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Taking action on climate change: Ramsar Convention on Wetlands

What have you done for water today?

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VIII.3

RECOGNIZING that climate change may substantially affect the ecological character of wetlands and their sustainable use, and AWARE of the potentially important role of wetlands in adapting to and in mitigating climate change;



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What sort of wetlands ?...

- ✓ **Natural and human-made**
- ✓ **inland/freshwater:**
 - *marshes, rivers, lakes, reservoirs, rice fields, fish ponds, etc.*
- ✓ **coastal/marine**
 - *mangroves, lagoons, estuaries, coral reefs, sea grass beds, salinas, etc.*

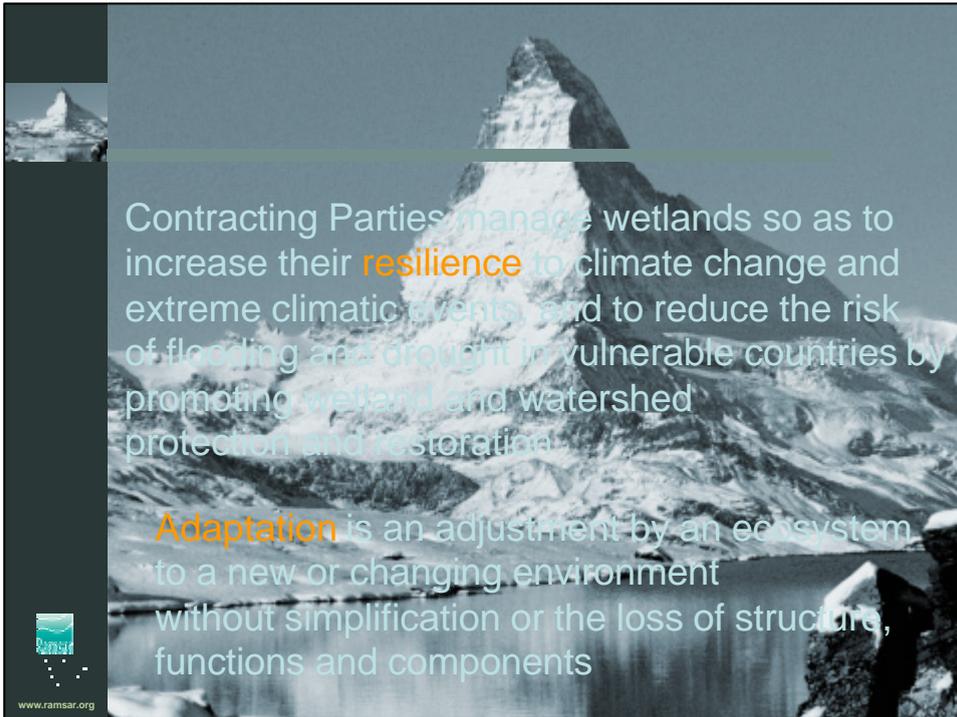


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RECOGNIZING the work of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its subsidiary bodies and their understanding that education, training and public awareness are vital tools in addressing issues of climate change, and NOTING the contribution that the Ramsar Convention's **Communication, Education, and Public Awareness Programme**, can make to addressing issues of climate change and wetlands;



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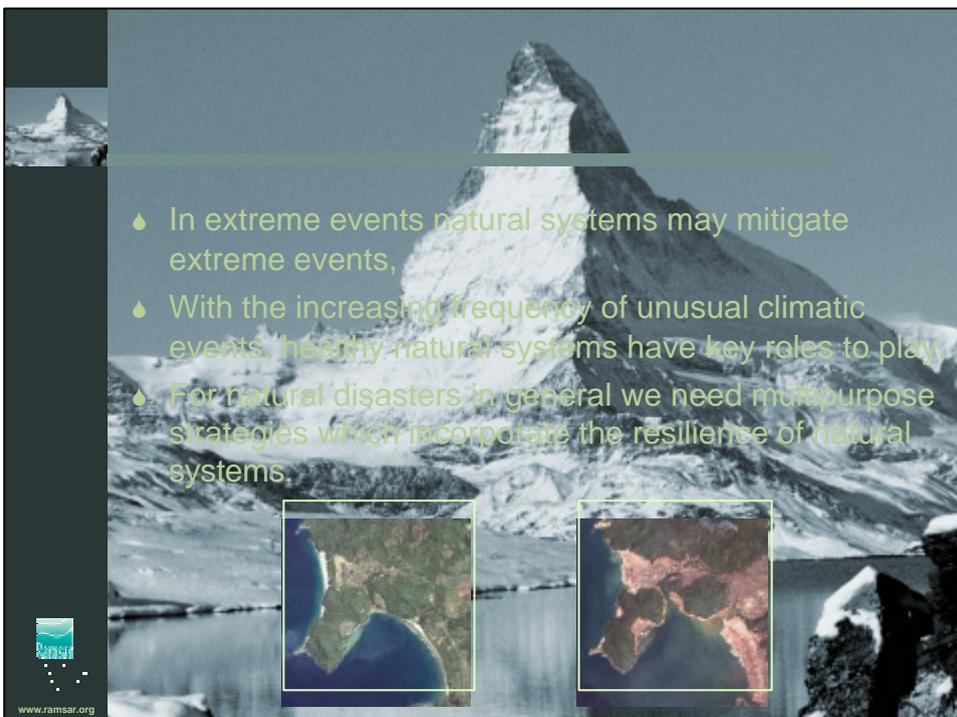


Contracting Parties manage wetlands so as to increase their **resilience** to climate change and extreme climatic events, and to reduce the risk of flooding and drought in vulnerable countries by promoting wetland and watershed protection and restoration.

Adaptation is an adjustment by an ecosystem to a new or changing environment without simplification or the loss of structure, functions and components.



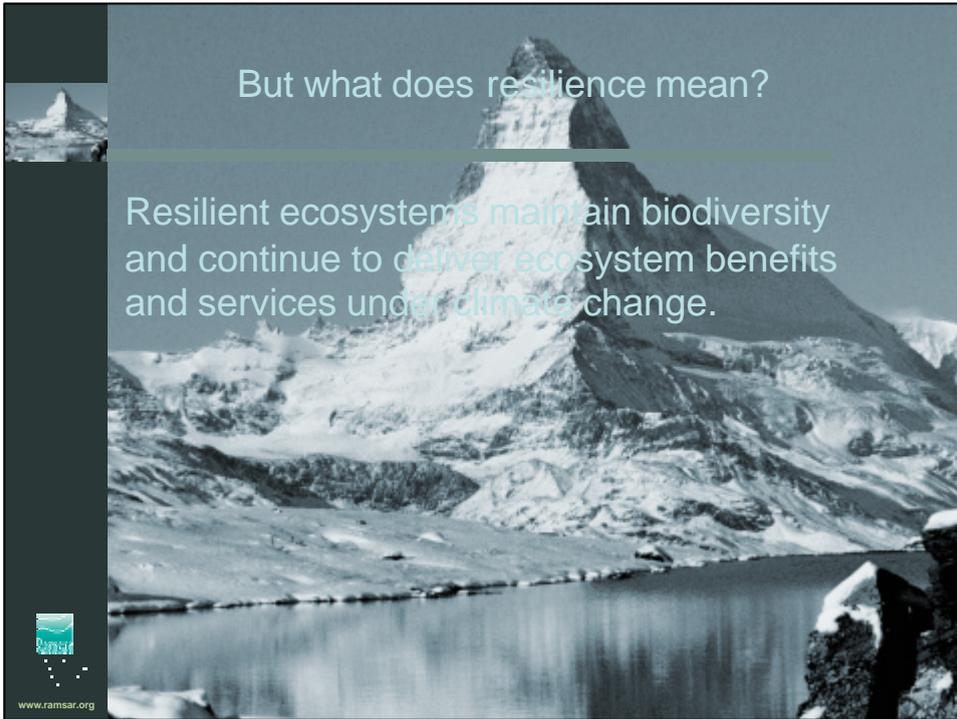
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- ◆ In extreme events natural systems may mitigate extreme events,
- ◆ With the increasing frequency of unusual climatic events, healthy natural systems have key roles to play
- ◆ For natural disasters in general we need multipurpose strategies which incorporate the resilience of natural systems.



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But what does resilience mean?

Resilient ecosystems maintain biodiversity and continue to deliver ecosystem benefits and services under climate change.



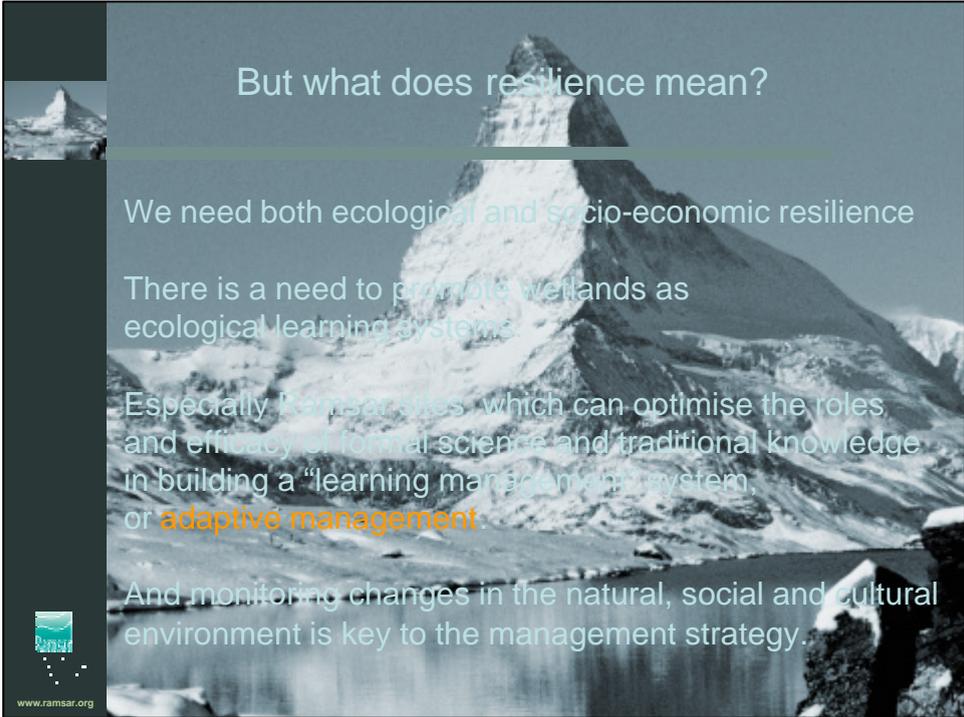
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And this includes the concept of *restoration of wetlands* so that ecosystem service delivery can be returned, maintained, and enhanced, even if there is some change in the species.



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But what does resilience mean?

We need both ecological and socio-economic resilience

There is a need to promote wetlands as ecological learning systems.

Especially Ramsar sites, which can optimise the roles and efficacy of formal science and traditional knowledge in building a “learning management” system, or **adaptive management**.

And monitoring changes in the natural, social and cultural environment is key to the management strategy.



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All this moves towards

- Identifying the key new issue
- balancing water for human needs
- and water for ecological needs.

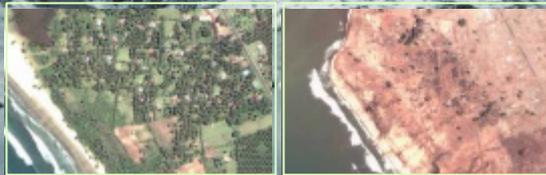


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Balancing Human needs and ecosystem restoration

- ◆ Rehabilitation of degraded coastal wetlands,
- ◆ Development of coastal greenbelt (mangroves and coastal forests) for storm damage protection,
- ◆ Climate change implications and coastal zone management



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A way forward

- ◆ Any strategy must include rational land use planning incorporating communities' views, sensitivity and promoting sustainable livelihoods.
- ◆ The ecosystem approach, incorporating conservation and wise use of natural resources, and based on adaptive management, is key



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