

**Implementation of the Ramsar Convention in general,
and of the Ramsar Strategic Plan 1997-2002 in particular,
during the period since the National Report prepared in 1995
for Ramsar COP6 and 30 June 1998**

Contracting Party: **People's Republic of China**

Designated Ramsar Administrative Authority

Full name of the institution:

State Forestry Administration

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Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective 1

To progress towards universal membership of the Convention.

1.1 Describe any actions your government has taken (such as hosting regional or subregional meetings/consultations, working cooperatively with neighbouring countries on transfrontier wetland sites) to encourage others to join the Convention.

In March of 1997, jointly with the Environment Agency of Japan and Wetlands International, the State Forestry Administration hosted the International Workshop on Wetland and Waterbird Conservation in North-East Asia.

Strategic Plan - General Objective 2

To achieve the wise use of wetlands by implementing and further developing the Ramsar Wise Use Guidelines.

2.1 Has a National Wetland Policy/Strategy/Action Plan been developed, or is one being developed or planned for the near future? If so:

a. What are/will be its main features?

The National Wetlands Conservation Action Plan is aiming at maintaining the status of the wetlands of the country, identifying the problems, threats on the wetlands conservation, outlining the principle and targets for the wetlands conservation, developing proposed conservation activities, and listing conservation priorities.

b. Was it, or is it, intended that the Policy/Strategy/Action Plan be adopted by the whole of Government, the Minister responsible for Ramsar matters or through some other process. Please describe.

The Action Plan is developed under the coordination of a leading group composed of members from 16 sectors headed by the State Forestry Administration and is going to be submitted to the State Council for approval.

c. How does it relate/will it relate to other national environmental/ conservation planning initiatives (e.g., National Environmental Action Plans, National Biodiversity Action Plans, National Conservation Strategies)?

The National Wetlands Conservation Action Plan and the National Biodiversity Action Plan are complementary.

2.2 If a policy is in place, how much progress has been made in its implementation, and what are the major difficulties being encountered in doing so?

Approved by the State Council, the National Wetlands Conservation Action Plan will be implemented under the organization and coordination of the State Forestry Administration (SFA). It will involve other government agencies because of their respective administrative functions. However, as authorized by the State Council, the SFA will be responsible for organizing and coordinating the nation-wide wetland conservation and therefore will be the highest administrative authority in this regard.

2.3 If a Policy/Strategy/Action Plan is in place, is the responsibility for implementing it with :

- a. a single Government Ministry,
- b. a committee drawn from several Ministries, or
- c. a cross-sectoral committee?

Please provide details.

2.4 For countries with Federal systems of Government, are there Wetland Policies/Strategies/Plans in place, being developed or planned for the provincial/state or regional levels of Government?

China is not a country with Federal system of Government.

If yes, please give details.

2.5 Has a review of legislation and practices which impact on wetlands been carried out, and if so, has this resulted in any changes which assist with implementation of the Ramsar Convention? Please describe these.

No.

2.6 Describe the efforts made in your country to have wetlands considered in integrated land/water and coastal zone planning and management processes at the following levels:

- a. national
- b. provincial
- c. local

2.7 Have there been any publications produced, or practices documented, which could assist other countries to promote and improve the application of the Ramsar Wise Use of Wetlands Guidelines? Yes/No

No.

If Yes, please provide details and copies.

2.8 Noting COP6 Recommendation 6.14 relating to toxic chemicals and pollution, please advise of the actions taken since then to remedy and to prevent pollution impacts affecting Ramsar sites and other wetlands (Operative paragraph 9).

Since China is a developing country with a large population and rapid economic growth, the Chinese government has been aware of the serious pollution caused by industrial and agricultural production on wetlands and necessities of prevention and control of wetland pollution. The Chinese government formally announced, in 1996, actions of pollution control in three important wetlands namely Dianchi Lake in Yunnan Province, Huaihe River and Taihu Lake, shut down thousands of paper mills which discharge over-standard pollutants and have incompletely treated sewage water, adopted the policy of “those who pollute should be responsible for pollution control”. With intensive pollution control measures on these wetlands,

prominent results have been scored and the quality of wetland water has been obviously improved. Pollution control activities are still underway.

2.9 Describe what steps have been taken to incorporate wetland economic valuation techniques into natural resource planning and assessment actions.

2.10 Is Environmental Impact Assessment for actions potentially impacting on wetlands required under legislation in your country? Yes/No

Yes.

2.11 Is wetland restoration and rehabilitation considered a priority in your country? Yes/No.

Yes.

If Yes, describe the actions that have been taken to identify wetlands in need of these actions and to mobilise resources for restoration or rehabilitation.

In the National Wetlands Conservation Action Plan the restoration and rehabilitation of wetland is considered as a priority in its implementation. When the Action Plan is approved by the State Council, actions would be taken in this regard.

2.12 Describe what actions have been taken to encourage active and informed participation of local communities, including indigenous people, and in particular women, in the conservation and wise use of wetlands._ (refer to Actions 2.7.1-4 in the Strategic Plan).

Under the GEF-China Nature Reserve Management Program, co-management between nature reserves and local communities are encouraged, and several plans and activities have been / will be developed/undertaken or is ongoing.

2.13 Describe what actions have been taken to encourage involvement of the private sector in the conservation and wise use of wetlands (refer to Actions 2.8.1-4 in the Strategic Plan). Has this included a review of fiscal measures (taxation arrangements, etc.) to identify and remove disincentives and introduce incentives for wetlands conservation and wise use? Yes/No

No.

If yes, please provide details.

Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective 3

To raise awareness of wetland values and functions throughout the world and at all levels

3.1 Is there a government-run national programme for Education and Public Awareness in your country which focuses on, or includes, wetlands? Yes/No? If yes, what are the priority actions under this programme and who are the target groups? (Refer also to question 9.4)

China has launched an extensive publicity campaign on wetland conservation via such mass media as radio, TV, newspaper and other forms like billboard, posters and lectures to educate public about the benefits and functions of wetlands as well as the significance of wetlands conservation. The country-wide annual "World Wetland Day", "Bird-loving Week" and "Wildlife Conservation Month" and other activities also intend to raise public awareness of significance of wetlands conservation.

With the supports from WWF and GEF-China Nature Reserve Management Program, China has launched more than 30 training courses on wetlands management and conservation, the target groups come from the nature reserves, administrative staffs at all levels.

- 3.2 Describe the steps taken to have wetlands issues and Ramsar's Wise Use principles included as part of the curricula of educational institutions. Has this been at all levels of education (primary, secondary, tertiary and adult)? Please give details.

A handbook titled the Guidelines on Wetlands Conservation and Wise Use in China has been printed and published, and is considered as education curricula by many wetland nature reserves and some universities.

Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective 4

To reinforce the capacity of institutions in each Contracting Party to achieve conservation and wise use of wetlands.

- 4.1 Describe the mechanisms in place, or being introduced, to increase cooperation between the various institutions responsible for actions which can have an impact on the conservation and wise use of wetlands. If one of the mechanisms is a National Ramsar/Wetlands Committee, please describe its composition, functions and *modus operandi*.

A leading group has been founded in 1995 headed by the Ministry of Forestry to coordinate the development of the National Wetlands Conservation Action Plan which is composed of 16 sectors including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the State Planning Commission, the State Education Commission, the State Science and Technology Commission, the Ministry of Public Security, the Ministry of Construction, the Ministry of Electric Power, the Ministry of Communications, the Ministry of Water Resources, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Forestry, the National Environmental Protection Agency, the National Bureau of Oceanography, the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the General Council of Light Industries and China Oil and Gas Corporation. This leading group plays an important role in formulating the Action Plan, it is not yet, however, a National Ramsar/Wetlands Committee for coordinating activities concerning wetland issues.

- 4.2 Of the following, indicate which have been undertaken:
- a. a review to identify the training needs of institutions and individuals concerned with the conservation and wise use of wetlands Yes/No? If yes, please indicate the major findings of the review.

No.

b. a review to identify training opportunities for these people both within your country and in other countries. Yes/No?

No.

c. the development of training modules or a training programme specifically for wetland managers. If yes, please give details.

Yes. With the support from GEF-China Nature Reserve Management Program, Poyang lake nature reserve has developed some training modules for wetland managers.

d. people from your country have gained wetland-related training either within or outside the country. Yes/No? If yes, please give details.

During the period of 1996-98, with the financial support of WWF, 16 wetland management training courses involving 170 person/times were conducted in Hongkong, and three additional training courses involving 30 person/times were held for staff members of wetland nature reserves in Jiangxi, Liaoning and Inner Mongolia. Lots of training courses were also conducted for the management staff of Boyang Lake Nature Reserve in Jiangxi Province under the GEF-financed Nature Reserve Management Project(NRMP).

Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective 5

To ensure the conservation of all sites included in the List of Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar List).

- 5.1 Of the Ramsar sites in your country, how many have formal management plans:
- being prepared?
 - fully prepared?
 - being implemented?

Please indicate in the attached table of Ramsar sites which sites these are and what category they fall into.

- 5.2 Of the management plans referred to above, which ones have included a monitoring scheme or programme to allow changes in ecological character to be detected? Please indicate this in the attached table of Ramsar sites also.
- 5.3 Has there been a change in the ecological character (either positive or negative) at any of your Ramsar sites or is this likely to occur in the near future? Yes/No. If Yes, please give details.

No.

- 5.4 In the case of Montreux Record Ramsar sites where the Management Guidance Procedure has been applied, what is the status of the implementation of the MGP report recommendations? What is the expected time-frame for removing the site from the Montreux Record?

- 5.5 For those countries referred to in COP6 Recommendations 6.17.1-4, Ramsar sites in the Territories of Specific Contracting Parties, please provide advice on the actions that have been taken in response to the issues raised at that time.

Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective 6

To designate for the Ramsar List those wetlands which meet the Convention's criteria, especially wetland types still under-represented in the List and transfrontier wetlands.

- 6.1 Has a national inventory of wetlands been prepared for your country? Yes/No.

Yes.

If no, are there plans for this to be done? Yes/No.

Where a national inventory exists please provide details of when it was finalised, where it is kept and what information it contains.

A nation-wide inventory is being undertaken.

- 6.2 Does there exist a list or directory of important wetlands for your country or region? Yes/No.

No.

If yes, please provide details of when it was finalised, where it is kept, what criteria for important were used, and the types of information it contains.

- 6.3 If it is known, please provide an estimate of the area of wetlands in your country at present and any information on rates of loss or conversion to other activities.

At present, there is more than 65 million hectares of wetlands in China.

If this information is available, please indicate what definition of wetland was used.

China adopts the definition of wetland as defined in the Ramsar Convention.

6.4 Have any actions been taken in response to the COP6 Resolutions and Recommendations that Contracting Parties should give priority to listing Wetlands of International Importance which:

- a. meet the criteria for fish habitat (Resolution VI.2),
- b. meet the 1% criterion for waterbird populations using data provided by the International Waterfowl Census (Resolution VI.4),
- c. are subterranean karst or cave wetland systems (Resolution VI.5),
- d. are peatland ecosystems (Recommendation 6.1)
- e. are coral reefs and associated systems (Recommendation 6.7)

f. are under-represented wetland types (which apart from d. and e. above include mangroves and sea grass beds) (Strategic Plan Action 6.2.3)

No.

Yes/No? If yes, please describe these actions.

6.5 If your government indicated at COP6 that it would be proceeding to list further specific sites, please advise of the status of this action.

No.

6.6 Please advise which of the sites included in the Ramsar List from your country are transfrontier wetlands (Refer also to 7.1).

No.

6.7 Describe any plans, or actions being taken for further transfrontier sites to be listed (Refer also to 7.1).

Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective 7

To mobilise international cooperation and financial assistance for wetland conservation and wise use in collaboration with other conventions and agencies, both governmental and non-governmental.

7.1 Briefly describe any bilateral or multilateral activities that have been taken, are under way, or are planned for the management of transfrontier wetlands or their watersheds/catchments (Refer also to 6.6 and 6.7).

A cooperation agreement on the co-management of Xingkaihu lake transfrontier nature reserve has been assigned by China government and Russia Federal government.

7.2 Do you have Ramsar sites that are twinned with others, either nationally or internationally? Yes/No.

No.

If yes, please give details.

7.3 Where your country is also a signatory of any of the following Conventions, describe what mechanism(s) exist to assist regular dialogue and cooperative actions between the personnel responsible for their implementation and the Ramsar Administrative Authority:

- a. Convention on Biological Diversity
- b. Framework Convention on Climate Change
- c. Convention to Combat Desertification
- d. Convention on Migratory Species
- e. World Heritage Convention

China also a signatory of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention to Combat Desertification and the World Heritage Convention. There is no specific mechanism existing for regular dialogue and cooperation between the Ramsar Administrative Authority and the personnel responsible for above-mentioned conventions. But they can communicate with each other, whenever it is necessary, by means of official channels.

- 7.4 Is your country cooperating as part of any bilateral or multilateral activities directed at the conservation of migratory wetland species? Yes/No.

Yes.

If yes, please provide details.

China is a member of the North-east Crane Network and East-Australia Shorebird Migratory Network.

China has also signed Sino-Japan Migratory Bird Agreement and Sino-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement with Japan and Australia respectively, with liaison meetings held each year.

- 7.5 Are there multilateral and/or bilateral donors supporting projects which contribute to implementation of the Ramsar Convention in your country? Yes/No.

Yes.

If yes, please provide details.

With the help of Wetlands International, the Ministry of Forestry sponsored the workshop on “the Project of Wetland Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use in China” on May 18th, 1995, at which the project outline was put forward. Since then, the Ministry of Forestry had contacts with UNDP and Wetlands International and made an application to GEF for project financing. At the end of 1996, the GEF board approved the Project Development Fund (PDF) Block B Preparatory Assistance project for Wetlands biodiversity Conservation(CPR/96/G33) which was initiated in June, 1997. In order to enhance the administration and management of the application and future implementation of the GEF-assisted project “Wetland Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use in China”, the Ministry of Forestry has set up a project office under the multi-disciplinary project leading group. By now, the second draft of the project outline has been completely worked out and the comments of UNDP is sought. The four important wetlands namely: Sanjiang in Heilongjiang, Yancheng in Jiangsu, Dongting Lake in Hunan and Rourgai in Sichuan and Gansu provinces are selected as project sites, among which many nature reserves are involved.

- 7.6 Does your government make an annual budgetary allocation to support the conservation and wise use of wetlands within your country? Yes/No.

Yes.

If yes, is this a specific allocation to a wetlands programme or as part of a larger environment or natural resource management budget?

As a part of a nature resource management budget.

7.7 If your country has a development assistance programme, does it include funds earmarked for wetland conservation and wise use in other countries? Yes/No. If yes, please give details.

No.

7.8 Is there a formal process in place for consultation between the Ramsar Administrative Authority and the development assistance programme in your country, where one exists? Yes/No

If yes, what is that process.

**Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective 8
To provide the Convention with the required institutional mechanisms
and resources.**

8.1 Has your government made voluntary financial contributions, other than the invoiced contributions or to the Small Grants Fund, to further the work of the Convention globally? Yes/No.

No.

If yes, please provide details.

8.2 If your country is in arrears with the payment of its annual contributions to the Ramsar Convention, please indicate the reasons for this situation and the prospects for paying these arrears in the near future.

Optional section - Participation of non-government organizations in the implementation of the Convention

These are optional questions relating to cooperation with and involvement of non-government organizations in the implementation of the Convention.

At COP6 some 42 NGOs made the Brisbane NGO pledge of support for the Ramsar Convention. The Standing Committee agreed that for COP7 there should be an effort made to gauge the level and type of cooperation which is occurring between government Administrative Authorities and the national and international NGOs with an interest in wetlands issues.

In this optional section of the National Report, you are asked to describe the nature of the cooperation and relationship with any other international, regional, national and provincial NGOs operating within your country.

- 9.1 Approximately how many NGOs have wetlands as part of their regular business in your country?

There is no yet an estimation on this issue.

Please break this down between international, regional and national/provincial organizations.

- 9.2 Is there a regular forum or mechanism through which these NGOs express their views on wetland conservation and Ramsar implementation:
- a. to each other? Yes/No

No.

- b. to the government? Yes/No

No.

If yes in either case, please give details.

- 9.3 Does your government include one or more NGO representatives on its official delegation to Ramsar COPs? Yes/No

No.

- 9.4 Do any of the NGOs run programmes aimed at Education and Public Awareness about wetlands in your country? Yes/No. If yes, please give details (Refer also to question 3.1).

Yes.

The China Wildlife Conservation Association launches education and awareness campaigns every year throughout the country including education about wetlands.

- 9.5 Where they exist, do Ramsar site management advisory committees include NGO representatives? If yes, please give details.

No.

- 9.6 Describe the themes of the Convention (refer to General Objectives 1-8 of the Strategic Plan) where you perceive the national/provincial NGOs to be most active.

No.

Final comments:

- 10.1 General comments on implementation of the Ramsar Strategic Plan.

- 10.2 Observations concerning the functioning of, relations with, and services provided by:

- a. The Ramsar Standing Committee
- b. The Ramsar Scientific and Technical Review Panel
- c. The Ramsar Bureau
- d. The Ramsar NGO partners

More training opportunities should be provided for the staff of the administration authorities of developing countries to build their capacity, and, more financial sources should be sought to support wetland conservation in developing countries.

- 10.3 Any other general observations and/or recommendations for the future.

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