

REGIONAL INITIATIVE

LESSER FLAMINGO

AIM OF THE REGIONAL INITIATIVE

1. Implementation of the Ramsar approach

1.1 Describe briefly how your initiative is promoting the objectives of the Convention and how it is implementing the Ramsar Strategic Plan through cooperation in your region:

Implementation of the Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Lesser Flamingo and its Shared East African Community Regional Ecosystem

This initiative focuses around Lake Natron as the single most, globally important, breeding site for 60-70% of the world's population of Lesser Flamingo. It adopts a trans-boundary, regional and shared wetland ecosystem approach to the management and wise use of the species, its flyways, habitats and economic benefits. The aim is to establish the inter-connectivity of the population, its economic significance to local livelihoods and to the regional eco-tourism trade. In so doing, the initiative meets several of the COP9 operative objectives, notably:

- OO1.2:Regional monitoring of wise use of wetland resources and species;
- OO2.1/2: Alignment of trans-boundary policies and initiatives;
- OO3.1/2: Dissemination of regional best practices;
- OO3.3: Establishes regional significance of wetland resource to national economies and local livelihoods;
- OO3.4: Integration of territorial management from regional level to grassroots village planning;
- OO6.1: Active involvement of informed local communities to benefit from related eco-tourism;
- OO7.1:Active involvement of private sector and local community as economic partnerships;
- OO8.1: Establishment of tax-based economies of user pays systems, for future self-financing;
- OO9.1:Development of a regional CEPA on wise use of the Lesser Flamingo and its shared habitats;
- OO10.1/2: In the process, identify potential new sites that need listing as wetlands of importance;
- OO11.1/2: Instill local action and implementation, to maintain and monitor site ecological characters;
- OO12.1/2: Promote cooperation in shared flyway and basin monitoring and management;
- OO13.1: Establish an international and regional network of cooperating partners and vested parties.
- OO14.1: Share information on management and economic values of a shared species.
- OO15.2: Ensure environmental safeguards in ecotourism and other investments in the species habitats.
- OO16.1: Pool resources, research and projects in collaborating in a shared resource management.
- OO18.1: Promote cooperation between parties who share this common resource.
- OO19.1: By regional and international networking, lobby for global support to manage a shared resource.

SUBSTANTIVE ELEMENTS OF THE REGIONAL INITIATIVE

2. Complete regional adherence and bottom-up approach

2.1 Describe briefly if your initiative is based on a bottom-up approach:

During the recent global interest surge, spurred by a possible mining threat to Lake Natron's key breeding population, international, regional, national and local pressures were rallied. Regional consultations, by the Birdlife network, right down to the grass-roots level, received support to lobby for the protection of the Lesser Flamingo, and conservation of the Lake Natron Basin Ramsar Site. This initiative builds on this momentum. It is about maximizing livelihood benefits to communities who live and share the same ecosystem as the Lesser Flamingo. "If it pays it stays!". If communities see benefits, they will protect the resource. The focus is to instill Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) in people who live with Flamingos and to raise benefit sharing to these communities through eco-tourism.

2.2 List the countries in the region that your initiative covers:

The initiative will cover most of the "primary range states" who share the same East African Lesser Flamingo population, flyway, breeding grounds and habitat. Partners are therefore linked to the ecological survival and breeding success of the species, and collectively, share its economic importance to local livelihoods and national tourism economies. Notably, the Network is first and foremost those 3 States that share the East African Lesser Flamingo population: Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda. Information linkages will however be maintained with other key sites, notably: Botswana, Namibia, Ethiopia, Guinea, Mauritania, Senegal, India, Zambia and South Africa.

2.3 Specify those countries in your region that do not participate in the initiative (if any):

The initiative, is based on the 3 key East African countries, which share the same Lesser Flamingo population, primarily linked to the Lake Natron breeding population. Proposed is to maintain information linkages with other African countries that have a Lesser Flamingo population, but which may not be dependent on Lake Natron.

3. Active involvement of all relevant stakeholders

3.1 List the participants in your initiative and their affiliation:

The international support that mobilized the global "save Lake Natron campaign", are key partners, notably: the Ramsar Secretariat, IUCN, AEWA, UNEP, Birdlife International, RSBP, CMS, WWF, Flamingo SSC, Wetlands International, etc.. The above, together with the Tanzanian, Uganda and Kenyan counterparts (Tanzania = MNRT/WD and NWWG; Uganda = the Chairman, Ramsar Steering Committee and National Wetlands Program; and Kenya = the Wetlands Program, Kenya Wildlife Services and National Environmental Management Agency) took part in a February 2008 Ramsar Appraisal Mission of the threats to Lake Natron, and they gave birth to the idea of a collective, East African initiative.

Through Ramsar and Birdlife International regional networks, contracting parties in Botswana, Namibia, Ethiopia, Guinea, Mauritania, Senegal and South Africa were sensitized to the threat.

In addition, Birdlife International has mobilized support from NGOs in 24 affiliated countries. Likewise, local and regional NGO and private sector support, as partners, were rallied through the networks of the 28 NGOs affiliated to Natron Consultative Group (Kenya), and those of WCST, Tanzania Bird Atlas and TNRF.

The Donor Working Group on Environment (DPG-E) Tanzania (representing Danida, NORAD, Finnida, Sida, EU, USAID, Belgium Cooperation, UNDP/UNEP, FAO, World Bank, etc) have collectively indicated they are willing to support Tanzania in undertaking the Lake Natron Soda Ash mining EIA. In addition, Danida currently supports a Sustainable Wetlands Management Program in Tanzania, involving the WD and includes support to Lake Natron Basin Ramsar Site, its IMP and districts. This fund, which is about USD 475, 000, will run until 2011. Through the DPG-E Tanzania, donors could be used to network interest in donor agencies in partner countries.

3.2 Indicate if only Ramsar Administrative Authorities at national level or also other relevant stakeholders (including other ministries, intergovernmental bodies, NGOs, academia and economic actors) are actively involved:

Other government agencies involved included the Environment Management Agencies in Tanzania and Kenya, and national wetlands committees. The network will link with Local Government Authorities as grass-root implementation will be through decentralized, administrative processes. National NGOs, which also took part in lobbying and advocacy for Lake Natron Flamingos have been involved. The on-the ground activities with communities will also involve local NGOs working in the area (eg. For Natron: IPI, UCRT, SCF, WCS, FCF, OXFAM, CORDS, Ujama, Fredikin Foundation and local private sector tour operators (eg. For Natron: WWG, TGT, Ngaresero Camp, etc), investors and other user groups (eg irrigation projects), and donors. The Parliamentary Committee on Lands, Natural Resources and Environment for Tanzania is also involved. The Committee comprise of renowned wetlands/birds specialist such as Prof. Raphael Mwalyosi (Tanzania Ramsar STRP) and Dr. Charles Mlingwa (former member of the AEWA Technical Committee).

4. Development of collaboration based on commonly agreed terms

4.1 Describe briefly how your regional network or centre is operating (attach the terms of reference or other agreements elaborated to guide its activities as separate documents where they exist)

The concept of the East Africa Community (EAC) Regional Lesser Flamingo Network has only recently introduced, and with support from Ramsar, intends to build up wider capacity and support, for this initiative. Draft TORs for the Network, are attached (Annex 1). The concept is one of regional cooperation, information sharing, synchronizing research, sharing efforts to attain a better understand and establishing a joint management institution of a shared economic resource. It is intended to also register it with the EAC office.

Through a Lesser Flamingo webpage, and e-mail group, information sharing will take place, swapping best practices, lessons learnt and scientific knowledge. North south scientific support will be coordinated and projects pooled for a consolidated implementation of the IUCN/AEWA Lesser Flamingo Single Species Action plan (SSAP). Collectively, the Network will link local and country fora into a regional network. The Network will primarily be an e-mail group, for wider information sharing. The Network, may join forces, when needed to provide support for a joint

funding proposal (e.g. from Ramsar), otherwise, in its own right, each country will fund and manage its own events, always in liaison with others.

5. Involvement of other regional partners

5.1 List relevant intergovernmental or international organizations operating in your region:

EAC, IUCN, AEWAA, Birdlife International, RSBP, WWF, Flamingo SSC, Wetlands International, UNEP, TRAFFIC, African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), WCS, Frankfurt Zoological Society, AEWAA,

5.2 List those with which you have established common activities:

All of the above.

5.3 List your activities in common:

- A global concern to save the Lake Natron Lesser Flamingo from soda ash mining (and other) threats.
- Common agreement to implement the IUCN/AEWA/CMS Single Species Action Plan (SSAP) for the Lesser Flamingo.
- An interest to prove the “long term (i.e. million years of tourism)” economic worth of the Lesser Flamingo outweighs any “short term (i.e. 100 years of mining)” consumptive resource use.
- A common research interest to better understand the biology of the Lake Natron and EAC Lesser Flamingo, its habitats and its genetic relationship and survival linkages to other African populations.
- Capacity building to local communities to actively engage in natural resources, especially water birds conservation and management.
- Preparation of a management plan for Lake Natron Basin Ramsar Site.

6. Scientific and technical backing

6.1 List the scientific and technical partners that provide a solid backing to your initiative:

- International: Ramsar Mission, IUCN, AEWAA, Birdlife International, RSBP, CMS, WWF, Flamingo SSC, UNEP and Wetlands International.
- Research partners: Max Plank Institute, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS).
- Local Research Institutions: TAWIRI, USDM, IRA.
- Local: Tanzania DPG-E, Danida, Sand County Foundation, Fredikin Foundation, WCST, TNRF, Tanzania Bird Atlas, IPI, CORDS, Ujama, and many other

7. Targets of the initiative and their links with Ramsar

7.1 List your initiative's strategic and operational targets for the period 2009-2011:

By 2009 to have established a global and regional electronic network and web page for Lesser Flamingo.

By 2010 to start implementation of the Lesser Flamingo SSAP as mainstreamed into the District Development Plans around key shared habitats in partner countries (especially Lake Natron).

By 2010 to have estimated the regional worth of the Lesser Flamingo to local livelihoods and eco-tourism.

By 2011, through regional satellite telemetry and genetic DNA, carry out an analysis of the migration patterns and inter-dependence, of the Lesser Flamingo. Establish the global; importance of Lake Natron to the survival of the East Africa regional and Southern Africa populations.

By 2011, through research on the feeding and breeding biology, establish the relationship of the species survival to the plankton biology and related water chemistry and hydrology (especially of selected key sites, especially Lake Natron). Develop a management model that factor-in the threats of climate change and wise use.

7.2 *Specify the relations of these targets to the objectives of the draft Ramsar Strategic Plan (attach your work plan for 2009-2011, or for 2009, where it exists):*

These targets aim to support and implement the SSAP of the Lesser Flamingo, but more specifically, are focused on justifying its conservation by establishing its importance to local livelihoods and regional tourism economies, today and in the future. In this regard it supports the 2009-2014 Ramsar Strategic Plan by networking, to look at the inventory of collective value and alternative economic developments, and to halt any further potential degradation. It is based on a shared management approach to the ecosystem of the East African Lesser Flamingo. It looks at values of the Lesser Flamingo and its wetlands services to people living with them and to eco-tourism and other livelihood uses, to network, to share, to synchronize wise use best practices and to harmonize actions at regional, national, local, community level and private sector. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessments will be applied as a tool to monitor wise use guidelines and water management, accommodating for the threats of climate change and of growing population pressures and changing land use priorities, to accommodate poverty. Regional institutional capacity will be strengthened and through the East Africa Shared Waterbody Protocol and East Africa Trans-boundary Resources Management Guidelines, unify policy and regulations across regional boundaries to combine forces in a more united effort based on a EAC Regional Integrated Management Plan for the Lesser Flamingo.

Draft proposed Work Plan and Budget is attached as Annex 2.

8. Raising awareness of Ramsar objectives

8.1 Describe briefly your activities in the fields of communication, education, and participatory processes with relevant stakeholders:

The network as such will become a means of information sharing through its webpage and e-group. In addition, as the key focus is to measure the livelihood and economic worth, local communities and investors will participate. Overall, the aim is to package these into awareness and training materials and CEPA tools for use both at community and training institution levels, once the tourism values are known and knowledge on breeding biology improves.

8.2 Describe briefly the increased support for Ramsar objectives resulting from these activities (this information may be used by Ramsar's CEPA Oversight Panel, according to Standing Committee Decision 35-14):

The initiative will strive to show that through regional mobilization for a shared resource like the Lesser Flamingo, it is not enough to protect one site of importance, but also the need to cooperate to manage other, interlinked ecosystems. In addition, the regional cost-benefit analysis will show that threats to the species in one site could have far reaching economic and

conservation consequences, in another. And, if the resource can benefit livelihoods, wise use principles and value added tourism can ensure the emergence of a “tax-based economy” to contribute to local poverty reduction.

FINANCIAL AND OTHER SUPPORT FOR THE REGIONAL INITIATIVE

9. Who provides political and financial support?

9.1 List all your sources and the amounts of financial support for the triennium 2009-2011. Specify the amounts which are already confirmed:

Danida: USD 475 000 for 2008-2011 for Lake Natron Ramsar Site Office and implement IMP (confirmed).

Walt Disney: USD 0.9 million for WCS/TAWIRI ecological and satellite telemetry study (under preparation).

GEF: 2*USD 40 000 for local action (to be applied for).

Ngaresera Tour Operators: USD 40 000/year concession fee for local development (Lake Natron)(underway).

Ngorongoro District: USD 60 000/year in gate fees sharing for local development (Lake Natron)(underway).

Friedkin Conservation Fund: USD 2 000/village for local development (Lake Natron)(underway).

Sand County Foundation: USD # 000 for land use planning East Bank Lake Natron (underway).

Oxfam: USD # 000 for sustainable irrigation in Pinyini River, Lake Natron Catchment (underway).

Birdlife/RSBP: USD # 000 support to Lake Natron Consultative Group/WSCT (underway).

Global Flamingo Movement Forum: World Flamingo Tracking Project (under preparation).

Private Investor: USD 1.5-1.8 million in eco-tourism around Lake Natron (Under consideration).

UNEP (Kenya): National Lesser Flamingo Conservation Action Plan (under preparation).

Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust: Surveillance, migration, climate change, cultural threats and economic values (under preparation).

AEWA/CMS: Lesser Flamingo SSAP (under way).

Max Plank Institute: Ringing study (under preparation).

IUCN: Integrated resource assessment study, Lake Natron (in preparation).

9.2 List your sources and amounts of financial support for the year 2009. Specify the amounts which are already confirmed:

Danida: USD 200 000 for Lake Natron Ramsar Site Office and start the IMP.

Ngaresera Tour Operators: USD 40 000 concession fee for local development (Lake Natron).

Ngorongoro District: USD 60 000/year in gate fees sharing for local development (Lake Natron).

Friedkin Conservation Fund: USD 2 000/village for local development (Lake Natron).

Sand County Foundation: USD # 000 for land use planning East Bank, Lake Natron.

Oxfam: USD # 000 for sustainable irrigation in Lake Natron Catchment.

Birdlife/RSBP: USD # 000 support to Lake Natron Consultative Group/WSCT.

9.3 List concisely, according to main budget lines, your expenditures planned for 2009:

See [Annex 2](#) Work Plan and Budget.

10. Financial planning

10.1 Summarize your remaining funding needs for 2009 that are not yet covered by confirmed donations, according to the main budget lines used above:

According to [Annex 2](#), the Regional Initiative will have a shortfall of USD 200 000 in 2009.

10.2 Provide information about your fundraising plan to cover such outstanding needs:

An institutional network of partners is currently coordinating the preparation of the following fund applications:

Walt Disney: USD 0.9 million for WCS/TAWIRI biological and satellite telemetry study (under preparation).

GEF: 2*USD 40 000 for local action (to be applied for).

Birdlife: Natron Consultative Group (Kenya) planning to undertake an economic analysis.

11. Request for Ramsar core budget support

11.1 If you request a financial contribution from the Ramsar core budget, specify the amount for 2009, and for the triennium 2009-2011:

The Regional Initiative would need core support for the Secretariat's Coordination Office, its operations, webpage hosting, technical support (i.e. bird counts, ringing operations, DNA study, etc) and annual workshops amounting to USD 200 000 in 2009, and USD 350 000 from 2009-11.

GOVERNANCE OF THE REGIONAL INITIATIVE

12. Governance mechanisms in place

12.1 Describe the governance and advisory mechanisms and structures (e.g., committees) in place or to be established to provide guidance and insight to your initiative (attach terms of references, rules of procedures, or operational guidelines, where such exist):

In the first instance, the MNRT (Tanzania) as lead partner, together with lead countries Kenya and Uganda will constitute an East Africa Community Regional Lesser Flamingo Network Committee. Each partner will have a designated focal point for internal communication, liaison and coordination. In Tanzania, the AEWA Thematic Committee of the NWWG will steer the process. Through established networks, the Committee will widen the circle to other countries that share the common global resource and SSAP (Botswana, Namibia, Ethiopia, India, Guinea, Mauritania, Senegal and South Africa) and international partners (Ramsar, Birdlife International, IUCN, SSC, CMS and AEWA).

Tanzania in the first instance will Chair the Network, and provide technical and secretarial support from Danida Support and Technical Assistance to the Wetlands Unit, in the Wildlife Division. Proposed is to rotate this every 3 years. Terms of Reference are in [Annex 1](#).

13. Coordination with the Ramsar Secretariat

13.1 Specify the established or anticipated operational arrangements between the governance structures of your initiative and the Ramsar Secretariat:

The East Africa Lesser Flamingo Network focal points, who are also Ramsar Focal Points or Administrative Authorities in partner countries, will as part of their reporting obligations keep the Ramsar Secretariat and Regional Chairman informed of individual country progress against the

SSAP. Tanzania, as the first coordinator of the network will consolidate this information and through the SSC, report on regional progress.

13.2 *List the full name, telephone and e-mail contact of the main focal point of your initiative:*

PS, MNRT or Director, Wildlife Division, Tanzania, Attention Miriam Zacharia, Wetlands Coordinator and Ramsar Focal Point

Telephone: 255-222111063 or 255-754261501.

E-mail: director@wildlife.go.tz and miriamzacharia@yahoo.co.uk