

40<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee:  
Agenda item 14.3



## Progress with Ramsar's ecological outcome-oriented indicators of Convention implementation effectiveness



Nick Davidson  
On behalf of STRP (TWA2)

14 May 2009



« Healthy wetlands, healthy people »



## This presentation...



- Reviews STRP progress in indicator development – and now initial implementation assessments
- Presents first results – and their implications
- Describes links and inputs to 2010 biodiversity target and indicators – and CBD implementation assessment
- Outlines next steps by STRP

# Ramsar effectiveness indicators



- Eight “ecological outcome-oriented” indicators of Convention effectiveness
  - Requested by COP8; adopted by COP9 (Res. IX.1 Annex D)
  - Assessments underway by STRP – preliminary findings now – more by 2010
  - Draw on & contribute to 2010 biodiversity indicators assessment
  - Go further than assessing 2010 biodiversity target



« Healthy wetlands, healthy people »

# Ramsar effectiveness indicators



- First time such assessment attempted for any MEA?
  - Is the Convention effective? OR ...
  - Can it be effective if implemented fully?
  - Is the state of wetlands better because of the Convention?
  - Would current and continuing wetland deterioration be worse without the Convention?



CHANGWON 2008

« Healthy wetlands, healthy people »

# Ramsar indicators of effectiveness – assessment examples (work in progress)



- Two-step assessment:
  1. **status/trend in the ecological feature (outcome)**
    - & rate of change of trend of 2010 biodiversity target
    - Global & disaggregated (regions; countries; basins, flyways etc.)
  2. **assessment of ecological trend (trend index) against range of process-related implementation indicators (as co-variates), from:**
    - Ramsar National Reports, especially COP10 NRF
    - Other sources e.g. national GDP; CBD NBSAPs; length of Ramsar membership etc



CHANGWON 2008

« Healthy wetlands, healthy people »

# Ramsar indicators of effectiveness – assessment examples (work in progress)



## Ecological feature trends (step 1)

- Some assessments now done for 5 indicators:
  - trend in wetland status – qualitative & quantitative [A]
  - trend in Ramsar site status – qualitative [B]
  - frequency of threats affecting Ramsar sites [D]
  - population trends of wetland taxa (waterbirds) [F]
  - changes in threat status of wetland taxa (Red List wetland-dependent birds & mammals) [G]
- Are we meeting the 2010 biodiversity target for wetlands and wetland-dependent species?
  - “by 2010 significantly reducing the rate of loss of biodiversity”

# Ramsar indicators of effectiveness – assessment examples (work in progress)



## Process indicators assessment (step 2)

- Methods developed and tested for 2 indicators
  - trend in wetland status – qualitative [A]
  - trend in Ramsar site status – qualitative [B]
- Initial results promising – identifying links between extent of national Ramsar implementation and state of wetlands
- Story-lines for Contracting Parties on setting future implementation priorities
- Some examples...



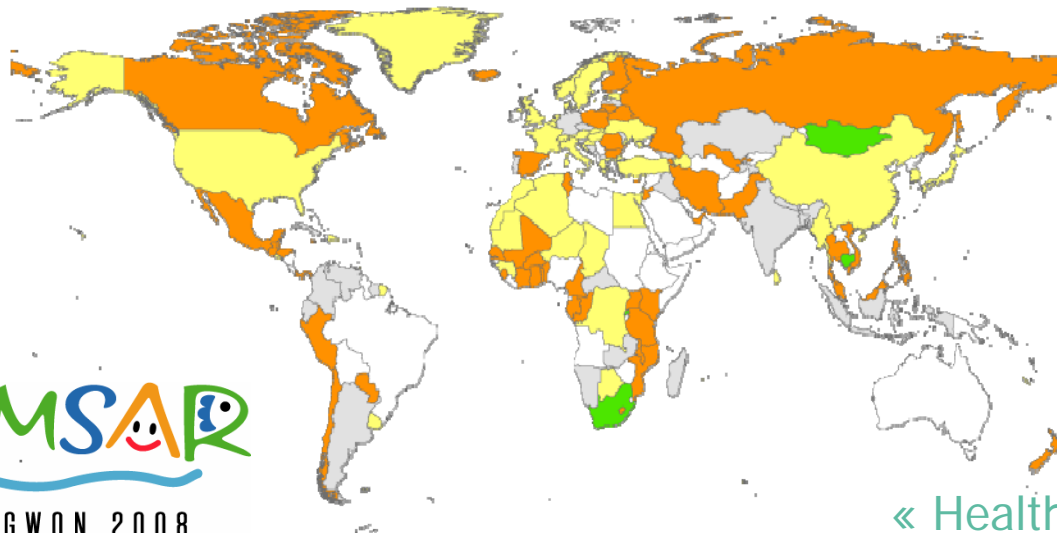
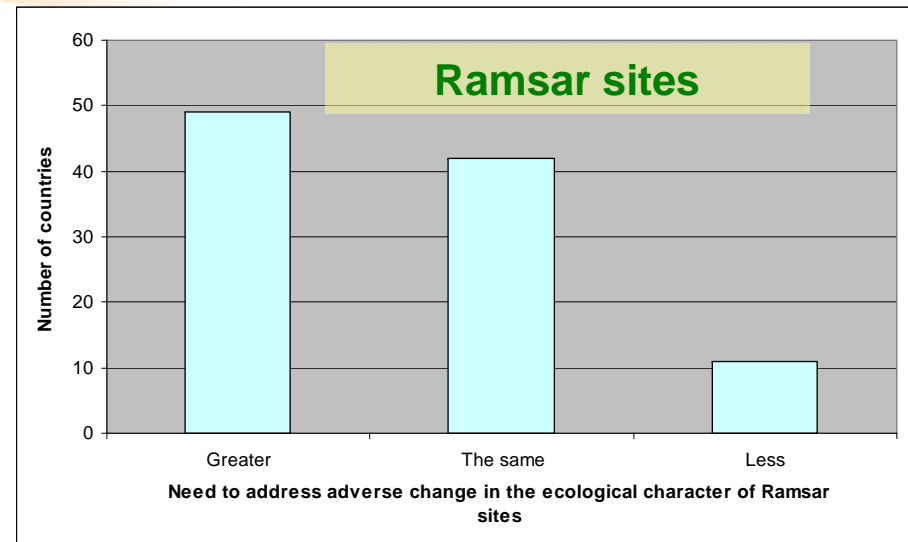
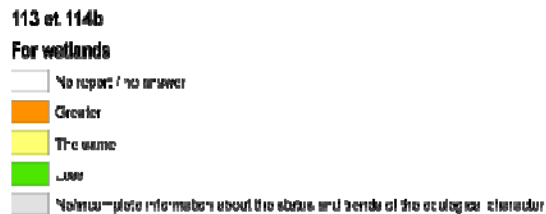
« Healthy wetlands, healthy people »

# Ramsar indicators of effectiveness – assessment examples (step 1)



## Ecological status trends - qualitative

Parties (COP10 National Reports) reporting that the need to address adverse change in the ecological character of wetlands (and Ramsar sites) in 2005-2008 was less, the same or greater than in the previous triennium



« Healthy wetlands, healthy people »

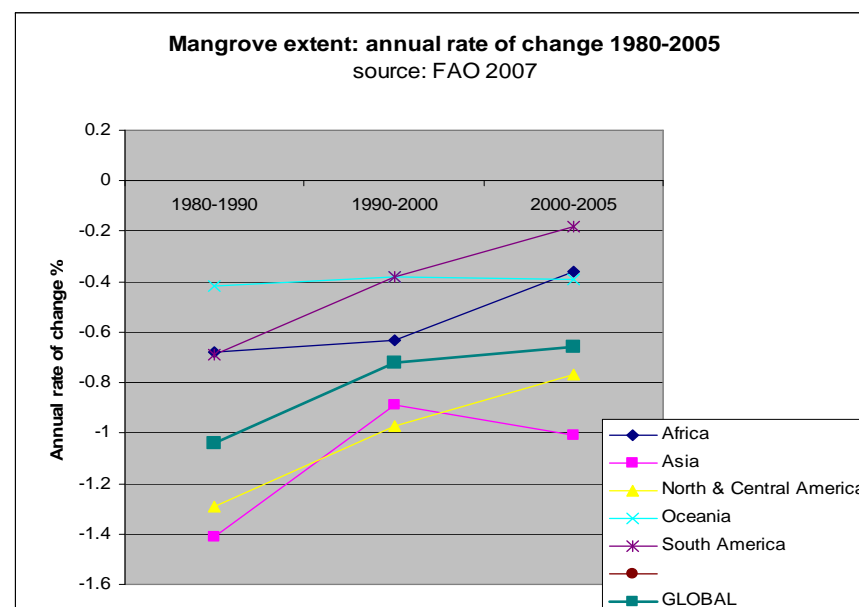
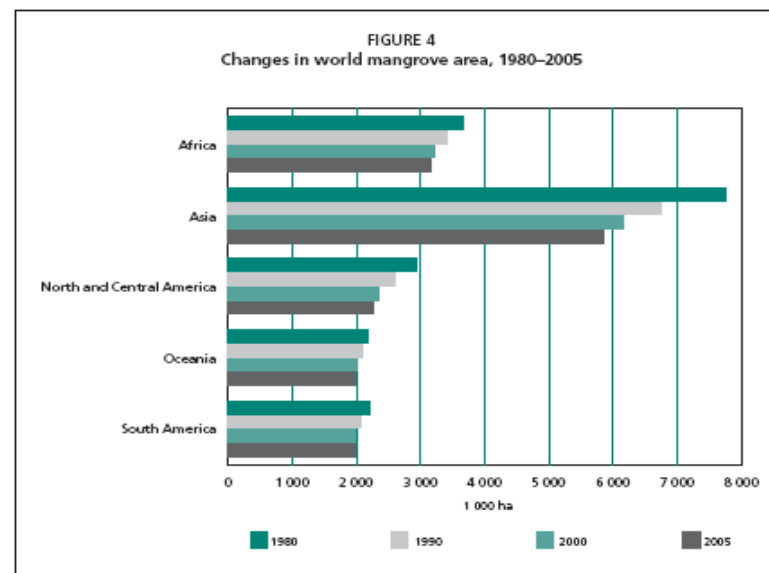


# Ramsar indicators of effectiveness – assessment examples (step 1)



## Ecological status trends - quantitative

- Changes in wetland extent
  - Few global assessments for wetlands
  - Earth Observation (remote sensing) may help soon
    - G-WOS and Landsat time-series since 1975)
  - FAO: mangrove area 1980-2005
  - Progressive & continuing area loss
  - Rate of loss slower in 2000-2005 than previously
    - Except **Asia** – increased rate of loss



# Ramsar indicators of effectiveness – assessment examples (step 1)

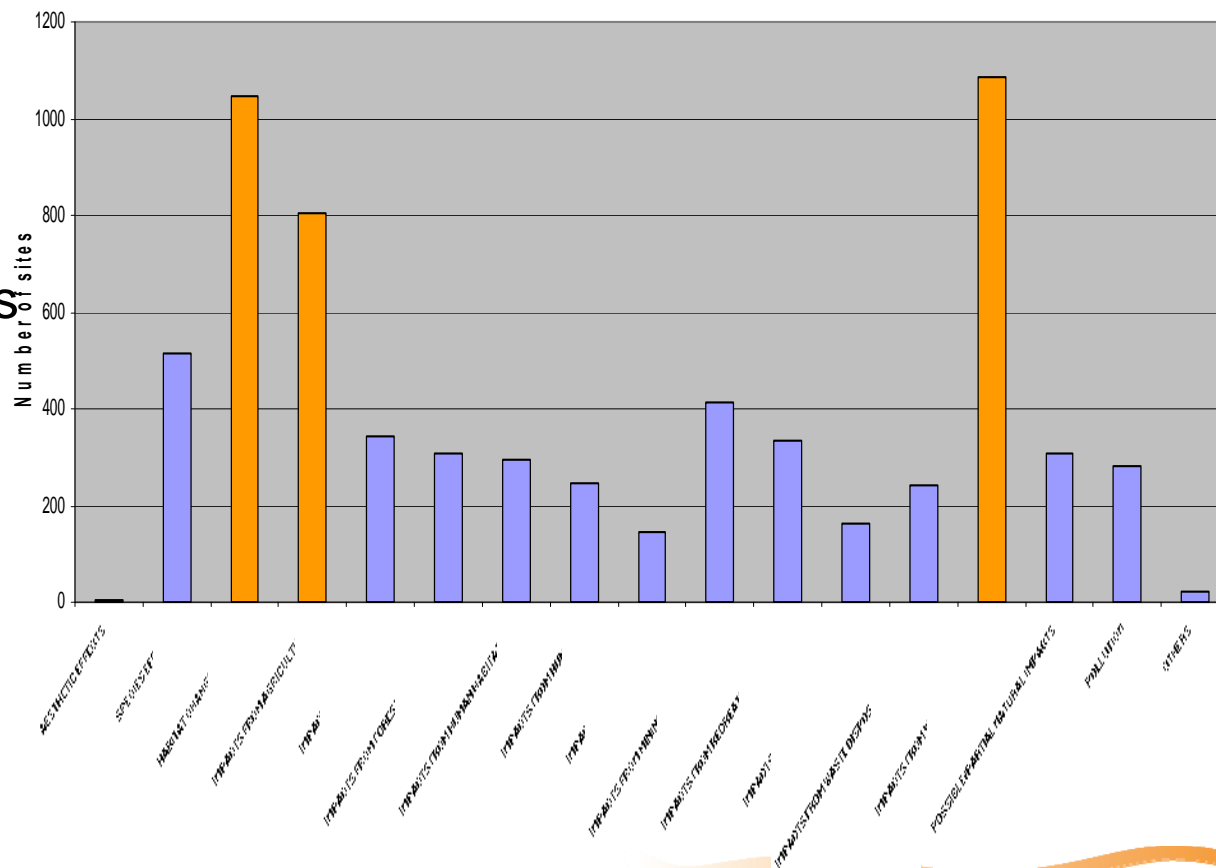


## Frequency of threats to Ramsar sites

Source: Ramsar Sites Database, 2009

### Threats to Ramsar sites

- Land-use change (land-claim)
- Agricultural pressures
- Water resource pressures



« Healthy wetlands, healthy people »

# Ramsar indicators of effectiveness – assessment examples (step 1)



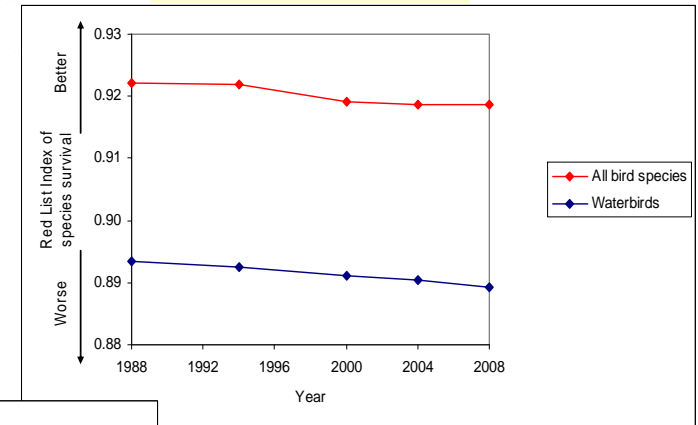
## Globally-threatened wetland-dependent species

### Red List Index (RLI)

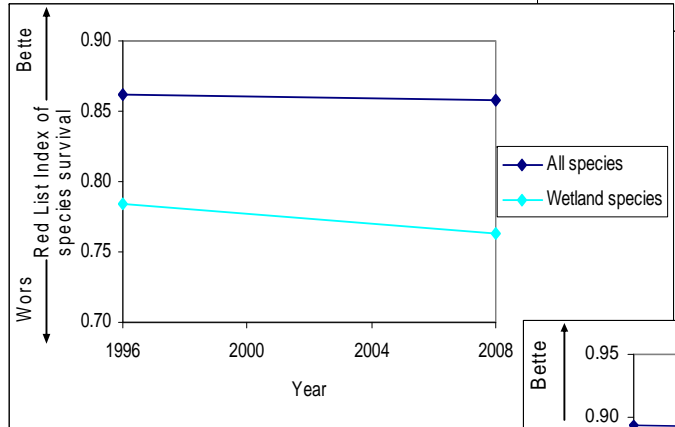
- “Wetland-dependent” species = proxy for wetland status and trends
- waterbirds are more threatened than all birds and their status has deteriorated faster
- status of wetland mammals deteriorated during the 1996–2008
- wetland mammals are more threatened than wetland birds - and have declined proportionately more steeply in recent years.



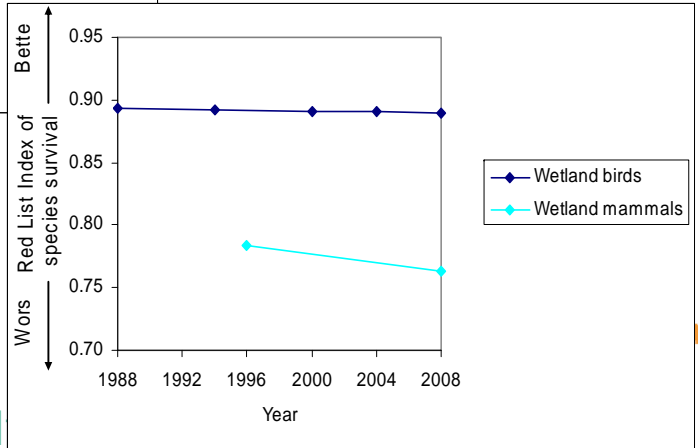
### Birds



### Mammals



### Birds of Mammals



« Heal

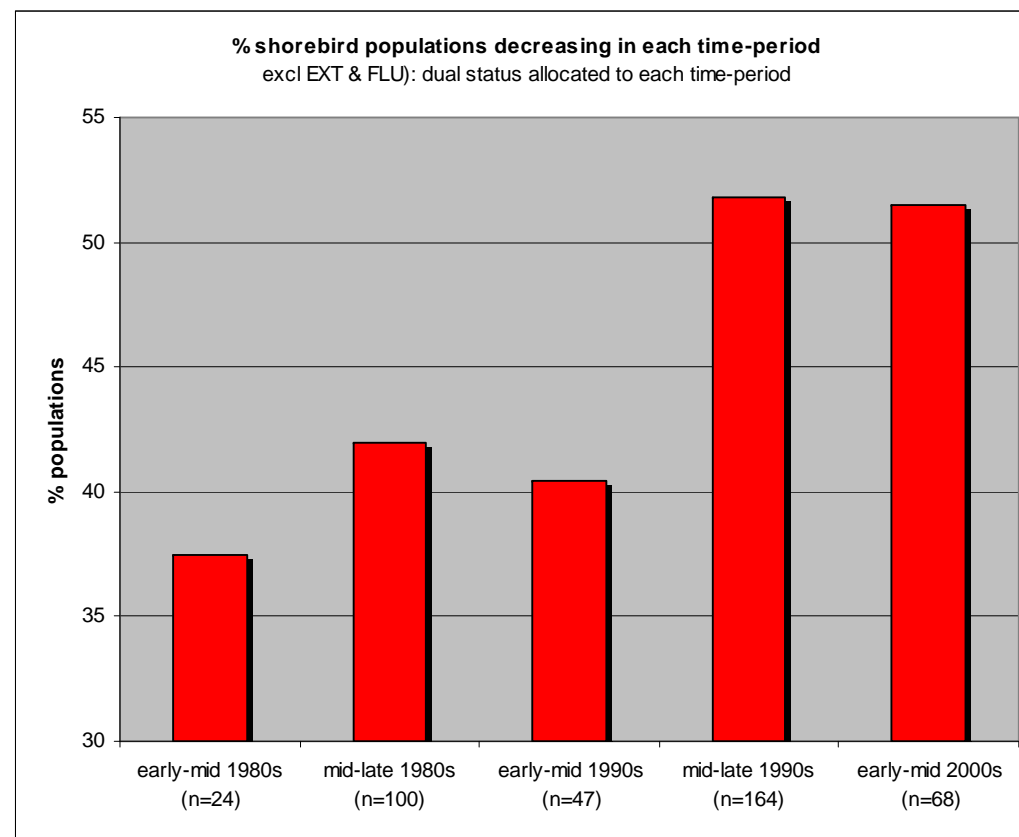
# Ramsar indicators of effectiveness – assessment examples (step 1)



## % shorebirds in decline

### Ecological status trends: waterbird populations

- 25-year time-period of global population trend assessments
  - Since early-mid 1980s
  - WI's *Waterbird Population Estimates*: 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> editions
  - Population sizes & population trends



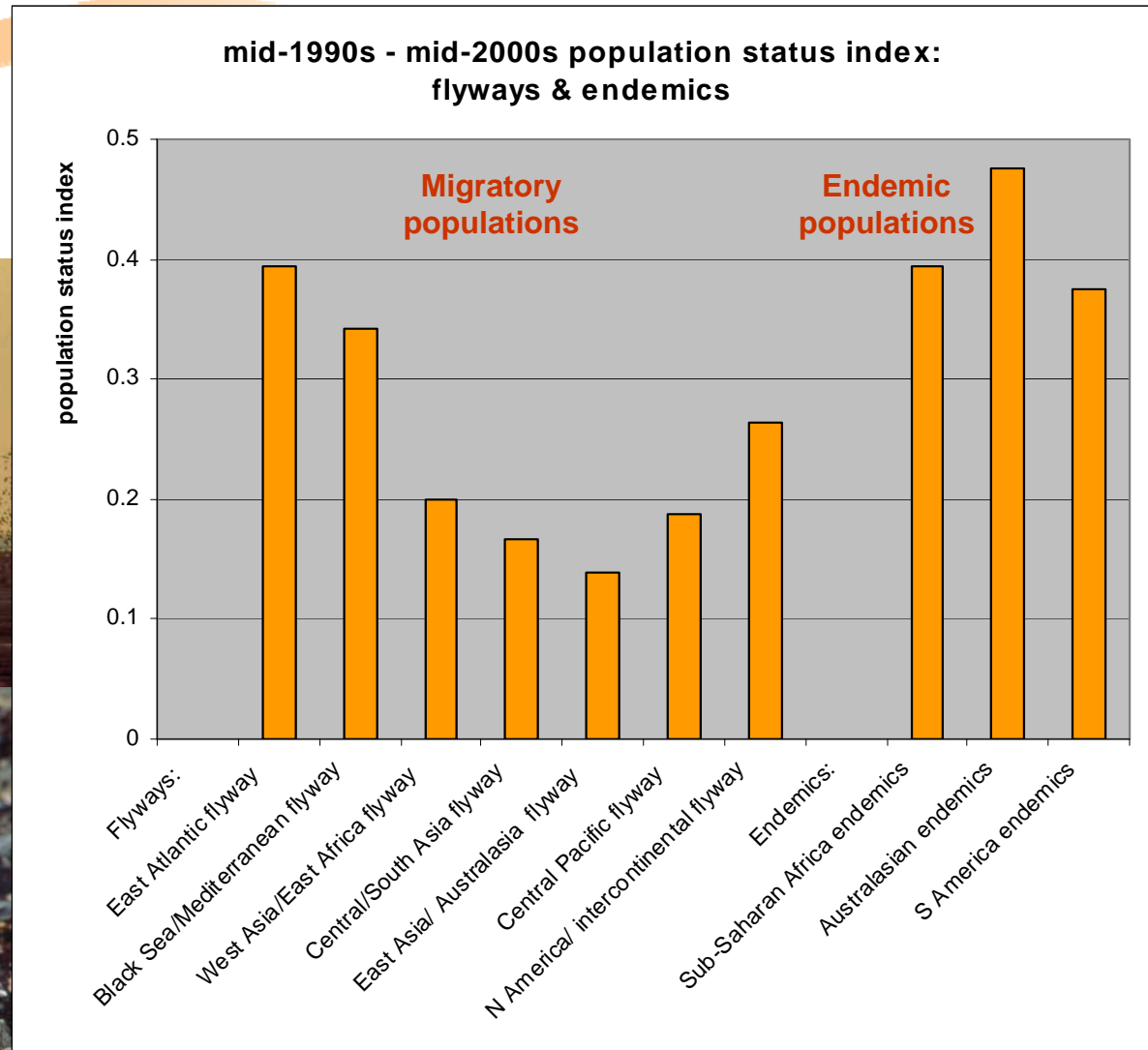
CHANGWON 2008

« Healthy wetlands, healthy people »

# Shorebird population status assessment



## Shorebird flyway status in 2000s

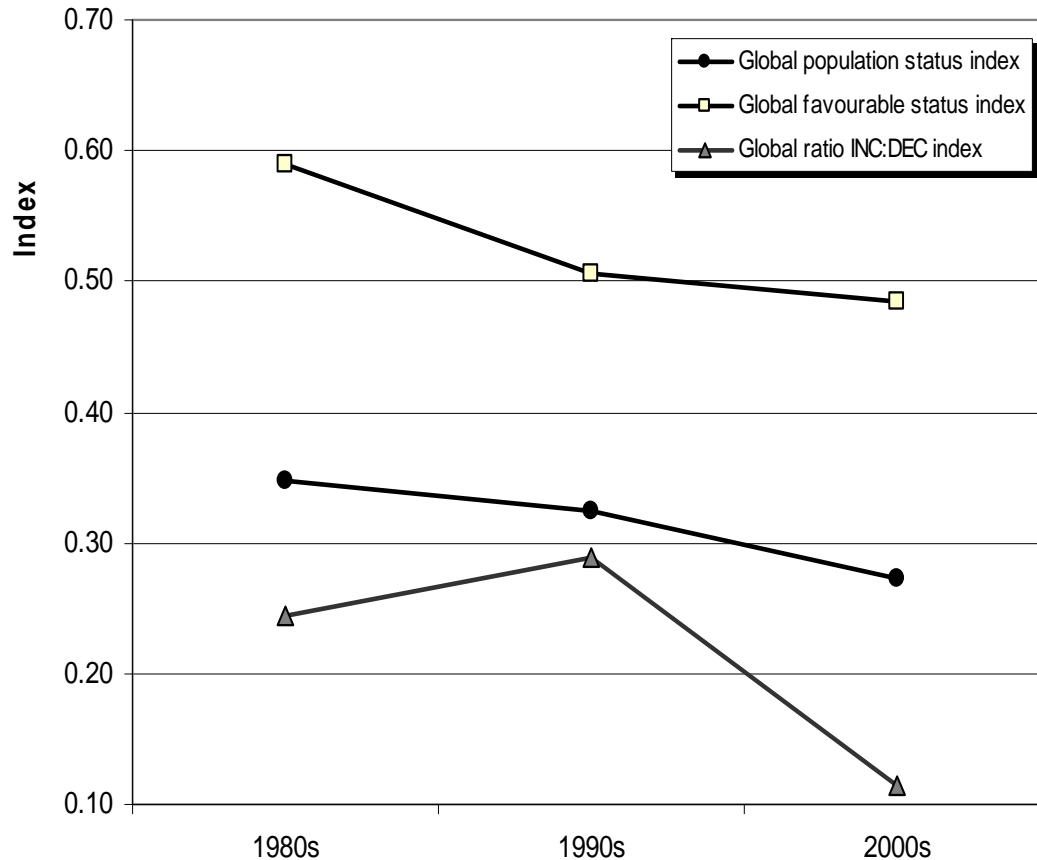


« Healthy wetlands, healthy people »

# Shorebird population status assessment



Global shorebird trend indices  
by decade



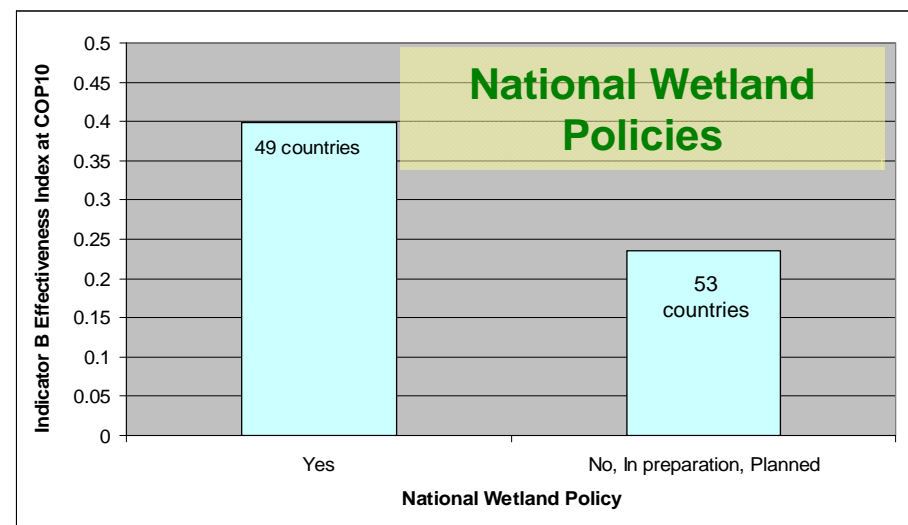
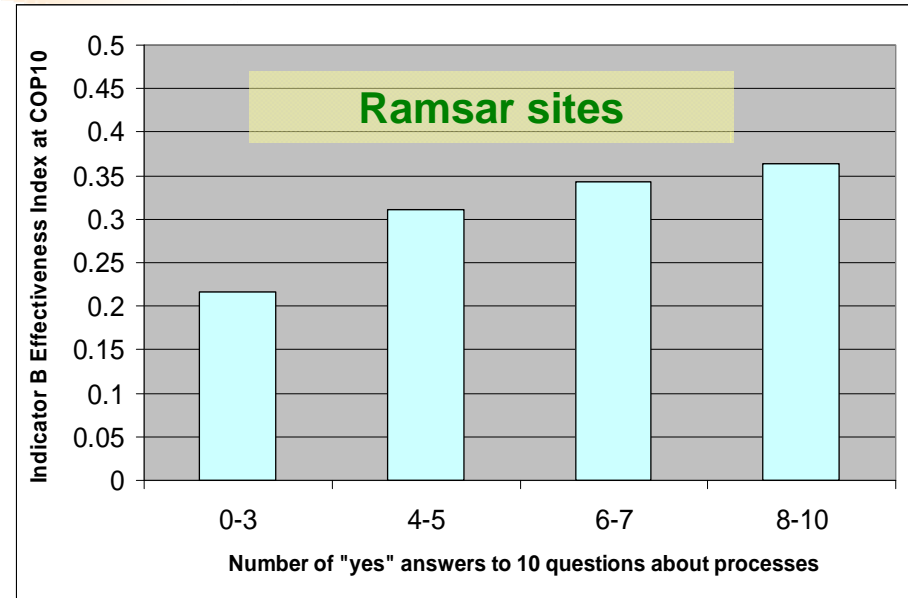
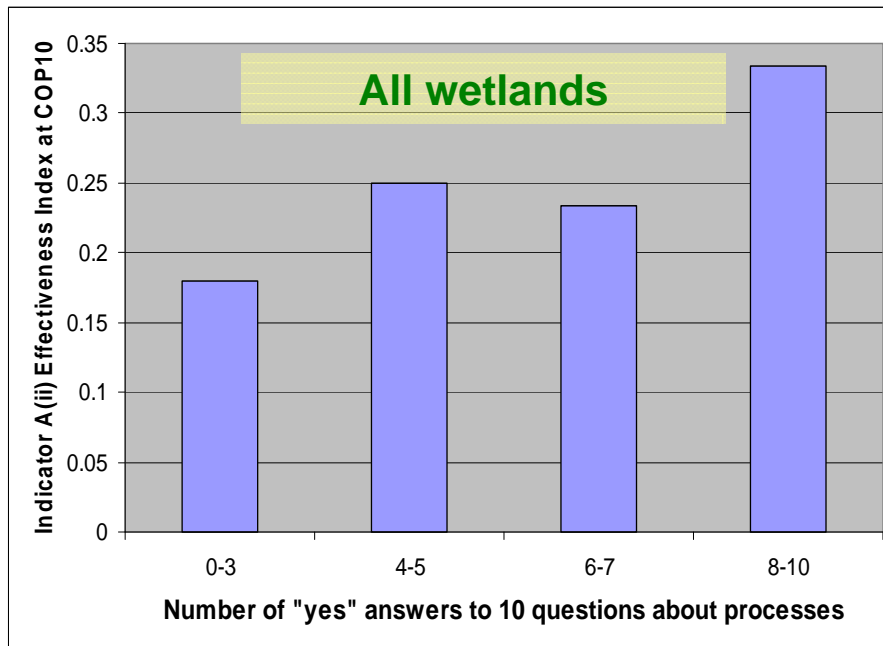
“population status index”:

- **2.6x faster rate of decline in recent years** compared with the rate of decline between the 1980s and 1990s
- the 2010 biodiversity target of “significantly reducing the rate of decline” is **not being met** for shorebirds.

# Ramsar indicators of effectiveness – assessment examples (step 2)



## Ramsar implementation effectiveness assessment COP10 NRF indicators

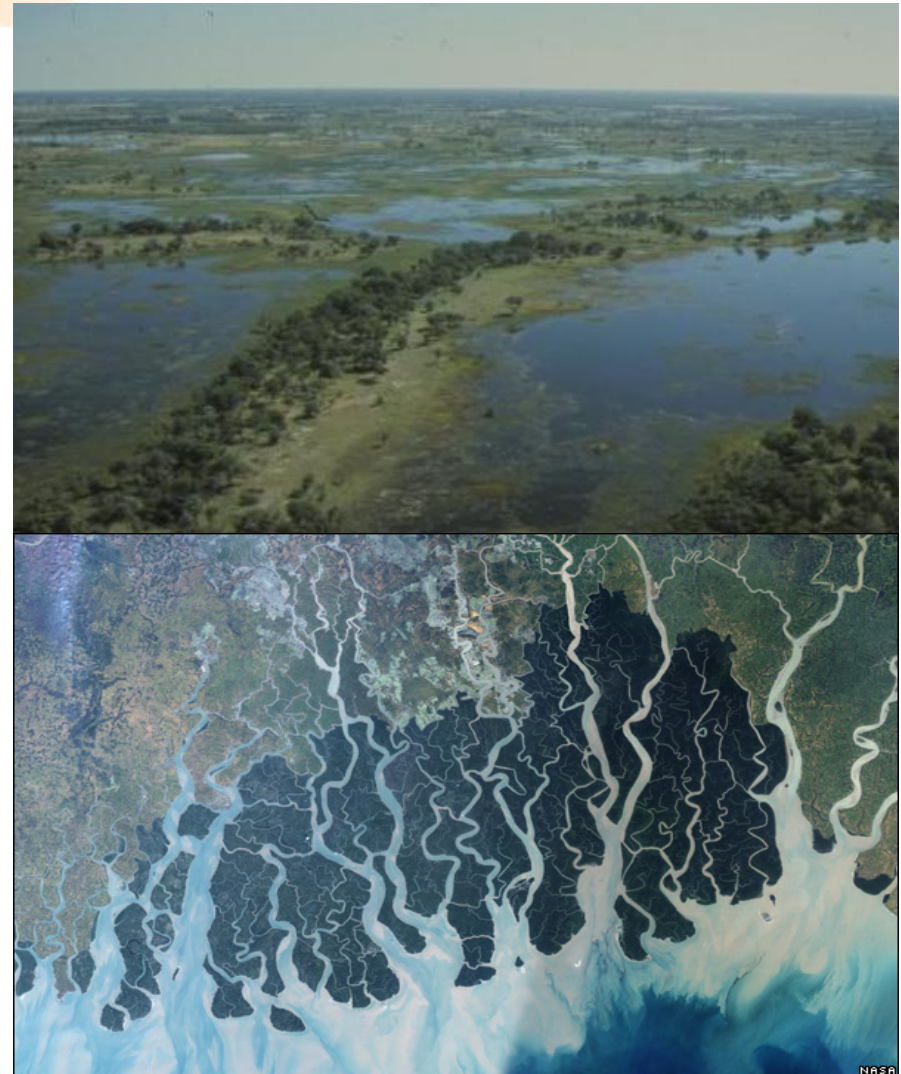




# Ramsar effectiveness indicators – preliminary conclusions



- **Wetlands are in relatively better state if:**
  - Ramsar Convention is being implemented
  - The wider the range of types of implementation, the better the state of wetlands
  - Developing and implementing a **National Wetland Policy** is particularly important action
    - If no NWP, implementing Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) positive



CHANGWON 2008

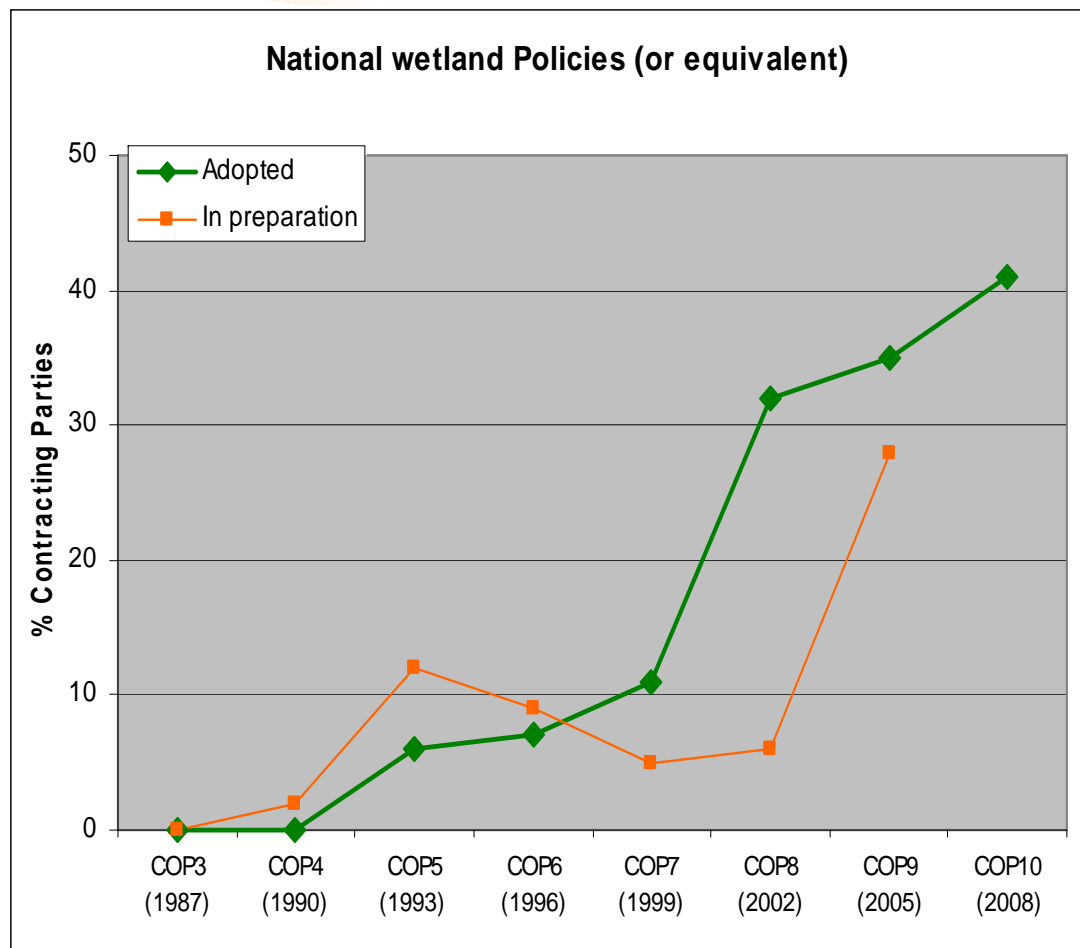
« Healthy wetlands, healthy people »



# National Wetland Policies



- COP National Reports since COP3 (1987)
- Progressive trend of increasing number of CPs with a National Wetland Policy (or equivalent) in place
- But more to do: **almost 60% CPs have not yet adopted a National Wetland Policy**



« Healthy wetlands, healthy people »

# Ramsar effectiveness indicators – preliminary conclusions



- Is the Convention and its guidance “effective”?
  - Yes – **IF** its provisions and tools are implemented nationally
- Effectiveness assessment will identify to Parties what types of implementation particularly effective/important
- Help Parties set priorities for future implementation of the Strategic Plan 2009-2015



« Healthy wetlands, healthy people »

# Ramsar effectiveness indicators – STRP next steps



- Further assessment of effectiveness indicators –  
STRP high priority 2009-2012
  - Further indicator workshops top priority for 2009  
(funding permitting)
  - Outputs in 2010:
    - Summary ‘headline’ report for decision-makers
    - Supporting technical report
  - Results input also to:
    - 2010 BIP indicator assessments of 2010 biodiversity target
    - CBD’s *Global Biodiversity Outlook 3* (2010)
    - In-depth review of CBD inland waters Programme of Work (to  
CBD SBSTTA May 2010)



CHANGWON 2008

« Healthy wetlands, healthy people »

# Ramsar effectiveness indicators – STRP next steps



- Revisit 2<sup>nd</sup> tranche of 5 more effectiveness indicators
  - Assess if any can now be progressed in light of
    - 1<sup>st</sup> tranche approach and
    - Other recent developments in data and information



**Thank you!**