Intergovernmental Consultations on Nature-Based Solutions
First Global Consultation, 15 and 16 May 2023

Submission by the Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands

_Wetlands are exceptionally valuable as Nature-Based Solutions (NBS)_

Wetlands, as defined in Article 1.1 of the Convention on Wetlands, are exceptionally valuable ecosystems, providing a range of critical ecosystem services including carbon sequestration and storage, particularly in peatlands and coastal and marine ecosystems; ensuring safe and reliable supplies of drinking and irrigation water; many goods and services connected with food security; and management against water-related disasters such as droughts and floods (Global Wetland Outlook: Special Edition 2021).

Contracting Parties to the Convention on Wetlands (172, as of April 2023) commit to pursuing wise use of all wetlands. Wise use of wetlands is defined as the maintenance of their ecological character, achieved through the implementation of ecosystem approaches, within the context of sustainable development (Resolution IX.1, Annex A (COP 9, 2005)).

_The Convention on Wetlands provides an intergovernmental framework for advancing wetland NBS_

Contracting Parties to the Convention on Wetlands have recognized the role of wetland protection, restoration and wise use in addressing climate change as well as in Disaster Risk Reduction, including e.g. Resolution XI.14 (COP 11, 2012) which, inter alia, urges parties to maintain or improve the ecological character of wetlands to promote the ability of wetlands to contribute to nature-based climate change adaptation, Resolution XII.13 (COP 12, 2015), which encourages contracting parties to integrate ecosystem management related considerations, in particular relating to wetland and water management, in their national disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation strategies; and Resolution XIII.20 (COP 13, 2018), which recognizes that nature-based solutions such as protection of coastal wetlands are important measures for climate-change adaptation and mitigation.

Resolution XIV.17 (COP 14, 2022) _The protection, conservation, restoration, sustainable use and management of wetland ecosystems in addressing climate change_ acknowledges that the concept of nature-based solutions is cognizant of and in harmony with the concept of ecosystem-based approaches; recognizes that nature-based solutions, as defined by the Fifth United Nations Environment Assembly, and ecosystem-based approaches, as identified under the Convention on Biological Diversity, delivered by wetland ecosystems, are among the approaches that can significantly contribute to climate action, while simultaneously providing biodiversity and human wellbeing benefits and addressing other social, economic and environmental challenges; and encourages Contracting Parties, in their plans and strategies, to deploy wetland-focused nature-based solutions or ecosystem-based approaches. The resolution also explicitly recognizes the need to identify innovative financial solutions and incentives for supporting environmentally, socially and economically sustainable investment in wetland ecosystems protection, conservation, restoration, sustainable use and management to address climate change, while simultaneously providing biodiversity and human wellbeing benefits, in particular for developing countries.
Resolution **XIV.16** (COP 14, 2022) encourages Contracting Parties to integrate existing national wetland policies into national sustainable development strategies... and, where appropriate, deploy wetland focused nature-based solutions or ecosystem-based approaches ... in alignment with Resolution XIV.17.

**A range of efforts are underway in the context of the Convention on Wetlands relevant to the global consultation on NBS**

Pursuant to Resolution **XIV.17**, the Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands and the Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative (MedWet), in collaboration with other Ramsar Regional Initiatives and other interested parties, work towards the establishment of a community of practice on addressing climate change through the protection, conservation, restoration, sustainable use and management of wetland ecosystems, including to facilitate global cooperation among regional initiatives and other partners and stakeholders by sharing scientific and technical support and information on accessing financial resources.

During the 2023-2025 triennium, and pursuant to Resolution **XIV.17** as well as Resolution XIV.14, the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) of the Convention on Wetlands will undertake a desktop study of success stories of nature-based solutions or ecosystem-based approaches to protecting, conserving, restoring, sustainably using and managing wetland ecosystems to address climate change and achieve other co-benefits.

Case studies are presented in three fact sheets on wetland restoration prepared for the launch of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, showcasing how restoration of blue carbon ecosystems, peatlands and other wetlands provide cost-effective and viable nature-based solutions. Relevant case studies and other information are also contained in outputs of the Convention’s Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP), including in **Briefing Note 10** Wetland restoration for climate change resilience, **Briefing Note 13** on Wetlands and agriculture, which recommended enhancing the role of wetlands (whether natural or constructed) as nature-based solutions to reduce pollutant transfer in the environment, as well as in other outputs of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel. **Technical Report 11** Global guidelines for Peatland Rewetting and Restoration highlights the potential of peatland restoration for climate change mitigation. A range of **Handbooks** on different aspects of wetland management have been prepared.

**Further information:**
Jerker Tamelander
Director, Science and Policy, Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands
tamelander@ramsar.org