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East Asian-Australasian Flyway - Regional Flyway Initiative

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Outline for the Presentation

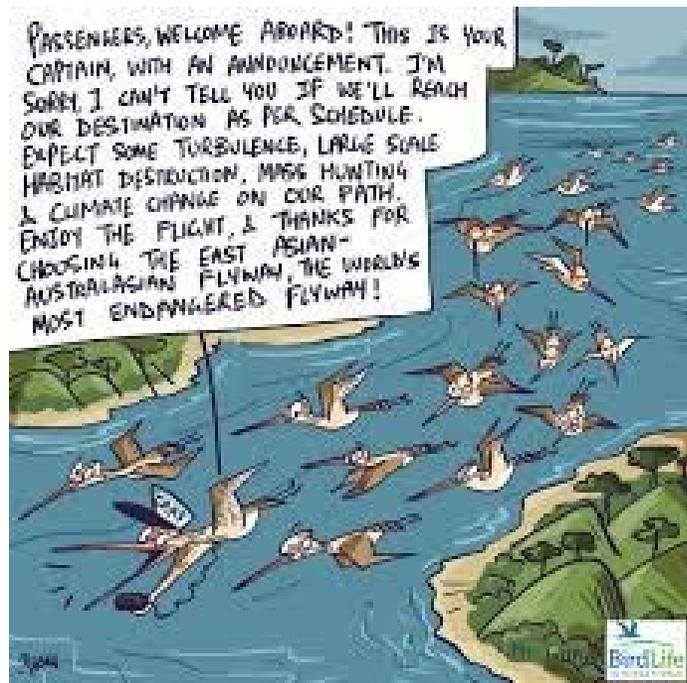
- 1) Why Wetland, Why Now, Why a Regional Flyways Initiative?
- 2) What is the Regional Flyway Initiative –long term vision
- 3) RFI Development Phase – Grant Details
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- 9) Long-term opportunities to support PRC priorities
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Spoon-billed Sandpiper (B. Scampion)

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Why Wetlands, Why Now, Why a Regional Flyway Initiative?



- **Important for Birds:** The EAAF covers East and Southeast Asia and Australasia, extending across 22 countries. Thousands of wetlands on the EAAF support over 50 million migratory waterbirds from more than 210 species.
- **Important for People:** Wetlands provide food, medicine, fuel, income, climate resilience and other economic benefits for nearly 200 million as well as maintaining key ecosystem services such as flood regulation and carbon sequestration.
- **Vulnerable:** The EAAF is the most vulnerable of the eight major migratory flyways globally.
- **Post COVID Green, Inclusive and Resilient Recovery:** Developing Member Countries (DMCs) need jobs and economic development, providing livelihood support in this setting through wetland sustainable management provides a great opportunity for DMCs.
- **Wetlands a Dynamic System:** – Wetlands (particularly coastal ones) are dynamic systems so can recover quickly, providing ideal platforms to deliver biodiversity gains.

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What is the Regional Flyway Initiative – long term vision



- **Delivery Timeframe** - 10+ year long programme comprising of grant (2yrs) and investment (10+yrs) components.
- **Priority Sites** - Will deliver 50+ flyway sites under Protection / Sustainable Management providing a coherent network of priority sites with favorable conservation status with species numbers maintained or enhanced.
- **Regional** - A Regional Initiative acting at-scale to have flyway level impact.
- **Co-benefits** - It will promote healthy wetlands (strengthen natural capital), deliver ecosystem service co-benefits and reinforce green infrastructure to benefit nature and people.
- **Resources** - US\$1.5-3.0 billion of loan and grant finance.
- **Focus Countries** - It is currently intended to benefit the following countries – Mongolia, Viet Nam, Cambodia, Philippines, Thailand, Bangladesh, and People’s Republic of China and Indonesia.
- **Focus Ecosystems** - Coastal sites will be the core focus of the initiative, although inland priority wetlands will also be explored where government interest.
- **International Agreements** - Contributes towards key agreements including EAAFP Strategic Plan, Paris Agreement, Ramsar, Post-2020 biodiversity framework, Ramsar and provides opportunity to support delivery on UNESCO World Heritage obligations

3 RFI Development Phase – Grant Details

- **Status and Schedule** – ADB Knowledge Sharing Technical Assistance (Grant) - 55056-001 ‘Scaling Up the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Initiative’:
 - Approved on 14 July 2021. Delivery period from July 2021 – December 2023
- **Financing** – Complete grant financing (\$1 million) to facilitate development phase outputs and leverage additional financing.
- **Implementation Delivery** - TA to be administered by ADB and implemented by consortium led by BirdLife International including:
 - EAAFP Secretariat, Wetlands International, Paulson Institute and academic experts.
 - Local partners will be employed at a national level to bring in key expertise from DMCs

Grant Delivery Schedule to Dec 2023:

November 2021 -
Inception
Workshop with
DMCs

December 2021 -
Site Selection
Framework
Endorsed

Jan – May 2022 -
DMC
engagement on
site selection

May 2022 -
Consensus on 50
priority sites at
COP15

June 2022 – Dec
2023 - Develop
Project Concepts

4 RFI Development Phase – Grant Deliverables

- **Development Phase Outputs -**

- **Output 1:** Develop a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy and undertake a needs assessment and subsequent capacity building program in targeted countries / locations for delivery of a scaled-up initiative including PRC.
- **Output 2:** Develop Site Selection Framework to deliver the following:
 - Identification of priority sites within EAAF based on existing known internationally important sites to establish 100 highest priority sites to take forward for discussion with developing member countries.
 - Subsequently confirm final list of 50 priority sites (protected and non-protected) in consultation with DMCs to be targeted within the initiative for investment and granting support.
 - For each selected site, design investment concepts detailing biodiversity values, threats to the site to be addressed, co-benefits to be delivered, investment budget required.
- **Output 3:** Develop a Sustainable Financing Mechanism to deliver long-term donor financing for the flyway and to explore self-financing mechanisms.

5 Criteria for prioritising and ranking sites



Biological importance (irreplaceability · representativeness)

- Occurrence of globally significant bird populations at site, based upon count data (taking into account observer/survey effort)
- Key waterbird life cycle events at site, i.e. critical staging ('refuelling') habitat, moulting area etc..
- Critical site for migratory connectivity, i.e. vital 'stepping stone'
- Extensive, high quality intertidal and associated habitats present (based upon satellite data and ground-truthing), can enable inclusion of poorly known sites with limited data.
- Designation as a World Heritage Site based on its conservation potential.

Conservation potential

- Important threats at site not currently being addressed, i.e. habitat loss, hunting/trapping.
- Conservation actions underway at site, but need to be strengthened, e.g. protected area management.
- Opportunity to take effective action at site because of local government and community support.
- Site identified as a priority for survey, based upon limited count data available & extent of coastal wetland habitats.

6 Climate co-benefit analysis

Conservation management investments at these sites must incorporate climate values and address both climate change mitigation and adaptation.



- Sequestration – the carbon stock, business-as-usual and RFI investment sequestration rate values through nature-based solutions (NBS) will be estimated and modelled. These will be based on recent spatial data for mangroves and coarser estimates for the remaining inter-tidal zones in Asia.
- Adaptation – the main opportunity for site level investment is in adaptation to sea level rise through the strengthening of green infrastructure, which will enhance local level climate change resilience for both ecosystems and communities.

Conservation management investments at these sites must support livelihoods:



- Support the sustainable use of natural resources by human communities - agriculture, fishing, aquaculture, salt production, sustainable timber harvesting and in the case of freshwater systems, potable and agricultural water supplies.
- Support tourism – many sites offer the potential for nature-based tourism, with specific localities that are attractive to local and premium tourists who seek to both encounter specific biodiversity – notably birds such as the Spoon-billed Sandpiper – and to appreciate the natural world more broadly.

8 RFI Implementation Phase - (a) Overview



- **Delivery Schedule** – Expected timeframe for overall delivery: i) 10 years from 2020-2030 and ii) 30 years to 2050 reaching both short and long-term targets set out in the post-2020 biodiversity framework. The implementation may be done on a 5-year cyclical basis.
- **Key Components** – The RFI will consist of two key components: 1) Investment Pipeline; and 2) Sustainable Financing Mechanism



Bar-tailed Godwits (Ding Li Yong/ BirdLife)



Common Whimbrel (G Allport/ BirdLife)

- **Project Investment Pipeline** – Total estimated investment needed to secure key sites is approx. **\$3 billion (including all investment partner financing from loans and grants)**
 - » **Site level selection and investment** – The estimated site level investment would be approx. \$10-50 million per site, with sites selected based on criteria earlier expanded.
 - » **Investment Funding Sources** – Funding partnerships between sovereign governments with support from bilateral, multi-lateral and civil society
- **Capacity Building** – To ensure that the investments are sustainable through stronger institutions, policies, networks, partnerships. This support would continue from development into implementation.

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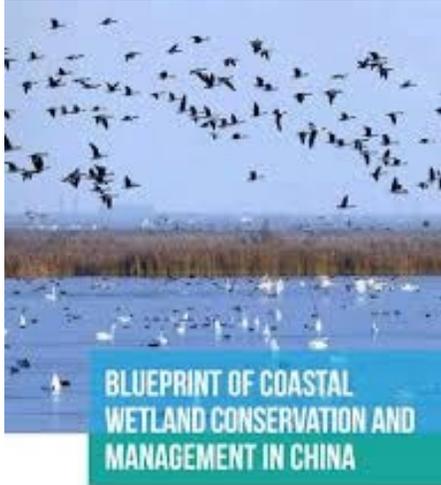
RFI Implementation Phase: (c) Key Component 2. Sustainable Financing Mechanism

- Comprise of grant money from multiple sources. **\$15-20 million per cycle**
- Focus would be regional to cover strategic level issues but will also include scope for interventions at a site level at priority sites to complement government action.
- Action mainly at non-protected sites (but also some Protected Areas under innovative management arrangements)
- Bridge the gap where other sources of funding are not available
- Will explore options for long-term self financing such as eco-compensation and market-based instruments
- The mechanism would also support and compliment key activities by CSOs where government funding is not available



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Long-term opportunity to support PRC's priorities in the Flyway



- The PRC is critically important for wetland conservation in Asia – Includes 64 Ramsar sites (16 coastal) and 19 EAAFP Flyway Network Sites (7 coastal). Various other coastal sites qualify as Important Bird Areas.
- The Yellow Sea is the most important migratory stopover site for birds in Asia. PRC has demonstrated global leadership by securing the inscription of sites along the Yellow Sea as World Heritage Sites. Phase 1 of the inscription was completed in 2019.
- The RFI will build on existing work undertaken including *the Blueprint of Coastal Wetland Conservation and Management in China*.
- The RFI is a major opportunity to support investments at and around World Heritage Sites on the Chinese Yellow Sea coast and enhance the value of these sites. These investments could boost biodiversity, tourism, recreation and agriculture, and help address climate change mitigation and adaptation.

10 Development Phase activities with PRC

- **RFI Launch**

- RFI Launch at CBD COP15 Eco-Civilization Event – Thematic Forum II - 14 October;

- **Development Output 1: Needs Assessment**

- Consultation with government to identify opportunities for improvement in existing flyway management in PRC such as capacity building, and policy support

- **Development Output 2: Priority Site Selection**

- Consultation on PRC identified priority sites selected for government consideration and approval for further concept development
- Identification of potential investment opportunity sectors to focus project components for different sites such as eco-tourism, sustainable agriculture, formal protection etc.

- **Knowledge Sharing**

- Mapping existing projects and initiatives to ensure no overlapping / wastage of resources;
- Collaboration with gov. departments on existing flyway and wetlands focused programs.



**Thank you very much for
your time and attention**

