

made by the responsible Ministry. In some cases it may be a form of Presidential decree, and in some cases a specific legal instrument applying to the site(s) in question. Parties are free to decide the approach taken, but some points of general good practice are worth mentioning here.

As with the notification of designations to the Ramsar Secretariat, a map showing the site boundary should be made available. Information on the reasons why the site is designated, and the particular ecosystem services which need to be taken into account in planning, management and decision-making, should also be made available. The legal and policy implications of designation (based, of course, on the provisions of the Convention, but elaborated as appropriate for the jurisdiction concerned) should be made clear; as should the allocation of relevant responsibilities, and sources of further information. Consultation with affected stakeholders, especially local communities, is very important. Wide publicity is desirable, to raise awareness of the significance of both the site and the Convention generally.

AFTER DESIGNATION

The purpose of this document is to contribute towards the adequate representation of important areas for waterbirds in the List of Wetlands of International Importance in Asia. Acting on

the steps above should achieve this. In addition to its relevance to the Ramsar Convention, this study is also relevant to regional agreements relating to the protection and management of wetlands in Asia, notably the Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Strategy and bilateral migratory bird agreements/treaties (see Box 2).

These steps, however, constitute merely the first stage towards the objective of fuller implementation of the site designation aspects of the Ramsar Convention, and better conservation and wise use of wetlands generally. A wealth of other material and advice is available under the Convention, and from BirdLife International and others, on the various dimensions of the treatment of sites once listed. All users of this document are therefore encouraged to continue dialogue with BirdLife International and the Ramsar Secretariat on issues such as planning, decision-making, management, monitoring and awareness-raising.

With the assistance of the systematic information base presented here, the prospects for ultimately stronger, more complete and more durable success in the conservation and wise use of wetlands of importance for birds in Asia should be better than ever before. The challenge to deliver this rests now on all governments and NGOs who are in a position to put this document to use. BirdLife urges the highest levels of commitment to this among all concerned, and stands ready to provide what further assistance it can.

Box 2. Regional agreements relevant to the protection and management of wetlands in Asia.

Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Strategy

The Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Strategy (www.wetlands.org/IWC/awc/waterbirdstrategy/Strat.htm) promotes the conservation of migratory waterbirds and wetlands in the Asia-Pacific region. It is supported by the governments of Japan and Australia and coordinated by Wetlands International, with an international conservation committee to oversee its promotion and implementation. The Strategy has greatly increased awareness in the region of the need to protect migratory waterbirds and their habitats, and has led to a series of initiatives undertaken with the active support and involvement of governments, conventions, national and international NGOs, development agencies, the corporate sector and local communities. Regional conservation Action Plans have been developed and are being implemented for shorebirds, cranes and Anatidae. Networks of sites of international importance have been established (under Recommendation 6.4: the 'Brisbane Initiative' on the establishment of a network of listed sites along the East Asian-Australasian Flyway, COP6 Brisbane, 1996; and under Resolution VIII.37: International cooperation on conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats in the Asia-Pacific region, COP8 Valencia, 2002) for these three waterbird groups (Anatidae Site Network in the East Asian Flyway, East Asian Australasian Shorebird Site Network and North East Asian Crane Site Network) that presently involves 85 sites in 13 countries (at August 2005); new sites are being added each year. Numerous activities have been undertaken at network sites, including public awareness and education, surveys and training courses in wetland management. International and national meetings have been held to share information and skills relevant to wetland management.

Bilateral migratory bird agreements/treaties

Ten bilateral migratory bird agreements/treaties involving territories in the Asia region have already been established (see table on right), and others are under discussion. These agreements provide mechanisms for the promotion of bilateral and international actions for the conservation of migratory birds.

Bilateral agreements/treaties on the conservation of migratory birds in the Asia-Pacific region.

	Australia	China	India	Japan	North Korea	South Korea	Russia	U.S.A.
Australia								
China	Yes							
India								
Japan	Yes	Yes						
North Korea								
South Korea								
Russia			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
U.S.A.		Yes		Yes			Yes	

Table reproduced from the Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Strategy: 2001–2005.