



Dear WLI Colleague,

As WLI is part of the delivery mechanism for Ramsar's CEPA work, we attended the recent Ramsar COP at the beginning of July in Romania. It was a great opportunity to catch up with colleagues and partners that are working on wetland education initiatives across the world. Although the COP focused on a whole range of issues, CEPA is one of the central themes of the convention, recognizing that wetlands cannot be protected without the involvement of people. See the article on Ramsar in this newsletter, with useful links to information at their website.

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We also had two Chilean colleagues visit us at Slimbridge, spending time working on developing the WLI Neotropics network, particularly on translating key documents and the website, as well as making contact with new and existing WLI members. Although the Fundacion Kennedy is relatively new and small, it was a great opportunity for them to experience an established centre, spending time with colleagues who worked on education, conservation and management issues. We continue to work together to develop the Neotropics network, and plan for next year's Neotropics conference.

You may also have seen the IUCN news, with their new report on the [100 most threatened species](#), including the spoon-billed sandpiper, which WWT is involved in protecting. It's a thought-provoking look at a handful of species that may well become extinct soon. Let's hope that the [IUCN congress](#), recently held in Jeju, South Korea, has had some impact on its members to better protect biodiversity as a whole.

Finally, please do take a look at our new [website](#) – this has been developed to offer a responsive and easily updatable site, which can give you more opportunities to support your work at wetland education centres wherever they are. If you have suggestions or new resources that you would like to see on the site, we would welcome your comments.

Best regards,

Chris Rostron  
Head of WLI

## China, Haifeng Wetland Centre



The Haifeng Nature Reserve Education Centre opened in May 2012, marking the successful completion of the HSCB/WWF South China 5-year Wetland

Programme, working to protect biodiversity through conservation and education.

Haifeng, in southeastern Guangdong province, covers 11,588 ha. The nature reserve is composed of coastal areas, mangroves, inter-tidal mudflats and reservoirs. Over 20,000 migratory waterbirds use it as a wintering site, including globally endangered species like the Dalmatian pelican, purple swamphen, and black-faced spoonbill.

The master plan of Haifeng Nature Reserve (2007-2016) has been revised and endorsed by the State Forestry Administration, and training workshops on wetland conservation and management were run to identify key conservation areas of the Reserve. Studies on socio-economic benefits of the Reserve to the local community were carried out which serve as important guidance on designing the future joint-management plan. In 2008, the designation of the Reserve as a

Ramsar Site reflected its international importance and the conservation commitment of local government.

In this programme, a tailor-made ESD (Education for Sustainable Development) strategy has been incorporated into the Reserve's 5-year management plan. An education

centre with a converted fish pond nearby provides a platform for learning. Six local schools organized ESD activities to actively raise students' interests and

knowledge on environmental conservation. The production of a *Walk with Wetlands* education pack and other promotional materials will further help local teachers.



For more information, contact Mr. Xie, Guangdong Haifeng Gongping and Daihu Nature Reserve at [xiezhaoyi1983@sohu.com](mailto:xiezhaoyi1983@sohu.com)

## Norwegian World Wetlands Day – in September!



After many discussions about the difficulty of holding World Wetlands Day in February in Scandinavia, due to the cold and snow, a novel approach has been taken. Move the day to September the 2<sup>nd</sup> – simple!

Some norwegian nature information centers marked the new, warmer Nordic wetland day, running events and activities. In Oslo, at the two wetlands centres Østensjøvannet and Lilløyplassen, the doors were kept open all day, welcoming visitors to learn about wetlands and celebrate the day.

People were invited to read about wetland, look at wetland species from under the surface, take a closer

look at migrating birds heading south and many other activities. The weather was smiling this day, and we hope that a lot of visitors now understood more about wetlands in Norway, these vital 10% of our land area.

These two centres are both new, planning for exciting developments in the months to come! Using the new wetland date makes World Wetlands Day possible to celebrate at this latitude, offering another opportunity to engage and enthuse people. For more details, contact:



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## Baikka Beel, Bangladesh

At Baikka Beel wetland sanctuary in Bangladesh, a number of visitor facilities and habitat management activities are underway, with support from USAID funds left over from the earlier project and support from Chevron. In addition to the existing observation tower a smaller viewing platform and access bridge have been built overlooking the southern end of the sanctuary, and an enlarged toilet block completed along with excavation deepening the wetland near the entrance. Work is now underway on the visitor centre at the entrance to the sanctuary. The foundation piling was completed earlier this year, and despite the challenges



along with an entrance walkway.

of the wet season the floor (which is well above flood levels) was recently cast. The centre, including reception area, displays and refreshment corner is due for completion by the end of the year,

Also in August five of the nest boxes in the sanctuary have again been used by cotton pygmy-goose (down from nine used in 2011, possibly due to theft of some boxes). This is the only successful nest box scheme in the wild that we know of for this species. Already one brood has hatched and made the leap into the wetland. In three of these boxes Asian pied starlings raised broods in July immediately before the pygmy-geese laid.



Currently Baikka Beel is looking for a volunteer with graphic / art capability as well as wildlife / environment interests, who could help in developing interpretive materials particularly displays for the new centre. Although unable to cover international travel, they can cover a suitable volunteer's accommodation and subsistence costs within Bangladesh. Potential volunteers would need to have at least 2-3 weeks available during the October-early December period. Please contact Paul Thomas at the e-mail below. E-mail: [paul@aqni.com](mailto:paul@aqni.com) W: [baikka.beel](http://baikka.beel)

## Australia – Bangladesh Wetland Centre Exchange



During August 2012, Denise Crosbie, of the Cockburn Wetlands Education Centre (CWEC), and Steven Harwood, of the City of Cockburn, Western Australia, visited the new Nature Conservation

Commission (NCC) headquarters in Bangladesh as part of a wetland centre exchange program. They met with NCC, Forestry Commission and IUCN representatives, and presented a paper at a seminar attended by 60 people called 'Best Wetland Management Practices'. Mr Sajahan Sorder, Director of the NCC, hosted their 18 day visit; he had previously been hosted in Western Australia in 2010 when he presented a paper at CWEC's Wetland Management.

Denise Crosbie said: "Wetland exchange programs are a really beneficial way to extend staff experience and

gain a better understanding of wetland management challenges around the globe. Coming from a country that has the luxury to manage wetlands mainly for conservation and recreation, it is a stark contrast to visit a country where people rely on wetlands for their livelihood. Despite this, some of the challenges, such as wetland loss, nutrient input and the introduction of weeds and exotic animals, are common to both countries."

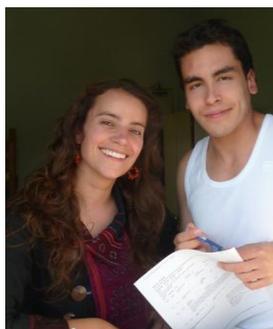
The NCC is keen to start delivering a variety of education programs targeting women and children in rural areas. Mr Sorder has been overseeing extensions at the new NCC headquarters just south of the capital of Dhaka using his own funds. The Centre includes a dedicated area for women and children, a workshop/training room, library, office and accommodation



for volunteers and visitors. The NCC is keen to extend similar education programs to their rural Nijhum Dweep Wetland Centre and at the Ramsar wetland, Hakaluki Haor, although funding remains their biggest challenge. The CWC hopes to assist the NCC with the planning of their education programs and to raise awareness about this dedicated group of people.

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## Chilean colleagues at WWT Slimbridge



In July and August, WWT Slimbridge, UK, hosted two colleagues from Chile, in a partnership between WWT, the Fundacion Kennedy and the Chilean/British Cultural University. We are working together to build the WLI Neotropics network and plan for a regional conference next year.

Here is a short description from Adriana Suarez-Delucchi, project office at the Fundacion Kennedy.

“Being at WWT was a privilege. We had a great time and it was a perfect combination between working and being surrounded by a beautiful Reserve, and actually living on it! During our time there, I felt that we could really support the work that WWT is doing through their WLI and WWN (World Wetland Network) initiatives.

I also felt very lucky because I was able to go to the Ramsar Convention 11th Conference of the Parties, in Romania. It was an amazing opportunity to see at firsthand how this Convention works, how parties try to get to a consensus before voting, so that everyone is happy with the solution or agreement they attain. I learned a lot about the importance that we as NGOs have in relation to bringing the Ramsar messages to

the local level, to local and indigenous communities and to the local governments. Our work as local groups is really important and it’s beautiful to feel part of a community that is delivering wetland conservation around the globe to do achieve the same things as we are in Chile through our NGO.

Moreover, I was very lucky to have a unique person as a partner, a student from the UCBC (Chilean-British University). Felipe helped by translating materials and resources such as manuals and guidelines, from English into Spanish and vice versa. These materials were taken to Romania, and we were able to have them in English, Spanish and French.

This was not only a work experience, but a life and cultural experience as well, living in another country different from our own. We also made a lot of friends. People at were very helpful and welcoming, while explaining to us what their jobs were about and what they did in the Nature Reserve. And that, for sure, made us feel at home.”

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**Ramsar COP11**  
6-13 July 2012  
Bucharest, Romania

## Ramsar COP11

Every three years the signatories to the Ramsar convention gather to assess progress, debate issues, and decide on priorities for the next three year period. In July, the COP (conference of the parties) was held in Bucharest, Romania, and WLI was represented by the network manager as well as partners at the event.

WLI had an information booth at the event, with posters and maps showing all our members. We also held a side event looking at the potential for flyways and wetland centre network to collaborate better. We had speakers from the East Asia Australasia Flyway Partnership, the Migratory Birds for People initiative, Wetlands International and BirdLife. The conclusion was the there is great scope to work better along flyways, to deliver messages to local people about the importance of their wetlands in the flyway context, but



also in citizen science and data collection from local people. We will work with the flyway secretariats to achieve this.

Sandra Hails, Ramsar's CEPA manager, reported back on progress and plans, see the presentation [here](#). She also held a meeting to bring CEPA focal points together to discuss the approach, sharing best practice from each country. Ramsar's CEPA programme is a great boost to promote engagement through both government and NGO partners, and you can also see

## WLI future plans

Over the coming months we will be continuing work with the Fundacion Kennedy, planning to develop and expand the WLI neotropics network, and work towards a regional meeting covering central and south America, and the Caribbean.

We are also working with our WLI Asia colleagues to plan for the next WLI Asia conference, to be held in South Korea in early 2013. WLI has an MoU with Suncheon City, who are currently completing a brand new wetland centre, designed to complement their existing Suncheon Bay centre. The conference will form part of the Suncheon Garden Expo, building on their impressive approach to sustainability and the idea of a 'green city'.

## Contact

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some best practice examples which will be available soon.

There were also many side events showing what partners, both NGO and government, were doing. You can get a flavour of what took place by checking the [Ramsar website](#). It was a great opportunity to catch up with colleagues, share experience and plan for future work priorities.

Finally, Ramsar has announced its theme for World Wetlands Day 2013, which is 'Wetlands and water management: wetlands take care of water'. To find out more about available materials and information, click [here](#).

As you may be aware, we now have a new [WLI website](#), which we hope provides a useful forum for information, resources, contacts and news. If you have any comments on possibly improvements, please let us know!

Social media is an area that is developing every day. People are starting to use facebook, twitter and host of other tools to share news, views and information. We now have a WLI FaceBook site, which is starting to be used by more people, but will be improved with more stories and updates, of course. If you use FaceBook, please look us up!