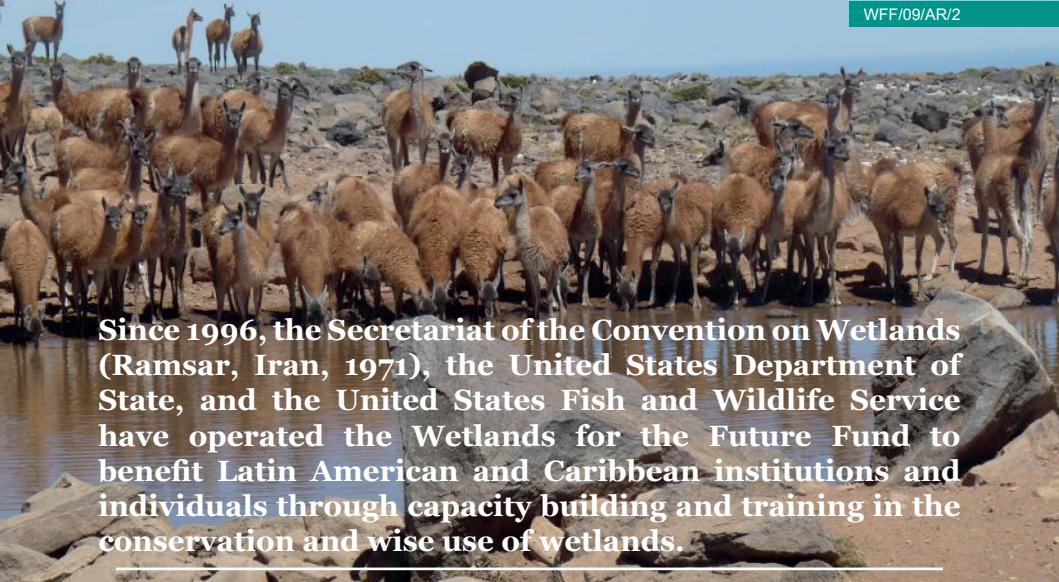


Wetlands for the Future Fund

Celebrating 20 Years of the Conservation and Wise Use of Wetlands in Latin America, the Caribbean and Mexico



Photo: Omar Rocha



Since 1996, the Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971), the United States Department of State, and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service have operated the Wetlands for the Future Fund to benefit Latin American and Caribbean institutions and individuals through capacity building and training in the conservation and wise use of wetlands.

Aim

The main objectives of the Wetlands for the Future Fund are to catalyze the training activities on wetlands, currently underway or planned for the region, and to complement existing initiatives for conservation, training and education related to wetlands.

20 years of the Wetlands for the Future Fund

To celebrate 20 years of the fund's contribution to the management and wise use of wetlands in Latin America and the Caribbean the Secretariat of the Convention has produced a publication titled Wetlands for the Future Fund: Celebrating 20 Years of the Conservation and Wise Use of Wetlands in Latin America, the Caribbean and Mexico. It aims to showcase the impact of the fund in its 20 years of operation with clear contribution to the implementation of the Strategic Plans of the Convention. The fund has also contributed to strengthening the capacity of Contracting Parties to manage their wetland resources highlighting



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the importance of the integration of the conservation and management of these vital ecosystems in the development process.



Some of the most successful projects and how they have contributed to the implementation of the Convention in the region are showcased in the above mentioned publication. It is available on the Convention's website www.ramsar.org

Activities supported by the fund and focus areas

Contracting Parties and countries that are not yet Contracting Parties in Latin America and the Caribbean and Mexico but meet the requirements may apply to the Fund for: a) Activities that contribute to the implementation of the Ramsar Strategic Plan and work within Latin America and the Caribbean & Mexico; b) Emergency assistance related to Ramsar sites or wetlands of regional importance; c) Assistance to allow Non-Contracting Parties to progress toward accession to the Convention; and d) Activities that link this initiative to other programmes that share the overall goals of wetland management and conservation. All projects also fall under one of the following focus areas:

1. Training & Capacity Building

This includes projects that aim to provide technical training on wetlands. This includes training of people to perform a specific activity such as processing fish products, marketing wetland handicrafts or engaging in ecotourism activities.

2. Awareness Raising Activities

Non-technical information provided to any group in society. School visits, campaigns involving the general public, and activities with indigenous groups all fall into this category. Academic events, documentation and training also contribute to raising the awareness of participants.

3. Documentation

This includes all books, CDs, handbooks, leaflets, posters and other reference materials. Visitor and wetland centers have also been included here.

4. Wetland Management & Tools

Infrastructure and equipment, baseline and monitoring data about the characteristics of a site, guidance documents (e.g., management plans, policies and consensus documents), maps, software and databases. This includes preparation of management plans and restoration strategies for Ramsar Sites and other wetlands.

5. Academic & Research

This includes data collection and/or processing and analysis of data into useable information or information products that are then made readily available to the entity that provided the data and through specialized journals and theses. Forum presentations in national and international events and new curricula (i.e. introduction of wetlands subjects into academic programs) are also considered.

6. Networking

Any initiative aimed at establishing or strengthening linkages between specialized or non-specialized groups is considered networking. In addition to the usual multi-stakeholder meetings and congresses, tools such as e-newsletters, virtual fora and joint (regional) initiatives are also included.

7. Protection and conservation of priority species

Any initiative that aims to protect and conserve vulnerable/endangered/protected aquatic species such as: habitat protection, protection of nests and reproductive females, development of institutional capacity for conservation of species, development of measures to address threats, amongst others.



WFF/12/GT/1

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