



WETLANDS FOR A SUSTAINABLE MEDITERRANEAN REGION

MedWet

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



MEDWET, A COMMUNITY WORKING FOR MEDITERRANEAN WETLANDS

Established in 1991, MedWet is the first and oldest of the Regional Initiatives formally recognized by the Ramsar Convention concerning wetlands.



The Ramsar Convention is the intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. The Convention was adopted in the Iranian city of Ramsar in 1971. www.ramsar.org

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.

One of MedWet's success stories is building a community of wetland conservation stakeholders: governments, scientists, civil societies and site managers all around the Mediterranean.

MedWet is the first Mediterranean dialogue platform for concerted action to benefit the wetlands, nations and people of this ecoregion, within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals.

AN ORIGINAL AND INNOVATIVE GOVERNANCE MODEL

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. MedWet is based on mutual trust and respect.

MedWet is the only platform to share information and technical capacities between institutions and civil society serving wetlands in the Mediterranean.

The Initiative is governed by the **Mediterranean Wetlands Committee (MedWet/Com)** and is made up of :

- 27 Mediterranean and peri-Mediterranean countries which are Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention, and Palestine
- Intergovernmental bodies
- Wetland Centres
- International NGO Partners of the Ramsar Convention
- Honorary members

OBJECTIVES

- To promote and participate in the implementation of the Ramsar Convention's objectives and initiatives in the Mediterranean region;
- To develop and reinforce the capacity of governments and civil society for the sustainable management of wetlands, especially those designated as Wetlands of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention;
- To act as a catalyst for the exchange of knowledge and expertise between key conservation and sustainable use actors in order to reinforce Mediterranean wetland management; and
- To collaborate with other international initiatives in the region and globally.



AN OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK: THE MEDWET GALAXY

THE MEDWET SECRETARIAT

The MedWet Secretariat facilitates and promotes collaboration among MedWet members. It acts in the following three areas :

Network facilitation and technical coordination

- Supporting cooperation between all the actors involved in Mediterranean wetland issues
- Following or coordinating pilot projects in Mediterranean countries

Facilitation of a communications platform

- Providing a source of scientific and technical informations
- Representing Mediterranean wetlands at international events
- Highlighting the positive actions by the Med Community

Development of a network of Ramsar Site managers in the Mediterranean

- Promoting and bringing together skills in the field of wetland management and conservation
- Raising the value of the experiences of wetland managers to develop European, Mediterranean and national policies

THE SCIENTIFIC & TECHNICAL NETWORK (STN)

Composed of more than 50 scientists and experts on wetland-related issues from each Mediterranean country, the STN's main objective is to provide scientific and technical support to the MedWet member countries concerning their policies and actions related to wetland conservation and sustainable use.

The MedWet/STN works in close collaboration with the MWO on five key areas, through its five Specialist Groups (SGs):

- Biodiversity-SG
- Inventories-SG
- Climate change-SG
- Water-SG
- Ecosystem Services-SG

THE MEDITERRANEAN WETLAND OBSERVATORY (MWO)



The MWO is a partnership mechanism coordinated by the Tour du Valat, the Research Institute for the Conservation of Mediterranean Wetlands.

This “science-policy” platform follows the status of and the trends in Mediterranean wetlands in order to improve policy decisions, particularly in terms of legislation, governance and management. Thus, the MWO is a privileged tool for the MedWet countries.

It works on several levels – local, national and regional – throughout the Mediterranean basin. Its approach consists of preparing reports on the state and trends of Mediterranean wetlands, on the basis of its own scientific research and summaries of published information.

The MWO also develops indicators on biodiversity, water, goods and services provided by wetlands, pressures exerted on them, and societies' responses to wetland degradation.

Thematic syntheses are published on a regular basis by the MWO, and the **Mediterranean Wetland Outlook** constitutes its flagship publication.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a global call by the United Nations to address the full range of issues such as climate, biodiversity, energy, water, poverty, gender equality, economic prosperity or peace, agriculture, education. Through its framework, there are 4 SDGs of special interest to MedWet:



Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all



Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development



Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts



Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems



"Wetlands are areas of marsh, fen, peatland or water, whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, with water that is static or flowing, fresh, brackish or salt, including areas of marine water the depth of which at low tide does not exceed six metres."

Article 1 of the Wetlands Convention (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)



MEDITERRANEAN WETLANDS

WETLANDS PROVIDE US WITH INVALUABLE SERVICES

Wetlands are the ecosystem that contributes most to the subsistence and development of humanity.

- It is the most productive ecosystem on the planet: 24% of primary production on 6.4% of the surface of the continents.
- They provide invaluable services: water supply, regulation of floods and droughts, provision of fish and game, cultural heritage, and many others.
- They are excellent "climate buffers" to effectively mitigate the impacts of climate change (25 to 30% of the carbon stored on the global level.)

...and the most threatened

- More than half of the Mediterranean wetlands have disappeared since the beginning of the 20th century.
- Pressures on water resources are constantly increasing, worsening the situation of wetlands.

SOME EMBLEMATIC WETLANDS

- Lake Shkodra in Albania • Chott Ech Chergui in Algeria • Madriu-Perafita-Claror Valley in Andorra • Livanjsko Polje in Bosnia and Herzegovina • Belene Islands Complex in Bulgaria • Lonjsko Polje in Croatia • Larnaca Salt Lake in Cyprus • Wadi El Rayan Protected Area in Egypt • Camargue in France • Messolonghi lagoons in Greece • Hula Nature Reserve in Israel • Valli residue del comprensorio di Comacchio in Italy • Azraq Oasis in Jordan • Réserve naturelle de l'île des Palmiers in Lebanon • Ain Elzarga in Libya • Ghadira in Malta • Larvotto Marine Reserve in Monaco • Skadarsko Jezero in Montenegro • Oasis du Tafilalet in Morocco • Estuario do Sado in Portugal • Gornje Podunavlje in Serbia • Secoveljske soline in Slovenia • Doñana in Spain • Sabkhat al Jabbul Nature Reserve in Syrian Arab Republic • Lake Prespa in Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia • Chott El Jerid in Tunisia • Lake Burdur in Turkey • Wadi Gaza in Palestine

KEY FIGURES

Key figures of the 27 MedWet Mediterranean countries:

- Wetland area estimated to be between 19 and 26 million hectares
- 6.7 million hectares are designated as Ramsar Sites
- 30% of vertebrate species in the Mediterranean region are dependent on wetlands



FUNDING

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