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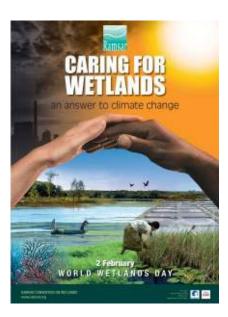
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The Ramsar Regional Center for Training and Research on Wetlands in the Western Hemisphere (CREHO) is a not-for-profit international organization that promotes management and wise use of wetlands in the Americas.

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EDITORIAL

We welcome 2010 with the first issue of INFOWETLAND, which celebrates its fifth year of publication. This time the especial issue is dedicated to the celebration of the World Wetlands Day 2010 with the motto "Caring for Wetlands – an Answer to Climate Change". This motto invites us to be aware of the impact that climate change is generated in our environment and the role played by wetlands as part of the solution to mitigate its effects.



It is also important to note that wetlands are considered especially vulnerable to climate change because their have a limited ability for adaptation to fast changes, therefore, damage to these ecosystems may be irreversible. Species that depend on wetland ecosystems have to cope with change and their options are limited to: move, adapt or become extinct.

Therefore, from the slogan of the World Wetlands Day, we invite our readers to ponder about the links between the services provided by wetland ecosystems, conservation of biodiversity and adaptation to global climate change.

In the special section "Celebrating World Wetlands Day in the Western Hemisphere", we show you some of the many activities undertaken by the environmental community as part of this important celebration. Also, we have included in this issue the usual sections of news, publications and events.

We hope you like this edition of INFOWETLAND and we invite you to read and work with us, so we can continue providing this service of information and exchange of experiences in order to promote the conservation and better understanding of the goods and services provided by wetlands to us.

Rosa Montañez Executive Director CREHO



NEWS

THE RAMSAR CONVENTION SECRETARY VISITED PANAMA

Dr. Anada Tiega, Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention, arrived in Panama on February 9th 2010 for a three day visit. Dr. Tiega was accompanied by Maria Rivera, Senior Advisor for the Americas,

The National Environmental Authority (ANAM) hosted Dr. Tiega during his first visit to this Central American country and briefed him on Panama's wetlands achievements. This included the recently completed and published Inventory of Continental and Coastal Wetlands and the national policy on wetlands, currently under design.

Dr. Tiega visited the headquarters of The Ramsar Regional Center for Training and Research on Wetlands in the Western Hemisphere (CREHO), one of the first regional initiatives of the Convention in the Americas. Dr. Tiega also participates in CREHO's first Board of Directors meeting of 2010.

During a visit to the Panama Canal Dr. Tiega lunched with the Minister for Environmental Affairs, Javier Arias, along with Esteban Saenz, Panama Canal's Executive Vice President of the Department of Environment, Water and Energy, as well as several members of the Panama's National Wetlands Committee.





CREHO'S FIRST 2010 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The Ramsar Regional Center for Training and Research on Wetlands in the Western Hemisphere (CREHO) had its first 2010 Board of Directors meeting on February 11 in Panama City, Panama. The meeting was focused on pending issues from 2009 and the discussion of strategic guidelines for CREHO's activities in 2010.

Mr. Javier Arias, Minister for Environmental Affairs and General Administrator of the National Environmental Authority of Panama, presided the meeting. Mr. Arias emphasized the importance of CREHO's role and reiterated the Republic of Panama's commitment to strengthen CREHO's mission. Dr. Anada Tiega, Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention, also participated in the meeting and pledged the support of the Ramsar Convention Secretariat for CREHO's work.

For further information please write to: info@creho.org



Report 2004-2009 is available for downlaod at CREHO's webpage: www.creho.org in the section CREHO in Action



RAMSAR SMALL GRANTS FUND FOR WETLAND CONSERVATION AND WISE USE (SGF)

Source: Ramsar Convention Secretariat www.ramsar.org

The SGF Guidelines and forms can be downloaded here:

http://www.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-activities-grants-rsgf-ramsar-sgf/main/ramsar/1-63-68-159%5E21043_4000_0

The deadline for applications is 30 June 2010. As its name indicates, the Small Grants Fund is for small-scale projects, it offers a maximum of 40,000 Swiss Francs (presently about € 27,300) per project. All projects must be submitted and endorsed by the head of the Administrative Authority of the Ramsar Convention in the country concerned.

RAMSAR CONVENTIONS SIGNS A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE WORLD BANK

Source: Ramsar Convention Secretariat www.ramsar.org

a Memorandum of Understanding was signed on February 16, 2010 by Dr Anada Tiega, Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention, and Mr Hartwig Schafer, Acting Vice President, Sustainable Development Network, at the World Bank, who indicated the initial objective would be to establish a framework of cooperation between the Ramsar Convention and the World Bank. This would focus on an exchange of technical expertise and capacity building related to the development and implementation of climate change projects in wetlands in the context of the World Bankfinanced Climate Change Portfolio.

FIRST INVENTORY OF PANAMA'S WETLANDS

During the month of February, the Inventory of the Panama's continental and coastal wetlands was published. This is the first document that compiles a descriptions of wetlands in the country and contains the description of 39 wetlands, 4 of which are Ramsar, 17 which are included in protected areas and



18 important wetlands that are outside protected areas, which adds up to a total of 5 124 688 km2 of coastal and continental wetland ecosystem.

This important project, which is a commitment of the country to the Ramsar Convention, was launched in the year 2006 thanks to the Ramsar Regional Center for Training and Research on Wetlands for the Western Hemisphere (CREHO) with the support of the National Environmental Authority (ANAM), the Panama National Wetlands Committee, and funds provided by the AVINA Foundation.

AWARD FOR RAMSAR AUTHORITY

IN MEXICO Source: Ramsar Convention Secretariat www.ramsar.org

The Mexican Government represented by Flavio Chazaro, National Commission on Protected Areas (CONANP) received in Madrid, Spain, on the 15 of December the BBVA Foundation Award for the Conservation of Biodiversity of Protected Areas. The BBVA mentioned that the award was conferred upon Mexico as recognition of the outstanding work in the international collaboration of protected areas and the conformation of new protected areas in different types of ecosystems, being the second country with more sites of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.



WATERBIRD CONSERVATION COUNCIL ANNUAL MEETING

Source: www.waterbirdconservation.org

The Waterbird Conservation Council (Council) is the steering body of the Waterbird Conservation for the Americas initiative and has responsibility for planning, coordinating, supporting, and communicating the implementation activities to further waterbird conservation in the Western Hemisphere. The annual meeting is designed to strengthen relationships between its members and infuse energy and momentum for work in the following year.



FOUR NEW WHSRN SITES DESIGNATED

Source: WHSRN www.whsrn.org / Diego Luna Quevedo. Shorebird Recovery Programme. Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences. http://manomet.org/programs/shorebirdrecovery/

At the annual WHSRN Hemispheric Council, held in Panama City on January 4th and 5th, nominations for four new WHSRN sites were approved, including the first site in the Caribbean region. This designations increase the network to a total of 81 sites in 12 countries, and more than 12 million hectares of habitat for coastal birds. A brief description of each of the four sites, from north to south:



Cabo Rojo Salt Flats. Covering an area of 505 hectares, this is the first WHSRN site in the Caribbean. This area is comprised of open lagoons, salt flats and mangroves, all within the National Wildlife Refuge of Cabo Rojo in southwestern Puerto Rico. The Puerto Rican Ornithological Society, Inc (SOPI by its abbreviation in Spanish) nominated the site with the support of the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The salt flats section of the refuge houses 5.3% (80 individuals) of the global population of *Charadrius alexandrinus tenuirostris* and 2.5% (151 individuals) of the global population of *C. wilsonia*.

Cuitzeo Lake. This is an area of 44,000 hectares in central Mexico, located in the Michoacán state and part of the Guanajuato state. The Mexican Network of Rural Forestry Organizations (Red MOCAF) nominated the site with the support of the National Commission for Natural Protected Areas (CONANP). Cuitzeo Lake shelters 21,500 coastal birds and 20 different species.

Ramsar Site Mangroves of San Pedro de Vice. Covering an area of 3,013 hectares, this is the last ecosystem of its type on the Pacific coast of South American, and it is located on the north coast of Peru, in the Vice Municipality. The mayor of Vice and the Neotropical Center for Wetlands Training-Peru nominated the mangroves as a Site of Regional Importance, together with the support of the Peruvian Ministry of Environment and the Regional Government of Piura. This fragile ecosystem shelters more than 1% of the world's Calidris alba population, as well as 23 other shorebird species.

Río Lluta Wetland. Located in one of the most arid regions in the country, in the extreme north of Chile, this area is 31 hectares. It is both a Municipal Natural Reserve and a Federal Nature Sanctuary. This wetland is an important resource for 130 bird species. The Universidad Tecnológica de Chile nominated the wetland as a Site of Regional Importance, with the support of the Mayor of Arica Municipality. The site shelters more than 20,000 shorebirds, including 1.4% of the Calidris alba population and 1.8% od the Numenius phaeopus population, which spend winter in this area. The site also gives refuge to 2 species of shorebird that are endemic to South American: Burhinus superciliaris y Himantopus melanurus.



FIRST CENTRAL AMERICAN WATER COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT FAIR

For more information: www.nuestragua.org

Central American countries will gather in San Jose, Costa Rica, March 19-22, 2010, to celebrate the first Central American Water Community Management Fair. The fair, also known as "Our Water 2010," will take place at the Parque Espana, across from the CENAC.



The fair's purpose is to devise ways of helping local communities in Central America manage their water resources.

The planning and development of this regional fair is the result of a program started in 2007 by the Central American Environment and Development Commission (CCAD), the Central American Regional Program (PCRC) and the Sustainable Environment and Development branch of the Spanish International Cooperation and Development Agency (AECID)-Fund Spain Central American Integration System (SICA)

The fair is being organized by SICA's CCAD through PCRC for the AECID-Fund Spain SICA; the Central American Network of Water Action (FANCA); the Indian and Peasant Coordination Association of the Agroforestry Community of Central America (ACICAFOC); the Central American Chapter of the World Water Association, (GWP Central America); the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica; and the national division of the Urban Development Foundation (FUDEU.)

CARIBBEAN WETLANDS INITIATIVE

Source: Ramsar Convention Secretariat www.ramsar.org

The first Meeting of the Caribbean Wetlands Initiative was held in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, from 3 to 7 February 2010. During this meeting, the Contracting Parties of the Caribbean as well as representatives of international organizations and NGO's worked on prioritizing the activities and on the establishment of a governance structure for the Initiative. They also prepared the work and financial plan for the triennium 2010-2012. This meeting was made possible thanks to the Danone-Evian support through the Fund for water resources.

THE WORLD WETLAND NETWORK LAUNCHED THE WETLAND GLOBES AWARD For more information: Chris.rostron@wwt.org.uk

The World Wetland Network, an international initiative comprising over 200 wetland NGOs from across the globe, is today launching a new set of awards to recognise best practice in wetland management, and to highlight wetlands in crisis.





The awards, known as the Wetland Globes, offer local community and grass-roots groups an international voice on how their local wetlands are managed. The awards scheme will highlight both best practice, where wetlands are well managed, but will also award 'gongs' for those wetlands that are either being neglected or actively degraded by human activities, often for short-term economic gain.

All are invited to vote on their wetlands of national or international importance at www.worldwetnet.org starting in March 2010 and the awards will be announced at the Convention on Biological Diversity Conference in Japan in October 2010.



CELEBRATING WORLD WETLANDS DAY IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE

A variety of activities to commemorate the Wetlands World Day (WWD) took place this year. In this special segment are published some experiences that our readers share with CREHO about the celebration of the WWD in their countries. Recognizing the importance of wetlands is a very important step forward in the Americas and it is an example of the daily actions we take to stress the increasing value we assign to our wetlands ecosystems.

EL SALVADOR

Source: Ramsar Convention Secretariat www.ramsar.org

The government of El Salvador designated Laguna de Olomegam as their fourth Wetland of International Importance acquired this new denomination on World Wetlands Day February 2, 2010. The vast lake located in the Center America dry forest bioregion is the largest fresh water body in Salvador's east region.

HONDURAS

Source: Jenny De Marco. www.fallsbrookcentre.ca

The Canadian NGO Falls Brooke Centre and Cuero y Salado Foundation organized diverse activities to celebrate World Wetlands Day 2010. Nine adults and 35 children gathered at the Wildlife Refuge of Cuero y Salado to plant red mangroves in the community nursery, to collect litter around the wetlands and to participate in a canoe tournament.







TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

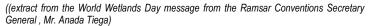
Source: Environment Tobago. www.environmenttobago.net

World Wetlands Day 2010 was commemorated by the NGO Environment Tobago (ET) with the launch of a postcard series with the theme for this year in mind. The artwork was done by locals. The launch was held at the ET office in Tobago and attended by principals, teachers, students, members of the local government agencies, the private sector and reporters from local television station. Participants were also invited to watch short videos on wetlands around the world.





This year's theme, Wetlands, Biodiversity and Climate Change, with the slogan "Caring for wetlands: an answer to climate change", captures the sense of urgency we all feel about the need to address the potentially disastrous consequences of global climate change as quickly as possible, particularly in the wake of the Copenhagen meeting of the UNFCCC back in December, and it emphasizes our belief that the role of wetlands in mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change must be central in all future debates about the way forward.





Source: Ramsar Convention Secretariat www.ramsar.org

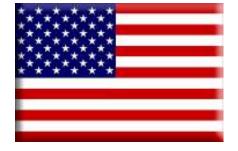
The Autonomous Corporation of Valle del Cauca celebrated World Wetlands Day 2010 with the official launching of the book 'Wetlands in the Geographic Valley of the Cauca River: origins, biodiversity and conservation". The book promotes better understanding of inter-institutional synergy benefiting lentic wetlands of the Cauca River system.

Humedales del valle geogràfico del rio Caucat génesis, biodiversidad y conservación

UNITED STATES

Source: www.nmparks.com

The state of New Mexico, the Parks Foundation and Friends of the Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park arranged a series of activities on Saturday February 6 to celebrate World Wetlands Day. Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park hosted bird information tours, children's activities, seminars on wetlands and their inhabitants.



jaguars, birds and reptiles. "Our interest is to show wetlands species, ecosystems and survival problems," said park expert Alex Mares.



PANAMÁ

Source: CREHO. www.creho.org

The celebration of World Wetlands Day 2010 was an opportunity for Panama to corroborate its commitment to the Ramsar Convention and show the country's wetlands management progress. As well, the celebration of the third anniversary of Panama's Wetlands National Committee also took place on February 2 (it was officially conform on WWD 2007). Rosa Montañez, CREHO's executive director, was honored with a photograph of a Snowy Egret (Egretta thula) for her support and efforts on behalf of this interinstitutional Committee since its inception. The photograph taken by Alfredo Maiguez was presented by Yessenia González of the National Environmental Authority and George Novey of the Marine Resources Authority of Panama representing the members of the Panama National Wetlands Committee.





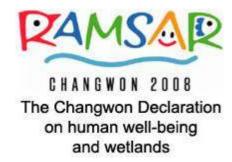
SPECIAL ISSUE

CLIMATE CHANGE AND WETLANDS

Source: extract from The Changwon Declaration. COP 10 Ramsar. http://www.ramsar.org/pdf/cop10/cop10_changwon_english.pdf

Climate change is increasing uncertainty in water management and making it more difficult to close the gap between water demand and supply. We will increasingly feel the effects of climate change most directly through changes in the distribution and availability of water, increasing pressures on the health of wetlands.

Governments need to include water and wetland management in effective strategies for addressing climate change at national level. Decision-makers need to recognize the natural infrastructure of wetlands as a major asset in combating and adapting to climate change.



THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON BIODIVERSITY, ECOSYSTEM SERVICES AND FOOD SECURITY Source: © SwedBio 2008-05-16 www.swedbio.org.

<u>Vulnerability growth and resilience reduction:</u> Between 20 to 30 percent of all species are in danger of extension if average global warming rises between 1.5 to 2.5 degrees. Ecosystems vulnerability will increase and their long term capacity to recover will dramatically decrease.

Impact on agriculture: A warmer climate implies changes in drought patterns and precipitation affecting agricultural production. Soils will no longer be suitable for cultivation, growing seasons will change and production of grains will decrease specially in Africa. Certain countries will see a decrease on their agricultural productivity of as much as 50 percent by 2020. A loss of biodiversity will result in a disruption of ecosystem services such as pollination.

Impact on fishing: An increment in temperature will impact fish banks in both sea and fresh water and will have negative effects for fishermen and aquaculture industries (farm raised fish and plants). An increase in the levels of carbon dioxide (CO2) in the atmosphere is expected to cause a gradual acidification of the ocean with negative consequences for marine organism with calcium based shells such as corals. Dependent species like seedlings will also suffer. As a whole all these changes will negatively impact food security particularly for those depending solely on fishing.







POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN WETLANDS

Source: Overview: Changing the Climate for Development. World Development Report 2010.

Latin American and Caribbean regions will suffer great losses as a result of climate change. Then the three most imminent:

- The tropical glaziers of the Andes are melting and face extinction if temperatures continue to rise. Modifications in the intensity and frequency of water availability will directly affect the production of hydroelectric energy the source of up to 50 per cent of electric energy in some Latin American countries. It will affect more than 77 million people by 2020.
- Ocean warming and acidification translate in the bleaching of Caribbean coral reefs and represent a threat to a reproduction zone containing an estimated 65 per cent of all fish species in the area. The reefs offer protection
 against marine tempests and are tourist attractions.
- The incidence and strength of hurricanes have increased and wetland destruction in the Gulf of Mexico makes the coast vulnerable to them.

WETLAND FAUNA THREATENED BY CLIMATE CHANGE

Leatherback turtle — *Dermochelys coriacea*

The name is derived from the fact that their soft shell is composed of a thin layer of tough, rubbery skin, similar to leather which is strengthened by thousands of tiny bony plates. The *Dermochelys coriacea* is the largest marine turtle species, reaching up to almost 2 meters in length and 500 kg of weigh.

Climate change affects the leatherback turtle in three important aspects: the high sand temperatures during the incubation period produce a disproportionately high number of females which could affect turtle population stability in the future; raised sea levels and increasingly strong storms diminishes the species' habitat and uncovers eggs that are nested in the sand; and changes in ocean currents can affect abundance and distribution of jellyfish and other species that are food for the leatherback.



Throughout their evolution, sea turtles have experiment changes in climate and have adapted accordingly. However, these recent changes are happening much faster than those ever faced by any marine species. Combined with their long growth cycle, the species' ability to adapt quickly enough to avoid serious impacts on the population is very limited.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) classifies the leatherback as a critically endangered species, meaning the global population has declined 80% within the last 10 years. Among the diverse threats suffered by the species are: collection of eggs, accidental capture, and habitat loss through coastal development and health complications caused by pollution, such as confusing plastic bags as food.

More information can be found on www.iucn.org



PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD ON THE WEB

On the web, you find interesting documents that talk about conservation, which are available for downloads for free. We invite you to send any publication you would like to share, to the following e-mail info@creho.org

Report on World Development 2010: Development and Climate Change

In this report, the World Bank focuses on understanding how development policy must evolve in order to deal with the complex challenges presented by climate change. The complete text is available only in English at: http://go.worldbank.org/FTD88BBDV0

Managing Mangroves for Resilience to Climate Change

Building resilience into mangrove conservation plans requires an understanding of how mangroves will respond to climate changes, what factors help them survive these changes, and, consequently, which mangroves are most likely to survive. This paper provides an overview of mangrove ecosystems, discusses the benefits of mangroves to people, and the human and global threats that compromise mangrove ecosystems. This document describes the impacts of climate change on mangroves and outlines tools and strategies that enhance mangrove resilience. Download in PDF format from: http://data.iucn.org/dbtw-wpd/edocs/2006-041.pdf

Species and climate change: More than just the Polar Bear

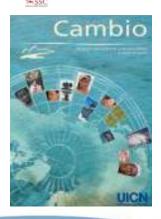
The Polar Bear has come to symbolise the impacts of climate change on the natural world. But it is only one of a multitude of species affected, and many of these are also well-known, much-loved and important to people. This report presents 10 new climate change flagship species, chosen to represent the impact that climate change is likely to have on land and in our oceans and rivers. Download in PDF format from: http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/species_and_climate_change.pdf

Change - Adaptation of Water Resources Management to Climate Change

This report looks out to help water professionals identify actions that can be adapted to the changes in world water patterns, which are expected to happen in the next decades. Their origins can be found in the World Water Vision, a declaration about global water issues that was adopted in March 2000 during the Second World Water Forum. The Vision highlighted the fact that climate change is one of the biggest challenges raised to water professionals for the next twenty five years. Available for download at: http://data.iucn.org/dbtw-wpd/edocs/2003-004.pdf









Events and Courses

During the year 2010, Páramo Andino Project will host two regional workshops about key issues for the conservation of the Andean highlands.

Proyecto Páramo Andino
Conservación de la Diversidad en el Techo de los Andes

- Workshop on Wetland Restoration and Conservation. Chile, June 21- 25, 2010.
- Workshop on Environmental Education. Paramo de Zuleta, Ecuador, September 20 24, 2010.

The fee of each workshop is 300 USD (cost of travel and lodging shall be covered by participants).

For further information: tania.calle@condesan.org

First World Seabird Conference.
Victoria, BC Canada, September 7 - 11, 2010

The goal of this conference is to bring the world's seabird research community together to discuss seabird conservation and management issues on a global scale. For further information: WSC@DeArmondManagement.com / www.WorldSeabirdConference.com

XXXI International Course on Protected Areas: Effectives Management facing global changes. CATIE Headquarters, Costa Rica, June 1 - 26, 2010.



Aimed at professionals with university degree (or equivalent training) and working directly or indirectly to protected areas of at least two years. The course fee is \$ 3,000 which includes tuition, materials, insurance, transportation airport-CATIE-airport and tours, accommodation and food (excluding international travel expenses, and transfers, air tickets, visas, etc.). For more information: capacitacion@catie.ac.cr / www.catie.ac.cr



Graduate Research Assistantship in Coastal Wetland Ecology Department of Plant Biology at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

Available starting June 2010. Interested applicants should contact Loretta L. Battaglia, Ph.D. by email (lbattaglia@plant.siu.edu) to discuss interests, potential projects, and application procedures.



Course on Wetland Delineation.
Ohio State University, USA, August 9-14, 2010

Introduction to techniques of estimating the boundaries of wetlands. The course fee is USD 1,400.00 wich includes course material, textbook, and plant identification book. Courses at the Ohio State University are taught at the Olentangy River Wetland Research Park, a Ramsar wetland of international importance. Register by June 11, 2010 for a 10% discount from the course price. For more information: Sara M. McCarthy, mccarthy.211@osu.edu. http://swamp.osu.edu/



INFOWETLAND Issue 5 Number 1 The Importance of Mangroves in the Western Hemisphere



Next INFOWETLAND will be out in August 2010 Send your news, topics, events and information before July 2nd, 2010 to the e-mail info@creho.org

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. 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 96 dpi and must be accompanied by the name of the photographer and the copyright authorization in order to be reproduced in INFOWETLAND



A CALL FOR SPECIAL ISSUE ARTICLES:

For the special issue featured in our next publication, we invite you to send us specialized information regarding the processes, techniques, experiences and outcomes associated with mangrove ecosystems in the Americas. You can send chronicles, essays or technical analysis. 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 96 dpi and must be accompanied by the name of the photographer and the copyright authorization in order to be reproduced in INFOWETLAND.

We want to acknowledge the support of Martha Barrand, Natalia Bogle, Agostina Contigiani and Henry Kinkead who as online UN volunteers (www.onlinevolunteering.org) collaborated with the translation and revision of this first 2010 issue of INFOWETLAND.

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

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.