Appendix 1: Resolution X.31 Enhancing biodiversity in rice paddies as wetland systems

1. RECOGNIZING that rice is grown in at least 114 countries worldwide and, as the staple diet for over half the world’s population, has contributed to about 20% of the total calorie supply in the world;
2. AWARE of recent concern over global food supplies and costs and the need for increasing food production, and ALSO AWARE that Resolution X.23 on Wetlands and human health and well-being highlights the interdependencies between human health, food security, poverty reduction and sustainable wetland management and calls for Contracting Parties to "strengthen collaboration and seek new partnerships between the sectors concerned with wetland conservation, water, health, food security and poverty reduction;"
3. RECOGNIZING that rice paddies (flooded and irrigated fields in which rice is grown), a typical agricultural landscape for a significant proportion of world rice cultivation, have provided large areas of open water for centuries in regions with a variety of rice-growing cultures, and, in addition to producing rice, also provide other animal and/or plant foods and medicinal plants, thus acting as wetland systems and helping to sustain livelihoods and human well-being in these regions;
4. RECOGNIZING that rice paddies in many parts of the world support important wetland biodiversity, such as reptiles, amphibians, fish, crustaceans, insects and molluscs, and play a significant role in waterbird flyways and the conservation of waterbird populations;
5. FURTHER RECOGNIZING that aquatic biodiversity associated with rice paddies can make an important contribution to the nutrition, health and well-being of rural populations;
6. RECOGNIZING ALSO that in some particular regions, it is important that irrigated rice paddies remain connected to surrounding natural/semi-natural habitat, in particular to wetlands, for the sake of biodiversity;
7. RECALLING that "rice fields" are included in the Ramsar Classification System for Wetland Type as a human-made wetland ("Type 3 Irrigated land; includes irrigation channels and rice fields") and that, where appropriate, may be designated as, or included in, Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar sites), and that at least 100 designated Ramsar sites around the world include field habitats that play important ecological roles and support a range of biodiversity, including supporting internationally important populations of breeding and non-breeding resident and migratory waterbirds;
8. RECOGNIZING that rice systems associated with rice paddies are or could be included in the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIASH) Programme, which was initiated by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and promotes the dynamic conservation of areas important for indigenous techniques and cultural and biodiversity values, and RECOGNIZING that such sites could provide examples of wetland wise use;
9. CONCERNED about current and potential threats to the role of rice paddies as sustainable wetland systems, as well as about the potential and current impacts to the wetlands environment, caused by factors such as inappropriate agricultural practices relating to water management and change of natural flow, as well as introduction of new taxa, including invasive alien species, use of high levels of harmful agricultural chemicals, and the impact of inappropriate conversion of rice paddies to other land uses;
10. NOTING that some water management approaches, such as flooding of rice paddies when they are not in use for rice production, have been adopted in order to provide suitable habitat for some fauna, including migratory waterbirds, and to control weeds and pest insects;
11. ALSO CONCERNED that inappropriate conversion of wetland to paddy field may have potential negative impacts on local biodiversity and related ecosystem services, and AFFIRMING that this Resolution is not used to justify conversion of existing natural wetlands into human-made wetlands, nor to justify inappropriate conversion of land to human-made wetlands;
12. ALSO AFFIRMING that the focus of this Resolution is specifically on the maintenance and enhancement of the ecological and cultural role and value of appropriate rice paddies as wetland systems, consistent and in harmony with the Convention, internationally agreed development goals, and other international obligations;
13. RECALLING that Resolution VIII.34 (2002) highlighted, inter alia, the importance of ensuring that agricultural practices are compatible with wetland conservation objectives and that sustainable agriculture supports some important wetland ecosystems, and AWARE of the work currently being undertaken in response to Resolution VIII.34 by the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) and the Guidance on Agriculture-Wetlands Interactions (GAWI) initiative with the FAO, Wageningen University and Research Centre, the International Water Management Institute (IWMI), Wetland Action, and Wetlands International, including the preparation of a framework for guidance related to interactions between wetlands and agriculture; and
14. NOTING that information and products related to rice paddy farming are available through the work and publications of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) on agriculture and biodiversity, including agri-biodiversity indicators; that information on wetland, water and rice farming is available in the Comprehensive Assessment of Water Management in Agriculture (CA); and that the analyses of distribution and representativeness of Ramsar wetland types, currently being undertaken by the IWMI for the STRP, include, inter alia, rice paddies as human-made wetlands;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

15. ENCOURAGES Contracting Parties to promote further research on flora, fauna and ecological functions in rice paddies and on the cultures that have evolved with rice-farming communities that have maintained the ecological value of rice paddies as wetland systems, in order to identify sustainable rice paddy farming practices that reinforce wetland conservation objectives and provide ecosystem services such as food provision, climate change, water recharge, soil fertility, provision of plant and animal food resources and medicinal plants, and the conservation of biodiversity;
16. INVITES Contracting Parties to consider offering recognition and/or protection to such sites through, for example, their designation as Wetlands of International Importance and through mechanisms such as the FAO Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems Programme, and FURTHER INVITES Contracting Parties to disseminate and exchange information on these practices and sites amongst governments, farmers and conservation agencies, in order to support improvement of sustainable rice farming practices and water management;

Appendix 2: Resolution IX.19 The importance of regional wetland symposia in effectively implementing the Ramsar Convention

1. TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the need for the establishment of appropriate regional frameworks for fostering international cooperation amongst Contracting Parties and other organizations and stakeholders, in accordance with the Guidelines for international cooperation under the Ramsar Convention (Resolution VIII.15);
2. RECOGNIZING the critical role of regional cooperation for promoting the aims and objectives of the Convention, as reiterated by the Regional initiatives for the further implementation of the Convention (Resolution VIII.30) and the establishment of regional initiatives in the framework of the Convention (Resolution IX.7);
3. CONSIDERING that such regional cooperation can be achieved through closer partnership between and among governmental and non-governmental sectors and scientific, technical and policy-making sectors in different regions of the world;
4. RECOGNIZING that the participation of local communities and indigenous peoples is essential for the conservation and wise use of wetlands, as embodied in the Guidelines for establishing and strengthening local communities’ and indigenous peoples’ participation in the management of wetlands (Resolution VIII.2) and Resolution VIII.34;
5. ALSO RECOGNIZING that the Asian Wetland Symposium (AWS) held in 1992 (Japan), 2000 (Malaysia), and 2005 (India) and organized through the leadership of the Ramsar Centre Japan (RCJ), a non-governmental organization (NGO) based in Japan, have contributed substantively to enhancing effective regional cooperation and networking in Asia;
6. UNDERSTANDING that these Symposia provide a single platform for discussions among various sectors including, inter alia, national and local governments, NGOs, scientific experts, the private sector, and local and indigenous peoples engaged in wetland management, and that their recommendations embodied in the Recommendation of the Asian Wetland Symposium (1992), the Penang Statement (2001) and the Chilika Statement (2005) have been reported to Ramsar COP6, COP7 and COP8 respectively;
7. MINDFUL that the Asian Wetland Symposium, and a series of local workshops organized by the Ramsar Centre Japan, have been successful in the Asian region in promoting public awareness of the aims and objectives of the Ramsar Convention, and accession thereto; have encouraged Contracting Parties to identify and designate Ramsar sites; and have promoted participation of local communities and indigenous peoples in the management of wetlands in the context of attaining sustainable development including economic growth and poverty reduction;
8. RECOGNIZING that Ramsar Regional Meetings and Conferences of the Contracting Parties...