



**MedWet**

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

Doc. MedWet/Com14 – 0

**MedWet/Com 14  
Virtual Meeting, 23 and 24 February 2021**

**Report and decisions of the MedWet/Com14**

**Members and observers present at the Meeting**

The following MedWet/Com members were represented at the meeting: Parties to the Ramsar Convention: Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Israel, Malta, Morocco, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey.

Other MedWet/Com members: International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN); World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF); Tour du Valat Research Institute for the Conservation of Mediterranean Wetlands, France; Ramsar Convention Secretariat;

The following observers were present: MAVA Foundation for Nature (Switzerland); ISPRA (Italy);

The MedWet/Com14 was carried out in 3 sessions:

Session 1: Tuesday 23, 14.30 - 17.00

Session 2: Wednesday 24, 10.00 -13.00 and 14.15 – 15.00

Session 3: Wednesday 24, 15.00 -17.00

## REPORT OF THE MEETING

### SESSION 1 - 23/02/2021

#### 14.30 – 15.00 / Opening of the meeting and adoption of the Agenda

1. The MedWet Coordinator, Alessio Satta, opens the meeting by welcoming and thanking the representatives of the countries, MWO, Tour du Valat, IUCN, WWF and the MAVA foundation for attending the meeting.
2. The Coordinator also thanks the team of interpreters and technical support for the good implementation of the dematerialized meeting.
3. The Coordinator recalls the agenda for the three sessions of MedWet/Com 14 and prompts participants to provide their consent to record the meeting in order to facilitate the drafting of the minutes.

#### **DECISION 1: The MedWet/Com ADOPTS the Agenda of the Meeting**

#### 15.00 – 15.30 / Icebreaking: Participants introduce themselves

4. The Coordinator invites all the participants to introduce themselves and to explain their role within their organisation.
5. The Coordinator recognizes that 17 countries are attending the meeting and therefore the quorum (14 countries) has been reached and exceeded. The meeting can then officially begin having a legal value according to the Terms of Reference in force.
6. The Coordinator proposes to the participants to anticipate the appointment of the new Chair due to the absence of the current MedWet Chair, Ms Hela Guidara from Tunisia, it is necessary.

#### **DECISION 2: The MedWet/Com DECIDES to anticipate the election of the Chair at the beginning of the Session 1**

#### 15.30 – 16.00 / Election of the Chair, Deputy-Chair and members of the MedWet Steering Group (MedWet/SG)

7. The MedWet Coordinator proposes to move on to the election of the new Chair and members of the MedWet Steering Group.
8. Miguel Aymerich Huyghues-Despointes announces the willingness of Spain to take up the chairmanship of the Steering Group. Spain has acted as an alternate in this last inter-sessional period and it is time to move on to a stronger commitment for this next period. The contact will be Ms Magdalena Bernues who will ensure the privileged link with MedWet.
9. The position of the Spanish Ministry is currently very favourable to this mandate thanks to its active role in wetland conservation and restoration, with a willingness to work on 20,000 hectares of wetlands in the country.
10. The Coordinator thanks Spain for its commitment considering the extremely difficult pandemic situation being experienced at present and for its support to the MedWet Initiative. The Coordinator asks the members to express their position on the offer of Spain.

11. The Tour du Valat thanks Spain in its turn for its commitment and underlined the need to reconcile with nature, considering MedWet as a force to take up this challenge.
12. Morocco supports Spain's proposal and praises the expertise and skills of Magdalena Bernues.
13. Algeria also supports Spain's candidacy.
14. Andorra also expresses its enthusiasm for the Spanish candidacy.
15. The Coordinator proposes to officialise this election and to officially appoint Spain as Chair of the MedWet initiative.
16. The Coordinator proposes to move on to the nomination of the other members of the Steering Group, in accordance with the fundamental principle of country rotation for the governance of MedWet.
17. After a brief consultation among participants, the following members are elected for the MedWet/SG: Algeria for Africa, Egypt as alternate; Croatia for Europe, Israel as alternate.
18. The Coordinator notes that due to the absence of Jordan, Lebanon, Syrian Arab Republic and Palestine at the meeting, it is not possible to nominate a representative for Ramsar Asia.
19. The Coordinator explains that while Lebanon's absence is justified given the current problems and total lockdown in the country, the situation in Jordan is more complex. In fact, the Ramsar Focal Point in Jordan has not given any response to the requests of the Ramsar and MedWet Secretariats for more than a year. In this sense, the Coordinator asks Tobias Salathé, representative of the Ramsar Secretariat, to express his views regarding the representation of the Asian part of the Convention.
20. Tobias Salathé suggests contacting the Focal point after the meeting and giving a mandate to the Steering Group in this regard.
21. The Coordinator recalls that Tour du Valat, IUCN-Med and WWF are three non-governmental members of the Initiative.
22. Israel comments on this point highlighting that WWF is made up of different national and international units and in this respect requests clarification about which branch of WWF is going to represent the NGO in the MedWet Steering Group.
23. The Coordinator replies that we are now keeping continuity with the former Steering Group and, of course, WWF will have the opportunity to express its willingness to confirm or not its membership to MedWet. The Steering Group will formulate the renewal of the WWF position within the MedWet/COM and the Steering group.
24. Tobias Salathé congratulates the very good complementarity between what MedWet is doing and what the Ramsar Convention is promoting at a global level which is, according to him, an excellent tool to do more for wetlands despite the difficult pandemic situation, pointing out that the challenges are increasing and so are the difficulties. He underscores the need for tools to address these challenges and invited the elected countries to become more involved, recalling that the Ramsar Convention stood ready to transmit the necessary information in this regard.
25. The Coordinator thanks Tobias Salathé and proposes to move on to the nomination of Gordana Beltram as Honorary Member. The proposal is unanimously approved and testimonies on Gordana's commitment and involvement are then expressed.
26. Spain expresses a feeling of extreme happiness with the election of Gordana as honorary member.
27. Morocco also supports the nomination of Gordana and recalled that the Slovenian presidency of the Steering Committee has been a very challenging period in the recent history of MedWet.
28. Albania describes the election of Gordana as one the very good MedWet moments.
29. Algeria thanks Gordana for his efforts deployed for wetlands and for MedWet and congratulated her on her appointment as honorary member.

30. France thanks Gordana for the work that has already been done and will be done for MedWet, considering that it is a great benefit for MedWet to keep such important and sympathetic forces for its future.
31. The Coordinator expresses the privilege of having started his experience at MedWet while Gordana was the Chair of MedWet. He praises his excellent work on both the legal and organizational aspects.

### **DECISION 3**

The MedWet/Com,

**NOMINATES** Spain as the new Chair and Egypt as Vice-Chair.

**APPOINTS** Gordana Beltram as the second honorary member of MedWet

**APPROVES** the following composition of the next MedWet/SG (Doc.MedWet/Com14-06):

- For Ramsar Africa: Algeria, and Egypt as alternate
- For Ramsar Europe: Croatia, and Israel as alternate
- Representative of Non-country members: WWF
- Permanent members: France and Tour du Valat
- Honorary Members: Thymio Papayannis and Gordana Beltram
- The MedWet Coordinator
- Permanent Observers: Ramsar Secretariat and IUCN-Med

**REQUESTS** the Steering Group to contact the member countries of Ramsar Asia to identify their referents for this region, and to ask WWF to identify which affiliate organization will be the WWF referent for MedWet.

### **16.00 – 16.30 / MedWet Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure: presentation and adoption (Doc.MedWet/Com14 – 2)**

32. The MedWet Coordinator presents the work carried out, over the last year, by the Steering Group and the Secretariat to reformulate the MedWet Terms of Reference (ToR) and the Rules of Procedure. The objectives were as follows: To comply with point 8 of Resolution XIII.9 of the Ramsar Convention and its Operational Guidelines, adopted with the Decision SC52-16; Clarify the roles of the different members and decision-making processes.
33. The Terms of Reference had to be adapted on the basis of the vote of this resolution. A legal officer was recruited to support the Secretariat in carrying out this work.
34. The MedWet Coordinator explains that, finally, the MedWet/SG have simplified the ToRs and the rules using the legal framework of the Ramsar Convention and that there had been lengthy exchanges on the ToRs beforehand by the members.
35. The MedWet Coordinator also recalls that the general structure and revisions proposed by members in previous exchanges were accepted by all on the basis of the responses sent by email. The Coordinator explains that the discussion and comments from members focused on two points: membership and contributions. For the first point, the inclusion of members who are not countries and honorary members has been considered. The structure has not changed from the previous ToR but the roles have been clarified. The number of non-country members is set at one-third of the country members. In relation to the second point, if a member does not pay its membership dues, the voting right is maintained for two years. The MedWet/SG will make a proposal to the MedWet/Com on the amount of the contributions of the non-governmental members.
36. Israel asks to clarify the point 9 on Suspension of Membership. After a first proposal from the MedWet Coordinator, Slovenia proposes the following final version of chapter 9 (Suspension, Rescission and Withdrawal) which is approved by all participants: “The rights of a member in

connection with elections and voting shall *ipso facto* be suspended when the dues of that member are **two** years in arrears. If a Member intends to reobtain the right to vote, it has to regularize the arrears of contributions due to MedWet. If the dues of a Member are more than **two** years in arrears, the matter shall be referred to the Meeting of the MedWet/Com, which may rescind all the remaining rights of the Member concerned. Such rescission shall be on such terms as the Meeting of the MedWet/Com may determine. Should a Member act in a manner seriously inconsistent with the requirements of article 9, the MedWet/Com may suspend that Member by a two-thirds majority of votes cast. [While under suspension, a member shall not be entitled to exercise any rights except the right of withdrawal. To reinstate the MedWet/Com after being suspended, the Applicant must complete the Admission procedure as stated in para.8] Any Member may withdraw at any time from membership of MedWet/Com by giving notice in writing to the Chair to that effect. The Member withdrawing shall not be entitled to any refund of membership dues paid.”

37. In addition, Rule 7 is updated to reflect the choice of "more than two years in arrears" for the remaining entitlement (para. 9): “MedWet/Com members are expected to cover their own travel and accommodation 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 Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). No representative will be sponsored from eligible countries that have not paid their membership dues to the MedWet baseline budget for [more than] **two** years in arrears.”

**DECISION 4**

The MedWet/Com,

**APPROVES** the new Terms of Reference of MedWet (DocMWC14-02).

**INVITES** the MedWet Secretariat to officially publish the ToR on its website and to disseminate it throughout the appropriate channels.

**16.30 – 17.00 / Approval of the Work Plan 2021 (Doc. MedWet/Com14 – 3) and the Budget 2021 (Doc. MedWet/Com14 – 4)**

38. The Coordinator presents the 2021 Action Plan and explains that it is a reference document including all the activities for 2021. In this sense, MedWet strives to make coherent the structuring of the activities with the Action Plan of the Ramsar Convention and this, in the perspective of the Framework for Action 2016-2030 of MedWet approved in Paris in 2016.
39. The Coordinator specifies that the actions will be presented during the first session of day 2 of this MedWet/Com but he mentioned: the realization of a remarkable work carried out with the different Directorates-General of the European Commission in the framework of the Green Deal with two proposals in the framework of the Horizon program. It should be noted that the partners are currently engaged in a search for funds to carry out the pilot activities; the deployment of the Network of Mediterranean Ramsar site managers and the conservation-related projects deployed in partnership with WWF and the Tour du Valat, thanks to the support of the MAVA Foundation; the progress achieved in the work carried out by the Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory (MWO) which will be presented by its Coordinator.
40. The Coordinator also recalls the MedWet's capacity in terms of communication and information and invites all members to take advantage of the newsletter as a privileged tool to disseminate and share information about the ongoing projects.

41. The Financial and Administrative Officer, Mrs. Isabelle Perroud, presents the balanced provisional budget of 495,000 euros for 2021. She highlights that the main financial gap of MedWet is due to the lack of the annual contribution of Italy since 2018.
42. The Financial and Administrative Officer recalls that France, the host country of MedWet, has maintained since 2019 a voluntary contribution of 51,500 euros, more than the expected contribution. France effectively confirms this willingness. In 2019, with the new distribution of quotas, France's contribution was decreasing. France has then chosen to maintain an annual contribution of 51,500 euros. She also highlights the important contribution of the French Biodiversity Agency (OFB) for the implementation of World Wetlands Day (WWD) in the Mediterranean. She continues emphasizing that the most relevant contribution to MedWet activities is ensured by the MAVA foundation, which has renewed its confidence in MedWet with a strong focus on communication and political advocacy, but also on restoration and knowledge transfer programs. This fund represents 60% of the resources. Moreover, MedWet has been able to grant 71,200 euros for 2021 thanks to its participation to the Interreg Tune up program for a concerted governance of marine protected areas.
43. The Financial and Administrative Officer also explains how the incomes are allocated. As foreseen in the ToR, the team is composed of a Coordinator; a Financial and Administrative Officer and a Communication Officer. MedWet also has, in its team, a network facilitator who works transversally on the projects and five other consultants hired directly on the projects. The financial burden therefore passes directly on the projects. The mission expenses in view of the pandemic have been budgeted at a minimum. The costs related to the WWD program for the financial support to NGOs and the network animation are maintained.
44. Jean Jalbert, the treasurer of the MedWet Secretariat, thanks the MAVA Foundation for its contribution and raised the question concerning the financial sustainability of the Initiative after 2022.
45. The Coordinator also thanks the MAVA Foundation and underlines that, after 2022, there will be no more donors fully dedicated to wetlands conservation as MAVA. To this end, MedWet has increased its effort to participate to the calls for projects launched by the European Union.
46. The Coordinator explains that MedWet is committed to other fundraising activities and in particular the Initiative is involved in the creation of the Consortium for Mediterranean biodiversity. Apart MedWet, the Consortium is composed by several international organisations as MedPan, Tour du Valat, IUCN, PIM and AIFM which work together to contribute collectively to ensure conservation of Mediterranean ecosystems. The involved organisations joined forces according to common values with the aim to support local and national actors for concrete actions to preserve biodiversity with a shared vision and strategy.
47. Antonio Troya, from IUCN-Med, recalls the need to focus on cooperation, which was the main idea behind the creation of this Consortium.
48. The Coordinator invites the countries to rely on MedWet's technical expertise and to think about joint fundraising.
49. After a brief discussion all the members approve the Action Plan and the Provisional budget for 2021.

**DECISION 5**

The MedWet/Com,

**APPROVES the Action Plan and Provisional Budget for 2021.**

## SESSION 2 – 24/02/2021

### 10.00— 11.00 / Reporting on MedWet Activities (Doc. MedWet/Com14 – 5)

50. The Coordinator starts the Session 2 by congratulating the Initiative on its 30th Anniversary (more information here) providing an overview on the key dates of its history. He recalled the mission, vision, galaxy and governance of MedWet. Special thanks is given to the previous Coordinators, among the people who built MedWet, namely Thymio Papayannis, Spyros Kouvelis, Adnan Budieri, Nejib Benessaiah and Delmar Blasco, as well as to the honorary member of MedWet, late Luc Hoffmann.
51. Jean Jalbert, Director of the Tour du Valat, takes the opportunity to pay tribute to the founders of MedWet, notably Thymio Papayannis, the first MedWet Coordinator, and Luc Hoffmann, one of the giants of conservation, who, both through their visions, their commitment, their obstinacy, have brought wetlands out of indifference.
52. The Coordinator gives the floor to the MedWet team who briefly reported on the main activities carried out by MedWet in the last two years, especially on: Communication and advocacy to reduce water abstraction and detrimental coastal development in Mediterranean coastal wetlands. More information [here](#); The Network of Mediterranean Ramsar Site Managers. More information [here](#); The MedWet Academy; Implementation of the World Wetlands Day in the Mediterranean. More information [here](#); Promoting multilevel governance for tuning up biodiversity protection in marine areas - TUNE UP. More information about the project [here](#).
53. The Coordinator explains that the written report (DocMWC14-05\_Activities Report 2019-2020) distributed to the MedWet members includes more details about the activities mentioned above.
54. The Coordinator of the Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory (MWO), Thomas Galewski, presents the activities of the MWO in the last 2 years and the future action for the period of 2021-2020.
55. The participants express gratitude with the activities undertaken and achievements of MedWet in the last two years. Ghislaine Ferrere, from France, congratulated the enormous work that has been carried out by the MedWet Secretariat in such a short period of time, as well as the progress made by the MWO, and suggested to foresee a dedicated workshop to exchange on specific issues and further explore some of the points raised. She also expresses the interest of France by the twining of Ramsar Sites as one of the future activities of the Network of Ramsar Site Managers and asked about the process modalities.
56. Gordana Beltram congratulates the MedWet team for its impressive work and reflects on the involvement of countries in the MedWet activities. She highlighted the involvement of Slovenia in the TUNE UP project through a public institution, as well as in advocacy, at EU level, for ecosystem restoration. She called on countries to work together in this direction.
57. Maria José Vinals, from Spain, also expresses her appreciation to the work done by the MedWet team and asked for more involvement of the universities and their scientific knowledge in the future work of MedWet.

### 11.00 - 13.00 and 14.15 – 15.00 / Countries presentations

58. The Coordinator invites countries to present their experiences and best practices on the Ramsar Convention implementation.
59. Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Croatia, France, Israel, Morocco, Serbia, Spain, Turkey presents their work related to wetlands. All the presentations are available [here](#).
60. All the participants congratulate the MedWet/SG for the opportunity to share experiences and good practices among members of MedWet.



### **SESSION 3 – 24/02/2021**

#### **15.00 – 16.45 / Building the next Strategic Plan of the MedWet Initiative**

61. The new Chair of MedWet, Maria Magdalena Bernués, introduces the Session by recalling the 3 elements that characterize MedWet: 1) MedWet is a regional intergovernmental network operating within the framework of the Ramsar Convention on the ground for the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of Mediterranean wetlands; MedWet is the official Ramsar initiative and is the only one where national authority has been involved for 30 years in a framework of common respect and trust; and 3) MedWet encourages governments to adopt policies and the implementation of actions on the ground for the conservation of Mediterranean areas and creates synergies with various governmental and non-governmental partners.
62. The Chair explains that to ensure the success of MedWet's strategic plan considering the strengths of the network, MedWet must be able to respond satisfactorily to its objectives and mission.
63. The Chair also recalls the main objective of MedWet which consists of contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2016-2030 in the Mediterranean region through the effective implementation of strategic plans of the Ramsar Convention on wetlands.
64. The Chair asks the group what kind of actions to adopt for the next MedWet strategic plan. In this sense, key objectives must be fulfilled: Evaluate the main threats to wetlands and their magnitude; Promote better governance; Coordinate and improve the network of managers; Promote better governance and management of wetlands; Work with national authorities to re-establish priorities for wetland restoration; Promote pilot projects for adaptation to climate change; Promote the green economy, sustainable agriculture and fishing and ecotourism; and Promote and develop awareness and education programs for decision-makers and site managers.
65. The Coordinator intervenes by explaining that MedWet's new strategic plan will be implemented from 2022 for a period of 3 years and asks participants to feel free to share their ideas but with clear objectives and try to cover ambitious objectives.
66. The coordinator introduces Maria Jose Vinals, who worked on a first structure of the strategic action plan and invites the participants for a brainstorming on the strategic planning of MedWet. The Coordinator proposes to take this as an opportunity for exchange and prepare a well-developed document and share it with the group and by the summer and plan a new session by June / July in which the group can go in detail, also in the meantime the group will have to study the possibility of finding additional funds from the countries for specific actions while taking into account the fact that to contribute to MedWet the countries have quite bureaucratic procedures and therefore are limited to the contribution and cannot be increased.
67. The Coordinator also introduces the issue of the opportunity for member countries to identify additional funds to dedicate to specific activities as for instance pilot actions that could be implemented in each country with the coordination of MedWet. Another example is the organization of the Wetlands Forum presented in the first part of Session 2 which includes the rotation principle (e.g. every two years). The hosting country could lodge and take care of the logistics when the other members and MedWet could raise funds for covering travel and experts costs. This activity would allow building a new era of cooperation for the Mediterranean Ramsar sites managers.
68. Marie-José introduces the work with 3 questions: How to think about new activities? What role could MedWet have? How to seek funds to carry out the new activities?
69. Maria Jose explains that the context is different and that the main donors will no longer be available and that the group has already become familiar with new technologies and a new, more collaborative way of working.



70. Maria Jose Vinals opens a brainstorming session and proposes that Spain produce a manual of good practices on wetland conservation and tourism (annex table 1).
71. She proposes to the participants to contribute to the table (annex1).
72. France explains that it is difficult to get involved at this stage and that we should put in the boxes where we have more experiences on such and such a subject and perhaps it would be possible to initiate the second meeting.
73. Morocco explained that the session should have been scheduled for the morning and that it would not be able to engage in such or such activities and that the document should be in French.
74. Morocco adds that Medwet contributes to the implementation of the Ramsar strategic plan, and that the objectives need to be aligned with what is required of the strategic plan.
75. Morocco also highlights the opportunity to implement a capacity building program dedicated to Ramsar site managers focusing on adaptation to climate change, green economy and nature-based solutions.
76. Albania has no specific suggestions at the moment.
77. Turkey suggests sharing with the group the Turkish experience in the preparation of management plans, wetland legislation and rehabilitation projects. Turkey proposes to learn more about the experiences of other countries in monitoring studies on integrated management and transboundary management of wetlands.
78. Egypt suggests that MedWet should find common priorities in order to have good actions planned for the future.
79. Malta suggests having more time to assess the Ramsar goals applied to the Mediterranean in the next trienniums and expresses the need to discuss them internally.
80. Andorra offers to share their experiences on mountain wetlands management. Andorra is a mountainous region with a large number of wetlands and proposes to establishes a working group for wetlands in mountain environments.
81. The Coordinator explains that MedWet's work in recent years has focused more on coastal wetlands as it is the main scope of the M3 Programme funded by MAVA and explains that it is a good idea to propose a wetlands and mountains working group.
82. Portugal comments that the topics are relevant and that it is important to involve research centres and universities. Portugal expresses its interest in working more on the development of the Ramsar sites managers network focusing on the implementation of education centers to wetland literacy- and also on wetlands inventory.
83. Bulgaria expresses its willingness to work on the 2030 global biodiversity strategy and explains that it finds too early to define concrete objectives and initiatives for the MedWet Strategic Planning.
84. Croatia agrees with the other countries and expresses the need for members to share their experience in the management plans and proposes that MedWet should support countries in the implementation of the Ramsar Convention and help update inventories and analyse gaps. Croatia will propose more concrete activities after the meeting.
85. Antonio Troya (IUCN-MED) also considers that create the conditions for exchanging wetlands conservation practices among members is a priority for MedWet. He proposes to launch well-targeted common initiatives to increase cooperation between each country including cooperation with NGOs. Antonio proposed to define a common position to bring a Mediterranean vision and to develop guidelines to guide Mediterranean action for national contributions to climate change, water and wetlands which are central aspects for climate change adaptation and mitigation plans. Medwet should contribute to the post Covid-19 restoration plans drafted within the EU and provide nature-based solutions within sector policies. Finally, Antonio explains that IUCN-MED is ready to collaborate with all governmental and non-governmental members to develop these actions.

86. Jean Jalbert (Tour de Valat) considers that MedWet should focus its action on cooperation, policy and communication. .... Exchange of experiences to bring messages to the local, national and regional level. -Root on ground such as the network of managers. -Consolidate the network of managers to be effective and feed political decisions. The themes: -Climate changes have 20% more effect in the Mediterranean in states like Andorra as well as in coastal areas. -Wetlands have a role in dampening the effects of climate change. -Innovation and post-COVID recovery plans: MedWet must have a role for the Health and Environment theme (ZH can constitute barriers or corridors for pathogens depending on how it is managed). - MedWet must be a precursor within Ramsar to propose collaborations in these themes. - MedWet should benefit from the UN decade on restoration and wetlands.
87. Algeria suggests focussing on the following topics: Exchange among countries on Ecotourism; Policy Intersectoral management at country level; wetlands restoration and Climate change.
88. Luís Costa (MAVA) congratulates the good work done by the Secretariat, the countries and other organizations in the region following their good presentations and explained the following ideas. He considers that there is however a lack of communication between partners, civil society, research organizations and government agencies working for wetlands conservation. He reminds that MAVA is currently promoting this dialogue through their final projects, and that MedWet and Tour de Valat are in a good position to facilitate this dialogue because they are active part of MAVA programmes for Mediterranean wetlands conservation. According to MAVA priorities for the next period until 2022, Luís underlines the need to get further funding to cover the current financial dependency on MAVA of 60% of MedWet's budget, and to consider the transboundary issues inviting countries sharing wetland sites and water resources to work bilaterally and in cooperation. At the same time the existing EU planning and funding framework should be explored to support MedWet in the implement of its strategic framework (e.g. green deal, ecosystem restoration, nature-based solutions, etc.) that can replace MAVA funds.
89. Marie José explains that the MedWet/Com must act as a driver of change for wetland conservation and that MedWet should extend its field of action beyond communication and policy and advocacy.
90. Slovenia suggests focussing on climate change and agriculture in wetlands (e.g. developing good practices to combine wetlands and sustainable agriculture). Slovenia also suggests securing funds for the future through the EU system and working on transboundary wetlands at regional level, climate change and nature-based solutions and sustainable agriculture to tackle water scarcity.
91. Tobias Salathè (Ramsar Convention) congratulates the MedWet team for the work accomplished so far and expresses his concern on the phasing out of MAVA after 2022 when it will be necessary to identify other sources of financing even beyond the EU funds. MedWet has become intersectoral by working with different partners and this challenge is still there. MedWet needs to work more with the ministries of planning and territorial development / housing. He considers that MedWet must work more on cultural aspects and local development as well as on the salt marshes, the issue of Health and Wetlands and finally agrees that climate change and Nature-based solutions.
92. Serbia suggests focussing on fundraising for wetlands conservation and on strengthening bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the region.

#### **16.45 - 17.00 / Conclusions**

93. In order to conclude the nomination of the new MedWet/Steering Group the Chair gives the floor to Egypt and Algeria to understand their availability for covering the post of Deputy chair.
94. Egypt expresses its willingness to ensure the role of Deputy chair with the consent of Algeria.

95. Algeria approves Egypt's proposal.
96. France congratulates Egypt and thanks Algeria for the response.
97. Marie-José suggests preparing a document with these ideas to facilitate the exchange and achieving results to consolidate the spirit of collaboration while considering the financial aspect. Finally, she explains that resilience is not only for wetlands but also for managers and all members of MedWet.
98. The Coordinator proposes to close the session pointing out the following issues: Improve the networking capacity at all levels: CSOs and governments; Try to fill this gap with the newsletter; Capacity building focusing on managers and focal points; Politics and advocacy; Education: environmental awareness with Mediterranean NGOs; Animate important discussions with our partners: nature-based solutions, blue carbon issues, climate change mitigation, etc.; Prepare a document based on the discussions and use it as a basis for our next strategic work plan.
99. The Chair officially concludes the MedWet/Com 14 highlighting once again that has been a very intense and interesting meeting with a lot of new interesting ideas and a great spirit of collaboration among members. She congratulates the MedWet team and the coordinator Alessio Satta. She also congratulates the interpretation team for its excellent work. Finally, she thanks the members of MedWet Com for the election of Spain as Chair of the MedWet/Steering Group.

## **Annex 1: Summary of decisions taken by the MedWet/Com13**

**DECISION 1: The MedWet/Com ADOPTS the Agenda of the Meeting**

**DECISION 2: The MedWet/Com DECIDES to anticipate the election of the Chair at the beginning of the Session 1**

**DECISION 3**

The MedWet/Com,

**NOMINATES** Spain as the new Chair and Egypt as Vice-Chair.

**APPOINTS** Gordana Beltram as the second honorary member of MedWet

**APPROVES** the following composition of the next MedWet/SG (Doc.MedWet/Com14-06):

- For Ramsar Africa: Algeria, and Egypt as alternate
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- The MedWet Coordinator
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**REQUESTS** the Steering Group to contact the member countries of Ramsar Asia to identify their referents for this region, and to ask WWF to identify which affiliate organization will be the WWF referent for MedWet.

**DECISION 4**

The MedWet/Com,

**APPROVES** the new Terms of Reference of MedWet (DocMWC14-02).

**INVITES** the MedWet Secretariat to officially publish the ToR on its website and to disseminate it throughout the appropriate channels.

**DECISION 5**

The MedWet/Com,

**APPROVES** the Action Plan and Provisional Budget for 2021.



# MedWet

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

## Annex 2: List of participants

	Name/Surname	Role	Institution	Country	Email adress
<b>COUNTRY MEMBERS</b>					
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