

## 1.70 Ramsar Convention Priorities

RECALLING that IUCN shares with the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar, 1971), a recognition that naturally functioning wetlands are essential to the world's natural, economic and social fabric;

NOTING that both IUCN and the Ramsar Convention work cooperatively to stem the global loss of wetland resources and to bring about the wise and sustainable use of these resources;

AWARE that the Sixth Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention (Brisbane, Australia, March 1996) adopted a number of measures to enhance the wise use concept;

RECOGNIZING that successful application of the Ramsar wise use concept will require the full efforts of both governmental and non-governmental organizations, most of which are members of IUCN;

The World Conservation Congress at its 1st Session in Montreal, Canada, 14–23 October 1996:

CALLS UPON all IUCN members to take the following specific steps over the triennium 1997–1999:

- a) to implement undertakings already agreed under the Ramsar Convention;
- b) to integrate wetland conservation and restoration into their nature conservation, land and water management policies and programmes;
- c) to encourage active and informed participation of local and indigenous peoples, at Ramsar sites as well as other wetland sites and their catchments, in the direct and ecologically sustainable management of such wetlands through appropriate community-based organizations, and to establish in each country that is a Party to the Convention a documentation centre accessible to the general public;
- d) to establish a process for assessing the ecological status of and threats to wetland resources nationally, regionally and globally;
- e) to establish programmes for the training of wetland managers and for providing local communities with such wetland science knowledge as will help to assure that decisions regarding the use of wetlands will sustain their natural functions over time;
- f) to protect the natural functions and ecological character of listed sites, particularly those appearing on the Montreux Record (the record of Ramsar sites where changes in ecological character have occurred, are occurring or are likely to occur);
- g) to support the field-based conservation actions of the Ramsar Convention including the Management Guidance Procedure and the Small Grants Fund;
- h) To promote the conservation of wetlands by listing under the Ramsar Convention wetlands important for birds, as documented in BirdLife International's Important Bird Area studies, as well for other taxa;
- i) To establish a network for education on wetlands in each country.

*Note. The use of the term "indigenous peoples" in this Recommendation shall not be construed as having any implications as regards the rights which may attach to that term in international law.*