



MedWet

L'initiative pour les zones humides méditerranéennes
The Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative
مبادرة المناطق الرطبة المتوسطية

Doc. MedWet/Com13–5

MedWet/Com 13
Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 21 October 2018

**Terms of Reference of the Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative
(MedWet)**

Actions requested: MedWet/Com13 is invited:

- to consider the proposed amendments aimed at facilitating the operation of the existing structure of the MedWet Initiative,
- to provide improvements where needed,
- to adopt the revised Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure and
- to instruct the Steering Group to elaborate criteria for the selection of MedWet members other than Ramsar Contracting Parties, and to submit them for adoption to the next meeting of the MedWet/Com.

Explanatory Note

Following substantive discussions on the future of MedWet that continued during recent months, and particularly at and after the Ljubljana meeting, some modifications are proposed by the Steering Group (based on the feedback received from members) to the Terms of Reference and to the Rules of Procedures. Throughout the document minor changes to improve the text are proposed in addition to some substantial ones as follows:

- An introductory part is added to show the development of this Ramsar Regional Initiative and to clarify its status as adopted through the Ramsar Resolutions. See also point 23 of the ToRs. Moreover, specific Recommendations and Resolutions on the formal recognition of MedWet by the Conference of the Parties are introduced in Para 5.
- Para 14 of the ToRs deals with the frequency of MedWet/Com meetings and proposes an electronic procedure for adoption of documents in the absence of physical meetings. The operational arrangements are proposed in Para 14bis and 14ter and are recalled in the RoPs (Rule 19).
- In Para 24, the core team of the Secretariat is defined including the Coordinator, the communication officer and financial-administrative officer.
- In Para 27, the functions of the Secretariat are better defined and explained. Para 28 specifies the responsibility of the Coordinator for the recruitment procedures.
- As for the budgetary matters, Para 30 specifies with greater clarity that the "baseline budget", based on the contributions of the countries, is intended to cover the core staff of the Secretariat as defined in Para 24.
- Annex 1 deals with members – the status of the present members has to be reviewed and the list of those to be invited approved.
- Annex 2 on Rules of Procedure: the main changes refer to the electronic adoption of documents and the possibility of voting majority, all of which changes are to make MedWet procedures more efficient. For decision making to function smoothly, the rule 4bis introduces the need to take decisions by vote (requiring 2/3 of majority) if consensus is not reached.
- The Mediterranean Wetland Observatory has been established at the request of MedWet/Com, and to use it effectively the Terms of References of the MWO are now to be included in the MedWet ToRs.
- A socioeconomic-culture specialist group has already been operational under the MedWet Terms of References, and it is herewith included in the MedWet ToRs.

The feedback received in the consultation on the proposed modifications to the MedWet ToR and RoP can be grouped into 1) members supporting the proposed changes prepared by the members of the Steering Group; 2) no response on the revised document; and 3) substantive changes to the document. The majority of the members fall into the first two groups.

One member (Italy) submitted substantive changes and sent them directly to all MedWet members with the explanation that the proposed "amendments are conditioned to the resolution of the key issue on the legal status of Medwet, as priority theme for the definition of the future setting of the Regional Initiative". The proposed changes stress the voluntary character of MedWet. According to this proposal, the MedWet Secretariat should have only one employee, the "Network Facilitator", and accordingly the ToRs for the MedWet Coordinator should be significantly changed. The Steering Group considers that such proposed changes made by Italy would completely change the structure and working of the MedWet as it is today.

Therefore, all amendments, as proposed by the Steering Group and MedWet members, to improve and up-date the ToR and RoP of the existing structure of MedWet were incorporated in this final draft document. All other proposed amendments that refer to changing the structure and operations of MedWet are indicated in "comments", but not included in the proposal of MedWet/SG. However, MedWet/Com is invited to consider how it wishes to address such comments.

Development of the Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative

Based on the growing realisation of the extent of wetlands loss and degradation in the Mediterranean region in the late 1980s, a symposium brought together in February 1991, in Grado (Italy), 280 concerned individuals representing governments, research institutions and non-governmental organisations of 28 countries. They adopted “A Strategy to stop and reverse wetland loss and degradation in the Mediterranean Basin”. After the symposium, a working group developed a mechanism to implement this strategy, the so-called “MedWet Initiative”. With support from the European Commission, a project proposal was prepared in 1992 and successfully submitted by Italy to the Environment Directorate General for European Union funding.

The first results of this regional collaboration programme for Mediterranean wetlands were presented in 1993 to the 5th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention (COP5), who considered it “as a very promising approach” (Recommendation 5.14). Three years later, Ramsar COP6 noted “the progress made during the first phase of the MedWet Initiative” and welcomed “this form of concerted and integrated collaboration between government and non-government partners” (Recommendation 6.11).

In 1999, COP7 formally recognized~~s~~ the MedWet Initiative as a “Collaborative structure for Mediterranean wetlands” through Resolution VII.22: The Conference of the Contracting Parties “EXPRESSES ITS SATISFACTION at the work carried out so far under the Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative and ITS APPRECIATION to the governments and institutions, in particular the European Commission, that have provided financial support to the Initiative; and RECOGNISES it as a model of regional collaboration, based on endogenous efforts and a wide participation of all sectors” and “APPROVES the establishment of the Mediterranean Wetlands Committee (MedWet/Com) within the framework of the Convention”.

Based on the [legal/formal] recognition of the MedWet Initiative by the Ramsar Convention, its members decided to provide it with a professional coordination unit, and Greece offered~~s~~ to host this unit. In 2002, Ramsar COP8 “RECOGNIZES the critical importance of financial and political support from Contracting Parties of the region to the MedWet Initiative, and especially from the host country of its Coordination Unit” (Resolution VIII.30) and approved~~s~~ the budget of the coordination unit for the years 2003-2005 (provided in Annex II of the Resolution). Similarly, COP9 approved~~s~~ in 2005 the budget 2006-2008 for the operational costs of the MedWet Initiative (Resolution IX.7).

Based on this original budget structure, subsequent meetings of the Mediterranean Wetlands Committee, the first held in Tirana in 2006, adopted annual budgets for the MedWet Initiative and decided to rename the coordination unit to “MedWet Secretariat”. The MedWet Secretariat was hosted in Greece between 2003 and 2013 and had the legal status of a not-for-profit association. In 2014, the Secretariat moved~~s~~ to France, where it has a comparable legal status under the French association law.

These Terms of Reference represent, therefore, a series of rules that the members of the MedWet Initiative have adopted to facilitate their cooperation.

Pripomba [GB1]: Italy to include: However, following a general principle of non-participation in the regional initiatives, the subsequent Ramsar COPs have not included references to these budgets.

Pripomba [GB2]: Italy to include: Nevertheless, as underlined in the Background document on the legal status of MedWet, published for the 12th Mediterranean Wetlands Committee Meeting (MedWet/Com12 – 4), “the Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative, as such, does not have a legal status and there is no formal legal and registered document that gives legal existence to this initiative. At yet, MedWet is an informal and voluntary network of governments, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations that have agreed to work together for a common cause” For this reason, in 2016 the Committee approved the “Decision on the way forward concerning the legal status of MedWet” (MedWet/Com12 – 4 – ADD 1) requesting to “the MedWet Steering Group and the MedWet Coordinator to make the necessary follow-up to this decision and report to the 13th MedWet/Com meeting”. Therefore, in the current status, the MedWet Initiative, as such, cannot create or include any formal legal obligation to the participants, in particular in terms of financial obligations.
Comment by SG: This issue has been included in the MedWet report (Doc. MedWet/Com13-2), has been addressed by the Ramsar SC and will be discussed by COP13 in the Draft Resolution on Ramsar Regional Initiatives.

The MedWet ToRs were originally adopted on 28 July 2007 by the MedWet/Com8 (Frascati, Italy) and amended on 3 June 2010 by MedWet/Com10 (Bastia, France), and updated by MedWet/Com11 (Bucharest, Romania) on 5 July 2012. This version of the ToRs has been adopted by the MedWet/Com12 (Paris, France) on 10 February 2016.

I. Introduction

1. The MedWet ToRs were originally adopted on 28 July 2007 by ~~the~~ MedWet/Com 8 (Frascati, Italy) and amended on 3 June 2010 by MedWet/Com 10 (Bastia, France), and updated by MedWet/Com 11 (Bucharest, Romania) on 5 July 2012 and ~~the~~ MedWet/Com 12 (Paris, France) on 10 February 2016. [This version was adopted by MedWet/Com 13 (Dubai, UAE) on 22 October 2018.]

~~1.2.~~ These Terms of Reference set out the ~~organisation~~ ~~organization~~ and functioning of the Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative (MedWet).

~~2.3.~~ MedWet was established to support countries in the Mediterranean region in their implementation of the conservation and wise use of wetlands within the framework of the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971), the Resolutions of its Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP), and the Decisions of the Ramsar Standing Committee, ~~as applicable~~

~~3.4.~~ MedWet is a long-term collaborative effort between Mediterranean countries and entities, the Ramsar Convention Secretariat, intergovernmental institutions, international non-governmental organisations and national institutions specialized in wetland issues.

~~4.5.~~ MedWet is an endogenous mechanism based on mutual trust and respect.

~~5.6.~~ MedWet benefits from the formal recognition by the Conference of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention through Recommendations 5.14 and 6.11, Resolutions VII.22, ~~and VIII.30 and IX.7~~ and a series of Ramsar Standing Committee Decisions following Decisions SC19-19 and SC25-31 of the Ramsar Standing Committee. This recognition implies the agreement by MedWet to comply with the Operational Guidelines for Ramsar Regional Initiatives in force, adopted by the Conference of the Parties or the Ramsar Standing Committee, ~~as appropriate~~.

~~6.7.~~ MedWet shall foster synergies with all institutions dealing with the conservation and wise use of wetlands in the Mediterranean basin and ecoregion.

Pripomba [GB3]: Italy proposal to delete the whole para.

II. Mission and Objectives

7. The MedWet mission is to ensure the effective conservation of wetlands and the wise use of their resources, values and services within the framework of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.
8. The MedWet objectives are:
 - a) To promote the effective implementation of the Ramsar Strategic Plan, pertinent [Ramsar Resolutions](#) and [relevant policies](#) and initiatives in the Mediterranean region by supporting actions on the ground by governments, civil society organisations and the private sector;
 - b) to reinforce capacities in areas where these are not sufficiently developed, and especially to develop and ensure adaptive and integrated management of Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites) and other wetlands;
 - c) to transfer to and exchange knowledge and expertise among key conservation and sustainable use actors in order to reinforce Mediterranean wetland management; and
 - d) to coordinate with other regional and international actions and programmes relevant for wetland conservation and sustainable use.

III. Structure

9. The MedWet Initiative includes:
 - a) The Mediterranean Wetlands Committee (MedWet/Com);
 - b) the MedWet Steering Group (MedWet/SG);
 - c) the MedWet Secretariat; ~~and~~
 - d) the MedWet Scientific and Technical Network (MedWet/STN); ~~and~~
 - e) [the Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory \(MWO\)](#).

The MedWet/Com

10. The MedWet/Com is a forum for collaboration on wetland issues in the Mediterranean and acts as an advisor to the Ramsar Convention (Ramsar Resolution VII.22, paragraph 3). It is the decision-making body ~~of~~for the MedWet Initiative.
11. The current membership of the MedWet/Com is listed in Annex 1.
12. Other organisations and individuals may participate in MedWet/Com meetings as observers subject to their admission by the MedWet/Com.
13. The MedWet/Com has been entrusted by the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention to assist in the effective implementation of the Ramsar Strategic Plans and Resolutions relevant to the Mediterranean region.

14. The responsibilities of the MedWet/Com in overseeing the implementation of the MedWet Initiative are:

- a) to accept new members of MedWet;
- b) to ~~approve~~adopt the MedWet strategic documents and workplans;
- c) to monitor the implementation and results of MedWet activities;
- d) to consider the reports and recommendations from the MedWet/SG;
- e) to ~~approve~~adopt the MedWet budgets and annual audited financial reports prepared by the MedWet Secretariat;
- f) to approve the annual contributions of MedWet countries to the MedWet budget;
- ~~f)g)~~ to select and replace a MedWet Coordinator;
- ~~g)h)~~ to approve the establishment of temporary *ad hoc* working groups and their dissolution.
- ~~h)j)~~ to designate the members of the MedWet/SG;~~and~~
- j) to take any other decisions for the good and effective functioning of the Initiative; ~~-and~~
- ~~i)k)~~ to provide guidance to the MWO and promote the co-funding of its activities by its members and any additional donor.

14bis. The MedWet/Com meets physically at least once every three years prior to or during the Ramsar Convention COP. MedWet members are encouraged to host additional, physical MedWet/Com meetings.

14ter. The MedWet/Com approves/adopts the documents as listed in para 14, and submitted for its approval/adoption by the Steering Group (cf. below), through electronic consultation, if the schedule of its physical meetings does not allow otherwise. The electronic consultation implies a silence procedure, considering the absence of an electronic response by any member within the announced deadline defined in Rule 19 of Annex2.

15. The MedWet/Com Rules of Procedure were originally approved by the 5th Meeting of the MedWet/Com. They are attached, as subsequently amended, as Annex II.

The MedWet/ Steering Group

16. The MedWet/SG is the body that operates between MedWet/Com meetings with the responsibility to supervise the implementation of the decisions of the MedWet/Com and the effective functioning of the MedWet Secretariat.

17. The MedWet/SG is composed of:

- a) three country representatives (one MedWet/Com country from each of the following Ramsar regions: Africa, Asia and Europe);
- b) a representative of the country hosting the MedWet Secretariat;
- c) a representative of the Ramsar International Organisation Partners (IOPs);
- d) a representative of the institution hosting the Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory (MWO);
- e) a representative of the Ramsar Secretariat;
- f) the MedWet Honorary Member Mr. Thymio Papayannis; and

Pripomba [GB4]: Italy to delete the whole para

- g) the MedWet Coordinator (*exofficio*).
18. In the case of the three countries, an alternate country from each region is designated by the MedWet/Com to serve in the event that the regular country representative should be unable to attend a meeting.
19. The Chair of the MedWet/SG is designated by the MedWet/Com at the time of election of the MedWet/SG members among the representatives of the three countries. He/she will Chair the MedWet/Com in the intersessional period until the closure of the next MedWet/Com meeting. The Chair of the MW/SG can serve a maximum of two consecutive terms.
20. Countries to serve on the MedWet/SG should be proposed by their regional group of MedWet/Com members.
21. The MedWet/SG meets periodically face-to-face, but will operate largely through email and teleconference processes. The necessary budget provisions to cover travel and subsistence costs of those members of the Steering Group eligible for such support are included in the MedWet Secretariat budget.
22. The responsibilities of the MedWet/SG are:
- a) to take operational decisions between MedWet/Com meetings based on the decisions of the MedWet/Com;
 - b) to approve the draft work plans, budgets and other documents prepared by the Secretariat to be submitted for adoption by the MedWet/Com;
 - c) to approve the annual reports and audited accounts to be submitted for adoption by the MedWet/Com;
 - d) to guide and supervise arrangements for the meetings of MedWet/Com; ~~and~~
 - e) ~~to select and appoint the Coordinator to be submitted for approval by the MedWet/Com~~ or provide arguments for his/her replacement to the MedWet/Com;
 - f) ~~to evaluate, on an annual basis, the performance of the MedWet Coordinator and [report to the MedWet Committee][propose to the MedWet Committee the renewal of his/her contract or his/her replacement];~~
 - e)g) to approve the recruitment of Secretariat staff and consultants in consultation with the MedWet Coordinator.

Pripomba [GB5]: Italy proposal to delete items c),e),f).

The MedWet Secretariat

23. The MedWet Secretariat was formally established in 2002 through Ramsar Resolution VIII.30 (paragraph 12), where the COP “RECOGNIZES the critical importance of financial and political support from Contracting Parties of the region to the MedWet Initiative, and especially from the host country of its Coordination Unit ...”. The Coordination Unit was later renamed “MedWet Secretariat” by a Decision of the Standing Committee of the Ramsar Convention to coordinate the work of the MedWet Initiative. It operates under the authority and supervision of the MedWet/Com and, inter-sessionally, of the MedWet/SG.
24. The core MedWet Secretariat consists of the MedWet Coordinator, a

Pripomba [GB6]: Italy to delete reference to resolutions.

Communications Officer, and ~~a financial and administrative Officer Assistant~~.
Other Secretariat staff may be recruited according to the needs of the work plan and available resources.

Pripomba [GB7]: Italy proposal to delete the whole para

25. The MedWet Secretariat has been legally established in France since 14 February 2014 as a non-profit organisation under the French Association Law of 1901, with the name of “Association Secretariat MedWet”, chaired by the Honorary Member of the MedWet/Com Mr. Thymio Papayannis.

Pripomba [GB8]: Italy proposal to delete the whole para

26. The Association Secretariat MedWet employs the MedWet Coordinator and other staff of the MedWet Secretariat according to the laws of the hosting country.

27. Under the leadership of the Coordinator, the responsibilities of the MedWet Secretariat are:

- a) to facilitate and promote collaboration among MedWet members;
- ~~b)~~ to coordinate the implementation of the ~~Secretariat's~~ work plans adopted by the MedWet/Com;
- ~~b)c)~~ to prepare annual work plans and budgets for the approval of MedWet/SG and adoption by the MedWet/Com;
- ~~e)~~ to act as the secretariat for the MedWet/Com and the MedWet/ SG;
- d) to identify and actively promote the involvement of Mediterranean stakeholders in the implementation of the MedWet work plans; ~~and~~
- ~~e)~~ to administer the budgets ~~approved~~ adopted by the MedWet/Com and to prepare the annual financial reports to be submitted to the MedWet/SG and to the MedWet/Com; and
- ~~e)f)~~ with the assistance of MWO, to report every six-months to the MedWet/SG their progress and relevant outcomes.

28. It is the responsibility of the Coordinator to ~~select and~~ supervise the other staff members of the MedWet Secretariat and its consultants. The Coordinator also leads the recruitment procedure of Secretariat staff and consultants, in consultation and with the approval by the Steering Group.

The MedWet Scientific and Technical Network (~~MedWet/STN~~)

29. The Terms of Reference for the MedWet/STN are included in Annex III.

The Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory

30. The Mediterranean Wetland Observatory (MWO) was established in 2008 at the request of the Mediterranean Wetlands Committee (MedWet/Com) as a multi-partner project coordinated and to be partially funded by Tour du Valat (TdV).

31. The MWO four objectives are closely linked: (1.) To provide timely and quality information on Mediterranean wetlands status and trends; (2.) To monitor threats to Mediterranean wetlands and identify actions to promote their protection and wise use and restoration; (3.) To assess the contribution of Mediterranean wetlands in the Mediterranean context of sustainable development; (4.) In collaboration with the MedWet/Secretariat, to raise awareness among policy and decision makers and to feed

public policies towards wetlands conservation and sustainable use.

32. The geographical scope of the MWO is the Mediterranean region at large, and includes all the countries that are members of MedWet/Com.

33. Within the limitations of available funding, the specific objectives of the MWO are:

- a) to identify, test and propose suitable indicators, methods and techniques for the assessment of the conservation status and trends of wetlands in the Mediterranean region;
- b) to make regular assessments using existing data of the state and trends of Mediterranean wetlands;
- c) to identify and quantify the changes in surface area and in quality of Mediterranean wetlands based on selected indicators and using inventory, monitoring and assessment methods;
- d) to develop an understanding of the causes and underlying mechanisms responsible for the ecological changes and test them by gathering and analysing adequate data;
- e) to publish regular reports on the status and trends on Mediterranean wetlands;
- f) to increase awareness on the importance of wetlands, their conservation and sustainable use, among decision-makers and stakeholders/users, through the transfer of the results to them and in partnership with structures that can influence them.

34. The Observatory promotes a shared understanding of the main root causes of Mediterranean wetlands loss, identifying key challenges to be addressed in the coming years, using this knowledge for regularly updating the MedWet Strategy and the multi-annual Work Plan, and monitoring the impact of the actions undertaken.

35. The MWO supports the Secretariat in the preparation of the annual work plans for the approval of MedWet/SG and adoption by the MedWet/Com.

IV. Budgetary matters

~~29-~~36. _____ The MedWet/Com adopts a ~~baseline~~^{core} annual budget to cover the costs of the ~~core~~ staff and operations of the ~~core~~ MedWet Secretariat.

~~30-~~37. _____ MedWet/Com members that are Parties to the Ramsar Convention make contributions to the ~~core~~^{baseline} MedWet budget according to the scale used for the contributions of Contracting Parties to the core budget of the Ramsar Convention Secretariat.

~~31-~~38. _____ ~~Other MedWet/Com members and partners of the MedWet/Com~~ are encouraged to make voluntary contributions to the ~~core~~ MedWet budget beyond the baseline annual budget, for MedWet's specific programmes and activities as well.

~~32-~~39. _____ MedWet may also receive donations and/or voluntary contributions from governmental, non-governmental and private sources.

Pripomba [GB9]: Italy proposed change of the para to: MedWet/Com members make voluntary contribution to the MedWet budget according to their own financial decision

Pripomba [GB10]: Italy proposal to delete this para.

V. Use of the MedWet name and logo

33.40. The name and logo of the MedWet Initiative **legally** protected. They **cannot** should be used by any MedWet/Com member in conjunction with the Ramsar Convention logo for activities implemented within the framework of MedWet Initiative.

34.41. Any other organisation or individual wishing to use the logo should obtain approval from the MedWet Coordinator.

Annex 1– MedWet/Commembers

Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands:

Albania, Algeria, [Andorra](#), Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Syrian Arab Republic, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tunisia and Turkey.

Other members

Palestine

The Ramsar Convention Secretariat

The Coordination Unit of the Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP)

The European Commission

The International Organisation Partners (IOPs) of the Ramsar Convention:

- BirdLife International
- International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- International Water Management Institute (IWMI)
- Wetlands International
- [World Wide Fund for Nature \(WWF\)](#)
- [The Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust \(WWT\)](#)

The Greek Biotope and Wetland Centre (EKBY), Greece

[LaTour du Valat research institute for the Conservation of Mediterranean Wetlands \(TdV\)](#), France

Honorary members

[The late](#) Dr. Luc Hoffmann

Mr. Thymio Papayannis

Additional country and institutions to be invited to join the MedWet/Com:

[Andorra](#)

The Union for the Mediterranean

Global Water Partnership–Med

Secretariat of the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA)

Plan Bleu – Environment and Development in the Mediterranean (UNEP/MAP)

Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (UNEP/MAP RAC/SPA)

Regional Activity Centre for Priority Actions Programme (UNEP/MAP PAP/RAC)

The Network of Marine Protected Areas managers in the Mediterranean (MedPAN)

Mediterranean Coastal Foundation (MEDCOAST)

[The Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust \(WWT\)](#)

The Man and the Biosphere Programme (UNESCO)

The World Heritage Centre

The UNESCO International Hydrological Programme

The United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO)

Annex II – Rules of procedures of the MedWet/Com and the MedWet/SG

Membership and representation

Rule 1. New members and honorary members of the MedWet/Com shall be admitted by a unanimous decision of all members present at a MedWet/Com meeting.

Rule 2. The MedWet/Com may designate honorary members on the proposal of any MedWet/Com member for their outstanding role in the conservation and wise use of Mediterranean wetlands and the development of MedWet.

Pripomba [GB11]: Italy proposal to delete this para.

Rule 3. Each member of the MedWet/Com shall be entitled to be represented at meetings of the Committee by a Representative and an Alternate Representative.

Rule 4. All decisions of the MedWet/Com shall be taken by consensus of all members present at a MedWet/Com meeting.

Rule 4bis. If consensus cannot be reached, decisions need to be taken by vote, requiring a 2/3 majority of the members present at the meeting and voting.

Pripomba [GB12]: Italy proposal to delete the whole para

Rule 5. The MedWet Coordinator, with the agreement of the Chairperson of the MedWet/Com, may invite any other person or representative of any country or organisation with an interest in the conservation and wise use of wetlands to participate as an observer in its meetings or for particular agenda items.

Rule 6. MedWet/Com members and honorary members are expected to cover their own travel and accommodation/subsistence costs to attend MedWet/Com meetings, with the exception of one government representative (or more, if resources allow) from each country eligible for support according to the List of Development Assistance Recipients established by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). No representative will be sponsored from eligible countries that have not paid their annual contribution to the MedWet baseline budget for one year or more.

Pripomba [GB13]: Italy proposal to delete the rest of the text in this para.

Chair and meetings

Rule 7. The MedWet/Com is chaired by the Chair of the MedWet/Steering Group (MedWet/SG). ~~The representatives of the members that are hosting the present and the preceding meetings of the MedWet/Com shall act as Vice Chair persons.~~

Rule 8. The Chair will represent the MedWet/Com as required within the limits of the Committee's mandate, and shall carry out such other functions as may be entrusted to him/her by the Committee.

Rule 9. MedWet/Com may appoint a Vice-Chair among its Ramsar Party members. The Vice Chair persons shall assist the Chair in his/her functions and shall preside at meetings in the absence of the Chair.

Rule 10. The MedWet Coordinator will be responsible to make necessary arrangements for

the Secretariat for meetings of the Committee. ~~for meetings of the Committee.~~

Rule 11. The MedWet/Com shall hold ~~information~~ physical meetings prior to or during the meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

Rule 12. The MedWet/Com shall also hold regular electronic meetings in between Ramsar COPs. A physical meeting can be held instead, if a member offers to host such a meeting at 18 months intervals.

Rule 13. The MedWet/Com meetings shall be called by the MedWet/SG or at the request of at least one fifth of the country members.

Rule 14. The time ~~and place~~ of meetings shall be determined by the MedWet/SG.

Rule 15. Notice of a meeting shall be given to all members at least 45 days in advance.

Rule 16. The working documents shall be distributed for the approval of the MedWet/SG at least 15 days before their distribution to all MedWet/Com members at least 30 days before the opening of the meeting.

Rule 17. A quorum of the meeting shall consist of at least half of the Mediterranean Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention. No decision shall be taken at a meeting in the absence of a quorum.

Rule 18. The minutes of each meeting, with the approval of the Chair, shall be distributed to all members within a month after the closure of each meeting and shall be posted in the MedWet website.

Rule 19.

- ~~a) Any member may make a proposal to the Chair for a decision by postal procedure. The Chair shall send the proposal to the members for comment. Comments are to be sent to the Secretariat within 45 days of the dispatch of the communication. After these 45 days, or after the receipt of comments from all members, whichever comes first, the Secretariat shall communicate all comments received to all members.~~
- ~~b) If no objection to a proposal is received by the Secretariat within 30 days, the proposal shall be considered as adopted and notice of the adoption shall be given to all members.~~
 - a) If any member objects to a proposal within the applicable time limit, the proposal shall be referred to the next meeting of MedWet/Com. In absence of a regular physical MedWet/Com members meeting documents (annual work plan and budget, annual reports and audited accounts) will be adopted by electronic procedure.
 - b) The Chair shall send the documents approved by the MedWet/SG to the members for comment. Comments are to be sent to the Secretariat within 20 days of the dispatch of the communication. After these 20 days, the Secretariat shall communicate all comments received to all members.
 - c) If no objection is received by the Secretariat within these 20 days of communication, the documents shall be considered as adopted and a notice of the adoption shall be given to all members.
 - d) If a member objects to a document within the applicable time limit, the document shall be put to voting.
 - e) Any member may also make a proposal to the Chair for a decision by electronic

procedure. The Chair shall send the proposal to the members for comment following the same procedure as outlined above.

Pripomba [GB14]: Italy proposal is to retain the original and delete the new text a) to e).

Working languages

Rule 20.

- a) The working languages of the MedWet/Com shall be English and French. All documents shall be distributed in the two languages and simultaneous interpretation shall be provided at the plenary sessions/physical meetings of the MedWet/Com ~~meetings~~. The costs of using these two working languages ~~should~~ have to be included in the budget of the physical MedWet/Com meetings.
- b) If resources are obtained, Arabic will be used as the third working language at physical MedWet/Com meetings.

Final provisions

Rule 21. In matters not covered by the present Rules, the Rules of Procedure as adopted by the latest regular meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Wetlands shall apply, *mutatis mutandis*.

Rule 22. These Rules shall come into force on adoption by MedWet/Com, and may be amended by a decision of all the members ~~present and voting at any subsequent meeting according to the procedures detailed above in Rules 4 and 4bis.~~

Rule 23. These Rules shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to the MedWet/SG.

Rule 24. All members of the MedWet/SG, including the alternate ~~countries~~ members, should be notified about the dates of the next meeting and should receive all working documents.

Rule 24.bis All members are invited to meetings. For participation at physical meetings full members eligible for sponsoring have priority over alternate members. If one month before the meeting, a full member country cannot attend or is unresponsive, the alternate country will be asked to attend.

Rule 25. In the case of the MedWet SG, a quorum is reached with the presence of five members, of which at least two must be country representatives.

Annex III- Terms of Reference for the MedWet Scientific and Technical Network (MedWet STN)

I. Objectives

1. The objectives of the MedWet Scientific and Technical Network (MedWet/STN) are:
 - a) to provide scientific and technical support:
 - to the MedWet members concerning their policies and actions related to wetlands conservation and sustainable use;
 - to the MedWet-sponsored projects; and
 - to the MedWet partners in their activities related to wetlands conservation and sustainable use;
 - b) to encourage to establishment of scientific and technical networks working on wetland-related issues in each MedWet country, in the form of National Wetlands Observatories or other appropriate arrangements; and
 - c) to provide inputs from a Mediterranean perspective to the work of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

II. Fields of action

2. The MedWet STN will work through Specialist Groups in the key areas where there is a need to improve the knowledge and managerial capacity related to wetlands conservation and sustainable use.
3. The Specialist Groups are established by the Mediterranean Wetlands Committee (MedWet/Com) at the recommendation of the Chair of the MedWet/STN. Initially, the MedWet/STN will operate with the following Specialist Groups :
 - a) MedWet/STN Specialist Group in Wetlands Inventory (MedWet/SG/Inventories);
 - b) MedWet/STN Specialist Group in Monitoring and Assessment of Wetlands Biodiversity (MedWet/SG/Biodiversity);
 - c) MedWet/STN Specialist Group in Wetlands Ecosystem Services (MedWet/SG/Eco-services);
 - d) MedWet/STN Specialist Group in Hydrological Cycle Integrity (MedWet/SG/Water);~~and~~
 - e) MedWet/STN Specialist Group on Climate Change (MedWet/SG/Climate); and
 - f) MedWet/STN Specialist Group on socio-cultural aspects of wetlands.

Pripomba [GB15]: Italy: to delete this proposed STN Specialists Group and also the ToR attached

III. Modus operandi

4. The MedWet/STN will be chaired by the Coordinator of the Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory (MWO), established in 2008 by the Tour du Valat research institute for the conservation of Research Centre on Mediterranean Wetlands ~~of La Tour du Valat~~ at the request of the MedWet/Com.

5. The MWO will manage the MedWet/STN in close cooperation with the MedWet Secretariat, through a staff member specifically recruited for this task and financed through the MedWet budget.
6. Membership in the Specialist Groups will be open to scientists and technicians of recognized competence in their fields, primarily from the Mediterranean region but potentially from other parts of the world as well. [Their work in the Specialists Groups is voluntary.](#)
7. They will join the Specialist Group(s) at the invitation of the Chair of the MedWet/STN and will serve as members of the Specialist Group(s) in their personal capacities.
8. The Chair of the MedWet/STN may receive proposals for membership in the Specialist Groups from the members of the MedWet/Com and from other MedWet partners.
9. The STRP Focal Points in the MedWet countries will be invited to join one or more (maximum two) of the Specialist Groups of their preference.
10. The Chair will do his/her utmost to ensure the geographical, cultural and gender balance in the composition of each Specialist Group.
11. The number of members in each Specialist Group will be sufficient for an effective functioning of each group and its management.
12. Each Specialist Group will be chaired by one of its members designated by the MedWet/Com on the recommendation of the Chair of the MedWet/STN.
13. The Chairs of each Specialist Group will serve for a term of three years, renewable for another period of three years.
14. Each Specialist Group should prepare a triennial work plan to be submitted to the Chair of the MedWet/STN, who in turn should submit it for the approval of the MedWet/Com.
15. The Chair of the MedWet/STN, in cooperation with the MedWet Secretariat, may seek funding for the work of the Specialist Groups. Each Specialist Group may also seek its own funding, with the previous and written approval of the Chair of the MedWet/STN.
16. The Chair of the MedWet/STN, the Chairs of the Specialist Groups, and the MedWet Coordinator shall constitute the Management Team of the MedWet/STN.
17. The Management Team will work mostly through electronic communications, holding face to face meetings when opportunities arise and resources become available.

18. The Management Team may develop its own Rules of Procedure, as necessary and appropriate.

IV. Terms of Reference for the Specialist Groups of the MedWet Scientific and Technical Network (MedWet STN)

19. Terms of Reference for the MedWet/STN Specialist Group on Ecosystem Services (MedWet/STN/Ecosystem Services)

1. A continuous degradation of biodiversity and related impairment of ecological functioning of the Mediterranean Wetlands, in combination with continually increasing anthropogenic pressures, threaten the long-term supply of ecosystem services. At the same time, demand for ecosystem services continues to increase, among others, due to demographic trends and changes in consumption patterns. As such, Mediterranean wetlands and their social-ecological systems form a forerunner case study for challenges that other countries, for instance Europe, will be faced with in the future.
2. To maintain or even improve human well-being and to allow for the further development of the different economic sectors, sufficient knowledge on the underlying natural resources, their functioning and trade-offs is lacking. Especially in Mediterranean wetland ecosystems, ecosystems and ecosystem services are heavily influenced by human interventions, whereas the scientific conceptual understanding of co-production of ecosystem services flows is still in its infancy.
3. Assessments and monitoring of the ecosystem services within their social-ecological context, require knowledge, methods and data from many fields and disciplines. They are, therefore, also limited by the knowledge gaps already presented in the ToR for the other MedWet Specialist Groups and these will not be repeated here.
4. The objectives for the **MedWet/GS/Ecosystem Services** are:
 - a. To identify the knowledge gaps regarding the trends and flows of ecosystem services. In order to obtain relevant knowledge for Mediterranean wetlands, it is important to go beyond the cascade framework, but to apply international frameworks that acknowledge the complexity of interactions between natural systems and society and the co-production of services;
 - b. To identify data and to propose indicators for the assessments of trends in ecosystem services stemming from pressures such as climate change, governance implementation or sector development across the whole Mediterranean Basin; and
 - c. To identify and communicate on relevant recommendations from ongoing research activities on wetland governance for Mediterranean decision makers.
5. In the short term, the outputs of the **MedWet/GS/Ecosystem Services** will be:
 - a. Organization of timely communication towards decision makers on ecosystem services

challenges for Mediterranean wetlands, for instance at the upcoming UNFCCC COP22 in Marrakech;

- b. Identification and co-development of influential opinion papers on Mediterranean ecosystem services challenges regarding governance implementation; and
- c. Contribution to ongoing research activities at the Tour du Valat Research Institute on the Conservation of Mediterranean Wetlands and other centres of excellence on the topics presented in this ToR.

20. Terms of Reference for the MedWet/STN Specialist Group on the monitoring and assessment of wetland biodiversity (MedWet/SG/Biodiversity)

1. Biodiversity issues are of particular importance in the Mediterranean Basin, since this is one of the main global centres of endemism. In addition to thousands of endemic species, it contains species with Euro-Siberian, Asian and African affinities. This gives rise to a high level of species diversity.
2. Unfortunately, the Mediterranean region stands out due to the large number of endangered species it contains. Of the 3,000 species associated with wetlands in Mediterranean countries and assessed by the IUCN Red List experts, one third is at risk of becoming extinct over the next few decades.
3. Our knowledge of the conservation status and trends of wetland species has increased in recent years. However, there is insufficient information on the location and evolution of wetland habitats – the scale at which most of the issues arise.
4. The causes and origin of the unfavourable conservation status of the wetland biodiversity are known: water pollution, changes in natural functions, climate change, overfishing, poaching, drainage and conversion of wetlands, invasive species, disturbance, etc.
5. Nevertheless, their relative importance is unknown. The efficiency of conservation measures already undertaken has not been properly assessed either. Finally, the consequences of the erosion of wetland biodiversity on the well-being of populations in the Mediterranean (and beyond) are largely unknown.
6. The main objective of **MedWet/SG/Biodiversity** is to identify the knowledge gaps that prevent decisions being made to help preserve wetland biodiversity. In order to achieve this, the group will focus in particular on:
 - a) Summarising our knowledge of the values and services provided by the biodiversity in Mediterranean wetlands and its ability to influence decision-making;
 - b) The summary of our knowledge on the conflicts between biodiversity and human activities (economic and others) and the solutions provided to address them;
 - c) The possibility of extending a system for mapping and identifying wetland habitats of global importance to Mediterranean countries outside of the European Union;
 - d) The monitoring of the conservation status of areas of key importance for wetland biodiversity;
 - e) The production of scientific position papers on the key subjects mentioned above; and
 - f) The communication and dissemination of the results of the MedWet/SG/Biodiversity to a wide audience.

7. Moreover, the group can advise the Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory and others on the development of indicators and their interpretation in the fields of biodiversity and climate change. It can also boost the development of research projects.

21. Terms of Reference for the MedWet/STN Specialist Group on the integrity of the water cycle (MedWet/SG/Water)

1. Despite its vital importance for wetlands, a global vision of water in the Mediterranean Basin –including an ecosystem perspective– is still lacking, despite studies carried out in several countries.
2. In terms of monitoring, the only assessments to date deal with the degree of quantitative pressures on the resource (instant: few/no trends available), and with the water quality, especially for the European Union part of the Basin, and only regarding the substantial water bodies (rivers, lakes, lagoons, etc.) followed up under the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD).
3. At the same time, whilst water is an essential element common to all wetland ecosystems, it is also essential for human development. In recent decades, human capacity for mobilising water for a productive purpose –irrigated agriculture in particular– has increased greatly, with great benefits for the growth of nations and the economies.
4. However, these developments also come at a cost, with numerous rivers, lakes, wetlands and water tables being affected by pollution, lack of water, or having dried up totally. Finally, climate change will have an increasingly significant impact on water quantity, flow and quality in the Mediterranean Basin, thus affecting both ecosystems and human activities, notably through changes in temperature and rainfall patterns.
5. While the issue of the proven decline in the availability of good quality water affects the entire Mediterranean Basin, its management is essentially carried out at a major watershed level, whilst remaining under the influence of national or supranational policies (e.g. the EU).
6. The objective of the **MedWet/SG/Water** is to contribute to the MedWet Initiative by:
 - a) Summarising research results for wetlands;
 - b) Providing guidance on the production of indicators for the Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory and other initiatives dealing with indicators;
 - c) Producing communication documents for decision-makers in Mediterranean countries, accompanying the MedWet Framework for Action 2016-20130; and
 - d) Developing projects for the improved monitoring (knowledge) and better management (action) of water resources.
7. More specifically, the **MedWet/SG/Water** will be responsible for developing summaries on the points for which high-quality, up-to-date, concise information is currently lacking, for example:
 - a) Environmental flows: how can ecosystem water requirements be quantified?;
 - b) The possibilities of monitoring wetland water quality on a large scale in the Mediterranean beyond the monitoring of the Water Framework Directive water bodies in EU countries;

- c) The innovative management of watersheds to reduce pressure on water resources;
 - d) Summaries of knowledge/case studies on ecosystem services linked to water provided by Mediterranean wetlands (a crosscutting task with the MedWet/SG/Ecosystem Services?);
 - e) How can contacts with the socio-economic stakeholders responsible for pressure on water resources be strengthened? ; and
 - f) What means of communication are most likely to influence them?
8. Moreover, if requested, the **MedWet/SG/Water** could also provide the Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory and other institutions with useful advice on several of the key water-related issues that concern them, for example:
- a) In order to influence decision-makers' in a manner beneficial to wetlands:
 - what balance should be struck between the production of new information (e.g. new monitoring/indicators), the summary of existing information, and a more convincing dissemination of the Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory (MWO)'s messages?;
 - which components are most easily communicated to decision-makers (the "water footprint", the flooding of wetlands, ecosystem water services provided by wetlands, etc.)?; and
 - how can water and wetlands be linked most explicitly? ;
 - b) The potential cross-referencing of "water data" with other data from the MWO and other sources, because of their potential explanatory power;
 - c) The best possible use of data from current or potential partners (e.g. the Plan Blue, the Water Footprint Network, the Euro-Mediterranean Information System on know-how in the Water Sector (SEMIDE / EMWIS), the European Environment Agency (EEA), Wetlands International, etc.) as crucial contextual elements on water not measured by the MWO itself;
 - d) Providing guidance for/facilitating access to the development of new indicators or metrics for the MWO, transnational and pan-Mediterranean sources or databases: Satellite images with ever-increasing performance, international databases such as those of the Water Footprint Network, FAOclim-NET, FAO-dams Database, Global Reservoir and Dam (GRanD) Database, etc.; and
 - e) Help create/strengthen links with the development of "water indicators" for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Ramsar, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) etc. and with the development of indicators for ecosystem services linked to water.
9. The **MedWet/SG/Water** will be made up of experts in various disciplines linked to water, who can contribute to different aspects of the issue: modellers, specialists in wetland ecology (ecologists, hydrologists, etc.), watershed management and remote sensing, etc.

22. Terms of Reference for the MedWet/STN Specialist Group in climate change (MedWet/SG/Climate)

1. There can be no doubt about the increasing importance of climate change for society. The consequences, already apparent, will have a major impact on human activities through rising temperatures, changes to rainfall patterns, as well as river and coastal flooding.
2. The consequences for plants, animals, water resources, health, the migration of parasites or diseases, are currently poorly understood. Likewise, more information is required for the adaptation of agriculture and, more generally, economic activities, coastal zones, etc.
3. Wetlands are particularly exposed to the consequences of these changes, directly via global hydrological changes, but there is a great risk that they may also be indirectly exposed via a series of ill-conceived adaptation measures, i.e. not taking their role sufficiently into account in the prevention of and adaptation to these changes.
4. Whilst the issue of climate change is first and foremost global, to a large degree its causes and solutions need to be addressed at a local level. The models of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) confirm the extent of climate change, but for the moment remain very global. Substantial work has been carried out and continues to be done in order to achieve the models and forecasts at an appropriate scale for local actions, which the broad international policies should be broken down into.
5. The objectives of the **MedWet/SG/Climate** are:
 - a) To summarise the research results on climate change in the Mediterranean region and their implications for the functioning and management of wetlands and their resources;
 - b) To produce communication documents for decision-makers in the Mediterranean countries, accompanying the implementation of the MedWet Framework for Action; and
 - c) To boost the development of projects for the prevention to or adaptation to climate change.
6. Different questions can be addressed such as the state of knowledge on climate change in the Mediterranean Basin, on the impact of this change on wetlands and water resources, the assessment of carbon stocks in Mediterranean wetlands, adaptation or mitigation projects carried out in the region, the role of coastal wetlands in the mitigation of the consequences of rising sea levels, etc.
7. Moreover, the group can advise the Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory and others on the development of indicators and their interpretation in the field of climate change.

The **MedWet/SG/Climate** will be made up of experts in a wide variety of disciplines, who can contribute to different aspects of the issue: modellers, specialists in wetland ecology (ecologists, hydrologists, soil scientists, etc.), in the management of natural resources and land use planning, specialists in remote sensing, mapping and in the management of spatial information, in human sciences (sociology, politics, law....) etc.

23. Terms of Reference for the MedWet/STN Specialist Group in Wetlands Inventory (MedWet/SG/Inventories)

1. At present, there are no harmonised data for the entire Mediterranean Basin on the location and delimitation of wetlands (the minimum for a pan-Mediterranean inventory). This absence of a spatial information system is principally due to the technical difficulties involved in its implementation, as well as to the fact that different countries have different definitions of wetlands. Nevertheless, numerous countries have already developed their local and/or national inventories, and some of them are even well in advance with regard to the description and localisation of their resources in wetlands.
2. The objective of the **MedWet/SG/Inventories** is to contribute to the MedWet Initiative, aiming to create and develop a harmonised database on the inventories of Mediterranean wetlands.
3. This contribution can involve the following aspects:
 - a) Contributing to the summary of the different existing methods and approaches that allow for the creation of wetland inventories or pre-inventories on a large scale (countries or large basins);
 - b) Participating in reflections on how to improve the approaches and methods linked to this issue: what data to use, how to adapt the existing approaches and methods, validation, etc.;
 - c) Links to ecosystem services: how data on inventories (delimitation, habitat type, conservation status, etc.) can be used to improve the definition of the potential services provided by wetlands;
 - d) Land use regulation and management: how best to integrate data on wetland inventories into national legislations in order to promote better protection for these ecosystems;
 - e) Producing communication documents for decision-makers in Mediterranean countries, accompanying the MedWet action plan; and
 - f) Contributing to the development of Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory indicators, notably those linked to the surface areas of wetlands in Mediterranean countries.
4. The members of the **MedWet/SG/Inventories** will also participate in the implementation of the inventory project that will be carried out by the MedWet Secretariat, and which will aim to provide by 2018-2020 a complete regional picture of wetlands, with information on their location, their boundaries, their ecological characteristics and their conservation status..
5. The **MedWet/SG/Inventories** will be made up of experts in wetland ecology (ecologists, hydrologists, soil scientists, etc.), in the management of natural resources and land use planning, specialists in remote sensing, mapping and in the management of spatial information, as well as people with knowledge of or experience in certain regulatory or legal aspects linked to the protection of wetlands. The **MedWet/SG/Inventories** can be expanded to encompass other [specialties](#)~~specialities~~, if they are relevant to discussions.

24. Terms of Reference for the MedWet/STN Specialist Group on socio-economic and cultural aspects of wetlands (MedWet/SG/Socioeconomic-Culture)

1. Wetlands are cradles of biodiversity and the source of many ecosystem services. They provide the resources and benefits on which countless species and human populations depend. Their dynamic nature can be described in ecological, hydrological and geomorphological terms, but also socio-economically, as they provide opportunities for farming, forestry, fishing, recreation, etc. The cultural aspects of wetlands, in particular, constitute a new dimension within their values that we have only now begun to recognise.
2. Culture – including traditions, customs and beliefs – primarily relates to the dynamic of how people live their lives and manage their resources, individually and collectively. When it comes to wetlands, cultural heritage reveals itself inter alia through the tangible practices of salt harvesting, fishing, the weaving of nets, the growing of rice and other water-related crops, boat building, irrigation systems and other aspects of water management, animal grazing, and the building of huts and fish-traps from reeds. There are also many intangible components including customs and beliefs, oral literature, music, dress codes, aesthetics and modes of religious expression.
3. Socio-economic and cultural dimensions are interrelated dimensions and key for rural communities in planning and managing decision-making of natural capital including wetlands. However, these components benefit of less considerations in research, monitoring and assessing wetlands status and trends, if compared to biophysical monitoring. Mediterranean Ramsar country representatives indicated the importance to better understand socio-economic dynamic in wetlands area for their protection.
4. MedWet, in its 2016-2030 frameworks for actions, has aligned its activities with SDGs, CBD and Ramsar strategies and targets, all of them recognizing the socio-economic and cultural dimensions in sustainable development and protection of nature. The cultural aspects of wetlands are being assigned an increasingly important role in the effective management of wetlands. This was recognised by the Ramsar Convention in 2001 through COP resolutions VIII.19 and IX.21.
5. The lack of knowledge, at an early stage, of socioeconomic dynamic and people development strategy in wetlands areas, including their cultural values, practices and decision-making mechanisms, limits the possibility of building a realistic sustainable development concept taking into account wetlands wise use and management.

The objective of the MedWet/SG/Socioeconomic-Culture is to contribute to the MedWet Initiative by:

- a. Summarizing research results and lessons learned from field experiences in socio-economy, culture associated to natural capital including wetlands;
- b. Disseminating awareness of the cultural values of Mediterranean wetlands among managers, decision makers, experts and the public;
- c. Monitoring developments relating to culture and wetlands around the Mediterranean;
- d. Assisting in the implementation of Ramsar Guidance on Culture and Wetlands and other initiatives related to culture to encourage cooperation among relevant institutions, wetland sites and experts.
- e. Providing guidance on the monitoring of socio-economic and cultural issues and indicators for the Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory;

- f. Developing projects for the improved monitoring (knowledge) and better management (action) in socio-economy and culture in wetlands.
- g. Producing communication documents for decision-makers in Mediterranean countries.
- h. Liaising with the organisations and intuitions working on the cultural issues to exchange knowledge and experience on cultural values and avoid duplication of work.

More specifically, the MedWet/STN/SG/Socioeconomic-Culture will be in charge of:

- 6. Based on existing studies, research and experiences in both conservation and development networks, help MedWet/MWO in preparing a wetland, socio-economic and cultural concept paper adapted to the Mediterranean context, that will help to prepare and update wetlands national strategies, wetlands management plans and local development planning for communes responsible to manage wetlands.
- 7. Helping in identifying, analyzing and communicating on socio-economic and cultural assets, success wetlands-culture stories and positive case studies that may interest each of the Mediterranean sub-regions and may help convince national decision-makers in a more integrated wetlands management approach.
- 8. Assisting in identifying knowledge gaps in that prevent decisions being made to help preserve wetlands and their cultural integrity.
- 9. Linking MedWet/MWO socio-economic and cultural activities with interested institutions, for both knowledge production and communication and project development.
- 10. Providing guidance and facilitate partnership for developing the macro socio-economic, (including policy and governance) studies, researches, knowledge, indicators and analysis in relation with wetlands in MedWet countries.