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Western Hemisphere (CREHO)
is a not-for-profit international organization
that promotes management and wise use of
wetlands in the Americas.

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EDITORIAL

The *impact assessment and wetlands* topic, the special issue to which we dedicate this number, is a call to reflect about the increasing pressures to which the wetlands ecosystems are subjected and their implications in terms of degradation and loss of goods, values and services they render to the human populations.

For this special issue, we have a special guest, the renowned wetlands specialist, Dr. Max Finlayson, whom we thank for the article he wrote to illustrate us about environmental impact assessment techniques applied to Ramsar sites and other wetlands.

Integrated management, together with collective, equal and real participation, is the key for the conservation and wise use of wetlands. The many actors and sectors implicated in development processes, such as industries, ports, fisheries, agriculture, tourism, construction, are the ones who need to know about the importance of the dynamics taking place in a wetlands ecosystem, mainly to make decisions on the basis of sustainability and with a vision towards the future.

It is also equally important to raise awareness in the community at large, to foster the active and informed participation of the civil society, to strengthen specialized technical capabilities, to generate and gather scientific information in order to develop conservation actions in wetlands and to formulate the appropriate laws for them.

In CREHO we want to contribute, through our usual sections on **INFOWETLAND**, to highlight positive tools and experiences, starting with the celebration of World Wetlands Day and other environmental dates that from year to year increase the participation of the population at large, as well as through our specialized efforts via courses and events to strengthen capabilities. As part of the evolutionary process affecting this bulletin, we have created a new section which we consider useful for those of our readers that need to consult specialized publications.

We hope you will enjoy this *INFOWETLAND* and we invite you to join in our work of strengthening, exchanging and spreading knowledge, sharing your experiences that, we are sure, will be of great value to enrich other conservation actions in the hemisphere.
Together we can make it possible for our wetlands to have a future!

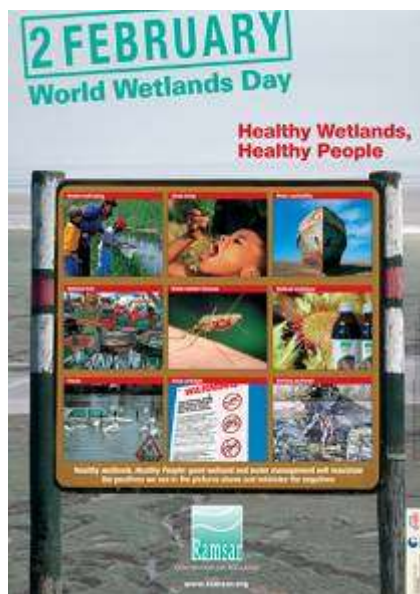


Rosa Montañez
Executive Director
CREHO



NEWS

CELEBRATING WORLD WETLANDS DAY IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE



SINALOA, MÉXICO DESIGNATION OF SEVEN NEW RAMSAR SITES. Source: Ramsar Secretariat

The Mexican Government, in a ceremony that took place in Mazatlán, Sinaloa, as part of the activities to celebrate the WWD, has provided the information for the designation of 45 new Internationally Important Wetlands in its territory.

Of these, seven (7) have already been added to the list of Ramsar sites. With this new addition, Mexico has now 74 Ramsar sites which cover some 5,908,968 hectares.

For more information about these 7 new sites go to http://www.ramsar.org/w/w.n.mexico_april08_s.htm

“...the strong relationship between healthy functioning wetland ecosystems and human health underlines the huge importance of management strategies that support both the health of wetlands and the health of humans.

(extract from the World Wetlands Day message from the Ramsar Conventions Secretary General, mister Anada Tiega)

CALAFATE, ARGENTINA WORLD WETLANDS DAY FOR THE FIRST TIME IN PATAGONIA

Source: Prensa Proteger / Calafate Natural Original note: <http://www.proteger.org.ar/doc736.html>

The city of El Calafate – entrance door to the famous Perito Moreno glacier – was the scenery for the celebrations organized by the “Calafate Natural” civil association where tourists and local people carried out different activities to raise awareness about the benefits and services provided by the wetlands ecosystems. This is the first time that the WWD is celebrated here.

BOGOTA, COLOMBIA PONTIFICIA UNIVERSIDAD JAVERIANA CARRIES OUT 5TH ACADEMIC DAY

Source: Byron Calvachy, Wetlands program, Bogotá's aqueduct

This year, the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana (PUJ) carried out the “5th Academic Day” on the 22nd and 23rd of February, in the Luis Carlos Galan Auditorium. Since the year 2004, the university is part of the worldwide celebration through this Academic Day. For 2008, the PUJ had the support of the Wetlands Foundation.

HOLGUÍN, CUBA BY PREVENTING POLLUTION WE´LL HAVE HEALTHIER WETLANDS

Source: MSc. Frank A. Ocaña Borrego

In Holguin, a city declared a National Monument, a garbage collection activity was carried out and a sign was posted to call the attention about the waste problem. A rustic informative fence was also placed at the entrance of the “Las Balsas” wetlands, an important site for biodiversity which provides refuge and a reproduction area for various species of the local fauna.

These activities were possible thanks to the sponsorship and collaboration of the Centro de Investigaciones y Servicios Ambientales Tecnológicos (CISAT), in Holguín, the Museum of Natural History “Joaquín Fernández de la Vara”, in Gibara, the Technical Youth Brigades, the Jose Martí Pioneers Organization and the Environmental Youth Network of Cuba.



Photo: Dayanis Matos



MANAGEMENT OF HYDRIC RESOURCES IN NICARAGUA

On September 9th, 2007, in Nicaragua, the General Law of National Waters was promulgated, which makes it in one of the most recent laws about hydric resources. The publication of the document in December, 2007, was possible thanks to the support of the Central American Commission for Environment and Development and the effort of the Permanent Organizing Committee of the National Earth Fair.

This law deals with the integrated management of the hydric resources and defines an administrative framework to assign rights of use and to ensure that the environmental obligations and wise use are fulfilled by the users. The law addresses the issue of watershed management, an important step towards the correct economic and environmental ordering of the territory.

The law emphasizes that water is considered a natural patrimony of public order and social interest. It is a pioneer law that surely will become a Central American model to encourage other countries to work towards legal regimes with an integrated management of hydric resources approach and towards a legal regime that will ensure the resource for future generations.



NEW LEGAL DISPOSITIONS FOR APPROPRIATE USE OF MARINE-COASTAL WETLANDS IN THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA

As part of the implementation of the Ramsar Convention guidelines to address the wise use of wetlands resources, the Panamanian Authority of Aquatic Resources (ARAP) issued [Resolution #01 of the 29th of January, 2008](#) "which establishes all the areas of marine-coastal wetlands, particularly the mangroves of the Republic of Panama, as special zones of marine-coastal management, and dictates other measures". This norm acknowledges wetlands as goods for public use and as dynamic ecosystems which play a preponderant role in the ecological and hydric equilibrium.

Also approved is [Resolution J. D.#. 1 \(February 26th, 2008\)](#), which establishes some rates, rights and fines that will have to be paid for the services provided by marine-coastal wetlands. Fines for illegal cutting of mangroves reach US\$300,000 per degraded hectare.

In this regulation, of special mention is the commitment by ARAP to produce and implement integrated marine-coastal management plans for these areas of the Republic of Panama, and the prohibition to cut, market and damage any marine-coastal wetlands, as well as modifications to soil profile or the construction of engineering projects that could modify or interrupt the hydric input that marine-coastal wetlands must receive.

To see these and other legal dispositions for the Republic of Panama go to <http://www.gacetaoficial.gob.pa/>



1ST INTERNATIONAL COURSE ON ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT EVALUATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIC EVALUATION FOR WETLANDS MANAGEMENT

Between November 19th and December 6th, 2007, the first International Course on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Environmental Strategic Assessment (ESA) for Wetlands Management was held in Panama City. A multidisciplinary group of representatives from eleven countries of the Western Hemisphere involved in diverse action areas pertaining wetlands management took part in the course. This intensive 17-day course worked with the technical guidelines for EIAs and ESAs provided by the Ramsar Convention and the Commission on Environmental Impacts.



The course provided the setting to strengthen links and to share experiences of our countries regarding wetlands management by giving the opportunity to establish relationships, to share and to build a network of professionals linked to different decision-making processes related to wetlands and their resources.

The course took place in Panama City and was organized by the Ramsar Regional Center for Training and Research on Wetlands in the Western Hemisphere (CREHO), thanks to the contributions made by the Ramsar Convention and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

UNITED NATIONS SUMMIT ON CLIMATE CHANGE

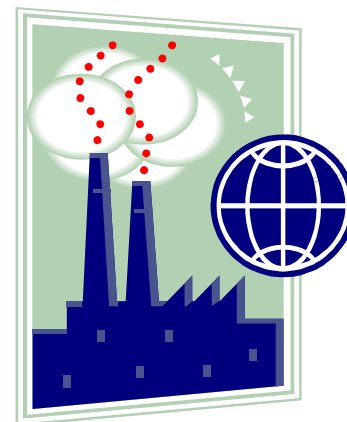
The United Nations Summit on Climate Change took place between December 3rd and 14th, 2007, in Bali, Indonesia. Delegates from more than 180 countries gathered to commit themselves to address the increase in global temperatures. This summit promises clean technologies and help to developing countries. One of the most important achievements of the summit was the incorporation of the United States to the fight against climate change.

The final balance of the meeting was positive because it signaled the beginning of a new process to reach an international agreement that will substitute the Kyoto Protocol starting in the year 2012. The next summit will be held in Copenhagen in 2009 and it will be the place where the real negotiations of the new treaty will be carried out, a treaty that promises to firmly and strongly follow-up on the achievements of its predecessor.

* To access the Action Plan approved at the Summit in Bali [click here](#).

EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON WETLANDS

The effects of a changing climate put wetlands in a vulnerable position. Less water availability or higher temperatures will alter the natural cycles of the flora and fauna in the region. For example, it has been proven that the functions of coral reefs are altered when the sea temperature goes up. This phenomenon is known as coral bleaching. It is not known with certainty if wetlands will have the capacity to shift or adapt to these new conditions. Hence, short-term decisions are crucial, as well as the development of strategies that will prevent and mitigate the impacts that climate change will have on these ecosystems.





¡NEW SECTION! PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD ON THE WEB

In this issue of Infowetland, we have started a new section called “Available Publications for Download on the Web”, in it you will find interesting documents that talk about conservation, which will be available for downloads, for free. We invite you to send any publication you would like to share, to the following address: info@creho.org



3RD EDITION OF THE RAMSAR HANDBOOKS FOR THE WISE USE OF WETLANDS

The handbooks are available in the three working languages of the Convention (English, French and Spanish).

Get hold of the 17 volumes that make up this “tool box” in http://www.ramsar.org/lib/lib_handbooks2006_e.htm

This third edition of the Ramsar handbooks replaces the series that was Publisher on May 2004 and includes the pertinent guidelines approved by the Conference of the Parties in various meetings, particularly the COP7 (1999), the COP8 (2002) and the COP9 (2005), as well as some background documents presented at those conferences.

Each handbook gathers, issue by issue, the diverse guidelines adopted by the Parties, to which additional material such as the COP information news, case studies and other publications have been added to illustrate the main aspects of the guidelines.

TRANS-FRONTIER ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT IN CENTRAL AMERICA: GENERAL GUIDELINES

This publication is available in PDF format. You can access it via the following link: <http://www.iucn.org/dbtw-wpd/edocs/EPLP-062.pdf>

This is a publication of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Regional Office for Central America and the IUCN Center of Environmental Laws.

Apart from their history, the Central American countries share hydro-graphic watersheds, forests, protected areas, life zones and ecosystems, among others. The development of a project, activity or plan in a frontier zone might affect the neighbor. The development of a trans-frontier EIA regime is indispensable to guarantee a good neighbor policy (40% of the world population lives in trans-frontier watersheds).

For more documents related to Environmental Impact Assessment in Central America go to: <http://www.eia-centroamerica.org/documentos.php?cat=6>

BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The brochure is available in PDF format at: <http://www.cbd.int/doc/bioday/2007/ibd-2007-booklet-01-en.pdf>

It has been produced by the Biological Diversity Convention and it highlights some of the causes of climate change and its consequences on biological diversity, as well as the different links that exist between biological diversity and climate change.

It also presents the main threats posed by climate change, specifically to diverse ecosystems, and the possibility to mitigate them and adapt to them.



SPECIAL ISSUE

IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND WETLANDS

Author: C Max Finlayson Institute for Land, Water and Society. Charles Sturt University, Albury, Australia

The importance of applying impact assessment techniques to Ramsar sites and other wetlands that may be threatened by developments or broader policies and strategies has long been recognized. In response the Ramsar Convention has adopted several decisions to encourage the incorporation of impact assessment into legislative frameworks and to ensure that impact assessments are undertaken where appropriate. These decisions complement those made by the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention on Migratory Species and provide consistent guidance to the many parties that are members of these august agreements. There is also agreement that further guidance on other aspects of impact assessment is needed, including the links between cultural, social, health and environmental impact assessment.

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTS FOR WETLANDS MANAGEMENT

The guidelines proposed for environmental impact assessment of wetlands are also applicable to strategic environmental assessment, taking into account that for the latter, wetland concerns should be considered from the early stages of the drafting process, including when developing new legislative and regulatory frameworks, and at the decision-making and/or environmental planning levels, and that strategic environmental assessments by their nature cover policies and programmes, a wider range of activities over a wider area.

Strategic environmental assessment is not a new process, but is not practiced as widely as environmental impact assessment. As experience accumulates in countries, it may then be necessary to draw more specific guidelines for the incorporation of wetlands into the process.



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR WETLANDS MANAGEMENT

The following is a summary of the guidelines adopted by the Ramsar Convention for incorporating wetland-related issues into environmental impact assessment. The guidelines were adapted from those developed by the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Environmental impact assessment is a process for evaluating the likely environmental impacts of a proposed project or development, taking into account inter-related socio-economic, cultural and human-health impacts, both beneficial and adverse. Although legislation and practice vary around the world, the fundamental components of an environmental impact assessment generally involve the following stages:

(a) Screening is used to determine which proposals should be subject to impact assessment, to exclude those unlikely to have harmful environmental impacts and to indicate the level of environmental appraisal required. If screening criteria do not include wetland measures there is a risk that proposals with potentially significant impacts on biodiversity will be screened out. Screening mechanisms include: positive lists identifying projects requiring environmental impact assessment; expert judgments or a preliminary assessment; and a combination of these. The screening can ascertain whether an environmental impact assessment is required, or a limited environmental study is sufficient, or if the project does not require an environmental impact assessment.

(b) Scoping narrows the focus of the broad issues found to be significant during the screening stage. It is used to derive terms of reference or guidelines for the actual environmental impact assessment. It also enables the relevant authority to provide guidance on significant issues and alternatives to be assessed and clarify how they should be examined, provide an opportunity for stakeholders to have their interests taken into account, and ensure that the resulting environmental impact statement is useful to the decision maker and is understandable to the public.

(c) Impact analysis and assessment is an iterative process of assessing impacts, redesigning alternatives and comparison. The main tasks are to refine the understanding of the nature of the potential impacts identified during screening and scoping and described in the terms of reference, including identification of indirect and cumulative impacts, and of the likely causes of the impacts (impact analysis and assessment). This includes reviewing and where necessary, redesigning of alternatives and consideration of mitigation measures in relation to the likely impacts, and providing a report for public review and eventual reporting in a final environmental impact statement.



(d) Consideration of mitigation measures entails looking for better ways to implement project activities so that negative impacts are avoided or reduced to acceptable levels and the environmental benefits are enhanced, and to make sure that the public or individuals do not bear costs which are greater than the benefits which accrue to them. It can include remedial actions, such as avoidance (or prevention), mitigation (including restoration and rehabilitation of sites), and compensation (often associated with residual impacts after prevention and mitigation).

e) Decision-making takes place throughout the process of environmental impact assessment in an incremental way from the screening and scoping stages to decisions during data-collecting and analysis, and impact prediction to making choices between alternatives and mitigation measures and finally the decision between refusal or authorization of the project. Wetland issues should play a part throughout the decision-making. The final decision is often a political choice about whether or not the proposal is to proceed, and under what conditions. If rejected, the project can be redesigned and resubmitted. It is also recommended that the precautionary approach should be applied in decision-making in cases of scientific uncertainty about risk of significant harm to wetlands; as scientific certainty improves, decisions can be modified accordingly.

(h) Monitoring and evaluation are used to see what occurs after the project has started. Predicted impacts on wetlands should be monitored, as should the effectiveness of mitigation measures proposed in the environmental impact assessment and anticipated impacts are maintained within predicted levels, and unanticipated impacts are managed before they become a problem and the expected benefits (or positive developments) are achieved as the project proceeds. The results of monitoring provide information for periodic review and alteration of environmental management plans, and for optimizing environmental protection through good practice at all stages of the project. An independent evaluation or environmental audit is also recommended as a way of ascertaining if the project is meeting its objectives.



CAPACITY-BUILDING AND PARTICIPATION

The successful and independent implementation of environmental impact and strategic impact assessment should be accompanied by appropriate capacity development activities. This could include ensuring sufficient expertise in taxonomy, conservation biology, ecology, and traditional knowledge as well as local expertise in assessment methods, techniques and procedures. Environmental impact assessments should involve ecologists with in depth knowledge about the wetland ecosystems) being assessed and other experts as appropriate for the specific assessment, e.g. environmental chemists, hydrologists and engineers.



For assessments to be successfully undertaken and examined it may be useful to conduct training workshops on wetlands and environmental impact/strategic environmental assessment for both assessment practitioners and wetland specialists to build a common understanding of the issues, and difficulties that can be faced. It is further suggested that relevant educational curricula should be reviewed to ensure that they incorporate material on biodiversity conservation, sustainable development and environmental impact/strategic environmental assessment. To support public confidence in the assessments it is also suggested that wetland-related data is provided in regularly updated and publicly accessible databases managed by independent and competent experts.

Relevant stakeholders or their representatives, and in particular indigenous and local communities should be involved in the assessment processes particularly during the development of guidelines or recommendations for environmental impact assessments as well as throughout the assessment processes relevant to them, including participation in the decision-making. The latter is likely more effective when the decision-making processes are independent from the role of the project proponents. Suitable public participation may require appropriate incentives or compensation for the time and effort that this can entail; relying solely on voluntary effort or input from self-funded NGOs is highly unsatisfactory and may undermine the social justice that underpins the principles of public participation and environmental protection. In addition to input from NGOs are also needed publicly funded processes to ensure community groups of different types and individuals can have input and representation.

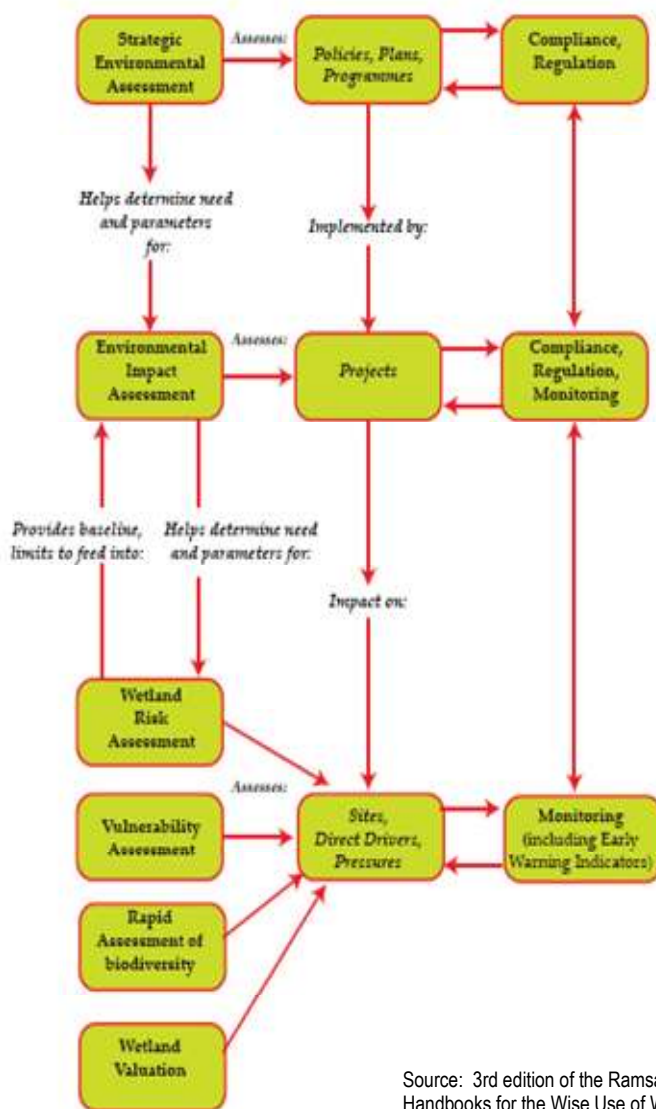
The inclusion of impact assessment and public participation within a legislative framework is seen as an essential step to ensure that public confidence in the assessment processes is both built and maintained as a basis for effective environmental management. It may also be useful to provide financial or other incentives to ensure that environmental impact and strategic environmental assessment are effectively undertaken and implemented and accountable through transparent and straight forward procedures.

About the author

Professor Finlayson is a wetland ecologist with longstanding links with the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. He has participated in the Convention's Scientific and Technical Review Panel since its inception in 1993 and has wetland research and management experience in many countries. His main interests revolve around integrated research and knowledge generation including the involvement of local people in research and management. He strongly supports the adoption of rigorous assessment procedures and transparency and accountability in environmental management and decision making.

INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK FOR WETLAND INVENTORY, ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING

The links and relationships between environmental impact and strategic environmental assessment within the Ramsar Convention are shown in the “Integrated Framework for Wetland Inventory, Assessment and Monitoring” that was adopted in 2005 and outlined in the Ramsar Wise Use Handbook No. 11. The integrated framework (IF-WIAM) has been developed in response to the growing realization that effective wetland management requires knowledge and information that can be used to inform management decisions that themselves need to be adaptable to changing knowledge.



Source: 3rd edition of the Ramsar Handbooks for the Wise Use of Wetlands

The relationships among the assessment tools in the IF-WIAM are presented as a flow diagram that shows the linkages between the tools and the choices that may need to be made when assessing the condition of or change in a wetland. Whilst each assessment tool has a specific application there is considerable overlap between tools. Practitioners need to consider the choice of tool or tools in relation to the specific purpose of the assessment they need to undertake.

All tools are relevant in one way or another for assessing change or potential change in wetlands and can be effectively integrated in a hierarchical decision-making framework, so that there is an efficient flow of information from one to the other. Some of the ways in which this can occur are:

- Strategic Environmental Assessment can provide a framework or context to determine the need for, and the parameters of, relevant project-specific Environmental Impact Assessments, focusing on key issues, priority risks and opportunities.

The relationships among the different wetland assessment tools available through the Convention.

- Environmental Impact Assessment can help determine the need for, and the parameters of, Vulnerability and Risk Assessments and Wetland Valuations.
- Vulnerability and Risk Assessments help define baselines, tolerance limits and other elements to feed in to Environmental Impact Assessment, as well as potential measures for reducing the risk of wetland degradation.
- Risk Assessment can quantify the magnitude and likelihood of impacts, as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment.
- Wetland Valuation of ecosystem services can provide information to assist in articulating the benefits obtained from a wetland and hence support the concepts provided in Vulnerability and Risk Assessments.
- Information on impacts collected in the Environmental Impact Assessment process and through subsequent monitoring activities can feed into the Strategic Environmental Assessment process, as well as informing Vulnerability and Risk Assessments and Wetland Valuations.
- Rapid Assessment of biodiversity provides information that can guide Environmental Impact Assessment and support Vulnerability and Risk Assessment, and identify elements of biodiversity that could be used within Wetland Valuation.

Acknowledgements

This report has been derived largely from the Ramsar Handbooks for the Wise Use of Wetlands, 3rd Edition, prepared and published by the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention. The many members of the Convention's Scientific and Technical Review Panel who participated in the discussions and analyses that resulted in the acceptance of the guidance for environmental impact and strategic environmental assessment are warmly thanked

WETLAND FAUNA OF THE WEST INDIES DENDROCYGNA ARBOREA

In English it is known as "West Indian Whistling-Duck". It is the biggest, lest common of all the 8 species of Whistling Ducks.

This endemic bird of the West Indies lives in zones close to the coasts like mangroves, marshy areas, and salt water marshes; you can also find them in lakes and fresh water lagoons. Its geographical distribution covers from Cuba to the Virgin Islands and some other islands to the north, in the Small Antilles. Currently their habitat has been threatened on many of the islands and they are listed as a vulnerable species by the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

The male and the female look alike and they couple for life. The females lay 6-10 eggs and both parents incubate them, switching turns every 24hours. You can commonly see them or hear its whistling at sunset when they fly in flocks to the different wetlands.

Source: <http://www.whistlingduck.org/download.html>



Events and Courses

II International Course on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SES) for Wetlands Management

RESERVE YOUR PLACE NOW
For more information, send an e-mail to
info@creho.org

This course will have a length of 12 days, from the 25th of August to the 5th of September 2008, in Panama City, Panama. The course is being organized by Ramsar Regional Center for Training and Research on Wetlands on the Western Hemisphere (CREHO) and the Ramsar Convention.

Option A: USD\$ 3,500.00

Includes: Enrolling, working material, field trips, lodging and food (breakfast, lunch, supper and snacks), Hotel/airport shuttle and insurance. **It does not include:** plane ticket, visas and taxes, tourism activities, phone calls, internet, laundry, health insurance nor any other expense that has not been previously agreed on.

Option B: USD\$ 2,300.00

Includes: Enrolling, materials, field trips, insurance, food (lunch and snacks, only). **It does not include:** lodging, food (breakfast and supper), hotel/airport shuttle, plane ticket, visas and taxes, tourism activities, laundry, phone calls, internet, health insurance nor any other expense that has not been previously agreed on.

Please hold for more information regarding the agenda and details about the course in the next few weeks.

Competition of Doctoral Thesis In Conservation of Migratory Species. Last date for Submittal: May 31st, 2008

The prize amounts to 10.000€. The thesis must provide new information and facts about the biology and ecology of migratory species, or about the external effects that interfere with their migratory patterns.

The results must be applicable to decision-making processes regarding conservation measures that benefit migratory species.

To see the basis of the competition go to:

www.thesis-award-2008.info/

10th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands Korea, October 28th-November 4th, 2008

The slogan used for the 2008 Wetlands World Day – “Healthy wetlands, healthy people” – will remain the slogan for this COP10.

Did you know that...

- The regular meetings of the Conference of the Parties are held every three years in the country selected during the previous meeting, in response to an official invitation that must be forwarded by the Chief of State or Government or the Minister of External Affairs of said country.
- Any national or international entity or agency, governmental or non-governmental, that is qualified in the field of the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands can be present at those meetings as an observer, except when at least a third of the Parties present at the meeting is against it.

Source: www.ramsar.org





TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION DURING 2008



After living prosperously for more than 360 million years, between a third and half of all amphibian species might disappear in the near future.

The cause is a fungus that lives in the skin of amphibians, the organ used to breathe and drink. The fungus can not be stopped or treated in the wild. In those environments where it vigorously grows, it is capable of killing up to 80% of native amphibians in a few months, producing their massive extinction.

To address the problem, the international scientific community has an emergency plan called Action Plan for the Conservation of Amphibians; for those species that cannot be saved in their natural environments, the plan is to rescue them before they disappear and to protect them in captivity until the threats to the natural populations can be controlled. The hope is that the amphibian species that are rescued will be taken back to their natural environment once the original threats have been controlled.

Coming celebrations

Join the celebrations, be part of the change in awareness, but remember that we have to be aware every day and that the lessons learned about the importance of taking care of the elements that make up nature (which include us, human beings) must be constantly applied. Share your activities with us, let us know how you become involved in the protection of our environment. Write to us at info@creho.org

World Day of Press Freedom – May 3rd

International Day of Biologic Diversity – May 22nd
The slogan for 2008 is “Biodiversity and Agriculture” <http://www.cbd.int>

World Smoke-Free Day – May 31st

World Environmental Day – June 5th
The slogan for 2008 is “Leave the habit! – towards a low-carbon economy”
<http://www.pnuma.org/dmma2008/>

World Day Against Desertification and Drought – June 17th

International Day for the Defense of the Mangroves Ecosystem – July 26th



2008 – International Year of Reefs

The International Coral Reefs Initiative (ICRI), an association between governments, international agencies and non-governmental organizations from around the world, has designated the year 2008 as the International Year of Reefs (IYOR 08).

IYOR 08 General Objectives:

- Strengthen awareness about the value of coral reefs.
- Improve the understanding of the critical threats they face and generate both practical and innovating solutions to reduce those threats.
- Design actions to develop and implement effective management strategies for the conservation and sustainable use of these ecosystems.

In many countries, these activities are already taking place. For more information about IYOR 2008 or about how to become involved in those activities, go to www.iyor.org or write to info@iyor.org





A call for articles ¡Collaborate with us!

Send us information about the activities, results and processes taking place in the Americas towards the implementation of the Ramsar Convention, or about actions in the wetlands. We are also interested in publishing information regarding training courses and events.

Send us your activities, events, processes, project outcomes or other positive news to info@creho.org. Remember that each article must have a maximum size of 1,300 characters, including the spacing. The images to illustrate your article must have a resolution higher than 72 dpi and must be accompanied by the name of the photographer and the copyright authorization in order to be reproduced in INFOWETLAND



Special issue: Migratory Species and their Relationship to Wetlands



For the special issue featured in our next publication, we invite you to send us specialized information regarding processes, techniques, experiences and outcomes related to environmental assessments in wetlands. You can send chronicles, essays or technical analysis.

Format for the special issue: Send us your chronicle, essay or technical analysis to info@creho.org.

Remember that each article must have a maximum size of 3,000 characters, including spacing. The images to illustrate your contribution must have a resolution higher than 72 dpi and must be accompanied by the name of the photographer and the copyright authorization in order to be reproduced in INFOWETLAND.

INFOWETLAND Vol. 3. Number 2.

Infowetland is an information service provided by the Ramsar Regional Center for Training and Research on Wetlands in the Western Hemisphere (CREHO)

Next INFOWETLAND will be out in July 2008.

The special issue will deal with migratory species and wetlands.

**Send your news, topics, events and information before June 30th, 2008
to the e-mail info@creho.org**

The Editorial Committee approves the content of each issue of the INFOWETLAND bulletin; thus, receiving an article does not guarantee its publication. Modifications made to the material received will be notified via e-mail to the author or information source, and if he/she does not object to the modifications, the committee will take it as the approval to publish the article with the proposed changes.