
ДЕКЛАРАЦИЯ ПО ВОДНО-БОЛОТНЫМ УГОДЬЯМ ЧЕРНОГО МОРЯ

BLACK SEA WETLANDS DECLARATION. From 18 to 22 October 1993, 55 wetland experts from 6 Black Sea coastal countries, 12 wetland experts from further 9 countries and 11 representatives of international organizations met in the Scientific Centre for Sea Ecology in Odessa, Ukraine. The workshop has been organized by the Ministry of Environment Protection of Ukraine, the International Waterfowl and Wetland Research Bureau (IWRB) and the Ukrainian Ornithological Society. Financial assistance has been provided by the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries of the Netherlands.

The participants agreed unanimously:

- (A) That the extensive and ecologically important wetlands of the Black Sea basin provide valuable goods and services to the local people. These include flood control, retention of pollutants and sediments, support of commercial fishery, recreation potential and provision of important habitat for wildlife, including numerous endangered species.
- (B) Despite this contribution to human health and welfare and to global biodiversity, there has been a massive loss and degradation of these ecosystems throughout the Black Sea basin which has had disastrous economic, social and ecological consequences. All this is critical during the current transition period, deep economic crisis and personal hardships the peoples are exposed in some countries of the Black Sea basin.

The combination of these factors urgently necessitates **sustainable management of the Black Sea basin wetlands for the benefit of the regional peoples and of global biodiversity.**

To move toward this goal, the following initial steps are suggested:

- (1) The countries of the Black Sea basin should prepare detailed national wetland action plans for the sustainable use of all wetland resources on their territories. An example of a positive step in that direction is the national plan accepted in Bulgaria focused on most important wetlands of the country.
- (2) International collaboration among 6 Black Sea countries and other countries involved should be increased with regard of technical and financial mutual assistance. This will be substantially facilitated whether all Black Sea countries will attend Contracting Parties of the Ramsar Convention.
- (3) Acknowledging existing bilateral and multilateral cooperation, international funding organizations and especially the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the European Investment Bank and the European Community should be requested for necessary grants to stimulate development and implementation of the national action plans which would provide input to the overall Black Sea Biodiversity Strategy. The funding organizations should ensure that the structural development projects they support will not contribute directly or indirectly to the wetland degradation.
- (4) International nature conservation organizations such as BirdLife International, IUCN, IWRB and WWF should intensify and coordinate their efforts for the Black Sea wetlands, mainly by providing technical and financial support for national and local initiatives.
- (5) Future activities for the wetlands of the Black Sea basin should maintain advantage of initiatives developed elsewhere and should be facilitated through appropriate workshops and training programmes. Under this context, the MedWet initiative, a joint effort of the Ramsar Bureau, EC, European governments, IWRB, WWF and la Station Biologique de la Tour du Valat should be considered. In their turn, the MedWet partners should share their experience and results with the Black Sea

countries, especially in the fields of inventory and monitoring, management, training, education and public aware mould, the use of research achievements.

- (6) In view of the present situation, urgent efforts should be taken for the public aware moulding as to the wetland values at all levels, as well as to the wetland resources inventory and assessment as a tool for planning and management. Priority should be given to regional workshops on these topics to be held. The effective protection and reasonable use of the wetlands require a clear understanding of their value by the local people. Such an aware is to be cultivated through an active participation of the local NGOs and those who use the wetlands in wetland management efforts. This may be facilitated through the establishment of local wetland committees.
- (8) IWRB should immediately circulate this Declaration among appropriate national and international agencies and stimulate the above actions. The conclusions of the present workshop should be promptly published in English and Russian to make it widely available in the Black Sea basin countries.
- (9) The warmest gratitude is due to the Government of Ukraine acted as a host of this workshop with a request to extend its efforts to encourage the inter-regional collaboration in favour of the Black Sea basin wetland protection.

Odessa, Ukraine 22 October 1993