



# MedWet

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

## **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. 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 :
  - 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.

#### **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.
8. 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 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/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 specialities, if they are relevant to discussions.