



9th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

“Wetlands and water: supporting life, sustaining livelihoods”

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Regional overview of the implementation of the Convention and its Strategic Plan 2003-2008: Africa

The National Reports upon which this overview is based can be consulted on the Ramsar Web site at http://ramsar.org/cop9/cop9_natlrpts_index.htm

Contracting Parties in Africa (44): Algeria, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cape Verde, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia.

Contracting Parties whose National Reports are included in this analysis (26): Algeria, Botswana, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia.

The National Reports from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Gabon, and Guinea were received after the deadline for their inclusion in the Ramsar NR Database for COP9 analyses. However, information from these has been, as far as possible, included in this report.

Reports received from Seychelles and Chad were not in the COP9 National Report Format and so could not be included in the analyses.

Contracting Parties yet to submit National Reports (10): Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Guinea-Bissau, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Sierra Leone, Togo.

Cape Verde and Rwanda have only recently acceded to the Convention and therefore were not expected to submit a National Report to COP9.

1. Main achievements since COP8 and priorities for 2003-2008

1.1 Main achievements since COP8

For reasons of economy, this document is printed in a limited number, and will not be distributed at the meeting. Delegates are requested to bring their copies to the meeting and not to request additional copies.

1. The triennium 2003-2005 might be considered as a milestone for the Africa region, which has embarked on the implementation of a new strategic plan with a new team to coordinate the regional application of the Convention. However, the National Reports analysis reveals that significant effort has been made to carry out the objectives included in the 2003-2008 Strategic Plan. These achievements are the results of the collaboration between Contracting Parties, the Secretariat, the International Organization Partners (IOPs) and other partners.
- A1 A majority of countries in the region have completed or are completing the preparation of their wetland inventory. This must be considered as a major step ahead as the preparation of such a document gives anyone involved in wetland management in one way or another a clear picture of the state of the wetlands before any action is taken. It is a very useful wetlands management tool. Parties must be encouraged to prepare their inventory reports.
- A2 Several countries have made significant progress in the elaboration of their National Wetland Policies or similar instruments. Ramsar obligations are now considered in related national policy instruments such as strategies for sustainable development, poverty eradication strategies, and water resources management and water efficiency plans in many countries. This is a major achievement as Africa is the only region of the world where poverty is on the increase.
- A3 A National Ramsar / Wetlands Committee (or equivalent body) is now in place in the majority of Contracting Parties (CPs). However, there is a need to reactivate some of them as they have not been active since their establishment.
- A4 The intra- and/or inter-ministerial dialogues and mechanisms for regular dialogue between Ramsar Administrative Authorities and the national focal points of other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) have been established.
- A5 Cultural issues are taking on more and more importance in wetlands management in the region. The cultural values of wetlands have been used as a tool to strengthen involvement of local stakeholders, particularly in wetland planning and management in most of the CPs.
- A6 More and more countries have understood the links that exist between the wise use of wetlands and poverty reduction. They have therefore prepared several projects and programmes that address these two issues across the region. In addition to being seen as a conservation convention, Ramsar is also being used as a development and water convention in Africa.
- A7 55 new Ramsar sites have been listed since COP8 and about 70 more are in process of designation.
- A8 Wetland restoration/rehabilitation programmes or projects have been developed and implemented in several countries. This is good sign as CPs are now moving beyond just designating sites for the Ramsar List to restoring those which are in poor condition.
- A9 The preparation and implementation of management plans for Ramsar sites is becoming a common practice in African CPs. This is another sign of the dynamism of some Parties in implementing the Convention, as it is important that measures are taken to maintain the ecological character of sites once designated.

A10 The Africa region has made significant progress over the past three years to increase its number of Parties to the Convention. With the collaboration of the IOPs and other partners, we have tried to secure the accessions on the basis of the five Africa subregions. This led us to almost 100 % coverage for West and Northern Africa and Indian Ocean Islands. The current situation in terms of accession leaves us with only eight countries (Cameroon, Central Africa Republic, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sao Tome and Principe, Somalia, Swaziland and Zimbabwe) to secure universal membership of the Convention in Africa. 83% of African states are now party to Ramsar.

1.2 Priorities for 2006-2008

2. While they have allowed us to review and monitor the implementation of the Convention in Africa, the activities carried out during the last triennium have also helped us to have a clear vision of the challenges to be addressed over the next triennium.

3. In addition to the outputs of the National Reports, the Regional Africa preparatory meeting results contribute to a vision of the following priorities for 2006-2008:

P1 The preparation of wetland inventories that goes together with the elaboration of National Wetlands Policies is a key element in the implementation of the Convention. CPs will be urged to combine the preparation of their National Wetland Policy with analysis of the findings of the wetland inventories. The Secretariat and its partners might want to embark in a pilot phase of helping a group of Parties to work on the preparation of these two important planning tools back to back.

P2 The integration of wise use of wetlands into sustainable development is of paramount importance for African CPs as wetlands cannot be considered as a standalone resource which needs to be protected without regard to the key question of development. The topic of this COP9 is an indication of the fact that the Convention will be looking more and more at the sustainable development issues together with the wetland conservation problems. This major step ahead must be consolidated in African CPs, which need it more than the other regions.

P3 The restoration and rehabilitation of degraded wetlands will also constitute a priority for the next triennium, depending on the availability of resources. CPs in collaboration with the Secretariat and its partners will draw up a list of important wetlands (Ramsar and non-Ramsar sites) that need immediate restoration and rehabilitation action. An action plan should be prepared and submitted to donors for funding. This will be linked with P1 where the degraded wetlands are identified.

P4 It has been recognized that the major river basins and many wetlands in Africa are currently suffering from major impacts of invasive alien species. *Eichornia crassipes* (water hyacinth) and *Salvinia molesta* are threatening the Niger River basin, the Senegal River basin, and a great number of wetlands. It is suggested that involvement of Ramsar in the fight against this phenomenon is done through the NEPAD program area on invasive species.

P5 More and more Ramsar National Committees have been created all over the region. However, many do not function properly because of lack of resources and sometimes lack of vision or do not have a plan of action derived from the Convention's Strategic Plan. A

priority for the next triennium would be the reactivation of the existing Ramsar National Committees.

- P6 The different attempts made to involve the private sector in the wise use of wetlands in Africa have started to yield some results. In order to keep the momentum gained over the last three years, it is important that the Secretariat and its partners reinforce their support to African CPs in obtaining tangible support from the private companies that do or do not use wetlands resources to make profits. Business sectors such as the oil industry, mineral water, tourism companies and airlines, etc., could be approached.
- P7 Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) are especially important elements for an effective implementation of the Convention in a region such as Africa, where the rate of illiteracy is still high. The Secretariat could organize only two regional CEPA-related workshops during the 2003-2005 triennium. The efforts initiated by the Secretariat and the IOPs must be combined with pilot projects that are adapted to the environment of local stakeholders. But the overall action plan at the national level will be based on the CEPA component of the strategic plan and the training needs and opportunity that have been identified during the current triennium. This, again, will be done in collaboration with IOPs.
- P8 While the Convention will continue to welcome new designations of Ramsar sites, priority will be given to the preparation of management plans of the existing sites. Parties will be encouraged to make use of Article 3.2 to notify the Secretariat of changes affecting Ramsar sites and then lay down the foundations for the preparation of management plans. Criteria to define the priority zones of intervention will be decided together with the Africa CPs in Kampala during COP9.
- P9 Although collaboration with other institutions has been quite good during the last triennium, it is suggested that we continue along the same lines and strengthen our collaboration with key institutions such as the NEPAD Secretariat, the Africa Development Bank, the UN Economic Commission for Africa, the Africa Water Facility, etc. All of these institutions are involved in one way or another in the implementation of NEPAD Environment Action Plan in which Ramsar is supposed to play an important role in five issues: i) wetlands, ii) invasive alien species, iii) cross border natural resources management, iv) poverty and environment and v) coastal and marine environment including freshwater. It is important that we do everything possible to speed up the implementation process of the NEPAD programmatic areas that have an interest to Ramsar through our collaboration with the relevant organizations.
- P10 The Africa region is not far from universal membership in the Convention. The current situation in terms of accession leaves us with only eight countries (Central Africa Republic, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, Sao Tome and Principe, Swaziland and Zimbabwe) to secure universal membership of the Convention in Africa. During the next triennium, focus will be put on securing the accession of three countries each year starting with those such as Central Africa Republic, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Sao Tome and Zimbabwe which have already initiated their accession process.

2. Implementation activities undertaken since COP8

2.1 Inventory and assessment

A. Wetland inventory [1.1]

4. Wetland inventory has been recognized by the Convention as the key basis for strategy and policy development and for development of wetland management planning, but so far only nine African Parties reported that they now have a national comprehensive wetland inventory, although this is two more countries (Tunisia and Zambia) than at COP8.
5. It is encouraging, however, that 40% of Parties indicated that they have or are planning to complete their inventories taking into account the Ramsar *Framework for Wetland Inventory* (Resolution VIII.6). Less encouraging is that only four countries in the region are planning to develop a national wetlands inventory, which appears to be a step backwards, since 12 CPs reported to COP8 that they were planning national wetland inventories. It needs to be clarified whether this is really a consequence of some plans being abandoned.
6. It is surprising that, in a region when poverty is a serious issue, only four Parties report that they assessed and documented wetlands which are of special significance for reasons of poverty alleviation in their inventories; and only five CPs have assessed and documented wetlands which are of special significance for reasons of food security in a region where hunger and starvation have again recently become a prominent issue.
7. However, CPs' COP9 reports do not seem to fully cover inventory progress in the region. For example, IUCN has been conducting a major wetlands inventory programme in the West Africa subregion, covering 15 countries, and although this programme does not seem to be reflected in the National Reports, it should be looked at as a potential basis for supporting CPs in acquiring wetland inventory in other parts of the region, in the face of widespread resource and capacity limitations to undertaking wetland inventory.

B. Wetland assessment [1.2]

8. In spite of the requirement of Article 3.2 of the Convention to report at the earliest possible time on potential ecological change at Ramsar sites (see also section 2.11 B), wetlands assessment and monitoring is not receiving sufficient attention in Africa.
 - i) Only one of the only 20 CPs that answered this question reported having a repository of assessments of changes in wetland status established. In addition, only three countries (12%) report having undertaken an assessment of the vulnerability of wetlands to change in ecological character, yet we know that African wetlands are facing serious threats and damages.
 - ii) Only four CPs (20%) have assessed the contribution of Ramsar sites and other wetlands to the maintenance of fisheries, although it is recognized that fish is the main source of protein in many African countries. It is important to pay attention to the contribution of Ramsar sites to the maintenance of fisheries because they represent a major component of the Ramsar "wise use concept" and its COP9 consideration (see also COP9 DR4 on *Ramsar sites and the conservation and sustainable use of fish resources*).
 - iii) Only three CPs (12%) report completion of a wetland assessment which includes assessment of water quality and quantity available to, and required by, wetlands.

- iv) Although there is much media reporting of severe droughts and other natural and human-made disasters that have occurred in the region, only two CPs have assessed their impacts on the livelihood of local communities and indigenous peoples dependent on wetlands.
9. There is an urgent need to know better the status of the African wetlands that play some important functions in the daily life of many Africans and which are facing various and important changes, as the basis for developing more effective integrated approaches to maintaining their services.
 10. Even if capacity limitations in many African CPs mean that regular reviews to identify potential changes in ecological character of Ramsar sites are unrealistic, it should be important that designated Ramsar sites (and as far as possible other wetlands) are monitored and assessed at least every three years, in order to identify and seek to resolve any damaging changes to their ecological character before any such changes become effectively irreversible. The experience of Kenya, where ground, aerial and remote sensing techniques are being applied to establish the status and trends of wetlands, could be valuably replicated in other countries of the region.

2.2 Policies and legislation, including impact assessment and valuation

A. Policy instruments for wetland wise use [2.1]

11. Out of the 26 African countries for which COP9 National Reports were available for analysis, only 5 indicated that they have in place a National Wetland Policy (NWP), but more (13 CPs, 50%) indicated that wetland issues (conservation, wise use, restoration/rehabilitation) have been integrated into other sectoral strategic or planning processes and documents at one or more of the following levels: national, regional, provincial and local, and some CPs indicated that wetlands will be covered in forthcoming policy instruments. A further 6 CPs (24%) indicated that a national wetland policy was in preparation, in most cases as part of the national conservation or biodiversity policy or strategy. Furthermore, wetland issues have been incorporated into poverty eradication strategies in 14 CPs (54%) – an encouraging sign of progress, given that Africa is the only region of the world where poverty is on the increase. Those which have completed or are completing their NWPs report having incorporated the WSSD targets and actions for sustainable development, which is of paramount importance for the African countries.
12. It is puzzling that twice as many CPs (10) reported to COP8 that they had an NWP in place as are reporting this to COP9: it seems unlikely, though possible, that some NWPs have been abandoned, so the reasons for this discrepancy need further evaluation. Since the establishment of NWPs and related strategies are recognized by the Convention as an providing an essential enabling environment for achieving wetland conservation and wise use, it is of concern that the lack of capacity and resourcing appears to be preventing more widespread activity. Currently use of the Swiss Fund for Africa available to the Secretariat is being focused on supporting NWP development in several CPs, and other donors should be encouraged to support similar initiatives. But there is still a long way to go before the target of at least half of the African CPs to have prepared a comprehensive NWP is to be achieved.

B. Development, review and amendment of policies, legislation, institutions and practices [2.2]

13. Undertaking reviews of legislation, institutions, and governmental plans at national scale has occurred very seldom in African CPs: only 2 countries (10%) report having completed a review of legislation and institutions to promote the wise use of wetlands, although related processes have been carried out for other conventions (notably the Convention on Biological Diversity). Furthermore only one CP (5%) reports having modified the other sectoral legislation and institutional procedures in order to preclude unwise use of wetlands. Economic valuation of wetlands is occurring (5 countries, 20%), but much still needs to be done. While environmental impact assessments are required by law in 13 countries (65%), none of the EIA materials, including case studies, have been transmitted to the Ramsar Secretariat for loading in the EIA-dedicated Web site. However, it is encouraging that EIAs have included full and appropriate consideration of the environmental, social, economic and cultural impacts in 11 CPs (55%).
14. Only one CP has indicated that it has completed a review of law and institutions relating to wetlands, and no other CPs have indicated that such a review is under way (Action 2.1.1). On a related question, only one CP has transmitted examples of best practice related to the integration and harmonisation of policies and legislation to the Ramsar Secretariat, although a further two CPs indicated that this was in progress.
15. Reviewing national policies, institutions and development plans that may affect the wetlands is an important process. While the National Reports for COP8 indicated that only very few (3) countries had completed such exercises by then, no substantial progress has been achieved during this triennium. The New Partnership for Africa's Development in its Environment Plan of Action, covering all the African CPs, is providing a favorable context to undertake such reviews. A matter of concern is, however, that financial resources to undertake this initiative are lacking in the regional.
16. The lack of resources to implement fully the obligations of the Convention and to plan ahead strategically in general and in Africa in particular should be clearly addressed by the Contracting Parties in order to find a solution to the financial problem which is jeopardizing the implementation of the Convention in the region. Although the Secretariat notes with satisfaction that some of the Parties that have been discovering oil recently in the region have approached us to share the findings of their EIAs when the drilling activities were likely to impact on the wetlands, we will invite the other countries that have not done so to keep the Secretariat posted when other developments are proposed or are occurring, as expected under Article 3.2 of the Convention.

2.3 Integration of wetland wise use into sustainable development

A. Methodologies for wetland conservation and wise use [3.1]

17. Three years ago, at least four countries (12%) had reported that using methodologies for wetland conservation and wise use had been progressed in their countries through a wide dissemination of the Ramsar Handbooks for the Wise Use of Wetlands. In 2005, there is no further progress reported. Although the Ramsar toolkit of Wise Use Handbooks have been made available in English and French to the main stakeholders, they are not usually

accessible to local communities because of language barriers. Ramsar's COP8 new management planning guidelines (Resolution VIII.14) have been adapted and incorporated into national practice in only four CPs (15.38%), with a further three countries indicating that it was in progress in 2005.

18. However, more CPs (7, 35%) have made available the Ramsar guidance on the Wise Use concept and its application to appropriate decision-makers, institutions and processes. This finding is encouraging as it indicates that key stakeholders such as decision-makers should be becoming more and more sensitized to the wise use concept and its importance.
19. In addition to producing materials that can fit the needs of local communities (translation of guidelines into local languages and production of more audio-visual materials), it will be useful to develop a regional program that will ensure that the Handbooks are well understood and utilized in African countries for the next triennium.

B. Peatlands [3.2]

20. There is no noteworthy information about peatlands from the African National Reports. Only one CP (Tunisia) responded that action has been taken to implement at national level the Guidelines for Global Action on Peatlands (Resolution VIII.17). However, South Africa responded that it is supporting, through the Peat Working Group and related departments (Departments of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, of Agriculture, and of Water Affairs and Forestry), the wise use principles of the Coordinating Committee for Global Action on Peatlands. The Peat Working Group and related national departments as well as provincial departments and conservation bodies have supported initiatives such as the International Mires Conservation Group's wise use project in Maputland and the Identification and Mapping of Peatlands in Southern Africa (inventory and awareness raising). The South African National Biodiversity Institute's Working for Wetlands programme works with peatland restoration, poverty alleviation, skills transfer and awareness raising.

C. Recognition of wetland values and functions [3.3]

21. Although only five CPs (26%) reported that specific measures have been taken to protect wetlands which are of special significance for reasons of water supply, coastal protection, flood defense, food security, poverty alleviation, cultural heritage, and/or scientific research, as many as 60% gave a positive response on their understanding of the values and functions of wetlands.
22. Water and wetlands have always been vital to the social and cultural environment in the region and the COP9 NRs report that actions have been taken to promote the recognition of the social and cultural heritage of wetlands in five countries (25%), with a further seven CPs indicating that this was in progress -- this makes for an encouraging picture of over 60% of CPs in Africa active in this area. Clearly social and cultural aspects of wetland management are very important to African CPs as they represent a useful tool to strengthen the involvement of local stakeholders, particularly in wetland planning and management. It is also important that more CPs are now making the link between wetland conservation and water management, although for COP9 only 5 CPs (19%) reported taking actions to ensure that public institutions place emphasis on the hydrogeological,

social, economic and environmental aspects of groundwater in their wetlands management activities.

23. In addition, 8 CPs (31%) have indicated that they have developed wise use wetland programmes and/or projects that contribute to poverty alleviation objectives and food and water security plans, with another CP indicating that this was in progress.
24. Attention should be paid by the Secretariat, its partners and Parties in the next triennium to strengthening support to African CPs for wetland management projects that also serve to reduce poverty.

D. Integration of wetland policies into broader planning and management from local to national scales [3.4]

25. Several African countries are at least partly implementing integrated management approaches through catchments management including river basin/lakes and coastal zones. The following initiatives have considerable significance for the implementation of the Ramsar Convention:

a) Integration of wetland policies at basin scale (shared catchments and water resources)

- i) The MedWet Committee, a framework for action in the Mediterranean countries, including five Ramsar Contracting Parties from Africa, is undertaking a number of actions that contribute to the implementation of integrated management approaches, together with the GEF MedWet Coast project, the MedWet North African Wetland Network, the MedWet/NGOs Network, and the development of the MedWet/Sites Network. Details of these achievements are provided in the report of the MedWet Coordinator.
- ii) The Lake Chad Basin Commission's collaboration with the Ramsar Bureau and its five member states, involving management planning at the basin scale, designation of Ramsar sites by all member states with the objective of having the entire lake on the Ramsar List, and the development and implementation of projects at basin scale with the support of GEF, the World Bank, UNDP, IUCN, WWF International and other partners such as the Nigerian Conservation Foundation.
- iii) Likewise the Niger Basin Authority is working on project development and implementation, Ramsar site designation and management, with its nine member states in collaboration with GEF, the World Bank, UNDP, WWF International, Wetlands International, the Ramsar Bureau and other partners, including the Nigerian Conservation Foundation. Both institutions consider that it is now time to move beyond just Ramsar site designations and be more active on the restoration and rehabilitation of the basin.
- iv) The Nile Basin Initiative is developing and implementing an integrated river basin management programme with its 10 member states. The Convention has not so far been closely involved in this process. However, the Nile Basin Initiative Secretariat attended the Ramsar Africa Regional Preparatory meeting,

held in Arusha, April 2005, and proposed that the Ramsar Convention seek to establish a presence in the subregion to strengthen its work on the ground.

- v) WWF International and the Secretariat have recently established a partnership with Malawi, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Mozambique to promote the establishment of a basin organization for the integrated management of Lake Malwi/Nyasa/Niassa by the three countries. However, some boundary issues over the lake between two of three countries have stalled the process, which was supposed to start with the designation of the entire lake as a Ramsar site.
- vi) The integrated marine and coastal zone programme jointly sponsored by FIBA (Fondation Internationale du Banc d'Arguin), IUCN, and WWF International for the Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mauritania, and Senegal.

b) Integrated management approaches at national level

26. A number of such integrated management approaches were reported by CPs as being underway or planned, including:

- i) the development of the Okavango Delta Integrated Management Programme (Botswana) with the financial sponsorship of the Botswana Government, the IUCN Water and Nature Initiative, Denmark, Sweden and other donors. The Ramsar Administrative Authority is providing the overall coordination of this multifaceted programme, involving numerous players. The Secretariat was involved in the preparation of the Delta Management Plan Draft Inception Report and Inception Report Workshop;
- ii) the development of a GEF project in Benin for integrated coastal zone management (see also the related proposed regional initiative – COP9 DOC. 21);
- iii) integrated management approaches in Kenya based on catchments and the major mountains and forests which are the sources of the main rivers and water resources;
- v) South African integrated coastal zone management, whereby a new policy covers the entire coastal zone of the country under the legislative framework of the Coastal Management Act;
- vi) the river basin management programme in South Africa, supported by the National Water Act, is being implemented across the country, whereby the relevant policies and the principles of integrated water resource management are applied to all water development initiatives;
- vii) integrated management for the Rufiji River Basin, the Pangani River Basin and the Tanzanian coastline; and
- viii) the plans in Chad to establish an integrated management programme in the Chari-Logone Basin.

2.4 Restoration and rehabilitation [4.1]

27. Twelve (48%) African CPs report having developed and undertaken some wetland restoration/rehabilitation programmes or projects, one CP indicated that this was in progress, and three further CPs reported that they have partly developed their restoration/rehabilitation programmes – an overall encouraging response of 64% of CPs answering positively. However, only six CPs have taken actions to restore/rehabilitate

the wetlands defined as a priority for restoration, while a further four have partially done so. But none indicated that they had compiled and disseminated information on new research and methodologies for wetland restoration/rehabilitation. Only 6 CPs (33%) reported that the role of wetlands restoration has been taken into account in river basin management, although overall 55% answered positively.

28. The *Principles and guidelines on wetland restoration* (Resolution VIII.16) have been used in the assessment of implications of the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol for wetland conservation at least in part in only three CPs (17%) – a possible indication of the poor level of synergy in the implementation of the Climate Change and Ramsar Conventions at the national level in Africa at a time when we know that water stress upon most of the wetlands in Africa is sometimes caused by evaporation due to extreme temperatures. Likewise there has been very little application of the *Principles and guidelines on wetland restoration* (Resolution VIII.16) in relation to the provision of compensation under Article 4.2 of the Convention, with only two CPs reporting positively. Cultural and archaeological heritage significance of wetlands have been considered in restoration actions by six CPs, a further illustration of the cultural link between African people and their wetlands.
29. While training needs in relation to wetland restoration have been assessed in six CPs (including two partly), it is sad to note that training opportunities and expertise in relation to wetland restoration have been identified in only two CPs in the region. There appears to be a clear need to enhance such management and restoration training opportunities for African CPs, and there are several initiatives already underway or being developed. Similarly, despite the increasing recognition of the role of wetlands in poverty relief at a time when poverty is on the increase in the continent, only 11% of African CPs indicated that restoration projects linked to poverty relief have been developed and implemented – there is a need for more attention to this important issue and opportunity.
30. The COP9 National Report responses indicate that aspects of wetland restoration have become a real priority for Africa CPs. However, Resolution VIII.16 addressed wetland restoration as an element of national planning and should have triggered nationwide assessments to identify wetlands in need of restoration in a substantial number of countries over the past triennium. More needs to be done to identify all those wetlands where restoration or rehabilitation would be cost effective and yield long-term benefits, including in poverty reduction. Then it will become urgent to find the resources needed to implement the necessary measures to recover these degraded sites.

2.5 Invasive alien species [5.1]

31. It is widely recognized that aquatic invasive species can and do cause significant damage to wetland ecosystems and loss of livelihoods in Africa. Although one-quarter of CPs have indicated that they have developed national policy, strategy and management responses to threats from invasive species, with over half (55%) answering positively, more progress on this important issue might have been expected. That there is clear recognition of invasive species as a problem is further demonstrated by prevention, eradication and control of invasive alien species having been fully incorporated in national legislation and national wetland and biodiversity policies, strategies and action plans in nine CPs (45%), a greater level of action than in other regions.

32. Furthermore, encouragingly 40% of CPs reported that actions related to invasive species have been carried out in cooperation with the focal points of other conventions and international organizations/processes – a good sign of the synergy that exists between the Ramsar Focal Point and the other MEAs' focal points in the region on certain specific issues. However, practical guidance for the prevention, control and eradication of invasive species has been developed and disseminated in only 25% of the African CPs; only two CPs have assessed problems of invasion by alien species in Ramsar sites and communicated this to the Ramsar Secretariat pursuant Article 3.2 of the Convention; and only 4 CPs have answered that international cooperation related to invasive species in transboundary/shared wetlands and water systems has been agreed and implemented over the past triennium. Given that international action is vital if invasive species issues are to be addressed effectively in shared wetlands and water systems in Africa, there remains more to be done. The NEPAD initiative on this issue and COP8 Resolution VIII.18 provide a clear framework for action in Africa on invasive species.

2.6 Local communities, indigenous people, and cultural values [6.1]

33. The COP7 guidance on the participation of local communities and indigenous people in wetland management has fully been applied in 7 CPs (35 %) and fully or to some extent in a total of 69% of African CPs – a similar percentage to the global average. In addition:

- i) 25% have reported that traditional knowledge and management practices in relation to wetlands have been documented and its application encouraged: based on the recognition that traditional knowledge in wetlands management is important in the region, further progress appears needed here;
- ii) 90% of African CPs reporting to COP9 indicated that public participation in decision-making with respect to wetlands has been fully or partly promoted;
- iii) local stakeholders have been involved in the selection of new Ramsar sites in 11 CPs (58%), an important response since it indicates that increasingly local stakeholders understand the rationale and purpose behind the designation of a wetland as a Ramsar site of international importance, and so are more likely to engage in maintaining its ecological character; and
- iv) also encouraging is the fact that local stakeholders have been fully involved in wider issues related to water resources management at basin level in 9 CPs (45%) and partly in 4 CPs (20%), a total of 65% of positive answers.

34. However, so far only one CP has compiled resource information on local communities' and indigenous people's participation in wetland management, so the potential for sharing information and lessons learned with other CPs is very limited as yet. Also, only three CPs (15%) have fully contributed with case studies and other materials to the elaboration of further guidance on the participation of local communities and indigenous people in wetland management.

35. Although it has been increasingly recognized that culture plays an important role in wetland management, it is unfortunate that the guiding principles on cultural values (Resolution VIII.19) have been used or applied in only 2 CPs and is planned in only 2 others. Similarly, cultural values of wetlands have been incorporated into the management

planning of Ramsar sites and other wetlands in only 5 CPs (19%), yet the Convention's COP8 guidelines on management planning stress that recognition of such values is a vital aspect of wetland management.

36. Although there is good evidence in the African COP9 National Reports that local communities are being increasingly involved, there are opportunities to develop new approaches based on a number of incentive measures, such as: the development of local capacity, the integration of traditional knowledge and pertinent cultural practices into wetland management, the devolution of power and generation of income along with sharing of benefits, the recognition and enforcement of customary regulations and the devolution of ownership on land and water resources.

2.7 Private sector involvement [7.1]

37. 42% of African CPs report having incorporated the private sector, academia and specialized institutions into decision-making related to wetlands, although only three CPs have established a private-sector "Friends of Wetlands" forum or equivalent mechanism, and overall there appears to be less involvement of the private sector in wetlands management in the region being reported now than was the case in COP8 National Reports – the reasons for this are not clear.
38. There are clear challenges for CPs in the region to involve the private sector in wetland management. Entering into an active dialogue with the private sector on how to implement the concept of environmental engagement and active commitment for sustainable development is not an easy task for those responsible for wetland management in Africa, either because they do not know how best to do it, because it is difficult to identify their counterparts (who will understand them) in the private sector, or because the private sector is not interested in such engagement. But there is a real opportunity in Africa to involve the private sector (e.g., water, electricity, oil, fishing and navigation companies), and preparation of guidance on how to involve the private sector in wetland conservation and management in Africa would be valuable.

2.8 Incentives [8.1]

39. A review of positive and perverse incentive measures in relation to the conservation and wise use of wetlands has been completed in only 2 African CPs, as have actions to promote incentive measures which encourage conservation and wise use of wetlands and actions to remove perverse incentive measures which discourage the same. Only one CP has identified agriculture subsidies or incentives having negative impacts and has taken actions to remove or replace agriculture subsidies or incentives which have negative impacts on water resources and in wetlands in particular. Clearly, Resolution VIII.23 on incentive measures as tools for achieving the wise use of wetlands has not been implemented to any significant extent in Africa.

2.9 Communication, education, and public awareness [9.1]

40. CEPA activities are recognized as vital for the Convention's implementation in the region, and it is important that they are pursued and extended. However, from the COP9 National Report analysis it seems that the Convention's CEPA programme adopted first at COP7 (Resolution VII.9) and further developed by COP8 Resolution VIII.31 is only now starting

to receive attention in the Africa region, and there is a clear issue of needing to find better resources in most African CPs for CEPA implementation at the national level.

41. The COP9 National Report analysis indicated the following levels of implementation of different aspects of the CEPA programme:
- i) only 25% (5 CPs) indicate that CEPA has been incorporated into sectorial policies, strategies, plans and programmes;
 - ii) four CPs report having developed pilot projects to evaluate different approaches for applying CEPA in promoting the wise use of wetlands;
 - iii) only one CP has completed a review of existing CEPA programmes and documented lessons learnt in implementing CEPA programmes;
 - iv) more CPs have designated CEPA National Focal Points: 11 (55%) have appointed their Governmental NFPs and 10 CPs (50%) their NGO NFPs, but it is disappointing that still many CPs in Africa have not yet made such designations, since these people are the key linkage between the CEPA implementation supported by the Secretariat and national action. All those CPs who have not yet made such designations are urged to do so without delay.
 - v) National Wetland CEPA Task Forces have been established in only 3 CPs and National Action Plans for wetland CEPA have been developed by only 2 CPs; this is very few compared with progress on these actions in other regions;
 - vi) actions have been taken on communication and information-sharing on wetland issues between relevant ministries, departments and agencies in 8 CPs, but only one reports that wetland CEPA has been incorporated into sectorial policy and planning committees;
 - vii) five CPs (25%) have taken actions to encourage synergies on CEPA activities among international conventions and programmes, a poor level of activity given that most of the 42 African Ramsar CPs are also parties to the other biodiversity-related MEAs;
 - viii) a key basis for identifying priorities for CEPA capacity building is an evaluation of the capacity building needs at the national level, but only 2 CPs report have completed the review of needs and capacities in the areas of wetland CEPA and that a roster (or equivalent tool) on wetland CEPA expertise in the country has been established;
 - ix) similarly, materials to support wetland CEPA have been produced and distributed in only three CPs and only four have identified sources of expert information and training opportunities in wetland CEPA;
 - x) although some African CPs report that there is no funding for their wetland CEPA activities, only five report having sought resources for capacity building in that area. This represents a missed opportunity, since four of these five CPs also report having made progress in securing resources on CEPA issues;

- xi) few reviews of formal educational curricula in relation to wetland services and wise use have been carried out (3 CPs), but in these three this has led to changes in the formal educational curricula to incorporate wetland-related issues;
 - xii) although World Wetlands Day activities have been carried out in 65% of CPs reporting, fewer other national campaigns, programmes or projects to increase awareness on wetland issues have been undertaken (45% of CPs).
 - xiii) although 9 CPs report systematic collaboration with the media to convey the wetland message, little information is provided as to what forms of media they have been working with, since not all have equal capacity for strong outreach in the region;
 - xiv) it is encouraging to see that actions have been taken to promote and equip Ramsar sites as demonstration sites for the wise use principle in three CPs, and that in 35% of CPs CEPA strategies and actions have been incorporated into the management plans of Ramsar sites, although the figures are below what we might be hoped for; and that 4 CPs have established education centres at Ramsar sites and other wetlands, and education centres are planned for Ramsar sites and other wetlands in a further 3 CPs. Such CEPA activities around the management of Ramsar sites are encouraging and should be promoted to other CPs across the region, as learning by doing and watching has always had a comparative advantage compared to traditional learning methods;
 - xv) Finally, only 3 CPs reported that the information provided at wetland education centres has been reviewed to ensure that it is in line with the Convention's principles and goals.
42. Clearly implementing the Convention's CEPA programme is proving a challenge in the region, and this should receive priority attention in the next triennium. In addition to the efforts initiated by the Secretariat and its partners, it is important that CPs complete their review of needs and capacities in the areas of wetland CEPA. Only after this has been done can the Secretariat and its partners will have a clear understanding of what the CPs future needs are.

2.10 Designation of Ramsar sites

A. Application of the Strategic Framework [10.1]

- 43. A total of 55 Ramsar sites covering 10,439,264 hectares have been added to the Ramsar List by 15 CPs in Africa since COP8 and a further 70 sites covering 20,547,195 hectares in 18 CPs are currently in the process of being designated (see Annex 1).
- 44. Only 42% of CPs responding have applied *Waterbird Population Estimates* 3rd Edition in designating sites under Criterion 6. Only 5 CPs reported having made contributions the updating of the 1% thresholds for waterbird populations, but waterbird population data is collected regularly in 9 CPs. Furthermore, only one CP reports having designated sites with wetland types currently under-represented in the Ramsar List, although 7 CPs have designated coastal and marine Ramsar sites and 11 CPs have designated Ramsar sites

supporting globally or nationally threatened species. Special care has been taken to include the social and cultural values and features in the “Information Sheets on Ramsar wetlands” by 8 CPs.

45. Although more than half of the African CPs have shared wetlands, only 5 CPs have designated Ramsar sites of the national area of transboundary wetlands, and further attention needs to be paid to this important aspect of international cooperation under the Convention.
46. It is encouraging that 69% of CPs report having established a strategy and priorities for further designation of Ramsar sites, in application of the Strategic Framework for the Ramsar List, and that 53% of CPs have designated Ramsar sites of representative, rare or unique wetland types present in the territory. However, only 8 CPs have identified and targeted all potential Ramsar sites for future designations: a clear indication that the *Strategic Framework and guidelines for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance and other wetlands* and Resolution VIII.10 are not yet being fully applied in the region. Increased focus on the implementation of this Strategic Framework with support from the Secretariat is therefore needed in the region.

B. Maintenance and use of the Ramsar Sites Database [10.2]

47. Nine CPs report having submitted all required updates of the Ramsar Information Sheet and/or maps to the Ramsar Secretariat, and nine CPs are in the process of completing such updates (see Annex 2), but there is a large and increasing number of Ramsar sites for which such updates are still required, and there are now 27 of the 44 CPs in the region with sites for which updated RISs are expected (see also COP9 DR16). Furthermore there remain a number of designated sites for which no suitable maps that indicate their location and boundaries have been provided. Resolution VIII.13 on enhancing the information on wetlands of international importance (Ramsar sites) has been poorly implemented in the region.

2.11 Management planning and monitoring of Ramsar sites

A. Maintenance of the ecological character of all Ramsar sites [11.1]

48. Development and implementation of management plans at all Ramsar sites has been a central objective of the Convention’s Strategic Plan for many years now. In Africa, some progress (but not enough) has been made during the last triennium towards the target of 50% of all Ramsar sites to benefit from management plans in place. This survey indicated that only 38 Ramsar sites (out of about 140 designated sites as of 2005) have a management plan in place, in 12 CPs (50%, as 2 of the 26 CPs reporting did not answer this question) – this represents 27% of designated sites, but these management plans are fully operational in only 32 sites (22%) in 10 CPs (42%) (see also Annex 3). CPs report that management plans are being prepared for a further 28 sites in 17 CPs, and are being revised and updated in 14 sites. Overall there appears to have been little progress since COP8 on development of management planning.
49. Overall, an encouraging 64% of CPs report having used the COP8 *New Guidelines on management planning* (Resolution VIII.14) in the development of management plans or strategies: fully in 6 CPs, partly in 5 CPs, in progress in 5 more, and 5 CPs are planning to

use them. A similar overall percentage of CPs report the definition and implementation of the measures required to maintain the ecological character of Ramsar sites. However, only 3 CPs have used the full array of Ramsar tools and guidance in the development or updating of management plans for wetland sites, and measures to maintain ecological character have been incorporated into the site management plans in only 9 CPs.

50. In terms of participation, 9 CPs (47% of those reporting) indicate that all stakeholders have been fully involved in the management planning processes and a further 8 CPs indicate that site management committees have been established at Ramsar sites. Recognising that different stakeholders usually have different interests over the wetlands' resources, 9 CPs (45%) have established cross-sectoral site management committees at Ramsar sites. Along the same lines, 9 CPs have taken into account the wider management implications (e.g., agricultural practices, river basin management, coastal zone management) in preparing the management plans for Ramsar sites. This is encouraging to see increasing recognition that the maintenance of the ecological character of a Ramsar site cannot be achieved without strong participation from various stakeholders.
51. With all the natural disasters that are taking place across the globe and the vulnerability of African island states, it is disappointing that only one CP reports having taken into account wetland resilience to climate change and extreme climatic events in their management planning.
52. Wetlands are dynamic ecosystems, open to influence from natural and human factors. In order to maintain their ecological character and to allow wise use of their resources by human beings, some kind of overall agreement is needed between the various owners, occupiers and interested parties. The management planning process provides this overall agreement. It's therefore unfortunate that many Ramsar sites in the region do not have yet a management plan in place and being implemented. This represents a major drawback in the Convention's implementation as it is pointless to designate a site if nothing is done to maintain its ecological character or the features (criteria) that make it important. Only seven CPs (35%) have submitted project proposals to support management planning of Ramsar sites to the Small Grants Fund during the last triennium.
53. Although it is obvious that more, sustained efforts and allocation of additional resources are still needed to achieve this key operational objective of the Strategic Plan, it is time now to move beyond designation of new Ramsar sites and make sure that when a site is designated, it has a management plan ready or being prepared.

B. Monitoring the condition of Ramsar sites, including application of Article 3.2 and Montreux Record) [11.2]

54. Monitoring the status of Ramsar sites is not yet a common activity across the region: only 5 CPs have reported to COP9 that they have established monitoring programmes at Ramsar sites but, perhaps curiously, more (8 CPs) report that monitoring programmes are part of site management plans. Not surprisingly in view of this absence of monitoring, and that only 4 CPs report have established mechanisms to collect information on changes in ecological character of Ramsar sites in accordance with Article 3.2, human-induced changes to the ecological character of Ramsar sites are notified to the Secretariat (without delay) by Administrative Authorities only on rare occasions (see also COP9 DOC 6). However, for four Ramsar sites in three CPs (Gambia - Baobolon Wetland Reserve; Kenya

- Lakes Nakuru and Naivasha; and Zambia - Kafue Flats), COP9 National Reports indicate that there are Article 3.2 issues.

55. There are undoubtedly many more African Ramsar sites facing human-induced change or likely change to their ecological character, and this is in part confirmed by the number of reports of such problems received by the Secretariat in the first instance from third parties: in the 2003-2005 triennium this has included reports for six other Ramsar sites in four CPs. Developing more effective Article 3.2 reporting should be a priority for attention in all CPs in the coming triennium. Three CPs have indicated that they have taken actions to address the problems that have originated a report to the Ramsar Secretariat pursuant to Article 3.2.
56. During the 2003-2005 period, no CPs have placed sites on the Montreux Record (see also COP9 DOC 6), and none of the Africa Ramsar sites on the Record could be removed from it, although CPs have reported that procedures to remove two sites from the Record are advanced. During the triennium, 3 CPs have requested Ramsar Advisory Missions to Ramsar sites included in the Montreux Record and only one CP reported taking actions to implement the recommendations of Ramsar Advisory Missions. More widespread use of the Montreux Record as a mechanism for seeking support in resolving ecological character issues on Ramsar sites is to be encouraged (see the guidance on these matters adopted in Resolution VIII.7).

2.12 Management of shared water resources, wetlands and wetland species

A. Inventory and integrated management of shared wetlands and hydrological basins [12.1]

57. The promotion of inventory and integrated management of shared wetlands and hydrological basins in the Africa region has led to the identification of all transboundary/shared wetland systems in 9 CPs (37.50%), although only 5 report progress in the cooperative management of the same shared wetland systems.
58. Two key Resolutions – Resolution VIII.1 “*Guidelines for allocation and management of water for maintaining ecological functions of wetlands*” and Resolution VII.19 “*Guidelines for international cooperation under the Convention*” – have been applied in the context of shared water systems in only 4 CPs, and only 2 CPs have applied joint impact assessment processes with neighbouring countries in shared wetland systems. This indicates a poor level of implementation, given that many African CPs have shared wetlands systems that require regional/international cooperation.
59. It is worth noting that the Secretariat has been collaborating with African river basins organizations such as Lake Chad Basin Commission and Niger Basin Authority in ensuring a sustainable future of those two shared water systems. In addition, in collaboration with the WWF Global Freshwater Programme, a designation process of the entire Lake Chad by the riparian states that are Parties to the Convention has begun: so far Niger and Chad have already completed the process. Similar initiatives are going on for Lake Malawi/Niassa/Nyasa and Lake Tanganyika.

B. Cooperative monitoring and management of shared wetland-dependent species [12.2]

60. Ten CPs report designating Ramsar sites for wetland-dependent migratory species, and new regional site networks and initiatives for wetland-dependent migratory species have been developed in 5 CPs. The most significant ongoing endeavor in this regard is the GEF project that has begun with selected Ramsar sites and potential Ramsar sites to be managed for the implementation of both the Ramsar Convention and the CMS/AEWA. This project is coordinated by Wetlands International and involves a number of African wetland sites. The Ramsar Convention Secretariat participates in the project's Steering Committee.

C. Support and promotion of regional arrangements under the Convention [12.3]

61. There is considerable interest and progress in the development of regional wetland initiatives in Africa, and 9 CPs report that they have been involved in the development of a regional initiative in the framework of the Convention (see also COP9 DR8). This has mainly been done at the subregional level.
62. Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, under the EAWSP (**Eastern Africa Wetlands Support Program**) have been developing wetland management initiatives to ensure wetlands in the region are conserved in line with the Ramsar Convention guidelines. Under this project, shared wetlands resources have been identified and mechanisms for collaborative management developed. In addition, the program fosters learning and exchange amongst the member countries. There is a proposal to continue this project and include additional countries, e.g. Burundi and Rwanda, in the programme. Consultations between the countries and potential donors are on-going. In addition, the East African Community has incorporated conservation of natural resources including wetlands in their development agenda. Several projects and programmes are currently being implemented.
63. In North Africa a network of African wetlands (NAWN) project under the MedWet Initiative is underway in Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia.
64. The operations of the SADC Wetlands Conservation Project under IUCN-ROSA has provided a framework for successful cooperation in wetlands management in the southern African region.
65. The West and Central Africa states are working on the preparation and implementation of the two regional initiatives (Chadwet and Nigerwet) that have already been approved at the ministerial level, and a West African Coastal Wetlands initiative is being proposed to COP9 for Convention endorsement (COP9 DR8).

2.13 Collaboration with other multilateral environmental agreements and institutions [13.1]

66. Eighteen CPs report that they have established mechanisms at the national level for collaboration between the Ramsar Administrative Authority and the focal points of other multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). However, this indicates no further progress on this activity since COP8.
67. Ten CPs have encouraged focal points responsible for the implementation of other MEAs to participate in the National Ramsar/Wetland Committee so as to increase collaboration

at the national level among the institutions. In addition, 4 CPs have partly done this and a further 3 CPs report “in progress”: overall this is a positive answer in 85% of CPs reporting. It is worth noting that at the national level collaboration has always been more productive with the UNCCD in relation to the two key factors for food or agricultural production: water and soil. Nevertheless, national level synergy among all MEAs should be further encouraged, as should synergy with regional seas conventions and agreements (only one CP reports having done this).

68. Despite the efforts and resources made available by the Convention, it is of considerable concern that only 6 CPs report have participated in the implementation of the wetland programme under NEPAD. This programme is supposed to be the master plan around which the management of the African wetlands would be articulated. It is not encouraging that more than three-quarters of African CPs indicate that they have not participated in the implementation of the NEPAD wetland component (some of these reported that this was because NEPAD issues are handled by another governmental department – but this indicates a need for much better cooperation between Ramsar Administrative Authorities and those departments). The working relationships between the AMCEN and NEPAD Secretariats should lead to the preparation of a strategy to promote the involvement of African CPs in the implementation of the NEPAD wetland component.
69. Only one CP indicated that it had participated in wetland-related activities within the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. It is important to increase this, as in Africa there are more than 6 CPs that belong to the Small Island Developing States community.
70. Despite the efforts on MEA collaboration by the Ramsar Secretariat, with progress in strengthening and formalizing linkages between Ramsar and other environmental conventions, action at the national level has been slow during the past triennium, and ways of encouraging this need to be better developed.

2.14 Sharing of expertise and information [14.1]

71. Sharing expertise and information through CEPA and training activities is increasingly recognized as an effective means to assure the wise use of wetlands through international cooperation. The Ramsar regional preparatory meeting for COP9 held in Arusha in April 2005 represented a real opportunity for sharing of expertise and information as CPs were able to present case studies of their success-stories in wetland management and benefit from other CPs and partners who attended the meeting.
72. In addition to the opportunities of the Arusha meeting, 11 CPs report having taken actions to share knowledge at the global and/or regional and/or national level, and 10 of these have engaged in international cooperation activities related to training on wetland issues.
73. However, there is a need to have more South-South cooperation among African CPs, since only five have established twinning arrangements among wetlands sharing common features for knowledge sharing and training. Even if language can sometime constitute a barrier for communication, the Secretariat encourages the sharing of expertise and information between the French- and English-speaking countries.

2.15 Financing the conservation and wise use of wetlands

A. Promoting international assistance to support the conservation and wise use of wetlands [15.1]

74. Financing the conservation and wise use of wetlands is an important endeavor that should be considered within a broad picture of sustainable development. Many African countries depend on international assistance for financing their projects related to wetlands management. Twelve CPs have mobilized resources through international cooperation for wetland issues and 9 CPs report having worked with bilateral and multilateral donors to mobilize funding support for wetland inventories.
75. We have already mentioned the existence of Ramsar site management plans that have not been implemented, but it is encouraging to note that 8 CPs have worked with donors to mobilize resources for implementation of Ramsar site management plans.
76. In the framework of the efforts made by the Secretariat and its partners to raise the awareness on the role of wetlands in water resources conservation, 7 CPs have worked with donors to ensure that the ecological functions of wetlands are conserved when designing and implementing water projects.
77. The Global Environmental Facility (GEF) is one of the few funding mechanisms that exists for shared/transboundary wetlands projects. It is encouraging to note that 9 CPs have submitted project proposals related to wetlands to the Global Environment Facility (GEF), although no information is provided as to whether the projects were approved. However, most of the river/lake basin commissions in Africa (Lake Chad, Niger River, Lake Victoria, etc.) have now had a project accepted and funded by the GEF.
78. In addition to the GEF, one should not forget the important role played by bilateral donors and the Convention's IOPs in the promotion of international assistance to support the conservation and wise use of wetlands in the region.

B. Environmental safeguards and assessments as part of all development projects (including foreign and domestic investments) affecting wetlands [15.2]

79. It is too early to assess the results of actions that have been taken to work with investors on possible impacts of their projects on wetlands. However, the existence in most of the Africa CPs of EIA rules and procedures can be considered as a positive sign. Two CPs (Tanzania and Niger) have done work to introduce mechanisms to direct resources derived from wetlands back to wetland management, but no details of the outputs have been provided.

2.16 Financing of the Convention [16.1]

80. Eleven CPs indicated in the National Reports that they have paid their dues to Ramsar in full and in a timely manner. However, the membership dues information maintained by the Secretariat shows that more than half of the Africa CPs have never paid their Ramsar dues since their accession to the Convention. For some CPs, this is a period of up to 15 years, and the contributions have not been paid in spite of the reminders sent to them and

visits to the Permanent Missions in Geneva by the Secretary General. This does not only concern least-developed countries: 8 of the 10 oil-producing countries in Africa which are Parties to the Convention have never paid their Ramsar dues. This is not acceptable, and much greater efforts are needed by African CPs to comply with their commitments.

81. We are grateful to the governments of Sweden and Switzerland, and the World Bank, which contributed to the organization of the Africa preparatory meeting for COP9.
82. We are particularly grateful to the federal government of Switzerland for their continuing support for the implementation of the Convention in Africa through the Swiss Grant for Africa (SGA), administered by the Secretariat.
83. However, the needs of African CPs to implement the Convention at national level is far above the resources that are currently available through the Ramsar Small Grant Funds and the Swiss Grant for Africa. Actions have been initiated to approach some donors to support strengthening of implementation of the Convention in Africa, but this has as yet not been successful.
84. In order to solve the funding issue of the Convention's implementation in the region, we should encourage some other donor countries to join hands with Switzerland to increase the amount available in the SGA. But while we are doing that, it is important that all African CPs clearly demonstrate their commitment to the Convention by those which have not yet done so paying their Ramsar contributions.

2.17 Institutional mechanisms of the Convention [17.1]

85. Furthermore, in spite of correspondence with the Heads of AAs, some countries still have not designated the different focal points of the Convention (daily AA focal points and National Focal Points for CEPA and the STRP (5 CPs yet to designate STRP NFPs). Without the designation of these key persons, we will never ensure that the Convention is implemented with a high level of efficiency at the national level.
86. Only 5 CPs reported having completed a review of national institutions responsible for the conservation and wise use of wetlands, although some AAs have remained unchanged since the early 1980s, despite major changes in government structure, including the establishment of ministries of environment, since then. It is important that governments keep their AAs under review so as to ensure that the AA designated is the most appropriate to coordinate the implementation of the Convention at the national level.
87. More and more CPs are establishing their National Ramsar Committees (now 16 CPs in Africa), but once established there appears to be no sustainability in the functioning of these committees as they generally have no funding for their activities.
88. It is encouraging that 14 CPs have established mechanisms to ensure cooperation between the Ramsar Administrative Authority and other national institutions directly or indirectly responsible for wetland issues, in particular water and biodiversity. This is a major improvement when we know that the Convention will be looking more and more to the conservation component of freshwater resources management for which the wetlands play a crucial role.

2.18 Institutional and financial capacity of Contracting Parties [18.1]

89. Institutional and financial capacity of Contracting Parties is important to achieve wetland conservation and wise use. But during the last triennium, only 3 CPs have assessed their institutional capacity for the effective implementation of the Convention, and only 6 CPs have used the National Report Format as a national planning tool for prioritizing their future implementation of the Convention.
90. It is clear that the lack of institutional and financial capacity is a major cause of the poor level of implementation of the Convention in some African CPs. However, it is important to make the distinction between the French- and English-speaking countries which are party to Ramsar: from the National Reports and other information available, it appears that while most of the English-speaking countries seem to have the institutions in place with staff dedicated to wetland issues, it is difficult to find the same institutional set-up in many of the French-speaking CPs. In many such cases, the focal points for Ramsar also have to devote the majority of their time to other activities unrelated to wetlands

2.19 Working with the Ramsar International Organization Partners (IOPs) and others [19.1]

91. For the Africa region, it is clear that the IOPs are playing a role of paramount importance in supporting CPs in the implementation of the Convention. Several countries have indicated that IOPs or similar bodies are part of their National Ramsar Committee, even if the National Report format did not ask specific questions about cooperation with the Convention's International Organization Partners and other bodies.
92. There has been good collaboration between the Africa Regional Team of the Secretariat and each of the four IOPs during the last triennium.

2.20 Training [20.1]

93. On the basis of the different answers given by the CPs that have completed their National Reports, it is clear that lack of capacity and training represent some major limitations in the Convention's implementation in Africa. Only 8% have assessed their training and capacity development needs. Identifying training needs of institutions and individuals, particularly in Africa, and delivering appropriate responses, remain vital elements to reinforce the capacities for wetland conservation and wise use.
94. The Secretariat was able to organize one training workshop during the last triennium for a specific group of countries. However, this experience needs to be widened at the regional level to provide those in charge of Convention implementation in the field with the appropriate tools and understanding to allow them handle some of the key wetland issues such as policy development and implementation, legislative review, wetland inventories, wetland management and work on invasive species. It is encouraging to note that all the francophone African countries (almost 50% of the African CPs) are involved in the preparation of a major capacity-building initiative that will be presented during COP9 in Kampala.
95. This lack of capacity does not seem to be related to the scarcity of financial resources available for the Convention's implementation, as only 15% of Africa CPs have submitted

training-related projects to the Small Grants Fund, and more should consider this avenue of opportunity.

2.21 Membership of the Convention [21.1]

96. The Africa region has made significant progress over the last three years with accessions to the Convention. With the support of the IOPs and other partners, we have tried to secure the accessions on the basis of the five Africa subregions. This led us to almost 100% coverage for Western and Northern Africa and the Indian Ocean islands.
97. In this triennium 8 countries (Cape Verde, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Lesotho, Liberia, Mozambique, Seychelles, and Sudan) have joined the Convention. Of these, five have joined the Convention within the past 16 months. Countries including Rwanda, Central Africa Republic, and Sao Tome have initiated their accession process by selecting the sites that are going to be designated and preparing the map that shows the boundaries of that site.
98. The current situation in terms of accession leaves us now with only 8 countries (Central Africa Republic, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, Sao Tome and Principe, Swaziland and Zimbabwe) yet to join to secure universal membership of the Convention in Africa.

Annex 1
A. African Sites designated since COP8*

	Country	Number of sites	Total area of new sites (ha)
1	Algeria	13	924,642
2	Djibouti	1	3,000
3	Equatorial Guinea	3	136,000
4	Kenya	1	10,880
5	Lesotho	1	434
6	Liberia	1	76,091
7	Madagascar	3	732,498
8	Mali	1	4,119,500
9	Morocco	20	243,260
10	Mozambique	1	1,300,000
11	Niger	7	1,189,330
12	Seychelles	1	121
13	Sudan	1	1,084,600
14	Uganda	1	22,000
15	United republic of Tanzania	1	596,908
	TOTAL	55	10,439,264

* At the date of the 15th of September 2005

B. New site designations in progress

Country	Number of proposed sites	Total surface area (ha)
Algeria	16	146,146
Benin	1	895,500
Burundi	4	77,400
Chad	3	8,035,900
Comoros	3	64,132
Congo	3	544,032
Cote d'Ivoire	5	107,944.30
Guinea	2	808,800
Guinea Bissau	4	287,979 (area of one site not available yet)
Liberia	1	73,370
Malawi	1	2,440,000
Mauritius	1	353
Mozambique	1	1,265,700
Niger	1	2,413,217
Nigeria	14	344,670
Seychelles	2	Not available
Sudan	3	1,406,234.40
Zambia	5	1,635,817
TOTAL	70	20,547,195

Annex 2. Updating of Ramsar Information Sheets in process

Country	Number of sites	Total surface area (ha)
Benin	2	544,833
Burundi	1	1,000
Chad	1	1,648,168
Cote D'Ivoire	1	21,800
Mauritius	1	26.4
Niger	1	220,000
South Africa	1	5,891
Tunisia	1	12,600
Zambia	2 (extension)	1,186,000
TOTAL	11	3,640,318

Annex 3. Africa Ramsar site list and management plan status (not including sites that have been designated since COP8)

Country	Site Name	Area (ha)	Total area per country (ha)	Management Plan (MP)	Additional comments
Algeria	Lac des Oiseaux	70		No	No information available
	Lac Oubeira	2,200		No	No information available
	Lac Tonga	2,700		No	No information available
	Chott Ech Chergui	855,500		No	No information available
	Chott El Hodna	362,000		No	No information available
	Chott Merrouane et Oued Khrouf	337,700		No	No information available
	La Sebkha d'Oran	56,870		No	No information available
	Complexe de zones humides de la plaine de Guerbes-Sanhadja	42,100		No	MP under preparation
	La Vallée d'Iherir	6,500		No	No information available
	Les Gueltates d'Issakarassene	35,100		No	No information available
	Marais de la Macta	44,500		No	No information available
	Les Oasis de Ouled Said	25,400		No	No information available
	Les Oasis de Tamantit et Sid Ahmed Timmi	95,700		No	No information available
			1,866,340		
Benin	Basse vallée du	47,500		No	No information

Country	Site Name	Area (ha)	Total area per country (ha)	Management Plan (MP)	Additional comments
	Couffo				available
	Basse vallée de l'Ouémé	91,600		No	No information available
			139,100		
Botswana	Okavango Delta	6,864,000		No	MP under preparation
			6,864,000		
Burkina Faso	La Mare aux hippopotames	19,200		Yes	MP fully implemented
	La Mare d'Oursi	45,000		No	MP under preparation
	Parc National du W.	235,000		No	No information available
			299,200		
Chad	Lac Fitri	195,000		No	No information available
	Partie tchadienne du lac Tchad	1,648,168		No	No information available
			1,843,168		
Comoros	Lac Dziani Boudouni	30		No	MP under preparation
			30		
Congo	Réserve Communautaire du Lac Télé/Likouala-aux-Herbes	438,960		No	MP would be approved by stakeholders in 2003
			438,960		
Cote d'Ivoire	Parc National d'Azagny	19,400		No	Development of a MP was done but never approved nor implemented
			19,400		
Dem. Rep. Congo	Parc National des Virunga	800,000		No	MP under preparation
	Parc National des Mangroves	66,000		No	MP under preparation
			866,000		
Egypt	Lake Bardawil	59,500		No	MP under preparation through the MedWet Project
	Lake Burullus	46,200		No	MP under preparation through the MedWet Project
			105,700		
Gabon	Petit Loango	480,000		No	No national policy on wetlands
	Setté Cama	220,000		No	No national policy on wetlands
	Wongha-Wongé	380,000		No	No national policy

Country	Site Name	Area (ha)	Total area per country (ha)	Management Plan (MP)	Additional comments
					on wetlands
			1,080,000		
Gambia	Baobolon Wetland Reserve	20,000			
			20,000	No	Resource limitation
Ghana	Keta Lagoon Complex	127,780		Yes	MP fully implemented
	Densus Delta	4,620		Yes	MP fully implemented
	Muni Lagoon	8,670		Yes	MP fully implemented
	Owabi	7,260		Yes	
	Sakumo Lagoon	1,340		Yes	MP fully implemented
	Songor Lagoon	28,740		Yes	MP fully implemented
			178,410		
Guinea	Ile Alcatraz	1		No	No information available
	Ile Blanche	10		No	No information available
	Konkouré	90,000		No	No information available
	Rio Kapatchez	20,000		No	No information available
	Iles Tristao	85,000		No	No information available
	Rio Pongo	30,000		No	No information available
	Niger-Tinkiso	400,600		No	No information available
	Tinkisso	896,000		No	No information available
	Sankara-Fié	1,015,200		No	No information available
	Niger Source	180,400		No	No information available
	Niger-Mafou	1,015,450		No	No information available
	Niger-Niandan-Milo	1,046,400		No	No information available
			4,779,061		
Guinea-Bissau	Lagos de Cufada	39,098		Yes	No information available
			39,098		
Kenya	Lake Naivasha	30,000		Yes	MP fully implemented
	Lake Bogoria	10,700		No	MP under preparation
	Lake Nakuru	18,800		Yes	MP fully

Country	Site Name	Area (ha)	Total area per country (ha)	Management Plan (MP)	Additional comments
					implemented
	Lake Baringo	31,469		No	MP under preparation
			90,969		
Libya	Ain Elshakika	No information available		No	No information available
	Ain Elzarga	No information available		No	No information available
			No information available		
Madagascar	Complexe des lacs de Manambolomaty	7,491		No	The country has received support from Small Grants Fund for the development of the MP for this site
	Lac Tsimanampetsotsa	45,604		No	Nothing is planned
			53,095		
Malawi	Lake Chilwa	224,800		Yes	MP fully implemented
			224,800		
Mali	Lac Horo	18,900		No	MP under preparation
	Séri	40,000		No	MP under preparation
	Walado Debo/Lac Debo	103,100		No	MP under preparation
			162,000		
Mauritania	Banc d'arguin	1,200,000		Yes	MP fully implemented
	Parc National du Diawling	15,600		Yes	MP fully implemented
	Chat Tboul	15,500		No	MP under preparation
			1,231,100		
Morocco	Baie de Khnifiss	6,500		No	MP under preparation
	Lac d'Afennourir	250		No	No information available
	Merja Sidi Boughaba	600		No	No information available
	Merja Zerga	7,000		Yes	MP not implemented
			14,350		
Namibia	Etosha Pan, Lake	600,000		Yes	Not fully

Country	Site Name	Area (ha)	Total area per country (ha)	Management Plan (MP)	Additional comments
	Oponono & Cuvelai drainage				implemented
	Orange River Mouth	500		Yes	Not fully implemented
	Sandwich Harbour	16,500		Yes	Not fully implemented
	Walvis Bay	12,600		Yes	Not fully implemented
			629,600		
Niger	Parc National du "W"	220,000		No	No information available
	Complexe Kokourou-Namga	66,829		No	No information available
	Lac Tchad	340,423		No	No information available
	Zone humide du Moyen Niger	88,050		No	No information available
			715,302		
Nigeria	Nguru Lake (and Marma Channel) Complex	58,100		Yes	MP not fully implemented
			58,100		
Senegal	Djoudj	16,000		Yes	MP fully implemented
	Bassin du Ndiel	10,000		Yes	MP is not fully implemented
	Delta de Saloum	73,000		Yes	MP fully implemented
	Gueumbeul	720		No	MP under advanced preparation
			99,720		
Sierra Leone	Sierra Leone River Estuary	295,000			
			295,000		
South Africa	Barberspan	3,118		Yes	MP fully implemented
	Blesbokspruit	1,858		No	Development of a MP have stalled
	De Hoop Vlei	750		Yes	MP fully implemented
	De Mond (Heuningnes Estuary)	918		Yes	MP fully implemented
	Kosi Bay	10,982		Yes	No other information
	Lake Sibaya	7,750		Yes	No other information
	Langeban	6,000		Yes	MP fully implemented

Country	Site Name	Area (ha)	Total area per country (ha)	Management Plan (MP)	Additional comments
	Natal Drakensberg Park	242,813		Yes	No other information
	Ndumo Game Reserve	10,117		Yes	No other information
	Nylsvley Nature Reserve	3,970		Yes	No other information
	Orange River Mouth	2,000		No	A joint MP being completed by Namibia and South Africa
	St. Lucia System	155,500		Yes	MP fully implemented
	Seekoeivlei Nature Reserve	4,754		Yes	No other information
	Turtle Beaches/Coral Reefs of Tongaland	39,500		Yes	MP fully implemented
	Verloren Valei Nature Reserve	5,891		Yes	No other information
	Verlorenvalei	1,500		Yes	MP fully implemented
	Wilderness Lakes	1,300		Yes	MP fully implemented
			498,721		
Togo	Parc National de la Kéran	163,400		Yes	MP not implemented (lack of funding)
	Réserve de Faune de Togodo	31,000		Yes	MP not implemented (lack of funding)
			194,400		
Tunisia	Ichkeul	12,600			
			12,600		
Uganda	Lake George	15,000		No	Need for financial resources
			15,000		
United Republic of Tanzania	Kilombero Valley Floodplain	796,735		No	MP expected to be developed within 5 years
	Lake Natron Basin	224,781		No	No other information
	Malagarasi-Muyovozi	3,250,000		No	MP under preparation – set up in 2004
			4,271,516		
Zambia	Bangaweulu Swamps: Chikuni	250,000		No	No other information
	Kafue Flats:	83,000		No	MP being

Country	Site Name	Area (ha)	Total area per country (ha)	Management Plan (MP)	Additional comments
	Lochinvar & Blue Lagoon				developped
			333,000		
TOTAL	110		27,422,740	YES = 39	

Annex 4

A. Sites on the Montreux Record

Country	Site Name	Date of inclusion (dd/mm/yy)	Ramsar Advisory Mission (RAM)
Algeria	Lac Tonga	16/06/93	YES
	Les Oasis de Ouled said	14/06/01	YES
Dem. Rep. Congo	Parc National des Mangroves	11/01/00	NO
Egypt	Lake Bardawil	04/07/90	YES
	Lake Burullus	04/07/90	YES
Mauritania	Parc National du Diawling	28/02/02	YES
Senegal	Djoudj	16/06/93	YES
	Bassin de Ndiael	04/07/90	YES
South Africa	Blesbokspruit	06/05/96	NO
	Orange River Mouth	26/09/95	NO
Tunisia	Ichkeul	04/07/90	YES
Uganda	Lake George	04/07/90	NO
TOTAL	10		YES = 8; NO = 4

B. Sites removed from the Montreux Record

Country	Site name	Date of inclusion (dd/mm/yy)	Date of removal (dd/mm/yy)
Algeria	Lac Oubeïra	04/07/90	18/11/97
South Africa	St. Lucia System	04/07/90	11/03/96
TOTAL	2		