Nepal names four high altitude Ramsar sites

21 December 2007

Nepal

Secretary General's address to the “Remembering, Honouring and Celebrating the Life and Achievements of Conservation Heroes” Conservation Day

Kathmandu, Nepal, 23 September 2007

Delivered on his behalf by Ms Pragati Tuladhar

On behalf of Mr. Anada Tiega, the Secretary General, I represent the Ramsar Convention Secretariat on this occasion. Mr. Tiega has apologized for not being able to be here amongst us to remember, honor and celebrate the life and achievements of conservation heroes but has sent a message, which I am going to read for you:

First of all, I would like to thank you for inviting me to the commemoration in the memory of our colleagues and friends who lost their lives in tragic helicopter crash a year ago, while carrying out their duties.

In particular, Dr. Tirtha Man Maskey and Mr. Narayan Poudel were associated with Ramsar for many years, and have played an important role in its implementation in Nepal.

Today, 23rd of September 2007, I officially declare the four wetlands - for the first time in the high altitudes in Nepal - as Ramsar Sites. This is an outstanding and tangible contribution to the conservation and sustainable use of high altitude wetlands of the world. We highly appreciate Nepal's example because it can stimulate similar actions and it can foster national and regional strategies to tackle climate change impacts on glacial wetland ecosystems. We remain confident that the steps taken in Nepal will continue to foster collaboration with other countries and we congratulate the WWF offices for their effective support to the development of a regional initiative to encourage policy makers to take action.

In the regional meeting of high altitude wetlands at Urumqi, China - about 200 sites were tentatively identified in this region as wetlands of international importance.

Based on this and the initiatives which are ongoing in Nepal and - of particular importance to us, the designation of four new Ramsar sites are evidence of the outstanding work carried out for conservation in Nepal.

For this important endeavor, the Ramsar Secretariat would like to thank the Government of Nepal and WWF - our International Organizational Partner.

It is our honor to declare Ramsar sites on such an important day - today - when we gather here to pay tribute to our colleagues - together with their families, our supporters and conservation communities at large.

Thank you
Ms Pragati Tuladhar presenting site certificates for four new Ramsar sites

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