

15/16. RAMSAR CONVENTION

NOTING that the number of Contracting Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (the "Ramsar Convention") is now 30 and that they have together designated over 230 wetlands, covering nearly 7 million hectares, for the List of Wetlands of International Importance;

AWARE that the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties, held in November 1980 at the invitation of the Government of the Republic of Italy at Cagliari in Sardinia, with participation of 21 Contracting Parties, 10 States which were not Contracting Parties, five international governmental organizations and five international non-governmental organizations, adopted eleven recommendations on:

- increasing the number of Contracting Parties (1.1);
- increasing the involvement of developing countries (1.2);
- increasing the number of wetlands designated for the List (1.3);
- the use of the criteria adopted at Cagliari for identification of wetlands for the List (1.4);
- the establishment of national wetlands policies (1.5);
- the need, in large-scale wetland transformation, for assessment, in consultation with ecologists, of the values involved (1.6);
- the elaboration of a Protocol providing for additional language versions of the Convention and a procedure for amending the Convention (1.7);
- the consideration of a further Protocol to amend the Convention with a view to extending its effectiveness (1.8);
- the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties (1.9);
- the arrangements for a permanent Secretariat and for interim arrangements until a permanent Secretariat is established (1.10); and
- the effective operation of the Ramsar Convention in Italy (1.11);

INFORMED that, in accordance with Recommendation 1.10 of the Cagliari Conference, a proposal on the Convention Secretariat was drawn up by IUCN in consultation with the International Waterfowl Research Bureau and submitted to the Contracting Parties, and that a number of Contracting Parties indicated their willingness to consider making voluntary contributions to an interim Secretariat;

FURTHER INFORMED that the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) at its 9th Session in April 1981 was unable to approve the setting up of a Trust Fund for the Convention, considering that secretariat services should be provided by IUCN on the basis of direct financial contributions from Contracting Parties; -

NOTING WITH APPRECIATION that since the Cagliari Conference, some Contracting Parties have taken steps to give effect to some of the Cagliari recommendations, and that several more States have become Contracting Parties or are on the point of so doing;

The General Assembly of IUCN, at its 15th Session in Christchurch, New Zealand, 11-23 October 1981:

REITERATES the value of the Ramsar Convention for wetland conservation, as expressed in Recommendation 1.8 of the Cagliari Conference, and associates itself with all the recommendations of this Conference;

CALLS UPON States which are Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention to give effect to the recommendations of the Cagliari Conference; to pursue as a priority matter the follow-up work for the necessary amendments of the Convention, and in particular - if they have not already done so - to give sympathetic consideration to making voluntary contributions towards the costs of interim arrangements for a Secretariat so that this body could promote effective wetland conservation in 1982; and

FURTHER CALLS UPON States which are not yet Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention to become such as soon as possible, in particular in the Western Hemisphere, the tropics and any State whose accession is required to complete the network of Contracting Parties in the Western Palearctic region.

