World NGO Conference on Conservation of

BIODIVERSITY & WETLANDS

生物多様性と湿地の保全に関する世界NGO会議

Abstracts

Photo: Luc Hoogenstein

24 October 2010　12:30－17:45
Lecture Hall of Aichi University,
Kurumamichi Campus

Ramsar Network Japan
World Wetland Network

PROGRAMME

Openning (12:30)
Welcome address Ryoichi Hori (Ramsar Network Japan)

Part 1: Presentations from Convention Secretariats and Japanese Government (12:35)

- David Coates (Secretariat of CBD)
- Nick Davidson (Ramsar Secretariat)
- Naoki Nakayama (Ministry of the Environment of Japan)
- Chris Rostron (World Wetland Network)

(Break)

Part 2: Reports from each Continent (14:05)

Moderator: Minoru Kashiwagi (Ramsar Network Japan)

- South and Central America Melissa Marin (Costa Rica)
- North America Crawford Prentice (USA)
- Africa Baboucarr Mbye (Gambia)
- Europe Luc Hoogenstein (Holland)
- Central & Eastern Europe Peter Lengyel (Romania)
- Oceania Kate Heyward (Australia)
- Asia (1) Park Junrok / Ma Yong-un (South Korea)
- Asia (2) Tamotsu Sugenami (Japan)

(Break)

Part 3: Discussion: How can NGOs help to protect Wetlands of the world? (16:00)

Moderator: Chris Rostron (World Wetland Network)
Hiromi Yamashita (Nagoya Univ. Graduate School of Environmental Studies)

Ramsar COP10 in Changwon to COP11 in Romania

- Kim Ducksung (South Korea)
- Peter Lengyel (Romania)

Adoption of statement

Closing address Shin-ichi Hanawa (Ramsar Network Japan)
Closing (17:45)

Conservation of Ramsar Sites in Japan

Naoki Nakayama
(Ministry of the Environment, Japan)

With high levels of rainfall and the surrounding oceans, Japan is a country blessed with water. With Japan Archipelago spanning from north to south and the complicated land form, there are numerous wetlands like marshlands, rivers, ponds, and lakes, beaches, tidal flats, coral reefs, mangrove forests, sea grass/seaweed, rice paddies, reservoirs, springs, and underground water systems, which represent the myriad of wetland types supporting Japan's biodiversity.

For conserving those wetlands, Japan became a contracting party to the Ramsar Convention in 1980, and Kushiro-shitsugen became Japan's first Ramsar site. In 1993, neighboring Kushiro City hosted the Fifth Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP5) to the Ramsar Convention, greatly raising awareness of the objectives of the Ramsar Convention in Japan and the rest of Asia. Now, 37 wetlands are designated as Ramsar site in Japan. Ahead of the COP10, for promoting the future Ramsar site registration, 172 wetlands were selected as potential sites, which were scientifically recognized to meet the criteria of the wetlands of international importance set by the Conference this September.

In the "National Biodiversity Strategy of Japan 2010" , our policy for wetland conservation is summarized, and based on it, Ministry of the Environment implements monitoring of Ramsar sites, nature restoration projects and raising public awareness. Also, we are conducting international cooperation such as implementation of the resolution X.31 "enhancing biodiversity in rice paddies as wetland systems" proposed by both Japanese and Korean government as well as support on implementation of Ramsar site in Asian countries.

In Japan, the Ramsar Convention is well known and is strongly supported by the domestic networks such as NGOs, the government organization, members of the Diet, municipalities and others. Convention strives not only for their conservation, but their wise use as well. The successful implementation of these requires participation and cooperation between relevant stakeholders for conservation of wetlands.

World Wetland Network

Chris Rostron (World Wetland Network)

2010 is the year of Biodiversity, the culmination of a challenge to halt the loss of biodiversity across the world. This ambitious challenge set before the leaders of the world has been missed by a long shot. Biodiversity continues to be lost apace, due to development, lack of enforcement of laws and conventions, and lack of resources for those carrying out biodiversity protection.

WWN represents small NGOs and grassroots organisations across the world, that are delivering wetland conservation activities through practical actions, monitoring, public engagement and lobbying. WWN is an independent and open network, and works through local partners. We see that governments and conventions have not delivered protection for wetland biodiversity, and we will work to do this through:

- Better engaging our partners at a local level and linking to conventions such as Ramsar and the CBD.
- Actively supporting partners in their own countries to oppose wetland threats
- Highlighting best and worst practice in wetland management through our wetland globes award scheme.
- Sharing of best practice and experience

WWN calls upon NGOs to work together to take wetland conservation forward, and invites them to join the WWN to make this happen. NGOs and community groups are carrying out a huge amount of work, and we want to recognise this and bring support through both influence and resources.

Neotropics

Melissa Marin (Fundación para la Gestión Ambiental Participativa)

Geographically, South America, Central America, the Caribbean and the Mexican lowlands are considered Neotropics. However, due to both cultural affinity and WWN work in this sub-region, we also include the whole of Mexico.

The Neotropics is composed of 34 countries (7 in Central America, 12 in South America, 14 in the Caribbean, and Mexico), for a total of 20,587,410 km2 and a population of 555,682,731.

Biologically, the area includes tropical rainforest, one of the most important reserves of biodiversity on Earth, and at the same time, one of the most threatened ecosystems.

The dependence between conservation and human well-being is especially evident in Neotropical wetlands, where the massive extraction of resources, the impact of weather (climate events) and pressure from unsustainable development projects.

According to FAO (United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation), mangroves losses and destruction have been substantial and continuing since 1980; with an estimation of 35,600 km2 lost between until 2005 (Red Mangrove, 2010).

This situation in addition to alterate the delicate ecological balance, is precluding wetlands to provide essential environmental services such us water, protection from natural hazards, fisheries, reservoirs of biodiversity, among others.

Socially and economically the Neotropics have an important historical history characterized by an unequal distribution of resources and increasing poverty, which are affecting the stability of these ecosystems.

Thus, the Neotropics have also been the basis for the emergence of many social processes, guided by the objective of ensuring the conservation of ecosystems, ensuring their ability to deliver goods and services. And all these processes have been shaped with the participation of all stakeholders.

Unlike other regions, the environmental movements in the Neotropics have deep roots of social participation from the community level, to national and regional levels.

World Wetland Network has a big challenge in the Neotropics, one of the greatest biodiversity regions of the world, with one of the largest extensions of coastal areas and particularly vulnerable to the irrational use of resources.

The following three strategic areas are planned for this network in the region:

- Networking: To become a key regional organization to support national and local wetland conservation campaigns, exchange of experiences and knowledge on wetlands, environment and livelihoods associated with the wise use of resources.
- Education and social awareness: To promote greater social awareness of the importance of wetlands for biodiversity, for human survival and as vital aspect permanently shaping the cultural identity of individuals.
- Social participation: To be a forum for joint building and improving the general perception about the role of civil society in the processes of wetland conservation, aiming at further strengthening of the participation of NGOs in the decision-making management processes of these ecosystems.

A Brief Overview of Wetland Biodiversity Conservation Status and Issues in North America

Crawford Prentice (International Crane Foundation)
Katie Beilfuss (Wisconsin Wetlands Association)

The presentation provides a brief overview of wetland conservation status, key conservation issues and conservation actions in North America, focusing on the United States and Canada. A summary of the status and trends of wetlands based on official government information is presented first, including some observations on the reported trends.

This is followed by a review of the key conservation issues affecting wetlands and their biodiversity, including the political will for wetland conservation, public awareness and involvement, impacts of resource extraction and utility infrastructure development on wetlands, climate change, etc.

Conservation actions for wetlands are briefly reviewed, including progress on wetland management, creation and restoration. This is illustrated by case studies involving the International Crane Foundation and the Wisconsin Wetlands Association.

The presentation closes with some suggestions on future priorities for wetland conservation action with particular reference to biodiversity conservation.

Wetland Conservation in Africa: Prospects, Challenges, Constraints and Way Forward

Baboucarr Mbye (Stay Green Foundation)

INTRODUCTION

Africa is a continent with different features: desert land in the north –the Sahara Desert and the Kalahari desert in the south-west; the Sahalian belt (arid and semi-arid lands with Savana type of vegetation) in some parts of the west; a tropical rain forest in the central and part of the west; highlands (mountainous) in the east and the south. However, despite the difference all geographical features are blessed with different types of wetlands which sustain the social, cultural and economic livelihoods of 85% of the rural population.

PROSPECTS

In Africa some of the wetlands are mapped out as protected and or within protected areas designated as Ramsar Sites of International Importance. The designated Ramsar Sites are mainly managed by Governments through technical departments in collaboration with communities and NGOs along side funding from development parks. This means that, the management of most protected areas, essentially wetlands is project based. The proliferation of nature-friendly actors, mainly NGOs and the slowly increasing attention of funding agencies is a blessing for sustainable conservation and protection of both protected and unprotected wetlands in Africa

CHALLENGES

There are more unprotected wetlands- wetlands not designated as Ramsar Sites in Africa than protected wetlands. The biggest challenge world over, is Governments none compliance to international (multilateral) agreements, in particular the Ramsar Convention.

CONSTRAINTS

Efforts of actors are uncoordinated. There is inadequate communication, information sharing and networking mechanisms for and among actors.

Europe: Critical Site Network Tool & the Wadden Sea

Luc Hoogenstein
(Vogelbescherming Nederland, Dutch Partner of Birdlife International)

Europe is rich on wetlands. Millions of migratory birds use these wetlands as a breeding place or, during migration, to rest, forage or sleep. But the protection of these areas is in many cases far from ideal. Habitat loss, illegal hunting, disturbance and sometimes pure ignorance all contribute to the degradation of wetlands. Therefore Wetlands International, BirdLife International and the World
Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP/WCMC) have developed a new instrument for a better prevention of these sites: The Critical Site Network Tool.

The Critical Site Network (CSN) Tool is a new online resource for the conservation of 294 species of waterbirds and the important sites upon which they depend in Africa and Western Eurasia, strengthening the implementation of the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. The tool makes it easy to obtain information on the sites critical for waterbird species by accessing several independent databases and analysing information at the biogeographical population level, so providing a comprehensive basis for management and decision making. It is designed to help a range of different users from site managers to national authorities and international organisations.

The Wadden Sea is a true wilderness, one of the last in Northwest Europe. An immense tidal area characterized by vast mudflats, it stretches over three countries: Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands. It is of crucial importance for millions of migratory birds. Some stop to rest and refuel on the journey between their Arctic breeding grounds and their wintering sites in West Africa, while others stay for the winter. In spring and summer, important populations of seabirds and shorebirds breed on the salt marshes, beaches and islands around the Wadden Sea. But the high natural values of the Wadden Sea are threatened by human activities. Large scale fisheries, growing mass tourism, military training, industrial developments, intensive farming, and last but not least, the effects of climate change, are damaging the fragile ecosystem. The populations of many bird species, both breeding and migratory, are in decline. The traditional, sustainable livelihoods of human communities around the Wadden Sea also face a bleak future.The BirdLife Partners of Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands have – for the first time – joined their forces.

Together they call for the implementation of the following seven measures, which will ensure a biologically rich Wadden Sea, where birds and people can prosper:

1. Provide a solid basis for the ecosystem: let natural processes have free rein to restore biological structures like the eelgrass fields and shellfish banks that support a strong food web.
2. Restore the unique natural landscape along the Wadden Sea coast, including salt marshes and inland pastures.
3. Make room for dynamic geomorphological processes on the islands. Restore the “walking” dunes, the wet dune valleys and the sea inlets.
4. Guarantee undisturbed breeding places and high tide refuges for birds.
5. Restore tidal movements in closed off estuaries.

6. Protect the various sites along the East Atlantic Flyway on which migrating Wadden Sea birds rely. Promote the global importance of the Wadden Sea for birds.
7. Take urgent measures to enable the Wadden Sea to adapt to sea level riseand other threats posed by climate change.

Wetlands and Humans in Eastern Europe: Past, Present and Future

Peter Lengyel (UNESCO Pro Natura)

In prehistory and even recent historical times, Eastern Europe had an amazing presence of aquatic ecosystems, where the natural flow or stagnation of water created wetlands of different types, containing a rich biodiversity on which the humans were able to base their existence. In the Danube river basin, transformation of landscapes by humans reduced the connection between these natural wetlands; the fragmentation produced a loss of biodiversity and loss of resources, too. Some major wetlands like the Danube Delta have survived, presenting natural patterns which become very important for scientific research, biodiversity conservation, and being models for ecological restoration. NGO involvement in research, conservation policies and ecological education is today a hope for a better connection of humans and wetlands in the future.

Prehistoric times:

-only natural processes in the landscapes

-large areas covered by wetlands, interrelating with natural forests (forests covering naturally about 80-90% o Romania)

-evolutionary processes of wetland biota shaped only by natural factors

Historic times:

Phase A: to a traditional society

-presence of humans in the landscapes: reduced forested areas, specially the transformation of floodplain forests in agricultural land

-overhunting, overfishing with traditional style producing the reduction of targeted populations and regional extinctions of few species (European beaver)

-fishpond systems lucrative and spread in the landscape in the medieval times

-still, human population and economy in a reasonable balance with the existing resources in the landscape.

Phase B: to an industrial society

-construction of large dams (Iron Gates on the Danube rising water level with 33 meters)

-river regulation works on large scale (e.g. Tisza river in Hungary)

-mining industry polluting the waters (cyanide pollution from Baia Mare spill, large scale fish mortality, international conflict Romania - Hungary)

-agricultural impact on waters: the need for agricultural land is reducing wetland areas; nutrient enrichment producing eutrophication, specially in lakes; pesticide bio-accumulation in top predators (pelicans, otters etc); water extraction for irrigation generally is not relevant in this region, but more in southern parts (Greece for example).

-polluted waters from towns, cities, flowing in the rivers: even major cities like Budapest had still in 2006 more than half of the wastewaters with no any purification, while Bucharest have

no functional water purification facilities even today. It is impossible to calculate the impact on biota of the synergistic effects of millions of chemicals resulting from the human society, including medical biologically active compounds, which is growing with an aging population.

-voluntary introduction of sport-fishing species

-involuntary introduction of alien invasive species

-human population and economy exceeding the carrying capacity of the ecosystems, resulting a large scale degradation of the resources.

Phase C: Recent environmental policy

-large scale degradation and loss of resources has produced an environmental legislation; relevant for wetlands in the European Union are the Water Framework Directive, the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive, each Member State having the obligation to implement them (together with other 1,000 Directives).

-implementation is very weak, because of low real political support for biodiversity, producing low funding, resulting in impossibility to protect nature in front of other interest like infrastructure development, overexploitation of the last remaining resources, spreading of settlements, etc.

-European Union's decision to halt loss of biodiversity by 2010 was not accomplished, because it is not targeting the basic causes of biodiversity loss

-EU wants to be a global leader in biodiversity conservation and sustainable development but it is not able to implement these ideas in it's own territory.

Importance of existing large and functional ecosystems

-an ecosystem should have large predators which need large landscapes for their populations to survive: colonies of pelicans in Danube Delta

-mosaics of natural habitats able to provide conditions for survival of a rich biodiversity need a large area

-natural ecological processes can't be contained in small patches of natural habitats, because these are influenced very much by their surroundings

-large natural wetlands are the base for understanding wetland dynamics and for developing models for wetland ecosystem restoration

-even the best wetland of Europe, the protected Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve, is inevitably based on Danube waters collecting pesticides, fertilizers, medical residues from large parts of Germany, Austria, Hungary, Serbia, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Romania etc.

-maintaining isolated 'protected areas' in a landscape characterized by overexploitation, pollution and degradation under the human pressure is impossible on long term.

-protected areas are emergency measures, short term solutions to protect genetic diversity, species and ecosystem samples, till humans will understand the fact that human civilizations' survival is possible only in a functional matrix of natural ecosystems

-now, probably the best protected wetland in the Danube river basin is the part of Kopacki Rit Nature Park in Croatia, which is a minefield resulting from the recent war in the region.

NGOs for protecting the future of humans

-the human civilization is totally dependent on the functional ecosphere, in which it is a part.

-our Planet has a certain ecological carrying capacity, which is already exceeded by the human use of resources. We do need a paradigm change in order to save the future of our human civilization, which can't survive without the ecological basis of it, a problem which will be even deeper in the near future when the fossil fuels will be terminated

-biodiversity conservation is not about lizards and dragonflies, it's about the future existence or extinction of our human civilization.

-in the NGO sector the think-tanks have the brain-power to analyze the ecological sustainability of the human civilization, based on scientific facts, trends and scenarios

-NGO representatives have the freedom of speech, more than do mandated representatives of governments and international bodies; NGO representatives have the capacity to formulate their ideas in an easier-to-understand style comparing with the representatives of the "pure science"/ academic sector focused on researching the details.

-the NGO sector representatives can focus on 1. easy leaflets about wetlands and other soft issues, 'implementing the existing environmental policy', but also can get involved in 2. 'hard-talks' about the basic problems of our civilization: impossibility to maintain a growing population and growing economy based on limited resources of our Planet.

-focusing on small-scale demonstration projects may involve the risk of winning small fights but loosing the battle

-Used to think on unlimited growth, people are facing a big difficulty to understand the absolute ecological limits of this small planet. This limit is forcing us to decide to limit our self (which species was able to do it?) or to proceed in the direction of the global ecological disaster, which will be most painful for the humans understanding what is going on. If already we do have problems with the existing resources, a bigger difference between demand and realities will increase the tensions, with major consequences regarding security, socio-economic wellbeing, health etc.

- There is Hope! We can hope in human genius, to find the possibilities to put back our civilization on a sustainability path, but we should accept this as being the most difficult question from the moment when our ancestors have started the very first fire. Probably the elite of the civil society is positioned on the best point, being able to communicate, think and rise a voice regarding the real problems we are facing now.

Conclusions:

1. Biodiversity conservation is the basic interest of the human species! Clarify for the people that biodiversity conservation is not mostly about lizards and dragonflies, but about the survival of our civilization. It is about the existence of the people which will have to survive on this Planet in the near and eventually deeper future. Our civilization (society, economy) is totally dependent on the health of biosphere/ ecosphere, the human civilization being a subsystem of the biosphere/ ecosphere.

2. Already we have exceeded the carrying capacity of the biosphere/ ecosphere: ocean fish stocks are collapsing, the forests are reduced, biodiversity is decreasing everywhere with a rate 1,000 faster than the natural extinction rate of species: we are loosing the resources necessary for our long-term survival. This means there is no space for economic growth and population growth, but for de-growth. Population de-growth is taking place in many places of the planet, while in others the increase in number of people is fast, adding each year about 18.000.000 people to the already to big human population, a style which is not ecologically sustainable.

3. To get back on a sustainability path, we need to reduce the ecological footprint produced by a to big human population and a to big economy. There is possibility for less people on a higher material consumption, or more people with less material consumption. Without going back to the ecological sustainability path, we are going into the direction of general collapse at a global scale, like many regional human civilizations have done it in the past. The consequences of past regional civilization collapses are not comparable not only regarding their magnitude, with the same situation in the case of our global human civilization.

4. Failure of the governments to reduce biodiversity loss by 2010 (or the even more ambitious halting of biodiversity loss in Europe by 2010) is produced by a wrong approach, not having in focus the basic causes of biodiversity loss: human population growth and economical growth. Politicians are unable to rise this type of fundamental questions, because it is not 'politically correct', they "do not have the mandate", and they are promising a short term future of happy days till the next election, not taking into consideration the results of resource overexploitation.

5. We do need a paradigm change in order to save the future of our human civilization, which can't survive without the ecological basis of it, a problem which will be even deeper in the near future when the fossil fuels will be terminated.

6. There are no chances to implement the MDGs without stabilizing the global human population and reduce the global economy to an ecological sustainable level. There is no chance to reduce poverty, without reestablishing and maintaining an equilibrium between the existing natural resources and carrying capacity of the Planet; the ecologically sustainable exploitation of these resources is possible to be realized by a human population and human economy having a maximal sustainable dimension, which in order to be safe on long term should incorporate also a "factor of precautionarity" .

7. Used to think on unlimited growth, people are facing a big difficulty to understand the absolute ecological limits of this small planet. This limit is forcing us to decide to limit our self (which species was able to do it?) or to proceed in the direction of the global ecological disaster, which will be most painful for the humans understanding what is going on. If already we do have problems with the existing resources, a bigger difference between demand and realities will increase the tensions, with major consequences regarding security, socio-economic wellbeing, health etc.

8. There is Hope! We can hope in human genius, to find the possibilities to put back our civilization on a sustainability path, but we should accept this as being the most difficult question from the moment when our ancestors have started the very first fire. Probably the elite of the civil society is positioned on the best point, being able to communicate, think and rise a voice regarding the real problems we are facing now.

Oceania　Wetlands in Review

Kate Heyward and Cassie Price,
(WetlandCare Australia & Australian Wetlands Alliance)

Oceania is one of the most diverse and wide-spread of all regions, making our wetlands and their issues equally as diverse. Our region has recently suffered the perils of erupting volcanos, drought, flood, and fire, a constant reminder of our changing climate. The island nations understand all too well the immediate impact climate change will have, not only on their wetlands, but on their livelihoods.

Although the drought has broken, floods, volcanos and fires subsided, a number of our important wetlands remain under constant threat. Some of the greatest threats include altered flow regimes and water extraction, development pressures and climate change. This is coupled with a lack of public awareness, lack of knowledge of some important areas and limited resources, making it difficult times for wetland management.

However, there are a number of key initiatives that are working to resolve these threats and benefit wetlands around the region. These include but are not limited to;

- Pacific Islands Wetland Report and agreement
- Shorebirds2020 – making a difference to migratory birds in Australia
- Queensland Wetlands Programme – significant step forward for wetland knowledge and awareness
- Piccaninnie Ponds – Victorian success in purchasing and rehabilitating these significant wetlands, with the return of breeding fish and threatened species
- Maintaining and Restoring Wetlands Project – New Zealand, research, community awareness, tools and restoration
- Microfossil record of the Holocene evolution of coastal wetlands – New Zealand

This diverse range of projects highlights the commitment of groups in the Oceania region to healthy and thriving wetlands for the future.

The Current Status of Major Wetlands and Biodiversity Crisis in ROK

Park Junrok / Ma Yong-un
(Korean Wetland NGO Network)

After holding Ramsar COP10 in 2008, public awareness of the wetlands was significantly improved but South Korea's efforts to conserve wetlands and biodiversity have not gotten any better. The government of South Korea says that it is concerned about wetland conservation, ecological restoration, and green growth but it is very different from the actual situation. The case which most represents the situation in the Republic of Korea is the "Four Rivers Restoration Project".

The government of South Korea touts the project as a 'saving, or restoration project.' However, it is merely an engineering and construction project, and the core of the project is the construction of numerous dams and sand dredging. The main contents of the 4 Major Rivers Project is to build 16 dams with a height ranging from 6 ~ 13.2m, to dredge 570 million m^3 of sand in the 4 major rivers of South Korea, to reinforce 377kms of the levee, and to create bike paths and sports parks along the waterfront.

Despite being a large operation with a budget of more than US$ 19,000,000,000 in expenses, a superficial and perfunctory environmental impact assessment was completed in less than four months, and the goal is to complete the project within 2 years. The project is proceeding without holidays and throughout the nights.

Due to dredging sand for the purpose of ensuring uniformed depth and channel width for the navigation of 2,500-ton ships, the river is radically changing and the shallows, sandbanks, and the waterfront area are disappearing. Various wetlands which have been developed along the 4 major rivers have been damaged, and species living there are likewise being damaged.

The Nakdong River is the core construction site in this project with the building of eight large dams and the dredging 440 million m^3 of sand ongoing. The Nakdong River sandbank plays a key role as a stopover for the Hooded cranes, which are listed as (VU, Vulnerable) on the IUCN RED DATA BOOK. Gumi Haepyeong Marsh at the middle of the Nakdong River has been listed on the Crane Network Site and is the most important areas where nearly 4,000~5,000 Hooded cranes, about half of the world living population of the species, sit down. Currently, the sand plain in this area is quickly being lost due to dredging, and the rice fields next to the river, where the Hooded cranes try to obtain food, are being filled with dredged sand.

The government is presenting invalid countermeasures such as maintaining the vegetation of alluvial islands, installing bars, piling huge stones and more despite the severe issue of the effect on biodiversity in ROK. Situations in coastal wetlands are not any different. Regardless of international commitments to avoid large flat landfill, the government of South Korea has been reinforcing its plans to carry out projects such as Incheon Songdo Tidal Flat additional landfill, construction of a large power plant at the Ganghwa Tidal Flat and Garorim Bay Tidal Flat.

Gyeonggi-Bay, where Ganghwa and Songdo tidal flats are located, is taking an especially important role as a stopover for shorebirds in the path of the East Asian Australasian FLyway

as well as habitats for internationally endangered species, such as Black-faced Spoonbills, cranes and more.

The Saemangeum Tidal Flat Reclamation project, which has been boasted to be the world's longest sea wall, was initially planned to create agricultural land, but switched to an urban construction plan including establishing an industrial complex and tourist attractions. However, the government has not presented any countermeasures anywhere for shorebirds that have been using this tidal flat as a stopover.

The Nakdong River Estuary is Korea's most important interest for Migratory Birds, and it s East Asia's largest Little Tern breeding grounds as well as stopover sites for internationally endangered species, such as Spoon-billed Sandpipers. However, the future of Korea's wetlands is still insecure due to the various development projects including the new international airport construction project in Nakdong River Estuary.

World Conference on Conservation of Biodiversity & Wetlands; Report from Japan

Tamotsu Sugenami
(Ramsar Network Japan)

In June 2008, CBD COP9 officially selected Nagoya as the host city of CBD COP10. In October 2008, Ramsar COP10 was held in the Republic of Korea after 15 years' absence from East Asia, since Ramsar COP5 was held in Kushiro, Japan. For the people who are working for the conservation of tidal flats or wetlands, the two-year period between Ramsar COP10 in South Korea and CBD COP10 in Nagoya has been the best opportunity to implement wetland conservation actions in Japan and introduce them internationally.

On the other hand, it has become apparent that the 2010 Biodiversity Target, which aims "to achieve a significant reduction in the current rate of biodiversity loss by 2010," is unachievable. We have been advocated that the conservation of the wetlands with high-conservation values and the reappraisal of development projects that may have impact on such wetlands are the most important and effective approaches to reduce the current rate of biodiversity loss.

As the CBD COP10 host country, Japan has proposed a draft of the Post-2010 Target. The Japanese government should have presented the proposal with several specific examples of conservation of important wetlands.

In this presentation, I would like to introduce three cases: the Isahaya Bay (Ariake Sea, Kyushu), Awase Tidal Flat (Okinawa Pref.) and Kaminoseki (Seto Inland Sea, Yamaguchi Pref). If the Japanese government had reviewed the importance of these wetlands and had implemented concrete measures to save them, it must have been the good examples of the achievement of Strategic Goal B of the Post-2010 Target, which is "to reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity," and have been favorably received by other CBD contracting parties.

More specifically, I would like to internationally introduce the people and lifestyle in the Iwaishima Island, Kaminoseki. The islanders have been fighting against a nearby land-filling project, whose aim is to build a new nuclear power plant. For over several hundreds of years, Iwaishima locals have lived by sustainable fishery, and are recently committed to recycling-oriented agriculture. They have already achieved the mid-/long-term target for 2050 included in the Post-2010 Target, which states: "Biodiversity is conserved, restored, and wisely used, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people."

Historically, people in Japan and other East Asia countries have lived under the organic link including forests, rivers, rice paddies, and coastal areas. We have wisely used natural resources and have received benefits from biodiversity. We must recognize this fact again and review its way of land development. It is necessary not only to address land development issues in Japan; it will also make positive effects on the way of development in other Asian countries, where land use projects are expected to accelerate. I would like to emphasize that Japan can carry out its responsibility in Asia only by doing so.