

Appendix I. Brief History and Milestones of the MWO

2004: Origin of the observatory.

In 2004, the idea of creating an Observatory of Mediterranean wetlands has been submitted by the Tour du Valat in the sixth meeting of the MedWet committee (Tipaza, Algeria). The objective was to ensure and harmonize the monitoring of the status and trends of wetlands in member countries of MedWet, share knowledge, and help decision making for a better preservation and management of wetlands in the Mediterranean basin.

2007: Preparatory phase of the Observatory: first international workshop.

In March 2007, a first international workshop was held in the Tour du Valat to discuss the objectives, indicators and procedures for the start-up and functioning of the Observatory. Many representatives of international organizations, NGOs and Mediterranean countries were present.

2008: Launch of preliminary studies and political validation of the Observatory.

The Tour du Valat started preliminary studies, especially on the choice of indicators and on the feasibility of one these indicators, the Living Planet Index. The proposal to create an Observatory of Mediterranean wetlands was adopted in the ninth Medwet/Com meeting (Changwon, Korea). The Tour du Valat was mandated to initiate the startup and operational capability of the Observatory. A small permanent staff - funded by the MAVA Foundation¹ and the Tour du Valat - represents the coordinating unit of the Observatory.

2009: The planning of the strategic stages of the establishment of the Observatory, the monitoring and evaluation framework and the governance of the Observatory.

With the arrival of a new coordinator, the coordination unit actively worked to develop a regional observatory in a participatory manner, and simultaneously, to meet the commitment to produce a first regional overview of the state of Mediterranean wetlands in 2011. The logical steps were developed between February and September 2009 (see box below). A second international workshop was held in March at the Tour du Valat with representatives of Mediterranean countries and international organizations involved in conservation. This workshop enabled the establishment of the logical monitoring and evaluation framework, first thinking of governance and partnership framework, and the institutional launch of the Observatory activities. A work schedule for 2009-2010 was discussed and approved by the participants, indicating the different stages. So far, the level of implementation of planned activities has been returned to partners every two months through the newsletter. Among others, activities of communication were initiated. The strategy of communication and the planning of communication activities are prepared. Similarly, a study of the situation and needs for the monitoring and evaluation of wetlands was launched in 16 countries in 2009. This study intends to serve as a baseline to measure the evolution of the situation. Finally, a third international workshop was planned in 2010 to finalize the governance, the partnership structure and to discuss the priority indicators to be used to start the monitoring.

2010: Validation of governance and priority indicators, start the monitoring and implementation of the communication strategy

In February 2010, about 60 participants from 19 countries attended the third workshop of the Observatory. These were representatives of the Ramsar Secretariat, Convention on Biological Diversity, and MedWet, as well as agencies funding the observatory. Participants

¹With additional contributions from foundations Prince Albert II de Monaco and Total, the French Ministry of Environment and CEPF (Critical Ecosystems Partnership Fund).

discussed and approved the structure, the organization and the partnership system of the Observatory, the development of indicators, the start of monitoring activities, the communication strategy and the work plan for 2010-2011. At the tenth meeting of MedWet / Com in June 2010 in Bastia, the participants approved the work plan 2010-2011 and the structure of the observatory. The coordination unit (CU) agreed with its partners to start the monitoring work and write the first report on the status and trends of Mediterranean wetlands from March 2010. CU implemented the work plan 2010 previously approved by the participants, including the continuation of the study on the needs for monitoring and evaluating wetlands. The website of the Observatory became operational in three languages. A major effort to develop partnership and networking was undertaken at the local, national and international levels.

2011: The development of the first report on Mediterranean wetlands.

The MWO devoted most of its efforts to produce the first report on Mediterranean wetlands, including a technical report and a report more strategic sent to decision makers. These reports came along with a film, posters and presentations. The study on the status and needs for monitoring and evaluation of wetlands was finalized, in English and French with a summary in Arabic, and distributed to partners. Activities planned in the work plan 2011 were completed. The first MWO thematic report on biodiversity was started. New projects were identified and formulated.

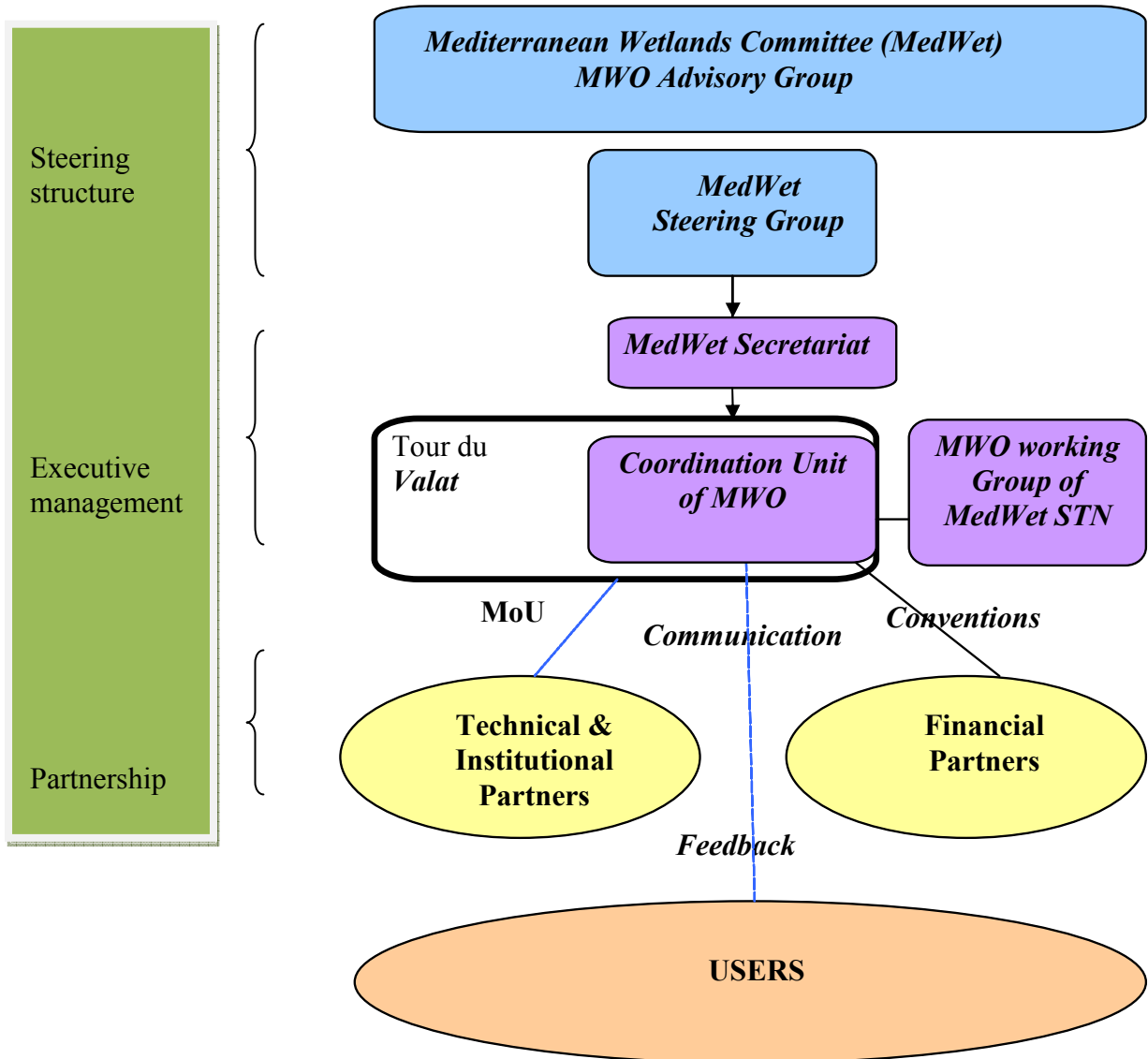
2012: Visibility and promotion of results of the Observatory and Strategic Review of the MWO.

The MWO Coordination Unit has focused its efforts in 2012 on the visibility and use of results of the report through national and international events, the update of the website and derivatives of these communication outputs. The report "Mediterranean wetlands Outlook" and associated communication products were presented at the Symposium on Water and Wetlands held in February in Agadir (Morocco), then at the World Water Forum in March, in Marseille (France). The reports were distributed at these events and sent to key partners and members of MedWet / Com not present at these events. Vision and strategic planning for 2012-2015 will be discussed at the 11th meeting of the Mediterranean Wetlands Committee (Medwet/Com). The results will be also presented at the Ramsar COP 11 (July 2012, Bucharest) and at the World Conservation Congress (Jeju, September 2012). The first thematic report on the biodiversity of wetlands in the Mediterranean was published and the second thematic report on land-cover has been started.

The 10 strategic steps of the MWO monitoring and evaluation programme elaborated in 2009 for the period 2009-2011.

1. *Definition of challenges and objectives of the Observatory;*
2. *Targeting (users of MWO results);*
3. *Monitoring & evaluation logical framework: objective, theme, indicator, data and method;*
4. *Governance and partnership structure;*
5. *Rolling working calendar: 2009-2010, then 2010-2011, etc;*
6. *Communication and visibility strategy (multi-products) of the Observatory;*
6. *Baseline reference of wetlands monitoring & evaluation situation and needs (based on a survey conducted in 16 countries);*
7. *MWO preliminary Chart: objectives, strategies, principles, mandate, etc;*
8. *Formal approval of MWO governance and MWO building process;*
9. *Implementation of monitoring & evaluation and communication strategy;*
10. *Production of the first report on Mediterranean Wetlands status and trends.*

Appendix 2: Governance structure of the Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory (MWO)



- **Steering structures**

- The Mediterranean Wetlands Committee (MedWet Com) serves as the MWO Advisory Group. The MWO Advisory Group is responsible for:
 - providing strategic guidance to the Coordination Unit;
 - facilitating all contacts between their own networks and the MWO coordination Unit;

- disseminating broadly the MWO results in their countries/ networks;
- approving the strategic priorities and work programmes of MWO;
- Assisting the CU with fund-raising to ensure the financial operation of MWO;
- Keeping CU informed on changes in countries relevant to wetlands such as new policies, strategies, guidelines, laws, Ramsar sites, wetlands inventories, etc.

In the course of MedWet/Com meetings, every 1.5 years, time will be devoted to assess progress and to steer MWO. Each member of MedWet/Com is proposed as focal point for MWO. However, he can assign another representative if relevant.

The MedWet Steering Group will assist the MWO coordination unit between meetings of MedWet/Com, in particular for strategic and operational issues such as development and adjustment of projects and partnerships/

- **Executive management**

The MWO Coordination Unit is a technical team based at the Tour du Valat and under Tour du Valat administration.

The Unit is responsible, under the guidance of the MedWet/Com MWO Advisory Group and the MedWet Steering group, for:

- coordinating the technical work done by all Partners;
- ensuring the overall implementation work plans approved by MedWet/Com and partners;
- ensuring that results are delivered as planned;
- preparing key technical elements for informed decisions/ choices to be made by the MedWet/Com and Steering Group;
- assist in fund raising to implement monitoring and evaluation activities (*by the CU or MWO partners*).

The MedWet Secretariat is responsible for:

- facilitate the collaboration between the Coordination Unit of MWO and the members of MedWet/Com as well as other relevant stakeholders in the region;
- transfer the information and request coming from the Coordination Unit to the MedWet/Com and MedWet Steering group.

- **Technical support structure**

The MWO Working Group from the Scientific and Technical Network of MedWet is an ad hoc group aiming at bringing technical and methodological support to the Coordination Unit. This group is constituted of members of MedWet/Com and from other organizations recognized for their expertise relevant for MWO.

The following organizations are proposed

- MedWet Secretariat
- UNEP-MAP/ Plan Bleu
- EKBY (Greece)
- Wetlands International
- ANPE Tunisia (Observatory of Ichkeul)
- WWF MedPO

Other organizations can be invited based on needs and opportunities.

This support structure will be particularly in charge of :

- helping in technical discussions on monitoring methods, themes and indicator development;
- Facilitating the development of MWO partner's network;
- Fostering the development of Mediterranean environmental and wetlands monitoring and evaluation networks;
- Facilitating synergies between projects, training and events directly or indirectly related to wetlands monitoring and evaluation within MWO network and in their own networks;
- Participate in the preparation of the MWO work plans.