



# MedWet

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

## **MedWet/Com 12 Palais de la Porte Dorée, Paris (France), 7 – 11 February 2016**

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

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. These Terms of Reference set out the organisation and functioning of the Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative (MedWet).
2. 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. 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. MedWet is an endogenous mechanism based on mutual trust and respect.
5. MedWet benefits from the formal recognition by the Conference of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention through Resolutions VII.22 and VIII.30 and 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 adopted by the Conference of the Parties or the Ramsar Standing Committee, as appropriate.

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

## **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 Resolutions 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).

### **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 the MedWet Initiative.
11. The current membership of the MedWet/Com is listed in Annex I.
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 the MedWet strategic documents and work plans;
  - c) to monitor the implementation and results of MedWet activities;
  - d) to consider the reports and recommendations from the MedWet/SG;
  - e) to approve 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;
  - g) to approve the establishment of temporary *ad hoc* working groups and their dissolution.
  - h) to designate the members of the MedWet/SG; and
  - i) to take any other decisions for the good and effective functioning of the Initiative.
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/SG**

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
  - g) the MedWet Coordinator (*ex officio*).
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.

### **The MedWet Secretariat**

23. The MedWet Secretariat was established in 2002 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-session, of the MedWet/SG.
24. The core MedWet Secretariat consists of the MedWet Coordinator, a Communications Officer, and an Assistant. Other Secretariat staff may be recruited according to the needs of the work plan and available resources.
25. The MedWet Secretariat has been legally established in France since 14 February 2014 as a non-profit organisation under the French Law of 1901, with the name of "Association Secretariat MedWet", chaired by the Honorary Member of the MedWet/Com Mr. Thymio Papayannis.
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;

- c) 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 by the MedWet/Com and to prepare the annual financial reports to be submitted to the MedWet/SG and to the MedWet/Com.

28. It is the responsibility of the Coordinator to select and supervise the other staff members of the MedWet Secretariat.

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

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

#### **IV. Budgetary matters**

30. The MedWet/Com adopts a core annual budget to cover the costs of the staff and operations of the core MedWet Secretariat.

31. MedWet/Com members that are Parties to the Ramsar Convention make contributions to the core MedWet budget according to the scale used for the contributions of Contracting Parties to the core budget of the Ramsar Convention Secretariat.

32. Other members of the MedWet/Com are encouraged to make contributions to the core MedWet budget as well.

33. MedWet may also receive donations and/or voluntary contributions from governmental, non-governmental and private sources.

#### **V. Use of the MedWet name and logo**

34. The name and logo of the MedWet Initiative are legally protected. They can and should be used by any MedWet/Com member for activities implemented within the framework of MedWet Initiative.

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

## **Annex I – MedWet/Com members**

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

### **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)

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.

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 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).

### ***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 Chairpersons.

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. The Vice Chairpersons 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.

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

Rule 12. The MedWet/Com shall hold regular meetings 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.
- c) If any member objects to a proposal within the applicable time limit, the proposal shall be referred to the next meeting of MedWet/Com.

### **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 of the MedWet/Com meetings. The costs of using these two working languages should be included in the budget of the MedWet/Com meetings.
- b) If resources are obtained, Arabic will be used as the third working language at MedWet/Com meetings.

### **Final provisions**

Rule 21. In matters not covered by the present Rules, the Rules of Procedure as adopted by the last 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 members present and voting at any subsequent meeting.

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

Rule 24. All members of the MedWet/SG, including the alternate countries, should be notified about the dates of the next meeting and should receive all working documents. 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 [to be confirmed] :
  - 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)

### **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

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.

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