What the WLI team did in 2019

A summary of WLI staff and interns' activities in 2019.

Chris Rostron was invited by national NGO, Ramsar France, to participate in their flagship **World Wetlands Day** event. The WLI colleagues at the Lac du Grand Lieu hosted the event, with 125 guests taking part, including Ramsar Association France, the CEPA focal point for France, local politicians and even a pre-recorded message from the Minister for Environment. Chris presented a session about wetland centres.

Funded by the European Union's Erasmus+ programme, **Biowet** held its first gathering of young people. Groups from Norway and Portugal went to the UK to figure out just how they could measure climate change at different wetland centres.

They came up with a protocol that is broadly relevant to wetland centres from inland in Norway to the coasts of Portugal and the Basque country, and any WLI member is welcome to use and adapt it!

The carbon footprint of our staff and interns in 2019 was 17.2 Tonnes CO2e

Where possible, we kept our meetings virtual, using services like Skype, Zoom, and WeChat. For the two staff and two interns these amounted to about 70 hours of meetings and activities with WLI members around the world.

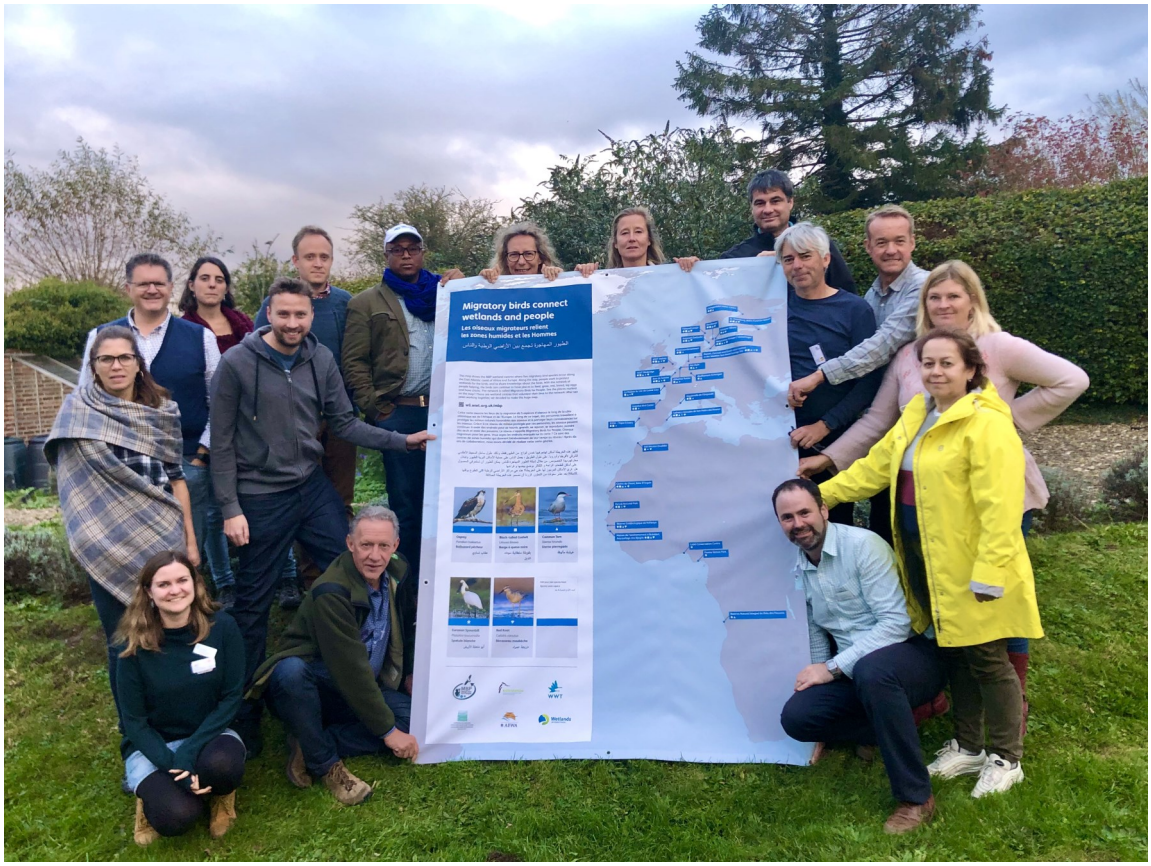
We again marked **World Migratory Bird Day** with school video link-ups. Called **Birds and Schools**, we coordinated a Spanish call in the Americas in October and May, and calls in English and French in May. About three hundred young people visited wetlands and chatted about it across two days and four continents. The events were well-received and we will continue to implement and refine them in 2020.

The **WLI intern** for 2018/2019, Samaneh Azizi, moved on in late June. She had a great time at WWT Slimbridge, improving her skills in websites, social media, and English language. Now back in her native Iran, we hope she makes great strides in environmental education! The intern recruitment process was highly competitive. Everyone we interviewed would have made a great contribution, and it is very encouraging to see so many dedicated wetlands communicators and educators around the world. The successful candidate, Adil Boulahia, joined us from his communications role at Morocco's GREPOM. Since then he has worked on multiple social media platforms and brought robustness to our Arabic and French output. He will continue until late June 2020.

The Head of WLI, Chris Rostron, addressed two conferences in Asia, one in person and one digitally. He attended the meeting of the **Ramsar Wetland City independent advisory committee.** It was hosted at the Ramsar Regional Centre–East Asia (RRC-EA), in South Korea, to review the process and make recommendations for the next round of wetland city applications. He was also present via the internet for a session at the RRC-EA's meeting about drafting a **resolution for the Ramsar Convention on education and wetlands**.

Connor Walsh attended the **Yancheng World Natural Heritage Site Symposium** in Jiangsu Province, China, to lead a three-hour seminar on public participation at the new World Heritage site there. This involved meeting staff from wetland centres in Eastern China, Hong Kong, and Korea, as well as eco-tourism guides from Cambodia and nature educators from Singapore. He also used the opportunity to meet WLI partner the **Mangrove Conservation Foundation, MCF**, in Shenzhen.

The East Atlantic flyway initiative, **Migratory Birds for People (MBP)** met at WWT Slimbridge, UK, in October. Twenty people spent two days in discussion and site visits. The meeting summarised the members' activities, and looked forward to the 2020 meeting in Senegal. We also got our first touch of the large, fabric map of the flyway MBP developed for educational games.



The **Seventh WLI Asia Conference** was hosted by Guandu Nature Park and Taipei Zoo in December. About one hundred people from wetland centres across the region met to share experiences and plan for the coming two years. We also had one exchange from Europe, with Patric Lorgé introducing Luxembourg's Biodiversum Remerschen. Chris Rostron attended for WLI Global, and along with Suh Seung-oh signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Ramsar Regional Centre – East Asia (RRC-EA): the agreement means RRC-EA will continue to operate WLI Asia for the next four years, with plans and ideas that came from the meeting.

The Ramsar Convention's **CEPA oversight Panel** has been reactivated and is now looking at a new approach to CEPA across the Ramsar programme (including a potential new resolution and a new name!). We have also been working to support the **Ramsar Culture network**, with Dave Pritchard, and will bring more information about this soon.

Nine new members joined WLI in 2019.

Our website had thirteen thousand users.

Our Facebook page grew to 1,232 followers.
Our Twitter account now has 636 followers.

We sent 47 mass emails in three languages.

We produced two Bulletins in 2019:

Bulletin 1, Bulletin 2.

Changes in titles: Chris Rostron's job title at WWT has changed to International Engagement Manager, without affecting his WLI and Ramsar CEPA duties. The intern at WWT, formerly the WLI intern, is now called the International Engagement Intern, to match the other team titles, and to include other activities at WWT.

For more information on WLI, please contact:

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WLI is recognised as a key implementer of the Ramsar CEPA programme

The WLI network is coordinated by WWT