



**MedWet**

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

Doc. MedWet/Com15 – 05

**MedWet/Com 15**  
**Geneva, Switzerland, 6 November 2022**

**The Mediterranean Alliance for Wetlands**  
**An update**

## I. The Mediterranean Alliance for Wetlands today

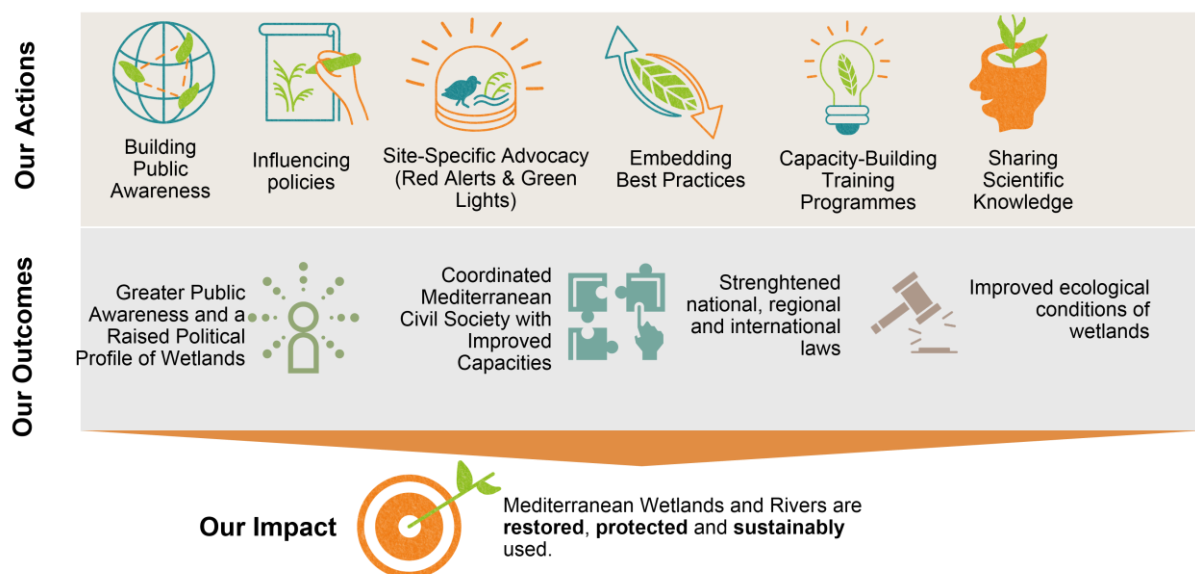
The “Mediterranean Alliance for Wetlands” was established in 2017 as a partnership arrangement among NGOs and scientific organisations dedicated to mobilizing civil society organizations and research institutions to increase the capacity of Mediterranean societies to ensure the protection, restoration and sustainable use of wetlands and rivers.

Today, the Mediterranean Alliance for Wetlands (MAW) is a network of 32 organisations across 15 Mediterranean countries

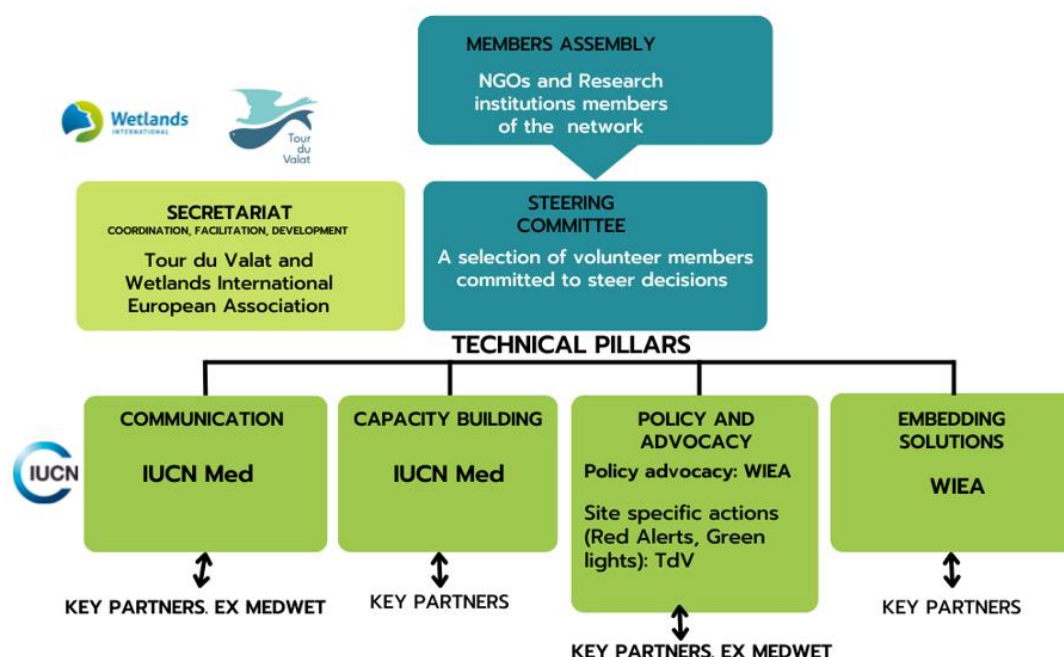


Taking into account the closing of the MAVA Foundation at the end of 2022, a major donor to – among many others – most Alliance members, these 32 Mediterranean civil society organisations decided to foster their collaboration in the framework of the MAW and agreed on an updated theory of change and organisation for the period 2023-2025.

This new theory of change can be summarized as followed:



The organisation and governance of the MAW is presented below:



The Policy and advocacy component relies on three components:

Two site specific advocacy mechanisms developed by the Alliance and led by Tour du Valat

- the “Red Alert », an early warning system aimed at identifying threats in specific wetlands, such as infrastructure development, and negotiating with the organisations at the origin of the threat in order to find a solution to remove it.
- the “Green light », a mechanism aimed at promoting wetlands restoration (based on mapping and surveys of areas to be restored) by supporting organizations in developing models to initiate a basis for dialogue with relevant authorities

And the Policy Advocacy component to influence policies, led by Wetlands International. .

In terms of funding, MAW members have submitted projects to donors. So far funding is secured from the French Development Agency (AFD) and the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation, and other proposals to private foundations that shown an interest in the Alliance’s work are in process. In addition, the MAVA Foundation, before closing down, has generously provided funding for enabling the functioning of the MAW for the triennium 2023-25.

For more information, see [www.medallianceforwetlands.org](http://www.medallianceforwetlands.org)

## II. MedWet and the Mediterranean Wetlands Alliance

In 2018, MedWet/Com took note of the existence of the Alliance, its objectives, structure and governance. It acknowledged the contribution of the Alliance to the conservation and sustainable use of Mediterranean wetlands and the need for properly articulating the actions of MedWet and the Alliance. In that respect MedWet/Com agreed that the MedWet Secretariat becomes a permanent observer to the Alliance and is invited to all meetings of its governing bodies (see Doc MedWet/Com13-8 in annex).

For the coming triennium 2023-2025, taking into account the MedWet Strategic Workplan and the new organisation of the Alliance, it is proposed to:

- Maintain the role of permanent observer in the Mediterranean Alliance for Wetlands, the MedWet Secretariat being invited to meetings of the MAW governance bodies,
- Acknowledge the high potential for collaboration between MedWet and the Alliance, especially in the fields of communication, policy and advocacy, and therefore request (1) an optimal flow of information between the MedWet Secretariat and the MAW, (2) the coordination of activities in fields of common interest and, when relevant, (3) joint activities.

Annex



**MedWet**

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

Doc. MedWet/Com13 - 8

**MedWet/Com 13**  
**Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 21-29 October 2018**

**The Mediterranean Wetlands Alliance**

## I – Background

### *MedWet and Civil Society Organisations*

1. MedWet as the first regional initiative of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of international importance, has been instrumental in structuring and promoting operational collaboration between governmental and non-governmental organizations for conservation and sustainable management of wetlands. One of the key assets of MedWet, as an implementation mechanism, which makes it original and well fitted for fulfilling its mission, is its membership, bringing together Mediterranean countries and entities, the Ramsar Convention Secretariat, intergovernmental institutions, international non-governmental organisations and national institutions specialized in wetland issues.
2. This added-value has been recognised many times, especially in projects where the legitimacy of governments together with the flexibility and capacity to deliver of NGOs proved to be a key condition of success.
3. Twenty years after the launch of MedWet, the International Symposium on Water and Wetlands, held in Agadir (Morocco) on February 2012, was aimed at celebrating the achievements of MedWet during this first period, and at agreeing on the key challenges for the next twenty years.
4. In the conclusions of the symposium<sup>1</sup>, endorsed by MedWet in 2012, the participants stressed the urgent need “to consolidate actions by civil society and locally active non-governmental organisations, support their activities for environmental education and awareness and encourage their networking at regional, national and Mediterranean levels”
5. The MedWet Framework for Action 2016-2030, adopted by the 12<sup>th</sup> MedWet/Com meeting held in Paris (France) in February 2016, contains three actions targeted at the civil society:
6. - Action 8.4: Promote and support the participation of civil society organizations and citizens in citizen-based science schemes to complete and update the information contained in wetlands inventories;
7. - Action 15.2: Reinforce the network of non-governmental organizations at national and regional level to enable them to be part of the MedWet Framework for Action; the Ramsar International Organization Partners should play an important role for this to happen;
8. - Action 19.2: Provide training programmes on organizational management and strategic planning for local and national non-governmental organizations that are willing to be involved.
9. Finally, between 2014 and 2017, the MAVA Foundation funded project “Wetlands Sentinels in the Maghreb: the MedWet Network of Civil Society” was implemented by WWF Mediterranean Programme Office in partnership with Tour du Valat / Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory and Wetlands International. Its aim was to contribute to promoting the conservation and sustainable participatory management of selected priority wetlands in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia through the development and capacity building of an active and efficient community of civil society in the three countries. This project allowed to improve the capacities of 18 NGOs.

---

<sup>1</sup> See « Proceedings of the International Symposium on Water and Wetlands in the Mediterranean ; From Grado to Agadir, the next 20 years” P.145

## 2 – Rationale

10. It appears today that the consequences of the 2008 economic crisis, of the 2011 « Arab spring » have had negative repercussions throughout the Mediterranean basin, leading to a lasting political and institutional instability, a weakening of a number of governmental institutions and a decline of environmental concern in political agendas.
11. At the same time, civil society has experienced a strong development in various countries, with in many cases a great need for capacity-building in technical, communication and organizational fields to build their professionalism, prerequisite to become credible and recognized by the public institutions.
12. Considering this context, a number of national and international NGOs, as well as research organisations, donors and the MedWet Secretariat met in October 2016 in order to discuss how to better engage the civil society, raise its voice and responsibility for the conservation and wise use of wetlands.
13. In January 2017 they decided to establish the “Mediterranean Wetlands Alliance” (see Terms of References in Annex<sup>2</sup>), a partnership arrangement among NGOs and scientific organisations dedicated to mobilizing the civil society towards the sustainable use of wetlands, with the following objectives:
  14. - Exchange and share in a multidirectional manner between the members of the Alliance available knowledge, sources, experiences, best practices, information on model sites, etc...
  15. - Build the capacity of the wider civil society so that they can become more effective in actions related to wetland management and conservation.
  16. - Effectively link local, national, regional and international actors or initiatives through innovative concrete joint actions on prioritized policy and strategic topics.
  17. - Increase the public profile of wetlands through joint communication using scientific knowledge and concerted messages around the value of wetlands, their multiple advantages and benefits they provide to people and the potential solutions they hold in the face of global change, including climate change.
18. The Alliance is set as an informal mechanism, without legal existence, meant to be as light, flexible and inclusive as possible.
19. To date the Mediterranean Wetlands Alliance is composed of 24 members from 14 countries: 6 international NGOs, 12 national NGOs and 6 scientific organisations.

## 3 - Relations between MedWet and the Mediterranean Wetlands Alliance

20. The Alliance intends to contribute to the effective conservation of Mediterranean wetlands and the wise use of their resources, values and services, which is a clear contribution to MedWet’s mission.
21. Alliance members felt that, taking into account the nature of NGOs and their contribution to the Mediterranean society, the Alliance should have its own governance scheme and retain its autonomy from MedWet. However, it should develop its activities in close

---

<sup>2</sup> This updated version of the Mediterranean Wetlands Alliance Terms of References is still in draft format and will be discussed and endorsed during the Alliance meeting to be held on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2018 in Tunisia. Therefore a validated version these ToRs will be available for the MedWet/Com13 meeting.

collaboration with the MedWet Secretariat, the Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory and the MedWet Scientific and Technical Network, in order to optimise synergies and to ensure a good flow of information.

22. In this respect, it is proposed to consider the Mediterranean Wetlands Alliance in the framework of the “Agadir Commitments”. This mechanism endorsed by MedWet in 2012 is “an evolving roster of projects and actions contributing to the conservation and wise use of Mediterranean water-related ecosystems in an exemplary manner, developed by governments of the Mediterranean region, regional and international organisations, non-governmental organisations or the private sector. These “Agadir Commitments” are aimed at promoting synergy and best practices among all these actors. The MedWet Secretariat should act as a clearing house for projects listed therein and maintain updated information on their progress, facilitate exchange of information and cooperation between the actors.”
23. In this context, MedWet/Com is invited to :
24. - Acknowledge the existence of the Mediterranean Wetlands Alliance and its potential to effectively contribute to achieving MedWet’s mission,
25. - Authorize the MedWet Secretariat to act as a permanent observer in the Mediterranean Wetlands Alliance, being invited to meetings of its governance bodies,
26. - Request the MedWet Secretariat to follow the activities of the Mediterranean Wetlands Alliance and report to the MedWet Steering Group.