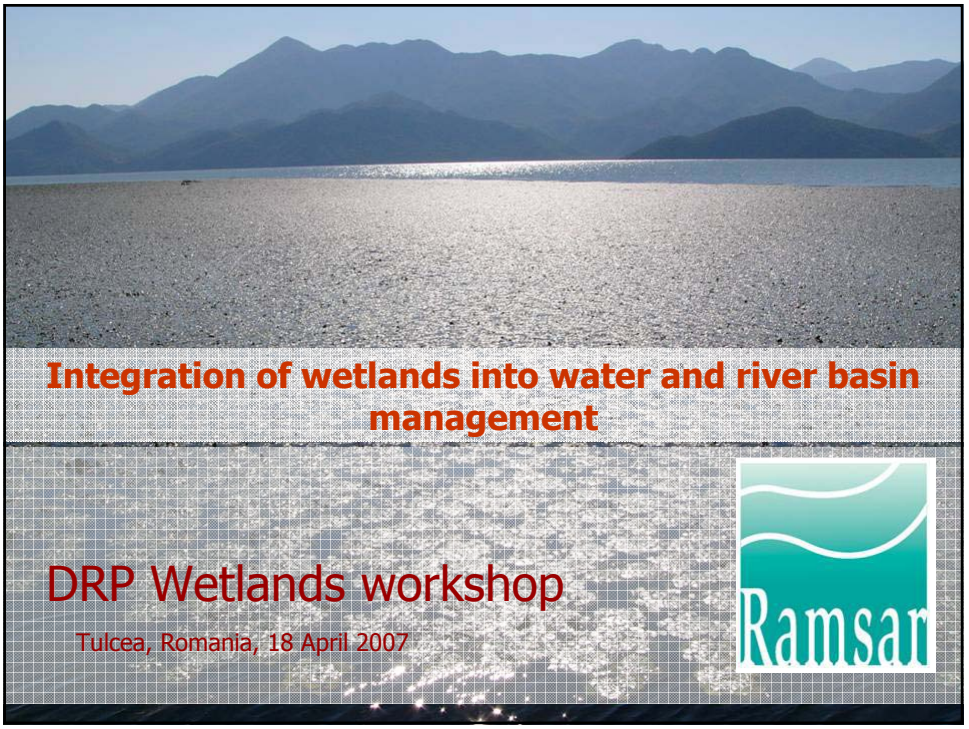


Integration of wetlands into water and river basin management

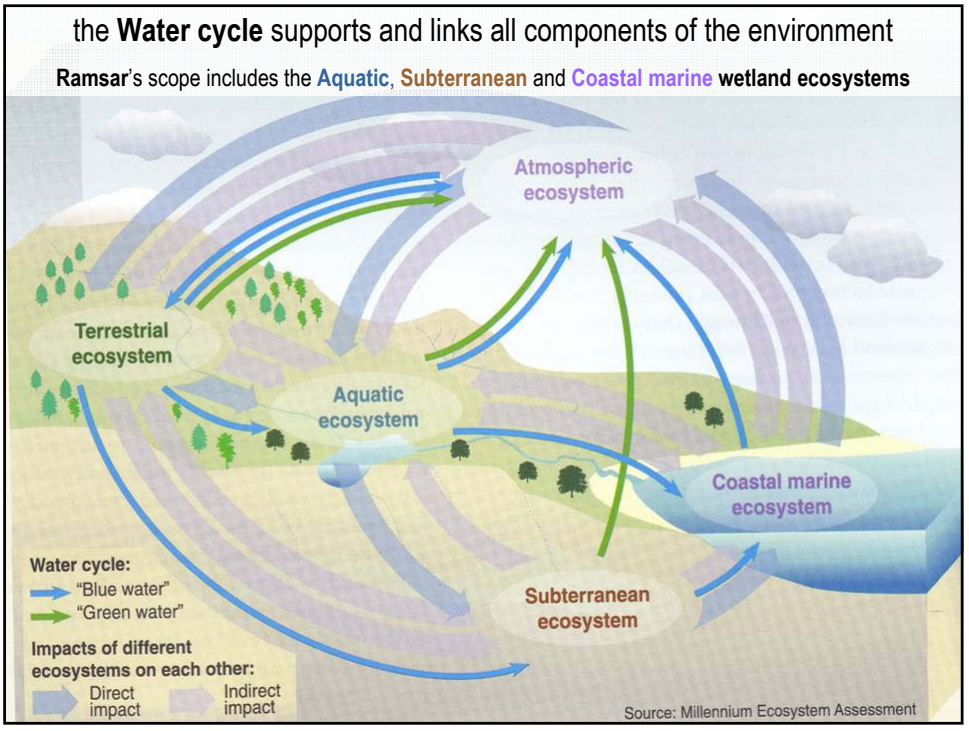
DRP Wetlands workshop

Tulcea, Romania, 18 April 2007

Ramsar

the **Water cycle** supports and links all components of the environment

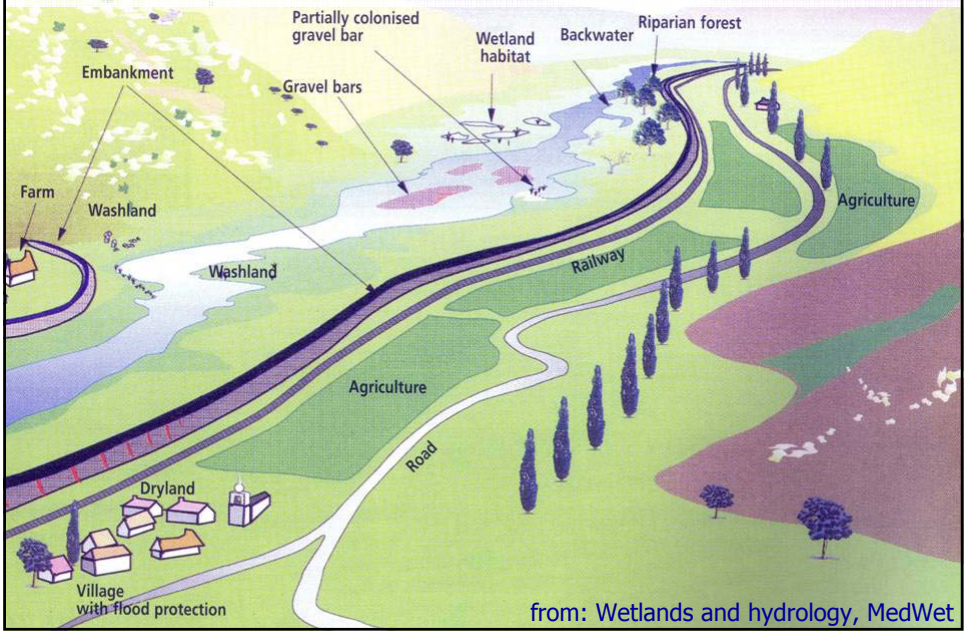
Ramsar's scope includes the **Aquatic**, **Subterranean** and **Coastal marine** **wetland ecosystems**



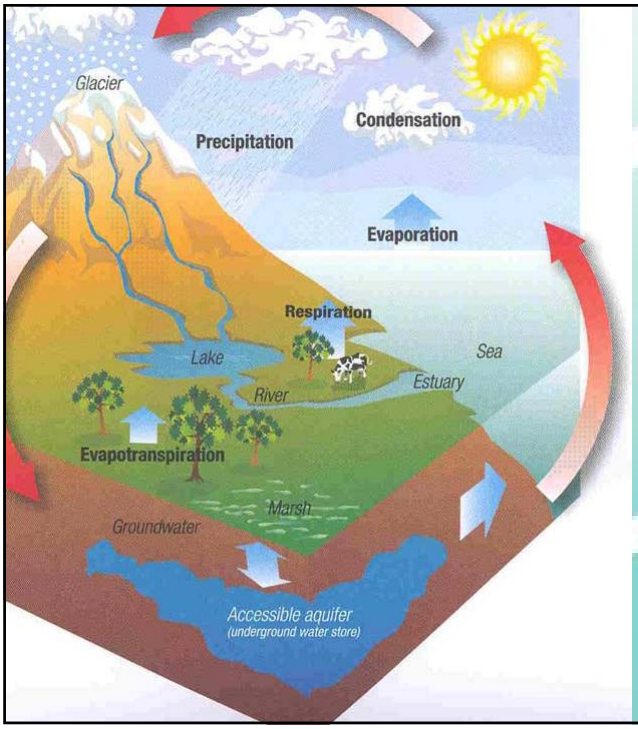
why Ramsar is concerned about water

- **no water – no wetlands**
- water is key to **sustainable development**: water supplies depend on **ecosystems** that capture, filter, store and release water, such as wetlands, mires, forests and soils
- **over-abstraction** of water from wetlands and their water catchments can lead to significant ecological damage, desertification and human disaster
- wetlands perform important **hydrological functions**, including groundwater recharge, water quality improvement and flood alleviation

integrating flood protection and natural river flow processes



from: Wetlands and hydrology, MedWet



the **hydrological cycle** is regulated by **ecological processes**

changes in the broader environment **affect water**

impacts on ecosystems **in one part** of the **hydrological cycle** can be **propagated to others** – often with unforeseen results

why wetland managers need to be involved in water management

- wetlands require **sufficient** water of adequate **quality** at the right **time** and in the right **pattern** in order to maintain ecological functions
- water users may have **water requirements that conflict with those of wetland ecosystems**: there is a need to negotiate tradeoffs and different ways of sharing the benefits of water
- it is essential to integrate **water needs of wetlands** into **water resources planning** to make sustainable water allocation decisions
- water resources management needs **cross-sectoral** policy, governance and institutional processes
- Ramsar recognizes the **interdependence** of man and his environment and the fundamental ecological functions of **wetlands** → IWRM

Ramsar's water-related **principles**

- **sustainability** as a goal
- **clarity** of process to all stakeholders
- **equity** in participation and decision-making
- credibility of **science**
- **transparency** in implementation
- **flexibility** of management
- **accaccountability** for decisions

full text in Resolution IX.1 Annex C on:
www.ramsar.org**/res/key_res_ix_01_annexc_e.htm**

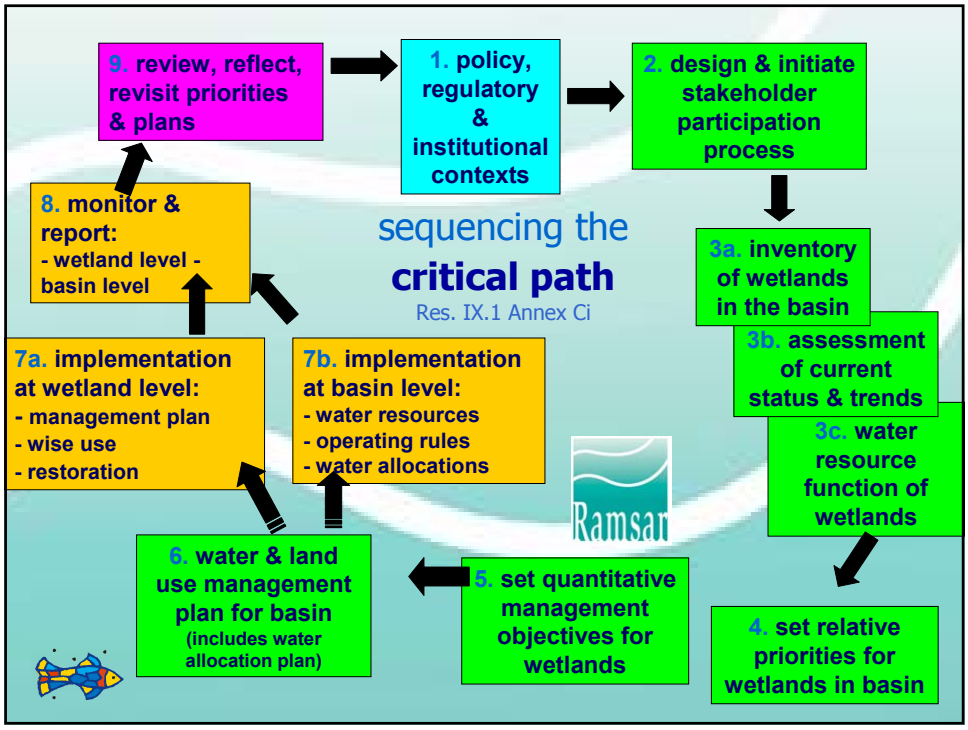
Ramsar's water-related **guidance**

- fits in the framework of the **wise use** of wetlands
- contains **core** water-related guidance and **other guidance** with water-related provisions
- addresses **technical** and **scientific tools**
- **policy, governance** and **institutional** aspects
- integrates **planning** and **management** frameworks at various scales

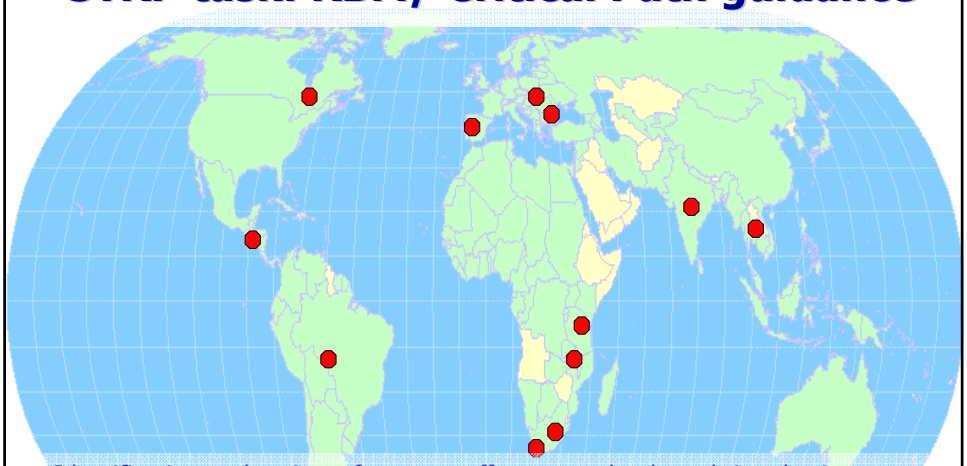
river basin management

- Resolution VII.18 provides guidelines for **integrating wetlands** into river basin management:
- dealing with **institutional** frameworks, **wetlands' role** in water management, **minimising impacts** of development projects on wetlands, maintenance of **natural water regimes**, and international **cooperation**
- Resolution IX.1 Annex Ci further develops aspects of **cooperation** between water and wetland sectors and introduces the **critical path** activities

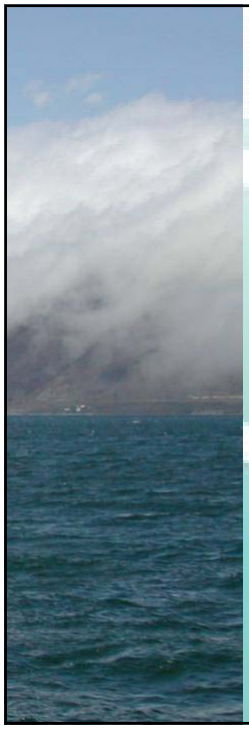
www.ramsar.org**/res/key_res_ix_01_annexci_e.htm**



STRP task: RBM/ Critical Path guidance



- Identification and review of **case studies** on wetlands and river basin management for elaboration of the Convention's River Basin Management Critical Path guidance
- 20 abstracts; 10 longer case reports
- New/ revised RBM guidance; Ramsar Technical Report



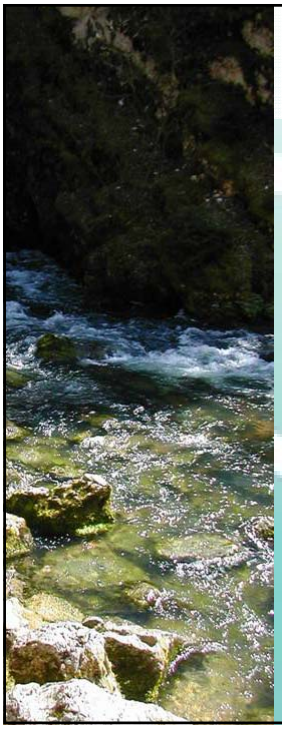
forthcoming guidance

Ramsar Technical Report on methodologies to determine and implement environmental water requirements for wetlands

STRP to develop:

- guidance for management of **water quality**
- guidance for implementation of **environmental water requirements**
- detailed guidance for core **water sector policy** and **legislative development** for wetland ecosystems
- guidance for management of **groundwater**

Ramsar Technical Reports are available on:
www.ramsar.org/**lib/lib_rtr_index.htm**



Links with WFD

- wise use of wetlands contributes to achievement of good status
- Ramsar sites as network of protected areas
- international cooperation (river basin scale)