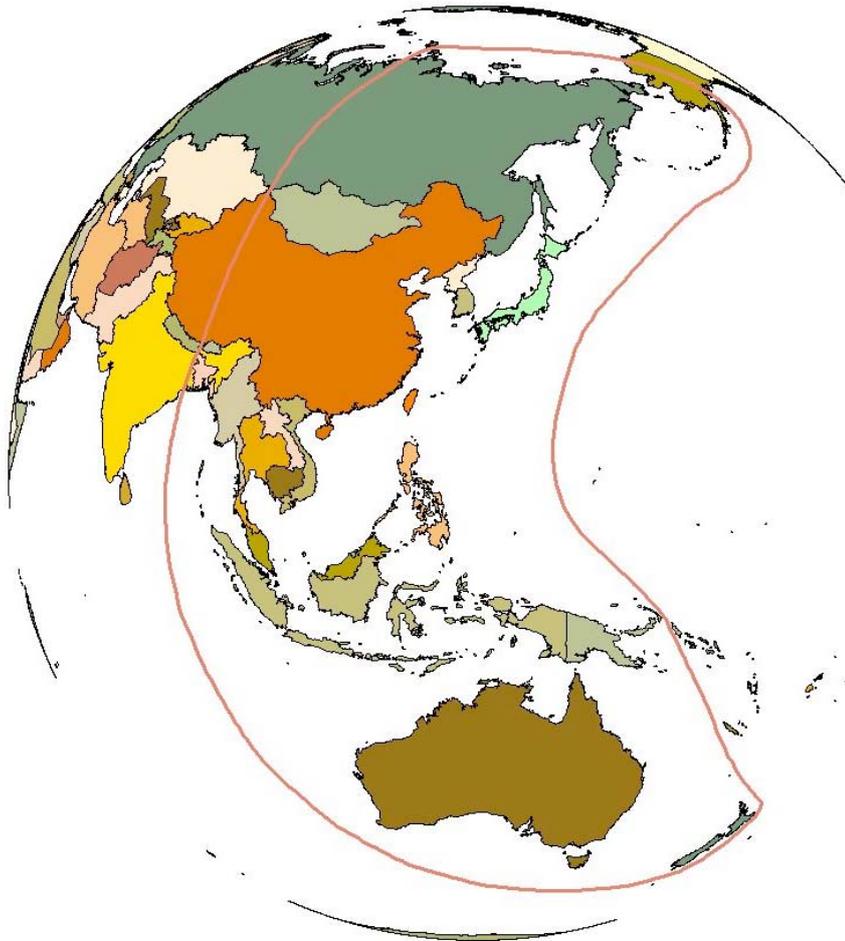


Implementation Strategy for the East Asian – Australasian Flyway Partnership: 2007 - 2011



This document draws directly from the Partnership Text and provides the framework to guide implementation of the Partnership for the East Asian – Australasian Flyway.

It is developed from a draft prepared by the Partnership Working Group following discussion at the first Meeting of Partners in Bogor, Indonesia.

1. INTRODUCTION

Each year over 50 million waterbirds migrate through the East Asian, South-east Asian and Australasian region. During migration, these waterbirds rely on a chain of highly productive wetlands to rest and feed, building up sufficient energy to fuel the next phase of their journey. International cooperation across their migratory range is therefore essential to conserve and protect migratory waterbirds and the habitats on which they depend.

The region in which these birds migrate is called the East Asian-Australasian Flyway (the Flyway). The Flyway encompasses 22 countries, stretching from the Russian Far East and Alaska, southwards through East Asia and South-east Asia, to Australia and New Zealand (Figure 1).

In 2002, at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg, the Governments of Japan and Australia, together with Wetlands International, proposed a Type II Partnership for the conservation and sustainable use of sites of international importance for migratory waterbirds in East Asia, South East Asia and Australasia.

The Partnership builds on the achievements of the Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Committee, the Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Strategy and its Action Plans for Anatidae, Cranes and Shorebirds. During the period 1996 – 2006 the Strategy and Action Plans enhanced and guided international cooperation, coordination and activities to conserve and protect internationally important habitat for migratory waterbirds.

Achievements under the Strategy and Actions Plans included the identification of more than 700 sites of international importance for migratory waterbirds in the Flyway and the development of Site Networks for Anatidae, Cranes and Shorebirds. Outcome from activities implemented included; increased knowledge of migratory waterbirds, raised awareness of the importance of these birds and enhanced capacity of managers to maintain sites important for migratory waterbirds across the Flyway. These activities have resulted in improvements in the management of Network sites.

Despite these efforts, waterbirds and their coastal and inland habitats are under increasing pressure from rapid population growth and economic development, particularly in East and South-east Asia. These pressures impact on the waterbirds that spend the non-breeding season in these countries as well as those waterbirds that utilize the central parts of the Flyway during migration. This Partnership recognises the importance of economic development for communities that share important sites with migratory waterbirds, whilst ensuring the availability and quality of habitats required to maintain populations of migratory waterbirds.

The Partnership recognises that building and promoting a Flyway Site Network for migratory waterbirds, its associated capacity building at a local level to ensure sustainable delivery of ecosystem services, will enhance the conservation status of the migratory waterbirds. The Partnership also recognises that a flyway wide approach to the conservation of migratory waterbirds is the most effective way to enhance their conservation status.

The work of the Partnership addresses all populations of migratory waterbirds of the East Asian – Australasian Flyway (Table 1).

Figure 1 Map of the East Asian – Australasian Flyway

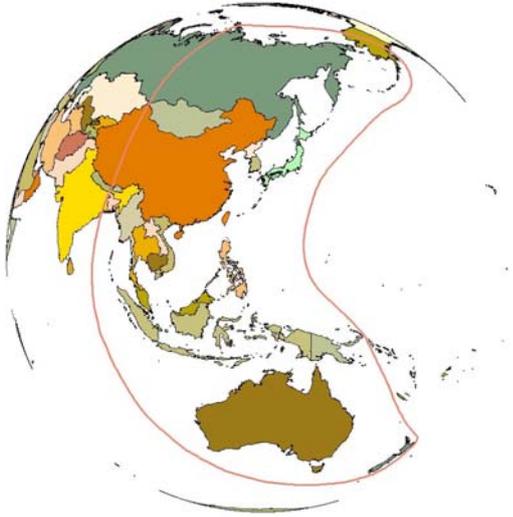


Table 1 Taxonomic groups of migratory waterbirds in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway.

Taxonomic Group	English Name
Gaviidae	Divers/Loons
Podicipedidae	Grebes
Phalacrocoracidae	Cormorants
Procellariidae	Shearwaters
Oceanitidae	Storm Petrels
Pelecanidae	Pelicans
Ardeidae	Herons, Egrets and Bitterns
Ciconiidae	Storks
Threskiornithidae	Ibises and Spoonbills
Anatidae	Swans, Geese and Ducks
Gruidae	Cranes
Rallidae	Rails, Gallinules and Coots
Heliornithidae	Finfoots
Jacaniidae	Jacanas
Haematopodidae	Oystercatcher
Recurvirostridae	Stilts and Avocet
Glareolidae	Pratincoles
Charadriidae	Plovers
Scolopacidae	Sandpipers
Laridae	Gulls, Terns and Skimmers
Stercorariidae	Auks
Alcidae	Skuas

2. STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

2.1 Goal and Objectives

The initiating Partners have agreed on the following goal and five objectives for the Partnership:

Goal: Migratory waterbirds and their habitats in the East Asian – Australasian Flyway are recognised and conserved for the benefit of people and biodiversity.

Objectives

1. Develop the Flyway Network of sites of international importance for the conservation of migratory waterbirds, building on the achievements of the APMWCS networks.
2. Enhance communication, education and public awareness of the values of migratory waterbirds and their habitats.
3. Enhance flyway research and monitoring activities, build knowledge and promote exchange of information on waterbirds and their habitats.
4. Build the habitat and waterbird management capacity of natural resource managers, decision makers and local stakeholders.
5. Develop, especially for priority species and habitats, flyway wide approaches to enhance the conservation status of migratory waterbirds.

The Partnership Working Group, established at the first meeting of potential partners, identified 13 major outcomes to be achieved through the Partnership by the end of 2011 (see below).

3. PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 Membership of the Partnership

The Partnership aims to have a broad range of membership that includes National Governments, international non-government organisations, Inter-Governmental organisations and the international business sector. The Partners encourage all national Governments and other organisations involved at the Flyway level in the conservation of migratory waterbirds and the sustainable use of their habitat to join the Partnership.

The Partnership is a collaborative arrangement and is not a legal entity. Partners join the Partnership through signing a copy of the Partnership Text.

3.2 Financing the Partnership

The Partners are encouraged to provide resources to support the work program and administrative tasks of the Partnership. Meetings of Partners will assess the needs and options for generating financial resources for:

- a) assisting Partners to carry out activities under this Partnership; and
- b) the expenses required for the operation of the Secretariat and advisory groups established under the Partnership.

As the Partnership is not a legal entity funding will need to be directed through Partners.

3.3 Work Planning

The development of activities to address the outcomes identified in this Strategy will require a high level of collaboration between Partners. An annual work program will be prepared at each meeting of the Partners and will consist of the activities planned by Partners.

3.4 Guidance for the Development of Project Activities

The Partnership has developed the following guidance to assist Partners in developing strategic projects to address the 2011 outcomes identified in this document.

Objective 1: *Develop the Flyway Network of sites of international importance for the conservation of migratory waterbirds, building on the achievements of the APMWCS networks.*

Outcome 1: The Flyway Site Network has developed to include at least 200 sites of international importance for migratory waterbirds.

- 1.1. The Partnership is promoted to all countries in the Flyway that have internationally important sites for migratory waterbirds.
- 1.2. In seeking nominations for the Flyway Site Network, priority is given to countries which have a national Government Partner and have yet to nominate a site, or have a low percentage (<10%) of their internationally important sites included in the Flyway Site Network.
- 1.3. The relative number of internationally important sites within a country is used to guide priority setting at the Flyway level.
- 1.4. National Partnerships set priorities for nominations within their country.

Outcome 2: *The management activities at sites result in a halt of loss of biodiversity or an increase in the conservation status of species concerned*

Outcome 3: The Flyway Site Network is demonstrating sound integration of wetland biodiversity conservation and sustainable development that benefits local communities.

- 3.1. Development and implementation of management plans at network sites, with participation local and key national stakeholders, that recognise the ecological needs of migratory waterbirds and the economic and social requirements of dependent communities.
- 3.2. Site Managers, national partnerships and local communities are encouraged to be involved in decision making on economic and social development processes affecting Network sites.
- 3.3. Collaboration is developed with other international projects relating to the management of migratory waterbird habitat.
- 3.4. Model projects are developed with the full involvement of the relevant National and Site Partnerships.
- 3.5. Model projects at Network Sites address key threatening processes, social and economic needs, and contribute to sound integration of wetland biodiversity conservation and sustainable development that benefits local communities.
- 3.6. Site management guidelines are developed by Flyway Partners for Flyway Network Sites that build on existing guidelines (e.g. Ramsar Guidelines for Wetland Management).

Outcome 4: The ecological, social and economic values of sites of international importance for migratory waterbirds are recognized in development and impact assessment processes.

- 4.1. Increased knowledge of the importance of including ecological, social and economic values of sites of international importance for migratory waterbirds are recognised in development and impact assessment processes (such as through increased application of Ramsar and CBD EIA guidelines).
- 4.2. Case studies of development and impact assessment processes that impact network sites and their catchments are available.
- 4.3. National Partnerships determine priorities for projects activities within their countries.

Objective 2: Enhance communication, education and public awareness of the values of migratory waterbirds and their habitats.

Outcome 5: There is a high level of awareness and recognition of the ecological, social and economic values of migratory waterbirds and Network sites.

- 5.1. A Flyway -wide Community Awareness and Education program is developed and provides ongoing guidance to the awareness and communication activities of the Flyway Partnership.
- 5.2. A review of communication and awareness resources is conducted.
- 5.3. National Partnerships are encouraged to develop CEPA Plans that complement the Flyway partnership-wide CEPA Plan.
- 5.4. A range of awareness and communication activities are implemented which are consistent with the Communication and Public Awareness Plan.

Outcome 6: There is a broad level of recognition of the activities and achievements of the Flyway Partnership.

- 6.1. Activities promoting the Partnership are implemented which are consistent with the Communication and Public Awareness Plan.

Objective 3: Enhance flyway research and monitoring activities, build knowledge and promote exchange of information on waterbirds and their habitats.

Outcome 7: Scientifically sound information is available on the Flyway wide status and trends of waterbird populations and their habitats.

- 7.1. Flyway Waterbird Monitoring Programs that are linked to existing national and international programs are established.
- 7.2. Flyway waterbird habitat monitoring programs, which are linked to existing national and international programs, are established at internationally important sites and regions.
- 7.3. Updated information is available on the status and threats to internationally important sites and to network sites in particular.
- 7.4. Partners collaborate on the integration of current waterbird monitoring activities (include biological factors) and enhance activities to enable the collection of scientifically sound data and analysis of the status and trends of waterbird populations.
- 7.5. Monitoring activities incorporate appropriate capacity development components to increase waterbird monitoring skills.

Outcome 8: Information is available on the internationally important sites for migratory waterbirds in all countries of the Flyway.

- 8.1. A review of information on the internationally important sites for migratory waterbirds in the Flyway is prepared and published.
- 8.2. Knowledge gaps on internationally important sites are addressed by survey activities.
- 8.3. Data on internationally important sites are available and shared between partners.
- 8.4. Priority is given to implementation of surveys in areas where an assessment of knowledge gaps has shown limited survey data but significant potential habitat.
- 8.5. Survey activities incorporate appropriate capacity development components to increase waterbird survey skills.

Outcome 9: Threats to internationally important sites for migratory waterbirds have been assessed and recommendations for appropriate management actions developed.

- 9.1. Guidelines on conducting threat and impact assessments are developed.
- 9.2. Reviews of threats and management needs at Network Sites and other internationally important wetlands are conducted.
- 9.3. Mitigation techniques and guidelines for mitigating impacts are developed.
- 9.4. Activities incorporate appropriate capacity development components to increase skills in threat assessment and response planning.
- 9.5. Involvement of local expertise, specialists.

Outcome 10: Knowledge of the ecology and migratory strategies of waterbirds is enhanced to support conservation action.

- 10.1. International collaborative migration projects are implemented for priority species.
- 10.2. Migratory Waterbird Marking Protocols are developed for most migratory waterbirds.
- 10.3. There is a high level of coordination between bird banding/ ringing/ schemes on migratory waterbird marking projects.
- 10.4. There is a high level of coordination on band return and flag re-sighting reports.
- 10.5. Analyses of waterbird migration data are completed and widely communicated.
- 10.6. Activities incorporate appropriate capacity development components.

Outcome 11: Knowledge of the potential role of migratory waterbirds in disease transmission, especially Avian Influenza, is enhanced.

- 11.1. The Asia Pacific Avian Influenza Working Group is [established and] supported.
- 11.2. Projects are implemented to increase the understanding of the potential role of migratory waterbirds in disease transmission.
- 11.3. Priority is given to projects involving species which have been implicated in the transmission of disease.

Objective 4: Build the habitat and waterbird management capacity of natural resource managers, decision makers and local stakeholders.

Outcome 12: Improved understanding of capacity needs for stakeholders for management of internationally important waterbird sites.

- 12.1. Capacity needs assessments are conducted for management and monitoring of Flyway Network Sites.
- 12.2. Training needs assessments are implemented for key stakeholders for management and monitoring of Flyway Network Sites.
- 12.3. Priority is given to developing countries.

Outcome 13: Natural resource managers, decision makers and local stakeholders at internationally important sites have the skills and support to enable sustainable management of waterbird habitats.

- 13.1. Capacity development and training programmes address needs in the areas of waterbirds, habitat management, sustainable development and communication, education and public awareness.
- 13.2. National capacity building networks are established to facilitate the ongoing management of migratory waterbirds and their habitats.
- 13.3. Priority is given to developing countries, which have national Government Partners, giving consideration to;
 - (a) the number of internationally important sites in each country
 - (b) completion of a training needs assessment for wetland managers and decision makers.

Objective 5: Develop, especially for priority species and habitats, flyway wide approaches to enhance the conservation status of migratory waterbirds.

Outcome 14: Collaborative Flyway-wide actions for waterbird species and habitats have improved the conservation status of priority species.

- 14.1. Coordinated projects are developed for priority species across their ranges.
- 14.2. Priority is given to species with an unfavorable conservation status or with potential as flagship species for international collaboration and habitat management.
- 14.3. Priority is given to projects that involve a number of countries and address major threats to a range of migratory waterbirds.