

19.11 Cooperation between IUCN and the Ramsar Convention

RECALLING that the text of the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar, 1971) states in Article 8 that "the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources shall perform the continuing Bureau duties under this Convention";

EMPHASIZING that this is the only global Convention on conservation and the wise use of natural resources which entrusts IUCN with such duties;

WELCOMING the agreement reached between the Standing Committee of the Convention and the Director General of IUCN in 1993 to refine the administrative arrangements for the Bureau of the Convention;

NOTING the importance attached by regional meetings of IUCN members and Ramsar Contracting Parties, especially in South America, to wetland conservation generally and cooperation between IUCN and the Ramsar Convention in particular;

NOTING WITH APPRECIATION that the Ramsar Convention now has some 80 Contracting Parties, that the Parties have designated some 650 wetlands for the List of Wetlands of International Importance, and that Ramsar Contracting Parties are paying growing attention to formulating and implementing their planning so as to promote the wise use of wetlands in their territory;

RECOGNIZING that IUCN, especially through its Wetlands Programme, seeks to conserve the planet's wetlands and that IUCN provides important professional support to the Ramsar Bureau, Conference of Parties and Standing Committee;

APPRECIATING the growing influence and effectiveness of the Ramsar Convention, as demonstrated at the Fifth Conference of the Contracting Parties, hosted in the City of Kushiro, Japan, in June 1993, in which 100 States and 1200 participants took part, which adopted a series of new mechanisms for improving the implementation of the Convention, and which emphasized the essential contribution which Ramsar can make to the work of the Convention on Biological Diversity;

The General Assembly of IUCN - The World Conservation Union, at its 19th Session in Buenos Aires, Argentina, 17-26 January 1994:

1. EMPHASIZES that IUCN has a particular role in providing both administrative and technical support to the Ramsar Convention;
2. TAKES NOTE of the many expressions by the Ramsar Contracting Parties of their wish for cooperation and interaction between the Ramsar Bureau and partner organizations, notably the International Waterfowl and Wetlands Research Bureau (IWRB), the Asian Wetlands Bureau (AWB) and IUCN;
3. WELCOMES the major contribution made in the past to the work of the Convention by IUCN technical programmes and in particular the IUCN Wetlands Programme;
4. STRONGLY ENDORSES the statements made by the Director General of IUCN at the Kushiro Conference and in other fora on the need for other IUCN technical programmes dealing with wetlands (such as Marine and Coastal Conservation, Species Survival, Biological Diversity, Protected Areas), as well as IUCN Conservation Services and Regional Programmes and Regional Offices to work much more closely with the Ramsar Bureau, both in joint programming of activities and in execution of projects;
5. REQUESTS the Director General of IUCN to ensure that, to the maximum extent practicable:
 - (a) IUCN's traditional institutional support for the Ramsar Bureau is maintained during the next triennium;
 - (b) cooperation between the Ramsar Bureau, IWRB, AWB, Wetlands for the Americas and other international conservation organizations and IUCN's technical and regional programmes is promoted with vigour;
 - (c) the efforts of individual Contracting Parties to safeguard Ramsar sites and use them wisely are supported;
6. CALLS UPON all Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention to:

- (a) seek and propose the most appropriate mechanisms for the participation of non-governmental organizations in the formulation and implementation of governmental wetlands policy, in protecting existing Ramsar sites and delimiting future sites, it being understood that such participation will help to guarantee effective conservation of such sites;
- (b) ensure that the wetlands designated for the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance are identified through an effective process of analysis and consultation with NGOs in the country concerned.