

International Cooperation

for shared water basins and wetlands



International Course
on **ecohydrological approaches to wise use,
restoration, management and conservation
of wetlands**

Třeboň, Czech Republic, 5-9 June 2007

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Ramsar Convention Secretariat



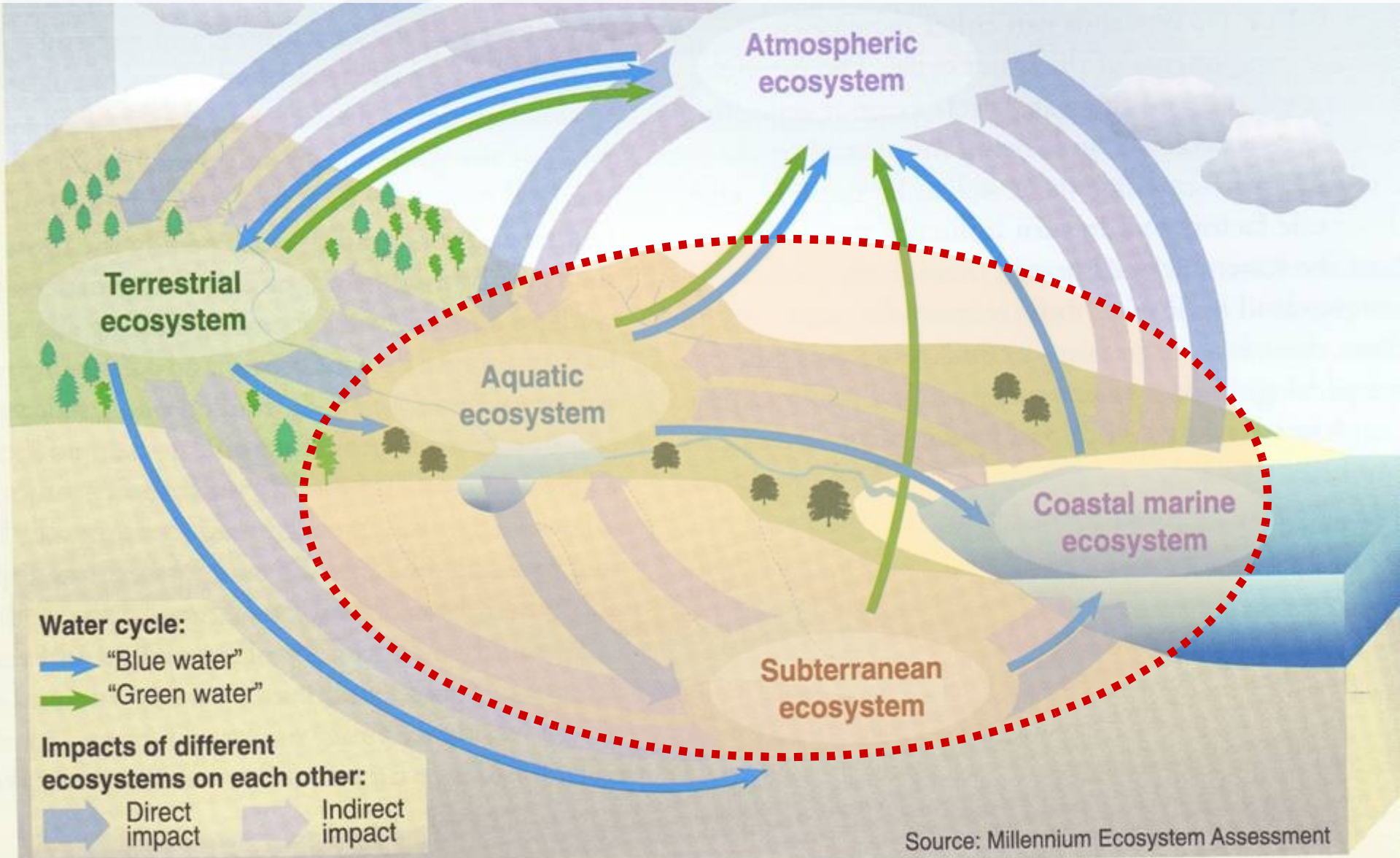


The Ramsar Convention – what is it about?

- 💧 **wise** (*sustainable*) **use** of all wetland ecosystems
- 💧 conservation of Wetlands of International Importance (**Ramsar Sites**), training of wetland managers
- 💧 **international cooperation**
for shared catchments and water-related ecosystems

the **hydrological cycle** supports and links all environmental components

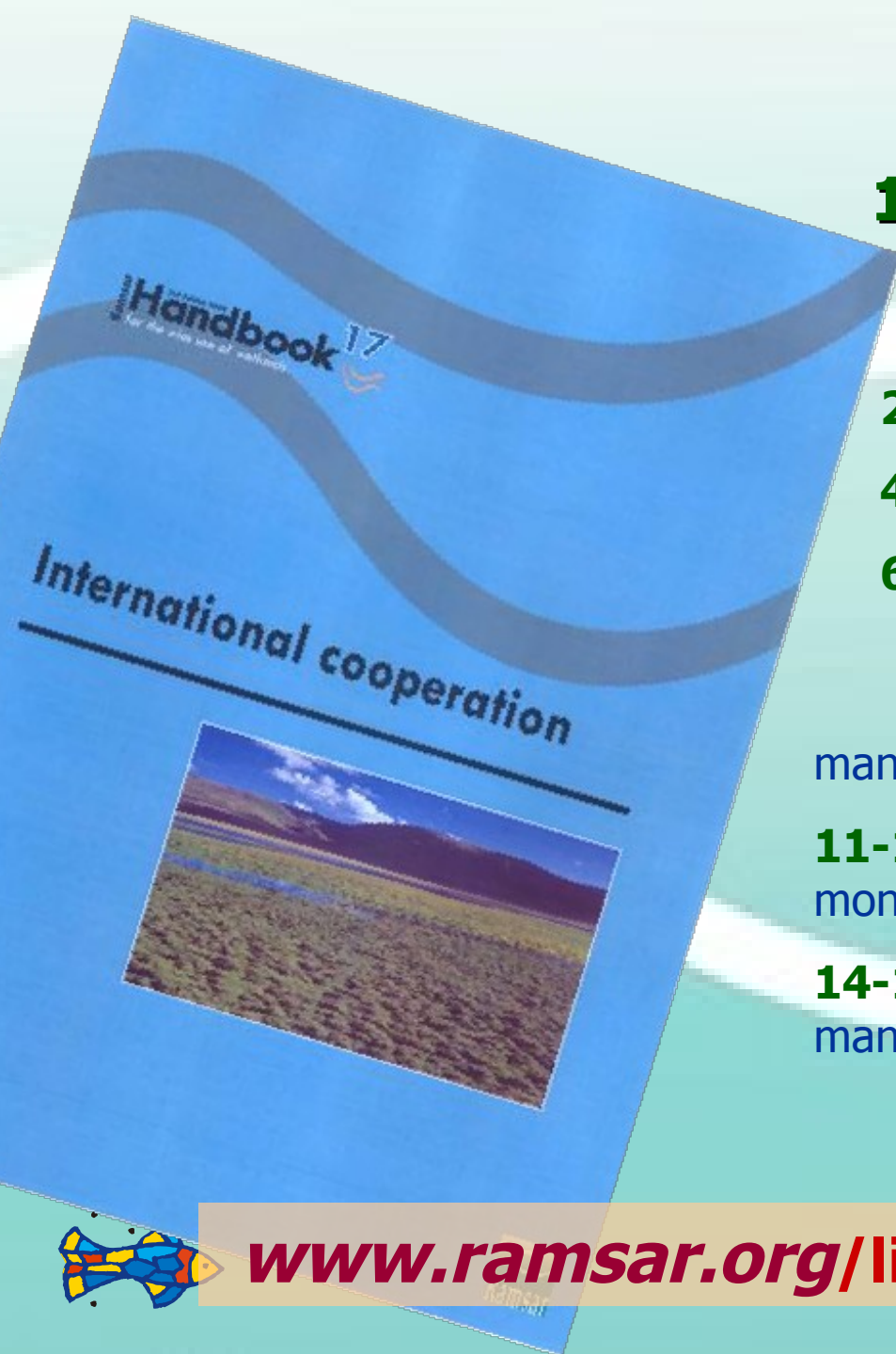
Ramsar focuses on **aquatic**, **subterranean** and **coastal marine** ecosystems



Ramsar's toolkit

17 handbooks addressing:

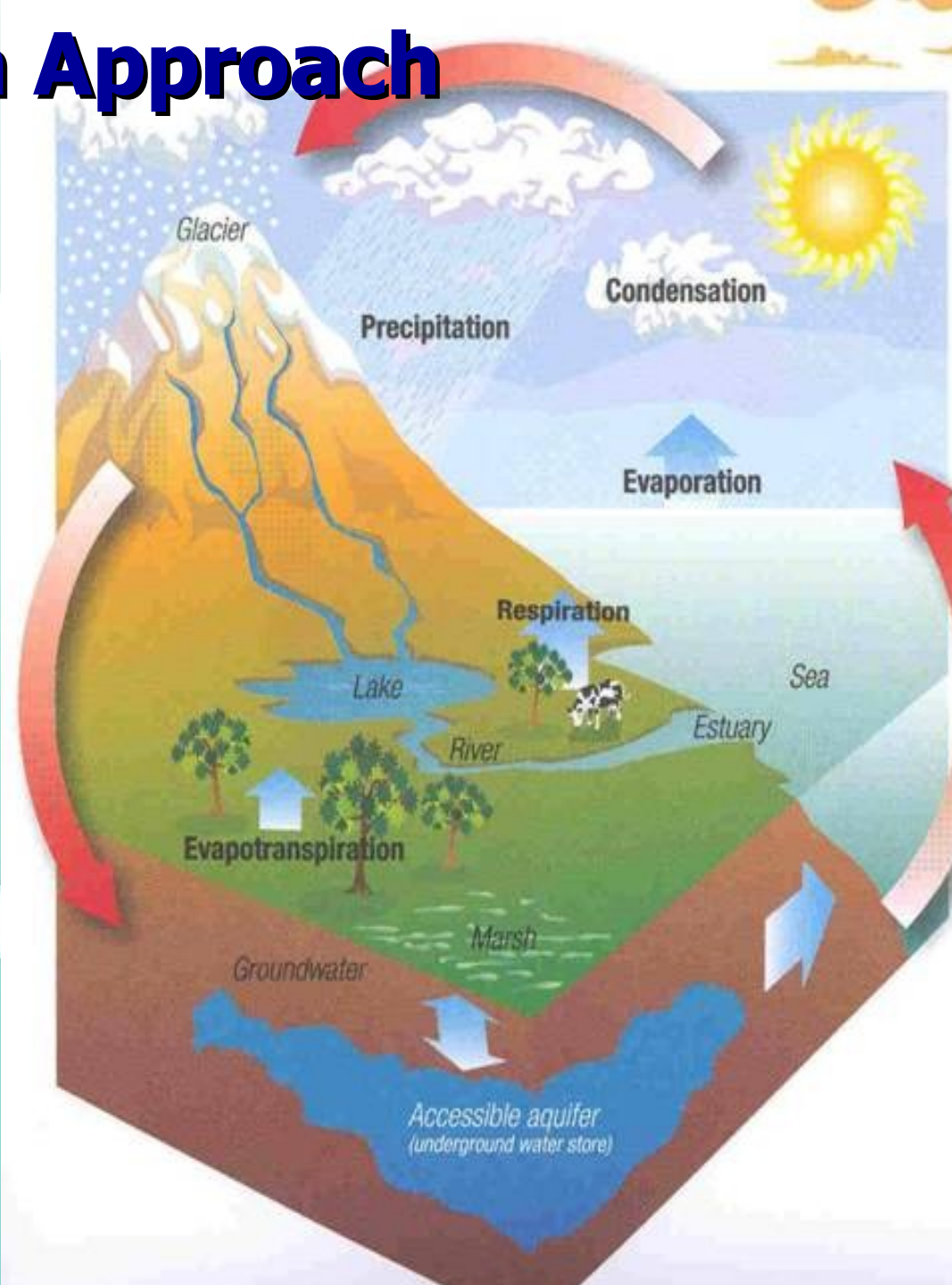
- 1 wise use of wetlands
- 2-3 policies and legislation
- 4-5 CEPA, participatory skills
- 6-9 water-related issues: riverbasins, groundwater, water allocation
- 10 spatial planning (coastal management)
- 11-13 inventory, assessment and monitoring
- 14-16 Ramsar site designation and management
- 17 international cooperation

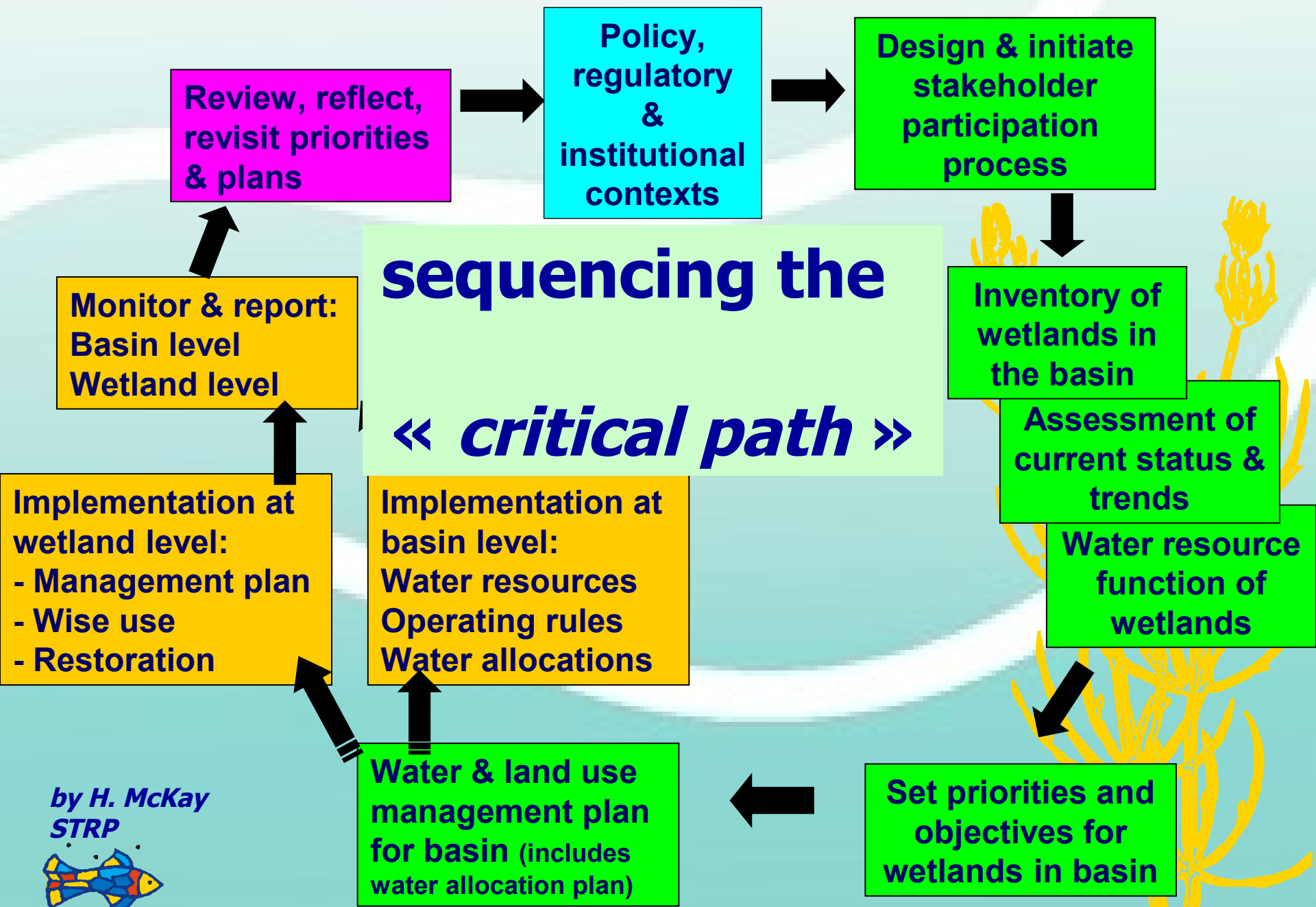


www.ramsar.org/lib/lib_handbooks2006_e.htm

Catchment Basin Approach

- *freshwater comes packaged in the hydrological cycle*
- the hydrological cycle works in **water catchment units**
- **wetlands** fulfil important functions in **the water cycle**
- the **river basin approach** – by water catchment unit - is also promoted by the EU Water Framework Directive
- catchments shared by **different countries** need **transboundary approaches**





by H. McKay
 STRP



International Cooperation

- **Article 5:**
Contracting Parties shall consult with each other and coordinate their policies and regulations in the case of shared wetlands and water systems
- **Ramsar Handbook 9** provides « Guidelines » on:
 - implementing obligations
 - conservation of shared sites, rivers and water systems
 - research and exchange of data
 - training



Lithuania | Belarus

river Kotra

Managing transboundary sites

recent initiatives:

- **Europarc Federation**
 - working group elaborating basic standards for transfrontier cooperation
 - SWOT analysis and recommendations
- **IUCN & Unesco**
workshop on transboundary cooperation in protected areas
- **MaB Recommendations**
for the establishment and functioning of Transboundary Biosphere Reserves



North Vidzeme
BR Latvia

is a process - *possible steps* :

1. **unilateral work on each side**

by NGOs, local stakeholders, governmental authorities >

2. **establish contacts**

in the catchment basin, across the borders, regular consultations, cooperation, joint actions >

3. **joint planning**

elaborate common management planning documents >

4. **undertake common, coordinated activities** >

5. **administer jointly**

a shared wetland and its catchment basin, share personnel and resources

Transboundary wetland sites: a priority

a preliminary analysis in Europe shows:

- over 90 **Ramsar Sites** are already designated

they cover at least parts of >70 transboundary wetlands

make an inventory of transboundary:

- river stretches and their floodplains
- lakes, floodplains and related rivers
- coastal lagoons and wetland areas
- peatbogs, waterlogged forests, and wet meadows
- karst areas and their transboundary underground water systems



Cepkeliai RS

Lithuania

Emerging issues to consider

- **European integration opens up former “no-go” areas**
- **these areas perform important hydrological functions** (water provision, purification, flood retention)
- **they contain an outstanding natural and cultural heritage**
- **new needs for integrated planning for coastal zones, river floodplains, agricultural lands, peatlands and forest areas**
- **new mobility creates new needs for recreation, tourism and outdoor activities**



What makes a transboundary wetland?

Selection criteria for Transboundary Ramsar Sites:

- focus on **wetland ecosystems** that lie across a national political boundary **with functional hydrological** -or other- **links** that are essential for their management,
- strive to connect the individual parts of the coherent wetland into **one management entity**,
- engage in **regular, formal** and **active management cooperation**,
- **designate** the respective portions that cover the wetland ecosystem as **Ramsar Sites**



Kotra RS

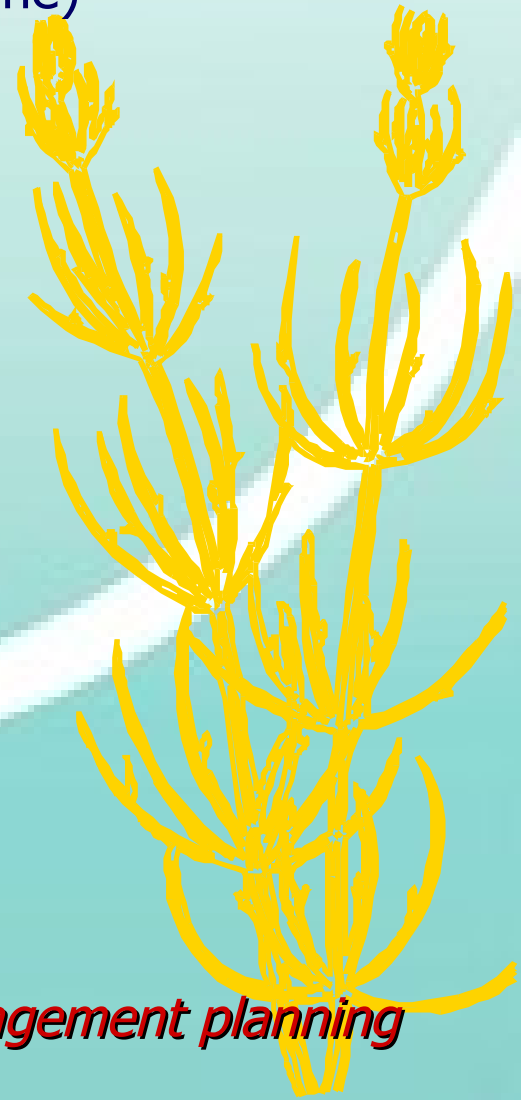
Belarus

Managing transboundary Ramsar Sites

- **Integrating site management within broad-scale environmental planning** (river basin, coastal zone)
- **Management planning *i.a.* to:**
 - identify objectives
 - identify factors that affect the site
 - resolve conflicts
 - define monitoring requirements
 - obtain resources
- **Stakeholder participation**
- **Management planning is a process**
- **Establish common management units**



Resolution VIII.14 New guidelines for management planning



Europarc Transfrontier Protected Areas Expertise Exchange Working Group

They applied the objective-oriented project planning process (OOPP):

- **Problem analysis:**
the key problems, their causes, and their effects
- **Stakeholder analysis:**
identify them and their involvement
- **Objective goal analysis:**
goals to solve the problems, activities to achieve the goals,
indicators of achievement
- **Operational planning:** develop a plan



Europarc **recommendations** for site managers

- needs dedicated staff, sufficient time, and patience
- choose a common language or provide training in the neighbours' language
- share databases, equipment, services, common monitoring and research
- develop one-stop-shops as common information source
- develop jointly rules and responsibilities, joint management plans
- share training activities and regular exchanges of staff
- identify mutual benefits, disseminate best practice and success stories
- awareness raising, education, school exchanges



Rhine delta
Austria

Recommendations for policy-makers

Europarc working group

- facilitate border crossings for local people
- work with international professional organisations
- make a government body responsible for developing a multi-sectoral approach, involving different ministries
- senior decision-makers should be invited to visit the areas to gain insight
- establish partnership agreements at the highest possible level
- develop a transfrontier protected area strategy and identify funding sources