

MEMORANDUM OF CO-OPERATION

between the

**SECRETARIAT OF THE CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION
AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT OF THE
WIDER CARIBBEAN (Cartagena, Colombia, 1983)**

and the

BUREAU OF THE CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

PREAMBLE

WHEREAS, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has a global mandate to provide leadership and encourage partnerships in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing and enabling nations and people to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations, to its Member States as well as other non-member States;

WHEREAS, the Action Plan of the Caribbean Environment Programme of the United Nations Environment Programme promotes regional co-operation for the protection and development of the marine environment of the Wider Caribbean Region;

WHEREAS, the Regional Co-ordinating Unit of the United Nations Environment Programme for the Caribbean Action Plan (CAR/RCU) serves, amongst other functions, as the Secretariat of the CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT OF THE WIDER CARIBBEAN (hereinafter referred to as the Cartagena Convention), adopted in Cartagena in 1983 and having entered into force in 1986, to facilitate the direction and co-ordination of the legal implementation of the Action Plan;

WHEREAS, the Contracting Parties to the Cartagena Convention work to develop plans, programmes and measures for the sustainable development of the marine environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (as defined by the Cartagena Convention);

WHEREAS, CAR/RCU provides information, advice, training and guidance to the Contracting Parties and other Governments and entities regarding the protection and development of the coastal and marine environment in the Wider Caribbean Region;

WHEREAS, the protocol to the Cartagena Convention on Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW Protocol) provides for the protection of special coastal and marine areas and wildlife and the protocol Concerning Marine Pollution from Land-based Sources and Activities (LBS Protocol) proposes to prevent, reduce and control marine pollution in the Wider Caribbean Region;

WHEREAS, by their entry into force, the SPAW and the LBS Protocols will, for their further implementation, provide for Scientific, Technical and Advisory Committees to meet periodically under the guidance of their Contracting Parties;

WHEREAS, the CONVENTION ON WETLANDS, signed in the Iranian city of Ramsar on 2 February 1971 (hereinafter referred to as the Ramsar Convention), whose Instrument is safeguarded by UNESCO, entered into force in 1975, and its mission is the conservation and wise use of wetlands by national action and international co-operation as a means to achieving sustainable development throughout the world;

WHEREAS, the Ramsar Convention works through a global network of policy and decision makers, scientists and practitioners in its Contracting Parties and those scientists and experts from international and national partner organisations, and has established an inter-sessional Standing Committee, a Scientific and Technical Review Panel, and a variety of programmes and projects, under the guidance of its Conference of the Contracting Parties;

WHEREAS, the Ramsar Convention established a secretariat known as the Ramsar Bureau co-located with the IUCN - The World Conservation Union at their Headquarters in Switzerland to administer and co-ordinate the day-to-day implementation of the decisions of the Conference of the Contracting Parties and the Standing Committee;

WHEREAS, the Ramsar Convention maintains a List of Wetlands of International Importance that includes a number of sites which are located in the Wider Caribbean Basin; and

WHEREAS, the Conference of the Contracting Parties to Ramsar in its Resolutions VII.4, VII. 18 and VII.27 (Action 7.2.8) recognises the strategic importance of mutual co-operation between the Regional Seas Conventions and the Ramsar Bureau in the conservation and wise use of wetlands at the regional level, as well as of extending participation in the Ramsar Convention to the small island developing states;

PRESENTLY, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mandate of the Parties to both the Cartagena and the Ramsar Conventions, the Regional Co-ordinator of the CAR/RCU and the Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention, in the interest of the mutual advantages in the cost-effective attainment of the objectives of the Conventions and performance of the work required by the Intergovernmental

Meetings, the Conferences of the Contracting Parties and the Ramsar Bureau, wishing to avoid duplication of effort in areas of common interest and to formalise and strengthen their co-operation in the spirit of an efficient and effective partnership, mutually agree as follows:

Article I. OBJECTIVE

CAR/RCU and the Ramsar Bureau agree to co-operate with a view to enabling the Contracting Parties to the Conventions to identify and strengthen conservation of those sites of international importance which are relevant to both Conventions.

Article II. STATEMENT OF WORK

The activities to be undertaken as part of this MOC will be based on the respective work programmes of each Secretariat as approved by their Contracting Parties and will be discussed and developed by the CAR/RCU and the Ramsar Bureau and may, amongst others, include:

- a. Exchange of information on a regular basis on specific aspects of the work of the Cartagena and the Ramsar Conventions which are of mutual interest and benefit;
- b. Sharing of information with the view to identification of potential wetland sites that may meet the criteria for nomination as Wetlands of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention or as protected areas under the SPAW Protocol, in cases where not yet designated. Potential Ramsar sites may include areas protected under the SPAW Protocol or habitats of species protected under the SPAW Protocol. Consideration will also be given to transboundary sites and habitats that may be critical for the protection of watersheds and catchments and/or home ranges of migratory species that may have outstanding global significance and which are shared by two or more Contracting Parties to both Conventions;
- c. Sharing of information and co-operation to encourage Contracting Parties to the Cartagena Convention to, where appropriate, designate as Wetlands of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention those sites which meet the criteria for listing;
- d. Sharing of information and co-operation to encourage Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention to, where appropriate, designate and manage protected areas and habitats of protected species for those areas meeting the criteria for protection under the SPAW Protocol and species listed in the Annexes;
- e. Sharing of information, databases, staff mission reports and other materials to enable early detection of threats to Ramsar sites or areas and species protected under the Provisions of the SPAW Protocol and to facilitate the necessary studies and analyses to identify measures for the mitigation of such threats, issues and needs;

- f. Co-ordination and/or joint development of programmes and projects for strengthening conservation of specific sites which are recognised by the two Conventions, and for identifying and mobilising human and financial resources and the knowledge to implement such programmes and projects, including emergency actions to mitigate potential and ascertained threats, including in particular those sites included in the so-called Montreux Record of Ramsar sites where the ecological character has changed, is changing, or may change;
- g. Efforts by each Secretariat, in the course of its own promotional activities, to promote recruitment of additional Contracting Parties to the other Convention and, in the course of work to implement its own Convention's obligations, to promote implementation of the other Convention by existing Contracting Parties; and,
- h. Informing of, in the spirit of partnership, and inviting each other's participation, and concurrence as appropriate, in meetings, including statutory meetings, studies and review, field visits to sites, design, organisation and conduct of training, education and information dissemination activities, and other activities to promote the Parties' awareness of the relationships between the application of the two Conventions.

Article III. IMPLEMENTATION

Nothing in this MOC shall constitute a legal or financial obligation of either party. Any financial or legal commitments that arise from measures taken to implement this MOC will be made on a case-by-case basis and agreed to by both parties.

This MOC shall enter into force upon signature by the two parties. It may be reviewed at any time agreed upon by the parties in the development of the work programme and may be amended at any time by mutual agreement.

Either party may terminate this MOC by giving notice in writing to the other not less than six months in advance.

On behalf of the Ramsar Bureau,

Delmar Blasco Secretary General Ramsar Convention on Wetlands Signed in GENÈVE

Date : 1/05/00

On behalf of CAR/RCU,

Nelson Andrade Regional Co-ordinator, CAR/RCU UNEP
Signed in GENÈVE

Date: 1/05/00