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## **Wetlands International pledge for action under the Nairobi Work Programme**

### *Mainstreaming wetland conservation and restoration in climate change adaptation policy and practice*

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#### **Introduction**

Wetland ecosystems play a critical, yet underrated role in accomplishing climate change adaptation. Important wetland services such as flood mitigation, storm protection, prevention of salt intrusion and mitigation of erosion all significantly contribute to creating increased resilience against the projected impacts of climate change. Wise management and restoration of wetlands can help both nature itself, as well as hundreds of millions of wetland dependent people to better adapt to climate change. Particularly in developing countries, ecosystem based adaptation might prove a powerful and cost-effective approach. This action pledge describes Wetlands International's activities towards mainstreaming the functioning of wetland ecosystems in climate change adaptation policies and practice, in line with the areas of work, objectives and calls for action as identified under the Nairobi Work Programme.

#### **Overall objectives**

This action pledge directly responds to the following areas of work as identified under the Nairobi work programme (NWP):

- Adaptation planning and practices
- Research
- Technologies for adaptation

More specifically it will target the following NWP objectives as described under the above areas of work :

- “(...) collecting, analyzing and disseminating information on past and current practical adaptation actions and measures, including adaptation projects, short- and long-term adaptation strategies, and local and indigenous knowledge; and facilitating communication and cooperation among and between Parties and relevant organizations, business, civil society, and decision makers, and other stakeholders.
  - Exchange information on experiences, lessons learned, constraints and barriers of past and current adaptation measures and actions, and the implications for sustainable development.
  - Promote understanding of response strategies, including early warning systems and local coping strategies, and of lessons learned that can be applied elsewhere.
  - Assess ways and means to support adaptation, and address barriers and constraints to its implementation”

- “Promoting research on adaptation options and the development and diffusion of technologies, know-how and practices for adaptation”.
- “Enhance work on different aspects of technologies and know-how for adaptation, as well as on opportunities for their transfer, development and diffusion, taking into account local and indigenous knowledge and experiences as well as ongoing activities and projects”.

The action pledge also responds to the following calls for action:

- “Assess the adaptive capacity of communities in coastal zones”.
- “Analyze and widely disseminate practical experiences on adaptation programs, practices and activities”.
- “Document, analyze and disseminate appropriate local adaptation knowledge and practices”.
- “Promote and enhance adaptation planning and practices at the water basin level”.

## Project purpose

Under its activities targeted at climate change adaptation, Wetlands International aims to:

- Assess the full potential contribution of wetland functioning towards accomplishing adaptation to climate change and to evaluate the consequences of changing wetland conditions for adaptation strategies.
- Share experiences on community-based wetland conservation, restoration and management as a practical tool for climate change adaptation; mainstream the role of relevant services provided by wetland ecosystems in local, national and international adaptation policies and plans.
- Contribute to increased adaptive capacity of wetlands and surrounding areas through improved wetland conservation and restoration focusing specifically on i) coastal areas, ii) high altitude wetlands and iii) wetlands in the Sahelian zone.
- Contribute to and increase understanding of ecosystem based adaptation for merging and delivering integrated approaches to adaptation.

See Annex 1 for an overview of linkages between Wetlands International’s adaptation objectives and objectives, areas of work and calls for action as identified under the NWP.

## Activities

The following activities will be undertaken to accomplish above-mentioned objectives and aims:

- Contribute to the literature review performed by the Ramsar Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) on the potential contribution of wetland-related ecosystems services towards accomplishing climate change adaptation.
- Collaborate with scientists in research projects targeted at increasing insight into the functioning of wetlands in relation to climate change adaptation; facilitate the development of comprehensive research programmes.
- Contribute to the development of monitoring tools for assessing adaptive capacity of wetland ecosystems.
- Facilitate sharing of insights on wetland-functioning in relation to climate change adaptation among research institutes, NGOs, corporates and governments.
- Ensure mainstreaming of the functioning of wetland ecosystems in adaptation policies and plans through contributions to scientific and technical panels and processes of relevant Conventions and global fora, local and national policy and plan development and international expert groups.
- Develop “Training of Trainers” (ToT) capacity building modules on wetlands and climate change adaptation targeted at local policy makers and practitioners in developing countries.
- Take steps to facilitate mainstreaming of traditional community adaptation practices in wetland areas in national and international policies and plans.

- Pilot the role of wetlands in climate change adaptation through community-based wetland conservation and restoration initiatives, focusing on coastal regions, high altitude areas and the Sahelian zone.
- Replicate and upscale successful wetland-based adaptation measures.

## **Stakeholders involved**

Wetlands International involves other stakeholders in its work by i) informing policy makers of local, national and international governments, corporates as well as conventions dealing with climate change on the relevance of wetland management in climate change adaptation, ii) by collaborating with research institutes, consultancy agencies and NGOs to acquire full insight into the potential role of wetland conservation in climate change adaptation and iii) by working with conservation and development NGOs, local communities, governments, corporates and donors to pilot and share practical experiences on wetland-based climate change adaptation.

## **Expected results: concrete outputs envisaged to achieve objectives**

- Documentation (for scientific and policy audiences) on the potential contribution of wetlands ecosystems towards accomplishing climate change adaptation.
- Monitoring tools for assessing adaptive capacity of wetland ecosystems developed.
- PowerPoint presentations, documentaries and training modules developed, highlighting the role of wetland management in climate change adaptation.
- Formal and informal expert groups and partnerships established for sharing knowledge on wetlands and adaptation.
- Actual wetland-based adaptation projects implemented; successful approaches replicated and expanded.
- Wetland ecosystems functioning considered in local, national and international adaptation strategies.
- Concrete, quantified and achievable targets identified for wetland-based adaptation measures; priorities established.

## **Indicators of achievement**

- Scientific assessments of wetland functioning in relation to climate change adaptation.
- Increased consideration of the role of sustainable resources management and restoration of wetland ecosystems under convention agreements and local, national and international policies and plans.
- Rate of replication and upscaling of current Wetlands International adaptation initiatives.

## **About Wetlands International**

Wetlands International is the only global NGO dedicated to the conservation and wise use of wetlands. We work globally, regionally and nationally to achieve the conservation and wise use of wetlands, to benefit biodiversity and human well-being. Wetlands International is an independent, not-for-profit organisation, supported by Government membership from all continents of the world, extensive specialist networks and volunteers. It currently works through 20 country offices in Central and Eastern Europe, Africa, South, East and North Asia, Oceania and South America; with its head office in Wageningen, the Netherlands.

For more information on our activities see [www.wetlands.org](http://www.wetlands.org) or contact Kemi Seesink at [kemi.seesink@wetlands.org](mailto:kemi.seesink@wetlands.org).

## Annex 1. Linkage between Wetlands International adaptation objectives and areas of work, objectives and calls for actions as identified under the Nairobi Work Programme

Wetlands international project purpose	NWP areas of work	NWP objectives	NWP calls for action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess the full potential contribution of wetland functioning towards accomplishing adaptation to climate change and to evaluate the consequences of changing wetland conditions for adaptation strategies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Promoting research on adaptation options and the development and diffusion of technologies, know-how and practices for adaptation”.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Document, analyze and disseminate appropriate local adaptation knowledge and practices”.</li> <li>“Assess the adaptive capacity of communities in coastal zones”.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share practical experiences on community-based wetland conservation and restoration as a practical tool for climate change adaptation; mainstream the role of natural ecosystems in local, national and international adaptation policies and plans.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adaptation planning and practices</li> <li>Technologies for adaptation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“collecting, analyzing and disseminating information on past and current practical adaptation actions and measures, including adaptation projects, short- and long-term adaptation strategies, and local and indigenous knowledge; and facilitating communication and cooperation among and between Parties and relevant organizations, business, civil society, and decision makers, and other stakeholders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Analyze and widely disseminate practical experiences on adaptation programs, practices and activities”.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribute to increased adaptive capacity of wetlands and surrounding areas through improved wetland conservation, restoration and management focusing on i) coastal areas, ii) high altitude wetlands and iii) wetlands in the Sahelian zone.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adaptation planning and practices</li> <li>Technologies for adaptation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Enhance work on different aspects of technologies and know-how for adaptation, as well as on opportunities for their transfer, development and diffusion, taking into account local and indigenous knowledge and experiences as well as ongoing activities and projects”.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Promote and enhance adaptation planning and practices at the water basin level”.</li> </ul>