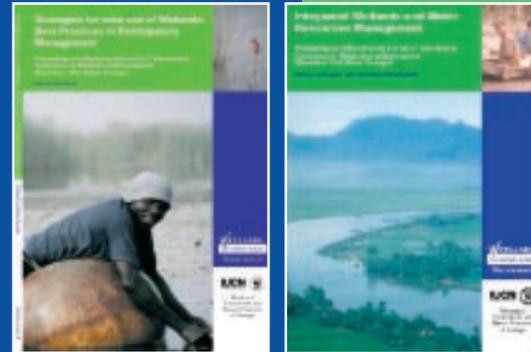


Wetlands

New Publications

The final two workshop proceedings from the 1998 Dakar Conference are available. Our thanks go to Meg Gawler, the editor of Workshop One Proceedings Strategies for wise use of Wetlands: Best Practices in Participatory Management and to Ger Bergkamp, Jean-Yves Pirot and Silvia Hostettler the editors of Workshop Three Proceedings Integrated Wetlands and Water Resources Management.



Two new publications on the Black Sea have been finalised: Black Sea Wetlands Conservation Priorities, bearing the fruits of two international workshops, includes descriptions of the current status of the Black Sea wetlands and their conservation, and priorities for their conservation with recommended actions. The Directory of Azov-Black Sea Wetlands consists of an introduction and a series of national reports, followed by site descriptions of 94 wetlands in Bulgaria, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Turkey, and Ukraine.



Out now! Shorebirds of the Yellow Sea - Importance, Threats and Conservation Status. This publication highlights the extensive intertidal areas and near-coastal wetlands of the Yellow Sea. The region is used by an estimated 2 000 000 shorebirds, this number being 40% of all migratory shorebirds in the East Asian -Australasian Flyway.



For further information contact: post@wetlands.agro.nl

In this issue:

Focus on Global Waterbird Flyways



INCLUDING GLOBAL ANNUAL REVIEW 2001



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Wetlands International

Wetlands International is an independent global non-profit organisation dedicated solely to the work of wetland conservation and sustainable management. Well-established networks of experts and close partnerships with key organisations provide Wetlands International with the essential tools for catalysing conservation activities worldwide. Our activities are based on sound science and have been carried out in over 120 countries.

Our Mission is: "To sustain and restore wetlands, their resources, and biodiversity for future generations through research, information exchange, and conservation activities world-wide."

Our vision is that all wetlands and their dependent biodiversity will be fully conserved, and that where wetlands are managed or used that this be done wisely. This must be achieved through guiding stakeholders that influence or depend upon wetlands to maximise the sustainability of their actions. In addition, through the provision of scientifically and culturally appropriate knowledge and guidance, conservation and wise use can be achieved.

Organisation

The Headquarters is in Wageningen, The Netherlands and we have offices in Argentina, Australia, China, Fiji, Guinea-Bissau, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mali, Russian Federation, Senegal, Thailand and Ukraine.

Networks

In addition to our staff, Wetlands International supports and facilitates networks of scientists working on wetland conservation. For example 11,000 individuals volunteer to undertake surveys for the annual Western Palaearctic Waterbird census.

Communication tools

Wetlands the official newsletter of Wetlands International is published 3 times per annum - 4000 copies distributed globally.

Members' News is issued to governance, sponsors and stakeholders (300 individuals) 4 times per annum.

Annual Review is published in April of each year.

Web site: www.wetlands.org

Publications and technical reports are produced on a regular basis and are available direct from Wetlands International and from our global distributor, the Natural History Book Service.

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Working with the Convention on Migratory Species



The Convention on Migratory Species is a key partner and major stakeholder of Wetlands International. In the coming years Wetlands International will seek to align its work programme more closely with the long-term needs of CMS.

On the eve of CMS COP 7, Ulf Müller-Helmbrecht introduces this issue of Wetlands, setting out his vision for international co-operation at the flyway level and highlighting some of the recent successes in the CMS/Wetlands International partnership.

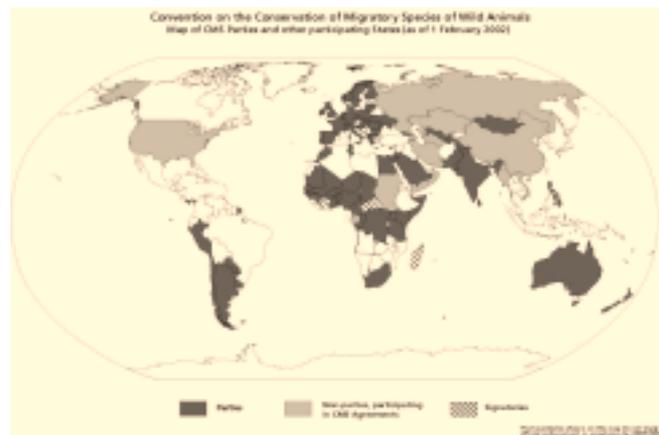
The Convention on Migratory Species and Wetlands International have a long history of intense co-operation, complementing the different responsibilities and expertise available within the two organisations. This special issue of Wetlands International's Newsletter is an excellent initiative to provide information about its global activities in relation to the migration of waterbirds, also to inform the forthcoming 7th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) in September 2002 in Bonn, Germany.

Stimulating international co-operation for the conservation of migratory waterbirds and developing legal instruments is an important part of the work of CMS. Wetlands International has substantially contributed in the past, and continues to contribute to this endeavour by providing the solid scientific data underpinning these instruments. Both our organisations worked closely together to develop the African Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement, the largest flyway agreement in the world. Similar intensive co-operation occurs in developing and implementing the Asia Pacific Migratory

Waterbird Conservation Strategy and, more recently, in developing an Action Plan for the Central Asian Indian Flyway. CMS Parties are closely involved in similar developments in South America. In addition, Wetlands International's global programmes, such as the International Waterbird Census, are an important tool in supporting the implementation of CMS Agreements and Action Plans, including monitoring their effect. With the growing numbers of Parties (80 at present) and increasing numbers of international instruments concluded under the Convention, monitoring their effective implementation, is becoming an important aspect of our future co-operation. CMS also supports conservation activities undertaken by Wetlands International on individual migratory waterbird species, such as the case of the White-headed Duck in Asia.

In the light of the above, it has been a logical step for the Convention on Migratory Species to strongly support Wetlands International's initiative to organise a global flyway conference: "Waterbirds Around the World" (Edinburgh, UK, April 2004). It creates a perfect opportunity to evaluate what has been achieved by both our organisations, but above all to look ahead to what is still needed and how we all can work together to protect waterbirds and to assure that the magic of their migration around the world continues.

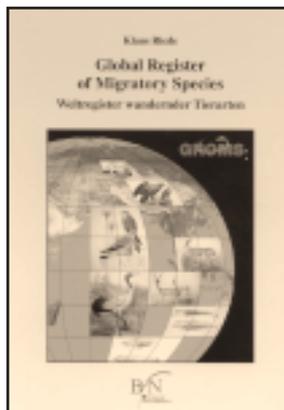
Arnulf Müller-Helmbrecht
Executive
Secretary,
Convention on
Migratory
Species



Global Register of Migratory Species

This excellent overview of the world's migratory species, including birds, is the result of a long term project funded by the German Government in support of the work of the Convention on Migratory Species.

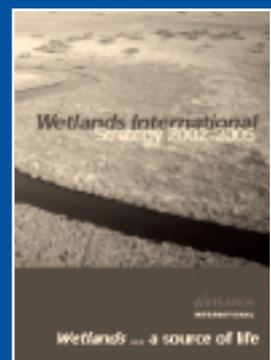
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2002-2005 Strategy

Redefining and clarifying our niche, the 2002-2005 Strategy presents a clear vision for the future and describes our major aims for the next 4 years.

The strategy is the culmination of 2 years collaborative effort from staff, members and partners to re-organise our program activities into a truly integrated global plan and provide the basis for enhancing our profile as a major wetland conservation organisation - thanks to everyone in the network who has contributed to its development.



Global Flyways

Co-ordinated activities on the conservation, management and sustainable use of migratory waterbirds

Bird migration in general and, in particular, north-south migration, is a massive annual movement of biodiversity around the globe. It involves every country and includes the Earth's most remote areas such as the Arctic and Antarctica. Migratory birds link continents and countries. International policy and legal instruments have been developed to stimulate co-operation between states in the management and protection of migratory species, with the Bonn Convention being the global legal instrument.

Migratory Waterbirds

Waterbird migration has always attracted great attention from the public at large but also from researchers, wildlife managers, subsistence and sport hunters. The migration strategies of a range of waterbird species are also relatively well-known for the following reasons:

- Many of them breed in large colonies or concentrate in large flocks outside the breeding season thus facilitating research, surveys, capture and ringing efforts.
- Their relatively large size and use of open habitats, helps in observing them in the field; thus stimulating monitoring of populations and numbers. Application of individual marking systems such as colour banding with unique numbers and satellite tracking is also enabled.
- Several waterbird species are considered to be pest species for mussel and fish farming, agricultural crops and grasslands. This has stimulated research and monitoring.

The Flyway Concept

Generally the definition of a flyway is understood to mean the entire range of a migratory waterbird species from the breeding ground to the wintering area. The term flyway is also used to indicate a geographical area to which a legal instrument may apply. It is the perfect tool to stimulate international co-operation on all levels.

Flyways differ considerably in length. Many goose species have relatively short and well-defined flyways (a few thousand

kilometres), whereas some Arctic breeding waders migrate huge distances up to more than 10,000 km. Several waterbird species are nomadic and their movements are difficult to predict and depend on the amount of rainfall.

Initiatives for waterbird conservation at a flyway level have been numerous. They vary from legally binding multilateral arrangements like the African Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement under the Bonn Convention, to bilateral arrangements like those between Australia and Japan or Japan and the USA. Some include hundreds of species and others focus entirely on a single, often endangered species such as the Bonn Convention Memorandum of Understanding for the Siberian Crane. Strategies such as the Asia Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Strategy, the flyway agreement under development for the Central Asian Indian Flyway and the successful North American Waterfowl Management Plan, are further examples of this international co-operation.

Wetlands International's role in global flyways

Wetlands International is involved in many global flyway activities. From 1987 onwards it provided the entire technical basis of the development of the African Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA, The Hague 1995) under the Bonn Convention. It co-ordinates the GEF-PDF B project to develop the AEWA support programme. Wetlands International is also a permanent member of the AEWA Technical Committee. The office in Kuala Lumpur co-ordinates the



implementation of the Asia Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Strategy which includes the development of site networks for Anatidae, Cranes and Shorebirds. Wetlands International is responsible for the development of a preliminary Action Plan for the Central Asian Indian Flyway, to act as a basis for further activities in this little known region. Recently a proposal has been developed for co-ordinated actions within the framework of an American Pacific Flyway Programme, covering the Pacific coast of Central and South America and co-ordinated with the many ongoing activities in North America.

Wetlands International keeps close contacts with many other flyway initiatives including:

- North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP): the "founding father" of the flyway concept.
- Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN).
- Partners in Flight (PIF).
- The North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI) which includes co-ordinated activities to protect migratory birds.
- Siberian Crane Memorandum of Understanding under the Bonn Convention.
- Slender billed Curlew MoU under the Bonn Convention; a single species flyway agreement for one of the world's rarest birds.
- Bilateral governmental agreements on migratory birds including: China-Australia (CAMBA); Russia-India; Australia-Japan (JAMBA); Russia-Japan; USA-Russia; Korea D.P.R.-Russia; Japan-USA.

Migratory waterbirds and flyways are also an important element of Wetlands International's contacts with many other international conventions and organisations including the Ramsar Convention, BirdLife International, EU, Bern Convention and regional treaties. Important too are Wetland International's contacts with the Arctic Council/Working Group on the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) for which the organisation produced an extensive report on the conservation of Arctic breeding waterbirds outside the Arctic.

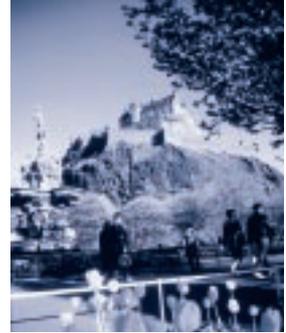
An important support mechanism for Wetlands International's flyway work is the co-ordination of the International Waterbird Census (IWC) programmes with the participation of tens of thousands of volunteers. Programmes are in place in the Asia Pacific region, Oceania, Africa, Neotropics, Europe and South West and Central Asia. Co-operation exists with Patuxent Wildlife Research Centre in the USA with regard to data from North America. Data from the IWC also play a crucial role in developing the Global Waterbird Population Estimates, which is a tool for Parties of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands to designate wetlands of international importance.

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Waterbirds Around the World

A global review of the conservation and management and research into the world's major waterbird flyways



**International Conference
3-8 April 2004
Edinburgh, Scotland**

"Waterbirds Around the World", will focus on all major themes and developments related to the global conservation of waterbird flyways during their full annual cycle. It will address achievements of the last 30-40 years and identify gaps and needs for initiatives to stimulate future conservation of the world's flyways. The conference scope includes all species, sub-species and populations of waterbirds.

The conference is intended for all who are active in conservation of migratory waterbirds and seabirds.

The conference invites participation to achieve an overview and syntheses covering such areas as historical developments, flyway conservation, conservation action planning, waterbird migration research, conservation status assessments, sustainable use and monitoring.

A First Announcement with a call for papers will be distributed around October 2002.

Please contact Dr. Gerard C. Boere for preliminary registration to receive the First Announcement or for further information on the substance and programme of the conference.

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"Waterbirds Around the World" is jointly hosted by the Governments of the United Kingdom and The Netherlands, with support from the Convention on Migratory Species (Bonn Convention), the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar Convention) and many national and international conservation and research organisations.



Pictures courtesy of Edinburgh & Lothians Tourist Board

The African Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA, The Hague 1995) under the Bonn Convention, is the largest legal flyway instrument in terms of geographical coverage (about 117 countries). The AEWA came into force in November 1999, after 13 years of preparatory work and negotiations. Over 30 Range States have already ratified the Agreement and there are a number of others preparing to do so. The Secretariat is co-located with the UNEP/CMS Secretariat in Bonn, Germany.

An Action Plan is in place and a "PDF B GEF" project is being implemented. Wetlands International is the key technical adviser for the work of AEWA.



AEWA region with present Parties

Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Strategy: 2001-2005

In recognition of the threats to migratory waterbirds and the need for action to conserve waterbirds and their habitats, the Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Strategy: 1996-2000 was developed. The Strategy has been actively supported by the governments of Australia and Japan and coordinated by Wetlands International.

The Strategy has been very successful in promoting international cooperation and an awareness of the need to work together to promote conservation. A number of international and national activities have been undertaken, primarily through the implementation of three regional migratory waterbird conservation action plans (shorebirds, cranes and Anatidae) including the establishment of three networks of sites of international importance for these groups of waterbirds and a range of activities, as has been reported in previous issues of Wetlands.



The Site Networks (as at July 2002) comprised 73 sites in 12 countries with new sites being added each year. Ten new sites were added to the international site networks during 2001-2002: Mai Po Marshes (Hong Kong SAR, China) and Utonai-ko (Japan) to the East Asian Anatidae Site Network; six sites to the North East Asian Crane Site Network from the People's Republic of China (Zhalong National Nature Reserve, Sanjiang National Nature Reserve, Xianghai National Nature Reserve, Shuangtai Hekou National Nature Reserve, Shengjin Hu National Nature Reserve and Cao Hai National Nature Reserve) and two sites, Kashima Shingomori (Japan) and Sungai Buloh

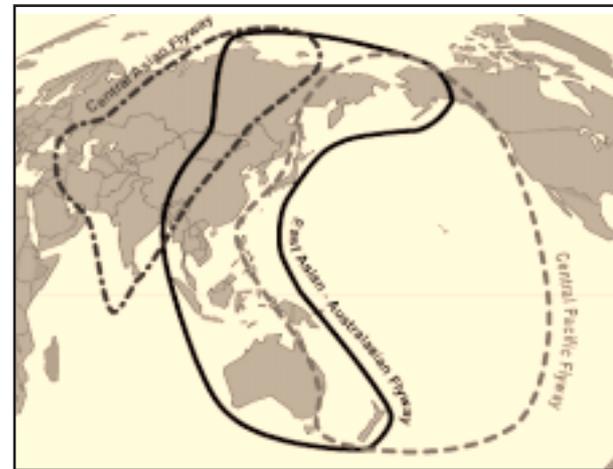
Wetland Reserve (Singapore) to the East Asian-Australasian Shorebird Site Network.

The latest Strategy 2001-2005 outlines eight key elements to promote the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats. It recognises that the role of governments, conventions, international and national corporations, bilateral and multilateral donor agencies, international and national non-governmental organisations and local communities is crucial in achieving this.

The Strategy is coordinated by an international committee - MWCC [see box]. The MWCC recently held its 7th Meeting in June 2002 in Malaysia and approved a number of priorities for 2002-2003 including promotion of the Strategy, development of national implementation programmes, action plans for selected threatened species, upgrading of websites and securing additional resources for local and national actions from international, bilateral and national donors. More information on the Strategy and plans is available on <http://www.wetlands.org/IWC/awc/waterbirdstrategy/default.htm>

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Map of Major Waterbird Flyways in Asia-Pacific

The Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Committee (MWCC) was established to monitor the implementation of the Strategy and comprises seven government representatives (Australia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Russia and U.S.A.), the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar Convention), the Convention on Migratory Species (Bonn Convention), international NGOs (BirdLife International and World Wide Fund for Nature), a representative of the United Nations Development Programme/Global Environment Facility, chairs of the three technical Working Groups (for Anatidae, cranes and shorebirds) and a Wetlands International Specialist Group Coordinator.

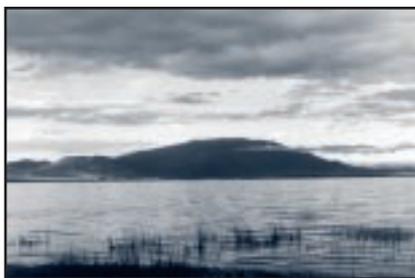
Central Asian-Indian Flyway (CAIF)

The region of Central and South Asia encompasses one of the world's greatest but least known bird migration routes. Tens of millions of individuals of Arctic nesting species, migrate through the region to the Middle East and Africa and the Indian subcontinent.

This continental flyway comprises vast areas of semi-arid habitats with limited areas of crucial importance, particularly in the staging areas. Many countries along the CAIF have developing economies with only modest allocation of resources for research and conservation. Many of the wetlands are situated in areas with dense human populations and are consequently threatened and in need of internationally co-ordinated conservation measures.



In 1996 the Bonn Convention called on Parties to take an active role in the development of a conservation initiative for migratory waterbirds in the CAIF. This is partly being done by the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement which extends into the Central Asian Republics and the Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird



Conservation Strategy which partly covers the Central Asian-Indian Flyway.

The project "Towards a Strategy for Wetland and Waterbird Conservation in the Central Asian-Indian Flyway", is being coordinated by Wetlands International from its Moscow office. Geographically the project includes the area from northernmost breeding grounds in Russia to the southernmost wintering grounds in the Maldives and thus incorporates 21 Range States of Central and South Asia, and Trans-Caucasus.

The first significant event within the CAIF project was a workshop held in August 2001 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

The CAIF workshop examined current conservation status of migratory waterbirds and wetlands in the Central Asian-Indian Flyway (CAIF) and reviewed the first draft Action Plan. A new version of the Action Plan is being discussed for presentation to the governments of the Range States for consideration and further adoption.

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Shorebird Conservation in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway

The East Asian-Australasian Shorebird Action Plan: 2001-2005 was developed 'To achieve the conservation of migratory shorebirds and their habitats in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway through a network of appropriately managed sites that are of international importance for migratory shorebirds'.

Coordinated by Wetlands International, with core funding from the Australian Government, the Shorebird Action Plan has three main components:



- 1) Development of the Shorebird Site Network to include all countries in the flyway and at least 100 sites.
- 2) Appropriate management of Network sites, by supporting and building capacity in site management, community participation, education and awareness.
- 3) Increasing the information base through surveys, monitoring and research on shorebirds and their habitats, to improve conservation initiatives in the Flyway.



The Action Plan makes full use of existing organisational structures, and cooperative action between Government agencies, site management bodies and NGOs.

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Siberian Crane Flyway Coordination; an example of an extensive single species flyway initiative

The Siberian Crane represents a "flagship species" for conservation of migratory birds and wetlands. The species numbers around 3,000 and is listed in the Red Data Book as Endangered. The decline of the Siberian Crane is primarily due to the impact of human activities, including the killing and disturbance of waterbirds, and the loss and degradation of the wetlands upon which the birds depend.

The Siberian Crane has the longest migration route of the fifteen crane species (see map).

Over the past 25 years, the International Crane Foundation has been working with a network of experts in the Siberian Crane range countries to discover basic information about this species. This scientific research has been applied to the conservation and recovery of this species, an effort that has gained momentum in recent years under the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the Siberian Crane (CMS MoU). Ten Siberian Crane range countries (China and Russia on the Eastern Flyway; Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, India on the Western/Central Flyway) take part in the development of a Conservation Plan every two years. Mongolia also participated in the May 2001 meeting.

These measures have been primarily species-oriented and focused on reducing mortality, public awareness, migration studies, increasing numbers and genetic diversity through captive breeding and release programs, and enhancing international cooperation. Efforts have recently been expanded to reduce threats and their underlying causes.

Under the framework of the CMS MoU strategies are being developed for flyway level coordination activities among the Range States. A Central Asian Flyway Officer for Cranes is coordinating these activities.

The tools for Flyway coordination were developed under a Global Environmental Facility (GEF) PDF B grant from 2000-2002. They will be implemented under a GEF Full Project on Development of a Wetland Site Network for Conservation of the Siberian Crane and Other Migratory Waterbirds in Asia pending successful funding. The strategies developed are focused on wetland and site any site level activities. For example, in China the protected area in the Poyang Lake Basin will be greatly enlarged and issues of declining water flows will be addressed at the Zhalong and Xianghai National Nature reserves.

The GEF project covers eastern and western flyways of the Siberian Crane, targeting key wetland sites located in China, Iran, Kazakhstan, and Russia. It does not cover the Central Asian Flyway of the Siberian Crane outside Russia and Kazakhstan where the species is virtually extinct, owing to the intractable nature of the threats to the few remaining birds.

Eastern Flyway activities will be coordinated through the existing and effective North East Asian Crane Site Network (NEACSN), led by an Eastern Flyway Officer for Cranes, under the auspices of the Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Strategy 2001-2005. This program will serve as a model for development of activities within West / Central Asia.

The GEF project will build capacity for flyway coordination and promote wetland site network development in Central Asia, including the establishment of a Regional Coordination Centre based in Moscow.

The project will link with initiatives under the CMS MoU, the Central Asia-Indian Flyway, the Asia Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Strategy, the Africa-Eurasia Migratory Waterbird Agreement, and the Crane Working Group of Eurasia. Staff will include a Western Flyway Officer for Cranes, technical consultants, and an administrative assistant.



This project will link with activities for the central population of Siberian Cranes outside Russia and Kazakhstan (i.e., in India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan) by supporting regional activities through GEF such as action plan development, regional meetings, database management, and publications. This coordination will form part of the responsibilities of the Western Flyway Officer for Cranes for West / Central Asia.

The project will link with and contribute towards other initiatives.

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International Crane Foundation



Project Site Locations in the Western and Eastern Flyways of the Siberian Crane

More Flyway Initiatives

The American Pacific Flyway Project

This project is aiming at a co-ordinated approach of the conservation and sustainable management of migratory waterbirds in Central America and the Pacific coast of South America, with close links to the many activities ongoing in North America. A draft proposal was developed with Dutch funding in close consultation with the governments involved and many NGOs.

In July 2001, this comprehensive proposal was presented to various North American GOs and NGOs at a meeting organised by the USFWS in Washington. Further consultations took place during the All-American BirdLife Conference in Ecuador in January 2002 and with many individual experts. Presently the proposal is being re-drafted and will be completed in early 2003.

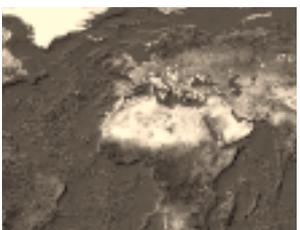
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Slender-billed Curlew

The Slender-billed Curlew is one of the world's rarest birds with a population estimated to be fewer than 50 individuals. Its breeding range is in Central West Siberia,

but the last confirmed breeding record goes back to 1924. Wintering areas are in the Mediterranean region and the Middle East. A Memorandum of Understanding under the Bonn Convention has

been concluded between Range States to join efforts for its conservation. A Working Group from the Scientific Council of the Bonn Convention guides the work undertaken such as field surveys, documentation of observations (including specimens found in collections) and a bibliography.



All Slender-billed Curlew records 1900 - 2002

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Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network

The strategy of the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN) is to build organisational capacity and motivation of regional, national and local community partners across North and South America in order to strengthen long-term conservation of shorebirds and their habitats.

Shorebirds often concentrate in extremely large flocks numbering in the hundreds of thousands at distantly selected wetlands, which serve as "stepping stones" across the hemisphere. This makes shorebirds particularly vulnerable but also provides a special opportunity to focus conservation resources effectively. Because migratory shorebirds depend on a linked chain of vital sites to survive, the Network strives to support and connect local partners into a biologically based coalition. Strengthening local community capabilities across the hemisphere is essential to long-term conservation of these threatened populations.

Current scientific estimates of shorebird populations indicate that over half of the 74 species in the Western Hemisphere are suffering a serious decline as they confront habitat losses and disturbance throughout their ranges. Based on over 30 years of research, WHSRN leads an integrated hemispheric conservation initiative of applied science, capacity building, and public awareness. The Network represents the collaboration of over 240 organisations (governmental agencies, non-governmental organisations, civic groups, and businesses) that are responsible for the conservation of over 8 million hectares (20 million acres)

at the 54 designated shorebird sites in 7 countries including Argentina, Brazil, Peru, and Suriname in South America and Mexico, Canada, and the U.S. in North America. Training, educational materials and technical assistance are provided to almost anybody working in shorebird conservation not only those involved in the sites of the network.

One of WHSRN priorities for the near future will be to strengthen and expand our program in South America. Currently there are only 9 designated sites in all of South America and there have been no new nominations since 1993. Compared with the 45 sites in North America this is clearly not adequate for the effective conservation of critical shorebird wintering and staging habitats in the southern hemisphere. Surveys



WHSRN Site Network

have indicated numerous extremely important shorebird sites for which there has been little organised effort to establish the needed conservation

programs. Further, there is good reason to believe that some of the key limiting factors causing recent shorebird population declines may be occurring in the Southern Hemispheric sites where so little is known about ecological conditions and shorebird status.

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Using Flyways as a Hemispheric Approach for the Conservation of Birds in North America

For conservation purposes, biologists in North America are increasingly recognising the need to study and conserve birds at the level of flyways, and the North American Waterfowl Management Plan is an early example of this approach, although restricted to a few countries only. Also the Old World has for decades been using



flyways to aid in developing and implementing large-scale conservation actions and policies for waterbirds (see this Newsletter).

The North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI) was formed in 1998 to integrate bird conservation across landscapes, geopolitical boundaries, and taxonomic groups in Canada, Mexico, and the United States, and to cultivate greater cooperation among the nations and bird interest groups of the continent. The NABCI works for the protection and conservation of all

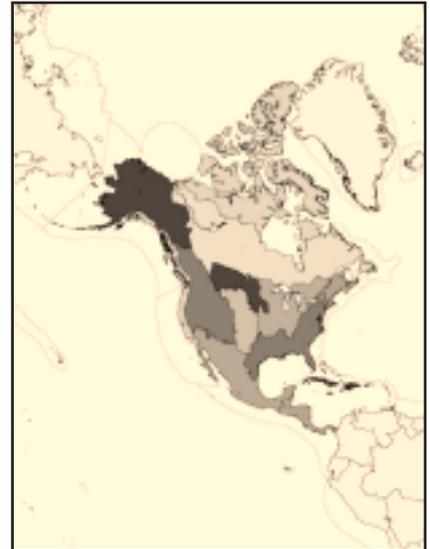
birds and is composed of four separate bird conservation initiatives: (1) North American Waterfowl Management Plan, (2) Shorebird Conservation Plans, (3), Waterbirds for the Americas Initiative (formerly the North American Waterbird Conservation Plan) and (4) Partners in Flight. The geopolitical boundaries adopted by each of the separate bird conservation initiatives differ.

The North American Waterfowl Management Plan uses a combination of species and habitat-based partnerships called Joint Ventures. Populations are managed through four Flyway Councils

The U.S., Canadian, and (in prep.) Mexican Shorebird Plans serve as the foundation for shorebird conservation in North America. The Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN) oversees conservation of critical migratory stopover sites for shorebirds.

Conservation of waterbirds in North America not covered by Waterfowl- and Shorebird Plans falls to the Waterbirds for the Americas Initiative. The Initiative recognises the need to use flyways to conserve waterbirds and proposes developing flyways that connect to other international Flyway Initiatives, especially the American Pacific and the Central Pacific Flyway Initiatives. By using flyways, habitats important for all the life stages of waterbirds can be identified and protected throughout their ranges in the Americas. The Waterbirds for the Americas proposes to begin to gather information on waterbirds outside of the breeding season by coordinating and implementing a large-scale, flyway based, winter census throughout North America, Central America, and the Caribbean. This winter waterbird census will be designed to

complement the International Waterbird Census organised by Wetlands International globally and being developed in South America. A goal of this census will be to identify and to initiate formation of a network of priority



Geographic Extent of the Waterbirds for the Americas Initiative

waterbird sites along the major flyways throughout the Americas.

The initial focus of Partners in Flight (PIF) was on bird species nesting in North America that wintered in the Neotropics. In recent years the focus of PIF has spread to land birds and other species requiring terrestrial habitats. Partners in Flight has developed plans for terrestrial bird conservation in ecological regions across North America. While there is not a specific flyway approach within PIF, migration and the conservation of North American birds in the Neotropics continues to be a unifying approach in PIF conservation strategies.

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News from around Wetlands International

Waterbird Harvest Workshop in La Plata, Argentina: A strategic approach for the sustainable use of wetland resources

The taking of waterbirds was the theme of a workshop, organised by Wetlands International in La Plata city (province of Buenos Aires, Argentina), June 19-20th 2002.

This 'Waterbird Harvest Workshop' focussed on different waterbird harvest techniques used in the Buenos Aires Province and their potential effects on waterbird populations. Sport hunting, control hunting and the harvest of waterbirds by rural populations (subsistence hunting) were discussed.

The workshop was attended by more than 50 participants representing governmental institutions and NGOs involved in waterbird harvest and management activities, including an important delegation from the province of Buenos Aires.

In follow up and as a result of the meeting Wetlands International is currently working to develop an "Action Plan" to be proposed to the Buenos Aires province authorities. This should provide the basis for a strategic approach for the sustainable use of wetland resources, and in particular for waterbird harvest within the Pampas.

The results of the workshop as well as the case studies and other presentations, will be included in a WI special publication, that will be distributed widely.

The organisation of the meeting was financially supported by Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DGIS) under the Conservation and Wise Use of Wetlands Global Programme, managed by Wetlands International.

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Training Workshop in Lijiang

A 4-day training workshop was conducted in Lijiang City of Yunnan Province by Wetlands International-China and Forestry Department of the province, 13-16 March 2002. The workshop was aimed at strengthening of management capacity of the Lashhai Nature Reserve. Chinese and Japanese experts gave the lectures. The participants visited wetland sites of the reserve and had an interview with local farmers. The workshop is a part of the project "Enhanced Management of Lashihai High Plateau Wetland Nature Reserve", assisted by Keidanren Nature Conservation Fund (Japan).

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Building capacity for local sustainable management of Madang Lagoon

In Papua New Guinea, Wetlands International - Oceania has assisted in building the capacity for local sustainable management of Madang Lagoon, an internationally significant marine site. Using funds provided by Keidanren Nature Conservation Fund (KNCF) the Fiji office of Wetlands International, in a one year project entitled "Capacity building and integrated coastal zone management of Madang Lagoon, Papua New Guinea", has laid the groundwork for local sustainable management by achieving:

- Establishment of four operational locally managed marine protected areas covering 27 % of Madang Lagoon.
- Local scuba-diving industry-staff trained in globally accepted Reef Check monitoring methods and contributing to management as marine resource guides and

MPA site monitors.

- Papua New Guinea National Government in the process of nominating Madang Lagoon to the Ramsar Convention as a Wetland of International Importance.
- Raised local community and national awareness of Madang Lagoon's natural assets through development and broadcast of the Melanesian Pidgin radio show "Solwara Toktok" (Sea Talk) and locally targeted puppet shows.
- Promotional and infrastructure support to two locally run eco-tourism enterprises in the form of widely distributed brochures and strategically placed signs.



The project has come to a successful close this financial year.

Details of this project will be presented at the 7th Island conference on nature Conservation and protected Areas in Rarotonga, Cook Islands.

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Freshwater fish stamps in Fiji

Also on the Fijian front, Wetlands International -Oceania (Fiji Office) in collaboration with Post Fiji, released a full set of Fijian stamps on freshwater fishes including a new species of goby found by Aaron Jenkins.



International Symposium on Management and Restoration of Wetlands and River Basins

Conservation of wetland ecosystems and integrated management approaches with a focus on local public benefits, were discussed at an "International Symposium on Management and Restoration of Wetlands and River Basins".

This happening took place on 22 May 2002 in Tokyo, Japan and was organised by Wetlands International Japan in association with the Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry



and Fisheries, and Ecology and Civil Engineering Society. The symposium aimed at learning and sharing knowledge through the presentation and discussion of case studies.

Key issues highlighted in the panel discussion included:

- The need for an integrated approach involving different sectors (forestry, fisheries, water resources)
- The importance of using the river basin as a management unit and establishing mechanisms for upstream-downstream sharing of resources and benefits
- Suggestions on the best ways to engage local communities in the management and restoration of rivers.

The key papers will be published later this year.

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Purple Water Trumpet research project in Tasek Bera

Hidden in the deep swampy waters of Tasek Bera is the fascinating and rare Purple Water Trumpet or *Cryptocoryne purpurea*. It had lain submerged in the lake's water, undiscovered until Professor Niels Jacobsen from the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University, Denmark, stumbled upon it in 1985 during one of his field visits to Pos Iskandar, Tasek Bera. No sooner had it been identified and documented, the Purple Water Trumpet once again returned to obscurity.

However, in March 2001, Ms Sim Cheng Hua, Senior Technical Officer with Wetlands International Malaysia, embarked on a long-term research on the plant, financially supported by the Nagao Natural Environment Foundation, Japan.

Finally, it seems that the Purple Water Trumpet will be able to blow its trumpet to the world. And justly so, for it is the only endemic *Cryptocoryne* species still surviving in the wilds of Tasek Bera and nowhere else on Earth!

The duration of the project is until September 2002 and it will assess the distribution of the plant's wild population, study its eco-physiology in its natural habitat, and develop a Species Conservation Action Plan for inclusion in the Tasek Bera Integrated Management Plan. Ms Sim is the first Malaysian to do long-term research on the plant and she is also currently developing the draft for a Species Conservation Action Plan for the ten *Cryptocoryne* species found throughout Peninsular Malaysia.



The Purple Water Trumpet's ideal habitat is shallow water over peat soil under the shade of swamp forest trees. The natural fertility rate of its pollen is low and it thus primarily reproduces by producing runners (see illustration). The plant is in great danger due to loss of shaded riparian habitats and deterioration of water quality. Habitat management and conservation is critical in sites where this endemic plant with localised characteristics is found. Aside from that, members of the genus *Cryptocoryne* are popular ornamentals in the aquarium trade and therein lies the danger of illegal or uncontrolled harvesting. Needless to say, it is of great importance to safeguard this species from extinction.

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Wetlands International wins the "Asia Water Management Excellence Award 2002"

Wetlands International was awarded the "Asia Water Management Excellence Award 2002" in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 26 March 2002 for its work in promoting the conservation of water resources and wetlands. Dato Seri Samy Vellu, Minister of



Public Works presented the award to Dr. Taej Mundkur, Regional Programme Director (Asia) on behalf of Wetlands International. The award ceremony was organised in conjunction with "Water 2002 - the International Water Technology, Equipment, Services and Management Exhibition and Conference". The awards were presented to four categories: government, industry, individual and NGO.

Dr. Philippe Bergeron, Director of Singapore's Regional Institute of Environmental Technology and Chairman of the Awards Committee, in reading out the citation stated "This year's NGO Award winner is a model of excellence of multi-stakeholder participation to protect particularly fragile water resources ecosystems in Asia. Wetland International is rewarded today for its outstanding regional achievement in mobilizing, educating, training and managing a wide network of community groups that spearhead a decentralized wetland inventory management programme known as the Asian Wetland Inventory.



This programme enables a multiplicity of interested communities to work along side leading scientists help gather, log and record professionally accurate, and reliable science-base indicators about the ecological diversity and services contributed by Asian wetlands to Asian countries." The awards are sponsored by the Regional Institute of Environmental Technology, Singapore, Water 2002 and Water and Wastewater Asia.

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Board of Members Report

In November 2001 the 3rd Board of Members Meeting was held in Wageningen, the Netherlands. The Proceedings of the Meetings and Workshops are now complete and have been distributed to the network.



Activities of the Niger Basin Initiative (NBI) in Mali

The Niger Basin Initiative (NBI) is an exciting new partnership between three founding organisations - Wetlands International, WWF and the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF). Its overall aim is to work together to secure sustainable biodiversity conservation in the Niger River Basin. In early 2002, the following main NBI events took place:

Biodiversity Vision Workshop (April 15-18, 2002)

The Minister of Environment of Mali opened this important workshop, which was attended by around forty participants from Mali, Nigeria, Niger, Guinea, Cameroon, Burkina Faso and Benin, as well as government and NGO representatives from elsewhere. The main objectives were to:

- Identify and map the most important areas for biodiversity in the Niger basin
- Identify the main socio-economic pressures and draw up plans for a more sustainable development of the basin
- Analyse the threats to conservation in the basin
- Identify priority conservation actions for the basin.

The recommendations from the workshop are being discussed with the inter-governmental Niger



Basin Authority (NBA), so that conservation planning can be better integrated into basin-wide policies that are currently being drawn up.

Communication Strategy Meeting (April 11-13, 2002)

Athanas Akaryenga, a WWF Communications Officer, was the facilitator for this three-day meeting, which also took place in Bamako. Representatives from the three founding NBI partners drew up a draft Communications Strategy based on building awareness of the biodiversity of and threats to the Niger Basin.

Wetlands and International Conventions Training Course (April 19-21, 2002)

Delivered by A. Ndiaye and A. Awaiss of Wetlands International, this course benefited eleven participants, all from either government agencies, NGOs and other scientific and technical institutions of countries making up the Niger Basin, plus representatives of IUCN-Mali, the Niger Basin Authority in Mali, Wetlands International, WWF-WARPO and NCF. The main themes of the course were:

- Definition and classification of wetlands
- The role of and synergy between the conventions and organisations involved in wetland management
- Introduction to the biodiversity of the Niger basin (mammals, fishes, birds)
- Functions and values of wetlands
- Integrated management of watersheds
- The process of elaboration of a national wetland policy and implementation strategy
- Introduction to the African waterbird census (AfWC)
- Development and management of wetlands
- Funding mechanisms and the development of projects

Geographic Information System initiation workshop

(April 19-21, 2002)

WWF-US and Wetlands International co-organised a three-day GIS training course for representatives of natural resource organisations from seven countries in West Africa (Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Mali, Guinea, Cameroon and Burkina Faso). One goal of the training was that future mapping needs and projects of the NBI would be undertaken directly by the participants. The resource persons were Michelle Thieme and Bernhard Lehner of WWF-US.

During the course, participants learned the basics of GIS with the GIS software "ArcView". Many of the essential methods of producing, importing and analysing data were taught such that participants may later develop their own data sets and maps. A discussion group was set up for participants, who can discuss questions within this group and begin a conservation GIS network within West Africa (SIGworkshop@wwfwafrica.org). Selected participants from the NBI organisations also received the complete ArcView data set.

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GEF PDF-B African/Eurasian Waterbird Flyways project

Wetlands International has been leading the development of a full GEF project proposal that will aim to enhance the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their critical sites across the African/Eurasian flyway. The proposal will be a very significant initiative that will include:

- Strategies for improving training and communications;
- Development of a network of sites of critical importance to migratory waterbirds as a tool for conservation;
- Eleven site based demonstration projects.

The project partnership will principally comprise BirdLife International, the Ramsar Convention, AEWA, UNEP and Wetlands International.

Activities in the current project are coming to an end and the technical reports are in review by the Project Steering Committee. These will form the basis of the project proposal which will be submitted to GEF in January 2003 and which we hope will be able to start sometime in the middle of that year.

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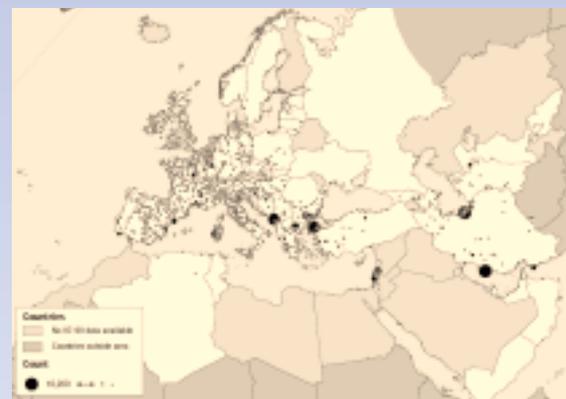
New Wetlands International publication available in September 2002: Numbers and distribution of wintering waterbirds in the Western Palearctic and Southwest Asia in 1997, 1998 and 1999



As mentioned earlier in this Newsletter, the International Waterbird Census (IWC) is an important tool for supporting the conservation of wetlands and waterbirds at the global flyway scale. The IWC is a site-based counting scheme for monitoring waterbird numbers, organised by Wetlands International. The Census operates as four separate surveys in the Western Palearctic and Southwest Asia, Africa, Asia and the Neotropics. In the

Western Palearctic and Southwest Asia this census has been organised by Wetlands International since 1967 and is conducted annually in mid-January. Currently a new strategy that will establish global IWC coordination is under development.

Together with this Newsletter a new IWC-report will be rolling off the presses. This report summarises the results from January 1997, 1998 and 1999 in the Western Palearctic and Southwest Asia region, comprising counts in 47 countries. For the first time maps of a selection of 50 species are presented, summarising their average distribution over the three census years (see example for Great Cormorant and Pied Avocet). In 1997, 1998 and 1999, totals of 22 to 23.5 million waterbirds of more than 230 species were counted in the region.



Distribution of Great Cormorant



Distribution of Pied Avocet