Gambia and Senegal cooperate on Ramsar site management

28 November 2008

Gambia
Senegal

Niumi-Saloum: the first Transboundary Ramsar Site in Africa

The Secretariat is extremely pleased to congratulate the governments of Gambia and Senegal for their declaration of the first African Transboundary Ramsar Site and the first Transboundary Ramsar Site outside of Europe. Transboundary Ramsar Sites comprise those Ramsar sites that are part of an ecologically coherent wetland that extends across national borders, where the Ramsar site authorities on both sides of the border have formally agreed to collaborate in its management, and have notified the Secretariat of that intent. This is a cooperative management arrangement and not a distinct legal status for the Ramsar sites involved.

Delta du Saloum was designated as Senegal’s third Ramsar Wetland of International Importance in 1984, and Gambia’s Niumi National Park was designated on 13 October 2008, also the third Ramsar site in that country. These two sites met the Ramsar Criteria by virtue of their capacity to maintain their ecosystem values in supporting numerous and varied species of flora and fauna, including those that are endemic, rare and/or endangered, as well as supporting the local communities in their livelihood activities.

Activities to develop and implement an integrated transboundary management plan with full stakeholder involvement are already underway. The Direction des Parcs Nationaux du Senegal, the Department of Parks and Wildlife Management of The Gambia, and The Wetlands International Africa Office in Dakar are carrying out this Wings Over Wetlands (WOW) UNEP-GEF African-Eurasian Flyways Project.

The notification to the Secretariat of such a collaborative management agreement demonstrates the commitment of Contracting Parties to achieving the Convention’s objectives of the wise use of wetlands through international cooperation. We would like to thank all parties involved for their efforts in this very important undertaking.

-- Cynthia Kibata, Ramsar

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