



# MedWet

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

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

### Content

	Page
About MedWet	2
Current members of the MedWet/Com	3
Current Members of the MedWet Steering Group	4
The MedWet Secretariat	4
Terms of Reference for the MedWet/STN	5
Terms of reference for the Specialist Groups of the MedWet/STN	7
How to become a member of the MedWet/STN	14

### Contacts for the MedWet/STN:

Patrick Grillas

Chair of the MedWet/STN

Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory

Research Institute on the Conservation of Mediterranean Wetlands Tour du  
Valat Arles, France

[grillas@tourduvalat.org](mailto:grillas@tourduvalat.org)

Flavio Monti

Manager of the MedWet/STN

Rome, Italy [monti@medwet.org](mailto:monti@medwet.org)

Delmar Blasco (no longer Coordinator since March 2017)

MedWet Coordinator

Arles, France

[blasco@medwet.org](mailto:blasco@medwet.org)

For more information about MedWet: [medwet.org](http://medwet.org)

## About MedWet

Established in 1991, the Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative (MedWet) brings together 26 Mediterranean and peri-Mediterranean countries that are Parties to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971). They constitute the *Mediterranean Wetlands Committee (MedWet/Com)*. Palestine and a series of intergovernmental and international non-governmental organizations and wetland centres are also members of the MedWet/Com.

MedWet is formally recognized as a Regional Initiative of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

### Positioning

MedWet encourages and supports governments to adopt policies and implement actions on the ground in favour of the conservation and the sustainable use of Mediterranean wetlands. To do this MedWet creates synergies with a wide range of intergovernmental and non-governmental partners.

### Vision

Mediterranean wetlands' resources and functions are conserved in the long term, and restored when necessary, for the benefit of nature, nations and people.

### Mission

The MedWet Mission is to ensure and support the effective conservation of the functions and values of Mediterranean wetlands and the sustainable use of their resources and services.

### Primary Goal

MedWet primary goal is to contribute to the achievement of key targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)\* 2016-2030 in the Mediterranean region through the effective implementation of the strategic plans of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

*\*Most relevant SDGs for MedWet are 6, 13, 14 and 15.*

### Operational Goals 2016-2020

In order to reach this primary goal, MedWet pursue the following **four operational goals**, in line with the Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016-2024:

1. Addressing the drivers of Mediterranean wetlands loss and degradation;
2. Contributing effectively to the conservation and management of Mediterranean Ramsar Sites;
3. Encouraging the wise use of all Mediterranean wetlands; and
4. Enhancing the implementation of the Ramsar Convention across the Mediterranean region.

## Description

MedWet is a **regional intergovernmental network operating within the framework of the Ramsar Convention and involving also other key actors**, dedicated to promote and support multi-stakeholders policies and actions on the ground **for the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of Mediterranean wetlands.**

## Values

1. Respect for the diversity of nature and cultures
2. Science-based action
3. Solidarity through mutual support and respect
4. Priority given to participatory approaches
5. Integrity, efficient use of resources and seeking replicable, long term solutions
6. Promoting human well-being and security\* and respect of essential human rights  
(\* security = livelihoods for French translation in particular)

## Current members of the MedWet/Com

Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands:

Albania, Algeria, 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 Greek Biotope and Wetland Centre (EKBY), Greece

La Tour du Valat Institute for the Conservation of Mediterranean Wetlands (TdV), France

## Honorary members

† Dr. Luc Hoffmann

Mr. Thymio Papayannis

## Current members of the MedWet Steering Group

At its 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting held at the Palais de la Porte Dorée (Paris, France) on 7-11 February 2016, the MedWet/Com approved the following composition of the MedWet Steering Group until the closure of the next MedWet/Com meeting:

AFRICA: Algeria - Alternate: Morocco

ASIA: Lebanon - Alternate: Jordan

EUROPE: Slovenia - Alternate: Turkey  
France, host country of the MedWet Secretariat

Other members:

The Ramsar Convention Secretariat

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation - Alternate to IUCN: World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)

La Tour du Valat, Research Institute for the Conservation of Mediterranean Wetlands Honorary Member: Thymio Papayannis

The MedWet Coordinator (*ex-officio*)

Dr. Gordana Beltram, representing Slovenia, accepted to chair the MedWet Steering Group.

## The MedWet Secretariat

MedWet activities are coordinated by a Secretariat hosted since 2014 by the Research Institute for the Conservation of Mediterranean Wetlands of La Tour du Valat in the Camargue, France. The Secretariat is funded by contributions of the 26 MedWet/Com countries and, during the triennium 2014-2017, by grants from the MAVA Foundation and the French Water Agency Rhône Méditerranée Corse.

## Terms of Reference for the MedWet /STN<sup>1</sup>

The MedWet/STN is re-established with new Terms of Reference pursuant to Action 14.1 of the MedWet Framework for Action 2016-2030<sup>2</sup>: “Re-establish a **MedWet Scientific and Technical Network (MedWet/SNT)** for developing technical guidance to MedWet; this body should meet side by side with and report to the MedWet Committee.”

### I. Objectives

- I. 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/STN/SG/Inventories);
  - b) MedWet/STN Specialist Group in Monitoring and Assessment of Wetlands Biodiversity (MedWet/STN/SG/Biodiversity);
  - c) MedWet/STN Specialist Group in Wetlands Ecosystem Services (MedWet/STN/SG/Ecosystem services);

---

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the 12th Meeting of the Mediterranean Wetlands Committee (Palais de la Porte Dorée, Paris, France, 7-11 February 2016).

<sup>2</sup> The MedWet Framework for Action 2016-2030 “Wetlands for Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean Region” was adopted by the 12th Meeting of the Mediterranean Wetlands Committee (Palais de la Porte Dorée, Paris, France, 7-11 February 2016)

- d) MedWet/STN Specialist Group in Hydrological Cycle Integrity (MedWet/STN/SG/Water); and
- e) MedWet/STN Specialist Group in Climate Change (MedWet/STN/SG/Climate).

### **III. Modus operandi**

4. The MedWet/STN will be chaired by the Coordinator of the Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory (MWO), established in 2008 by the Research Centre on the Conservation of 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.
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.
16. The Management Team may develop its own Rules of Procedure, as necessary and appropriate

### **Terms of Reference for the MedWet/STN Specialist Group on Ecosystem Services (MedWet/STN/SG/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/STN/SG/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/STN/SG/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 Research Institute on the Conservation of Mediterranean Wetlands and Tour du Valat and other centres of excellence on the topics presented in this ToR.

#### **Terms of Reference for the MedWet/STN Specialist Group on the monitoring and assessment of wetland biodiversity (MedWet/STN/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/STN/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.

### **Terms of Reference for the MedWet/STN Specialist Group on the integrity of the water cycle (MedWet/STN/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/STN/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/STN/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/STN/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/STN/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.

### **Terms of Reference for the MedWet/STN Specialist Group in climate change (MedWet/STN/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/STN/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.
8. The **MedWet/STN/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.

### **Terms of Reference for the MedWet/STN Specialist Group in Wetlands Inventory (MedWet/STN/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/STN/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/STN/SG/Inventories** will also participate in the implementation of the inventory project that will be carried out by the MedWet Secretary, 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/STN/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/STN/SG/Inventories** can be expanded to encompass other specialities, if they are relevant to discussions.

## How to become a member of the MedWet/STN

The following are the relevant rules of the Terms of Reference:

Rule 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.

Individuals can join a maximum of two Specialists Groups in their personal capacity (*not as representatives* of the institutions in which they are working or are affiliated with).

Interested persons may express their wish to join one or two Specialists Groups by contacting the MedWet/STN manager by e-mail with a covering note indicating the areas in which they would like to contribute and a copy in English of their curriculum vitae.

The MedWet/STN manager may also approach scientists and technicians to invite them to join one or two Specialist Groups.

It should be noted that English is the working language of the MedWet/STN.

Rule 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.

In all cases membership in one or two Specialist Groups should be confirmed in writing by the Chair of the MedWet/STN.

Rule 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.

Qualified scientists and technicians may also be proposed by governmental or non-governmental institutions in the MedWet countries.

Rule 9: The STRP (the Scientific and Technical Review Panel of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands) Focal Points in the MedWet countries will be invited to join one or more (maximum two) of the Specialist Groups of their preference.

Rule 10: The Chair will do his/her utmost to ensure the geographical, cultural and gender balance in the composition of each Specialist Group.

Special efforts will be made to ensure representation in the Specialist Groups from all sub-regions in the Mediterranean. A particular effort will be made to identify female scientists and technicians.

Rule 11: The number of members in each Specialist Group will be sufficient for an effective functioning of each group and its management.

While there will not be a formal limitation in the number of members in each Specialist Group, consideration will be given to not having more than two members from the same country in each group.

Once a core membership of a Specialist Group is established, the Chair of the MedWet/STN will invite one of its members to chair the Group. The Group will then establish its work plan and *modus operandi*, which should be validated by the Chair of the MedWet/STN and in turn by the MedWet Steering Group and finally by the Mediterranean Wetlands Committee.

**IMPORANT NOTE:** Members of the Specialist Groups offer their time and intellectual contributions on a voluntary basis, without remuneration. Specialist Groups may develop project proposals and seek funding for them, with the previous authorization of the Chair of the MedWet/STN and the MedWet Coordinator. If funding is obtained, members of the SG could get paid for their services, provided that this use of the funds has been made explicit in the project proposal and in its budget.