

Working Session 7

Wetlands and Poverty Eradication— Guidance and Case Studies

**Asia Regional Workshop on Scientific and Technical
Support for Implementation of the Ramsar Convention**

Changwon, Republic of Korea
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Background

- wetland ecosystem services are vital for human well-being and form an integral part of livelihood strategies of wetland-dependent communities
- poverty can often result in interventions that impact upon wetlands
- These impacts can be both direct and indirect
- A vicious cycle could develop where poverty impacts the ecological character of wetlands so that the wetlands ability to deliver ecosystem services is degraded/lost.

Background (continued)

- Wetland losses are more rapid where human populations are increasing and where pressure for economic development is greatest.
- Achieving the MDGs such as the eradication of poverty, partly depends on maintaining/enhancing wetland ecosystem services.
- A cross-sectoral focus is urgently needed that emphasizes securing wetland ecosystems and their services in the context of achieving sustainable development and improving human well-being.

Resolution IX.14 on Wetlands and Poverty Reduction (2005)

- Urged CP to take action to contribute to poverty reduction
- Stressed the central role of local communities and linking wetland management and restoration with poverty reduction
- To give priority or support to the conservation and wise use of water and wetlands in national poverty reduction strategy papers
- Create new partnerships to ensure that local perspectives are included and that existing sustainable livelihood strategies are respected

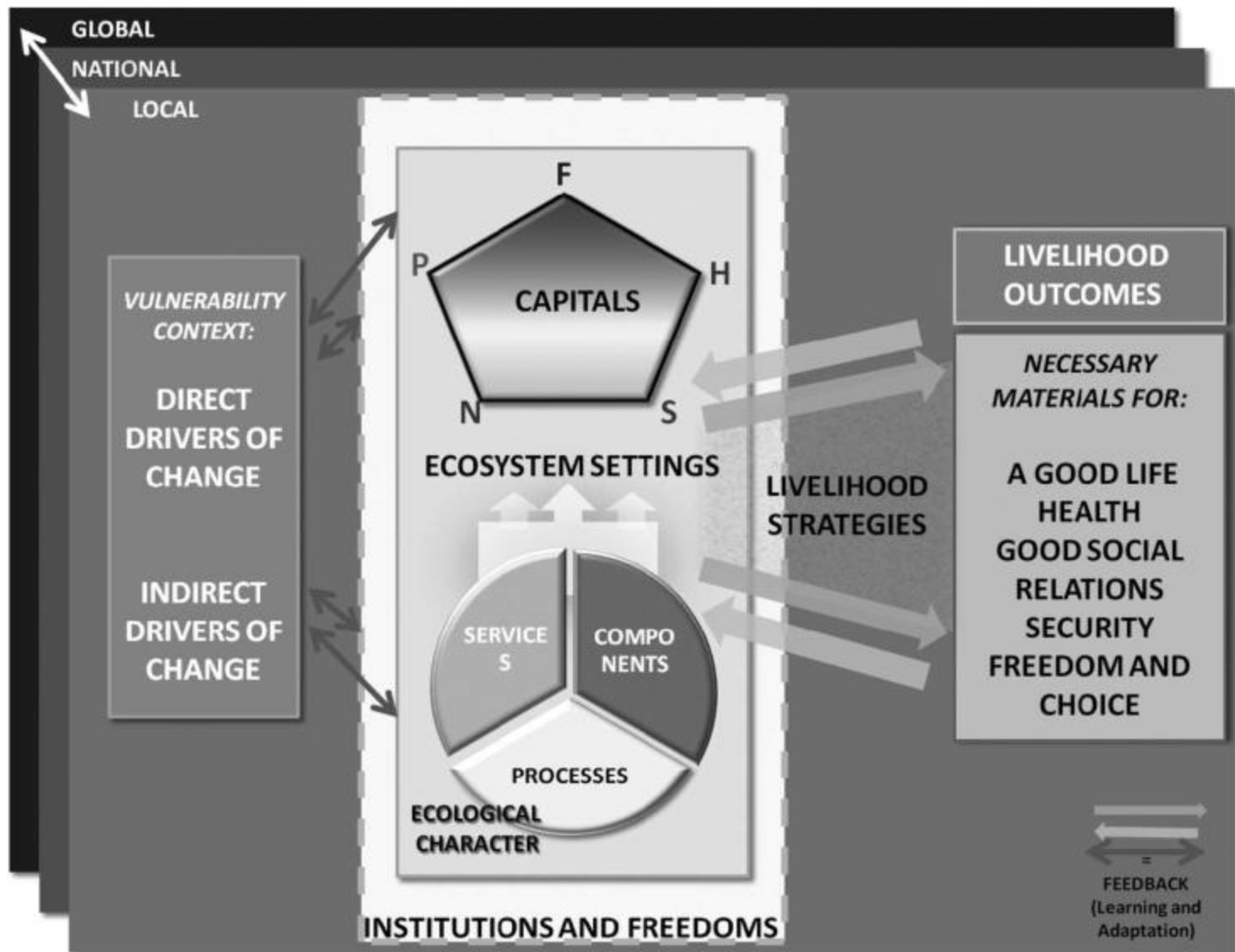
Resolution X.28 on Wetlands and Poverty Eradication (2008)

- encouraged CP to identify ways and means of further implementing the initial framework for action on wetlands and poverty reduction adopted in Resolution IX.14
- requested STRP to develop specific guidance for CP to support the implementation of those Resolutions

Resolution XI.13 (2012).

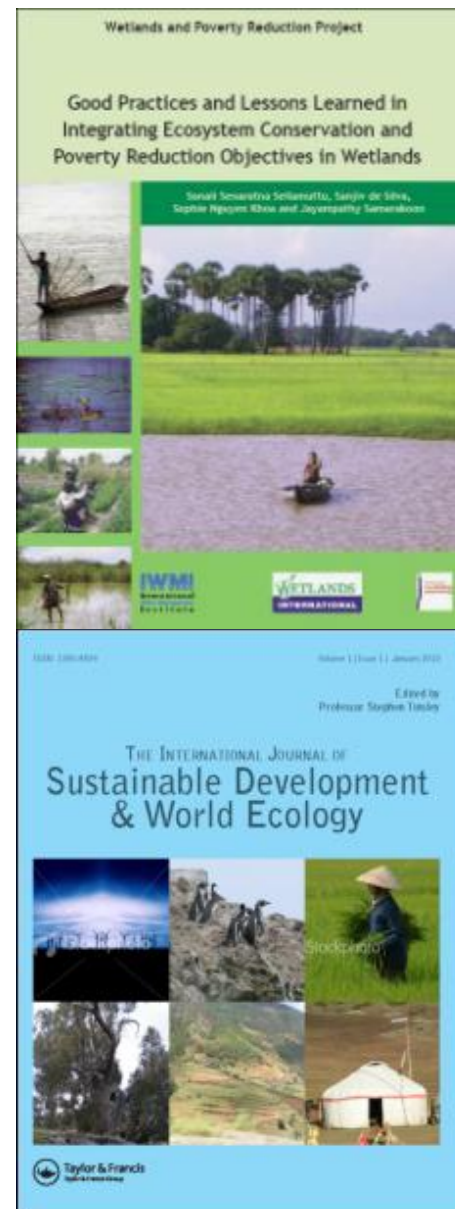
- Introduced an Integrated Framework for linking wetland conservation and wise use with poverty eradication
- Urged CP to make use of the Framework, in their assessments of the inter-linkages between poverty and the wise use of wetlands, and to include such assessments in the development of site-based management planning
- Encouraged CP to utilize this framework as a means of furthering cooperation and collaboration with development agencies to address poverty issues within wetlands in their decision-making

Framework for assessing wetlands–livelihood interlinkages



Exploring the Potential for Integrating Wetlands Conservation and Poverty Reduction (2008-2009)

- Funded by Wetlands International's (WI) "Wetlands and Poverty Reduction Project"
- 7 projects (China, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, South Africa, India & Brazil) + 4 WI Demo Projects (Indonesia, Kenya, Mal & Malawi)
- Contextual diversity
 - Types: coastal, inland (diverse)
 - Scale: small – basin
 - Duration: 1-2 years to 5-10+ years
 - Human population: high to low
 - Urban to highly rural
 - Protected and not protected
 - State and community managed
- **Common denominator:** all attempted to link wetland conservation with poverty reduction.



Can wetlands be managed sustainably and contribute to poverty reduction?

- By optimizing provisioning ecosystem services – e.g. food production. E.g. Malawi-Zambia:
 - Better water management - irrigation during the dry season - yields increased by 30%-60% and area of cultivation increased.
 - Higher food security during water scarce months – no starvation.
 - Livelihood diversification
 - Savings invested in health, education
 - Similar results in several other case studies
- Changes in social status of women
 - In Mali – women accessed land & part of decision making process



What features may influence a wetland's ability to reduce poverty?

Each wetland will have a natural limit to the ES it can sustainably provide. Influenced by:

- Biophysical attributes (e.g. size, stability, productivity)

E.g. Negombo Lagoon

- Small, coastal wetland
- Shallow with low tidal amplitude, so more prone to sedimentation

What features may influence a wetland's ability to reduce poverty?

- Human dimensions
 - Local population size relative to its ecosystem services (provisioning & regulating) & demographic trends
 - **Malawi-Zambia:** in-migration due to lack of other livelihood options - concerns due to small size of dambos
 - People's longer-term material aspirations e.g. consumption patterns, urbanization: **Negombo Lagoon** - rapid urbanization
 - Land uses near (conversion, pollution) and upstream (sedimentation, pollution)
 - Institutions: **Kenya & Hadejia-Nguru Wetlands (Nigeria)** - lack of water allocation institutions; **Malawi-Zambia** – lack of local institutions for land management in dambos.
 - Social change will be a constant reality and institutions with capacity for adaptive management will be vital.

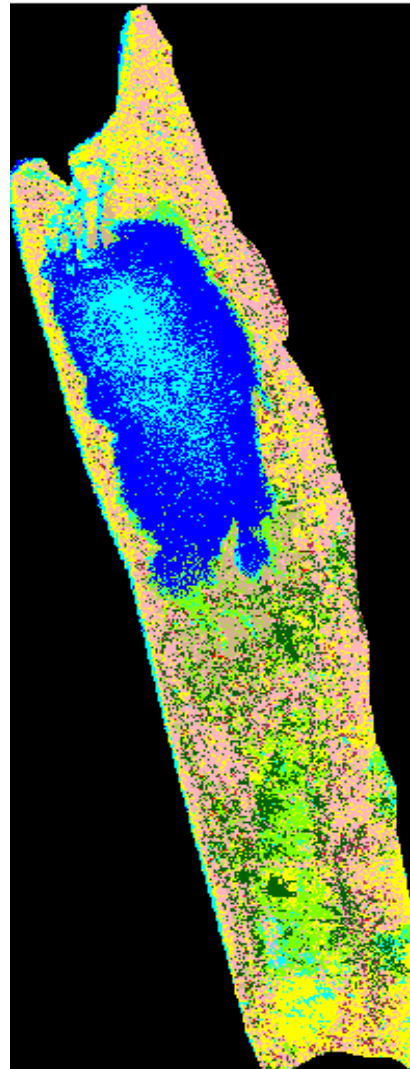
What features may influence a wetland's ability to reduce poverty?

**Degradation
of Negombo
Lagoon
wetland
complex:**
Interplay
between
biophysical
and human
dimensions

Land Cover - 1992



Landcover-2002



- Shallow water with Sediments
- Built-up / Settlements
- Littoral Vegetation (Mangrove, Shrubs
- Abandoned Paddy/ Grassland
- Marshland
- Home Garden with Coconut
- Paddy with Other Vegetation
- Water Body Deep / Lagoon
- Open Areas /Fallow

Why use an integrated (conservation - poverty reduction) framework?

- Allows for the multi-attribute drivers to be understood, prompting multi-attribute responses.
- Helps understand and address root causes of problems in a manner that optimizes ecological results and minimizes loss of livelihoods.
 - **Cao Hai (China) & Mamiraua (Brazil):** PA - community conflict needed social skills for dialogue. Enforcement alone was costly and ineffective.
 - **Hadejia-Nguru Wetlands:** Institutional complexity in the basin needed multi-level networks to promote a common vision.
 - **Mali, Cao Hai, Mamiraua and Indonesia:** economic incentives (micro-credit, community-managed eco-tourism) needed to offset the short-term livelihood losses involved in livelihood changes and participation in conservation.
- Managing trade-offs was a key feature in all cases, and central to an integrated approach.
 - More possible if there is a balance of skills between physical and social science disciplines – helps approach problems through multiple strategies.

Feedback requested from participants

- Case studies on wetlands wise use and poverty eradication inter-linkages.
- Policies and Programmes influencing (+ly & -ly) the links between wetland conservation and poverty eradication.

Questions for Discussion

1. How is the role of wetlands in poverty eradication perceived in your country by different actors (e.g. government agencies, NGOs, donors)? What opportunities and challenges do these views create for wetland wise use?
2. What are your views on the Framework for assessing wetlands–livelihood presented? How could you apply it in your work?
3. From your experience:
 - a) What have been the trade-offs necessary to ensure wetland wise use?
 - b) What approaches have been used to understand these trade-offs and reach consensus between resource users and conservation?

Background documents

- Ramsar Resolution XI.13: An Integrated Framework for linking wetland conservation and wise use with poverty eradication.
<http://www.ramsar.org/pdf/cop11/res/cop11-res13-e.pdf>
- Resolution X.28: Wetlands and poverty eradication.
http://www.ramsar.org/pdf/res/key_res_x_28_e.pdf
- Ramsar Resolution IX.14: Wetlands and poverty reduction.
http://www.ramsar.org/pdf/res/key_res_ix_14_e.pdf