



# World Wetlands Week

**31st January - 5th February 2010, Seychelles**

**Wetlands Connect life & Culture**



**2nd February**  
**World Wetland Day**  
**RAMSAR CONVENTION ON WETLANDS**  
[www.ramsar.org](http://www.ramsar.org)

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**WORLD WETLANDS WEEK 2010**  
**REPUBLIC OF SEYCHELLES**

**BACKGROUND**

The Seychelles is recognised as one of the world's leading nations in terms of the political and local populations will to ensure the sustainable use of their natural resources. In the case of Small Island States as with all other nations it is ever more imperative that all are conscious of the vulnerability and therefore the importance of maintaining the well being of their environment.

Seychelles acceded to the Ramsar Convention in March of 2005 and has presently designated 3 Ramsar sites of International Importance; two of which were added to the Ramsar list on February 2nd, World Wetlands Day 2010.

The wetlands of Seychelles are of particular importance to the country's financial stability as the largest portion of their earnings is from the tourism industry which is centred on their healthy marine and inland wetlands. This is clearly noted in their National Wetland Policy, '...wetlands play a very important role in the sustainable environment, the population and economic sectors in Seychelles'.

As a result of this realisation, there are numerous protective mechanisms in place to ensure that negative impacts from developments are avoided and minimised as far as possible where necessary; including guidelines in place that dictate should a proposal be submitted to install a waste water system within 50 meters of a wetland, the application regardless of whether it involves a large or small development, is immediately rejected.

Following the call from participants during COP10 (Changwon, 2008) to involve a broader range of partners in promoting the values and functions of wetland ecosystems and the invitation from H.E. President Jean Michel to organize a week of celebrations centred on this point, the Government of Seychelles with support from the Danone-Evian group and the Ramsar Convention Secretariat began organizing this historic event.

The objectives were:

1. Encourage development of concrete actions to support the sustainable daily use of wetland resources and promote the exchange of information on experiences with their management.

2. Promote the improvement of environmentally sustainable tourism practices by increasing dialogue and understanding of the socio-economic benefits and business opportunities provided by the ecosystem services of fully functioning wetland systems.
3. Encourage governments, donors, international organisations, and the civil society at large, including business companies, NGOs and local communities, to join their efforts to stop and reverse the degradation of wetlands in order to sustain the services they provide as a prerequisite for future growth opportunities.
4. To encourage decision makers and business leaders to develop and adopt policies, strategies and operational approaches according to existing national and international guidelines and standards for ecosystem management, which avoid, remediate or as a last option 'offset' adverse impacts on wetland ecosystems, including considering the potential benefits that could be derived from the Business and Biodiversity Offsets programme.
5. Support joint efforts between the Ramsar structures and partners and the business sector in building alliances with scientific and research organisations, with a view to improving understanding of wetland ecosystem services, identifying and scaling up solutions, and sharing their tools and experience

The continually fruitful partnership between the Danone-Evian Group and the Ramsar Convention made this event a reality. With their generous financial and moral support a successful 6 day programme of events was developed with a specific theme for each one to achieve these objectives.

## **ACTIVITIES**

### **Day 1: Sports and Recreation Day**

The first day of the World Wetlands Week 2010 celebrations in Seychelles focusing on raising awareness of the values of wetlands during the 'Sports and Recreation Day' was held at the first designated Ramsar site Port Launay.

In attendance was Minister Joel Morgan (Minster of Environment, Natural Resources and Transport), Mr. Anada Tiega (Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention), Mr Didier Dogley (Principal Secretary), Mr Wills Agricole (General Director of the Environment/Head of the Ramsar Administrative Authority), Mrs Ginette Gamatis (Member of the National Assembly), Mr. Kevin Erwin (Ramsar Scientific and Technical Review Panel), representative of the Ephelia Hotel (sponsors of the day), Non Governmental Organisations such as Sustainability for Seychelles, numerous members of the local community and tourists.

Geared towards raising awareness of the functions of wetlands to all, young and old, the day was a success. Amongst the activities organized to show the recreational value that wetlands hold were the sporting competitions which included a triathlon (swimming, running and canoeing) through the Ramsar site, volleyball and football. All winners were awarded prizes sponsored by the Danone-Evian group and will receive Ramsar materials so that they continue to pass on the messages that they learnt.



To demonstrate the biodiversity supported by this ecosystem, a Wetland Safari was organised for the young members of the Wildlife Club, with participation of the Sustainability for Seychelles NGO, the Sea Level Rise Foundation amongst several others.

See appendix 1 for opening and closing speeches.



*Wetland Safari participants (Photos: Terrence Vel)*



#### Day 2: Visit to the wetlands of Mahé Island and official Opening Ceremony

The second day of the World Wetlands Week 2010 celebration in Seychelles, began with visits to the wetlands of Mahé; the largest of the Seychellois islands. This visit was organized and sponsored by the Seychelles Tourism Board and accompanied by the Ramsar National Focal Point, Dr Pugazhendhi Murugaiyan and Ms Vanessa Zialor of the Ministry of Environment (Coastal Zone Management Programme).

Amongst those visited was Anse Royale and Police Bay; both examples of outstanding wetlands aesthetically and in terms of the support they provide to the range of biodiversity reliant upon them.

These two wetlands are also of note as it is evident that they are potential designations as Ramsar sites of International Importance and it is intended that this process be completed by the end of the year.

The official opening of the weeks' celebration was held in the evening with a ceremony attended by Mr Joseph Belmont (Vice President of Seychelles), Minister Morgan, other Ministry heads of the Government of Seychelles, Mr Luigi Cabrini (Director of the Sustainable Development of Tourism Department, UNWTO), diplomats, local school children, international media coverage from the Inter Press Service News Agency, local media, wetland site stakeholders amongst many others.



*Vice-President Belmont, Minister Morgan (respectively 5th and 4th from right, front row) and other guests  
(Photos: Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation)*

The ceremony was opened through song by students of Anse Etoile School who called for all to 'Protect our sky, sea and planet to ensure that it lives on'. This sentiment was echoed by the messages of support from Dr Ahmed Djoghla (Convention on Biological Diversity) and Mr Franck Riboud (Danone-Evian). Both as well as all other speakers further focused on the point that in order to implement the Ramsar principles and ensure that the rich yet fragile ecosystems of all the worlds' wetlands ,it is essential to promote partnership with stakeholders at all levels; local and national, governmental and private etc.

With this event being hosted in the Seychelles, where tourists are attracted by the beauty of its natural environment, the tourism industry is a major source of income. Mr Cabrini noted that 2010 will be the year of transformation following the economic troubles that have faced all in the recent past. With this he called to Seychelles to initiate joint projects with partner organisations which would then allow for all to share information for the benefit of the country without detriment to the biodiversity and other natural wonders that draw people to the Seychelles. This message he reiterated is one that is applicable to all nations.



With the debut of the Danone-Evian sponsored World Wetlands Week theme song '*Don't let them die*' and the launch of the '*Wetlands and Ecotourism in Seychelles*' documentary that was made possible through the support of the Swiss Grant for Africa 2008 cycle, Minister Morgan took the opportunity to officially launch the World Wetlands Week 2010 celebrations. It is intended that both of these products will be available for distribution through the Ramsar website and other online sources in the coming months.

### Day 3: Wetland conservation sites field visits

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> February, World Wetlands Day, the celebrations in Seychelles continued with a series of activities including the "adoption" of the North East Point Wetlands by the Seychelles Scouts Association (SSA) in the presence of the national and international media. Minister Joel Morgan and Mr. Anada Tiega as well as other officials of the government of Seychelles participated to the event.

The representative of SSA read a statement in which he indicated that his association would take good care of the North East Point wetland which has partly been invaded by creeping plants with the aim to restore its functions.



(Photo: Ramsar)



*(Photo: Ramsar)*

The Wild Life Club of Seychelles organized a workshop on “zon”, a wetland local invasive at Roche Caiman Community Centre. This workshop was the occasion for young kids from various schools from Mahé and Praslin islands, and some adults to show the series of objects which could be manufactured with the “zon” and other wetlands related plants. The students involved are now to disseminate this new knowledge that they have acquired to the other students in their individual schools.

Further demonstrating the commitment of the youth of Seychelles to protect the natural environment, this third day of the celebrations was the occasion to see the importance that the youth play in the success of wetlands conservation in the country, as they were well represented in all of the ceremonies.

The Ministry of Culture organized a viewing of 3D modeling at the Natural History Museum with a special focus on the importance of wetlands in the history and culture of Seychelles. The guided visits throughout the day at the National Museum of Natural History were articulated around the wetlands theme.

The Wildlife Club and Young Citizens Group of the Plaisance Secondary school, gave an excellent presentation of their knowledge on wetlands as well as of the projects they carry out over the weekends. This includes participating in wetland safaris and assisting in ongoing restoration programmes of the wetlands of the Seychelles.





*Presentation and discussions on wetland values and functions at Plaisance Secondary school (Photos: Terrence Vel)*



One of the major events of this celebration was the signing of a Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ramsar Secretariat and the United Nations World Tourism Organization under the auspices of the Government of Seychelles. This ceremony was followed by an interview of the Ramsar Secretary General on the national TV (Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation) on the global importance of wetlands, the



theme of the WWD 2010 and the reasons for which the MoC was signed with UNWTO; the interview is soon to be available on request from the Secretariat.

The signing of this MOC provides an opportunity for all Contracting Parties to gain and share information on development of sustainable tourism strategies centered on wetlands; it cannot be denied that the wonders of their natural resources are often what draw curious individuals to nations.

For further information on the projects already initiated as part of this agreement and full details of the MOC, visit the following link: [http://www.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-news-archives-2010-wto-moc-sign/main/ramsar/1-26-45-437%5E24391\\_4000\\_0](http://www.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-news-archives-2010-wto-moc-sign/main/ramsar/1-26-45-437%5E24391_4000_0)

The day ended with the presentation of the certificates for the designation of two wetlands (Mare aux Cochons and Aldabra Atoll) as Ramsar sites of International Importance, by the Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention Mr. Anada Tiega to the Government of Seychelles. The certificates were received by Minister Joel Morgan (Minister of Environment, Natural Resources and Transport) on behalf of the Seychelles Government. The Minister handed over the Aldabra certificate to Mr. Maurice Lousteau-Lalane, Chair of the Seychelles Island Foundation Board of Trustees, which is the organisation responsible for the management of the site which is already a UNESCO World Heritage site.

#### Day 4: Visit to Mare aux Cochons Ramsar site of International Importance

The 3<sup>rd</sup> of February, Day 4 of the WWW 2010 celebrations, focused on visits to the wetland sites of Mahé; specifically to the newly designated Ramsar site of International Importance 'Mare aux Cochons'.

Accompanied by Terrence Vel (representative of the Wildlife Club of Seychelles) this not to be missed opportunity was taken up by Mr Luigi Cabrini, Abou Bamba (Ramsar Senior Regional Advisor, Africa), Ministry of Environment officials, Seychelles Wildlife Club members and representatives of civil society groups in Seychelles.

Located in the Morne Seychellois National Park, this Ramsar site (No. 1905) is unique in that it is the only high altitude freshwater wetland on Mahé.

Clearly demonstrated by the guides and the evident high levels of maintenance, this National Park and Ramsar site are in good hands. As informed by Mr Jean Claude Labrosse of the Ministry of Environment, it is essential now that steps be taken to ensure that the invasive species affecting Mare aux Cochons and its surrounding catchment are cleared before they irreversibly affect the ecology of this special area.

#### Day 5: Wetland seminars and workshops

The fifth day of WWW2010 in the Seychelles was one of sharing knowledge. As fittingly said by Mr Jean Claude Labrosse of the Ministry of Environment, *'...to celebrate wetlands, we must know wetlands'*.

The day was launched by Mr Didier Dogley (Principal Secretary) and Mr Abou Bamba. Both putting forward the fact the Seychelles should be proud that the political and civil will to ensure the protection of wetlands is apparent to all. A particularly strong point was also the open cooperation of the private sector with the government and local communities.

Participants came from varied backgrounds ranging from Non-Governmental Organisations, Grassroots community organization representatives, UN administered project office representatives, school children, Government Ministry representatives amongst others.

The presentations began with 'The Way Forward' by Mr Marc MRM Marengo, Secretary General of The Ecotourism Society of Seychelles (TESS). He told of Sweet Escott wetland and the important role it had played throughout his life from childhood as well as to the culture of the community of Anse Royale.

He noted that following land reforms in the Seychelles, many of the wetlands were neglected as tourist developments gained more favour. With severe threats from invasive flora and lack of maintenance of dykes and channels, effects from siltation and repeated flooding in the area were some of the problems faced.

Through TESS the Sweet Escott wetland is being rehabilitated, with the support of funding from the EC through the Indian Ocean Commission. The objective here is to develop an ecologically sustainable management plan that will return the wetland and the surrounding areas affected to its previous state, thereby promoting once again Sweet Escott as an eco-tourist gem.

Dr Fleischer Dogley of the Seychelles Islands Foundation (SIF) was next to address the participants. The SIF is responsible for the management of the Vallee de Mai and Aldabra Atoll World Heritage Sites.

Dr Dogley introduced the near pristine Atoll to all as the newly designated Ramsar site (No. 1887). Recognised for its varied habitat types that allow for the support of many different species such as the endangered and vulnerable green turtle *Chelonia mydas* and the Aldabra giant tortoise *Geochelone gigantea*; endemic species of flora (40 species) and fauna such as the Madagascar sacred ibis *Threskiornis aethiopicus abbotti* and 100% of the populations of two species of endemic insectivorous bat (*Chaerephon pusillus* and *Triaenops pauliani* amongst others).

She noted that amongst the challenges facing the management of the site was the logistics of travel to the Atoll (1150 km from Mahe). A point stressed however was that it is essential to develop long term conservation strategies for any protected area. It is hoped that with this further designation of the Atoll as a Ramsar site, further opportunities for support of the activities being carried out to maintain the Aldabra Atoll in its natural state will be more forthcoming.

The representative for Sustainability for Seychelles, Mrs Michelle Martin, was next to take the podium where she shared the organisations experience acting as facilitator between the local community of Port Glaud (district in which the Port Launay Ramsar site is found) and the representatives of the newly opened Ephelia Resort in Port Glaud.

It was clear that with the current Seychelles Strategy promoting doubling of the GDP by 2017, there would be increased promotion of high end tourism developments. In this particular case, lack of sharing information led to conflicts between community members and the hotel representatives.

Sustainability for Seychelles bridged this communication gap and while reservations still remain, stakeholders from as wide a range as the local authority, small enterprises, fishermen, church



representatives etc. have had the opportunity to tour the development and discuss their concerns with the hotel representatives.

As a result there is a newly formed Environment Group in Port Glaud that includes all stakeholders. It aims to take all necessary measures to conserve the beauty and resources of this area, which will benefit not only the hotel and the local and national community, but the global community by implementing proper conservation and maintenance measures.

The next presentation, introduced the study conducted recently on the freshwaters of the Seychelles Islands; Praslin, Mahe and Silhouette.

There has been a lack of detailed study in this area and the findings of this study conducted in conjunction with the Paris Natural History Museum, such as the discovery of species such as Larkansyel (*Parioglossus multiradiatus*) in the mangroves and brackish zones of the rivers in Seychelles, it is expected that there will be an increased interest in the inland wetlands. Other species inventoried were *Anguila bicolor* (Short fin eel), monkey river prawn and crabs.

Mr. Kevin Erwin of the Ramsar STRP was next to deliver a presentation to the participants concerning Wetland Restoration, Mitigation and Management of impacts from climate change and other more localized issues. This presentation and ensuing discussions, led by Abou Bamba continued onto the next day.

This was an enlightening opportunity for all concerned, as not only was there the chance to discuss the issues that the participants felt were most pressing with regards to the pressures facing the wetlands, but with the Ministry of Environment representative responsible for elaboration of the Environmental Management Plan of Seychelles (EMPS) 2010-2020 present, these issues and the resulting recommendations from the discussions are to be included in the final document with the possibility to have a standalone Wetland Section highly likely as a result.

The summary of the individual recommendations is provided below:

1. A full wetland inventory to be conducted throughout all the Islands of Seychelles.
2. Elaboration of management plans taking into consideration the current state of wetlands, pressures, impacts and recommended responses at the catchment level.
3. Implementation of measures to limit/control the spread of invasive species.
4. Capacity building and resource availability: An active programme to be initiated with the aim of building up local expertise and practical experience in relation to
5. Conducting wetland inventories on all Seychelles Islands
6. Rehabilitation of wetlands
7. Monitoring of wetland health
8. Coordination and accessibility to information: Improve the transfer of information between the various bodies and organisations (governmental and non-governmental) concerned with wetlands. A centralised resource to be developed allowing all stakeholders to be updated on studies conducted and those to be conducted. The findings of the research where possible are to also be available to interested parties.

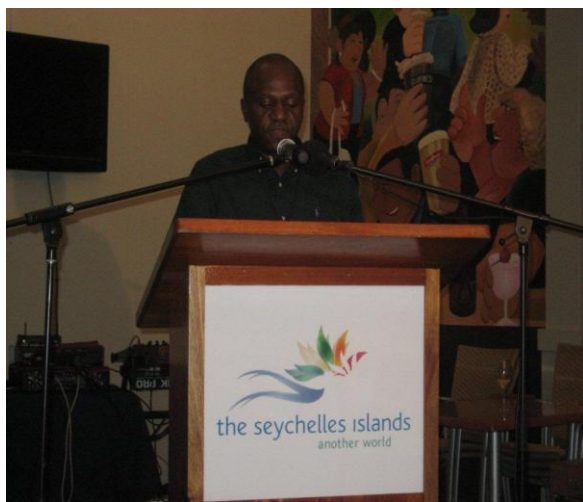
9. Promote participation of local communities and civil society in wetland related activities and ensure resource availability:
10. Coastal communities to undergo training to improve their efficiency in managing the resources available to them
11. Creation of community 'beachwatch' groups
12. Adoption of wetlands in the locality for rehabilitation where applicable and monitoring
13. Legislation: Consistent implementation and enforcement, and where necessary further development of existing protective legislation, including the National Wetland Policy, Agriculture and Aquaculture policy and Urban Planning policy is of paramount importance.
14. Administration: Re-establishment of the Wetlands Unit with creation of officially sanctioned full time positions (as opposed to occasional contracting of consultants) with individually dedicated responsibilities.
15. Ecotourism: Elaboration and implementation of management measures specific to existing and potential ecotourism developments.

Copies of the presentations are available on request from the Secretariat and the report of the workshop from the Ministry of Environment is available in Appendix 2.

#### Day 6: Closing ceremony

The closing ceremony of WWW2010 in the Seychelles was hosted by the Eden Island Group at the Eden Island development. This event was attended not only by Ministry of Environment representatives, including Minister Joel Morgan, but by all who had been involved in the organisation of this historic event.

Mr Didier Dogley (Principal Secretary) and Abou Bamba (Ramsar Senior Advisor, Africa) took to the stage to thank all individuals and organizations that had been involved in ensuring the success of the week, to reflect on what had been achieved and what was to come not only for the Seychelles but for all Ramsar Contracting Parties as a result.



*Abou Bamba (Ramsar Senior Advisor, Africa) and Didier Dogley (Principal Secretary) delivering closing remarks*



At the international level special recognition was given to the Danone-Evian group for their support of this unique event, as well as the UN World Tourism Organisation, Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention on Migratory Species. Also noted was the appreciation to the media coverage of the event by Radio France Internationale, Inter Press Service News Agency and the Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation.

The local contributors and financial sponsors were also offered sincere thanks and several awarded certificates of recognition for their participation. Of note was the diverse range of activities in which they were involved: Seychelles Tourism Board, Ministry of Education, Seychelles Scouts Association, Mangroves for the Future, and Sustainability for Seychelles, Banyan Tree Hotel Management, Constance Resorts Group (Ephelia, Seychelles), Ramani and Co. Chartered Accountants amongst several others.

The Government of Seychelles was also presented with a certificate of recognition from the Ramsar Secretariat for the efforts into organizing the weeklong celebration that was inclusive of all stakeholders and allowed for concrete outputs ranging from the “adoption” of the North East Point Wetlands by the Seychelles Scouts Association (SSA) to the real possibility of having a standalone Wetland Section in the Seychelles Environmental Management Plan 2010-2020 (EMPS).



*Minister Joel Morgan being presented with a certificate of recognition for the Government of Seychelles by Mr Abou Bamba.*

As the Principal Secretary, officially closed the World Wetlands Week, it was evident to all that the momentum of the week will continue both in Seychelles, at the Ramsar Convention Secretariat and amongst the Contracting Parties interested in hosting similar events in the years to come.

## **MEDIA**

Through local and international media coverage of the events in Seychelles there has been successful dissemination of the global World Wetlands Day 2010 message, with even further focus on the importance of wetlands to culture.

This coverage has helped to improve the visibility of the Ramsar Convention and the wide range of partners that we work with to achieve our mission of *'the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world'*.

Promotion of the event was carried out locally and internationally by the Seychelles Tourism Board and Radio France Internationale through their online networks.

The Seychelles' Broadcasting Corporation provided local coverage of the week with the proceedings of the opening and closing ceremonies as well as the workshop and seminars held on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> February 2010 being aired as part of the daily news programme in English and Creole. A '20 Minutes' a weekly programme that profiles a prominent figure featured Anada Tiega following the signing of the MOC with the UN World Tourism Organisation.

Throughout the week, the team from Radio France Internationale led by Mrs. Anne-Cecile Bras, had the opportunity to interview representatives from the Ministry of Environment, the Ramsar Scientific and Technical Review Panel, Seychelles Islands Foundation, University of Seychelles amongst others. These interviews were then aired as part of the 'C'est pas du vent' environmental programme that is broadcast weekly reaching over 40, 000, 000 people.

Links:

1. Le point sur les zones humides dans le monde et le rôle de la Convention de Ramsar: <http://www.rfi.fr/contenu/20100128-1-le-point-zones-humides-le-monde-le-role-convention-ramsar>
2. Les enjeux des zones humides aux Seychelles: <http://www.rfi.fr/contenu/20100128-2-enjeux-zones-humides-seychelles>
1. Le rayonnement scientifique des Seychelles: <http://www.rfi.fr/contenu/20100128-1-le-rayonnement-scientifique-seychelles>
2. Comment concilier tourisme et environnement: <http://www.rfi.fr/contenu/20100128-2-comment-concilier-tourisme-environnement>
1. Le thon dans l'Océan indien: <http://www.rfi.fr/contenu/20100128-1-le-thon-ocean-indien>
2. Les conséquences du réchauffement climatique sur les fonds marins des Seychelles: <http://www.rfi.fr/contenu/20100128-2-consequences-rechauffement-climatique-fonds-marins-seychelles>

Providing Anglophone coverage of the week's events was the global news agency, Inter Press Service. The environment and science correspondent Mr Stephen Leahy and his team were present for the entire week and published a feature length article on the importance of 'Keeping Wetlands from Becoming Wastelands'; soon to be available is an article on the link between wetlands and tourism. Available on demand from the Secretariat are photographs from the week and two podcast interviews of Mr Cabrini and Mr Tiega.

Links:

Keeping Wetlands from Becoming Wastelands: <http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=50233>



## LESSONS LEARNT

The success of this week is evident from the commitment of all involved to deliver and follow up on the outputs; in the Seychelles specifically and to all Ramsar Contracting Parties.

The **participation of the local communities, with a specific nod of recognition to the youth** of the Seychelles is an example that should be replicated amongst all contracting parties. The education system should place as a priority emphasis on raising awareness of the values of the natural environment and the importance of maintaining the invaluable resources.

Through the tremendous support from the Danone-Evian group, local private sector organisations and civil society organisations in the Seychelles this event was **resoundingly successful and productive for all local and international partners involved, especially in terms of increased promotion.**

The involvement of the local private sector should be especially noted as they ranged from those involved in the tourism industry such as hotels, resorts and tour operators; those from the telecommunications sector such as mobile and internet service providers; financial organisations amongst several others.

This is a clear indication that all contracting parties have a multitude of resources outside of the Convention Secretariat available to them to carry out similar activities.

Through **local and international media coverage** of the events in Seychelles there has been successful dissemination of the global World Wetlands Day 2010 message, with even further focus on the importance of wetlands to culture. This coverage has helped to improve the visibility of the Ramsar Convention and the wide range of partners that we work with to achieve our mission.

Responding to the wise use of wetlands goal, the discussions during the workshops that involved a diverse range of participants has led to the initiation of discussions to include a **standalone Wetland Section in the 10 year Environmental Management Plan of Seychelles**, with further investigation into the recommendations put forward from the workshop.

As part of the projected outcomes following the visit to the Seychelles in 2009 (that led to the launch of this World Wetlands Week celebrations in Seychelles) four new sites were to be added to the Ramsar List of Sites of International Importance. To date, two sites were designated on the 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2010 and the compilation of information for Vallée de Mai and Plaine Hollandaise is underway. Subsequent to this more recent mission to the Seychelles there is definite potential to **add further sites onto the list**; Police Bay has already been proposed and it is expected that with full wetland inventories being conducted on all Seychelles Islands the additions to the list will continue.

By following a simple framework for organisation of an event such as this, involving a range of participants from varied backgrounds and with support from the private and public sectors it is not beyond reason that **similar events can be carried out on an annual basis in the other Ramsar regions. To be investigated is the possibility to develop a model** that can be used as a tool by all contracting parties to this end.

## **THANKS AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

The Ramsar Convention Secretariat would like to acknowledge the contribution of the Danone-Evian Group to the success of this event. We look forward to collaborating on similar projects in all regions in the coming years.

The contribution of Mr Kevin Erwin (Ramsar STRP member) was truly appreciated.

We also offer our sincerest appreciation to the entire staff of the Ministry of Environment without whose dedication this historic World Wetlands Week would not have been as great a success.

Thanks are also given to the members of the numerous organizing committees who worked tirelessly to ensure that the activities for each day were executed effortlessly.

Amongst the numerous local sponsors we especially recognize the contribution of the following:

- Cable & Wireless Seychelles Pty Ltd.
- AirTel – Telecom Services Seychelles
- Takamaka Bay Rum – Takamaka – Seychelles
- Seychelles Breweries Ltd
- National Sports Council – Seychelles
- District Administration – Port Glaud
- Ramani & Co. Chartered Accountants
- PillayR Groups – Victoria.
- GS Pillay & Co Mont Fleuri.
- Jean Marie Moutia – North East point.
- Seychelles Tourism Board
- Seychelles Hospitality Agency
- Seychelles Island Foundation
- Ephelia Resorts – Port Glaud
- Banyan Tree Hotel Resorts & Spa – Seychelles.



## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX 1**

#### **WORLD WETLANDS WEEK CELEBRATIONS 2010 SEYCHELLES 31<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY – 5<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2010 SEYCHELLES ISLANDS**

#### **SPORTS & RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES 31<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY 2010**

#### **REMARKS FOR THE OFFICIAL LAUNCHING OF THE SPORTS & RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES PORT LAUNAY**

Minister for Environment, Natural Resources & Transport, Minister for Community Development, Youth, Sports and Culture, Secretary General of “Ramsar Convention” Regional General Manager of Constance Hotels & Resort other Invitees and Participants, good morning and welcome once again to Port Glaud District.

It is a pleasure and privilege to have you all among us today to celebrate this important and unique event, the Sports and Recreational Activities for the World Wetlands Week 2010 Celebration in Seychelles. The first activity to be celebrated during the week long celebrations.

The lives of the Port Glaud Community have always evolve around the Wetlands of Port Glaud and Port Launay, be it a fisherman, or a tourist guide has in one way or another benefit from the Wetlands, as we also know that wetlands supports billions of livelihoods around the World.

Decision taken to celebrate the World Wetlands Week in Seychelles by Ramsar Convention shows its appreciation to what Seychelles has achieved so far into the management, Conservation and protection of the wetlands in Seychelles and the confidence that Ramsar has in the Government of Seychelles to organize such an event and your presence here among us today bear witness to the same.

Our presence today for this activity, demonstrate our commitment and determination to continue to support the protection of these areas of great natural resources for the benefit of our young generation. One of the activities to be organized today is the Wetlands Safari, which will be a great opportunity for the children to enhance their knowledge of what does a Wetland has to offer as resources and its vital roles in the equilibrium of our fragile environment. Support for the protection of our Wetlands should not end after this activity, but we should continue to unite our efforts to be better prepared as a Community, as Nation to manage, conserve and protect our Wetlands for our future generations. I seize this opportunity to thank Ramsar Convention and the Danone Group for sponsoring this activity today.

As the theme for this year goes “Together ready for the future”

I now have the pleasure to officially launch the Sports & Leisure Activities for the World Wetlands Week 2010 Celebrations in Seychelles. Have a nice and joyful day among us.

Thank you

**WORLD WETLANDS WEEK CELEBRATIONS 2010 SEYCHELLES**  
**31<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY – 5<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2010**  
**SEYCHELLES ISLANDS**

**SPORTS & RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES 31<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY 2010**

**REMARKS TO OFFICIALLY CLOSE THE SPORTS & RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES PORT  
LAUNAY**

Minister for Environment, Natural Resources & Transport, Minister for Community Development, Youth, Sports and Culture, Secretary General of “Ramsar Convention” Regional General Manager of Constance Hotels & Resort other Invitees and Participants.

On behalf of the Organizing Committee for this Sports & Recreational Activities for the WWW 2010 Celebrations in Seychelles and the P.Glaud Community I would like to thank you all for your presence among us today. As it was stressed this morning, this shows the appreciation Ramsar Convention has for Seychelles endless efforts in protecting its Wetlands, but this is only the beginning, as we face many challenges both natural and man-made in protecting our Wetlands, but we are determine to face these new challenges for we know together we can overcome them.

I think all of us will take home some good memories of that special day and eventually the week that is to be followed. I wish our distinguish guests of wonderful stay in Seychelles and to the participants we really appreciate your participation in all the activities and also for the Organizing Committee for a job well done and now I have the pleasure to officially close this Sports & Recreational Activities.

Thank you

## APPENDIX 2



### **WORLD WETLAND WEEK – 2010 SEYCHELLES** **SEMINARS & WORKSHOP – FEBRUARY 4<sup>TH</sup> & 5<sup>TH</sup> 2010**

**VENUE: ICCS – ROOM NO. 2**

**TIME: 9:00 AM – 4:30 PM (Thursday)**

**9:00 AM – 12:00 NOON (Friday)**

**Organizers: Dr. P. Murugaiyan & Mr. Ronley Fanchette**

### **DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT**

**Opening of the Seminar & Workshop:**

**Mr. Didier Dogley – PS/Environment**

#### **Program of Events:**

<b>4<sup>TH</sup> 2010</b>	<b>FEBRUARY</b>	<b>WETLAND SEMINARS</b>	<b>PRESENTERS</b>	<b>TOPIC/AREAS</b>
9:00 am		<b>Opening ceremony</b>	<b>Principal Secretary/Env</b>	<b>Opening of the sessions</b>
9:15 am		The Eco-tourism Society Seychelles (TESS)	Mr. Marc Marengo	Rehabilitation of Sweet Escott Wetlands
9:30 am		<b>TEA BREAK</b>		
10:00 am		Sustainability for Seychelles ( S4S)	Mrs. Michelle Martin	Five star tourism in Ramsar Wetlands
10:20 am		Conservation Section	Ms. Wilna Accouche	Wetlands & Freshwater



	/DoE		biodiversity
10:40	Seychelles Island Foundation	Dr. Fleischer Dogley	Aldabra Atoll – a Ramsar site.
11:00	Plant Conservation Action Group	Ms. Katy Beaver	The Value of monitoring vegetation in small island wetlands.
11:20 – 12:00	Discussion	Discussion	Discussion
12:00 – 1:00	<b>LUNCH BREAK</b>	<b>SEA FRONT RESTAURANT</b>	
1:00 – 4:30	Conservation Group USA.	Dr. Kevin Erwin	Wetlands & Climate Change : Restoration, Mitigation and Management
2:30 – 3:00	<b>TEA BREAK</b>		
	Conservation Group USA.	Dr. Kevin Erwin	Wetlands & Climate Change :
4:00 – 4:30	Discussion & Close		
<b>5<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2010</b>			
9:00 am – 12:00 noon	Conservation Group USA.	Dr. Kevin Erwin	Wetlands & Climate Change :
12:00 - 1:00	<b>LUNCH BREAK</b>	<b>SEA FRONT RESTAURANT</b>	

## **WORLD WETLAND WEEK – 2010**

### **SEYCHELLES**

### **WETLANDS SEMINARS AND WORKSHOPS – BRIEF REPORT**

#### **4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> February - events from THE SEMINAR:**

##### **OPENING SPEECH:**

Principal Secretary Environment Mr. Didier Dogley declared open the seminar sessions with a short speech on wetlands importance and conservation together with Mr. Abou Bamba Regional Advisor – Africa on the importance of Wetlands and their role and in perspective of the small island states like the Seychelles.

After the opening speeches there followed the presentations of different persons as scheduled in the program of activities.

**Coordinators:**

Dr. Pugazhendhi Murugaiyan – Wetlands – EEWS/DoE and Mr. Rodney Fanchette – Conservation.

**Audience:**

The room was brimming with participants from different organizations and school eco club group and very high and strong questions and criticisms were raised and answered back by the presenters and coordinators. Please find below a separate list of participants.

Each following organization was invited to send two participants to attend the two days seminar:

*Public Utilities Corporation – waters*  
*Seychelles Fisheries Authority*  
*Seychelles Bureau of Standards*  
*National Meteorological services*  
*Department of Agriculture*  
*Local Government – district administrations*  
*The Ecological Society Seychelles – NGO*  
*Marine Conservation Society Seychelles – NGO*  
*Sustainability for Seychelles – NGO*  
*Plant Action Group – NGO*  
*Seychelles Island Foundation – Parastatals*  
*Botanical Garden Trust*  
*Mangroves for the Future*  
*ReCoMaP*  
*Seychelles Scouts Association – NGO*  
*Young Citizens*  
*Wild Life Clubs – Schools – from Plaisance School*  
*Environment Health – Min of Health*  
*Department of Risks and Disaster Management*  
*Environment staff from:*

- *Drainage*
- *Conservation,*
- *Environmental impact assessment*
- *Legal office*
- *Wetlands- inspectors Mahe, Praslin and La Digue*
- *Environment Coordinators from Praslin and La Digue*

*For each session: nearly 68 participants were present – a high number of participation for a wetland presentation and seminar.*

***Different presentations by NGOs in the morning session: 4<sup>th</sup> February 2010***

Mr. Marc Marengo did his presentation on behalf of the TESS and NGO - on the Rehabilitation of Sweet Escott Wetlands, followed by

Ms. Willna Accouche – from the Conservation Section of the Department of Environment to do her presentation on Fresh water biodiversity especially on the fish and terrapins and the main insects present in the wetlands and rivers and on the recent studies on them.

Mrs. Michelle Martin from the Sustainability Seychelles gave a presentation on the Five star tourism potentials at the Ramsar site with special mention to the first Ramsar site Port Launay – Port Glaud.

On behalf of the Seychelles Island Foundation on the second International Ramsar site – Aldabra atoll Dr. Fleisher Dogley present her picturesque views and reports on the Aldabra Atoll, its biodiversity and ecological significance.

Ms. Katy Beaver a free lance environmental biologist and the member of the Plant Action Group another NGO did her presentation on the vegetation studies on small island wetlands and the different level of succession of plants in different time periods.

***Special presentation from Ramsar side: Mr. Kevin Erwin Principal ecologist – US.***

Mr. Erwin arrived on the 30<sup>th</sup> of January and had ample exposure to the local environment and wetlands through different organized site visits and observations. He was given the floor on the afternoon session of the 4<sup>th</sup> February and the morning session of the 5<sup>th</sup> February.

On the 4th & 5th his presentations were on different restoration of wetlands on Florida USA. Following the intervention of Mr. Bamba, Ramsar Senior Regional Advisor (Africa), many interested participants had started asking different questions of wetlands issues and impacts and responses were recognized.

Studies focused on Pressure, Impacts, Current state, and Response categories and different issues raised were tabled and analyzed. Ms. Cynthia Kibata (Assistant Advisor, Africa) was also coordinating with Advisor on the discussion as well.

**Several recommendations were made** at the end of the day with the co ordination of the Regional advisor Mr. Bamba.

1. Possibility of Ramsar assisting in the new Environmental Management Plan – Seychelles EMPS – 2010 – 2020 for the wetlands components under Biodiversity thematic areas.
2. More coordination and sharing of information from the NGO's and Government sides on wetlands sides
3. Inventory of all the wetlands
4. Training and capacity building – with university seychelles, scholarships, expert visits etc
5. Guide book on the wetlands management
6. More consistency from government in utilizing opportunities – like training facilities.

**Other logistics:**

All invited participants were given a file folder with stationery and a 4 GB wetland week souvenir pen drive, tea break and lunch break with buffet system.

Well received by the different sectors of participation and anticipate good follow ups from the participants' side on different issues of wetlands conservation and management in the small island states like the Seychelles.

**Closing:**

A short compilation of the recommendations was made and the sessions were closed at around 2:00 pm of that day to break for lunch and other programs.