIONS

Based on Section II of the Convention's Work Plan 2003-2005 (Resolution VIII.25, and incorporating all relevant Actions called for in Resolutions adopted by the 8th meeting of the Conference of the Parties

Notes:

1. Only those actions which specifically indicate a task for the Bureau and/or MedWet Coordination Unit are listed below. The Bureau's regional teams also play a role in supporting and assisting Contracting Parties in their implementation of the wide range of other actions required at the national level.
2. The code numbering of Actions listed below is as follows:
 - a) Actions from the Convention's Strategic Plan 2003-2008 are numbered as in the Annex to Resolution VIII.25, in arabic numerals, e.g. 1.1.1, 11.1.15 etc.
 - b) Additional Actions derived from the operational paragraphs of other COP8 Resolutions are distinguished with a separate coding system, e.g. R1.2.ii, R3.1.iv etc.
 - c) For Actions under Operational Objective 9 (CEPA), all Operational Objectives and Actions are those adopted in the Annex to Resolution VIII.31, which fully incorporate, and expand upon, the fifteen CEPA Actions as listed in the Convention's Strategic Plan 2003-2008.

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 1. INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENTOperational Objective 1.1:

Describe the extent of wetland resources, especially at global and national (or, where appropriate, provincial) scales, in order to inform and underpin implementation of the Convention and in particular the application of the wise use principle.

Actions

- 1.1.1 Promote and encourage the use of standard wetland inventory methodologies following the Ramsar *Framework for Wetland Inventory* adopted at COP8 (Resolution VIII.6), to undertake, update and disseminate national (or, where appropriate, provincial) scientific inventories of wetlands. GO1, 2 {CPs, IOPs, Bureau, MedWet}

2003-2005 Global target: By COP9, all Parties without completed inventories to have initiated action in line with the Ramsar Framework for Wetland Inventory, and as far as possible to have completed and disseminated comprehensive national wetland inventories.

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Ensure that the Ramsar *Framework for Wetland Inventory* is available to all those responsible for undertaking or updating wetland inventories. Africa: Promote Wetland Inventories in the NEPAD framework. MedWet: further develop and disseminate MedWet inventory methodology for use to Mediterranean CPs.

- 1.1.5 Undertake an update of the *Global Review of Wetland Resources and Priorities for Wetland Inventory (GRoWI)* to include updated information on the distribution and size of the wetland resource and progress in national (including provincial) wetland inventory since COP7 (Resolution VII.20), and report on this to COP9. **GO1** {STRP, Wetlands International, Bureau}

2003-2005 Global target: An update to be completed of the *Global review of wetland resources and priorities for wetland inventory (GroWI)* with a report to COP9.

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Develop, with Wetlands International, a project proposal for *GRoWI* updating, and seek funding for its implementation.

- 1.1.7 Give high priority to developing projects for inventory activities for the Small Grants Fund. **GO1** {CPs, SC, Bureau, MedWet}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Encourage and assist CPs to prepare and submit inventory projects to the SGF.

- R1.1.i Review further the application of remote sensing data, low-cost GIS and classification systems in wetland inventory and prepare additional guidance as appropriate. (Resolution VIII.6) **GO1** {STRP, Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Provide support to initiating STRP's work, if identified by Standing Committee as a priority for 2003-2005.

Operational Objective 1.2:

Assess and monitor the condition of wetland resources, both globally and nationally (or, where appropriate, provincially), in order to inform and underpin implementation of the Convention and in particular the application of the wise use principle.

Actions

- 1.2.1 Actively contribute to the work of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment project (<http://www.millenniumassessment.org>) by serving on its Board and Executive Committee and on its various working groups; analyze the Assessment's methodologies, results and findings at Ramsar COP9, and review the necessary actions, if any, to update and make comprehensive the global assessment of wetland resources and their condition. **GO1** {CPs, Bureau, MedWet, STRP, IOPs} (Refer also to Action 1.1.5)

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Continue to participate in MA Board and Executive Committee meetings.

- R1.2.i Make available to Contracting Parties and other interested organizations the findings and guidance developed by the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) for their use, as appropriate, of the MA guidance and methods for sub-global ecosystem assessments in the assessment of wetland ecosystems at the local, national and regional (supra-national) scale, including through international cooperation on the assessment of transboundary aquatic ecosystems. (Resolution VIII.7) **GO1, 3** {Bureau, MA, CPs,}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Work with MA secretariat to establish mechanisms for making widely available relevant MA products.

- R1.2.ii Make available to all Contracting Parties and others, in cooperation with the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the findings of the review of the status and trends on inland water biodiversity, prepared in support of the review and elaboration of the CBD's programme of work on inland water ecosystems. (Resolution VIII.7) **GO1** {Bureau, CBD}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: As an action in the 3rd CBD/Ramsar Joint Work Plan, make arrangements to ensure that the CBD review of status and trends of inland water biodiversity is circulated to all Ramsar Administrative Authorities and other relevant organizations.

- R1.2.iii Develop collaboration with other assessment processes, including the Global International Waters Assessment, UNESCO's World Water Assessment Programme, and IUCN's Freshwater Biodiversity Assessment Programme, and seek to ensure that their findings and information on the status and trends of wetlands, wetland biodiversity, and water resources are fully available to, and contribute to the needs of, Contracting Parties. (Resolution VIII.7) **GO1, 2** {Bureau, STRP}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: As resources permit, maintain and improve contacts with other assessment activities, including through encouraging their participation in STRP working groups, if established.

- 1.2.2 Establish a repository for the contribution by Contracting Parties of summarized national (or, where appropriate, provincial) assessments of changes in the status of wetland resources, as the basis for regular analysis and improved reporting on the status of wetland resources. **GO1** {STRP, Bureau, IOPs, CPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Encourage CPs to provide a copy of relevant assessments and establish a Bureau mechanism for holding this information and making it available to STRP, as needed.

- 1.2.3 Develop guidelines for rapid assessment of wetland biodiversity and functions, and for monitoring change in ecological character, including the use of indicators, for both inland waters and coastal and marine ecosystems, for consideration by COP9. **GO1, 2** {STRP, Bureau, CBD} (Refer also to Action 11.2.1).

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Continue to contribute to CBD work in the preparation of rapid assessment guidelines for inland waters and marine and coastal ecosystems and indicators. Provide support to any work agreed to be undertaken by the STRP, including making available the CBD guidelines for review in the Ramsar context.

- 1.2.4 Develop methodologies for the assessment of the vulnerability of wetlands to change in ecological character, including their vulnerability to the impacts of climate change, sea-level rise, invasion by alien species, and agricultural practices. Apply for this purpose the Convention's Risk Assessment Framework (Resolution VII.10), its guidance on impact assessment (Resolutions VII.16 and VIII.9). **GO1, 2** {Bureau, STRP, MedWet, IOPs, MEAs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Provide support to any work agreed to be undertaken by the STRP.

- 1.2.5 Undertake assessments of the vulnerability of wetlands to change in ecological character, including their vulnerability to the impacts of climate change and sea-level rise. **GO1, 2** {CPs, MedWet, IOPs}

2003-2005 Global target: SC/Bureau to identify at least 20 Parties willing to undertake vulnerability assessments and report to COP9.

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Through the work of the North African Wetlands Network (NAWN), promote the undertaking of vulnerability assessments in the North African region.

- R1.2.v Update information on mangrove forest cover and conservation status and levels of use of mangroves and provide this information to the Bureau and STRP. (Resolution VIII.32) **GO1, 2** {relevant CPs, Bureau, STRP}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Hold any relevant information supplied by CPs, as part of repository established for Action 1.2.5, and make available to STRP, as needed.

- R1.2.vii Monitor and assess the impacts of drought and other natural disasters on the ecological character of Ramsar sites and other wetlands, and on the livelihoods of local communities and indigenous peoples dependent on these wetlands, and report this information to the Ramsar Bureau and STRP. (Resolution VIII.35). **GO1, 2** {CPs, Bureau, STRP}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Hold any relevant information supplied by CPs, as part of repository established for Action 1.2.5, and make available to STRP, as needed.

- 1.2.7 Undertake assessments of water quality and quantity available to, and required by, wetlands, to support the implementation of the *Guidelines for the allocation and management of water for maintaining the ecological functions of wetlands* (COP8 Resolution VIII.1), as a contribution to the WSSD Plan of Implementation. GO1, 2 {CPs, MedWet, IOPs}

2003-2005 Global target: At least 50 CPs to have undertaken water quality and quantity assessments.

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Medwet: Introduce into MedWet activities actions for the assessment of water quality and quantity, including through the use of methodologies developed by SEHUMED.

- R1.2.viii Further review and, as appropriate, develop guidance and report to COP9, concerning identified gaps and disharmonies in defining and reporting the ecological character of wetlands through inventory, assessment, monitoring and management of Ramsar sites and other wetlands, giving priority to advice and guidance on practical matters on issues that should include:

- i) the Ramsar Classification System for Wetland Type, including its coverage of mountain wetlands and particularly those associated with glaciers (Resolution VIII.12) with a view to inclusion of additional types, and (bio)geographical regionalization schemes, and their application in defining and reporting the ecological character of wetlands;
- ii) determining the ecological character of Ramsar sites and other wetlands, including techniques and guidelines for delineating ecological boundaries and mapping wetlands, and for evaluating the values and functions, goods and services provided by wetlands;
- iii) incorporation of assessment and management processes and practical methods (including multi-scalar methods for wetland assessment and monitoring) developed by other programmes, including the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA), into the Ramsar "Toolkit" of Wise Use Handbooks;
- iv) practical methods, including indicators, for monitoring wetlands and for the rapid assessment of wetland biodiversity, including both inland waters and coastal and marine systems;
- v) incorporation of environmental impact and strategic environmental assessment into wetland risk assessment procedures; and
- vi) harmonization of definitions and terms throughout the suite of Ramsar guidance on inventory, assessment, monitoring and management of the ecological character of wetlands; (Resolution VIII.7) **GO1, 2** {STRP, Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support any work by STRP on these matters.

- R1.2.ix Consider the consolidation of the additional guidance developed through Action 1.2.14 with that already adopted by the Convention in the form of an integrated framework for wetland inventory, assessment and monitoring, developed from that outlined in Ramsar COP8 DOC. 16, ensuring that the tools, guidance and mechanisms provided for the benefit of Contracting Parties resulting from this work should be framed in such a way that they can be applied at different scales according to the capacity, priorities and objectives of Contracting Parties for the wise use of wetlands within their jurisdiction, and that they should also be provided such that any reporting involved does not represent an undue burden on Contracting Parties and divert resources from the on-site conservation and sustainable use of wetlands. (Resolution VIII.7) **GO1, 2** {STRP, Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support any work by STRP on these matters.

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 2. POLICIES AND LEGISLATION, INCLUDING IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND VALUATION

Operational Objective 2.1:

Specify the most appropriate policy instrument(s) to be used in each country to ensure the wise use of wetlands.

Actions

- 2.1.3 Ensure best practice examples of integration and harmonisation of policies and legislation are made available to the Bureau and the Scientific and Technical Review Panel, so as to assist in the development of good practice guidance to assist Contracting Parties. **GO1.** {CPs, Bureau, STRP}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Add relevant information provided by CPs to the Ramsar Wise Use Resource Centre, and make available to STRP, as needed. Africa: encourage up to three CPs to review national legislation in line with updated policies and promote legislative reviews through NEPAD.

Operational Objective 2.2:

Develop, review, amend when necessary, and implement national or supra-national policies, legislation, institutions and practices, including impact assessment and valuation, in all Contracting Parties, to ensure that the Convention, and especially the wise use principle, is being fully applied.

Actions

- R2.2.vii Provide impact assessment materials relevant to wetlands, including case studies indicating lessons learned, guidelines, sources of advice, and other relevant materials, to the Bureau for incorporation into the IUCN Biodiversity Economics Web site. (Resolution VIII.9) **GO1, 2** {CPs, Bureau, IUCN}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Make available relevant information provided by CPs for inclusion in the IUCN Biodiversity Economics Web site and STRP, as needed.

- R2.2.viii Prepare a synthesis of lessons learned from those case studies submitted by Contracting Parties (see Action 2.2.10), including indications of linkages with existing Ramsar guidance on other topics where relevant, and prepare a report for COP9. (Resolution VIII.9) **GO1, 2** {STRP, Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support any work by STRP on these matters.

- R2.2.ix Conduct a review, as a supplement to that presented in Technical Session A of Ramsar COP6 in 1996, of references to impact assessment in Ramsar COP decisions, guidelines and other Ramsar publications, and in particular to identify and seek to correct if necessary any inconsistencies of approach, and to make the results of such review available as an updated index of references to impact assessment in Ramsar materials. (Resolution VIII.9) **GO1, 2, 3** {STRP, Bureau, IOPs, IAIA}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support any work by STRP on these matters.

- 2.2.4 Promote the continuing development, wide dissemination – primarily through the Internet-based resource kit (<http://www.biodiversityeconomics.org/assessment/ramsar-503-01.htm>) and application of methodologies to undertake valuations of the economic, social and environmental benefits and functions of wetlands, in collaboration with the International Association of Impact Assessment (IAIA), Ramsar's International Organization Partners, and interested Parties and organizations. **GO1** {CPs, STRP, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support any work by STRP on these matters.

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 3. INTEGRATION OF WETLAND WISE USE INTO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Operational objective 3.1:

Develop and disseminate methodologies to achieve the conservation and wise use of wetlands.

Actions

- 3.1.2 Compile advice, methods and best practice studies for the wise use of wetlands, including the application of the ecosystem approach, and disseminate these to wetland managers. **GO1** {STRP, CPs, Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support any work by STRP on these matters.

- 3.1.4 Disseminate and encourage the use of the Convention's guidance on the wise use concept to governments, responsible agencies and bilateral and multilateral donor organizations, in order to assist their development and implementation of sustainable development funding policies that fully address the conservation and wise use of wetlands. **GO1, 3** {Bureau, MedWet, CPs, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support and encourage CPs and others in the wide dissemination of existing wise use guidance. SAEDC: Help define and disseminate the wise use concept amongst the donor community and Ramsar supporters, through paper preparation, meetings and workshops.

- R3.1.i Share information, expertise and experience concerning the study, conservation and wise use of mountain and high altitude wetlands, and develop, as appropriate, national, regional or local strategies and plans for their conservation and wise use, particularly with a view to strengthening coordination of Ramsar implementation with work underway in the framework of bilateral and multilateral environmental agreements, especially the Convention on Biological Diversity and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, and those agreements dealing specifically with mountains, as well as with the initiatives of international organizations, including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with the Bureau to report on progress to COP9. (Resolution VIII.12) **GO1, 2, 3** {CPs, Bureau, IOPs, MEAs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Encourage and support input to the work on mountains being developed by other MEAs. Asia: initiate development of platform for the sharing of information, expertise and experience especially for Himalayan wetlands. Europe: Review opportunities for collaboration with the Alpine Convention.

- R3.1.ii Propose a joint strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of High Andean wetlands, involving the Ramsar Convention and other related conventions and initiatives. (Resolution VIII.39) **GO1, 2, 3** {Bureau, SC, MEAs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Americas: Organize and attend joint meeting of the Flamingos High Andean Group and the Paramos Group and develop agreed work plan for drafting strategy.

- R3.1.iv Contribute fully, as resources permit, to the initiatives concerning the transfer of environmentally sound technologies for the sustainable management of mangrove ecosystems, and make this available to users. (Resolution VIII.32) **GO1, 2, 3** {Bureau, STRP}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Continue to contribute to joint work with ITTO and the UNFF, including through assisting in identification of key players, and participation in initiative regional workshop (Nicaragua, March 2003) and UNFF (Geneva, May/June 2003).

Operational Objective 3.2:

Ensure the conservation and wise use of peatlands as a demonstration of the ecosystem-based approach under the Convention.

Actions

- R3.2.i Establish a Coordinating Committee and prepare an implementation plan for global action on peatlands. (Resolution VIII.17) **GO1, 2** {Bureau, STRP, CPs, IOPs, International Mire Conservation Group, International Peat Society, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Establish, resources permitting, a *modus operandi* for the Coordinating Committee for Global Action on Peatlands.

- 3.2.2 Report to COP9 on the progress in implementing the *Guidelines for global action on peatlands* (Resolution VIII.17). **GO1, 2** {CPs, Bureau, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: No action needed during 2003.

Operational Objective 3.3:

Increase recognition of the significance of wetlands for reasons of water supply, coastal protection, flood defense, food security, poverty alleviation, cultural heritage, and scientific research.

Actions

- 3.3.2 Prepare, based upon the available information contained in the Ramsar Sites Database, an analysis and promotional summary of the values and functions of Ramsar sites, giving particular attention to those that have importance for reasons of water supply, coastal protection, flood defense, food security, poverty alleviation, climate change mitigation, cultural heritage and/or scientific research. **GO1, 2** {Bureau, MedWet, Wetlands International} (Refer also to Operational Objective 10.2)

2003-2005 Global target: Analysis of values and functions of Ramsar sites prepared by Bureau/Wetlands International and circulated.

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Agree mechanism with Wetlands International for the analysis of information in the Ramsar Sites Database, through its contractual work on behalf of the Convention.

- R3.3.i Work together with other relevant bodies, in particular the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), to expand upon current reviews of the state of knowledge concerning the interactions between agricultural practices and wetland functions and values. (Resolution VIII.34) **GO1, 2** {IOPs, Bureau, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Work with IOPs and FAO to develop work reviewing agriculture and wetland knowledge. MedWet: Further advance the MedWet work on agriculture, water and environment through the GWP-Med initiative.

- 3.3.4 Develop and implement wise use wetland programmes and projects that contribute to poverty alleviation objectives and food and water security plans at local, national and regional levels. **GO1** {CPs, IOPs, OCs, Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support and encourage CPs and others to develop wetland programmes and projects supporting poverty alleviation objectives.

- 3.3.5 Promote research, including through the establishment of national and regional research and training centres, into the role of wetlands in water supply, coastal protection, flood defense, food security, poverty alleviation, and cultural heritage. **GO1, 2** {CPs, MedWet, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Americas: Provide necessary support to the establishment of the Panama City Regional Center. MedWet: Develop new activities, modules and methodologies in the existing MedWet Technical Network, and establish new partnerships with research centres and institutes.

Operational Objective 3.4:

Integrate policies on the conservation and wise use of wetlands in the planning activities in all Contracting Parties, and in decision-making processes at national, regional, provincial and local levels, particularly concerning territorial management, groundwater management, catchment/river basin management, coastal and marine zone planning, and responses to climate change.

Actions

- 3.4.2 Apply the guidelines in *Integrating wetland conservation and wise use into river basin management* (Ramsar Wise Use Handbook 4) and, where appropriate and feasible, participate in the related CBD/Ramsar project entitled the “River Basin Initiative” so as to support the WSSD agreement to increase understanding of the sustainable use, protection and management of water resources. **GO1, 3** {CPs, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Continue to encourage CPs and others to participate in and contribute information through the River Basin Initiative and its Web-based information portal. Provide input to LakeNet’s lake basin management project implementation. Africa: Continue collaborative work with river/lake management organizations, including for Lake Chad and Niger River.

- 3.4.3 Review, from case studies and other materials compiled through the CBD/Ramsar River Basin Initiative, lessons learnt and good practice experience, and report this to COP9, including the preparation of additional guidance, as appropriate, on integrating wetlands, biodiversity and river basin management. **GO1, 3** {Bureau, STRP, MEAs, OCs} (Refer also to Operation Objective 12.1)

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support any work by STRP on these matters.

- R3.4.i Ensure that due attention is given to the role of mountain and high-altitude wetlands, and the importance of their conservation and wise use, in the preparation and implementation of river basin management plans. (Resolution VIII.12) **GO1, 2, 3** {CPs, Bureau, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support and encourage CPs and others in this work.

- 3.4.4 Develop guidelines to assist Parties in considering the full environmental, social and economic impacts on wetland and river systems of constructing large dams, for consideration at COP9. **GO1, 3** {STRP, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs}

2003-2005 global implementation target: Guidance prepared on assessment of impact of large dams on wetlands and river systems.

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support any work by STRP on these matters.

- R3.4.v Prepare a report for COP9 on environmental flow methodologies so as to assist in the management of dam related impacts. (Resolution VIII.2) **GO1, 3** {STRP, IUCN, other IOPs, OCs, Bureau}.

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support any work by STRP on these matters.

- R3.4.vi Document case studies of good practice in the integration of wetlands into ICZM and make these available to the Convention for review by the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) as the basis for preparing further guidance on wetlands and ICZM under the Convention. (Resolution VIII. 4) **GO1, 2** {CPs, MedWet, Bureau, STRP}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Encourage CPs to provide case studies, and support any work by STRP on these matters. MedWet: Promote the application of sustainable management of habitats and species in the Med region through the implementation of the Strategic Action Plan on Biodiversity [for the Mediterranean region] (SAP-Bio).

- R3.4.ix Develop projects and other activities that promote and demonstrate good practice in water allocation and management for maintaining the ecological functions of wetlands, make such good practice examples available to others through the information exchange mechanisms of the Ramsar/CBD River Basin Initiative, and report to COP9 on the successes achieved and lessons learned from these activities. (Resolution VIII.1) **GO1, 3** {CPs, Bureau, STRP, MEAs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Encourage CPs and others to contribute information on good practice through the River Basin Initiative and its Web-based information portal. SAEDC: At the request of CPs or partners, help develop projects that demonstrate good practice in water allocation and management..

- 3.4.7 If established as a priority for the STRP's work in 2003-2005, review Resolutions VIII.1 and VIII.2 and prepare further guidance, if it is required, for consideration at COP9. (Resolution VIII.1) **GO1, 2** {STRP, IOPs, OCs, Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support any work by STRP on these matters.

- 3.4.16 Review the role of wetlands in groundwater recharge and storage and of groundwater in maintaining the ecological character of wetlands and the groundwater component of the hydrological cycle, as well as the impacts of groundwater abstraction on wetlands, and to report to COP9 including, as appropriate, with guidelines for Contracting Parties on these matters. (Resolutions VIII.1 and VIII.40) **GO1** {Bureau, MedWet, STRP, IOPs}

2003-2005 Global target: Guidelines on groundwater resources prepared.

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support any work by STRP on these matters.

- 3.4.7 Develop, for consideration at COP9, guidelines on the sustainable use of groundwater resources to maintain wetland ecosystem functions and the maintenance of the groundwater component of the hydrological cycle. **GO1** {Bureau, MedWet, STRP, IOPs}

2003-2005 global implementation target: Guidelines on groundwater resources prepared.

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support any work by STRP on these matters.

- R3.4.xiii Review the role of wetlands in groundwater recharge and storage and of groundwater in maintaining the ecological character of wetlands and the groundwater component of the hydrological cycle, as well as the impacts of groundwater abstraction on wetlands, and report to COP9 including, as appropriate, with guidelines for Contracting Parties on these matters. (Resolutions VIII.1 and VIII.40) **GO1** {Bureau, MedWet, STRP, IOPs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support any work by STRP on these matters.

- 3.4.8 In collaboration with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (refer also to Action 13.1.1), promote the management of wetlands in relation to adaptive management and mitigation of the impacts of climate change, particularly in the context of land use, land use change and rising sea levels, forestry, peatlands and agriculture. **GO1, 2** {STRP, Bureau, MedWet, OCs}

2003-2005 global implementation target: COP8 information on wetlands and mitigation and adaptive management for climate change made available.

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Explore with IPCC secretariat opportunities for addressing these matters, and support any work by STRP on these matters.

- R3.4.xxi Request the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to prepare a Technical Paper on the relationship between wetlands and climate change, in time for consideration at the second STRP meeting prior to COP9; and develop (STRP), on the basis of the IPCC Technical Paper, a synthesis of key issues on wetlands and climate change as an information paper, which should undergo a review process as determined by the STRP, for consideration by Contracting Parties at COP9. (Resolution VIII.3) **GO1, 2** {Bureau IPCC, STRP}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Request IPCC to prepare the Technical Paper, and support any work by STRP on these matters.

- R3.4.xxiii Seek Ramsar representation in the Dialogue on Water, Food and the Environment and build on existing links with that Dialogue's secretariat. (Resolution VIII.34) **GO1, 2, 3** {Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Improve input to this Dialogue, including securing Bureau representation. MedWet: contribute to the development of the Dialogue and an Associated Programme by MedWet for GWP-Med.

- R3.4.xxiv Contribute information on wetlands and agriculture to the Wise Use Resource Centre maintained by the Ramsar Bureau, River Basin Initiative and to the Dialogue on Water, Food and Environment and future meetings of the World Water Forum. (Resolution VIII.34) **GO1, 2, 3** {CPs, IOPs, STRP, OCs, Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Add relevant information supplied to the Wise Use Resource Centre.

(Refer also to Operational Objective 12.1 in relation to transboundary wetlands and river basins.)

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 4. RESTORATION AND REHABILITATION

Operational Objective 4.1:

Identify priority wetlands where restoration or rehabilitation would be beneficial and yield long-term environmental, social or economic benefits, and implement the necessary measures to recover these sites.

Actions

- 4.1.2 Establish wetland restoration/rehabilitation programmes, where feasible, at destroyed or degraded wetlands, especially in those associated with major river systems or areas of high nature conservation value, in line with Recommendation 4.1 and Resolutions VII.17 and VII.20. **GO1** {CPs, MedWet, IOPs}

2003-2005 Global target: All CPs with lost or degraded wetlands to have identified priority sites for restoration; restoration projects underway or completed in at least 100 CPs.

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support and encourage CPs in their restoration work. MedWet: Further advance and disseminate the methodology developed within the MedWet Technical Network, and promote its use by the Mediterranean CPs, by identifying appropriate cases for action.

- 4.1.3 Compile information on new research and methodologies for the restoration and rehabilitation of lost or degraded wetlands and disseminate this information. **GO1** {CPs, STRP, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs}

2003-2005 Global target: Continue to add new case studies and methods to the Ramsar wetland restoration Web site.

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Encourage CPs to supply new case studies and methodologies, and support any work by STRP on this topic, adding information to the Ramsar Web site as and when available.

- R4.1.v Ensure, when implementing the *Principles and guidelines for wetland restoration*, that the cultural and archaeological heritage significance of wetlands being considered for restoration is fully recognized so as to ensure that this significance is maintained, taking into account the *Guiding principles for taking into account the cultural values of wetlands for the effective management of sites*, annexed to Resolution VIII.19. (Resolution VIII.16). **GO1** {CPs, MedWet, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: MedWet: Support and encourage inclusion of the cultural dimension in all appropriate restoration activities in the Med region.

- R4.1.vi Identify, as part of national training needs assessments, training needs in wetland restoration, training opportunities and expertise in wetland restoration and create relevant training modules as part of the Ramsar Wetland Training Initiative, once established. (Resolution VIII.16). **GO1** {CPs, Bureau, STRP, MedWet, IOPs, OCs} (Refer also to Action 20.1.5)

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support Wetlands International in further developing and resourcing the Ramsar Wetland Training Initiative

- R4.1.viii Disseminate the *Principles and guidelines for wetland restoration* (Resolution VIII.16) to community stakeholders who have an interest in wetland restoration and involve local communities and

indigenous peoples in restoring and maintaining wetlands, in line with the guidance in Resolution VII.8 concerning establishing and strengthening local communities' and indigenous peoples' participation in the management of wetlands. (Resolution VIII.16). **GO1** {CPs, MedWet, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: MedWet: Work with local populations, and promote the use of traditional practices in planning wetland restoration. Develop specific guidance modules for salinas restoration.

- R4.1.ix Utilise the information and resources of Ramsar's restoration Web site, and contribute relevant additional information on their wetland restoration projects and experience to this Web site, so as to increase the wide availability of such information, and particularly to provide demonstration projects that illustrate the application of the principles and guidelines adopted by Resolution VIII.16. (Resolution VIII.16) **GO1, 2** {CPs, STRP, Bureau, IOPs}

2003-2005 Global target: Continue to add new case studies and methods to Ramsar wetland restoration Web site.

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Maintain Ramsar's restoration Web site, and add further relevant material, when supplied.

- R4.1.xi Further develop tools and guidance on wetland restoration, including a glossary of wetland restoration terminology, and guidance on small dams and wetland restoration. (Resolution VIII.16) **GO1, 2** {STRP, Bureau, Coordinating Committee for Global Action on Peatlands}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support any work by STRP on this matter.

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 5. INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES

Operational Objective 5.1:

Develop guidance and promote protocols and actions to prevent, control or eradicate invasive alien species in wetland systems.

Actions

- R5.1.iv Identify the presence of invasive alien species in Ramsar sites and other wetlands in their territory, the threats they pose to the ecological character of these wetlands, including the risk of invasions by such species not yet present within each site, the actions underway or planned for their prevention, eradication or control, and, for Ramsar sites, report on this to the Ramsar Bureau without delay in line with Article 3.2 of the Convention, so that this information may be included in the Ramsar Sites Database (refer also to Operational Objective 11.2); and make information provided by Contracting Parties available to the Convention on Biological Diversity and others in support of the implementation of the CBD-Ramsar Joint Work Plan 2002-2006. (Resolution VIII.18) **GO1,2** {CPs, Bureau, Wetlands International}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Transmit Article 3.2 reports to Wetlands International for inclusion in the Ramsar Sites Database, and make available to CBD any information provided by CPs. Africa: take an active part in contributing to the development by NEPAD of work on invasive species.

- 5.1.2 In collaboration with the Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP), the Convention on Biological Diversity, Ramsar's International Organization Partners, and interested Parties, continue to develop and disseminate practical guidance for the prevention, control and eradication of invasive species, based on case studies and documented experiences from around the world. **GO1** {CPs, STRP, Bureau, MedWet, GISP, IOPs, OCs}

2003-2005 global implementation target: Guidance for invasives' management prepared.

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support any work of the STRP on this topic.

- R5.1.vi Encourage the Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP), IUCN and others, to further develop Web-based sources of information on identification, distribution and management of invasive species and potential invasive species affecting wetlands, and make these widely available to Contracting Parties and wetland managers so as to assist them in the early detection, eradication and control of invasive species. (Resolution VIII.18) **GO1, 2, 3** {Bureau, STRP, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Identify additional information sources on invasive species and make available to CPs. Africa: Communicate to GISP the outcomes of the African projects on invasive species.

- R5.1.vii Explore with the secretariat of the CBD and the GISP ways and means for the Ramsar Convention to contribute to the review, for the CBD, on the assessment of the impact of invasive species on inland waters, including on islands, and make available the results of this review to Contracting Parties and wetland managers. (Resolution VIII.18) **GO1, 2, 3** {Bureau, CBD, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Seek to contribute to the CBD/GISP work.

- R5.1.viii Collaborate with IUCN, the World Heritage Centre, and UNESCO's MAB to further develop and implement communications and awareness-raising work on African wetland invasive species for wetland managers, disseminate widely its information and awareness products, consider developing similar projects in other Ramsar regions, and encourage Contracting Parties and donor organizations to consider providing resources for such projects. (Resolution VIII.18) **GO1, 2, 3** {Bureau, MEAs, IOPs, OCs, CPs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Disseminate information products on African wetland invasives, and review opportunity for developing similar projects for other regions.

- 5.1.3 Ensure that national and, where necessary, international action plans for the prevention, control and eradication of invasive species fully incorporate wetland issues. **GO1, 3** {CPs, Bureau, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support and encourage CPs in this work.

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 6. LOCAL COMMUNITIES, INDIGENOUS PEOPLE, AND CULTURAL VALUES

Operational Objective 6.1:

Encourage active and informed participation of local communities and indigenous people, in particular women and youth, in the conservation and wise use of wetlands.

Actions

- 6.1.1 Apply the *Guidelines for establishing and strengthening local communities' and indigenous people's participation in the management of wetlands* (Ramsar Wise Use Handbook 5), giving particular attention to the importance of incentive measures (refer to Operational Objective 8.1), the building of trust, the need for flexible approaches, the exchange of knowledge, capacity building and the continuity of resources and efforts. **GO1** {CPs, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support and encourage implementation work by CPs.

- 6.1.2 In consultation with and with the full support of indigenous people, document and encourage the application of appropriate traditional knowledge and management practices of indigenous people and local communities in the conservation and wise use of wetlands, particularly where wetlands are under the traditional ownership of local communities and indigenous people. **GO1, 2** {CPs, MedWet, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: MedWet: Work with local populations, and promote the inclusion of traditional practices and structures in management procedures (especially for North Africa, Prespa, and Neretva).

- 6.1.3 Continue to support the Participatory Management Clearinghouse (PMC), a joint service of IUCN–The World Conservation Union, the Ramsar Bureau, and WWF International (www.iucn.org/themes/pmns). **GO1** {CPs, Bureau, MedWet, IUCN, WWF}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Continue supporting the Participatory Management Clearinghouse, including the provision of new materials when available.

- 6.1.5 Elaborate for consideration by COP9 further guidance on the application of the *Guidelines for establishing and strengthening local communities' and indigenous people's participation in the management of wetlands* (Ramsar Wise Use Handbook 5), based on experiences gained at the field level, and in particular the experience of Pacific Island States and other Small Island Developing States, and working with the CBD and others in line with the CBD-Ramsar 3rd Joint Work Plan. **GO1** {CPs, CEPA, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs, OCs}

2003-2005 Global target: Elaborated guidelines, developed jointly with CBD, available to COP9.

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Work with CBD on the development and elaboration of joint guidelines.

- 6.1.6 Consider using the *Guiding principles for taking into account the cultural values of wetlands for the effective management of sites* (Resolution VIII.19), and continue to document case studies on social and cultural values of wetlands and how they can be incorporated into the effort to conserve and sustainably use wetland resources. **GO 1, 2** {CPs, CEPA, MedWet, Bureau, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support and encourage provision by CPs and others of case studies, and disseminate through Ramsar Web site, as appropriate.

- 6.1.7 Apply the *New guidelines on management planning for Ramsar sites and other wetlands* adopted by COP8 (Resolution VIII.14) in such a way as to ensure the full incorporation of the cultural features of wetlands in their sustainable use. **GO1, 2** {CPs, MedWet, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Africa: Disseminate and promote the application of the new guidelines on management planning for Ramsar sites and other wetlands, especially through NEPAD. MedWet: Incorporate the aspect of cultural values in all management planning and development activities undertaken through MedWet.

- R6.1.vii Enhance the information paper on cultural aspects of wetlands (COP8 DOC. 15) and the detailed guidance prepared for consideration by COP8, with input from Contracting Parties, experts and practitioners, as well as local communities and indigenous peoples from around the world, with a view to publishing it as a background document, and inform COP9 of the progress made. (Resolution VIII.19) **GO1, 2** {Bureau, CPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Establish mechanism for the revision and preparation of COP8 materials on cultural aspects of wetlands for publication.

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 7. PRIVATE SECTOR INVOLVEMENT

Operational Objective 7.1:

Promote the involvement of the private sector in the conservation and wise use of wetlands.

Actions

- 7.1.1 Encourage the private sector to apply the wise use principle (Ramsar Handbooks 1 to 6) in their activities and investments affecting wetlands. **GO1** {CPs, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: SAEDC: Involve the private sector in wetland wise use projects under development, including in Ecuador, Peru, Malawi, and provide support to IOPs in this endeavor.

- 7.1.2 Seek opportunities to involve the private sector, national science academies, universities and other professional, scientific, and technical societies of recognized merit in wetland-related decision-making, through vehicles such as National Ramsar/Wetlands Committees, site or river basin management authorities/committees, and outreach activities. **GO1** {CPs, CEPA, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support and encourage CPs in implementing this activity. Africa: Continue working with private sector in the “W” wetland complex and seek to establish other links with the private sector for African wetlands.

- 7.1.3 Establish an international private-sector “Friends of Wetlands” forum where international and national companies can seek advice on applying wise use practices in their business activities, and can also identify opportunities for supporting the activities of the Convention, either at the national, regional or international levels. **GO1** {SC, Bureau, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: SAEDC: Provide assistance to IOPs in the setting up of a “Friends of Wetlands” forum.

- 7.1.4 Establish, where appropriate, national and local private-sector “Friends of Wetlands” forums where major companies can seek advice on applying wise use practices in their business activities, and can also identify opportunities for supporting the activities of the Convention. **GO1** {CPs, Bureau, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support and encourage CPs in implementing this activity.

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 8. INCENTIVES

Operational Objective 8.1:

Promote incentive measures that encourage the application of the wise use principle, and the removal of perverse incentives.

Actions

- 8.1.2 Make use of and continue to develop and improve upon the Internet-based resource kit (<http://www.biodiversityeconomics.org/incentives/policies-07-00.htm>) on positive incentives prepared and maintained by IUCN—the World Conservation Union. **GO1** {CPs, STRP, IUCN, Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support any work undertaken by STRP on this matter.

- R8.1.iii Advise the Ramsar Bureau on the relevance, quality, and accessibility of the information provided on this web-based resource kit and indicate further needs regarding information on incentive measures. (Resolution VIII.23) **GO1** {CPs, STRP, IUCN, Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Make available to STRP information supplied by CPs, so as to support any work undertaken by STRP on this matter.

- 8.1.3 Report to COP9 on progress in the design, implementation, monitoring and assessment of positive incentive measures and the identification and removal of perverse incentives, including those relating to agriculture. **GO1** {STRP, Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support any work by STRP on this matter.

- R8.1.iv In collaboration with IUCN, IAIA, other relevant bodies and experts and the Bureau, Investigate linkages between incentives and related topics including financial mechanisms, trade, impact assessment and valuation. (Resolution VIII.23) **GO1** {STRP, IUCN, IAIA, OCs, Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support any work by STRP on this matter.

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 9. COMMUNICATION, EDUCATION, AND PUBLIC AWARENESS (CEPA)²

Operational Objective R9.i:

Integrate CEPA processes into all levels of policy development, planning and implementation of the Convention.

Actions:

- R9.i.i Ensure that by COP9, CEPA is integrated into all Convention work programmes, including joint work plans with other conventions and organizations, and is also considered in the development of all further Ramsar guidance for Parties. **GO1, 2, 3** {COP, Bureau, MedWet, STRP, IOPs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support any work by STRP on this matter, and review all joint work plans to ensure full coverage of CEPA. MedWet: align the communications strategy of Medwet with the Convention's CEPA programme.

- R9.i.iii Establish an STRP expert Working Group on CEPA to undertake a programme of work as set out in Annex II of Resolution VIII.31(Resolution VIII. 31). **GO1, 2, 3** {STRP, Bureau, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support any work by STRP on this matter.

² The Operational Objectives and Actions here are those adopted by Resolution VIII.31 (Annex 1), which also established three General Objectives under which the Operational Objectives are grouped as follows:

General Objective 1: To gain acceptance of the value and effectiveness of wetland-related communication, education and public awareness (CEPA) processes at all levels throughout the Convention (Operational Objectives R9.i and R9.ii)

General Objective 2: To provide support and tools for the effective implementation of national and local wetland-related communication, education and public awareness (CEPA) activities (Operational Objectives R9.iii, R9.iv and R9.v)

General Objective 3: To mainstream the wise use of wetlands within society and enable people to act (Operational Objectives R9.vi, R9.vii and R9.viii)

Operational Objective 9.2

Demonstrate that CEPA processes are effective in achieving Ramsar's wetland wise use objectives at the global, national and local levels.

Actions:

- R9.ii.iii Make the findings and conclusions drawn from Actions 9.2.1 and 9.2.2 available to Parties and the broader community through appropriate mechanisms (see Operational Objectives 9.4). **GO1** {Bureau, CPs, CEPA, IOPs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Make available any work by STRP on these matters.

Operational Objective 9.3:

Provide national leadership, networks and cohesive frameworks to support and catalyse CEPA for the wise use of wetlands.

Actions:

- R9.iii.vi Collaborate globally and nationally to encourage synergy with the CEPA activities under other international conventions and programmes, including the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme. **GO1, 3** {Bureau, CPs, CEPA, IOPs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Continue to encourage synergies on CEPA with other conventions and programmes, including contributing, as appropriate, to any work they undertake.

- R9.iii.vii Establish and maintain an on-line searchable listing of expertise in CEPA and of the CEPA Focal Points, one which can be accessed to assist CEPA at national and international levels, and promote this service to assist CEPA programmes and activities. **GO1, 4** (Bureau, CPs)

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Provide this information through Ramsar's CEPA mini-Web site.

Operational Objective 9.4:

Transfer, exchange and share CEPA information and expertise that promotes and results in the wise use of wetlands.

Actions:

- R9.iv.i Continue to develop the Convention's Web site and the CEPA mini-Web site within it, which has been designed specifically for the CEPA programme, and add resource materials to ensure that these remain a cornerstone of this CEPA programme globally. **GO1, 2, 3, 4** {Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Continue to develop and maintain Ramsar's CEPA mini-Web site.

- R9.iv.ii Encourage Ramsar's International Organization Partners (IOPs), especially the IUCN's Commission on Education and Communication, and other organizations with which collaborative agreements are in place, also to make available suitable resource materials to assist the global CEPA programme and information on effective CEPA approaches. **GO1, 4** {Bureau, IOPs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Work with IOPs to make available additional resource materials through the CEPA mini-Web site.

R9.iv.iii Continue to produce, distribute and share resource materials to support wetland CEPA actions. **GO3, 4** { Bureau, IOPs, CPs, CEPA, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Prepare further Ramsar CEPA materials, as appropriate, and make them available, including through Ramsar's CEPA mini-Web site.

R9.iv.iv Maintain, and seek to expand, the Ramsar global e-mail networks to include Ramsar Administrative Authorities, Ramsar national wetland CEPA Focal Points, CEPA professionals, Ramsar site managers, those facilities dedicated to environmental education and awareness raising, and local stakeholders. Establish and support similar national e-groups and the linking of these with the global network. **GO3, 4** { Bureau, CPs, CEPA, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support establishment of further e-mail networks, as needed.

R9.iv.v Promote and seek to resource the coordination of the Wetland Link International programme of the Wildfowl & Wetland Trust, UK, in order to allow it to assist wetland education centres to create a global network and national centres of excellence for promoting CEPA, and to facilitate information exchange between centres in developed and developing countries and countries with economies in transition. **GO1, 3** {CPs, Bureau, IOPs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support efforts to resource coordination of the Wetland Link International programme.

R9.iv.vii Establish a Ramsar photolibrary to support global, national and local efforts to raise awareness and appreciation of wetland resources and how these can be used wisely. **GO4** {Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Review requirements, options and costs of establishing a Ramsar photolibrary.

Operational Objective 9.5:

Improve the individual and collective capacity and opportunities of people to participate in and contribute to using wetlands wisely, through the recognition of the values of wetland resources.

Actions:

R9.v.ii In collaboration with Ramsar's International Organization Partners, identify sources of expert information and training opportunities in wetland CEPA in order to facilitate the sharing of expertise and knowledge at the local, national, regional and global levels. **GO4**{ Bureau, CPs, CEPA}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Encourage IOPs to provide this information.

Operational Objective 9.6:

Foster sustained national campaigns, programmes and projects to raise community awareness of the important ecosystem services provided by wetlands as well as their social, economic and cultural values.

Actions:

R9.vi.ii Celebrate World Wetlands Day/Week with appropriate national and local events and promotions and the distribution of resource materials, in order to raise awareness of wetland values and functions. **GO1** {CPs, CEPA, Bureau, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Prepare and distribute materials for World Wetlands Day 2004.

R9.vi.iii Collaborate with the media to inform decision-makers and the broader society about the values and benefits of wetlands. **GO1** {CPs, CEPA, Bureau, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: As opportunities arise, work with the media on wetland stories and issues, providing information as and when requested.

Operational Objective 9.7:

Support and develop mechanisms to ensure that CEPA processes are incorporated into participatory, multi-stakeholder wetland management.

Actions:

[None concerning Bureau work]

Operational Objective 9.8:

Promote and support the role of wetland and other education centres as focal points for global, national and local CEPA efforts.

Actions:

[None concerning Bureau work]

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 10. DESIGNATION OF RAMSAR SITES

Operational Objective 10.1:

Apply the *Strategic Framework and guidelines for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance* (Ramsar Handbook 7).

Actions

R10.1.i Identify all wetlands which potentially qualify for designation as Ramsar sites, [as a concrete output of the strategy and priorities called for in Action 10.1.1 above,] establish targets for future designation in terms of number of sites to be designated, and communicate these targets to each meeting of the Conference of the Parties and the Ramsar Bureau. (Resolution VIII.10) **GO2** {CPs, Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Encourage CPs to establish a strategy, priority and targets for Ramsar site designation and to provide these to the Bureau and COP. Promote and encourage designation as Ramsar sites of already existing Biosphere Reserves and World Heritage Sites. Support WWF's initiative on designation of coral reefs as Ramsar sites.

R10.1.iii Provide interpretation of the term 'under-represented type' in the context of available information on the global extent of different wetland types and representation of these in the Ramsar List, investigate methods for defining targets for representation of wetland types in the Ramsar List in the context of the Strategic Framework for the future development of the List (Resolution VII.11), and report the results of this to COP9. (Resolution VIII.11) **GO2** {STRP, Wetlands International, Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Include this work in the Ramsar Sites Database contract with Wetlands International, resources permitting, and support any input from STRP to this work.

R10.1.ix Report to the Standing Committee any Ramsar site boundary revisions and accompanying documentation provided in response to Resolution VIII.21, paragraph 9. (Resolution VIII.21) **GO2** {Bureau, SC}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Report to the Standing Committee, as and when any such information is provided by CPs.

R10.1.xi Develop, for consideration by COP9, additional Criteria and guidelines for the identification and designation of Ramsar sites concerning their socio-economic and cultural values and functions that are relevant to biological diversity, as listed in Annex 1 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), which would be applied on each occasion in conjunction with one or more existing criteria for the identification and designation of Ramsar sites; and include in this work a full analysis of the implications for Contracting Parties of the implementation of such criteria for the management of Ramsar sites, including Contracting Party obligations and responsibilities for maintaining the ecological character of any such sites so selected so as to ensure that the coherent national networks of Ramsar sites fully incorporate all relevant aspects of the biological diversity of wetlands. (Resolution VIII.10) **GO2** {STRP, Bureau, CPs, OCs, MEAs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support any work by STRP on these matters.

R10.1.xiii Harmonize of the layout and information fields of the Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS) and the core data fields recommended in the Ramsar *Framework for Wetland Inventory* (Resolution VIII.7) **GO1, 2** {STRP, Wetlands International, Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support any work by STRP and Wetlands International on this matter.

R10.1.xvi Develop protocols for the electronic submission of RISs, where this is possible and desirable, so as to facilitate the supply of data from the information systems of Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Sites Database. (Resolution VIII.13) **GO2** {Bureau, Wetlands International, CPs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Ensure that this work forms part of the Ramsar Sites Database contract with Wetlands International, and make protocols available to CPs once developed.

R10.1.xviii Review, if indicated by the Standing Committee as a priority, the ecological roles played by reservoirs and other human-made wetlands, including their use by aquatic and other water-dependent biota, and prepare guidance for Contracting Parties concerning the identification and designation of such wetlands for the Ramsar List, taking into account the experience gained by Parties that have already done so. (Resolution VIII.2) **GO1, 2** {STRP, CPs, Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support any work by STRP on this matter.

10.1.7 Continue to support the work of Wetlands International, other International Organization Partners, and others in providing analyses and information to help Parties to apply the Strategic Framework to identify and designate Ramsar sites, including further identification of under-represented wetland types. **GO2** {CPs, Bureau, IOPs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support and encourage provision of analyses and information, including through the Ramsar Sites Database contract with Wetlands International.

10.1.8 Continue to support the work of Wetlands International and others in the updating for each COP of the 1% thresholds for waterbird populations for the application of Criterion 6 for Ramsar site designation, having first undertaken international scientific consultation on its contents; seek to provide such population information for other wetland-dependent taxa; and apply this information

for the designation of Ramsar sites. **GO2** {CPs, Bureau, IOPs} (Refer also to Operational Objective 12.2.)

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support and encourage work by IOPs on these matters.

Operational Objective 10.2:

Maintain the Ramsar Sites Database and constantly update it with the best available information, and use the database as a tool for guiding the further designation of wetlands for the List of Wetlands of International Importance.

Actions

- 10.2.1 Ensure that the maps and descriptions of Ramsar sites submitted by Contracting Parties at the time of designation are complete, in the approved standard format of the Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands as amended by COP8 (Resolution VIII.13), and provide sufficient detail to be used for monitoring the ecological character of designated wetlands (refer to Operational Objective 11.1 below). **GO2** {CPs, Bureau, Wetlands International}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Continue to review and finalise for listing all Ramsar Information Sheets and maps provided by CPs.

- 10.2.4 Fully update and submit revised Ramsar Information Sheets as frequently as necessary to record changes in the status of sites, and at least at intervals of not more than six years, so that they can be used for reviewing change in ecological character and progress in achieving the Vision and Objectives of the *Strategic Framework and guidelines for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance* (Ramsar Handbook 7) at each COP. **GO2** {CPs, STRP, Bureau, Wetlands International}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Continue to urge all CPs to update Ramsar Information Sheets, and ensure that Wetlands International provides regular updates on which sites require updating.

- 10.2.5 Enhance the interactive capacity of the Ramsar Sites Database and its accessibility to stakeholders, including through links between the Database, the Ramsar Sites Directory Web presentation, the Ramsar Web site, and other interactive systems such as the Ramsar Data Gateway, as well as the publication of special reports and other outputs. **GO 2** {Bureau, Wetlands International, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support the work of Wetlands International for the Ramsar Sites Database development and management.

- 10.2.6 Maintain the Ramsar Sites Database with the RIS data supplied by Contracting Parties; and manage other relevant data on Ramsar sites, including that supplied by Contracting Parties in addition to the RIS, so that this data can be made publicly available, subject to consultation with the Contracting Party concerned. (Resolution VIII.13) **GO2** {Bureau, Wetlands International}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Complete contract renewal for 2003-2005 with Wetlands International for the provision of this service, taking into account the terms of COP8 Resolutions.

- R10.2.i Maintain the Ramsar Sites Database with the RIS data supplied by Contracting Parties; and manage other relevant data on Ramsar sites, including that supplied by Contracting Parties in addition to the RIS, so that this data can be made publicly available, subject to consultation with the Contracting Party concerned. (Resolution VIII.13) **GO2** {Bureau, Wetlands International}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Include this work as part of the Ramsar Sites Database contract.

R10.2.ii Maintain, as part of the Ramsar Sites Database, in accordance with Resolution 5.4, information reported by Contracting Parties in fulfilment of Article 3.2; and prepare and circulate to all Contracting Parties a simple format for this reporting. (Resolution VIII.8) **GO2** {Bureau, Wetlands International}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Include this work as part of the Ramsar Sites Database contract.

R10.2.iii Continue the development of the Ramsar Sites Database so as to reflect the information as provided in the RIS as revised by Resolution VIII.13, and linked to relevant supplementary data in line with Action 10.2.5 above, and make arrangements for the Ramsar Sites Database to be accessible through the World Wide Web, including the inclusion of a regularly updated version of the Ramsar Sites Database for incorporation into the Ramsar Wetland Data Gateway developed by the Centre for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN). (Resolution VIII.13) **GO2** {Bureau, Wetlands International, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Include this work as part of the Ramsar Sites Database contract.

R10.2.iv Make arrangements to hold digital maps as part of the Ramsar Sites Database, and to make available, as appropriate and taking account of copyright issues and national regulations, such maps for inclusion, *inter alia*, in the further development of the Web presentation of the Ramsar Sites Database by Wetlands International, the Ramsar Wetland Data Gateway maintained by CIESIN, and the Global Database of Protected Areas maintained by the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC). (Resolution VIII.13) **GO2** {Bureau, Wetlands International}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Include this work as part of the Ramsar Sites Database contract.

10.2.6 Maintain, and make available and easily accessible, the *Directory of Wetlands of International Importance* in electronic format, including the preparation of a fully up-to-date version for each meeting of the Conference of Parties, and the *Annotated Ramsar List* in the three official languages. **GO 2** {Wetlands International, Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Continue to prepare an *Annotated List* text for all new and updated Ramsar sites, and make available through the Ramsar Web site.

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 11. MANAGEMENT PLANNING AND MONITORING OF RAMSAR SITES

Operational Objective 11.1:

Maintain the ecological character of all Ramsar sites.

Actions

R11.1.viii Develop a field guide for the practical application of the guidelines adopted by Resolution VIII.14, recognizing that there may be circumstances that limit the application of the guidelines in full. (Resolution VIII.14) **GO1, 2** {Bureau, STRP}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support any work by STRP on this matter.

R11.1.x With the support of Contracting Parties and IOPs, identify agriculture-related management practices developed for areas that include Ramsar sites, contribute this information to the preparation of the guidelines as requested in Action R11.1.ix [framework for agriculture and wetland management guidelines], and share this information with the secretariats of CBD and the

Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD). (Resolution VIII.34) **GO2** {Bureau, CPs, IOPs, MEAs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Request information from CPs to support any work by STRP and IOPs on the preparation of guidelines.

- 11.1.3 Establish, resources permitting, the necessary procedures for the creation and maintenance of the San José Record for the promotion of wetland management, and report to COP9 on its implementation. (Resolution VIII.15) **GO2** {Bureau, STRP}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Initiate San José Record, if resources permit.

- R11.1.xii Identify examples of effective management and exemplary models at Ramsar sites and other wetlands for listing on the San José Record, and submit nominations for consideration through the approved procedure, once established. (Resolution VIII.15) **GO2** {CPs, MedWet, STRP, CEPA, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Encourage CPs to prepare nominations for submission, once procedures established. MedWet: Draw on specific cases of appropriate management of wetlands in the Mediterranean Region and encourage their proposal for the Record.

- R11.1.xiii Review and prepare further guidance on zonation and monitoring programmes and methodologies for Ramsar sites and other wetlands, including indicators and rapid assessment methodologies and the use of remote sensing. (Resolution VIII.14) **GO1, 2** {STRP, Bureau, Man and the Biosphere Programme, CBD, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support any work by STRP on this matter.

Operational Objective 11.2:

Monitor the condition of Ramsar sites, notify the Ramsar Bureau without delay of changes affecting Ramsar sites as required by Article 3.2, and apply the Montreux Record and Ramsar Advisory Mission as tools to address problems.

Actions

- R11.2.i Monitor and assess the impacts of drought in areas where it is not normally experienced, and other natural disasters, on the ecological character of Ramsar Sites and other wetlands and on the livelihoods of local communities and indigenous peoples dependent on these wetlands within their territory and, for designated Ramsar sites, report this to the Ramsar Bureau, in line with Article 3.2 of the Convention, so that this information can be made available to the Scientific and Technical Review Panel to assist in its reporting to COP9 on the status and trends in the ecological character of sites in the Ramsar List, as called for in Resolution VIII.8. (Resolution VIII.35) **GO2** {CPs, Bureau, STRP}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Make available to STRP, as needed, any relevant information provided by CPs. Africa: Encourage NEPAD to consider monitoring and assessment of the impacts of droughts and other natural disasters so as to seek ways for mitigating these impacts on African wetlands.

- R11.2.ii Prepare further consolidated guidance on the overall process of detecting, reporting and responding to change in ecological character, including guidelines for determining when such a change is too trivial to require reporting, having regard to the reasons why a given site is important, and to the conservation objectives which have been set for it (see also Action 1.2.14). (Resolution VIII.8) **GO2** {STRP, Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support any work by STRP on this matter.

- 11.2.4 In fulfilment of Article 3.2 of the Convention, report to the Ramsar Bureau without delay all actual or likely changes in ecological character on Ramsar sites, and include Ramsar sites “where changes in ecological character have occurred, are occurring or are likely to occur” in the Montreux Record as appropriate. **GO 2** {CPs, Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Continue to urge CPs to make timely Article 3.2 reports, and request such reports from Administrative Authorities when advised by third parties of human-induced threats to Ramsar sites.

- 11.2.5 For sites included in the Montreux Record, request a Ramsar Advisory Mission of independent experts, where appropriate, to review the problems affecting the site and offer recommendations for remedial actions. **GO2** {CPs, Bureau}

2003-2005 Global target: For all sites on the Montreux Record which have not been subject to a Ramsar Advisory Mission (RAM), CPs to request such a Mission prior to COP9.

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Prepare and undertake Ramsar Advisory Missions, as required.

- 11.2.6 Where a Ramsar Advisory Mission has been completed for a Montreux Record site, take all necessary steps to implement the recommendations, and report at regular intervals to the Bureau on the results of these actions. At the appropriate time, seek the removal of the site from the Montreux Record, having provided the Bureau and STRP with details of the site condition using the approved questionnaire (Ramsar Handbook 7). **GO2** {CPs, STRP, Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Facilitate the removal, as appropriate, of sites on the Montreux Record, including in consultation with STRP.

- R11.2.ix Prepare an analysis and report of the status and trends in the ecological character of sites in the Ramsar List for consideration by COP9 and each subsequent meeting of the Conference of the Parties, and set, as far as possible, the status and trends of Ramsar sites within the wider context of the status and trends of marine, coastal and inland wetlands, drawing upon the results of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) and other assessment initiatives as appropriate. (Resolution VIII.8) **GO1, 2** {STRP, Bureau, Wetlands International, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support any work by STRP on this matter.

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 12. MANAGEMENT OF SHARED WATER RESOURCES,
WETLANDS AND WETLAND SPECIES

Note: Where actions are drawn directly from the *Guidelines for international cooperation* (Ramsar Handbook 9), the cross-reference is indicated.

Operational Objective 12.1:

Promote inventory and integrated management of shared wetlands and hydrological basins.

Actions

- 12.1.4 Ensure enhanced accessibility to information, analyses, good practice examples, and experience-sharing on integrating wetlands and biodiversity into integrated river basin management, including through the Ramsar/CBD River Basin Initiative. **GO1, 3** {CPs, Bureau, CBD, IOPs, OCs}

2003-2005 Global target: River Basin Initiative fully operational.

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Continue to seek the resources to fully operationalise the River Basin Initiative.

Operational Objective 12.2:

Promote cooperative monitoring and management of shared wetland-dependent species.

Actions

12.2.3 Through the Memorandum of Understanding and associated Joint Work Plan with the Convention on Migratory Species and the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds Agreement (AEWA), work cooperatively to identify and manage important sites for wetland-dependent migratory species, and promote jointly, where appropriate, to Parties of both Conventions and Agreement the development of site networks referred to in the previous Action. (Section B3 of the Guidelines.) (Refer also to Operational Objective 12.1). **GO2, 3** {STRP, Bureau, MedWet, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Encourage and support CPs in identifying appropriate sites for networks, including through input of expertise from CMS and AEWA, and continue to contribute to the development and implementation of the GEF AEWA flyways project. Asia: Continue to participate in the Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Strategy.

12.2.4 Promote and disseminate research into the population dynamics and sustainable harvesting of wetland dependent species, especially migratory waterbirds. **GO1, 3** {STRP, Bureau, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Encourage IOPs and others to provide such information, for dissemination to CPs.

12.2.5 Ensure that national hunting legislation is consistent with the wise use principle for migratory waterbird and other wetland-dependent species, taking into account geographical range, life-history characteristics of species, and research on sustainable harvesting. **GO1, 3** {CPs, Bureau, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Encourage and support CPs in addressing this matter.

Operational Objective 12.3:

Support existing regional arrangements under the Convention and promote additional arrangements.

Actions

12.3.1 Continue to support the operation of the Mediterranean Wetlands Committee (MedWet/Com) and its related action programme, the Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative (MedWet) and its Coordination Unit. **GO3** [MedWet, Bureau, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Continue to manage and implement the work of the MedWet Initiative and develop and disseminate a full and coherent programme of its activities.

R12.3.i Conclude, taking due account of the *Guidance for the development of regional initiatives in the framework of the Convention on Wetlands* (Resolution VIII.30) and in consultation with the Chair of the Standing Committee, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Greek Government with regard to the specific financial and institutional arrangement of the MedWet Coordination Unit in Athens for years 2003-2005; and report to the Standing Committee on the conclusion and implementation of this MoU. (Resolution VIII.30) **GO3** {Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Conclude and report on establishment of MoU with the Greek Government.

- 12.3.2 Ensure that the experience of the MedWet Coordination Unit and its partners will be at the disposal of other regional initiatives as required and in the most appropriate form. (Resolution VIII.30) **GO3** {Bureau, MedWet}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: MedWet: provide expertise and advice to requests for the establishment of new regional initiatives, and participate in the process as resources permit.

- 12.3.2 Encourage development of similar regional arrangements under the Convention where appropriate, applying the *Guidance for the development of Regional Initiatives in the framework of the Convention on Wetlands* (Resolution VIII.30) for example in the Black Sea, Caspian Sea, the Caribbean, South America and the Altaj-Sayansky region. **GO3** {Concerned CPs, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Encourage and support CPs in developing regional initiatives, including proactively, by developing contacts with interested CPs. Asia: explore with CPs opportunities for developing a Himalayan mountain wetlands initiative.

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 13. COLLABORATION WITH OTHER INSTITUTIONS

Operation Objective 13.1:

Work as partners with international and regional multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and other agencies.

Actions

- 13.1.1 Continue to strengthen cooperation and synergy with the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention to Combat Desertification, the Convention on Migratory Species and its Agreements, the World Heritage Convention, and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in particular through the vehicles of Joint Work Plans and collaboration among the respective subsidiary scientific bodies of the conventions and the secretariats, and at national level among the Ramsar Administrative Authorities and Focal Points of the different MEAs. **GO3** {STRP, CPs, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs, OCs}

Global targets:

- 3rd CBD-Ramsar Joint Work Plan fully implemented.
- CMS/AEWA Joint Work Plan in place and being implemented.
- Joint activities developed with UNCCD and UNFCCC, including through participation in the Joint Liaison Group with UNFCCC, CBD and UNCCD.

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Implement and keep under review Joint Work Plans and, as resources permit, develop further joint activities with MEAs, including participating in the Joint Liaison Group with UNFCCC, CBD and UNCCD. MedWet: continue to develop contact with the EU concerning wetland activities.

- R13.1.i Keep under regular review the progress, successes and constraints in the implementation of joint work between these bodies and the Convention, and report to Ramsar COP9. (Resolution VIII.5) **GO3** {Bureau, MedWet, MEAs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Keep under review joint work, including note of successes and constraints during 2003.

- R13.1.ii Make available, in line with joint work plans and programmes, to Contracting Parties of other global and regional MEAs and other programmes, all new guidelines and other guidance relevant to the implementation of conservation and sustainable use of ecosystems so as to support issues of common interest. (Resolution VIII.14 and others) **GO1, 2, 3, 4** {Bureau, MEAs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Work with the secretariats of other MEAs and programmes to ensure that new Ramsar guidance is fully available to their CPs.

- R13.1.iv Invite the IPCC and UNFCCC to focus some of their future work on issues related to region-specific wetland data, and improve knowledge on the vulnerability of wetlands to climate change and the capacity to project impacts on wetlands; and request the STRP to get involved in this work, drawing on the work of the IPCC and other relevant bodies as appropriate, and reporting on the status of international discussions at COP9. (Resolution VIII.3) **GO1, 2, 3** {Bureau, IPCC, UNFCCC, STRP}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Invite IPCC and UNFCCC to undertake wetland related work, and support the involvement of STRP, as appropriate.

- 13.1.2 Maintain and, where appropriate, seek opportunities to further promote cooperation with UNESCO, in particular its Programme on Man and the Biosphere (MAB), especially as regards wetlands within Biosphere Reserves, and in the area of the development of curricula to integrate wetland issues. **GO2, 3** {CPs, CEPA, Bureau, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Continue to seek to expand cooperation with UNESCO, including through implementation of the Programme of Joint Work with MAB and through the Ramsar CEPA programme.

- 13.1.3 Give priority to the implementation of the Memoranda of Cooperation or Understanding with the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena Convention), the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Mediterranean Sea (Barcelona Convention), the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea, other regional seas conventions, and the Danube River Protection Convention, and seek to establish similar cooperative arrangements with other regional instruments, such as the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME). **GO3** {Concerned CPs, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Continue regional level collaborations. Africa: Give priority to the implementation of the MoCs with the Lake Chad basin Commission and the Niger Basin authority. Americas: Visit the Regional Coordinating Unit of the Regional Sea Programme for the Caribbean in Jamaica, to agree plan of joint activities. Asia: initiate discussions on collaboration with ROPME.

- 13.1.4 Establish working relations with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES), noting Sections F2 – F6 of the *Guidelines for international cooperation under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands* (Ramsar Handbook 9). **GO3** {Bureau, CITES}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: As capacity permits, identify topics of common interest to Ramsar and CITES as basis of establishing improved links.

- 13.1.5 Develop closer working relationships with appropriate regional bodies or programmes which have an interest in wetland conservation and wise use, including the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the European Union (EU), the Council of Europe, the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the African Union

(AU), and the Organization of American States (OAS). **GO3** {CPs, SC, Bureau, MedWet, MEAs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: As capacity permits, identify topics of common interest to Ramsar as a basis for establishing improved regional links. Americas: visit Washington, D.C., to identify key joint actions with OAS. MedWet: continue to develop contact with the EU concerning wetland activities.

- 13.1.6 Support and contribute to the development and implementation of the Plan of Action to Implement Africa's Wetland Management Strategy under the Environmental Initiative of NEPAD, the New Partnership for Africa's Development. **GO1, 2, 3** {CPs, SC, Bureau, IOPs, MEAs, OCs}

2003-2005 Global target: NEPAD's Action Plan to have fully incorporated Ramsar issues and mechanisms, and being implemented by relevant CPs, in line with WSSD targets.

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Africa: Continue to support and contribute to the development and implementation of the Strategy and Plan of Action of NEPAD on wetlands.

- 13.1.7 Continue to contribute, through the application of Ramsar tools and mechanisms, to the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. **GO1, 2, 4, 3** {CPs, SC, Bureau}

2003-2005 Global target: Review of Ramsar's cooperation with the Barbados Programme of Action, as a contribution to the WSSD target.

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Continue to support implementation by making Ramsar's guidelines and handbooks available to SIDS. Americas: identify key aspects to be supported in the Caribbean Island States.

- 13.1.8 Continue the development and implementation of joint work plans under the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ramsar Convention and the South Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP). **GO3** {Bureau, SPREP, IOPs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Implement priority actions in the Ramsar/SPREP Joint Work Plan, and review plan in light of COP8 decisions, as Bureau capacity to support Oceania work permits.

- 13.1.9 Review the advantages and disadvantages with regard to accession and corresponding financial contributions and, as appropriate, investigate the feasibility of regional economic integration or similar organizations/ institutions gaining Contracting Party status under the Convention, including the possibility of amending the Convention to that effect if necessary. **GO3** {Bureau, SC, COP}.

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support further review by SC, if deemed appropriate.

- 13.1.10 Promote a UN General Assembly Resolution formally recognizing the Convention. In the meantime, pursue partnership approaches with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and other relevant UN agencies, as well as the Subcommittee on Water of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (Section C2 of the Guidelines.) **GO3** {Bureau, SC}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Continue developing partnerships with UN agencies and committees.

- 13.1.11 Further develop working partnerships with other specialized bodies that deal with wetland-related issues including through collaboration in the Ramsar/CBD River Basin Initiative (RBI). **GO3** {Bureau, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: As capacity permits, continue contacts with, *inter alia*, the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI), the World Water Council, the Global Water Partnership, and the Global International Waters Assessment (GIWA), using the vehicle of the RBI once fully operational.

- 13.1.12 Continue to contribute to the development and testing of harmonized information management and reporting systems with the appropriate MEAs, including exploration of modular-style national reporting formats, consolidated reporting formats, state of the environment reporting, and regional reporting. **GO3, 4** {Bureau, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Review and report on experience of UNEP harmonization pilot projects, once available.

- R13.1.v Continue to participate in and contribute to the work of the United Nations Environment Programme, in particular its Division of Environmental Conventions and the World Conservation Monitoring Centre, in the area of promoting synergies among MEAs, as well as in the work of the Environmental Management Group (EMG). **GO3** {Bureau} (COP8 DR 5)

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Continue working with UNEP and participating in the EMG.

- R13.1.vii Continue to work with the Executive Director of UNEP in efforts to include Administrative Authorities of the Ramsar Convention in activities designed to strengthen the capacity of developing countries, particularly the least developed countries, and countries with economies in transition in the areas of compliance with and enforcement of multilateral environmental agreements. (Resolution VIII.24) **GO 4** {Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Continue working with UNEP to secure full involvement of Ramsar Administrative Authorities in convention compliance work.

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 14. SHARING OF EXPERTISE AND INFORMATION

Note: Where actions are drawn directly from the *Guidelines for international cooperation* (Ramsar Handbook 9), the cross-reference is indicated.

Operational Objective 14.1:

Promote the sharing of expertise and information.

Actions

- 14.1.1 Using mechanisms such as the national focal points for communication, education and public awareness (CEPA) and for the STRP, promote the sharing of knowledge (traditional, indigenous, and more recently derived technologies and methods) at the global, regional, and national levels. (Section D1 of the Guidelines.) **GO1, 3** {CPs, CEPA, STRP, Bureau}.

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Covered by implementation of CEPA programme under Operational Objective 9.

- 14.1.2 Recognize training as an important element of international cooperation under the Convention and provide access to such training, especially for wetland managers, and wetland educators and those others responsible for implementing the Convention, from other countries that would benefit from

these opportunities. (Sections D2 and D3 of the Guidelines). **GO3, 4** {CPs, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs} (Refer also to Operational Objective 20.1).

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support and encourage CPs and IOPs to make available and share training opportunities. Africa: Help develop and implement training courses within the NEPAD framework

- 14.1.3 Develop twinning and/or networks of transboundary wetlands and wetlands sharing common features, as an important mechanism for sharing knowledge and providing training opportunities. **GO2, 3** {CPs, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs, OCs}

2003-2005 Global target: At least 75 twinning arrangements to be in place and reported to the Bureau for Web publicity on the Ramsar Web site.

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support and encourage CPs, IOPs and others to establish site twinning mechanisms, and seek to ensure that those established are reported to the Bureau.

- 14.1.4 Further review and develop Internet-based resource kits and knowledge and information sharing, including the Convention's Wetland Expert Database, on topics including impact assessment, incentives, management planning, river basin management, participation, education and public awareness, and Ramsar sites. **GO1, 2, 3** {CPs, Bureau, IOPs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: During 2003, continue to maintain existing Ramsar Web site and its topical mini-Web sites, and explore with IUCN the continuation of its biodiversity economics Web site.

- 14.1.5 Further develop, use and advertise the availability of the Convention's Wetland Expert Database. **GO1, 2, 3**{Bureau, CPs, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: It is anticipated that the role of the Convention's Wetland Expert Database will be subsumed as part of the work of the planned STRP Support Service to be established in 2003.

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 15. FINANCING THE CONSERVATION AND WISE USE OF WETLANDS

Note: Where actions are drawn directly from the *Guidelines for international cooperation* (Ramsar Handbook 9), the cross-reference is indicated.

Operational Objective 15.1:

Promote international assistance to support the conservation and wise use of wetlands.

Actions

- 15.1.1 Mobilize direct funding support from multilateral and bilateral development assistance agencies in order to assist developing countries and countries whose economies are in transition in the conservation and wise use of wetlands and in implementation of the present Strategic Plan. (Based on Section E1 of the Guidelines) **GO1, 3, 4** {CPs, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs}

2003-2005 Global target: Each CP with a bilateral donor agency to have encouraged it to give priority for funding for wetland conservation and wise use projects in relation to poverty alleviation and other WSSD targets and priorities

Bureau/MedWet 2003: SAEDC: Advise CPs and partners on how and where to find funding for wetland projects, when requested.

- R15.1.i Encourage bilateral and multilateral donors to assign priority to supporting wetland inventories in developing countries and countries whose economies are in transition in recognition of the importance of inventory as the basis for developing and implementing sustainable use of wetlands. (Resolution VIII.6) **GO1, 3, 4** {CPs, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: SAEDC: Encourage donors to assign priorities to wetland projects, including through discussions with DANIDA, AEI, DFID, DDC FFEM, UNDP in 2003. Africa: Contribute to the identification of priority projects, including wetland inventories, to be submitted to bilateral and multilateral donors through NEPAD.

- 15.1.2 Mobilize resources to support the implementation of management plans for Ramsar sites in developing countries and countries whose economies are in transition. **GO 2, 3** {CPs, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs} (Refer also to Operational Objective 11.1)

Bureau/MedWet 2003: SAEDC: Advise CPs and partners on how and where to find funding for wetland projects, when requested, and encourage donors to consider providing such funding.

- R15.1.ii Encourage Contracting Parties and donor organizations to give priority for support to the development of coherent national and international networks of Ramsar sites and their effective management, in recognition of their essential values and functions in combating poverty through the sustainable use of their ecosystems and their role in maintaining the quality and quantity of water, including at the basin scale. (Resolution VIII.10) **GO1, 2, 3** {CPs, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs} (Refer also to Operational Objective 11.1)

Bureau/MedWet 2003: SAEDC: Continue Bureau input to the EU Water Initiative Multistakeholder forum.

- R15.1.iii Urge multilateral and bilateral donors to ensure that the allocation and management of water for maintaining the ecological functions of wetlands and production potential of wetlands is fully addressed in the design, planning and implementation of river basin and water resource management projects, taking into account the special circumstances and constraints of the concerned countries. (Resolution VIII.1) **GO1, 3.** {CPs, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: SAEDC: Use the Conservation Finance Alliance as leverage to promote sustainable finance mechanism for wetland conservation. Help CPs and partners to prepare good project proposals. Support the Comoros to establish an environmental fund. Participate in training and workshops for partners and donor agencies (Bolivia workshop in August, Vilm workshop for central Asian countries in March, North African workshop in October), attend training arranged by the CFA. Finalize the Conservation Finance guide (March 2003).

- 15.1.3 For those Parties with bilateral development assistance agencies, respond to sections E1, E2, E5, E7, E10, E11, E14 and E15 of the *Guidelines for international cooperation under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands* (Ramsar Handbook 9), and especially consider issues such as long-term fund generation mechanisms, appropriate monitoring of projects, training of development assistance agency staff, priority for institutional capacity building, the need for cooperation between development assistance agencies, and the importance of coordination between bilateral development assistance agencies and the Ramsar Administrative Authorities in the donor and recipient countries. **GO3, 4** {CPs, Bureau, IOPs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Provide support and advice to CPs, as requested, in their working with their bilateral development assistance agencies.

- 15.1.5 For those Parties involved in the priority-setting for, and the determining of, the *modus operandi* of the multilateral development and environment-related assistance agencies, seek to ensure that wetland conservation and wise use is afforded due attention and priority. **GO1, 3, 4** {CPs, Bureau, IOPs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: SAEDC: Support Parties through visits to development banks and donors to exchange views and ideas on how to best support the Convention.

- 15.1.6 Provide financial support, preferably on a medium and/or long-term basis, for the operations of the Ramsar Small Grants Fund and its Endowment Fund, and the Voluntary Fund for the Convention's Outreach Programme, seeking to have available a minimum of one million US dollars annually for the former and half a million US dollars for the latter. (Based on Sections E4 and E9 of the Guidelines.) **GO1, 3, 4** {Bureau, SC, CPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: SAEDC: Visit donors (DANIDA, AEI, DFID, DDC, NORAD, Finnida) and seek to convince them to increase their support to the SGF.

- 15.1.7 Mobilise resources to support the development of wetland training and education centres at Ramsar sites and the training of wetland educators in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. **GO1, 2, 3, 4** {CPs, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support and advise efforts of Parties, as requested. Americas: Provide necessary support to the establishment of the Panama City Regional Center.

- 15.1.9 For eligible Contracting Parties of both the Ramsar Convention and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), develop wetland conservation and wise use projects suitable for consideration by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), as part of the implementation of the Joint Work Plan with the CBD and in accordance with paragraphs 6 and 7 of Decision IV/4 of CBD's COP4 relating to inland water ecosystems. **GO 1, 3, 4** {CPs, Bureau, IOPs, OCs}

2003-2005 Global target: Assistance provided to at least 15 countries in preparing projects for submission to the Global Environment Facility.

Bureau/MedWet 2003: SAEDC: Work with at least five countries during 2003 in project preparation, including Comoros, regional Latin American, and Danube delta, and in Africa project preparation for submission through NEPAD. MedWet: support development of appropriate projects in Mediterranean Basin countries.

- 15.1.10 Maintain close working relations with multilateral agencies that provide development and environment-related assistance in relation to project screening, development and evaluation, notably: the World Bank, UNDP, and UNEP, in particular as partners in the Global Environment Facility (GEF); regional funding agencies such as the Asian Development Bank, African Development Bank, Interamerican Development Bank and the European Investment Bank; and the European Commission. **GO1, 3, 4** {Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: SAEDC: Visit Regional Development Banks, the World Bank, the EC and other potential UN partners to seek support to the Convention. Also seek support amongst the US international environment NGOs. Africa: Continue to work closely with the World Bank, UNEP, UNDP, the African development Bank, and the European Commission through NEPAD.

- R15.1.v Further strengthen working relations between the Ramsar Bureau and the GEF Secretariat, and invite the GEF Council to consider affording to the Ramsar Convention, represented by the

Ramsar Bureau, the status of observer at all Council and Assembly meetings of GEF, so that the Convention can be in a better position to provide advice on its areas of expertise to the Council and its member States, particularly in view of the Joint Work Plan between Ramsar and the Convention on Biological Diversity. (Resolution VIII.5) **GO1, 2, 4** {Bureau, GEF}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: SAEDC: Continue to seek support for Ramsar to be invited to the GEF Council meetings as an observer organization.

- 15.1.11 Assist, where requested, Contracting Parties and bilateral and multilateral development assistance agencies in the development, screening and evaluation of wetland projects. **GO1, 3, 4** {STRP, Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: SAEDC: Provide assistance, when requested, to CPs and partners in developing wetland project proposals for funding (including Indonesia, Danube, Malawi, Comoros, Peru, Brazil, Cuba). Visit Central Asian and Oceania CPs on a project identification mission.

- 15.1.12 Pursue involvement of the private sector (including corporations and foundations) in wetlands conservation and seek opportunities for private sector funding of wetland projects under Ramsar. **GO1, 3, 4** {Bureau, CPs, IOPs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: SAEDC: seek contact with appropriate organizations, if time permits. Africa: Continue to work with Point Afrique and seek opportunities to work with other private operators on tourism development.

- 15.1.13 Promote establishment of effective mechanisms to encourage environmentally sound trade in wetland products, in particular from Ramsar sites, compatible with international trade agreements. **GO1, 2, 3** {Bureau, CPs, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: SAEDC: initiate review of effective mechanisms as basis of advice to Parties.

- 15.1.14 Consider the possibility of creating a voluntary “Ramsar Label” for wetland products and services that are provided in both environmentally sound and socially equitable manners. **GO1, 3** {Bureau, CPs, IOPs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: SAEDC: initiate consideration of a *modus operandi* for a voluntary “Ramsar Label”.

Operational Objective 15.2:

Ensure that environmental safeguards and assessments are an integral component of all development projects that affect wetlands, including foreign and domestic investments.

Actions

- 15.2.1 Work with international development agencies, including banks, financial institutions and private investors and developers, to ensure that proposed grants, loans, and development projects include environmental safeguards and environmental assessments of possible impacts upon wetlands. (Based on Section G1 of the Guidelines.) **GO1, 3** {CPs, Bureau, IOPs} (Refer also to Actions 1.2.3 and 1.2.4)

Bureau/MedWet 2003: SAEDC: Support CPs in this endeavour.

Operational Objective 16.1:

Provide the financial resources required for the Convention's governance mechanisms and programmes to achieve the expectations of the Conference of the Contracting Parties.

Actions

R16.1.i Establish a Ramsar Endowment Fund to resource the Small Grants Fund, and establish the *modus operandi* of the Endowment Fund taking into account the views expressed by Contracting Parties during debate on this matter and on the basis of the principles established in Resolution VIII.29. (Resolution VIII.29) **GO4** {SC, Bureau, CPs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support the SC in its development of an SGF Endowment Fund *modus operandi* and, once established, assist in putting in place Fund mechanisms.

16.1.2 Consider providing additional voluntary contributions to the Convention to support the Small Grants Fund and its Endowment Fund, the Voluntary Fund for the Convention's Outreach Programme, and the Wetland Training Service, regionally-based initiatives such as MedWet, the undertaking of Ramsar Advisory Missions for sites included in the Montreux Record and other Ramsar sites, and other priority activities as determined by the Strategic Plan. **GO4** {Bureau, CPs, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Encourage all relevant CPs and other potential funding organizations to provide voluntary funding to the SGF, its Endowment Fund, the Voluntary Fund for the Convention's Outreach Programme, and other Convention initiatives. Africa: Swiss Grant Fund for Africa: prepare a report on 2002 project implementation, and submit new proposal for 2003 project funding to the Swiss government.

16.1.3 Continue to consider including in the core budget of the Convention an additional allocation to defray the Ramsar Bureau costs related to the ordinary meetings of the COP, in order to allow the opportunity for all Contracting Parties to be able to offer to host meetings of the Conference of the Contracting Parties. **GO4** {Bureau, COP, SC}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: [No Bureau action required for 2003.]

16.1.4 At COP9, consider including within the core budget of the Convention an allocation to establish a Water Officer post and a CEPA Programme Officer post to help accelerate implementation of this work. **GO1, 4** {Bureau, SC, COP}

2003-2005 Global target: Proposal for Bureau posts of a Water Officer and CEPA Programme Officer to have been prepared for consideration by COP9 for inclusion in the core budget of the Convention.

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Initiate exploration of opportunities to establish Water Officer and CEPA Programme Officer posts prior to COP9 through voluntary contributions or secondments.

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 17.INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS OF THE
CONVENTIONOperational Objective 17.1:

Ensure that the Conference of the Contracting Parties, Standing Committee, Scientific and Technical Review Panel, and Ramsar Bureau are operating at a high level of efficiency and effectiveness to support implementation of this Strategic Plan.

Actions

17.1.2 Analyse, report and provide recommendations on possibilities to improve the efficiency of the meetings of the Conference of the Parties, and endeavour to maximise the wise use of time on the agreed agenda for Convention business, including reports previously circulated as conference documents. (Resolution VIII.45) **GO4** {SC, Bureau, host CP}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support SC review of COP procedures and development of COP9 Agenda, in implementation of Resolution VIII.45.

17.1.3 Through the information provided in National Reports, evaluate and report on the implementation of the Strategic Plan at each meeting of the COP, and prepare for every second meeting a revised and updated Strategic Plan for the forthcoming two triennia. **GO4** {COP, SC, Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Develop COP9 National Report Format for SC approval.

R17.1.v Establish an STRP Support Service, working in open and transparent partnership with all International Organization Partners, STRP observer organizations and others, and establish, with the approval of the Standing Committee, a contractual arrangement and Terms of Reference for the delivery of this Service. (Resolution VIII.28) **GO4** {Bureau, SC, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: STRP Support Service established and operational under Bureau contract, with approval of SC.

17.1.5 Maintain as an ongoing priority action of the STRP, with the support of the Convention's network of STRP national focal points, IOPs and others, the development of new tools to assist Parties with the implementation of the wise use principle, as well as the review of the Ramsar Criteria for Identifying Wetlands of International Importance to ensure that these reflect global wetland conservation and wise use priorities. **GO1, 2, 4** {COP, STRP, Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Ensure that STRP's ongoing priorities are reflected in advice to the SC on STRP's 2003-2005 work plan priorities.

17.1.7 Review and approve annual Ramsar Bureau Work Plans, based on the Convention's Triennial Work Plan approved by the COP. **GO1, 4** {SC, Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: This Bureau 2003 Work Plan prepared for SC approval.

17.1.8 Review and make recommendations to the COP regarding the staffing and budget requirements of the Ramsar Bureau which take account of the expectations raised by the Strategic Plan and triennial Convention Work Plans. **GO4** {Bureau, SC, COP}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: [No specific Bureau action needed during 2003, other than that under Action 16.1.4.]

R17.1.vii Give careful consideration to supporting capacity building activities in the Oceania region and in particular to working with the Ramsar Bureau and the South Pacific Regional Environment Program and other interested parties to develop a co-financing strategy to establish a regionally-based Coordinator post to provide support and help mobilise development assistance funds for developing states and dependent territories of Oceania to implement the Joint Work Program of

the Ramsar Bureau and the South Pacific Regional Environment Program (see also Action 13.1.8). (Resolution VIII.42) **GO3, 4** {CPs, Bureau, SPREP, IOPs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Work with SPREP and WWF to agree a mechanism for establishing regionally-based Oceania post.

R17.1.viii Review the working arrangements of the Ramsar Bureau so as to formally assign, by COP9, the role of Regional Coordinator for Oceania to an officer of the Bureau, and, as an interim arrangement, identify the resources to support a position of intern for the Oceania Region. (Resolution VIII.42) **GO1, 4** {Bureau, SC, COP}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: [Implementation of this action will be subsequent to, and dependent upon, the ongoing initiative to establish a regionally-based Oceania Ramsar Support officer – see Action R17.1.vii.]

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 18. INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY OF CONTRACTING PARTIES

Operational Objective 18.1:

Develop the capacity within, and promote cooperation among, institutions in Contracting Parties to achieve conservation and wise use of wetlands.

Actions

18.1.2 Establish National Ramsar/Wetlands Committees to provide the opportunity for input from, and representation of, relevant government agencies including national water management ministries and/or agencies, where appropriate, and non-governmental organizations, STRP and CEPA National Focal Points, key stakeholders, indigenous people and local communities, the private sector and interest groups, and land use planning and management authorities (Recommendation 5.13). When in place, ensure the proper functioning of these Committees. **GO1, 4** {CPs, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Advise and encourage CPs in their establishment and running of National Ramsar/Wetlands Committees.

R18.1.ii Seek ways of simplifying and harmonising the activities and requirements of the Ramsar Convention, and continue actively to seek to harmonise their requirements of the Convention with all other environment-related international instruments, mindful of the small size and limited human and financial resources available to Pacific island countries and territories. (Resolution VIII.42) **GO1, 2, 3, 4** {Bureau}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: This will, in part, be delivered through the revision and updating of the Ramsar 'toolkit' of Wise Use Handbooks, the preparation of a 'User's guide' to the Handbooks, and of a Convention Handbook (updating the 1997 Ramsar Convention Manual), as resources permit.

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 19. INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION PARTNERS AND OTHERS

Operational Objective 19.1:

Maximize the benefits of working with the Convention's International Organization Partners (IOPs) and others.

Actions

- 19.1.1 Establish with each International Organization Partner a programme of joint work based on the Strategic Plan, review it annually, and seek additional funding for the implementation of actions not covered by existing organizational budgets. **GO4** {Bureau, IOPs}

2003-2005 Global target: Each IOP and the Bureau to have established and be implementing a programme of joint work in support of the Convention, including joint actions by all IOPs

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Request each IOP to review Strategic Plan actions and prepare a draft programme of joint work for Convention support, covering global and national activities.

- 19.1.2 Implement mechanisms for strengthening the contribution of networks of experts of the International Partner Organizations and other collaborating organizations to the work of the STRP and the Convention. **GO4** {Bureau, IOPs, STRP}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: This will be achieved as part of the STRP Support Service (see Action R17.1.v).

- 19.1.3 Review and renew formal agreements with the Convention's International Organization Partners as necessary. **GO4** {Bureau, IOPs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Formal agreements, including Memoranda of Cooperation / Understanding will be reviewed and, as necessary, updated.

- 19.1.4 Welcome and expedite review of applications by eligible organizations seeking the status of International Organization Partner of the Convention. **GO4.** {SC, Bureau, IOPs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Advise SC on any requests received from eligible organizations.

- 19.1.5 Implement existing memoranda of cooperation with other bodies, such as Eurosite (the network of European natural heritage management bodies), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Society of Wetland Scientists (SWS), Center for International Earth Science Information Network, Columbia University, USA (CIESIN), the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA), Ducks Unlimited (Canada, Mexico, USA), the Lake Chad Basin Commission and the Niger Basin Authority, through establishment of joint programmes of work, and seek to develop similar agreements with other appropriate bodies. **GO4** {Bureau, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Discuss with these organizations, and others appointed as observers to STRP, establishing formal memoranda and joint programmes of work as appropriate. Americas: visit Washington, D.C., to identify key joint actions with TNC and Ducks Unlimited.

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 20. TRAINING

Operational Objective 20.1:

Identify the training needs of institutions and individuals concerned with the conservation and wise use of wetlands, particularly in developing countries and countries in transition, and implement appropriate responses.

Actions

- 20.1.1 Implement, and further develop and publicize, the Convention's Wetland Training Service. **GO4**{CPs, Wetlands International, Bureau, IOPs}

2003-2005 Global target: Ramsar Wetland Training Service in place and fully implemented.

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Support ongoing efforts by Wetlands International to secure funding for full implementation of the Convention's Wetland Training Service.

- 20.1.2 Identify at national, provincial, and local levels the needs and target audiences for training in implementation of the Convention and, in particular, use of the Wise Use Guidelines and Ramsar Handbooks. **GO4** {CPs, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs}

Global target: At least half of CPs to have assessed national and local training needs.

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Most 2003 activity will be dependent on operationalising the Wetland Training Service under Action 20.1.1 above. Americas: Undertake training needs assessment through the Panama City Regional Center, once established.

- 20.1.3 Identify and disseminate, nationally, regionally and globally, information describing the current training opportunities in disciplines essential for the conservation and wise use of wetlands through the further development of the Bureau's Ramsar Wise Use Resource Centre (http://ramsar.org/wurc_index.htm) and the Directory of Wetland Management Training Opportunities (http://ramsar.org/wurc_training_directory.htm). **GO4** {CPs, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Any 2003 activity will be dependent on operationalising the Wetland Training Service under Action 20.1.1 above.

- 20.1.5 Assemble and make available, or develop, new training activities and general training modules as necessary, for the use of the Ramsar Handbooks, with specialized modules including coverage of the following fields:

- a) wetland inventory, assessment and monitoring;
- b) national wetland policies and plans;
- c) integrated catchment/river basin and coastal zone planning and management;
- d) integrated site management planning at the local, provincial or catchment/river basin level;
- e) wetland restoration and rehabilitation;
- f) invasive alien species;
- g) agricultural impacts on wetlands and water resources;
- h) impact assessment and strategic environmental assessment;
- i) impacts of climate change, and adaptive management and mitigation of such impacts
- j) economic valuation of wetlands;
- k) communication, education and public awareness techniques.

GO1, 2, 3, 4 {CPs, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Any 2003 activity will be dependent on operationalising the Wetland Training Service under Action 20.1.1 above.

- 20.1.6 Provide opportunities for manager training by:

- a) encouraging personnel exchanges for on-the-job training, possibly between twinned sites;
- b) holding pilot training courses at specific Ramsar sites;
- c) siting wetland manager and wetland educator training facilities at Ramsar sites;
- d) obtaining and disseminating information about training courses for wetland managers around the world;
- e) establishing further regional training initiatives such as the Wetlands for the Future Initiative funded by the Government of the USA for the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

GO2, 3, 4 {CPs, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Any 2003 activity will be largely dependent on operationalising the Wetland Training Service under Action 20.1.1 above. Asia: examine training opportunities for East Asia available through the Mai Po centre, Hong Kong.

- 20.1.9 Exchange information, technical assistance and advice, and expertise about training for the conservation and wise use of wetlands through the CEPA Programme, the Bureau, MedWet and the IOPs of the Convention. **GO1, 3, 4** {CPs, Bureau, MedWet, IOPs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: Information will be disseminated, when received, through the CEPA Programme and Ramsar Web site.

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 21. MEMBERSHIP OF THE CONVENTION

Operational Objective 21.1:

Secure the universal membership of the Convention.

Actions

21.1.1 Recruit new Contracting Parties through:

- a) seeking direct contact with non-Contracting Parties to provide information on the benefits of membership and advice or assistance in overcoming obstacles; **GO5** {SC, neighbouring CPs, Bureau, IOPs}
- b) intensifying contacts with the diplomatic representatives of non-Contracting Parties; **GO5** {Bureau}
- c) seeking assistance from the secretariats of other conventions, including the Regional Seas Conventions, and in-country offices of the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank and others; **GO5** {CPs, Bureau, MEAs, OCs}
- d) organizing subregional workshops involving Contracting Parties and non-Contracting Parties; **GO5** {CPs, Bureau}
- e) providing assistance for the identification of Wetlands of International Importance that could be listed as Ramsar sites upon accession; **GO5** {Bureau, IOPs, OCs}
- f) encouraging attendance by observers from non-Contracting Parties at regional meetings and meetings of the Conference of the Parties. **GO5** {Bureau, IOPs, OCs} and

Additional Resolution Action

- g) publishing and disseminating an accession kit to assist countries in the Oceania region (and Small Island Developing States more generally) through the accession process (Resolution VIII.42) **GO5** {Bureau, CPs, IOPs, OCs}

Bureau/MedWet 2003: The Bureau's regional teams will continue to establish contact and work with non-Parties to secure their accession, with a focus on the Middle East and Central Asia, Caribbean, and Pacific Island States. Europe: continue working with Andorra for accession. Americas: continue contacts with Antigua & Barbuda, Barbados, Grenada, Guyana, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and initiate contacts with Diplomatic Channels in London of Dominica and St. Kitts & Nevis. Oceania: accession kit for Oceania (and SIDS) will be disseminated.

