

The East Asian-Australasian Flyway – Opportunities to Support Wetlands, Livelihoods, and Biodiversity in East and Southeast Asia

Webinar hosted by the
Asian Development Bank
Co-organized with the **East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership Secretariat**
and **Center for EAAF Studies**

16 October 2020

14:00–16:10 Manila/Beijing Time

And additional Q&A Session 16:10–16:40

Venue: Zoom

Link: <https://adb-org.zoom.us/j/95103190379> ; Meeting ID: 951 0319 0379; Password: c24BxvF8

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has heightened global awareness of the need to protect nature as well as people and address threats to biodiversity. Efforts focused on the protection of migratory waterbirds and their wetland habitats provide opportunities to help improve the protection of natural capital to benefit biodiversity and people.

Many species of waterbirds conduct long-distance seasonal migrations, and rely on coastal and inland wetlands to rest and refuel. There are nine major migratory waterbird flyways around the world. The East Asian-Australasian Flyway (EAAF) covers East and Southeast Asia and Australasia, extending across 22 countries from the Arctic Circle in the north to Australia and New Zealand in the south. Thousands of wetlands occur within the EAAF: these support over 50 million migratory waterbirds from more than 210 species, provide food and other resources for millions of people, and maintain essential ecosystem services such as flood regulation and carbon sequestration. Many of these wetlands and their biodiversity are under severe threat from agriculture, economic development, climate change, hunting, and other factors. National and international agencies are undertaking a wide range of efforts to conserve wetland biodiversity, yet these efforts are challenged by climate change, rising human populations, limited financing, and other issues. There is a need to scale up these efforts through multi-sector, regional initiatives that emphasize partnerships and the achievement of benefits for nature and people.

International development agencies have traditionally had a relatively small role in biodiversity conservation, but this is changing, especially with the global drive toward “nature-positive” approaches for sustainable development. Regional flyways and wetlands are well suited to support from development agencies due to the potential for large-scale, multi-sector approaches involving biodiversity conservation, livelihoods, and sustainable development.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) working broadly with a wide range of partners is exploring the development of a regional program to support and enhance conservation and the sustainable management of wetlands in the EAAF. The program will be developed working with partners and aims to build upon and integrate into existing efforts, especially the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership, and will be implemented through collaboration with governments, other development agencies, and civil society. The aim of this webinar is to discuss the challenges and opportunities towards strengthening regional action within the EAAF, focusing initially on the People’s Republic of China and Southeast Asia. The webinar will: (i) summarize the context for waterbird and wetland conservation in East and Southeast Asia, (ii) present brief case studies and lessons learned, including the role of development agencies, and (iii) introduce, and facilitate preliminary discussion on, the proposed program.

AGENDA

14:00–14:15 Opening Remarks

Chair: Mr. Qingfeng Zhang, Director, Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture Division (EAER), East Asia Department, ADB

1. **Mr. James P. Lynch**, Director General, East Asia Department, ADB.
2. **Mr. Ramesh Subramaniam**, Director General, Southeast Asia Department, ADB.
3. **Ms. Patricia Zurita**, Chief Executive Officer, BirdLife International.

14:15–14:45 Session 1: Water bird and Wetland Conservation in East and Southeast Asia and Perspective from other Flyway Initiatives (10 minutes each)

- Regional Overview: Challenges and Opportunities for Water bird and Wetland Conservation; and the Work of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP). **Mr. Doug Watkins**, Chief Executive Officer, EAAFP Secretariat.
- Waterbird and Wetland Conservation in the People's Republic of China (PRC). **Dr. Lu Cai**, Deputy Director, Center for EAAF Studies.
- Experiences from the Africa–Eurasia Flyway. **Mr. David Stroud**, Emeritus Senior Advisor to UK Government Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Patron of AWEA.

14:50–15:15 Session 2: Role of International Development Agencies: Case Studies

Chair: Mr. Jiangfeng Zhang, Director, Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture Division (SEER), Southeast Asia Department, ADB (7 minutes each)

- AFD and Wetland Conservation in the PRC. **Ms. Xiaoting Jin**, Senior Project Officer, AFD.
- KfW and Wetland Conservation in the PRC: Case Study – Hengshui Lake. **Mr. Wolfram Erhardt**, Director, KfW Office Beijing.
- ADB and Wetland Conservation in the PRC: Case Study – Jiangsu Yancheng Project. **Mr. Niu Zhiming**, Senior Environment Officer, ADB.

15:15–16:05 Session 3: Towards a Regional Flyway Program

Chair: Mr. Bruce Dunn, Chief of Environment Thematic Group and Director, Environment and Safeguards Division (SDSS), Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department, ADB

Lead Speaker (10 minutes)

- Introduction to the proposed East Asian-Australasian Regional Flyway Program. **Mr. Duncan Lang**, Senior Environment Specialist, ADB; and **Mr Vinayagan Dharmarajah**, Regional Director / **Gary Allport** Advisor to CEO, BirdLife International.

Discussants (5 minutes each) – Towards a Regional Flyway Program

Participants from 5 agencies (2 national agencies and 3 civil society organizations) have been requested to provide initial feedback about the flyway program, guided by the following questions:

- What are the potential benefits and challenges for establishing the flyway program?
- What are the potential opportunities and role for national agencies in the flyway program?
- What are the potential opportunities and role of civil society organizations in the flyway program?
- **Note:** Other participants are kindly requested to provide questions in the chat box, for discussion in the open Q&A session after the formal close.

National agencies

- Perspective from the PRC. **Mr. Hu Yuanhui**, Deputy Director General, Department of International Cooperation, State Forestry and Grassland Administration, PRC.
- Perspective from ASEAN Flyway Network. **Ms. Shufen Yang**, Director (Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve), National Parks Board, Singapore.
- Perspective from Cambodia. **Mr. Yoeung Visal**, Deputy Chief of Office, Department of Freshwater Wetlands Conservation of the General Directorate of Administration for Nature Conservation and Protection, Ministry of Environment, Cambodia.

Civil Society Organizations

- International and regional perspective – wetlands and waterbirds. **Dr. Spike Millington**, Vice President of the International Crane Foundation; former Chief Technical Advisor for the EU-China Biodiversity Program and former Chief Executive, East Asian–Australasian Flyway Partnership.
- International and regional perspective – wetlands and waterbirds. **Dr. Taej Mundkur**, International Waterbird Census Coordinator and Senior Technical Officer Wetlands International; Chair of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) Flyways Working Group and former Asia Scientific Councillor for CMS.
- Blueprint for Coastal Wetland Conservation and Management in the PRC. **Dr. Jianbin Shi**, Director of Conservation Programme-Wetland, Paulson Institute Representative Office, PRC.

16:05–16:10 Summary and Closing Remarks

- **Mr. Warren Evans**, Special Project Facilitator, ADB

16:10–16:40 Continuing Session 3: Open Q & A Discussion (30 minutes)

Chair: Mr. Bruce Dunn, supported by Mr. Duncan Lang

- *Open to all participants*
- *Please write questions in chat box during the session, for discussion in this session*