

World Wetlands Day 2001: Activities planned and reported for WWD 2001



What is World Wetlands Day? World Wetlands Day, set for 2 February of each year, in recognition of the signing of the Convention on Wetlands on 2 February 1971 in the Iranian city of Ramsar, was celebrated for the first time in 1997. The purpose of World Wetlands Day is to provide **an opportunity for government and citizens' groups to undertake actions aimed at raising public awareness of wetland values and benefits in general and the Ramsar Convention in particular.** Since 1997, the Ramsar Web site has been reporting on activities of all sizes and shapes from all over the world, from lectures and seminars, nature walks, children's art contests, sampan races, and community clean-up days, to radio and television interviews and letters to newspapers, to the launch of new wetland policies, new Ramsar sites, and new programmes at the national level. *(Photo left: WWD 2001 in Lutembe Bay, Uganda)*

Wetland world - A world to discover!

The suggested theme for World Wetlands Day 2001 is "***Wetland world - A world to discover!***" In addition, World Wetlands Day 2001 falls on the **30th anniversary** of the signing of the Convention and marks 30 years of work and progress by the Convention on Wetlands. The wetlands community around the world is invited to celebrate this anniversary on World Wetlands Day. The Ramsar Administrative Authority in each country and the wetlands community at large are encouraged to focus on the efforts made, and the obstacles encountered, in implementing the three main commitments of the countries that have joined the Convention: 1) the inclusion of internationally important wetlands in the Ramsar List; 2) planning for the "wise use" of all their wetlands; and 3) international cooperation on shared water systems and species. The Anniversary's motto is:

30 YEARS HELPING YOU CARE FOR YOUR WETLANDS!

The governments of many Ramsar member countries use WWD to help make their citizens aware of what they are doing to assure the health of the nation's wetlands and to implement the Convention's cornerstone "wise use principle", synonymous with sustainable use. And, at the same time, school classes, nature clubs, birdwatching societies, and park managers at the local level find imaginative ways to involve their communities and bring wetland values into public focus.

Activities Planned for WWD 2001, as reported to the Ramsar Bureau

Bad Grammar. Up to today, 2 February, we have been posting plans, all in the future tense; hereafter we'll be posting activities that have actually taken place, all in the past tense. So unfortunately the tenses are all mixed together.



UNESCO. In a press release issued for World Wetlands Day, the Director-General of UNESCO, **Koïchiro Matsuura**, announced the launch of a new joint Web site dedicated to providing accurate information on the world's wetland sites that are both Biosphere Reserves under the **UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB)** and Wetlands of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention. The new Web site, hosted by MAB and developed by Katarina Vestin and Ivette Fabbri, has brief texts and links to longer texts on each of the 59 sites that are inscribed in both Lists (soon to be joined by the new Ramsar site, **Domica**, in Slovakia), and it's all been very tastefully designed and clearly set up. This new initiative is part of the rapidly increasing and very fruitful cooperation between Ramsar and MAB, in which a joint work plan is presently under development. UNESCO press release: <http://www.unesco.org/opi/eng/unescopress/2001/01-15e.shtml> . Joint Ramsar-MAB Web site: <http://www.unesco.org/mab/ramsarmab.htm> .

Wetlands International - Asia Pacific reports on its activities in **China, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand**, with further news from **Wetlands International - Oceania**. [Here it is.](#)

Albania. On World Wetlands Day last year, the Prime Ministers of Albania, Greece, and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia met in Aghios Germanos in Greece to declare the international "**Prespa Park**". ([The texts of the declaration and speeches are available here.](#)) For WWD 2001, to mark the first anniversary of Prespa Park and WWD, the **Society for the Preservation and Protection of the Natural Environment in Albania** (PPNEA, ppnea@xs4all.soros.al) has planned three days of activities, [which are described here.](#)

Algeria. The Government of Algeria plans to use the occasion of World Wetlands Day to designate ten wetland sites, totalling about 1,800,000 hectares as Wetlands of International Importance. This is said to be the largest block of wetlands to be conserved by a Mediterranean country. Known there as gueltas and oases, these desert wetlands play host to huge numbers of endemic species. The oases Ramsar sites will be the first ever in Africa, and the gueltas will be the first in the world. **WWF's Living Waters Campaign** was instrumental in assisting these designations, and the Ramsar Bureau's **Anada Tiéga** will be participating in the designation ceremonies. / [Here is Anada's report afterwards](#), with [links to descriptions of the wonderful new Ramsar sites.](#)

Argentina I. Juan Carlos Chebez (drnea@fnn.net), Director of the Delegación Regional Nordeste Argentino, **Administración de Parques Nacionales**, informs the Bureau that Día Mundial de los Humedales info packs, stickers, posters etc. will be distributed to wetland protected areas throughout the northeast region, including the Ramsar site **Parque Nacional Río Pilcomayo**, for use in local celebrations.

Argentina II. Julieta Peteán (jcproteg@satlink.com), Prensa/**Fundación Proteger**, has kindly sent her organization's press release for World Wetlands Day to the Ramsar Forum. [It is reprinted here](#) (Spanish language).

Argentina III. Bruce Johnson (bruce@canaldig.com.ar) of the **Fundación Inalafquen** in Patagonia writes that Ramsar WWD materials will be prominently displayed in a World Wetlands Day show and, as it's the height of the tourist season, should be seen by a large number of people.

Australia I. Belinda Thorpe (belinda.thorpe@ea.gov.au) of the **National Wetlands Program**, Marine and Water Division, Environment Australia, reports that a number of events are planned throughout Australia, including the national launch of the 3rd Edition of ***A Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia***, introducing a new on-line database; the release of Australia's National CEPA (Communication, Education, Public Awareness) Action Plan for public consultation (as required by Resolution VII.9 from COP7); promotional activities for Migratory Waterbirds; and a series of Wetland Discovery Seminars in regional and capital city locations. [Here is some more detail from Kathy Eyles](#) (kathy.eyles@ea.gov.au) and a **[general table showing activities planned all over the country](#)**.

What's more, Australia is celebrating WWD with the designation of **[three new Ramsar sites and extensions to four more](#)** in Western Australia. These have already been added to the Ramsar List. [Here is the subsequent report from Alison Russell-French](#), Assistant Secretary of the Marine, Coasts & Wetlands Branch of Environment Australia, with some photos of the exhibitions.

Australia II. Ben Churchill (bchurchill@parks.vic.gov.au) reports that "**Parks Victoria**, in conjunction with the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, and with funding from the National Wetlands Program of Environment Australia, is launching a strategic planning framework for all of Victoria's Ramsar sites. The launch will take place on World Wetlands Day, 2 February, at the Coolart wetlands and homestead, adjacent to the Western Port Ramsar site." [Here's some further details about the framework itself](#) as well as [Ben Churchill's later report](#) on how it went. In addition, **Darryl Fyfe** of the **Department of Nature Resources and Environment** in Victoria writes that World Wetland Day displays are being placed in the department's Information Centres around Victoria.

Australia III. Judy Harrington (jharrington@bicentpkhbay.nsw.gov.au), Volunteer Program Coordinator for **Bicentennial Park**, notes that "For WWD 2001 our particular project will be to involve members of the community as well as all of our staff in the removal of salvinia from one of our freshwater lakes." [Read more about it here](#).

Australia IV. Abbie Spiers (abbies@eriss.erin.gov.au), Wetland Ecologist at the Environmental Research Institute of the Supervising Scientist in Jabiru, notes that the **National Centre for Tropical Wetland Research** in northern Australia is organizing a series of activities in and around Kakadu National Park Ramsar and World Heritage site and Darwin, for 2 February and the following week. [More details right here](#).

Australia V. Chris Evenson (chris.evenson@env.qld.gov.au), Nature Conservation Extension Officer in South West Queensland Australia, part of the **Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service**, reports that he is currently preparing presentations and displays to use at a number of venues, including the **Currawinya National Park Ramsar site**, to promote World Wetlands Day "with the aim of building a better understanding of Ramsar and the significance of many of the wetlands throughout our semi-arid area".

Australia VI. Kevin Brown (kbrown@yallournenergy.com.au) explains that in the **Latrobe Valley** region of southern Victoria, Australia, World Wetlands Day will be celebrated with a public inspection and lunch at the developing Morwell River Wetlands. [See attached advertisement and photo](#) (with copy of the strategic plan for the wetland restoration and a list of project supporters). This project is coordinating several wetland developments and aims to re-establish wetlands similar to those that existed in this area prior to European settlement over 100 years ago.

Australia VII. Roana O'Neill (roana.o'neill@plmbay.pwcnt.nt.gov.au), Senior Community Education Ranger in the **Parks and Wildlife Commission of the**

Northern Territory, in Palmerston, writes: "Hi there. I manage the Community Education Unit at the Parks and Wildlife Commission NT and have just sent an email off to all Territory park staff re World Wetlands Day tomorrow and the events occurring in the Top End. I have been in contact with Belinda Thorpe a bit about the event and we have promoted this on an environmental calendar we sent to all Territory schools. As a result of my email I have had a number of requests to obtain a hard copy of your wetland values and functions kit (I just received one in the mail today and its fantastic!). Is it possible to obtain 10 copies (this is not for 1 person but for 3 separate areas of the Commission)."

Australia VIII. Joanne Green of Wetland Care

Australia (wca@linknet.com.au, www.wetlandcare.com.au), Ballina, NSW, reports that record rains on 2 February forced the cancellation of two planned outings, but a celebration was held in the offices nonetheless, including cutting of the anniversary cake and a meeting of the '**Japan Australia Migratory Human Agreement**' (**JAMHA**) -- [see report and photo](#).

Austria I. "The Austrian federal states Carinthia and Styria (Kärnten and Steiermark), together with the local conservation group "**Naturschutzverein Hörfeld-Moor**" and the regional promotion group "Regionalverein Norische Region" are opening on WWD 2001 a photographic exhibition "**The Hörfeld-Moor through the seasons - summer and winter impressions**". The photos are actually exhibited along a transect through the Hörfeld peatbog Ramsar Site, marking the boundary between both federal states. The outdoor exhibit will be opened on 2 February 2001 at 11a.m. by Mayor Ofner and Mag. Krainer of the local nature conservation consortium. On this occasion, the chairman of the Austrian National Ramsar Committee, **D.I. Pelikan**, and its representatives for the federal states Carinthia, Dr **Rottenburg**, and Styria, Dr **Turk**, will briefly recall the 30 year-history of the Convention. The outdoor exhibit will remain accessible on-the-spot until 19 February 2001. So hurry up to see it for yourself."

Austria II. Michaela Bodner informs the Bureau of **Crossborder Cooperation between Austria and Czech Republic**: "On the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Ramsar Convention on February 2nd, the **Trebon Biosphere Reserve Administration**, the town of **Trebon** (both Czech Republic), the town of **Schrems**, and the **WWF Austria** (both Austria) will sign a treaty on cooperation in establishing and running the Ramsar Centre in Schrems and the visitor centre "Landscape and man" in Trebon. Within this crossborder area, 3 Ramsar sites are situated, with the river Lainsitz/Luznice forming the backbone of a beautiful wetland landscape with meandering rivers, fishponds and peat bogs. The Ramsar centre in Schrems is planned as a cooperation between nature conservation, environmental conservation, tourism and agriculture. The visitor centre in Trebon is a cooperation between the town of Trebon and several nature conservation organizations, both governmental and NGO. All four partners of the cooperation treaty consider the crossborder realization of the two centres as one big project that is both a valuable contribution to each one's area but also an important step in the development of bilateral relationships between the two countries. For further information contact: Michaela Bodner, WWF Waldviertel, stuetzpunkt@waldviertel.wwf.at, Mirek Hatie, CHKO Trebonsko, chkot@trebon.cz."

Austria III. Martin Wurglits (martin.wurglits@bmu.gv.at), press officer, sends us two press releases created by the Austrian Ministry of Environment (the **Bundesministerium für Land- und Forstwirtschaft, Umwelt und Wasserwirtschaft** in Vienna) for World Wetlands Day, one on Austrian Ramsar sites generally and the other entitled "Austria, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic will protect **March und Thaya** together". [Here they are \(texts in German\)](#).

Bahamas. Pericles Maillis (centurion117@hotmail.com) of the **National Creeks and Wetlands Committee** writes that "a major program is being organized for World

Wetland Day, which we shall spread over a week, starting with the Prime Minister's Proclamation, a major public exhibition, National TV addresses by the Ambassador for The Environment, school visits, a public meeting, mass showings of the West Indian Whistling Duck Recovery Group / wetland puppet show, and much more. A marine biologist, Rochelle Newbold, newly appointed to BEST's staff, and Lynn Gape, Bahamas National Trust are organizing this. . . Concurrently, a further (Phase 11) of a Restoration Project is going to happen during World Wetland Week with the Road engineering works to physically start of Monday 5th February at Cemetery Pond, Mastic Point, Andros Island." [Here is further detail from Eric Carey](#), including news of the establishment of a National Wetlands Committee.

Belgium. prof. dr. **Eckhart Kuijken**, general director and Ramsar focal point, **Institute of Nature Conservation** (eckhart.kuijken@instnat.be), has informed the Bureau that on the occasion of World Wetlands Day the Flemish Minister of the Environment **Mrs. Vera Dua** has announced the government's commitment to designating three new sites for the Ramsar List. [Here are the details.](#)

Benin. **Josea Dossou-Bodjrenou** (josea_bj@yahoo.co.uk) of the Musée des Sciences Naturelles in Cotonou, reports that the **Musée Nature Tropicale du Bénin** plans an open-doors day on the values and functions of wetlands, including guided visits, symposia, and videos, to be repeated twice again throughout the coming year. Afterward, he reported: "Nous profitons de l'occasion pour vous signaler que dans le cadre de la Journée Mondiale des Zones Humides, le Programme d'Aménagement des Zones Humides (PAZH) en collaboration avec le Ministère de l'Environnement du Bénin ont organisé plusieurs activités dont une Journée Portes-Ouvertes libres et gratuites pour aider tous les citoyens à découvrir les valeurs et fonctions des zones humides. Notre Musée Nature Tropicale a activement pris part à ces manifestations qui ont été fortement médiatisées. Au cours de l'année, le Musée organisera des expositions temporaires à divers lieux pour sensibiliser le grand public à la conservation des écosystèmes et l'utilisation durable de la diversité biologique des zones humides."

Bulgaria. **Milen Filev** (bspbpoda@mobikom.com), manager of the **Nature Conservation Center "Poda"**, writes that, as in past years, the staff of NCC "Poda" will be mounting a new exposition for World Wetlands Day in collaboration with their colleagues from the **Bourgas Wetland Team**.

Cameroon. **Tabé Tanjong** (ttanjong@wwf.cm) reports that "The Policy Programme of **WWF-Cameroon Programme Office** has been working together with the Ramsar Bureau and the WWF-Living Waters Campaign in assisting the Government of Cameroon to accede to the Ramsar Convention. We celebrated WWD2000 with a round table conference and a Radio Quiz on Cameroon's wetlands, and the Ramsar Convention in general. We also placed huge posters and banners at strategic points in the city of Yaounde and broadcast information on the radio about WWD and its significance. We intend to follow-up on what we commenced last year with a series of activities for WWD 2001. Our target group shall include members of Cameroon's Parliament, policy makers in Government and institutes of higher learning. A residual target would be the "general public". Activities planned shall include a one-hour documentary (shot on site) on wetland sites nominated by Cameroon for the Ramsar List, to be broadcast on National TV and later distributed to policy makers, members of Parliament, Universities etc. An activity of this sort is not only reflective of this year's theme: Wetland world-A world to discover, but shall serve as an information tool to convince its targeted audience of the need for accession. Also scheduled is a round table conference and a march around Yaounde."

Canada **I. Danielle Corbeil** (d_corbeil@ducks.ca), Greenwing Liaison for the Province of Québec, writes: "**Ducks Unlimited Canada** provincial office in Quebec City is working on WWD French package to be used in elementary schools in the Quebec City area. In this

package there will be a movie "À la rescousse des terres humides" (Rescuing wetlands) as well as activities to be done with the kids in the 4th Grade. We are planning to send our package to the Bruntland schools (green schools) in our area (33 schools) But our packages will be offered to all schools who wants it. We will give you more details about this package in December."

Canada II. Clay Rubec (Clay.Rubec@ec.gc.ca) of the **Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Canada**, writes: "Canadian wetland partner agencies are developing a reception on Parliament Hill on World Wetlands Day to release a 10th Anniversary Report on the North American Wetland Conservation Council (Canada) and signing of an interagency Letter of Cooperation on wetland issues between federal departments." After the event, Mr Rubec reported that, "in a Committee Room of the Senate in Ottawa on [WWD], representatives of 11 federal agencies involved in wetland management also marked World Wetlands Day and signed a Letter of Agreement establishing the **Federal Wetland Forum**. This informal federal working group will cooperate on interdepartmental wetland issues such as information management, scientific research and policy directions under the Federal Policy on Wetland Conservation." [See his brief report](#), with a list of participating agencies and organizations.

Canada III.J. Denys Bourque [jdbourq@nbnet.nb.ca] reports on celebrations held in Madawaska, dans la province du Nouveau-Brunswick, Canada, organisée par **Le Club d'ornithologie du Madawaska, Itée (COML)**. [Here is his report \(in French\)](#).

Chile I. José Luis Brito Montero, Conservador at the **Museo de Historia Natural de San Antonio** (museo_imsa@hotmail.com) has provided a brief description (in Spanish) of World Wetlands Day plans in the Province of San Antonio and in particular the area of the **Humedal el Yali** Ramsar site. To summarize: "An exposition on the importance of wetlands, the Convention, and the El Yali National Reserve, took place at the People Help People College in Santo Domingo with the participation of the "Corporación Nacional Forestal" (CONAF) and its departments of Wildlife Heritage Region V, and Agriculture and Farming. Also participating were the volunteers of "Grupo de Acción Ecológica de San Antonio", ANTIPODA, Chile's Union of Ornithologists (UNORCH), the Museum of Natural History of San Antonio, Santo Domingo Municipality and the People Help People college. Other events included a bird-watching trip to the Maipo River mouth, a children's game about wetlands and its importance organized by UNORCH, local and regional media announcements, and a field trip to "El Yali" Wetland." The original is [available here](#).

Chile II. Elier Tabilo-Valdivieso (etabilo.4@conama.cl), Director Regional de CONAMA Region de Coquimbo in La Serena, writes that : "Con motivo de la celebración del día mundial de los Humedales, la **Comisión Nacional del Medio Ambiente (CONAMA) de la Región de Coquimbo** en Chile (www.conama.cl) ha decidido participar de esta importante fecha para conmemorar el 30 aniversario de la Convención." [Here is his report](#).

China I. Wetlands International's China Programme plans to publish a series of articles to be written by invited VIPs to celebrate World Wetlands Day 2001. Among the columnists will include Alison Russell-French, Chair of Wetlands International - Asia Pacific Regional Council, Chris Kalden, President of Wetlands International, Delmar Blasco, Secretary General of Ramsar, and James Harkness, representative of WWF-China. The VIPs will each write an article to be published in the first issue of 2001 of Wetlands International's bilingual Chinese/English 'Newsletter for Wetlands'.

China II. For the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, People's Republic of China, **Tsim Siu-tai** [wfco@afcd.gov.hk] writes: "To celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the Convention and WWD 2001, **the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department** in Hong Kong is organizing a series of programmes with local NGOs to raise public awareness of wetland conservation. Most of these activities will be held in the **Mai**

Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar site and other wetlands in Hong Kong. The WWD 2001 activities will commence in early February 2001 and last for about a month. They include a Wetland Exhibition in different venues, Discover Mai Po (co-organized with World Wide Fund for Nature Hong Kong), a Wetland Photo Contest and Wetland Drawing Competition (co-organized with the Tai Po Environmental Association), Junior Bird Watching Race (co-organized with the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society), and Clean Ramsar Site Competition (co-organized with the Hong Kong Conservancy Association). A Closing Ceremony will also be held in early March 2001 in Phase 1 of the Hong Kong Wetland Park, which opens to the public since December 2000 to provide an additional venue publicizing the functions and values of wetlands."

Colombia I. Julio Mario Fernández (jmfernandez@wwf.org.co), Communications Officer for **WWF Colombia Programme Office**, writes that "WWD materials will be used in three different events: 1. In **La Cocha** (a lake in process to be declared a Ramsar site), local and regional authorities are preparing a celebration event (February 2nd), in which they want to highlight the importance of La Cocha as a wetland and as a biodiversity and endemism centre. WWF and the Colombian Environmental Ministry were invited to present their joint work on the declaration of wetlands in the country and the status of La Cocha's declaration. The new authorities (both local and regional) are very interested in taking concrete action and commitment towards La Cocha preservation. 2. In Bogotá, in the headquarters of the environmental ministry, there is going to be a celebration of Wetlands Day, for which an important number of local and regional authorities and national NGOs are invited, and the media will be present. 3. During the first days of April, a watershed fair is going to take place, with WWF's participation. We believe that these three events are really important to raise the awareness of wetlands in Colombia among key actors and it will be a first step towards achieving concrete actions to protect these ecosystems."

Colombia II. With reference to Laguna de la Cocha mentioned just above, **Carmen Ana Dereix** (cadereix@wwf.org.co) has sent us the press release on La Cocha issued by **WWF Colombia Programme Office** on 2 February 2001, in [Spanish](#) and [English](#).

Croatia I. Jasminka Radovic (jasminka.radovic@duzo.tel.hr), Head of the Biodiversity and Landscape Department, Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, Republic of Croatia, writes: "It is a pleasure for me to announce activities for WWD 2001 in Croatia planned by the **Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning**. We are preparing the WWD Exhibition on 15 big panels in the hall of the building where the Directorate for the Protection of Nature is located. The exhibition includes the 8 Ramsar Exhibition posters, with the text translated into Croatian language, as well as lots of pictures and texts describing the diversity of wetlands in Croatia, Ramsar sites in Croatia, and announcing our new project *Inventory of wetlands in Croatia*. We shall send a press release few days before the WWD, and on 2 February our Minister of Environment, Mr. Bozo Kovacevic, will have a press conference about wetlands in Croatia where our new poster and leaflet (versions in Croatian and in English language) for WWD 2001 will be presented. We shall send you a report about these activities and published materials after the event." [Here is her subsequent report.](#)

Croatia II. The **Tehnolosko-kemijska skola** (tehkemsk@inet.hr) in Karlovac plans to hold a Day of Protection of Moors in the school on WWD.

Cuba. Enrique Hernández Hernández (enrique@unepnet.inf.cu), **Centro Nacional de Areas Protegidas**, informed the Bureau of the results of the **III Simposio Internacional Humedales 2001** ("International Symposium on Wetlands"), 30 de Enero al 2 de Febrero del 2001, at Ciénaga de Zapata, Matanzas, Cuba. [Here is his brief report](#), in Spanish with English translation, and some photos.

Cyprus. Andreas Hadjichambis (d.chadjihami@cytanet.com.cy), President of the **Panyprian Environmental Organization ENARMONISI**, reports that his group is planning WWD activities at the Akrotiri salt lake and Phasouri marsh in Limassol. The site has been proposed for the Natura 2000 network, and Mr Hadjichambis is considering adding the slogan "Still not a Ramsar site" to the "Wetland world - A world to discover" theme of WWD2001.

Czech Republic I. Josef Chytil (jchytil@palava.cz), Secretary, **Czech Ramsar Committee**, reports that, in addition to the announcement of two new Ramsar sites and a new exhibition in Trebon, "The most important item will be the final meeting concerning preparation of a **Memorandum of Understanding of Trilateral Ramsar Platform** (Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia) in Bratislava. The signature of Memorandum is planned at the level of Ministries of Environment, the exact datum will be discussed in Bratislava (earlier there was a plan of signing of Memorandum in WWD, but for more reasons we had to postpone it.....). The main organiser of this activity is NGO Daphne (Ecological Institute, Bratislava)." [Read more about it here.](#) And for more about the Czech Republic, see also **Austria II** above.

Czech Republic II. Jana Jandová, in charge of environmental education and visitor programmes for the **Trebon Basin Protected Landscape Area and Biosphere Reserve**, writes "This year's exhibition on the occasion of the World Wetlands Day called 'The Ramsar Convention protects our wetlands – 30th anniversary of Ramsar' is just being opened at the Trebon municipal library and it will be on display for one month." For more details on this and other activities in the Trebon area, [read her brief report.](#)

Dominican Republic. The Bureau has received from the Permanent Mission of the Dominican Republic to the United Nations in Geneva a copy of a World Wetlands Day press release from the office of the **President of the Dominican Republic**, providing general information about Ramsar and the obligations the country will acquire when acceding, explaining the present threats to the country's wetlands, and stating that the Environment Secretariat (Semarena) is in the process of preparing the accession papers to be submitted to Congress for its approval.

Ecuador. Lcdo. **Carlos Zambrano Bravo** (czambrano_pnm@hotmail.com) writes that the staff of the **Parque Nacional Machalilla** Ramsar site intend to display Ramsar materials in the visitors' centre and explain Ramsar values and the significance of the 30th anniversary to guests.

Eritrea. Jugal Tiwari (jugalt2000@yahoo.com) of **Seawater Farms Eritrea** indicates that bird counts are being organized in celebration of WWD 2001.

Estonia. Juhan Telgmaa (telgmaa@hot.ee), President of the **Estonian Society for Nature Conservation** writes that "the ENSC will conduct its traditional conference on the Wetlands Day – Feb. 2. Due to the 30th anniversary of the Ramsar Convention this year the conference will be organised in cooperation with the Estonian National Ramsar Committee. Although these conferences usually are organized in different Ramsar areas of Estonia, this time, again due to the anniversary, the conference will take place in Tallinn. Besides the items of agenda concerning the Convention the main attention will be paid to the functioning of the renewed plant for wastewater treatment of Tallinn, which leads the cleaned wastewater of almost whole town directly into the Finnish gulf. In the presentations and during the short field trip will be handled also the environmental impact of relatively huge territory of the enterprise to the coastal area." [Here is his later report following the event.](#)

France I. Salvatore Arico (s.arico@unesco.org) notes that the **UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme** is planning to inaugurate on WWD 2001 a permanent joint Web

site between the MAB Programme and the Ramsar Convention, in collaboration with the Ramsar Bureau.

France II. Cécile Ardouin (cardouin@wwfnet.org) of **WWF France** reports that WWD activities are planned, with press packs for journalists, for five Ramsar sites in France in which WWF France is closely involved, and a nationwide press release is in preparation.

France III. On 26-27 March, in honor of the 30th anniversary of the Ramsar Convention and the 40th anniversary of the World Wide Fund for Nature, a symposium on "**Eaux vivantes d'altitude**", high altitude wetlands, will take place in Evian, France, sponsored by WWF's **Living Waters Campaign** and Ramsar, in the context of the Convention's **Evian Project** funded by the private-sector Danone Group.

France IV. Renaud Dupuy de la Grandrive [spn-agde@worldonline.fr] informs the Bureau that "Nous participons à la journée Mondiale des zones humides en organisant des animations gratuites pour le grand public autour de **la réserve naturelle du Bagnas**, zone humide de 600 hectares du sud de la France, classée ZPS et ZSC en cours et dont nous assurons la gestion. Il s'agit d'une visite guidée le samedi matin 3 février 2001 et d'un camp d'observation de la vie de la réserve toute la journée de ce samedi. Nous éditons aussi pour l'occasion un petit livret de présentation des zones humides de la région des Pays d'Agde. Réserve Naturelle du Bagnas, Société de Protection de la Nature d'Agde, Domaine du Grand Clavelet 34300 AGDE (FRANCE)".

Germany I. Michael Trepel (michael@ecology.uni-kiel.de) reports that the **Ecology Centre at the University of Kiel** is organizing a seminar for WWD, intended mainly to sketch out a moorland conservation programme for the North German Land (State) of Schleswig-Holstein. [More details are available here.](#)

Germany II. Claus Mayr (claus.mayr@NABU.de) of **NABU**, the German partner of BirdLife International, based in Bonn, has sent us NABU's press release on das Internationaler Tag der Feuchtgebiete: "NABU fordert besseren Schutz für Wasservögel und ihre Lebensräume". [Here it is \(text in German\).](#)

Germany III. Edith Wenger of the **WWF-Auen-Institut** in Rastatt, Germany, has sent us the text of WWF Germany's World Wetlands Day press release, with emphasis on the Upper Rhine area ([text in French](#)).

Ghana I. Dr Chris Gordon (Interim Director), **Centre for African Wetlands** (afriwet@idngh.com), writes to say that the Centre will be setting up poster exhibitions for World Wetlands Day.

Ghana II. Charles C. Amankwah, Coordinator of Wetlands Conservation Programmes in the **Wildlife Division of the Forestry Commission**, reports, "Beautifully painted banners with the theme "Wetland world – A world to discover" started flying at vantage places of the capital city of Ghana, Accra and major communities within all the five coastal Ramsar Sites two weeks to 2 February 2001. This marked the beginning of awareness raising on wetlands toward the celebration of 30 years of work and progress worldwide by the *Ramsar Convention on Wetlands* and 12 years of formal wetlands work in Ghana." [Here is the rest of the informative report.](#)

Greece I. Panagiota Maragou (p.maragou@wwf.gr), Freshwater Officer at **WWF Greece**, reports that a communications event is planned for Athens which will feature an update on the Prespa Park, the presentation of WWF's Water and Wetland Index project (for which WWD will be the Pan-European launch date), and activities for children. A communications pack for journalists will be prepared, and it is intended that their next Panda magazine will focus on a "wetlands tribute" with WWD at its center.

Greece II. Kyriakos Skordas (komath@spark.net.gr), Communication Officer of the **Hunting Federation of Macedonia & Thrace**, writes: "The Hunting Federation of Macedonia & Thrace, Northern Greece, would like to inform you that, since March of 2000, it has created a new service, the Body of Wildlife Protection, with 50 game wardens. A great effort has been given for the protection of wetlands (not only the Ramsar sites) from any illegal activity. On World Wetlands Day special actions will take place for the protection of wetlands, with the collaboration of the wildlife guardians at the regional level. It must be mentioned that only with the money of the Greek hunters and without any financial support from the Government, the Hunting Federation covers the salaries of 50 persons, has bought 25 new jeep 4 x 4s and makes environmental actions for the conservation of wetlands and biotopes in North Greece. Similar actions have been made by the other Greek hunting federations. Moreover our Federation, in addition to press releases, interviews, etc, will participate in the National Agricultural Exhibition in Thessaloniki, where on the 2nd of February we will inform, using leaflets, video and slide shows, the thousands of visitors about the importance of wetlands in the conservation of biodiversity and in fulfilling human needs."

Greece III. Dr. Urania Giannakou, Scientific officer of the **Wetland Information Center of Axios, Loudias & Aliakmon Delta** [wicaxios@otenet.gr], writes "We have a painting competition among elementary local schools for the WWD; posters and books will be distributed among the winners and all paintings will be placed in the exhibition area of the Information Center for the next week. Selected environmental groups of secondary schools will help out with a bird liberation act of *Circus aeruginosus* and *Buteo buteo*, in different places in the wetland. All participants will receive WWD stickers of the Ramsar Bureau. Of course, the Wetland Information Center will be open the whole day for the public with information leaflets and slide projections on the values and functions of our wetland."

Greece IV. Mrs K Chatzichristidi, Head of the Environmental Planning Division, reports that the **Ministry of Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works** urged all information centres in wetlands areas, as well as the regional and prefectural authorities, to prepare local events and the response was very positive throughout the country. "Additionally to the above activities a meeting of volunteers for the protection of nature was held in the Information Centre of Messolonghi Lagoon, where the creation of a relative web site was decided, release of birds of prey of an environmental group of school children and a painting competition was organized by the Information Centre of Axios-Loudias-Aliakmon, a talk show of representatives of local groups was organized in a local TV channel by the Information Centre of Vistonis and Ismaris, special games for kids were organized by the Information Centre of Nestos, a special lecture for the problems of the lake was organized by the Municipality of Doirani and a one day workshop for the management of Amvrakikos was organized by the Developmental Company of Amvrakikos."

Hungary. András Demeter (demeter@mail2.ktm.hu), Head of Department, Ministry of Environment, Authority for Nature Conservation, reports on WWD seminars in Debrecen in eastern Hungary, which included progress reports on the **cyanide and heavy metal spills in the rivers Szamos and Tisza** last year. [Here is his brief report.](#)

India I. The Government of India has informed the Ramsar Bureau that it intends to celebrate World Wetlands Day by announcing the designation of **thirteen new sites for the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance**. The scientific background for these new sites has been prepared with assistance from WWF India. These new sites will be announced and added to the Ramsar List when the subsequent paperwork has been completed in the Bureau. In addition, **S. N. Sharma** (sambharresorts@usa.net)

writes to say that activities are planned for the **Sambhar Lake Ramsar site** and that details will follow.

India II. Dr R K Ranjan (ranjanrk@dte.vsnl.net.in) reports that the **Manipur Association for Science and Society**, which has celebrated WWD every year since 1998, with activities including a Mid-Winter Waterfowl Census of Loktak Lake Ramsar site, is planning a similar programme for WWD 2001.

India III. D. P. Dash (pallishree137@hotmail.com), Secretary of **Pallishree** in Orissa, India, has written to describe plans for educational WWD activities at Chilika Lagoon, Ansupa Lake, and Vitara Kanika. [Here's the brief report](#). Whilst on this subject, Mr. A.K. Pattnaik, IFS, Chief Executive of the Chilika Development Authority, Bhubaneswar (ajitpattnaik@hotmail.com), confirms that "the **Chilika Development Authority**, a Government of Orissa Agency, created for the preservation of Chilika Lagoon, the 1st Ramsar Site of India, in collaboration with Pallishree, a leading NGO of the State, is planning to celebrate WWD-2001 at Chilika in a grand way" - and [here is that brief report as well](#).

India IV. Dr. Rathin Barman (rathinbarman@satyam.net.in), Vice President of **Aaranyak** in Guwahati, Assam, writes: "Each year 'Aaranyak' celebrates world wetland day in collaboration with Indian National Science Congress, North East Chapter, Department of Zoology, Gauhati University. This year, WWF North East India will also join the team for the celebration. This year we are planning to organise a discussion among leading wetland experts from the region to highlight the importance of Ramsar sites along with other biodiversity rich wetlands of North East India. In North East India we have three Ramsar site, Deepar Beel Wildlife Sanctuary, Assam, Logtoke lake in Manipur and Deiring (Lali) wetland in Arunachal Pradesh. After the discussion a bird watching camp will be organised at Deepar Beel Wildlife Sanctuary (a Ramsar Site) where field level instruction will be demonstrated to highlight the wetland value."

India V. Chander Parkash (c_parkash@rediffmail.com) writes from the Guru Nanak Dev University in Amritsar, Punjab, that for WWD celebrations on 2 February at the **Harike Ramsar site** some 700 school, college and university students are expected. Details will follow.

India VI. Dr. Satnam Singh Ladhar (ssladhar@yahoo.com), Senior Scientific Officer (Environment) for the **Punjab State Council for Science & Technology** notes that the Council is planning to celebrate World Wetland Day at the district and Inter-district levels in the State so as to promote wetland awareness among the children, youth and general public. [Here is a brief description](#).

India VII. Robert Grubh, Director of the **Institute for Restoration of Natural Environment** in Tamil Nadu at the southern tip of India (irne@vsnl.com) explains that because of terrible earthquake in Gujarat his organization has postponed its WWD celebrations until 10 March: here is a brief description of the planning so far.

India VIII. Dr Paresh Pandya writes that the NGO **Gujarat Vigyan Parishad**, Environment Education Centre and Kotak Science College organized a World Wetlands Day Celebration on February 2 at Rajkot (Gujarat Region), India. A Memorandum on wetland values was submitted to government authority; a lecture on 'Wetland World – a World to Discover!', a student visit to a wetland, an exhibition and drawing – essay competition were also conducted. [Here is his report](#).

Indonesia I. Nyoman Suryadiputra (komang@bogor.wasantara.net.id), Technical Director at WIAP-IP, reports that the **Wetlands International-Asia Pacific Indonesia Programme** plans to celebrate Ramsar's 30th anniversary on WWD by

launching a programme to plant 20,000 mangrove trees in Singajaya, Brondong, Karangsong and Eretan Kulon in the Indramayu coastal area, west Java. Planting activities will involve university students, schoolchildren, fishermen and the local community. Funding for this project is provided by American Forest as part of its Global ReLeaf Mangrove Reforestation Project, and the planting activity will take place from February to July 2001. In addition, WIAP-IP reports that it has received funding from the **Wildfowl and Wetland Trust** (UK) to monitor the white-winged wood duck (*Cairinia scutulata*) in northern Sumatra, in partnership with the local NGO Biopalas, and the survey will be carried out during February as part of WWD activities.

Indonesia II. Ayu Rahayu, Communications Officer, Wetlands International (ayu@wiap.nasionet.net), reports that in February 2001 **Wetlands International**, in collaboration with the National Wetland Committee, will organise a National Seminar on Managing Citarum wetlands catchment areas. This seminar will focus on the impact of industrial discharge to the ecology of the river Citarum as well as to the three big reservoirs (Saguling, Cirata and Jatiluhur) located along this river. Participation is expected from the industrial sectors, conservationists, government agencies, universities, and drinking water companies. Wetlands International will also disseminate posters, stickers, brochures and information packs received from the Ramsar Bureau during the WWD celebration events.

Indonesia III. Noriko Toyoda (noriko@stanfordalumni.org) reports that **Yayasan Riak Bumi** in Pontianak, West Kalimantan, plans educational and awareness-raising activities in connection with the Danau Sentarum National Park Ramsar site.

Indonesia IV. Nyoman Suryadiputra (komang@bogor.wasantara.net.id) also reports that on WWD the Wetlands International Asia Pacific-Indonesia Programme will announce five Coastal Projects Development competition winners in Indonesia. Funding will be awarded to five coastal wetlands community groups who can submit proposals which contain field conservation programme related activities. This competition is open to local coastal NGOs, coastal community groups, fishermen, fish farmers, schools etc.

Iran, Islamic Republic of. Fatemeh Movasaghnejac writes that the **Women's Society Against Environmental Pollution** has published a pamphlet for WWD 2001, highlighting Iran wetlands and the role of the Convention in that country.

Japan I. Dr Atsushi Numazawa (kca@cg.mbn.or.jp) of the **Kasumigaura Citizens' Association** writes that the Association is planning a WWD-related symposium for 25 February on the subject of "Lake Kasumigaura and the Ramsar Convention", with a keynote lecture by Ms Reiko Nakamura, Secretary General of the Ramsar Center Japan). The programme includes a panel discussion on potential designation of Kasumigaura, Japan's second largest lake, as a future Ramsar site. [Here's more detail.](#)

Japan II. Yoshihiko Miyabyashi (yym@mub.biglobe.ne.jp), Anatidae Flyway Officer at **Wetlands International - Japan**, reports: "Various organisations governmental and non-governmental will celebrate World Wetlands Day in some key sites for Anatidae in Japan. (1) Shiga Prefecture Government will organise a series of field trips for local people for waterbirds and wetlands in **Lake Biwa-ko**, a Ramsar Site and an Anatidae Network Site. (2) Kaga City Kamoike Sanctuary will organise field trips for local people at the time of morning flight of waterbirds from the **Lake Katano-kamoike**, a Ramsar Site and an Anatidae Network Site. (3) Various organisations in the Miyagi Prefecture (including Lakes Izunuma & Uchinuma, a Ramsar Site; and Lake Kabukurinuma & River Shiroishigawa, Anatidae Network Sites) will celebrate WWD 2000 in a series of events, including field trips and wetland panel exhibition. The staff and members of these organisations will assist the primary schools in the area in a class or an educational programme especial on the wetland and environment around the World Wetlands Day. Ref: World Wetlands Day in Miyagi, Japan: <http://www2m.biglobe.ne.jp/~wwd/>."

Japan III. Steve Sawa writes, on behalf of **A. Hasegawa**, Director of the **Yatsu Higata Nature Observation Center**, in Chiba, about a WWD exhibition there, and includes a few photographs. [Here's his brief report.](#)

Kenya I. Sarah Higgins (kijabe@net2000ke.com), Hon. Secretary of the **Lake Naivasha Riparian Association** (winners of the Ramsar Award, 1999) writes: "A trip to the Post Office cheered me up enormously as 10 posters and 26 WWD flyers have arrived - so now I can get to work getting them out. We are celebrating WWD by inviting local schools from around Naivasha and the catchment to come to **Elsamere Field Study Centre** (on the shores of the lake) to share their views on the importance of Wetlands. This they do through essays, songs, poems and artwork and there will be prizes given for the best in each category. We get the farms and businesses around the lake to provide transport and to donate prizes so that we can involve as many children as possible and give as many prizes as possible in order to encourage the children. We did this last year as well and it was a brilliant day, as it is amazing what the children come up with. They have such fertile imaginations and seem to have a much better grasp of the subject than the average adult - and they can express themselves and their opinions with so much humour too. I am looking forward to the day. . . . (PS If your stickers are still available they go down a treat, particularly with car owners who use them to stick their road tax disks onto the windscreen - a great way to advertise. Please can we have lots.)"

Kenya II. Mr **Anderson Koyo** (akoyo@kws.org) of the **Kenya Wildlife Service** informs the Bureau of the KWS press release on World Wetlands Day released to national newspapers in Kenya and the text of the Director, **Nehemiah K. Rotich's** address on the challenges on the conservation of marine and coastal wetlands in Kenya, presented at national World Wetlands Day celebrations held in Nairobi on 3 February 2001. [Here the two texts.](#)

Korea, Republic of. Nial Moores (spoonbill@hotmail.com) informed the Ramsar Forum of **Wetlands and Birds Korea's** recent activities and World Wetlands Day plans, and posed a number of questions about action on conservation of tidal flats. [Here is his message.](#)

Latvia. Ms **Ilze Strausa** writes that the **Latvian Nature Museum** distributed WWD posters to a number of key university and government locations and displayed the Ramsar poster exhibit, translated into Latvian, in its own venue. A number of radio broadcasts with wetland experts were aired on 2 February, and both a press conference and open meeting were held. [Here is a summary of her report, with a few photographs.](#)

Libya. Mr **Abdulmaula A. Hamza** (a_haza@hotmail.com) informs us that the Environment General Authority is preparing a 50x60cm poster about wetland and waterfowl conservation, as well as an article about wetlands, Ramsar, and MedWet for the next issue of the EGA Bulletin. A report on wetlands and Libya's accession to the Ramsar Convention is to be prepared for national television.

Macedonia, FY Republic of. Prof. **Branko Micevski** (brankom@ukim.edu.mk) of the Institute of Biology, Faculty of Sciences in Skopje, writes "The **National Ramsar Committee in Macedonia** (which is in the frame of **Bird Study and Protection Society of Macedonia** - BSPSM) is going to celebrate the wetlands day on 1st of February. As usual we are inviting the most important politicians, journalists, and another wetlands lovers (NGOs dealing with wetlands), responsible ministries, foreign missions in Macedonia, Embassies etc. This year due to the 30 years of Ramsar (and one year of Transboundary Prespa Park) we have invited His Excellency president of the Republic of Macedonia **Boris Trajkovski** and offered him to be patron of that celebration in the house of the parliament of Macedonia. Before that on 30-31 of January we have a trilateral meeting of the coordination committee of Prespa Park (between Albania, Greece and

Macedonia). Next days, on 2,3 and 4 of February 2001, BSPSM is planning joint winter census of waterfowls on **Prespa Lake (Ramsar Site)** - together with Greek and Albanian colleagues, proceed with Ohrid Lake (UNESCO Heritage) and later to organize it on Dojran Lake. In the meantime some other members of the Committee will present activities of NRC and BSPSM in TV and radio. Maybe it is important to point out that this winter census will be in the same time filmed by Macedonian TV."

Malaysia I. Wetlands International - Asia Pacific Malaysia Programme plans to organise WWD2001 celebration on 2 February 2001 at Putrajaya Wetland' Nature Interpretation Centre and Tasek Bera, Malaysia's first Ramsar Site. Putrajaya (Constructed) Wetland is located at Malaysia's new federal administrative capital, near Kuala Lumpur. The activities will include setting up a booth on wetland awareness, organising nature trails and some hands on experience and dissemination of materials on wetland education and awareness.

Malaysia II. Mrs **Lim Young Peing** (earthiankk@hotmail.com), of the Teacher Support Group of the **Kota Kinabalu City Bird Sanctuary**, reports that plans are being made, not only for World Wetlands Day, but for a "road show" afterwards, wherein photos and posters contributed to WWD competitions will be brought round to some 90 secondary schools in the city and perhaps to other towns as well. Mrs Tan Hui Shim supplies further information about activities at Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia.

Malta. Joe Sultana (jsultana@mail.global.net.mt) reports that "BirdLife Malta, which runs both Ramsar sites in Malta under contract with the Government, will be commemorating Wetlands Day by having an open day at Ghadira Nature Reserve. The President of Malta and other personalities will be visiting officially the reserve on the occasion." Afterwards, Mr Sultana sent us some press clippings of the event.

Moldova. Ilya Trombitsky (paolo@mdearn.cri.md) of **Biotica** writes: "Dear Inga, dear Alexander, Greetings in relation to the 30 years of Ramsar! On February the 2nd we organised together with the Ministry of Environment the press-conference, where journalists had a chance to receive the information about the Ramsar. In the evening two TV news issues the reportage from this press conference was shown. Plus to this, Biotica wrote the article to the newspaper related to the event. We already started to implement the Ramsar small grant project."

Nepal. The Government of Nepal reports that World Wetlands Day will be celebrated by exhibitions, a viewing of the Ramsar video on television, and quiz competitions. The Department of National Parks, in collaboration with the UNDP/Park and People Project and IUCN Nepal, have also arranged an interview on Radio Sagarmatha and articles for the national daily newspaper.

Netherlands I. Henk Eggink (H.J.Eggink@N.agro.nl), National Ramsar focal point in the Netherlands, writes: "On the occasion of World Wetlands Day, the **State Secretary of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries** has launched a special poster on wetlands of international importance in the Netherlands. The poster has been widely distributed to Government Departments, Provincial and Local governments, Water-boards, NGOs, schools and embassies. The poster has been prepared with the partner organizations of RIZA (Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water management), Birdlife-Netherlands, and Wetlands International. A symposium about Wetlands in the Netherlands is planned in April 2001. The **Netherlands Committee on IUCN** will launch on 2 February its new wetland programme, which is supported financially by the Ministry of Development Cooperation."

Netherlands II. Dr Chris Kalden, President of **Wetlands International**, writes: "On behalf of the Wetlands International network I would like to convey our congratulations to

the Ramsar Convention on its 30th Anniversary and also send our best wishes for World Wetlands Day tomorrow. . . . Wetlands International will continue to support and promote the development and implementation of the Convention and we are pleased to have played a part in the success story."

New Zealand I. Graham Ford (gford@fishandgame.org.nz), Fish and Game New Zealand, reports a list of 15 activities planned throughout the length of New Zealand in coordination with **Fish and Game New Zealand**. [View it right here](#).

New Zealand II. Kay Holder, Coast Care Office, Parks Unit in Christchurch (kay.holder@ccc.govt.nz) informs us that **Travis Wetland Nature Heritage Park** will hold a Twilight Tour on World Wetlands Day. Travis is a 120ha "saved from development" swamp in the middle of Christchurch city. Restoration of the wetland by the community and the City Council has increased the number of native birds and plants living in the area. The World Wetlands Day tour will visit a new pond with ornithologists.

New Zealand III. Karen Denyer (karen.denyer@wairc.govt.nz) of **Environment Waikato** reports on the results of what was probably the very first World Wetlands Day 2001 celebration in the world, a breakfast function that included the presentation of the awards for the Winning Wetlands Competition. [Here is her brief report](#).

New Zealand IV. Hon. Marian Hobbs, Minister for the Environment, and Hon. **Sandra Lee**, Minister of Conservation, have announced the three winners of the **New Zealand Wetlands Awards** to be honored on 2 February 2001. The [ministers' press release](#) provides further details on the Whakaki Lake Trustees, the Pauatahanui Reserve Management Committee of the Forest and Bird Protection Society, and Norske-Skog Tasman.

New Zealand V. Gnome Hannah-Brown (ghannah-brown@doc.govt.nz) of the Department of Conservation in the North Canterbury Area reports that the DOC and the North Canterbury Fish and Game Council "ran a very successful bus trip, looking at wetlands around **Te Waihora (Lake Ellesmere) and Lake Forsyth (Waikarewa)**. We interpreted the flora and fauna and discussed wetland issues. Included was the Ngai Tahu perspective on wetlands and a demonstration of cultural uses of wetland materials."

New Zealand VI. Philippe Gerbeaux (pgerbeaux@doc.govt.nz), Senior Technical Support Officer, West Coast Conservancy Office, reports that "Two outings at **Okarito Lagoon** lived up to all the expectations of organiser **Merryn Bayliss**, Rural Advocate for Franz Josef/South Westland. Guests included Okarito residents as well as representatives from a range of organisations, including Westland District Council, Fish & Game, the West Coast Conservation Board, South Westland Area School and DOC." [Here are some more details](#).

Nicaragua. World Wetlands Day will be the occasion for the Seminario-Taller Internacional "**Humedales: Planificación Territorial y Participación Local para su Manejo Sostenible**", to take place 1-4 February in Bluefields, Nicaragua, sponsored by PROCODEFOR (Proyecto de Conservación y Desarrollo Forestal) and DIPAL (Proyecto para el Desarrollo Integral de la Pesca Artesanal en la Región Autónoma del Atlántico Sur). More information from humedales2001@hotmail.com .

Nigeria I. Ojei Babatunde (tundeojei@hotmail.com), wetlands desk officer with the **Nigerian Conservation Foundation**, writes that WWD celebrations on 2 February will include the official commissioning of Nigeria's Ramsar site, Nguru Lake, as well as a rally in Uyo with the wetlands centre at Uyo. Special lectures and poster exhibitions will be hosted on "Wetlands Open Day" at the Lekki Conservation Centre. [Here is his very brief report after the event](#).

Nigeria II. Mr **Chizor Wisdom Dike**, Executive Director of the **Community Rights Initiative**, CORI (crightsinitiative@yahoo.com), reports: "We are working with local communities of the **Niger Delta**, the world's third largest delta, to protect their wetlands and Rivers which are very rich and strategic to their survival. Much of the wetlands and rivers have been destroyed and threatened by oil pollution and industrial wastes. It is our resolve to draw public attention to the dangers of destroying our wetlands, and we have begun preparations for the 2001 WWD. The 2001 Celebration will be given adequate publicity and local communities will be mobilized to carry out local events to mark that day. We request for campaign materials for the event - during and after the celebration. We are also working on the Wetlands Protection Bill to be forwarded to all the House of Assembly in the Niger Delta States, coastal communities and other States of Nigeria. Our latest edition of Environmental Care Newsletter focuses on wetlands. Still in 2001, we shall begin a massive awareness campaign on Wetlands. Many local communities in Nigeria depend on their Wetlands for survival and yet they care little about what happens to these wetlands."

Pakistan I. The Government of Pakistan has informed the Ramsar Bureau that it intends to celebrate World Wetlands Day by announcing the designation of **eight new sites for the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance**. The scientific background for these new sites has been prepared with assistance from IUCN Pakistan. These new sites will be announced and added to the Ramsar List when the subsequent paperwork has been completed in the Bureau.

Pakistan II. **Richard Garstang**, Project Manager for the **Protection and Management of Pakistan Wetlands Project** (PakistanWetlands@aol.com), c/o **WWF-Pakistan**, reports that "Pakistan will be celebrating World Wetlands Day on February 2nd, 2001 by holding a National Workshop on Wetlands Conservation in the capital city, Islamabad. The inaugural address will be given by the country's progressive Minister of Environment, The **Honourable Omar Asghar Khan**. The occasion will be attended by around 145 of Pakistan's leading conservationists and representatives of prominent NGOs." Richard adds further detail on WWD plans and background on this important GEF- and UNDP-supported project, for which Pakistan's Federal Ministry of Environment is the executing agency and has appointed WWF-Pakistan to implement the programme. [Consult more details here.](#)

Panamá I. **Zuleika Pinzón** (zpinzon@naturapanama.org) reports that the **Grupo de Trabajo de Humedales de Panamá** plans, with the help of IUCN-ORMA, to mount a traveling exhibition on wetlands in commemoration of WWD.

Panamá II. Con motivo de celebrarse el pasado 2 de febrero de 2001 el Día Mundial de los humedales y los Treinta años de la Convención de Ramsar, el grupo **GITEC (Grupo para la Investigación Tecnológica y la Conservación)** organizó un evento en el área del Distrito de **Río de Jesús** que está incluida en el Humedal Golfo de Montijo, el más grande sitio Ramsar de la República de Panamá. Algunas de las actividades realizadas fueron; juegos ecológicos, preparación de coloridas camisetas alusivas a los manglares, excursión en bote por el manglar, proyección del vídeo de Ramsar y distribución de materiales impreso sobre Ramsar y sobre humedales. De esta forma y gracias al apoyo de organizaciones estatales, proyectos de desarrollo y empresa privada, fue posible hacer práctico el lema de celebración de este año "El mundo de los humedales, un mundo por descubrir", junto a los niños y adultos del Distrito de Río de Jesús una de las zonas geográficas incluidas en el Humedal Golfo de Montijo. [In celebration of WWD 2001 and the 30th anniversary of the Ramsar Convention, GITEC (Technological Investigation and Conservation Group) organized an event at the Río de Jesús district that is included in the Golfo de Montijo Wetland, the biggest Ramsar Site in Panama. Some of the activities that took place include; ecological games, preparation of colorful "wetland T-shirts", boat trip through the mangrove forest, projection of the Ramsar video and distribution of didactic

material about Ramsar and about wetlands. This event had the support of state organizations and the private sector.]

Paraguay. Danilo Salas (dsalas@mbertoni.org.py) of the Fundación Moisés Bertoni reports on World Wetlands Day in Paraguay and progress towards the creation of a National Wetlands Committee. [Here is his report.](#)

Perú I. Manuel Nique Alvarez (maniqueal@yahoo.com) writes that in Tingo Maria a workshop is being planned for WWD at the **Universidad Nacional Agraria de la Selva**. [Read about it here \(in Spanish\).](#)

Perú II. Blga. Flor de Maria Salvador (fsalvador@lycos.com), recently a Ramsar Intern and now Investigador asociado, Departamento de Botanica, **Museo de Historia Natural, Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos** in Lima, reports: "How are you and all the team?. Let me inform you that for the WWD the Department of Botany of the Museum of Natural History of San Marcos University is going to launch a round of conferences with the following main issues: the Ramsar Convention Strategic Plan, the conservation of the Peruvian wetlands and the implementation of the Convention in Peru. Additionally, we are going to prepare some wetland exhibitions and distribute the WWD educational materials. This event will involve the participation of the Administrative Authority (Instituto de Recursos Naturales - INRENA), the National Program of Wetlands and me. Also, the 2 of March we are going to organise a Forum on Wetlands of La Puna and its problems. In this event for the first time the Government, the Indigenous people, the NGOs, the Private and the Academic sector will meet. This Forum aims apart from raise public awareness, prepare a base document to design a National strategic plan to conserve our wetlands of the Puna Region. In these events I am very proud to say that I am the Coordinator :)."

Perú III. Pilar Padilla Bustillos, Coordinadora de Areas Protegidas y Sitios Ramsar (inrena.dganpfs@terra.com.pe), INRENA, writes that Ramsar materials on WWD and Ramsar Toolkits are being distributed to the seven Peruvian Ramsar sites and to members of the Wetlands Programme technical group in order to support WWD activities.

Perú IV. J. Alarcon (ipwetlands@heroica.upt.edu.pe) writes: "Dear friends of the **Indigenous Peoples Wetlands Network**. With reason of taking place February 2, the world day of wetlands. The indigenous peoples who live in the Andes highlands wetlands have taken eight agreements that are published on our Web site. We invite you to visit our web site: <http://www.upt.edu.pe/ipwetlands> Our network, since its installation, to date has 132 active members who invite you to send messages on the topic to the following e-mail: ipwetlands@egroups.com . WETLANDS ARE LIFE! CARE FOR THEM AROUND THE WORLD."

Perú V. Luis Morante Alvarado (moranteing@amauta.rcp.net.pe) writes that the **Unión Demócrata Cristiana del Perú** will be hosting activities in Lima and distributing Ramsar materials.

Perú VI. Dante Choquehuanca (jnaves@LatinMail.com), of the Facultad de Ciencias Biologicas, **Universidad Nacional del Altiplano**, writes: "Previo saludo desde Puno - Perú para todos los que conforman la Convención Ramsar y además muchas felicidades por el DÍA MUNDIAL DE LOS HUMADALES, que nosotros en esta parte del Perú un grupo de interesados nos estaremos reuniendo para propiciar la conservación de los humedales en esta zona de sudamerica que se encuentra en la frontera con Bolivia y contamos con más 280 lagunas, muchos rios, cientos de bofedales y el principal Lago Titicaca donde se encuentran multiples de diversidad faunistica. Asimismo, nuestro departamento (Puno) cuenta con zonas altoandinas, valles y llanura amazonica. Esperamos tener contacto constante con ustedes y quiero adelantarles que en el mes de setiembre los días 11 al 15

estaremos realizando la IV Jornada Nacional de Ornitología donde se sabe que la distribución de estas especies más frecuentan en los humadales por lo que es muy importante para nosotros todas las propuestas de Ramsar, por lo pronto les pedimos que nos auspicien en este evento para motivar los lineamientos Ramsar. WEB: www.galeon.com/ornitologia.com".

Philippines I. Reynaldo C. Bayados writes that the President of the Philippines has proclaimed 2 February as National Wetlands Day, in addition to World Wetlands Day, and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' **Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau** is continuing its tradition of holding WWD "lectures, symposia, contests, wetland visits, photo exhibits, and wetland clean-up activities" involving schools, NGOs, and other government agencies in a large number of locations throughout the country.



Philippines II. Eduardo Bisquera Jr., Protected Areas and Wildlife Division in **Zamboanga City** (bisquera@eudoramail.com) writes "Annually our institution (Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Region 9, Zamboanga City Philippines) join the world in the celebration of WWD. Next year we had lined-up various activities to commemorate the occasion, such as: information campaign in schools and communities near wetland areas; messages in print and broadcast media; mangrove propagules planting; on-the-spot painting contest; nature walk. There were three provinces comprising Region 9. We have focal persons assigned in each province. Last year, we had a significant accomplishment. Next year we want to make this celebration meaningful, especially that it coincides with the 30th anniversary of the Conventions on Wetlands."

Poland I. Barbara Stoff (slonsk@go.home.pl) reports that **Warta Mouth Landscape Park** is tentatively planning an open house for World Wetlands Day. It's hoped that WWD festivities can be tied into celebrations of the Landscape Park's graduation to National Park status, which is in the works, to go along its present status as the Slonsk Reserve Ramsar site. -- Afterwards, she reported that "This was our first annual celebration of World Wetlands Day! We loved the idea so much that we decided to celebrate World Wetlands Day three times; complete with contests, food, field trips, and slide shows!" [Here is her brief report.](#)

Poland II. Izabella Engel (hoopoe@hoopoe.com.pl) of **Biuro Turystyki Przyrodniczej DUDEK** ("Hoopoe" Wildlife Tours) informs us that her private-sector firm will be organizing nature and ecological events for tourists at the Slonsk Nature Reserve Ramsar site.

Sierra Leone. Daniel Siaffa, **Sierra Leone Conservation Society**, reports that the president of the society, Hon. Dr Sama Banya (who is also the country's Foreign Minister), broadcast a World Wetlands Day address on national radio and television, a float parade was held in conjunction with a seminar for members of Parliament, and a number of other

discussion programmes and infomercials were also shown on TV. Activities were supported financially by **Wetlands International's West Africa Programme**. [Here is his report.](#)

South Africa I. Dale Holder (daleh@parks-sa.co.za) writes that **Wilderness National Park** is setting up WWD displays at its camp and information centre, as well as educational sessions for school groups followed by a clean-up sessions of Island Lake via canoe.

South Africa II. Nathalie Kelderman (nathalie@africam.co.za) writes: "**Africam** are an internet-based company that broadcasts live footage of wildlife over the internet, through the use of strategically placed cameras at watering holes, burrows, dens, nests etc, and also by means of game drives (which we term virtual game drives). The content on our site is very educational, inspirational and informative. **Africam Radio** was recently launched as one of Africam's new projects. The radio station is going to be paying much attention to World Wetlands Day on the 2 February 2001. We have lined up a number of experts and knowledgeable folk for our show on the 2nd of Feb for the purpose of driving the educational message on Wetlands home. We would like to play a proactive role in Wetland awareness, not only on the 2nd of Feb 2001, but on a perpetuating basis." The main Web site is at <http://www.africam.com>.

South Africa III. Mmakoma Moloto (mmoloto@ozone.pwv.gov.za) of the **Wetlands Conservation Programme** in the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism in Pretoria notes that the department plans a big celebration for WWD, including an address by the Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism. [Here is the subsequent comprehensive report of the activities on activities throughout the country.](#)

South Africa IV. Randall Adriaans (radriaans@cmc.gov.za) of the City of Cape Town CMC-Administration has compiled accounts of five WWD activities in the **Cape Town region**, with a few photos; [here is his report.](#) and the Web site http://www.cmc.gov.za/w&w/CatchmentMgmt/wwetlands_frame.html.

Spain I. Francisco A. Comín (comin@porthos.bio.ub.es), Director-Coordenador del Proyecto "ReCoGeSAL" (Restauración, Conservación y Gestión de la Laguna de Gallocanta), **Asociación de Guías de la Laguna de Gallocanta**, has provided a briefing on the work of the Association and a [description of their plans for WWD celebrations in Zaragoza \(en español\).](#)

Spain II. Francisco Cosme Muñoz (colirrojo@lettera.net) describes activities planned for Salamanca by the **Sociedad Española de Ornitología** (SEO/BirdLife).

Spain III. Santiago Pérez Poza (espaciosman@open58.com) writes that: "El Area de espacios naturales del **Servicio de Medio Ambiente Natural de la Consellería de Medio Ambiente de la Xunta de Galicia** (España), celebrará en próximo día 2 de febrero el Día Mundial de los Humedales en espacio natural protegido Complejo Intermareal Umia-O Grove de Pontevedra, incluido por el Estado Español en el Convenio de Ramsar."

Spain IV. Alain Ochoa (aocchoa@diario16.org) informs us that **Mestizaje**, the leading Spanish ecology magazine, a supplement to the **Diario 16** nationwide newspaper, will be featuring World Wetlands Day in its next issue, with a message on the Ramsar 30th anniversary by the Secretary General, Mr Delmar Blasco.

Spain V. Julian M^a Cano Villanueva [jcanovi@clientes.unicaja.es] writes: "Somos de la **Ecoescuela del IES Poeta Garcia Gutierrez de Chiclana** en Cadiz (España). Llevamos cuatro años trabajando en la educacion ambiental con el proyecto que patrocina en Europa FEEE (Foundation education environmetal european) y en España ADEAC (Asociacion para la defensa del ambiente y el consumidor). El curso pasado obtuvimos el

galardon de la bandera verde que premia el trabajo realizado y nos acredita como una Ecoescuela. Este año queremos **celebrar el día mundial de los humedales** el proximo 2 de febrero de 2001. Para ello queremos hacer una exposición, dos conferencias y un concurso entre nuestro alumnado. Estamos dispuestos a colaborar con las iniciativas que desde ahí se pudieran hacer para tal día. De hecho mantendremos la exposición al menos dos semanas, y los actos se celebraran a lo largo de las mismas. Procuraremos darle publicidad en la prensa y television comarcales." poetaggut@arrakis.es

(right) World Wetlands Day 2001 stickers, Laguna del Donadio, Córdoba

Spain VI. The **Instituto de Estudios Miñoranos** (IEM) writes: "Related to the World Wetlands Day, the IEM (www.ieminhoranos.org) will publish "A Foz, unha zona húmida a descubrir" (The Foz, a wetland to discover), a brochure about a small estuary in the Miñor river, in the south of Galicia, Spain. The brochure points out the importance of the "Foz" as an economic resource (mollusque aquaculture) and also as a natural resource: landscape and resting area for birds (83 species of birds have been identified in the area in the past 12 years). A birding outing will be organized on the coming 6th of February during which the brochure will be presented. To this outing all local authorities are invited." More information: www.geocities.com/ddries.geo, fernando_lahuerta@ieminhoranos.org.



Spain VII. The **Asociación Naturalista "Baixo Miño" (ANABAM)** has scheduled numerous activities for World Wetlands Day in the region of Pontevedra, Spain. Information from anabam.anabam@terra.es.

Spain VIII. **Antonio Prieto Cerdán** (apc.cota@arrakis.es), Jefe de Proyectos de Cota Ambiental, S.L., Director Técnico del Servicio de Control y Educación Ambiental del **Clot de Galvany**, describes his organization's activities and plans for World Wetlands Day in the region of Alicante. [Here it is.](#)

Spain IX. The **Parc Natural del Delta de l'Ebre** (parc@ofitec.net) have sent a report on WWD activities in the Ebro Delta Ramsar site, including the opening of a photo exhibit and an excursion to an interesting part of the site: the isolated nature reserves covering freshwater springs "Ullals" in the landward parts of the delta plain. [Here is the report](#) (in Spanish).

Spain X. **Francisco J. Sánchez Polaina** (fsanchezp@dipucordoba.es) of the Delegación de Medio Ambiente y Protección Civil, Diputación de Córdoba, writes to describe WWD activities in that region of Spain, including guided visits for students to the **laguna del Donadio** and the inauguration of a new exhibit on wetlands and the Ramsar Convention. [View his report here](#) (text in Spanish).

Spain XI. **José M^a Ruiz López**, Director of the **Instituto de Enseñanza Secundaria "Poeta García Gutiérrez"** in Chiclana de la Frontera (Cádiz), Junta of Andalucía, has forwarded a report on WWD by **Julián M^a Cano Villanueva**, who's in charge of the Ecoescuela there. Activities on 2 February included the launching of a permanent

exhibition on the values and functions of wetlands, conferences on the Ramsar Convention and on the Parque Natural Bahía de Cádiz, a bird and fish identification contest for students, and efforts by the school to initiate the process of Ramsar nomination for the **endorrheic wetland complex of Chiclana**. [Here is the brief report \(in Spanish\)](#).

Sri Lanka I. The Department of Wildlife Conservation has informed the Bureau that, in addition to a National Wetlands Day Celebration on 2 February at Bundala National Park Ramsar site, the Government will take the occasion of WWD to announce its forthcoming designation of **Anaiwilundawa Tanks Sanctuary** as its second Wetland of International Importance. This new site will be added to the Ramsar List and announced following receipt of the necessary paperwork in the Bureau. The Government also signified its intention to name five new Ramsar sites over the coming year.

Sri Lanka II. Winston De Silva (sdf@sri.lanka.net), President of the **Saviya Development Foundation**, reports: "An array of programs has been laid down by SDF in Sri Lanka to commemorate the international wetland day. The following activities are scheduled. 1) An awareness program to 50 schoolchildren around the Maduganga wetland at Balapitiya Sri Lanka. 2) An essay competition on wetlands of Sri Lanka and Madu Ganga wetland, among 550 schools at the Galle district in the southern province of Sri Lanka. Winners are awarded cash prizes as well as a certificate for all the participants. 3) An Art/Poster exhibition on wetlands by the schoolchildren. 4) A seminar on environment and wetlands ecology on 2 February at the Ahungalla Rajapaksha Vidyalaya. 5) Publication of a book on wetlands and Balapitiya Maduganga. 6) Production of a 30 minutes video film on wetlands and Madu Ganga."

St. Lucia. Consistent with the **Ramsar COP's Recommendation 5.7**, **Lyndon John** (lyndonjon@netscape.com), Research Officer with the **Forestry Department** in Castries, St. Lucia, reports that the Permanent Secretary has approved the formation of a **National Wetland Committee**, preparatory to planning for accession to the Ramsar Convention. The Committee was launched on World Wetlands Day, 2 February 2001, at a meeting that was attended by "representatives from the Forestry Department, Fisheries Department, St. Lucia National Trust, Caribbean Natural resource Institute, St. Lucia Nature Heritage Tourism Programme, Soufriere Marine Management Authority, Ministry of Planning- Sustainable Deveopment section, Water Resource management Unit, Water and Sewerage Company, St. Lucia Hunters Association and concerned citizens included Mr. Devaux who has published on St. Lucia's wetlands as (ret.chairman of the National Trust) and the representative of the Aupicon Charcoal Producers, who are organized through CANARI for systematic management of the Mankote Mangrove".

Sweden I. Torsten Larsson (torsten.larsson@environ.se) of the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency has sent a report of six World Wetlands Day 2001 activities that took place in Sweden, despite the fact that "as usual all wetlands in Sweden were covered by ice". [Here it is](#).

Sweden II. Dirk Harmsen (terranordica@telia.com), WISP Project Secretary, reports that "For the first time the world wetlands day was celebrated in the South of Sweden. The lead partner in an EU "Interreg" project called '**Wetlands in Spatial Planning**' (**WISP**) arranged a meeting at the **nature reserve of Getterön, Varberg**. Invited were representatives for seven important wetland and birdwatching sites in the South of Sweden to discuss a common marketing policy towards international nature tourism. On this freezy wetlands day (not much wet land left) the initiative was supported and a future marketing plan was accepted. Please read more at www.eurowetlands.com . Contact: info@eurowetlands.com " .

Switzerland. Lisa Hadeed and **Kyla Evans** on behalf of the **World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)**, and its Living Waters Campaign, have issued a press release on World

Wetlands Day and the global water crisis. -- **Wetlands events send another wake-up call for world's fresh water.** Gland, Switzerland - "As celebrations surrounding World Wetlands Day commence around the world, WWF, the conservation organization, and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands have warned that unless more is done to protect vital wetlands, water shortages will be more severe in at least 60 countries by 2050, and flooding-related disasters could increase substantially." [View the rest of it right here](#) (English, français, español).

Switzerland II. Meinrad Küttel (Meinrad.Kuettel@buwal.admin.ch), Ramsar's focal point in the Swiss Government, has notified the Bureau that the Government is extending the Ramsar site formerly known as Rade de Genève to almost double its size and renamed it "**Le Rhône genevois - Vallons de l'Allondon et de La Laire**". Here's an announcement prepared by **Denis Landenbergue**, WWF's Living Waters Campaign: "As a contribution to the 2001 World Wetland Day and the 30th anniversary of the Ramsar Convention, Switzerland, the host country of the Ramsar Bureau, is happy to announce the extension of the Ramsar Site that was designated in 1990 near Geneva. The newly extended Site encompasses the port of Geneva, the Rhône from Lake Geneva (Lake Lemman) all the way to the French border as well as the adjacent Allondon and Laire river valleys. This is a step towards a hoped for transboundary wetland of international importance that could include the Etournel marshes in France."

Tanzania. Lars Dinesen of Danida (dinesen@twiga.com), with the Wildlife Division-Wetland Unit (Tanzania), in Dar es Salaam, wrote that in Tanzania "the plan is to hold a conference, financed by **Danida**, involving the Minister and 120 District Executive Directors from all over the country and to broadcast the event on radio and TV. The main aim is awareness-raising among key decision-makers and the general public. Priorities to new potential Ramsar sites will also be given." **He later reported:** "In celebrating World Wetlands Day, the Minister of Natural Resources and Tourism and the Director of Wildlife addressed the nation through two speeches, which introduced the concept of wetlands and the Ramsar Convention to the public and delivered the visions for wise use of wetlands in Tanzania. The speeches were held in Ki-swahili, of 10 minutes each, and were broadcast by two TV channels at prime time. The three main Swahili and one English newspaper had four pages set aside for wetland news. The speeches appeared in print as well as presentations of several wetland case studies including The Usangu Flats, Lake Manyara, The Kilombero Valley, and Lake Natron. As part of raising awareness to the general public, a video show highlighting concepts of the Ramsar Convention will be broadcast through the most popular television stations during February 2001. Several wetlands articles will appear in the quarterly "Kakakuona" wildlife magazine in April. Success in celebrating WWD came as a result of joint collaboration between **World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)**, **Journalists Environmental Association of Tanzania (JET)**, and the **Wildlife Division in the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism.**"

Thailand I. Ayu Rahayu (ayu@wiap.nasionet.net) writes that, "For World Wetlands Day 2001, **Wetlands International's Thailand Programme** plans to organise a 2-day celebration at **Thale Noi Non Hunting Area**, Thailand's first Ramsar site. The activities will be organised together with the Thale Noi Non Hunting Area Office, Prince of Songkla University, Thale Noi Rehabilitation and Conservation Club, and Phanang Tung School. The organisers have received a positive response from a major company in Bangkok, Chareon Pokhapand (Public) Co. Limited regarding donation of funds to organise the activities. The Petroleum and Tourism Authorities of Thailand are also being approached to co-fund this event. Activities will include drawing and colouring competitions, wetland quiz, poetry reading contests, wetland exhibition, shadow puppet show with environmental conservation theme, and famous personalities' speech on wetlands. The contests will involve 2,000 schoolchildren from around Thale Noi. This event aims to raise awareness of the local people around Thale Noi on Wetlands and Ramsar."

Thailand II. In Bangkok, the **Office of Environmental Policy and Planning** (OEPP) of the Ministry of Science, Technology and the Environment, Thailand, will organise a conference on 1-2 February 2001 in conjunction with World Wetlands Day 2001 and the Ramsar Convention's 30th Anniversary. **Dr. Taej Mundkur**, Interim Executive Director and Technical Director of Wetlands International - Asia Pacific, has been invited to present a paper on "30 years of the Ramsar Convention" [[reprinted here](#)]. Afterward, **Dr Waneer Samphantharak**, Acting Secretary-General, reported on the event and expressed the organizers' gratitude to the Bureau for having funded Dr Mundkur's participation as guest speaker. [Here is his brief report.](#)

Trinidad and Tobago I. **Susan Shurland-Maharaj** (shurland@ima.gov.tt), Public Relations/Information Officer at the **Institute of Marine Affairs**, reports on the work of the IMA in Trinidad, West Indies, and describes the Institute's plans for World Wetlands Day, [right here.](#)

Trinidad and Tobago II. **Nadra Nathai-Gyan** (wildlife@trinidad.net), Head of the Wildlife Section, reports that "**The Wildlife Section** is organising a "Walkathon" in the Cacandee/Felicity community (for those who visited it, it starts at the crematorium). We end up at one of the schools and there we will have an exhibition, with lectures, video shows, etc. Each member of my technical staff is attaching himself to a school and working with the kids on developing posters for the walkathon. We are giving prizes for the best poster and school, etc. (sponsored by my conservation friends). Several of the NGOs have expressed to us that they will join in our efforts."

Trinidad and Tobago III. **Nicole Leotaud** (envirtob@tstt.net.tt), Education Centre Director for **Environment Tobago**, in Scarborough, Tobago, reports that "Environment Tobago (ET) collaborated with the Department of Natural Resources & Environment of the Tobago House of Assembly (THA) to hold an Exhibition in the Botanic Gardens in Scarborough to commemorate World Wetlands Day on February 2nd. Approximately one hundred secondary school students from Harmon's SDA, the Moravian School, and Bishop's High School attended. The students played two interactive games with ET to explore some of the complex issues and difficult choices involved with wetlands conservation." [Here's a report with photos.](#)

Turkey. **Azhar Ali** (aliazhar@consultant.com) of the Department of Environmental Engineering at the Middle East Technical University in Ankara reports that the wetlands division of **DHKD (Dogal Hayat Kurumu Dernegi)**, the national Associate of WWF, hopes to produce a comprehensive journal of the 30th anniversary of Ramsar, for release on WWD, and including Turkish translations of many MedWet, WWF, and Ramsar key documents.



Uganda. **Paul Mafabi**, Programme Manager of the National Wetlands Programme (wetlands@imul.com), writes that at international celebrations 1-4 February prepared by

the **Ministry of Water, Land and Environment of Uganda** to mark the 30th anniversary of the Ramsar Convention, the Minister will launch the "Wetlands Sector Strategic Plan 2001-2010". The Plan "is meant to specify, prioritise and operationalise the strategies for sustainable wetland management, including strengthening the appropriate institutions for wetland management. It is hoped that the Plan will attract sufficient internal and external funds for the continuation of wetland activities in Uganda." The **Secretary General of the Convention, Delmar Blasco**, attended both the launching and subsequent festivities in Lutembe Bay, where he delivered two stirring addresses and helped the Minister cut the World Wetlands Day cake. [Here is a report, with speeches and lots of photographs stuck on.](#)

Ukraine. Olga Konopelko (olga.konopelko@wwf.od.ua) of the **WWF Project Office** in Odessa informs the Bureau that her office has translated Ramsar's **Wetland Values and Functions information pack** into Russian and plans to produce a Russian-language version as soon as possible.

United Kingdom I. Cindy Peters [Cindy_Peters@detr.gsi.gov.uk] of the **Department of the Environment, Transport, and the Regions**, writes: "Just to let you know that we have got Ministerial approval to **contribute £17,074 to the Ramsar Small Grants Fund on WWD 2001**. Additionally the UK will mark WWD 2001 by displaying the Ramsar Poster displays in the DETR's London Headquarters Building (Eland House) - in addition to a large number of officials many of the Cabinet Office ministers are based in Eland House, the display will therefore have a wide audience. We will also be putting up the displays here in Tollgate House in Bristol, Victoria Quay in Edinburgh (the offices of the Scottish Executive) and Cathays Park in Cardiff (the offices of the National Assembly for Wales). Additionally an item will go out on the DETR Electronic News Service which is transmitted (on TVs) throughout the majority of Government buildings in England. Colleagues in Scotland and Wales may be carrying out other activities."

United Kingdom II. Deborah Leigh (deborah.leigh.01@bbc.co.uk) of the British Broadcasting Corporation informs us that the **BBC Alert** Web site is planning a spotlight feature on World Wetlands Day.

United Kingdom III. Jonathan Brickland (pondsforpeople.pct@environment-agency.gov.uk), Ponds Officer for the **Ponds Conservation Trust**, reports that the Trust is organizing a World Wetlands Day "**Discover the Rivelin Valley**" walk in a river valley near Sheffield which has 21 old mill ponds at varying stages of succession. The function is supported by the Ponds for People Conservation Trust, the Rivelin Valley Conservation Group, Yorkshire Water, and the Sheffield City Council. [Here is his report.](#)

UK, Northern Ireland. In Northern Ireland, Environment and Heritage Service is launching a **River Conservation Strategy** and hosting a river conservation conference to mark World Wetlands Day. The conference will be held in Cookstown close to the Ballinderry River recently designated an Area of Special Scientific Interest and a candidate Special Protection Area. [Here are some further details.](#)

UK, Scotland. Anne Marie McGinty (anne-marie.mcginty@scotland.gsi.gov.uk) of **Wildlife and Habitats** in the Scottish Executive, writes that displays have been prepared for WWD with materials from Ramsar and from Scottish Natural Heritage. [Photos are available.](#)

UK, Wales. Jon Young (jon.young@wales.gsi.gov.uk), Countryside Division, Nature Conservation Branch, National Assembly for Wales, has forwarded very welcome news about a new Ramsar policy for Wales modelled upon the UK's recent Ramsar policy for England. "Good Morning Dwight, Thought you might like to know that the National Assembly for Wales will be issuing its Ramsar Policy Statement tomorrow, to coincide with

World Wetlands Day. The Policy follows the lines issued by DETR. You may wish to include this in the World Wetlands Day events page on your website. Our Environment Minister will be writing to the Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention enclosing a copy of the statement in due course. Regards, Jon."

Uruguay. "As part of WWD-2001 activities, **CLAES (Latin American Center Social Ecology)** presented a report on the critical situation of Uruguayan wetlands. Ten critical wetlands were identified in the country. CLAES recalls that the Eastern Marshes Ramsar site [Bañados del Este] have been in the Montreux Record since 1990, and current environmental measures are inadequate or insufficient. A complete version of the report is available at CLAES' Web site on Uruguayan Environmental News (in spanish): <http://www.ambiental.net/claes> ." But here is [CLAES's posting to the Ramsar Forum](#), 3 February 2001 (mostly in Spanish).

USA I. Scott Duckett, Wetlands Manager for the City of Eugene, Oregon, USA, representing the **Society of Wetland Scientists**, is engaged in helping SWS members to organize school field trips throughout the USA on World Wetlands Day 2001, and on behalf of the SWS International Chapter, he intends to extend this to other countries in which SWS members reside. He promises to keep us posted on his progress, both in general and country-by-country. A description of this initiative is available in the June 2000 SWS Bulletin. **Here are some of the reports he's received.** More info from scott.duckett@ci.eugene.or.us.

USA II. Prof **William Mitsch** (mitsch.1@osu.edu), Director of the **Olentangy River Wetland Research Park**, writes: "We are holding a very important wetland event on our Ohio State University campus in Columbus, Ohio, on February 2. We have begun a public \$2.3 million fund-raising campaign for the completion of our 12-hectare campus wetland facility. We will have about 100-120 people in attendance at that luncheon. . . . We are also going to put your WWD sticker on our home page, <http://swamp.ag.ohio-state.edu/>, and link it to your web site." After the event, Prof Mitsch reported on the ceremonies in which **YSI Inc.** presented a sort-of-cheque for US\$ 200,000 to help initiate the **Ohio Center for Wetland and River Restoration**. [Here's his report, with photos.](#)

USA III, Virgin Islands. **Dayle Barry** (dbarry@uvi.edu), of the **Virgin Islands Conservation Data Center, University of the Virgin Islands**, reports that the Data Center will be hosting an unveiling ceremony of a mapped inventory of natural terrestrial and marine communities on the eve of WWD 2001.

USA IV. Robin Weinman (rweinman@eou.edu) informs us that "**The Wetlands and Waterfowl Club** at Eastern Oregon University (La Grande, Oregon) will be holding its 3rd annual **Ladd Marsh** Clean-up on February 10th in celebration of World Wetlands Day. Students, staff and community members are invited to meet at the Oregon Fish & Wildlife Office on Pierce Lane at 8:00am for a briefing of the area and to team up in groups for the clean-up. For more information please contact Doug Doherty at eouman@yahoo.com ."

USA V. Bobby L. Bonnett, Jr. (bobbybonnett@aol.com) writes from the state of West Virginia that the **Stream Monitoring / Analysis for the Heizer / Manila Watershed** NGO will be holding a ground-breaking ceremony on World Wetlands Day for a new project to construct a human-made wetland in the region. [Here are some details.](#)

USA VI. The **US State Department** has issued an interesting press release for World Wetlands Day, describing the significance of the occasion and the work of the Convention. The document can be found at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/index.cfm?docid=71> .

USA VII. Erin Breetzke (vandswcd@dynasty.net), Water Quality Specialist with the **Vanderburgh County Soil and Water Conservation District in Evansville, Indiana**, reports that the SWCD assisted the **Evansville-Vanderburgh Public Library System** in promoting World Wetlands Day 2001 with displays, games and puzzles, promotional materials, and the presentation of three wetland books to the library. [Here's a brief description with photos.](#)

Venezuela I. Alejandro Luy, Gerente de Comunicaciones y Publicaciones for the **Fundación Tierra Viva** (comunicaciontv@cantv.net), explains some of the [many activities planned for Venezuela](#) in celebration of World Wetlands Day (en español). Briefly summarized: In celebration of World Wetlands Day 2001, Venezuela's Tierra Viva Foundation has organized an event titled "Experiences in environmental Education with schools and communities of Golfo Triste" with presentations of projects generated from the work of teachers and members of the Tucacas, San Esteban and Puerto Cabello, the Inter-institutional Foundation for the Protection of Golfo Triste (FIPROGO), and the National Institute of Parks. There will also be exhibits by the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (Ramsar administrative authority in Venezuela) and by the nature Defense, institution that runs a project at the Cuare Wildlife Refuge (Ramsar site). This event will take place at the Chamber of Commerce of Puerto Cabello. See also <http://www.tierraviva.org> .

Venezuela II. Rafael Rodríguez Altamiranda (caracola@etheron.net) wrote to the Ramsar Forum to explain that (in Marco Flores' translation): "**Curimagua College in Lara, Venezuela**, joins the celebration of the international World Wetlands Day with an event titled "Water Festival", to take place in their college's facilities. Students, from preschool to high school level, have been preparing theatrical presentations, science projects, and short researches on the topic of water. It is of great importance that the Lara community celebrates and reflects on the importance of water and how wetlands in their region are fundamental to guarantee permanent sources of water. On Friday the college will release an article in the press on the situation of water supplies worldwide and in their region, the treats to these resources, the responsibilities of government and the community, protecting watersheds, environmental education, a local reforestation program with involvement of children and of course the importance of World Wetlands Day as a day to reflect on what each of us is doing to protect the essential resource of water." [Here is the Spanish original and the accompanying press release.](#)

Venezuela III. The Non-Governmental Coordination of Communication, Education and Public Awareness of the Ramsar Convention in Venezuela made a call for articles about wetlands in the area and these are available today in **Venezuela Analitica** (www.analitica.com) as a special feature for WWD 2001. These articles include: El agua es la vida. Alejandro Luy. - The environmental impact of flow regulation in tropical delta. The Case of the Manamo river (Venezuela). Giuseppe Colonnello. - Curso: Conservación de los Humedales en los Llanos de Venezuela. Andrés E. Seijas. - Provita se une a la celebración del Día Mundial de los Humedales. Provita. - La Asociación EcoNatura contribuye con la conservación de los humedales de Venezuela. Isabel Novo T. - Educación Ambiental en pro de la conservación de los humedales. Fundación Tierra Viva - Humedal más grande de Venezuela tendrá Plan de Conservación. FUDENA. - Importancia de los Humedales. Diego Díaz - Hombre, comunicación y ambiente: unidad vital a favor de los humedales. Marycarmen Sobrino. - La situación de la tortuga arrau y su posible efecto sobre la productividad del Orinoco. Omar Hernández.

Yugoslavia. Natasa Panic of the **Institute for Protection of Nature of Serbia** (nature@net.yu) in Novi Beograd, writes that the Institute has organized WWD events every year since 1997 and plans a media promotion of Ramsar's 30th anniversary on

several national television and radio stations and in news article. [Here is her brief report on the planning and a later report on the event, with photos.](#)