



Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority



Ramsar Regional Initiative on Black Sea Coastal Wetlands - BlackSeaWet

Terms of Reference of the Management Body

1. Introduction

The idea behind this initiative was born in 2007 during the International Conference “Stopping the loss of Black Sea Coastal Wetlands: the establishment of a regional initiative”, held on 30th -31st October 2007 in Odessa, Ukraine. Participants representing government ministries, national and international non-government organizations, international conventions and scientific institutions from Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, the Russian Federation, Turkey and Ukraine discussed the basis for future cooperation in the field of wise use of coastal wetlands along the coast of the Black and Azov Seas. The workshop was organized by Wetlands International Black Sea Programme in cooperation with the Ministry of Environmental Protection of Ukraine and financed by the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Food Quality and the Dutch Embassy in Kiev, Ukraine.

With reference to the Operational Guidelines for Regional Initiatives adopted with Resolution X6 at the 10th Meeting of Parties to the Convention on Wetlands and attached as Annex I, and in accordance with Decision SC 40-18 of the 40th Meeting of the Ramsar Standing Committee in May 2009, the Black Sea Coastal Wetlands Initiative has been recognized as partially meeting the Regional Initiative Operational Guidelines and has been endorsed provisionally for one year.

2. Mission and objectives

The overall aim of new regional initiative – BlackSeaWet is to catalyze the conservation and sustainable development of Black Sea coastal wetlands within the framework of the Ramsar Convention.

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The main strategic targets are:

- Stopping the loss and degradation of wetlands and their biodiversity by 2020;
- Ensuring that wise use principles are integrated into coastal zone development;
- Involving local people in planning and decision-making;
- Completing the ecological network around the Black and Azov Sea coasts;
- Combining wetland conservation in integrated water resource management and integrated coastal zone management approaches;
- Promoting wetlands conservation in sectors whose activities are contributing to degradation.

The operational objectives of the Initiative are the following:

- Harmonize and strengthen conservation legislation in the Black Sea Countries and improve its implementation and enforcement;
- Ensure that wetland conservation, management and restoration is underpinned by biodiversity, environmental and socio-economic information and knowledge based on standard approaches to monitoring, data processing and storage;
- Raise awareness of civil society, government and private sector stakeholders of wetlands values, degradation and wise use approaches;
- Reach out to key sectors whose activities affect wetlands and develop innovative approaches and best practices to wetland management;
- Maintain a regional coordination mechanism for governments, civil society and the private sector that will act as a focus for regional wetland conservation, including information management and exchange, research, communication, resource mobilization and capacity development;
- Mainstream wetland conservation into frameworks, strategies, plans and implementation of integrated approaches to water resources and coastal zone management, including river basin management.

3. Legislation

All activities of the Initiative are governed by international, European and national laws, conventions or directives:

- Specific national legislation for the coastal areas;
- Ramsar Convention on wetlands;
- European Birds Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds;
- European Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora;
- European Water Directive 2000/60/EEC for the Community action in the field of water policy.

4. Partners

Each country participating into the Initiative will be represented by 2 persons, one delegated by the national Ministry of the Environment and one from an important national NGO activating in the environmental protection. The countries are: Russia, Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey and Georgia (all Black Sea countries).

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The Management Body will also include representatives of the Ramsar Convention Secretariat, Black Sea Commission Secretariat and international non-governmental organizations active in the region (Wetlands International, BirdLife International, WWF – Danube Carpathians Programme, IUCN).

Other organizations and individuals may participate in the BlackSeaWet meetings and activities, as observers, by invitation.

5. The Management Body responsibilities

- taking strategic decisions for the Initiative;
- approving the Initiative Annual Working Plan;
- monitoring the implementation and results of the Annual Working Plan
- elaboration and promotion of initiatives and projects on local level;
- considering reports and recommendations from the Interim Coordination Unit and adopt decisions on any action needed, as appropriate;
- approving the creation of the National Working Groups;
- strengthening integration among different sectors at the local, national and regional levels, relevant institutions, governmental bodies and international organizations, the private sector and other stakeholders;
- drafting proposals for attracting the international financial assistance;
- addressing regionally important environmental problems related to integrated coastal zone management;
- developing possible scenarios and assessment of their probable consequences concerning the most acute threats to Black Sea coastal wetlands;
- developing, analyzing and defining appropriate indicators for comprehensive description of the status of the Black Sea coastal wetlands;
- defining and disseminating good practices and tools for the decision-making process in the framework of the Initiative, at regional level;
- identifying existing international programs of relevance for solving regionally important or transboundary problems of the Black Sea coastal wetlands management and drafting specific project proposals for these programs;
- support all activities or/and proposals for conservation of the coastal wetlands areas;
- approval of the CEPA-related activities of the Initiative.

6. Cooperation with other institutions and structures activating in the Black Sea area

- The Management Body shall closely cooperate with the all advisory groups of the Black Sea region in order to propose the coherent and cost effective measures for the protection and rehabilitation of the Black Sea coastal wetlands;
- The Management Body shall cooperate with respective institutions in the region and joint groups that may be set up from time-to-time,

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particularly on such issues as land use planning, pollution assessment, environmental impact assessment, coastal erosion, sustainable development of tourism and fisheries, aquaculture, strategic environmental impact assessment, etc;

- Twinning projects and joint activities with the appropriate bodies of the relevant global and regional conventions and agreements;
- Coherence and coordination of concurrent activities with international research programs, projects and bodies;
- Cooperation and direct involvement of all the stakeholders from the Black Sea coastal areas to promote sustainable development;
- Best use of expertise and institutional capacity within the region and, within its work plan approved on an annual basis, cooperate on specific tasks with any institution or expert that it considers appropriate;
- Strengthening and further development of the existing network;
- Increased involvement of general public, NGOs and local communities in the activities.

7. Reporting requirements

- elaborate, regulate fill in, and update questionnaire on the relevant issue to the implementation of the impact on the coastal environment;
- prepare and submit its draft work plan to the two months prior the annual meetings for approval and incorporation in the ...
- compile the annual report on current status of integrated coastal zone management and pressure on the coastal environment in a format approved by the Commission two month prior the regular meeting;
- prepare and submit a chapter on coastal pressure and threats to the *State of the Environment of Black Sea Report*, every five years, six month prior the Meeting of the Ministers of Environment,
- the ... shall convene a meeting at least once a year but no later than two months prior the Commission Meeting. More meetings could be convened upon availability of funds and urgency of issue under discussion. The Minutes of each meeting should be delivered to the Permanent Secretariat not later than 10 days after the meeting.