

Coordinated management and networking of Mediterranean wetlands

Deliverable

4.2.2

TECHNICAL POSITION PAPER

on the integrated governance of Mediterranean wetlands through Wetland Contracts

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RECOGNIZING

- that Mediterranean wetlands provide essential ecosystem services for human populations and contribute greatly to the local, regional and world biodiversity;
- that Mediterranean wetlands have been greatly reduced in quality and quantity in the 20th century - with data showing a loss of over 50% in wetland surface areas;
- that Mediterranean wetlands create a unique cultural and natural heritage, and local communities might play an important role in their wise use and conservation;

RECALLING

- that the 1971 Ramsar “Convention on wetlands of international importance especially as waterfowl habitat” underlined the fundamental ecological functions of wetlands as regulators of water regimes and as habitats supporting a characteristic flora and fauna, especially waterfowl, as much as their great economic, cultural, scientific and recreational value, the loss of which would be irreparable;
- that the 1991 Grado “Conference on managing Mediterranean wetlands” adopted a Declaration urgently recommending all Mediterranean States, concerned organizations and individuals to stop and reverse the loss and degradation of Mediterranean Wetlands;
- that the 1995 Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (“Barcelona Convention”) called for the integrated management of coastal wetlands promoting the use of participatory processes, as underlined in the 2008 Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the Mediterranean too;
- that the 1996 Venice declaration on Mediterranean Wetlands proposed the implementation of a Mediterranean Wetlands Strategy that builds upon training, inventory, monitoring and applied research;
- that the 2000 European Water Framework Directive (2000/60/CE) set the basis for the environmental protection of inland surface waters, transitional waters, coastal waters and groundwater, encouraging the active involvement of all interested parties;

FURTHER RECALLING

- that the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention adopted a Strategic Plan at their Conference in Punta del Este, Uruguay, in June 2015, through Resolution XII.2 with the following shared vision that guides implementation of the Convention for the period 2016-2024: “*wetlands are conserved, wisely used, restored and their benefits are recognized and valued by all*”;

NOTING

- that according to the Mediterranean Wetlands Outlook 2, the Mediterranean governments are not on track to meet their international commitments for the conservation and wise use of wetlands;
- that an increasing number of countries have wetland management policies, but fewer are now implementing these policies than in the last decade;

RECOGNIZING

- that the majority of threats targeting Mediterranean wetlands are linked to deficiencies in governance;
- that voluntary agreements for the integrated management of wetlands, such as River Contracts, Delta Contracts and Bay Contracts, have been successfully tested and implemented in some European countries, including the experience of the Interreg Med WetNet project that tested and disseminated this tool with a common approach at Mediterranean scale first;

THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE FINAL CONFERENCE OF THE INTERREG MED WETNET PROJECT

convened in Venice on October 1st-3rd, 2019

RECOMMEND that permanent monitoring processes are conducted in the Mediterranean Region to follow the wetlands' governance and management trends;

CALL ON Mediterranean countries to test and adopt voluntary Wetland Contracts using a place-based approach to participatory processes that are inclusive in nature and meet the individual wetland needs;

URGE funding bodies - whether international, national, regional or local - to privilege sites that have undertaken this process with financial resources for the development and implementation of the Wetland Contracts;

THANK the European Union and the Interreg Med delegations for supporting the WetNet project and all of the other governance-based projects in the European Mediterranean countries.

WETNET PARTNERS



Veneto Region



Italian Centre for River Restoration



Andalusian Federation of Towns and Provinces



Aragonese Company for Agroenvironmental Management



Development and Innovation Network



Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts



Spanish Ornithological Society | Birdlife International



Gozo Regional Council



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