

Final Report to the EAAFP Secretariat on the Finalization of a report on “The conservation and wise use of intertidal wetlands around the Yellow/West Sea”.

Dr Nial Moores, Birds Korea, November 14th 2018

Project Background

In September 2016, a workshop on “The Conservation and Wise Use of Wetlands in North-east Asia with focus on the coastal wetlands of the Yellow/West Sea” (“The Yellow Sea Workshop) was held as part of the INTECOL meeting in Changsu, PR China. Although attended by only a small number of participants (~20), the workshop provided a genuinely historic opportunity for experts and decision-makers from the PR China, DPRK and ROK to present information on the status of wetlands in their own nations, and to learn more about international agreements and initiatives that could help to support their work (including participation in the EAAFP and Ramsar). Subsequent to the meeting, an invitation was then made by the INTECOL organisers for presenters at the conference to contribute to a rigorously-edited conference Proceedings, potentially for online hosting by Springer. In the months that followed, this initial proposal was refined further by the organisers, with the revised intention to publish each of the received papers and presentations in book form, with the working title of “Ecological Studies: Wetlands: Functions, Restoration and Wise Use” and with the aim of publication by Springer before the end of 2018.

With the encouragement and under the guidance of Dr Lew Young (the lead organiser of the Yellow Sea workshop in partnership with the Hanns Seidel Foundation), all of the presenters at the workshop agreed to contribute to this publication. In accordance with guidance provided in late June 2017, six topics were agreed to (though discussion on this was limited by differences in language capacity and in access to internet) - with each presenter or group of presenters taking responsibility for one of these topics (e.g. for Topic 2, Spike Millington and Nial Moores [NM] were allocated three pages to explain the “Conservation of the migratory waterbirds of the Yellow/West Sea;” and for Topic 3, Director-General Ri Kyung Sim of MoLEP, DPRK, was allocated three pages to present about the, “Conservation of wetlands in the DPR Korea, especially the coastal wetlands of the West Sea of Korea). Although much valuable information was captured by this process, the total length submitted was >50 pages in length; there were multiple inconsistencies in writing style and structure; and there were several contradictions within and considerable overlap between sections. Substantial editing was therefore undertaken by the three authors who were also native speakers of English (Dr Lew Young, Spike Millington and NM), with most of the initial focus on reducing length and on grammar. This editing effort was limited by the obvious challenges of trying to maintain regular communication between the various topic-authors and by the great sensitivity of some of the material, especially as one of the topics was contributed by a government body in the DPRK; and another by a government research institute in the ROK. This first draft was submitted in January 2018.

It took several months for an independent reviewer (Prof. Nick Davidson) to peer-review our chapter. In early July 2018, a series of comments were provided by this reviewer through the chief book editor, Prof. Jos Verhoeven,, including the observation that, “Unfortunately the text reads as a set of extended presentation abstracts placed one after the other, with no ending Discussion/Conclusions text to draw the main stories and issues together – this is needed. .. Further the whole text needs a thorough English-

language edit to harmonise better the different writing styles of different sections.” A deadline for revision by September 1st was provided; and Dr Lew Young invited participating authors to volunteer to undertake the major task of re-editing the text. This request was not responded to adequately because of everyone’s heavy workloads; because of the difficulty of some parties to communicate directly with each other; and by the realisation of how much work needed to be done to get the text into the necessary state.

The Project

- (1) In recognition of the time required for editing, the EAFFP office and Birds Korea agreed a contract of 600 USD for an anticipated 5 days of editing work (per email from Dr Lew Young of July 6), with Birds Korea charged with submitting the second draft by September 1st; and “continuing to revise the draft chapter until it is finally accepted for publication”. The Project included the request to submit a final report, after submission of the edited chapter, on October 1st.
- (2) On behalf of Birds Korea, NM made substantial edits to the text as requested by the reviewers / editors; and provided a written response to nine general and 23 specific comments. These drafts and comments were shared with all participating authors with a request for further feedback and corrections.
- (3) In accordance with the contract between the EAFFP and Birds Korea, following c.10 days of work dedicated to editing and revision, NM then submitted this second draft and related comments on August 22nd to Prof. Jos Verhoeven (JV), copied into all contributing authors. JV then requested a further three weeks to review the revised text.
- (4) On September 28th, NM then mailed to JV to request updates and to seek advice on what more needed to be done, in order to complete the process by the suspected deadline of October 1st.
- (5) On October 12th, JV sent a further list of detailed guidance organised in nine sections provided by Springer relating to permissions, to formatting and to the resolution of figures; and on October 18th followed this up with a positive commentary on the state of the text.
- (6) NM then again amended the text in accordance with the most recent guidance (including responding to several minor edits proposed by JV); and received a positive response to these additional edits by JV (on Oct 23rd), who also requested, “Please do approach your co-authors to ask them high-quality copies of the figures, so that you can send these to me (I need to have them by December 15).”
- (7) In early November, NM contacted Dr Nick Murray to clarify permission for use of an amended figure (Fig 1 in the chapter); and also mailed several of the authors to seek higher resolution figures and tables. The issue of permission was clarified and higher resolution figures (2 and 3) were received on November 14th.
- (8) On November 14th, JV then sent a request to NM and Dr Lew Young for a completed consent form; and for a final review of the text.
- (9) On November 14th, following further minor edits, NM sent the final version of the text, the larger figures and a scanned-in consent form for publication to JV, cced in to Dr Lew Young.
- (10) On November 14th, NM also completed this short report in order to fulfil the obligations of the contract.

The Agreement stated that the Final Report should contain:

- (i) A summary statement of the Project’s work and results for the full period of the Agreement.

- This is provided above.
- (ii) An overview of the Project's results in accordance of Annex A (relating the completion of editing and submission of the chapter for publication).
This is provided above.
 - (iii) A statement of income and expenditure.
The budget of 600 USD was provided to cover an anticipated five days of work. No extraneous or additional costs were anticipated through this process beyond time and communications. In total, probably closer to 14 full days of work were required to fulfil the project.

In consideration of the above, it is understood by Birds Korea that we have now completed all obligations of this agreement between the EAAFP and Birds Korea.