

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In prelude to a coherent and productive participation at the Ramsar COP10 which will be held in Changwon City, in South Korea, from 28 October to 4 November 2008 delegates of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on wetlands of the Africa region broken down into six sub-regions:

- Central Africa
- East Africa
- West Africa
- North Africa
- South Africa
- Island states of the Indian Ocean,

Meeting in Yaoundé from 26 to 30 November 2007 at the invitation of the Standing Committee of the Ramsar Convention, by this declaration:

- Express their commitment to the successful initiative taken by the Standing Committee of the Ramsar Convention to examine the implementation of the convention and prepare the conference of the parties;
- Subscribe to the objectives assigned to the deliberations: to analyze the main issues and concerns which characterize the growth of the region, examine the progress made in the work plans and the current strategies of the Convention, make recommendations to solve the problems identified and identify future needs;
- Recognize the relevance of discussions on thematic groups relating to the 2003 -2008 strategic plan :
  - Wise use of wetlands
  - Wetlands of International importance
  - International Co-operation
  - Implementation capacity
  - Evolution of membership;
- Express their encouragement to the Ramsar Senior Advisor for Africa and the Secretary General for their physical and intellectual efforts;
- Express their profound gratitude to UNEP, the Cameroon government, Sweden and Switzerland for their invaluable support;
- Address their deference to the Cameroon Government for its high involvement in the holding of this Yaoundé meeting, symbolically marked by the patronage and solemn opening of deliberations by the Prime Minister, Head of Government, Chief Ephraim Inoni;
- Reiterate their gratitude to the Cameroon Minister of Environment and Nature Protection, Mr

Hele Pierre, whose special attention conditioned the holding of the Yaoundé meeting;

- Acknowledge the impact of wetland management on health, economic development and poverty reduction.

The delegates, dwelling on this aspect in connection with the theme of Ramsar Cop10: “**Healthy wetlands, Healthy people**”

- Approve the proposal to restructure the Secretariat for Africa by strengthening its staffing, in order to attain the objectives assigned to it and which are of concern to the contracting parties;
- Urge the Secretariat to submit as soon as possible concrete proposals for additional means of financing the implementation of the Convention in Africa;
- Instruct the Secretariat to clarify the terms of reference and structure of the competent authority and National Focal Points in view of harmonizing their operations.
- Welcome with satisfaction, the activities of Wetland International and its collaborators in implementing Resolution IX.14 on poverty reduction, and request that Ghana, Mali and Benin propose a new resolution within the framework of Cop10;
- Urge African leaders, including Parliamentarians, to show strong political will and commitment to wetlands conservation, including the allocation financial resources in national budgets and developing optimal local management strategies for wetlands;
- Call for a session at Cop10 to discuss regional initiatives, their activity reports, state of progress, financing and sustainability.
- Recommend the involvement of Island states in the governance of the Convention;
- Consider strengthening the management capacity for Ramsar sites including monitoring and reporting on their ecological characters.
- Encourage the organization of training courses and practical application of lessons learnt;
- Recommend appropriate management of water resources in relation to the use of biological pesticides for treatment of forests and natural areas;
- Stress on the importance of scientific and technical capacities of the Convention, the basic tools for wetlands management and the implementation of related policies;
- Note with satisfaction the collaboration between the Ramsar Convention on wetlands and WHO, and insist on the strengthening of this collaboration;
- Recommend close collaboration between the Ramsar Secretariat and UNCCC;
- Suggest the distinct separation of representatives for Central Africa and North Africa within

the Standing Committee;

- Adopt the conclusions and recommendations of the 2<sup>nd</sup> joint Meeting of Ramsar sub-regional Initiatives for the Niger River Basin (NigerWet) and Lake Chad Basin (ChadWet), held from 10 to 12 July 2007 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, and recommend continuation and strengthening of the fruitful collaboration between the Ramsar Secretariat, the Niger Basin Authority (NBA) and the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC);
- Recommend the establishment of a CongoWet initiative by all States of Central Africa and CICOS Member States;
- Note with satisfaction, the willingness of Central Africa countries and those of the Congo Basin to develop a Ramsar network for the Congo Basin (CongoWet) and recommend that this process be pursued in the context of a submission for CongoWet for formal adoption by Cop 10 as a Ramsar sub-regional initiative for the Congo Basin and all Central Africa states;
- Equally note with satisfaction the willingness of the Nile Basin countries to develop a Ramsar network for the Nile Basin (NileWet) under the joint auspices of Ramsar and the Nile Basin Secretariat/Nile Basin Initiative, and recommend that this process be pursued in the context of a submission for NileWet for formal adoption by Cop10 as a Ramsar sub-regional initiative for the Nile Basin;
- Recommend that the identification of wetlands (water reservoir, dams) be done in collaboration with the departments of the Ministries of Public health.
- The delegates of the Nile Basin region at the African preparatory meeting for COP 10, from Kenya, Uganda, Sudan, Egypt and Ethiopia, recommended NileWet as a strategic regional initiative for wetlands management, to be implemented within the framework of the Ramsar Convention and to be encouraged in line with the existing structures of the respective Member States.
- Note the progress made by Uganda in the establishment of the Ramsar Centre for Eastern Africa as stipulated in Resolution IX.7 adopted at COP9 and recommended Ramsar Convention budget support as seed funding to the regional initiative.