

The Wetlands for the Future Fund: A Performance Review of the First Ten Years



Prepared by

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&

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CONVENTION ON WETLANDS

(Ramsar, Iran, 1971)



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Executive Summary

Since 1996 the Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971), the United States Department of State, and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) have operated the Wetlands for the Future (WFF) initiative, to benefit Latin American and Caribbean institutions and individuals through capacity building and training in the conservation and wise use of wetlands. Ten years after its inception, and 225 projects later, the Ramsar Secretariat and the Fund's sponsors considered it necessary to undertake an assessment of the Fund's performance, what it has achieved, and how effective it has been in advancing the objectives it set for itself.

This Performance Review constitutes the first effort to assess, in as objective a way as possible, the outcomes and outputs generated by the Fund. This assessment drew on two main sources of information: a survey recently undertaken in which 87% of all previously sponsored projects were requested to fill out a questionnaire, and a desk study that reviewed the final reports and products submitted by sponsored projects. The survey, on its part, aimed to learn about the medium- and long-term impacts that projects have had in their places of implementation. As such, it collected data on the perceptions and lessons learned by implementing individuals and organizations regarding various types of impacts, synergies and multiplier effects, including the additional financial leverage that beneficiaries obtained from subsequent projects. A record 43.3% (84 out of 194 sent) were received from former beneficiaries. This unusually high rate of response has been attributed to the benefits that the grantees have derived from the Fund, and the commitment they have developed toward this initiative, as shown in their responses. The desk study, on the other hand, allowed the extraction of the basic quantitative information relating to the outputs of the fund, including the allocation of funds by country, focus area, current status, matching funds, implementing organization, relevance to Ramsar sites, and other outputs such as number of people involved and products generated. Among the main findings are an overall matching funds / WFF funding ratio of 2.62, and the involvement and training of over 8,217 people during more than 1,259 days. Although WFF funding has benefited 21 of the 26 country candidates in the region, the largest 5 recipients account for 51% of all projects approved and 47% of all the funding disbursed. Eighty-seven projects (39%) were either carried out in a Ramsar site or involved a Ramsar site as one of their main components. Of the 225 projects sponsored to date 158 (70.2%) are closed, 37 (16.4%) are ongoing and 30 (13.3%) pending.

The final recommendations of the review explore the need for the Fund sponsors and the Secretariat to agree on clear benchmarks for measuring the performance of projects and the Fund as a whole. Other suggestions include the development of a strategy and vision for the Fund and the incorporation of results-oriented and wetland-relevant indicators.

It is our sincere hope that the information contained herein will highlight both the strengths and weaknesses of this initiative, and provide useful information to improve its effectiveness.

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1. Introduction

The first version of this performance review set out to answer a simple question as objectively as possible: how successful has the Wetlands for the Future Fund been during these last 10 years? As it became increasingly clear a few weeks later, it is not an easy task to assess the long-term impact of a fund that has supported hundred of small projects.

This review attempts to assess the overall performance of the Fund by responding to the basic questions: *What was done, where and by whom?* and *How much did it cost?* (i.e. where did the money go?). Additionally, this exercise hopes to shed light on some of the key areas of the Fund's functioning, and in particular the medium and long-term impact that this type of projects have had in their places of implementation and their wetlands. It is hoped that this assessment contributes valuable insights into the Secretariat's and the Fund sponsors' understanding of the Fund, providing an opportunity for its continued improvement. The recommendations at the end are intended to assist in this respect. The preparation of this document took approximately three months, from July to September, 2006.

2. Methodology of the Review

Mixed methods were employed to gather the data for this Review, the first comprising a survey of the former beneficiaries of the Fund (2 months) and the second a desk study (1 month).

Survey

A questionnaire consisting of 27 questions (21 questions for completed projects (Section A) and 6 questions for non-completed projects (Section B)) was sent to a selection of **194** organizations and individuals sponsored by the Fund in the past out of the 225 individuals and organizations that had been sponsored. Thirteen of these projects were implemented by Ramsar and included regional and subregional workshops. Of the 194 organizations contacted, 84 (43.3%) responded, which is considered a very high rate of response for this type of questionnaire, even more so considering that many of the individuals funded were indigenous communities and university students who have moved on in the past 10 years and their contact address have changed. It can be assumed that this reflects the relevance that the Fund has had for the grantees and their projects. The detailed methodology employed, as well as a summary of the main findings of the survey, is presented in **Annex VII**.

Limitations of the methodology

Apart from the data limitations imposed by non-responsive grantees and their corresponding questionnaires, the main limitations in this review's methodology are a reflection of the Fund's very structure. In particular, three areas stand out as worthy of mention:

- Considering the size of individual projects (ranging from USD 1k to 20k), it is impractical to incorporate built-in monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess their compliance, outcomes and general effectiveness, as this could not be justified from the financial nor human resources point of view.
- Projects were selected based on individual merit, and frequently without the formal endorsement of the corresponding Ramsar Administrative Authority, which made it difficult to pursue any follow-up at the local level.
- The sponsored projects were designed with a duration of one year, and although monitoring and replicability are factors considered during project selection (Section C of the Guidelines), it must also be noted that because of the very nature of capacity-building activities, the impacts are long-term and require investments for longer periods of time, which is not envisaged by this Fund.

Desk study

The information for this section was obtained from the Secretariat records of the 225 national and regional projects sponsored to date by the Fund. Two main sources of information were consulted: i) the Final Reports submitted by the project proponents (technical documents and Section E of the Operational Guidelines¹); and ii) Ramsar evaluations of those Reports (Section F in the Guidelines). To a lesser extent, Progress Reports (Section D in the Guidelines) were also consulted. Whenever these files were unavailable, extrapolations were made using the data in the original proposals (Section B in the Guidelines), noting that this information was only an estimate.

The present assessment of the Fund should not be considered exhaustive, as only a limited number of quantifiable variables were selected for analysis. If possible, the undertaking of a broader assessment of the Fund at regular intervals is recommended. Financial and human resources should also be set aside to that end.

3. Overview Analysis of the Fund

The overview analysis of the Fund presents the bird's eye view of the Fund by focusing on how it has allocated resources by country, type of project and implementing organization. A general introduction provides the conceptual framework and context to interpret the information provided in subsequent sections of the review.

3.1 Brief Background and Objectives of the Fund

The Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971), the U.S. Department of State, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service established the Wetlands for the Future Fund (WFF) as an initiative to support and promote strengthening of the capacity of countries and all stakeholders to manage their wetland resources in perpetuity and to contribute to the integration of wetland conservation and management with the development process.

The original objective of the fund, still valid today, is promoting the conservation and wise use of wetlands in the Neotropics and Mexico. The focus areas identified as key to achieve this end can be traced to Clause 8 of the MoU on the "Wetlands for the Future Program" signed between the Ramsar Convention Secretariat and the Government of the United States of America (1997, renewed 2004); Item III, Section A of the Operational Guidelines 2003-2008 governing this Fund; and General Objective 4 of the Strategic Plan 2003-2008: Implementation capacity to ensure that the Convention has the required implementation mechanisms, resources, and capacity to achieve its mission.

In the guidelines it was stated that the WFF was open to eligible Contracting and non-Contracting Parties for:

- a) activities that clearly contribute to the implementation of the Convention's Strategic Plan and work within the Neotropics and Mexico;
- b) emergency assistance related to wetlands of regional importance or Ramsar sites;
- c) assistance to allow non-Contracting Parties to progress toward accession to the Convention; and
- d) activities that link this initiative to other programmes that share the overall goals of wetland management and conservation.

The focus areas of support of the Fund are:

1. Long and Short-term Training.

¹ The WFF Operational Guidelines 2003-2008 establish the functioning of this Fund.

- a) preparation of teaching materials and implementation of university-level courses;
 - b) support for participation in wetland-related training courses;
 - c) support for thesis research and fieldwork on wetlands; and,
 - d) graduate placement (for MSc and Ph.D. graduates).
2. Practical Application of Ramsar's "Wise Use" Concept and Guidelines.
 - a) on-the-job training opportunities and internships for wetland managers;
 - b) exchange opportunities for managers, planners, technical and field staff; and,
 - c) hands-on training experience in wise-use activities for local stakeholders.
 3. Reserve Personnel Training Programs.
 4. Information Management and Transfer.
 5. Emergency assistance.
 6. Preparatory assistance.

3.2 Allocation of Funds

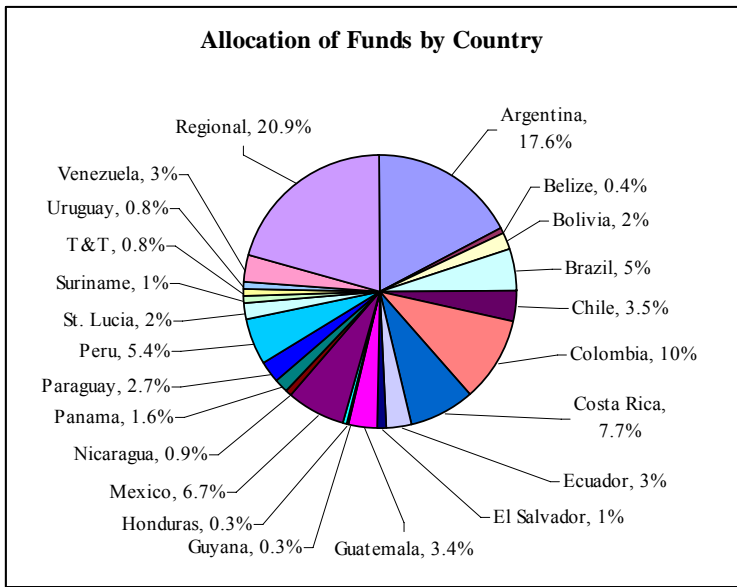
Of the 424 project proposals that have been received since the first call in 1995, a total of 225 have been approved for funding, i.e. a rate of 53.3%. This total can in turn be subdivided into 195 single-country projects and 30 regional ones that involved anywhere from 2 to 27 countries. This has been made possible with generous annual contributions by the US Government totaling USD 2,725k, which after deduction of a 10% administrative fee since 1999 until 2005 has provided a net USD 2,452k for funding projects.² Additionally, the Ramsar Convention Secretariat has contributed in staff time about USD 0.5 million. The total amount committed to and spent on specific projects from the US Government contribution until 2006 amounts to more than USD 2.5 million. As some projects were cancelled owing to health problems encountered by proponents, or by their lack of signature of contracts, and others returned unspent funds, at present there is an accumulated positive balance of USD 17,479. The complete information on annual contributions and projects sponsored can be found in Annexes I and II.

3.3 Geographic Spread of Projects and Funds

At present there are 26 Contracting Parties in the region that are eligible to receive funding, as well as 6 non-Contracting Parties that could also apply for accession purposes. However, when the Fund started there were only 14 Latin American and Caribbean countries that were Parties to the Convention, and there was little knowledge about the Convention in the non-Parties. Of these 26 Parties, 21 (81%) have received direct project support from the Fund, several of them more than once, and in the rest of the countries in the region, except for Cuba, Parties and non-Parties have all benefited from several of the regional projects. In addition, one non-Party (Guyana) received preparatory assistance for joining the Convention in 2002. To make an analysis of the geographical distribution of the funding allocation, it is important to take into consideration that nationals of some countries are much more active than others in submitting project proposals, and the quality of the proposals varies immensely between many of them. Parties such as Antigua & Barbuda and Barbados, which recently joined the Convention, Bahamas, Jamaica and the Dominican Republic have never submitted a project proposal, and Belize has only requested assistance once. By far the country that has submitted the most proposals (78) and therefore received support for the largest number of projects (a total of 41) was Argentina. The other big recipients include Costa Rica which submitted 57 and received support for 24, Colombia which submitted 42 and received support for 21, followed by Brazil which submitted 27 and Mexico which submitted 24, both receiving support for 15 each. Of the total of 424 proposals received, 228 (54%) originated in those five countries. Together these five countries account for 51% of all the projects approved in the region. A similar pattern exists with regard to the actual funds received, where again the largest five recipients (the same group, substituting Brazil for Peru) received 47% of the total funding. Argentina again emerges as number one in funds received, with USD 450 k. At the opposite end, Belize,

² Both the gross and net totals include the 2006 contribution of US 238,880. Up to 2005 the corresponding figures are USD 2,725,000 and USD 2,552,500, respectively.

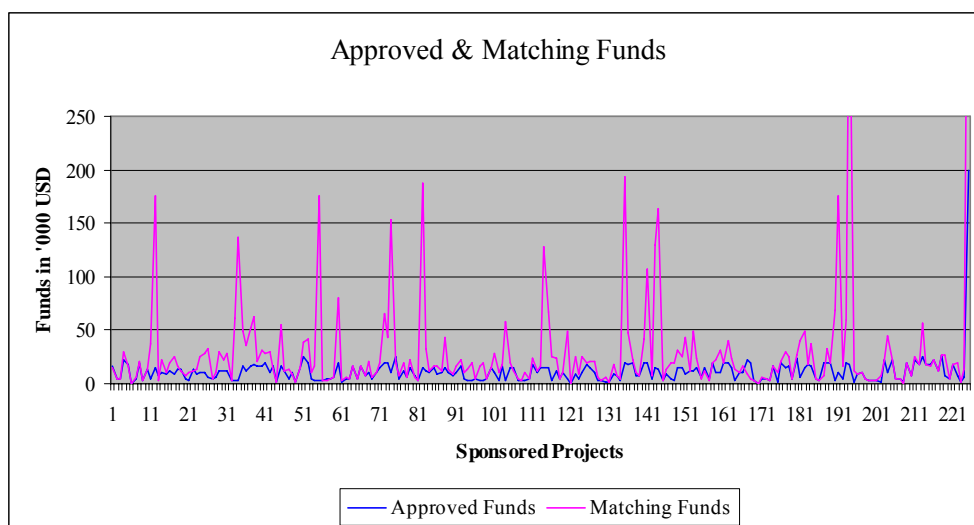
Honduras, Trinidad & Tobago³ and Uruguay received 1 project each for a total of USD 115,131 or 4.5% of the total funding. The following diagram summarizes these findings. For the detailed status of individual project and funding recipients see **Annex III**.



Since the beginning of the Fund, it was a pre-condition to receive funding that the proponent should contribute at least 50% of the required funding. In some cases the recipients secured more than 70% of the total cost of the project from external sources or were able to continue additional phases of the projects with the additional funds they raised based on the outcomes of the initial project. The complete list of approved and matching funds can be found in **Annex IV**.

One of the key questions of the survey was whether the original grant from Wetlands for the Future had helped to mobilize additional funds. 35% of the respondents said yes, and of these 15.5% stated that they managed to secure more than 20,000 USD for the follow-up project, which had been the maximum amount granted through WFF. Additionally, 86% of the grantees responded that there was follow-up to the project implemented with WFF, and 76.7% of these are still on-going.

³ This does not include project “St. Lucia 98SL-1” which was implemented for the Caribbean sub-region from Trinidad & Tobago.



The figure shows an overlap of the approved and matching funds for all projects. The information was mainly obtained from the original proposals, and only occasionally from the financial reports of completed projects. This graph does not include the additional funds mentioned in the survey.

According to the analysis of the total funds committed and spent until 2006 (USD 2.5 million, of which USD 2,169,766 have already been disbursed), WFF funds were largely exceeded by matching funds (USD 6,667,399). This would mean that for every dollar provided by the WFF an additional 2.62 were mobilized from other sources. A closer inspection of the numbers shows that most of the additional funds can be traced back to a handful of projects where counterpart funding was abundant (the “peaks” in the graph above). A recommendation for the future implementation of the initiative is to request grantees to include a complete financial report, which will clearly show the other cash contributions received, as well as their in-kind financial support, which in some cases is over-valued and in others under-valued.

3.4 Types of projects sponsored

In general the findings reflect a balanced distribution of resources as regards the types of projects sponsored in the past (focus area), and the agencies in charge of their implementation. The quantitative outputs generated in each case are presented in Section 4.

Projects by Type

The choice of project types is a result of the main focus areas of the Fund (Section 3.1) and the personal appreciations of the drafting team regarding the most adequate classification of the projects. Throughout the remainder of this document the following six project categories or types will be used:

1. *Training & Capacity Building*: this includes all projects that aim to provide technical training. Although the standard recipients are field staff and government bureaucrats, instances where lay people are trained to perform a specific activity such as processing fish products, marketing wetland handicrafts or engaging in ecotourism activities are also included here. This review has identified 132 projects (59%) with training and capacity building as their focus.
2. *Awareness Raising Activities*: non-technical information provided to any group in society. School visits, campaigns involving the general public, and activities with indigenous groups all fall into this category. Academic events, documentation and training also contribute to raising the awareness of participants. This review has identified 99 projects (44%) involved in awareness-raising activities.
3. *Documentation*: this includes all books, CDs, handbooks, leaflets, posters and other reference materials. Visitor centers have also been included here. Videos and radio broadcasts fall as much under this category as under “awareness raising”, while websites are treated under “networking”. This review has identified 134 projects (60%) in which various types of documentation were generated.

4. *Wetland Management & Tools*: infrastructure and equipment, baseline and monitoring data about the characteristics of a site, guidance documents (e.g., management plans, policies and consensus documents), maps, software and databases all fall under this category. A total of 110 projects (49%) contained a wetland management component.
5. *Academic & Research*: those interventions whose main goal is to obtain and process information without making it readily available to the people in charge, or only doing so through specialized journals and theses are included here. Forum presentations in national and international events and new curricula (i.e. introduction of wetlands subjects into academic programs) are also considered. An estimated 89 projects (40%) were academic in nature.
6. *Networking*: any initiative aimed at establishing or strengthening linkages between specialized or non-specialized groups are considered networking. In addition to the usual multi-stakeholder meetings and congresses, tools such as e-newsletters, virtual fora and joint (regional) initiatives are also included. Networking activities constituted an integral part of at least 63 projects (28%).

A reasonable compromise among the different types of projects appears to have characterized the Fund's allocation of resources. However, in the first years of the Fund a higher priority was assigned to academic and research projects, whereas more recent projects have favored government and NGO proposals involving capacity building, participatory management, networking and awareness raising activities. As the niche and character of the Fund gradually matured along with the Convention's strategic plan and vision, proponents also adjusted their proposals to meet the requested profile.

Projects by Proponent

Of the 225 implemented projects, 87 (39%) were implemented by NGOs, 69 (31%) by universities and research institutes, 46 (21%) by government agencies, and only 22 (10%) by other organizations, including Ramsar and IUCN. As can be seen from the table below, all four types of proponents were involved in all six types of projects (or projects that involved all six focus areas). The numbers shown in the table are not additive, as several project types could be included within the same project.

Project Type	Implementing Organization			
	NGO	Academic	Government	Other
Training & Capacity Building	56	36	33	8
Awareness Raising Activities	58	17	22	2
Documentation	62	41	28	3
Wetland Management & Tools	50	36	18	6
Academic & Research	26	43	19	1
Networking	21	18	18	7

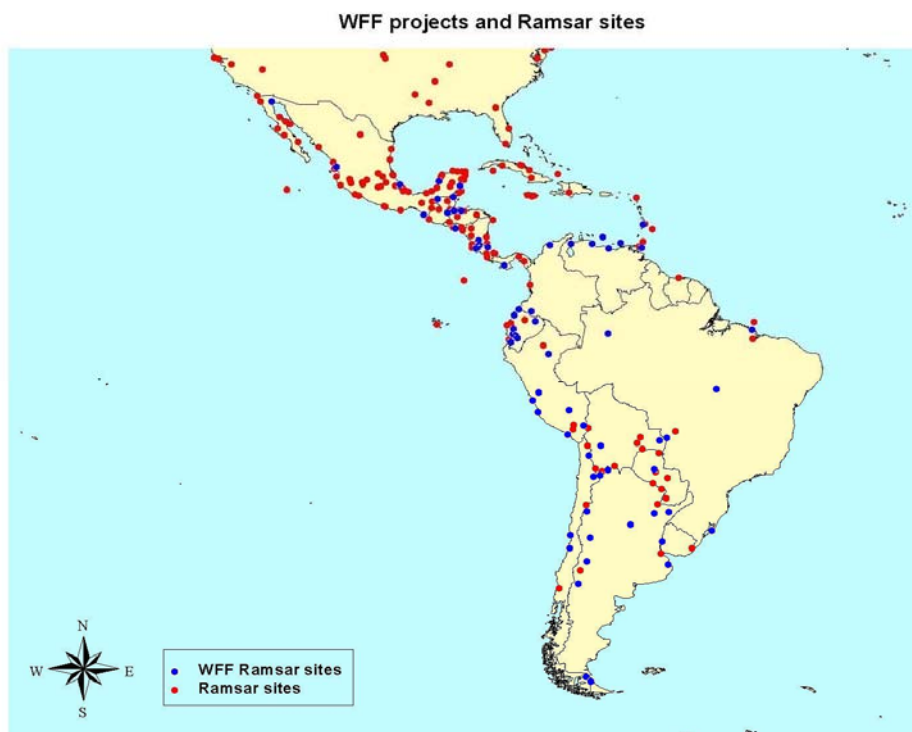
Although 30 of 225 projects appear as pending in their status of implementation, the large majority of grantees have provided the key outputs of the projects but have failed to provide an adequate financial or final report of the project. Of these, government agencies are responsible for 14, NGOs are responsible for 12, and academic institutions for 5. Again, these numbers do not reflect cases where project closure was preceded by long default periods which relate mainly to support for theses and indigenous groups. Although the lack of reporting is more severe for the smallest projects, for larger projects it is recommended to modify the proportions between advanced and final payments, in order to encourage grantees to provide complete reports.

4. Performance of the Fund

4.1 Relevance of the Fund to Ramsar sites and other wetlands

The main long-term objective of the Fund is to promote the wise use and conservation of wetlands in the Americas, and since 2002 priority has been given to those wetlands that have been designated as of International Importance by the Contracting Parties to the Convention. A list of the site names where WFF projects have been carried out can be found in **Annex V**.

As can be seen from the map below the spread of WFF projects has covered most of the Ramsar sites in South America, while the high density of sites in Central America and Mexico has largely surpassed the number of projects approved for these subregions. This map was elaborated by identifying those projects that were either carried out directly in the site or had a considerable component related to the site. The process did not differentiate between those projects that directly contributed to improving the capacities of site managers (equipment, training or other tools) and those that published a document which will raise public awareness on the Ramsar site when distributed elsewhere.



The data show that the 87 projects carried out in Ramsar sites resulted in 119 interventions, so that while in countries like Colombia only 3 out of 21 projects were carried out in Ramsar sites (14%) and none in the case of Suriname, in other cases counting interventions rather than projects has increased the results considerably: from 3 to 11 in Brazil; from 7 to 15 in Peru; and from 4 to 13 in Venezuela. Many of the projects which had as their main objective to provide training on Ramsar implementation to regional and subregional government authorities are not listed as direct interventions in Ramsar sites; however, it is assumed that by training the authorities responsible for implementing Ramsar at the local level, the management of the Ramsar sites will also have been improved, as well as the conservation of all wetlands under their jurisdictions.

Another measure of the relevance the WFF has had on Ramsar sites relates to the role it has played in incorporating new sites into the Ramsar List. As can be seen from the tables below, apart from the 7 sites that

were successfully designated by Argentina, Mexico⁴ and Peru following WFF projects and the 2 that are currently in the process of being designated from El Salvador and Peru, other projects have nominated an additional 17 wetlands as Ramsar site candidates, which later received little or no attention from their respective governments. Nonetheless, the efforts made assisted the local communities and authorities to gather and share key information about important wetlands in their territory. In many cases the designation of a wetland as a Ramsar site was not an explicit objective at the onset of the project, and this was decided while implementing the project, recognizing the ecosystem values and services, and the need for its conservation. The following tables provide further details.

Designated RS	Site Name	No.	Project
Argentina	Lagunas de Guanacache	1	WFF/98/ARG/2
	Lagunas de Vilama	1	99AR/6
Mexico	Reserva de la Biosfera Banco Chinchorro	1	WFF/02-2/MX/1
	Parque Nacional Arrecife de Puerto Morelos	1	WFF/02-2/MX/2
	Cuencas y corales de la zona costera de Huatulco	1	WFF/02-2/MX/3
Nicaragua	Sistema de Humedales de San Miguelito	1	98X-19 = WFF/98/CR121
Peru	Humedal Lucre – Huacarpay	1	WFF/03-2/PE/1
	TOTAL	7	

RIS Being processed	Site Name	No.	Project
El Salvador	Complejo de Guija-Metapan	1	WFF/00/ORMA/1
	Sistema Barra de Santiago - Bola de Monte	1	WFF/00/ORMA/1
	TOTAL	2	

Undesignated RIS	Site Name	No.	Project
Argentina	Bañados de la Estrella	1	WFF/99/ARG/6
	Bañados del Quirquincho	1	WFF/99/ARG/6
Bolivia	Llanos de Moxos	1	98BO-3
	Complejo Los Platillos	1	WFF/02/COL/2
Brazil	Abrolhos National Park	1	WFF/02-2/BRA/2
Chile	Bofedal Jachajwira	1	WFF/98/CH/1
Costa Rica	Laguna Ballena	1	98CR-20
Ecuador	Reserva Ecológica Arenillas	1	WFF/01-2/ECU/2
Guyana	North Rupununi wetlands	1	WFF/02/GUY/1
Nicaragua	Llano Grande	1	98NI-1
	Estero El Chorrall	1	98NI-1
	5 (names unknown)	5	WFF/00/ORMA/1
Paraguay	Lagunas y esteros de la cuenca del Arroyo Ñeembucú	1	WFF/03-2/PY/1
	TOTAL	17	

Only a small proportion of projects implemented in Ramsar sites have a significant biodiversity research component, while many biodiversity-related projects have been carried out in other important wetlands. As was mentioned before, the progressive shift from purely academic to more management and advocacy oriented projects has also resulted in a decrease in the number of projects involving inventories of species and assessment of ecological characteristics of sites, to participatory management and local community involvement in wetland conservation. Nevertheless, tools such as inventories, databases and maps continue to be common outputs to improve local management capacities.

A subset of the values commonly present in Ramsar sites are migratory species, endangered species and coastal wetlands or those important for fisheries. A total of 26 projects explicitly mentioned wetland

⁴ The 3 Mexican projects that culminated in the designation of new Ramsar sites were not counted among the 87 carried out in Ramsar sites (preceding paragraph), as their sole purpose was the preparation of the corresponding Ramsar Information Sheets.

restoration among their objectives, while 27 contained a clear focus on migratory species (mostly waterfowl, turtles and manatees); at least 27 dealt with endangered species; 19 with mangroves; 21 with coastal ecosystems and/or fisheries; and 51 had a biodiversity component not included in the above categories. Finally, at least 12 projects were carried out in the extremely vulnerable High-Andean Wetlands.

4.2 Effectiveness of the Fund

The effectiveness of the Fund refers to the extent to which it has been able to deliver results and achieve its stated objectives, even if these are only of a general and qualitative nature. In addition to the overarching objectives common to all projects, which derive from the Operational Guidelines and other relevant Ramsar documents, every project is also internally accountable to the objectives it set for itself in its original proposal. To the extent that the proponent, the Secretariat and the sponsors of the Fund were involved in the approval of each individual project, they also share responsibility in the objectives it sought.

From a more strategic perspective another implicit assumption of the Fund, which is shared by the authors of this review, is that the best investment that can be made to improve the long-term management of wetlands (and by extension their conservation and wise use) is the creation and strengthening of self-sustaining capacities in the region. Once again, the problem faced is one of lack of reliable indicators to measure positive shifts in attitudes and practices. Useful as they are to build general impressions, gross totals do not tell us much about what these projects have achieved in their respective areas of influence. It is much simpler to quantify the outputs (number of people trained, number of days) than the actual knowledge people have acquired or the extent to which they have put it into practice. Moreover, even if the intervention produces outstanding results in the short term, the usefulness of much of the information starts eroding after some time both because it is no longer updated and because the individuals no longer perform their original activities (this is especially true for government personnel), even if it is also assumed that they will apply their acquired knowledge throughout their professional careers wherever they move. Training children is another example where the benefits are expected so far into the future as to be virtually unquantifiable in the present, but that does not diminish in any way its paramount importance to guarantee the conservation of wetlands and its associated biodiversity in the Western Hemisphere. Acknowledging these limitations, this section draws on two main sources of “proxy” indicators to attempt to answer the previous questions: the survey undertaken recently as part of this review (the detailed methodology and quantitative results are presented in **Annex VII**), and the outputs that individual projects have produced as stated in their final reports to the Secretariat (desk study).

4.2.1 The Survey

Section A – Information on Completed Projects

I. EFFECTIVENESS

Most of the questionnaires received considered themselves successfully completed even when in several cases amendments are pending and the Secretariat has not formally closed the project. This being said, among the main accomplishments of these projects a remarkable balance was found between those involving components such as capacity building, awareness raising and networking. If an additional wetland management category were included comprising guidance documents and wetland assessment information and tools, this would involve around 65% of all proposals. Some sample testimonies follow.

“[The project] *allowed the comparison of wetland inventory techniques for use in Latin America*
[...] *The recommendations of this study have been extensively used by students in several*
countries in the region”

– WFF/95-96/CR/5

“I consider WFF initiative an encouraging support for small projects for many reasons: it is one of the few wetlands driven support funds, it does not involve much bureaucracy, it can be accessed by individuals, governments, NGOs or universities, and it might work as a seed fund for calling the authorities’ attention to a certain issue”

– Brazil 98BR-1

“[The project] allowed the identification of several indigenous groups in Central America that are interested in wetlands, and with whom we still maintain working relationships for the conservation and wise use of these ecosystems”

– WFF/98X/13 (Costa Rica)

“The project motivated a group of researchers that have since then continued working on wetland projects for the conservation of the biological diversity in several areas of the country”

– WFF/00/PAN/1

“[The project] established a core group of teachers in San Andres/Providencia (Colombia) and Honduras who are using the resources to peer-teach other teachers and students on the importance of mangrove wetlands habitats”

– WFF/01-2/CAR/1

“The training of human resources enabled the introduction of conservation and wise use of wetlands in the community...Since the implementation of this project strong social networks were created that involve civil society, the education community and academia. As a result this city is the 1st in the country to implement a local Agenda 21 featuring a central and transdisciplinary wetlands component. The project has become a model that was replicated in other cities in the Buenos Aires Province. In every case it was declared of municipal importance by the legislative and executive authorities, and was also presented in several congresses and scientific events”

– WFF/02-2/ARG/2

“The WFF support for publishing the educational CD on water management allowed its distribution everywhere in Chile...In the High Andean Wetlands in the North of Chile the goal was to involve children of the indigenous Aymara, Quechua and Atacameña groups”

– WFF/02-2/CHI/1

“This project has facilitated the training of specialized human resources, has strengthened linkages between management, scientific and technical stakeholders, NGOs and the local community increasing both mutual trust and the quality of long-term intervention strategies”

– WFF/03-2/ARG/3

“In relation to the training of human resources the results exceeded the original expectations...we now have more baseline information on the topic and more tools to conserve critically important areas. The project also increased the motivation and commitment of university students who later on became part of the work team, thus increasing the number of future professionals in the field”

– WFF/04/AR/4

“The international response surpassed all expectations. A large number of requests for publications were received by e-mail, which were followed by the electronic distribution of materials to Argentina, Bolivia, Peru, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador and Spain”

– WFF/04/CL/2

II. INFLUENCE

When asked about the concrete improvements made in local or regional wetlands, the two-thirds majority who responded in the affirmative only provided proxies or necessary conditions (e.g., capacities generated and raised awareness) for concrete, measurable improvements in the field such as increased numbers of waterfowl or a generally improved state of conservation. Exceptions were projects like WFF/02-2/ESL/1 and 98AR-2 which reported a halt to illegal logging and the filling of formerly dry lagoons, respectively.

Although in most cases the number of people trained is not indicated, almost three quarters of respondents considered that trained personnel had had a positive multiplier effect in their communities. Exemplary responses were provided by project WFF/98/MX/2 where the training of 130 teachers enabled the subsequent training of another 330 in three regions; and by project WFF/03-2/PE/1, which mentioned that 25 young people trained later established an NGO specializing in ecotourism.

Regarding the extent to which local authorities have taken questionnaire findings into consideration when taking decisions that affect wetlands, again in two thirds of cases affirmative responses were provided citing institutions and people rather than wetland sites, processes or legal instruments. Exemplary responses were provided by projects WFF/97/CO/1 (local authorities used the information generated as their main reference when drafting management plans and EIAs), WFF/01/COL/1 (extraction of emergent vegetation was prohibited to protect the habitat of waterfowl and other species), WFF/97/SU/1 (guidelines on management of estuarine zones), and WFF/02/ARG/6 (implementation of the management plan and halt to an oil exploration project in Mendoza). Short-term positive results were mentioned by projects 98AR-2 (the local government became proactive until replaced), and several others where local authorities initiated the process to designate the wetland as a Ramsar site.

Over half of respondents indicated that networks or leaderships had indeed been created as a result of the original project. As was mentioned in a previous case, a side-benefit of the interventions has sometimes been the creation of new civil society organizations that have followed up on the efforts of the original project. Among other types of new networks and leaderships created are the involvement of the police and military to patrol a site (WFF/97/SU/1) and an increased number of notifications to the authorities regarding illegal activities affecting the wetland (WFF/00/CRI/1).

Finally, 17 projects indicated having received formal awards for their work, while a much larger number mentioned more informal types of recognition from various stakeholders. For example, the book produced by project WFF/00-2/BRA/2 was chosen as Brazil's official gift to foreign Environmental Ministries during the CBD's COP8 held in Curitiba in early 2006 and the documentary prepared by ECOVIVIR through project WFF/03/UY/1, showing the importance of wetlands and their biodiversity in the southern cone, won the first prize for the best documentary presented on the national educational channel in Argentina in 2005. Examples of the testimonies received follow.

“The level of understanding of the value of wetlands has not only been passed on to the teachers, but they have in turn taught hundreds of students. This kind of knowledge is a long-term solution to help communities as a whole recognize the true value of wetlands”

– WFF/01-2/CAR/1

“By raising public awareness in the community and instilling in them a sense of ownership and identity with the territory the recovery and conservation of these wetlands will become a reality, as they will feel responsible for the wise use made of them”

- WFF/01-2/COL/1

“When people are involved they become responsible for their actions. Working this way we achieve a change in their attitudes toward the environment, as well as greater solidarity and commitment toward the project”

– WFF/02/PER/1

“The project has triggered many actions that have without a doubt translated into tangible improvements for the local wetlands. The fact that the project has been replicated in other places has provided it a greater regional significance than was originally expected”

– WFF/02-2/ARG/2

“In the case of the Santay wetland [the project] has had a positive effect in as far as new economic activities involving women were introduced that do not affect the integrity of the wetland...[women] have now become promoters of the wise use of resources in the site”

– WFF/03/EC/1

“The project and its sequels have promoted a more active involvement by the local community regarding the use and management of wetland resources, creating common ground between government agencies and users”

– WFF/03-2/ARG/3

III. IMPACT

Even though close to two-thirds of respondents indicated that no local or national wetland policies had been adopted or modified as a result of the project, responses mentioning participation in the drafting of national wetland policies and similar documents were nevertheless frequent (e.g., WFF/98/TT/1). Particularly outstanding was the response from project WFF/02/ARG/6, which influenced a new EIS on oil exploitation and three initiatives on the limits of the “Laguna de Llanquanelo” Ramsar site, its management plan and a private-public partnership. A different type of response was provided by project WFF/97/SU/1, which mentioned the introduction of a policy in 1998 to charge a fee to visit the wetland in order to control the flow of visitors.

Similar responses were obtained regarding the passing of new legislation on wetlands. During the processing of responses a distinction was made between instruments like the “Sensitive Areas Rules” of the Environmental Management Act of 2000 (WFF/98/TT/1) that constitute a clear “Yes”, and other elements of legal instruments that by themselves are not binding (or are still pending approval), which were included under “Yes (pending or similar)”. On many occasions it was difficult to establish a direct link between the decision to designate a wetland as a Ramsar site and a particular project (e.g., “El Tromen” in Argentina resulting from project WFF/04/ARG/6). The regional project WFF/03/REG/WKS culminated in a regional strategy for the protection of High-Andean Wetlands, which was adopted at Ramsar’s COP9 and has encouraged the designation of several High-Andean Wetlands as well as the preparation of a multimillion dollar project that should be implemented in the coming years.

When asked if the project had had a noticeable positive impact on the management and wise use of wetlands in the medium and long terms, close to four-fifths answered in the affirmative, while only close to 5% provided a negative response, the remainder being non-applicable or blank responses. One project in particular provided a response challenging one of the basic assumptions of the fund: project WFF/99/CR/2 stated: *“This is a difficult question to answer, as reality is contradictory. The Caño Negro wetland continues to deteriorate despite positive and continuous awareness-raising and empowerment processes in the region.”* Another interesting reply came from project 98X-15 (implemented by IUCN), which noted that while

providing training in Map Maker initially seemed a good idea, the software turned out not to be user friendly or practical. These two cases provide good examples of the complexity of designing effective interventions.

For several years the Secretariat has opted for sharing the education and training materials generated by successful projects with other countries in the region that either speak the same language or have similar types of ecosystems or issues that need resolving. This has been acknowledged and recognized by several governments as a very positive development of the fund. Although this has an additional communication cost, the Secretariat considers that the benefits for other countries and the long-term impact of information sharing fully justify this expense.

“[The project] established the basis for the design of wetland inventories in Chile and Peru”

– WFF/95-96/CR/5

“In the international realm the experience in the assessment of environmental impacts in Chile has allowed the documentation of the real and potential implications of copper mining in High Andean Wetlands, transferring the knowledge on good practice and mistakes made in the past. This increases the spectrum of management and conservation alternatives for the people who attended from Bolivia, Argentina and Peru”

- WFF/98/CHL/2

“The declaration [produced during the project] was used for the drafting of the Central American Wetland Policy, specifically in the section called “Action by the Central American population and NGOs” and is reflected in Objective 6 that relates to public participation in the management and wise use of wetlands”

– WFF/98/CR/4

“The participation of teachers has triggered several initiatives at the local level, as the teachers are leaders in these communities. The inclusion of wetlands into the official study curricula has raised the awareness of the local communities regarding the importance of having healthy wetlands. In several cases each community has contributed their own resources and knowledge to generate solutions to the problems affecting their wetlands”

– WFF/98/MX/2

“The participants in the training workshop now hold important positions as decision makers in their respective governments, or head organizations that actively promote the management and conservation of High Andean Wetlands”

– 98X-21

“The production of this publication was essential to giving the Caribbean nations the information they needed in order to manage wetland areas of importance. We have seen the publication in use over and over again as these countries are making decisions about which islets and wetlands to preserve”

– 98X/3/USA/1

“The development of the human resources trained and later involved in our work team contributed to the critical mass that now constitutes our Lab (CONICET), greatly contributing to the information we have now”

– 99AR-1

“It was the first initiative documenting the area of coral reefs included in protected areas in the country. It’s been used as baseline to guide the assessment on the need of creating new coral reefs protected areas in Brazil”

– WFF/00-2/BRA/2

“The behavior of the people visiting the wetland has changed considerably for the benefit of the ecosystem; they take it as a place for passive recreation, contemplation and a living learning space. The wetland is already recognized at the national level as one of the most important wetlands in the savannah of Bogotá. This was not the case before the project”

– WFF/01-2/COL/1

“The lessons learned relate to a wider vision of the possibilities granted by a Ramsar site, both to make its characteristics and importance known, and for the wide array of services it provides to visitors”

– WFF/02/AR/5

“At the administrative level the awareness has increased especially with regard to the importance of maintaining wetlands as water reservoirs in an area as dry as ours... [WFF] has truly been seen as a management tool”

- WFF/02/ARG/6

“This project motivated local authorities to issue a decree for the protection of the Maipo river mouth, which in turn encouraged the municipality of San Antonio to initiate the cleaning and maintenance of the northern bank of the river. Visit the website www.humedalesantodomingo.cl”

– WFF/02/CHI/1

“We have found new species of plants in the area which raise the importance of the High Andean ecosystem. Future management plans and environmental impact studies should take these findings into account”

– WFF/02/PER/1

“Since the implementation of the project new initiatives have been implemented and continue to be implemented that link the sustainable management of resources, conservation and an increase in biodiversity; varied initiatives of a productive and educational nature”

– WFF/02-2/ARG/1

“In the creation of human capacities the results will be much more visible in the medium and long terms. In addition to the notorious impacts that are visible today, the municipality has manifested its intention to march toward a development that is sustainable. The community networks that were created during this project are the basis for this policy”

– WFF/02-2/ARG/2

“The results obtained [by the project] are used as arguments both to prevent the introduction of [exotic] fish, as well as to manage them wisely where they have already been deliberately introduced”

– WFF/04/ARG/6

IV. SUSTAINABILITY

Though the large majority of questionnaires indicated that follow-up activities had indeed taken place after project completion, the frequently chosen category “New follow-up activities” provided results too dissimilar to indicate any particular trend (several responses were possible for each project). Some of the types of activities encountered under this category include different activities with former project participants

(WFF/97/AR/7); replicating the similar activities elsewhere (WFF/02-2/ARG/2); signing of agreements with other institutions (WFF/03-2/ARG/3); implementing new projects (WFF/99/MX/3); and incorporation of new study curricula (WFF/98/MX/2), which subsequently trained over 500 teachers, and an additional 20 projects are envisaged. Project 98X-18 (Rainforest Alliance) also cites the 1999 WFF-sponsored workshop as one of the milestones behind the launch of the Eco-Index initiative.

The responses provided for this question have made it abundantly clear that some of the best options for increasing the continuity of projects involve incorporating wetlands components into the ongoing activities and processes of institutions that will remain on-site. Examples include complementing existing study programs and curricula⁵, influencing the agendas of civil society organizations or even creating such organizations. In particular, conservation and wise use initiatives that are linked to income-generating activities have the best chances of standing the test of time, as instead of competing for the time and effort of participants they merely require them to go about their activities differently. Project WFF/04/ARG/6, for example, combined wise use of traditional fisheries and wetland restoration with fish processing and marketing techniques that enabled participants to improve their livelihoods while preserving the resource.

The permanence of trained personnel is another instance where the questionnaires provided an optimistic first impression, with over half of all respondents attesting to the local permanence of former participants. While some respondents have pointed out that most of the local authorities remain on-site but have changed functions (WFF/99/CH/1 and WFF/99/CHL/6), in other cases the trained individuals have migrated but still work in wetlands-related issues in the region (WFF/95-96/CR/5 and WFF/00/ORMA/1). A different phenomenon was pointed out by project WFF/02-2/CHI/2, which indicated that when the main recipients are children they are likely to remain in the area for the next several years, after which their likelihood of migrating to urban areas increases; yet this trend is again reversed after a certain age when mature and older citizens tend to remain on a fixed location (WFF/01/PAR/1). In the case of project WFF/02-2/ESL/1, 60% of the beneficiaries remained in the community while the remaining 40% migrated to the US. As was pointed out by projects 98AR-2 and WFF/02/ARG/6, a high rate of permanence for local residents has sometimes been matched by a high (voluntary or involuntary) mobility of technical and administrative staff. Repeated training has been and will always be necessary to face this common trend.

One third of all respondents indicated that the original sponsored project enabled the mobilization of additional funds at a later stage. In particular, at least five projects (98X-21, WFF/01/PAR/1, WFF/01-2/COL/1, WFF/01-2/CAR/1 and WFF/02-2/ARG/7) mentioned a different WFF project when alluding to other sources of funds; while another three projects (98X-18, WFF/98/CRI/21 and WFF/97/SU/1) cited USFWS. The total additional funds mobilized exclusively from Ramsar and USFWS' other funds was USD 190,612.

This being said, by far the largest share of additional funds has come from third parties or organizations that have received mixed funding from the USFWS and other agencies. An example was provided by project WFF/98/CRI/21, which also received funding from WWF and UNDP for a total of USD 150,000. By far the most funds were mobilized by the proponent of project WFF/98/MX/2, which since 1999 has tapped into an estimated USD 900,000 from 21 sources (USD 400,000 were provided by the North American Wetland Conservation Council). Project WFF/00/PAN/1 likewise notified receiving USD 500,000 from the Japanese Government (JICA) and other agencies. Finally, mining companies have also proven to be important partners in this effort, contributing USD 50,000 a year since 2000 to the organization which implemented project WFF/98/CHL/2. According to this survey, the total additional funds mobilized from third party sources and mixed USFWS - third party sources was a cash contribution of USD 2,743,700. Most follow-up projects were in their final stages of implementation or closed.

⁵ Project WFF/02/CHI/1 is currently working with the government to produce a document to be distributed to all students nationwide. For more information see: <http://www.conama.cl/certificacion/1142/channel.html>

As regards the complementarity between the original and its follow-up counterpart project, some of the most common responses encountered included: updating information, undertaking monitoring activities, finalization of a management document, complement previous capacity building activities, networking, providing additional information and tools, implementing previous recommendations, refining the previous intervention or document and replicating the project at a different location.

Finally, among the most frequently encountered reasons to justify support for the WFF was the limited alternative sources of funding for wetland conservation both nationally and internationally to which local organizations and individuals have access (26 projects). This is particularly important as initial grants, however small, often motivate proponents to pursue the proposed activity further or for a longer period of time, and encourage them to apply to other funding sources later. The WFF was repeatedly praised for involving less bureaucracy than most other funds. Project 98BR-1 sums up the key points when stating: *“I consider the WFF initiative an encouraging support for small projects for many reasons: it is one of the few wetlands driven support funds, it does not involve much bureaucracy, and it can be accessed by individuals, governments, NGOs or universities. It might work as a seed fund or serve to draw the authorities’ attention to a certain issue.”* Other testimonies include the following:

“In many cases this grant increases the chances of mobilizing additional funds. The implementation of the first project, frequently in a relatively unknown site, is a ‘seed’ to raise interest in and draw attention to the importance of wetlands and their conservation”

– **WFF/97/CO/1**

“WFF has become a very efficient catalyst of international meetings to strengthen the coordination among neighboring countries that share this [wetland] ecosystem”

– **WFF/98/CHL/2**

“Gathering the information and experiences generated and sharing them widely opens the possibility of creating a multiplier effect in all other instances interested in wetlands issues”

– **WFF/98/CR/4**

“The funds invested by Ramsar and other donors have allowed us to translate enthusiasm into action”

– **WFF/98/MX/2**

“There are institutional and financial weaknesses for the evaluation of strategic ecosystems incorporating development and an improvement in the quality of life of the inhabitants in the Amazon. That’s why the support of international agencies is key in channeling additional state and private resources toward the management and wise use of wetlands”

– **WFF/99/CO/2**

“Previously an unknown term, the concept of ‘wetlands’ is nowadays widely used not only in environmental circles, but also in the public domain and in the most important media”

– **WFF/00/ORMA/1**

“[The WFF] is a convenient means to obtain resources that, even if limited, can nevertheless make the difference between the existence of the wetlands and their elements or the lack thereof”

– **WFF/01/PAR/2**

“These projects allow the analysis of different topics related to the conservation and wise use of wetlands. In many cases they are seed capital that are complemented with other projects and other sources of funding”

– **WFF/01-2/BOL/1**

“In many cases the funds received are used as a first step for the performance of different tasks. They serve to ‘kick-start’ an initiative and stimulate the execution of other projects”

– **WFF/02/ARG/5**

“In our case WFF served to demonstrate to policy makers that many things can be done with minimal support”

– **WFF/02/ARG/6**

“I consider that these funds are essential to carry out actions that, even if they don’t address all the needs, generate small projects that end up triggering the development of these sites and communities”

– **WFF/03/EC/1**

“It is a complementary fund, but very strategic. Its efficient management and the selection of strategic projects account for its high cost-benefit”

– **WFF/03/REG/WKS**

“There are very few, if any, organizations prepared to provide funding for wetlands-specific projects particularly in environmental education. With funds from Wetlands for the Future it is unlikely that many projects in this field would take place”

– **WFF/WKS/3/00**

“The Wetlands for the Future Fund allows the start of concrete actions in wetlands, strengthening different actors, consolidating lines of research, supporting the creation of human resources at different levels and being the initial thrust in the search for funds that allow the sustainability of long-term actions”

– **WFF/03-2/ARG/3**

“In my modest opinion WFF provides support to local groups that do not frequently receive it from other sponsors”

– **WFF/04/AR/4**

V. LESSONS LEARNED

A large number of the lessons learned involved greater awareness and capacities created in the proponent’s organization to better design future interventions, as they often mentioned things they would do differently in the future. An example of this were projects like WFF/02/ARG/6, which stressed the need to consider the political climate and involve local authorities to avoid losing credibility with the local population; project 99BR-6, which pointed out that traditional brochures have by themselves had very limited impact as an outreach tool, especially if they contain general information not driven to a specific group; and project WFF/01-2/GT/1 which touched on several key issues when suggesting the pooling of resources to make training an ongoing activity and strengthening the capacities of the local population in order to deliver on commitments made to the government.

Section B – Information on Non-completed Projects

Only 4 questionnaires were submitted for non-completed projects, of which two referred to ongoing NGO projects that are expected to successfully reach completion (WFF/04/CO/1 and WFF/04/CO/2). The remaining 2 questionnaires were submitted by a research institute (WFF/03-2/PY/1) and a government agency (WFF/03/AR/1). In the sections below (A) stands for the research institute; (G) for the government agency; and (N) and (N2) for the two NGOs.

All 4 projects mentioned external factors as being responsible for the non-completion of projects. These varied from a 50% cut in the funds originally requested (A) to government restructuring (G, N) and delays in the reception of the funds (N2). Among other causes, one project (A) acknowledged that the original proposal was too ambitious and the study area larger than expected. However, three of these nevertheless indicated the generation of positive impacts in terms of networking with various stakeholders (G, N) and awareness activities (A). Among the mitigating factors introduced, one project (N) stressed the importance of receiving government support, while another (A) drafted additional proposals to mobilize the needed funds. The latter expects to deliver the same results over an extended period of time.

Two projects (A, N) stated having obtained additional funding for corrective measures to continue the original project despite its condition. One (A) received 2 additional small grants from the World Bank for environmental education (USD 10,000) and community development (USD 2000). Among the main lessons learned, one project (G) indicated that the project could be considered successful even if the original activities were not carried out. Meanwhile, (A) stressed the need to be more realistic when designing projects and abstaining from accepting budget cuts unless the objectives are adjusted accordingly. Among the recommendations, greater involvement from the Secretariat and the Ramsar focal point in the country was considered desirable.

4.2.2 The Desk Study

In the following paragraphs, instead of extrapolating data and adding unnecessary inaccuracies to the analysis, a distinction has been made between the quantitative information that was explicitly included in the final reports and other qualitative information that is presented aggregated in brackets. In this way, and unless otherwise specified, the quantitative data gathered will be followed by the number of projects not specifying quantities. Even if this review has taken every precaution to ensure that the most reliable data was employed, ultimately all the information presented in the following sections was extracted from project files available in the Secretariat.

In addition to the specific categories included below, it was deemed useful to mention the overall number of people who have been exposed to or involved in Wetlands for the Future initiatives. The review of final reports yielded an estimated 8,217 people involved during 1,259 days of training, interactive events, field visits and other activities. In addition, 3,308 people were also involved during an unspecified length of time, and an unspecified number of people were involved during 1,919 days. A group of 117 projects did not indicate in their final reports either the number of people they involved nor the corresponding length of time, even though activities involving other sectors of society were among their objectives. For internal accountability purposes it can also be mentioned that the stated goals of the originally sponsored proposals included the involvement of 15,726 people (112 unspecified) during 3,592 days (113 unspecified).

The following paragraphs present the total outputs that the various types of projects have generated. Numbers should be taken as indicative of the order of magnitude for each output.

- 1. Training & Capacity Building:** The 132 training & capacity building projects indicated in Section 3.4 (a subgroup of the above category) provided technical training to 1,873 professionals, of which 338 were field personnel and site managers (29 projects unspecified); 253 were government bureaucrats (40 projects unspecified); and another 1,282 were professionals from other sectors (40 projects unspecified).

2. **Awareness Raising Activities:** In this case, due to the nature of the activities, events tend to involve larger and broader types of audiences. At least 5,550 people were reached by the 99 projects carried out with awareness-raising objectives, of which 4,275 were from the general population (41 projects unspecified). Of this total only 34 individuals from indigenous groups were deliberately engaged as a result of their origin (9 projects unspecified). The remaining groups included 1,240 children (20 projects unspecified), and 35 individuals were simply classified as “other”(2 projects unspecified).
3. **Documentation:** Among the various types of materials that have been produced over the years, at least 16,532 copies of publications (mainly books and handbooks) have been produced (26 projects unspecified) in addition to 192,663 promotional materials such as posters, leaflets, CDs and news items (30 projects unspecified); 1,109 copies of videos (8 projects unspecified); 148 radio broadcasts (3 projects unspecified); 25 web pages (3 projects unspecified); 35,809 copies of newsletters and e-newsletters (5 projects unspecified); and 49 visitor centers or their equivalents, e.g., libraries and temporary exhibitions (3 projects unspecified). The Fund has also been quite efficient at including the logos of Ramsar, the USF&WS and the USDOS in the products generated. Whenever beneficiaries have omitted them a commitment has been sought to include them in subsequent editions and/or in the electronic versions.
4. **Wetland Management & Tools:** In order to differentiate between the various outputs that can be included under this heading, products were grouped into the following four sub-categories:
 - (i) *Equipment and infrastructure:* at least 30 projects acquired equipment, or built infrastructure, for management purposes (none unspecified).
 - (ii) *Monitoring data:* at least 22 projects contained relevant components aimed at monitoring technical information (none unspecified).
 - (iii) *Baseline data, inventories, databases and maps:* at least 45 projects produced these types of products (none unspecified).
 - (iv) *Guidance documents:* this section includes outcomes such as management plans, consensus declarations and various types of policies both formal and informal. At least 33 projects generated such documents (none unspecified).
5. **Academic & Research:** Activities of an academic nature have directly or indirectly resulted in a recorded 111 technical studies (4 projects unspecified) of which an unknown number were published in scientific journals; 27 student theses (1 project unspecified); 11 new teaching curricula and contents (1 project unspecified); and an unspecified number of interventions at technical events (e.g., congresses and symposia) and presentations for non-technical audiences (e.g., students and schoolchildren).
6. **Networking:** Some projects had as one of their main objectives the creation of spaces where participants could easily exchange information and experiences, and in general foster networks of like-minded individuals or people with similar interests. Organizing national and regional events (but not local workshops) fall under this category. The review identified 63 such projects, of which 50 were involved in organizing national events (2 unspecified) and 28 international or regional events (6 unspecified).

As can be appreciated by the reader, any effort to modify the present structure of the Fund should also involve improving the quantification of outputs, even if these do not fully capture the value of the interventions.

4.3 Efficiency of the Fund

Any attempt to assess the overall efficiency of the Fund in terms of the use it has made of the financial and human resources at its disposal implicitly seeks to determine whether these resources would have been put to a better use elsewhere, or whether there was a more efficient way to achieve the same results. Since the alternative investments that could have been made with these funds are unknown to the Secretariat, an

opportunity cost analysis became unworkable. Similarly, the varying contexts, levels of complexity and time periods when the various projects were implemented would make a comparison between countries, project types and proponents irrelevant.

Among the efficiency factors which have not been discussed so far is the rate of compliance of projects. As can be seen from Annex III, of the 225 projects that have been sponsored, 158 (70%) are closed, 37 (16%) are ongoing (open), and 30 (13%) pending submission of reports, products or amendments.⁶ As could be predicted, the rate of default is closely related to the number of projects approved in each country (i.e., the more projects approved, the larger the number of defaults) and in all cases those countries that had 100% of their projects closed or in default also had no more than 3 projects overall. Section 3.4. noted that those projects implemented by academic institutions appeared to have a lower rate of default than those implemented by government / NGOs, though this impression requires further verification.

Another issue worth mentioning is that in those cases where a refund has been requested there has been virtually no leverage available to the Secretariat other than reminding beneficiaries of their commitments and withholding the last payment of 20%. On several occasions projects in default received a lump sum of 100% to minimize transaction costs (this applies to projects between USD 1k and 10k). Although delays in the submission of reports and requests to extend deadlines are both common, the general administration of the Fund by the Secretariat (including the timeliness of disbursements) was not found to constitute a burden on beneficiaries.

5. Conclusions and Lessons learned

During the past ten years the Wetlands for the Future Fund has generated a vast amount of outputs ranging from the tangible (e.g., printed materials, equipment and guidelines) to the intangible (e.g., raised awareness, experience and increased human capacities) to the barely measured (quantitative improvements on the wetlands in the region). This has been the outcome of a deliberate effort to keep the Fund open to as wide a variety of recipient organizations as possible within the mandate of the Fund. The Secretariat finds it remarkable that a random sample of 43% of all the projects sponsored (survey) yielded an exceptionally high rate of follow-up after completion of the original project, even if the types of subsequent activities undertaken have not always built directly upon the previous ones.

The Wetlands for the Future Fund has been recognized by governments, NGOs, scientists, and other stakeholders as an impressively helpful tool to develop national capacities, promote information exchange, empower local communities and promote public participation in local and national processes. Managing the fund is a very time-consuming task for the Ramsar Secretariat; however, the appreciation and comments received from stakeholders make it clear that it has been a key tool to encourage local involvement in wetland management and conservation, which will no doubt have a long-term impact on the status of wetlands and their biodiversity in the Western Hemisphere.

6. Recommendations

1. An assessment of the Fund should be undertaken at regular intervals (5 years) - Financial and human resources should also be set aside to this end. To facilitate this process formats for progress and final reports should be modified to guarantee that the key questions to assess performance are properly included and a monitoring system can be put in place.

⁶ The Secretariat does not make a sharp distinction between those projects that are temporarily delayed and those where there is only a minimal probability of successful completion, as the former usually turn into the latter after a (yet unspecified) period of time. The best judgment of the staff at the Secretariat determines the actions to follow in each case, and as has been shown in the past even projects dating back several years are many times successfully completed. Many pending projects have already submitted final reports, financial reports and/or materials but still have unresolved issues which the Secretariat has requested them to clarify. As a general rule projects are not closed (and the final payments not made) until all reports, products and clarifications have been received and approved by the Secretariat.

2. The maximum of USD 20,000 should be reserved for proponents with a proven record of delivering quality results. First-time beneficiaries should only be entitled to a lower amount.
3. A fund disbursement ratio of 60% - 40% (instead of the current 80% - 20%) would probably increase the responsiveness of beneficiaries to Secretariat requests, and hence reduce the number of “pending” projects.
4. Request grantees to include a complete financial report, which will clearly show other cash contributions received, as well as their in-kind financial support.
5. Visits to selected projects could be combined with regular Secretariat staff travel or performed using reliable contacts in the region to minimize costs.
6. The Operational Guidelines should be amended to include: 1) A standard format to evaluate progress reports, and 2) the expected (Section B) and actual (Section E) quantitative outputs, possibly to be complemented by other wetland-related indicators.
7. Audited financial reports could also be required for projects receiving more than USD 10 k, although this may generate additional financial burden for small grants such as WFF’s.



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Wetlands for the Future Fund (WFF): Operational Guidelines 2003-2008
http://www.ramsar.org/wff/key_wff_index.htm

The Ramsar Strategic Plan 2003-2008
http://www.ramsar.org/key_strat_plan_2003_e.htm?bcsi_scan_EC783A0C3C997A81=uDfdPZt5fTnWvhP3P IZ1BQsAAABu+VYA&bcsi_scan_filename=key_strat_plan_2003_e.htm

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Annex I. Annual Contributions made by the US Government

Year	Funds Received (USD)	Funds Available (-10% since 1999)
1994	250,000	250,000
1995	250,000	250,000
1996	0	0
1997	250,000	250,000
1998	250,000	250,000
1999	250,000	225,000
2000	270,000	243,000
2001	300,000	270,000
2002	340,000	306,000
2003	205,000	184,500
2004	150,000	135,000
2005	210,000	189,000
2006	238,880	214,992
TOTAL	2,963,880	2,767,492

Annex II. Proposals Received and Projects Sponsored

Year	National received	National sponsored	Regional received	Regional sponsored	Total received	Total Sponsored	Approval rate
1995-1996	30	11	0	1	30	12	40%
1997	54	23	1	3	55	26	47%
1998	76	30	16	16	92	46	50%
1999	49	20	0	1	49	21	43%
2000	25	20	4	5	29	25	86%
2001	39	19	1	1	40	20	50%
2002	49	34	1	1	50	35	70%
2003	29	15	1	1	30	16	53%
2004	26	12	0	0	26	12	46%
2005	23	11	0	0	23	11	48%
2006	-	-	-	1	-	1	-
TOTAL	400	195	24	30	424	225	53%

NOTE: The category “Regional & Other” includes projects proposed by the Ramsar Secretariat which were not received from third parties. They account for instances when the number of sponsored projects is greater than the number of proposals received.

Annex III. The Geographic Spread and Status of Projects

Country	No. of projects	Closed No.	Closed %	Ongoing No.	Ongoing %	Pending No.	Pending %	Total Funding Received (USD)
Argentina	41	24	59%	10	24%	7	17%	\$450,010
Belize	1	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%	\$10,000
Bolivia	5	2	40%	3	60%	0	0%	\$51,727
Brazil	15	13	87%	1	7%	1	7%	\$126,425
Chile	9	7	78%	0	0%	2	22%	\$90,210
Colombia	21	14	67%	5	24%	2	10%	\$254,125
Costa Rica	23	16	67%	1	4%	6	28%	\$197,432
Ecuador	10	6	60%	2	20%	2	20%	\$77,491
El Salvador	2	1	50%	0	0%	1	50%	\$25,621
Guatemala	10	9	90%	1	10%	0	0%	\$86,856
Guyana	1	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%	\$8,055
Honduras	1	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%	\$8,134
Mexico	15	9	60%	3	20%	3	20%	\$171,138
Nicaragua	3	3	100%	0	0%	0	0%	\$23,486
Panama	3	2	67%	0	0%	1	33%	\$40,000
Paraguay	5	3	60%	0	0%	2	40%	\$68,000
Peru	13	10	77%	2	15%	1	8%	\$138,167
St. Lucia	5	4	80%	1	20%	0	0%	\$50,245
Suriname	3	3	100%	0	0%	0	0%	\$25,000
T&T	1	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%	\$20,000
Uruguay	1	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%	\$19,300
Venezuela	7	3	43%	3	43%	1	14%	\$76,997
Regional	30	25	89%	4	11%	0	0%	\$534,435
Total	225	158	70%	37	16%	30	13%	\$2,552,744

Annex IV. Approved and Matching Funds

No.	Code	Approved Funds	Matching Funds
1	95-96AR-1	\$16,825	14,807
2	Follow up to AR-1	\$4,903	4,903
3	95-96AR-3	\$5,000	5,000
4	97AR-1	\$21,860	29,230
5	97AR-2	\$17,990	16,200
6	Modification No. 1/97	\$600	600
7	97AR-3	\$4,362	5,660
8	97AR-7	\$20,000	21,000
9	98AR-1	\$2,600	3,000
10	98AR-2	\$13,912	13,300
11	98AR-3	\$5,000	37,600
12	98AR-6	\$15,000	175,650
13	99AR-1	\$7,450	3,000
14	99AR-6	\$10,000	23,000
15	WFF/00/ARG/1	\$8,860	10,000
16	WFF/00-2/ARG/3	\$12,000	20,000
17	WFF/00-2/ARG/4	\$8,400	25,039
18	WFF/00-2/ARG/5	\$13,590	15,800
19	WFF/01-2/ARG/4	\$14,000	11,858
20	WFF/02/ARG/4	\$4,324	8,158
21	WFF/02/ARG/5	\$3,221	10,850
22	WFF/02/ARG/6	\$13,000	11,292
23	WFF/02/ARG/7	\$8,225	13,325
24	WFF/02-2/ARG/1	\$10,000	25,500
25	WFF/02-2/ARG/2	\$11,000	28,082
26	WFF/02-2/ARG/3	\$6,300	33,380
27	WFF/02-2/ARG/4	\$5,000	5,080
28	WFF/02-2/ARG/5	\$6,000	9,733
29	WFF/02-2/ARG/6	\$11,950	29,150
30	WFF/02-2/ARG/7	\$12,000	22,974
31	WFF/03/AR/1	\$12,500	28,567
32	WFF/03-2/AR/3	\$2,600	2,600
33	WFF/04/AR/2	\$3,000	61,215
34	WFF/04/AR/3	\$2,900	136,616
35	WFF/04/AR/4	\$16,000	49,640
36	WFF/04/AR/6	\$11,633	35,500
37	WFF/05/AR/2	\$16,793	52,600
38	WFF/05/AR/3	\$18,400	62,000
39	WFF/05/AR/4	\$16,000	20,900
40	WFF/05/AR/5	\$16,967	30,600
41	WFF/05/AR/7	\$19,546	28,087
42	95-96BZ-1	\$10,000	30,000
43	98BO-3	\$17,000	13,000
44	98BO-5	\$1,000	1,000
45	99-BOL-1b	\$16,727	54,873
46	WFF/01-2/BOL/1	\$12,000	12,000

No.	Code	Approved Funds	Matching Funds
47	WFF/05/BO/1	\$5,000	13,200
48	Brasil-95-96BR-1	\$10,000	8,500
49	Follow up to BR-1	\$1,500	1,500
50	Brasil-97BR-1	\$15,000	15,000
51	Brasil-97BR-5	\$24,563	38,113
52	Brasil-98BR-1	\$20,000	41,417
53	Brasil-98BR-2	\$4,500	10,685
54	Brasil-99BR-3	\$3,000	15,835
55	Brasil-99BR-4	\$3,000	175,650
56	Brasil-99BR-5	\$3,000	3,000
57	Brasil-99BR-6	\$5,000	3,500
58	Brasil-99BR-9	\$4,000	4,000
59	Brasil-99BR-12	\$6,500	6,500
60	WFF/00-2/BRA/2	\$20,000	80,100
61	WFF/01-2/BRA/3	\$1,362	2,960
62	WFF/04/BR/1	\$5,000	6,415
63	Chile-98CH-1	\$5,000	5,200
64	Chile-99CH-1	\$16,100	16,000
65	Chile-99CH-2	\$5,000	5,200
66	Chile-99CH-6	\$16,100	16,000
67	WFF/00-2/CHI/1	\$8,000	8,000
68	WFF/02/CHI/1	\$10,000	21,270
69	WFF/02-2/CHI/1	\$4,910	5,728
70	WFF/02-2/CHI/2	\$10,100	10,100
71	WFF/04/CL/2	\$15,000	19,828
72	Colombia-97CO-1	\$19,910	65,300
73	Colombia-98CO-4	\$20,000	42,779
74	Colombia-98CO-10	\$10,000	153,846
75	Colombia-99CO-1	\$25,000	20,000
76	Colombia-99CO-2	\$5,000	8,083
77	WFF/00-2/COL/1	\$12,000	20,000
78	WFF/00-2/COL/2	\$5,415	5,415
79	WFF/01/COL/1	\$15,300	22,664
80	WFF/01-2/COL/1	\$7,500	5,565
81	WFF/01-2/COL/3	\$3,000	3,000
82	WFF/01-2/COL/4	\$15,000	187,000
83	WFF/02/COL/1	\$12,000	33,372
84	WFF/02/COL/2	\$10,000	12,440
85	WFF/03/CO/1	\$14,500	16,931
86	WFF/03/CO/2	\$8,800	16,187
87	WFF/03/CO/3	\$10,000	11,197
88	WFF/03-2/CO/1	\$15,000	43,245
89	WFF/03-2/CO/2	\$10,000	13,816
90	WFF/04/CO/1	\$8,000	9,480
91	WFF/04/CO/2	\$10,700	15,775
92	WFF/05/CO/4	\$17,000	22,073

No.	Code	Approved Funds	Matching Funds
93	Costa Rica-95-96CR-2	\$3,794	10,500
94	Costa Rica-95-96CR-5	\$3,000	13,195
95	Costa Rica-95-96CR-9	\$3,000	19,076
96	Costa Rica-97CR-3	\$4,000	4,230
97	Costa Rica-97CR-4	\$3,000	16,079
98	Costa Rica-97CR-6	\$3,000	19,708
99	Costa Rica-97CR-8	\$5,000	5,000
100	Second Part CR-8	\$15,250	15,250
101	Costa Rica-98CR-17	\$10,250	28,800
102	Costa Rica-98CR-25	\$3,600	10,300
103	Costa Rica-97CR-9	\$17,100	18,600
104	Costa Rica-98CR-2	\$3,500	58,000
105	Costa Rica-98CR-7	\$15,000	20,000
106	Costa Rica-98CR-8	\$15,435	11,960
107	Costa Rica-98CR-20	\$3,500	4,300
108	Costa Rica-98CR-23	\$3,553	3,553
109	Costa Rica-99CR-2	\$3,600	11,100
110	WFF/00/CRI/1	\$5,000	5,000
111	WFF/00/CRI/2	\$17,505	23,748
112	WFF/00-2/CRI/3	\$10,000	11,500
113	WFF/01/CRI/2	\$15,000	17,000
114	WFF/02/CRI/1	\$15,000	128,008
115	WFF/04/CR/1	\$15,000	66,500
116	Ecuador-95-96EC-2	\$3,000	25,600
117	WFF/01/ECU/1	\$12,000	23,900
118	WFF/01-2/ECU/1	\$5,000	5,000
119	WFF/01-2/ECU/2	\$10,000	10,000
120	WFF/02/ECU/1	\$5,000	48,600
121	WFF/02/ECU/3	\$463	463
122	WFF/02/ECU/4 - II	\$9,528	25,000
123	WFF/03/EC/1	\$5,000	9,325
124	WFF/03-2/EC/1	\$10,000	25,590
125	WFF/05/EC/1	\$17,500	19,050
126	El Salvador-98ES-1	\$15,000	20,516
127	WFF/02-2/ESL/1	\$10,621	20,598
128	Guatemala-97GT-2	\$3,000	6,625
129	Guatemala-97GT-4	\$2,269	2,500
130	Guatemala-97GT-5	\$2,200	5,307
131	Guatemala-98GT-2	\$1,666	1,865
132	Guatemala-98GT-3	\$9,210	17,600
133	Guatemala-99GT-1	\$7,750	7,750
134	WFF/01/GTM/1	\$3,295	4,069
135	WFF/01/GTM/2	\$19,604	193,896
136	WFF/01-2/GTM/1	\$17,950	47,000
137	WFF/04/GT/1	\$19,912	22,350
138	WFF/02GUY/1	\$8,055	9,900
139	Honduras-97HO-2	\$8,134	8,134
140	Mexico-98MX-1	\$20,000	42,000
141	Mexico-98MX-2	\$20,000	106,574

No.	Code	Approved Funds	Matching Funds
142	Mexico-98MX-4	\$5,000	8,172
143	Mexico-98MX-6	\$15,000	130,000
144	Mexico-99MX-1	\$13,000	164,000
145	Mexico-99MX-3	\$3,000	3,500
146	WFF/00/MEX/1	\$9,500	14,000
147	WFF/00-2/MEX/2	\$5,000	18,749
148	WFF/00-2/MEX/3	\$3,000	19,000
149	WFF/02/MEX/1	\$15,000	31,900
150	WFF/02/MEX/2	\$15,000	25,516
151	WFF/02-2/MEX/1	\$9,310	43,660
152	WFF/02-2/MEX/2	\$12,000	12,405
153	WFF/02-2/MEX/3	\$12,128	49,550
154	WFF/05/MX/1	\$14,200	23,644
155	Nicaragua-97NI-2	\$5,436	5,000
156	Nicaragua-98NI-1	\$14,200	12,100
157	WFF/02/NIC/1	\$3,850	3,145
158	Panama-98PN-2	\$20,000	20,000
159	WFF/00/PAN/1	\$10,000	22,500
160	WFF/01-2/PAN/1	\$10,000	31,401
161	WFF/01/PAR/1	\$20,000	20,000
162	WFF/01/PAR/2	\$20,000	40,323
163	WFF/02/PRY/1	\$15,000	23,600
164	WFF/02-2/PRY/1	\$3,000	13,496
165	WFF/03-2/PY/1	\$10,000	10,000
166	Peru-97PE-4	\$10,320	16,170
167	Peru-97PE-8	\$21,892	9,000
168	Peru-99PER-3	\$19,015	4,500
169	WFF/00/PER/1	\$3,600	3,600
170	WFF/00-2/PER/2	\$500	500
171	WFF/01/PER/1	\$4,700	5,381.99
172	WFF/01-2/PER/3	\$4,400	5,190
173	WFF/02/PER/1	\$3,070	3,070
174	WFF/02-2/PER/1	\$16,300	16,710
175	WFF/03/PE/1	\$930	10,662.51
176	WFF/03-2/PE/1	\$19,500	20,589.31
177	WFF/05/PE/2	\$15,000	30,030
178	WFF/05/PE/4	\$17,000	24,834
179	St. Lucia 95-96SL-1	\$5,000	5,000
180	Santa Lucia-97SL-1	\$24,080	27,295
181	Santa Lucia-98SL-1	\$5,680	39,840
182	WFF/99/LCA/1	\$15,485	49,445
183	WFF/04/CAR/1	\$17,875	17,450
184	Suriname-97SU-1	\$17,000	37,000
185	Suriname-98SU-1	\$5,000	5,000
186	WFF/00/SUR/1	\$3,000	\$3,000
187	98TT-1	\$20,000	6,935
188	WFF/03/UY/1	\$19,300	32,710
189	WFF/00-2/VEN/1	\$19,027	\$19,027
190	WFF/00/VEN/2	\$3,000	68,667

No.	Code	Approved Funds	Matching Funds
191	WFF/02/VEN/1	\$10,000	176,246.36
192	WFF/02/VEN/2	\$4,900	16,428.57
193	WFF/03/VE/1	\$19,570	59,900
194	WFF/03/VE/2	\$18,500	404,578
195	WFF/04/VE/2	\$2,000	11,800
Various & Regional			
196	95-96X-1 Paid in 1995	\$8,566	\$8,566
197	97X-1	\$10,000	\$10,000
198	97X-2 = 97/USA/1	\$4,368	4,368
199	97X-3	\$3,500	\$3,500
200	98X-1	\$2,266	\$2,266
201	98X-2	\$2,340	\$2,340
202	98X-3 = 98/USA/1	\$2,000	7,000
203	98X-4	\$22,000	\$22,000
204	98X-6	\$10,000	45,000
205	98X-10	\$22,000	\$22,000
206	98X-13	\$5,000	\$5,000
207	98X-14 = WFF/98/CR/4	\$5,000	\$5,000
208	98X-15	\$870	500
209	98X-16 = Costa Rica-98CR-13	\$20,000	\$20,000
210	98X-18 = WFF/98/CRI/18	\$8,000	\$8,000

No.	Code	Approved Funds	Matching Funds
211	98X-19 = WFF/98/CRI/21	\$23,050	25,200
212	98X-21	\$18,000	18,421
213	98X-22 = WFF/98/CHL/2	\$24,750	56,850
214	98X-23	\$18,300	18,300
215	98X-24	\$18,300	17,000
216	99X-1	\$22,000	\$22,000
217	WFF/00/ORMA/1	\$12,000	\$12,000
218	WFF/WKS/3/00	\$27,000	\$27,000
219	WFF/WKS/4/00	\$7,000	26,975
220	WFF/WKS/CAN/00	\$5,000	\$5,000
221	WFF/00/CAR/2	\$17,834	\$17,834
222	WFF/01-2/CAR/1	\$7,500	18,720
223	WFF/02-2/URY/WKS1	\$1,481	\$1,481
224	WFF/03/REG/WKS	\$6,200	14,000
225	WFF/06/REG/1	\$200,000	\$600,000

Annex V. Number of Projects and Interventions in Ramsar Sites

Country	Number of interventions in Ramsar sites*	Number of projects in Ramsar sites	Total WFF projects for country	% WFF Projects in Ramsar sites
Antigua & Barbuda	0	0	0	0%
Argentina	20	20	41	49%
Bahamas	0	0	0	0%
Barbados	0	0	0	0%
Belize	1	1	1	100%
Bolivia	4	4	5	80%
Brazil	11	3	15	20%
Chile	7	4	9	44%
Colombia	4	3	21	14%
Costa Rica	8	8	24	33%
Dominican Republic	0	0	0	0%
Ecuador	11	10	11	91%
El Salvador	1	1	2	50%
Guatemala	8	8	10	80%
Guyana**	N/A	N/A	1	N/A
Honduras	1	1	1	100%
Jamaica	0	0	0	0%
Mexico	8	6	15	40%
Nicaragua	1	1	3	33%
Panama	1	1	3	33%
Paraguay	1	1	5	20%
Peru	15	7	13	54%
St. Lucia	1	1	5	20%
Suriname	0	0	3	0%
Trinidad and Tobago	2	2	1	200%
Uruguay	1	1	1	100%
Venezuela	13	4	7	57%
TOTAL	119	87	197	

*The difference between the no. of interventions and the no. of projects is due to regional projects or to projects involving several national Ramsar sites. Trinidad & Tobago is the only country to have been the sole beneficiary of a foreign project (St. Lucia), which accounts for its 200% rate.

**Project WFF/02/GUY/1 was granted for its accession to Ramsar. To date this has not taken place.

Annex VI. List of Ramsar Sites where WWF Projects have been Implemented

No.	Country	Site Name
1	Argentina	Laguna de los Pozuelos
2		Mar Chiquita
3		Bahía de Samborombón
4		Laguna Blanca
5		Reserva Provincial Laguna Brava
6		Reserva Costa Atlantica de Tierra del Fuego
7		Lagunas de Guanacache
8		Río Pilcomayo
9		Lagunas y Esteros del Iberá
10		Laguna de Llanquanelo
11		Jaaukanigás
12	Belize	Crooked Tree Wildlife Sanctuary
13	Bolivia	Pantanal Boliviano
14		Lagos Poopó y Uru Uru
15	Brazil	Reentrancias Maranhenses
16		Pantanal Matogrossense
17		Lagoa do Peixe
18		Mamirauá
19		Ilha do Bananal
20	Chile	Humedal el Yali
21		Sistema hidrológico de Soncor
22		Salar de Tara
23		Salar del Huasco
24		SN Laguna Conchalí
25		Bahía Lomas
26	Colombia	Sistema Delta Estuarino del Río Magdalena, Ciénaga Grande de Santa Marta
27		Laguna de la Cocha
28	Costa Rica	Palo Verde
29		Caño Negro
30		Humedal Caribe Noreste
31		Cuenca Embalse Arenal
32	Ecuador	Abras de Mantequilla
33		Reserva Ecológica de Manglares Cayapas-Mataje
34		Parque Nacional Cajas
35		Manglares Churute
36		Isla Santay
37		Reserva Biológica Limoncocha
38		Laguna de Cube
39	El Salvador	Area Natural Protegida Laguna del Jocotal
40	Guatemala	Refugio de Vida Silvestre Bocas del Polochic
41		Parque Nacional Laguna del Tigre
42		Punta de Manabique
43	Honduras	Refugio de Vida Silvestre Punta Izopo
44	Mexico	Humedales del Delta del Río Colorado
45		Reserva de la Biosfera La Encrucijada
46		Marismas Nacionales
47		Izembek Lagoon National Wildlife Refuge (USA)
48		Sian Ka'an

No.	Country	Site Name
49		Reserva de la Biosfera Los Petenes
50		La Mancha y El Llano
51	Nicaragua	Sistema de Humedales de San Miguelito
52	Panama	Golfo de Montijo
53	Paraguay	Laguna Chaco Lodge
54	Peru	Zona Reservada Los Pantanos de Villa
55		Santuario Nacional Lagunas de Mejía
56		Lago Titicaca (Peruvian sector)
57		Humedal Lucre - Huacarpay
58		Santuario Nacional Manglares de Tumbes
59		Paracas
60		Reserva Nacional de Junín
61		Pacaya Samiria
62	St. Lucia	Mankôté Mangrove
63	Trinidad and Tobago	Nariva Swamp
64	Uruguay	Esteros de Farrapos e Islas del Río Uruguay
65	Venezuela	Laguna de Tacarigua (coast)
66		Archipiélago Los Roques
67		Ciénaga de Los Olivitos
68		Cuare
69		Laguna de la Restinga
70		Laguna de Tacarigua

Annex VII. Results of the Wetlands for the Future Survey (Questionnaire)⁷

The original design of the WFF survey was meant to include all 225 individuals and organizations that had been sponsored by the Fund in the past. However, during the preparatory period it became increasingly clear that certain types of projects did not lend themselves to this kind of exercise. For instance, it was clear that no medium and long-term impacts could be expected from the 12 projects sponsored since 2005, nor would there be any point in filling out questionnaires for the other 10 projects where the funds were managed by the Secretariat for internal purposes, e.g. internship program and handbooks. Additionally, the following 9 projects were also not considered:

- 5 projects only covering the air transport of individuals attending wetland-related events abroad;
- 1 student thesis (Peru);
- 2 projects that were originally thought to have been sponsored with interests (Uruguay and Caribbean);
- 1 project from Suriname that was apparently overlooked when making the shortlist.

As a result, only 194 Fund beneficiaries were contacted. There were also 3 cases in which questionnaires were mistakenly sent to interest-sponsored projects (Chile, Colombia and Peru). The corresponding responses were not included in the statistics, but were taken into account in the interpretation. Only in a project by the Society of Caribbean Ornithology have the funds entirely remained in the USA.

The questionnaires and an accompanying letter were sent in electronic format (e-mail) to all 194 recipients between the 4th and the 6th of July, 2006. Since two weeks later only 21 filled questionnaires had been received, a second round of e-mails was sent between the 28th July and 2nd August, increasing the response rate to a total of **84 questionnaires** the last one being received on September 12th. While these 84 questionnaires represent **43.3% of the 194** projects that were requested to fill out the questionnaire, they only represent **37.3% of all the 225** projects that have benefited from the Fund in the past. Additional general comments for 5 St. Lucia projects were received, considered in the analysis but not included in the previous total. In several countries the assistance of the Ramsar Administrative Authority was mobilized to increase the response rate. As a general rule the it proved much more challenging to contact individuals from older projects (1999 and before), although their overall response rate was the same as for more recent ones. A list of all projects that submitted filled questionnaires is provided at the end of this Annex.

For the purpose of processing the information contained in the questionnaires, the original template was restructured into the following 6 categories:

- I. **Effectiveness** (questions 1 and 7)
- II. **Influence** (questions 9, 11, 12, 17 and 18)
- III. **Impact** (questions 14, 15, 16 and 20)
- IV. **Sustainability** (questions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 19 and 21)
- V. **Lessons Learned** (question 8)
- VI. **Information for Non-completed Questionnaires**

The following pages present the quantitative results for each category.

⁷ The Americas Team at the Ramsar Secretariat wishes to thank Mrs. Nancy MacPherson and Mrs. Assia Alexieva from IUCN for their invaluable advice and support in structuring this analysis.

Section A – Information on Completed Projects

I. EFFECTIVENESS

QUESTION 1: Was the original Wetlands for the Future project successfully completed?

RESPONSE: (81) YES (3) NO

QUESTION 7: Main accomplishments of the project:

RESPONSE: (80 responses, 4 blanks)

Suggested Categories	Frequency	%
Capacity building	28	33.3
Guidance documents	21	25.0
Raised awareness	27	32.1
Networking and synergies	33	39.3
Wetland assessment information and tools	33	39.3

NOTE: These categories were suggested retroactively based on the most frequently encountered responses. The percentages are not cumulative as several categories were possible for each project.

II. INFLUENCE

QUESTION 9: Have the undertaken activities resulted in concrete improvements for the local and/or regional wetlands?

RESPONSE:

Categories	Frequency	%
Yes	51	60.7
No	11	13.1
N/A or blank	22	26.2

QUESTION 11: Do you consider that the people trained during the project (beneficiaries) have had a positive multiplier effect in their communities (e.g. by passing on their knowledge to others, taking action, mobilizing additional resources, etc.)?

RESPONSE:

Categories	Frequency	%
Yes	62	73.8
No	1	1.2
N/A or blank	21	25.0

NOTE: In most cases the number of people trained is not indicated.

QUESTION 12: Have the local authorities taken into account the information generated by the project in their decisions affecting the wetland?

RESPONSE:

Categories	Frequency	%
Yes	52	61.9
No	13	15.5
N/A or blank	19	22.6

QUESTION 17: Were new networks or leaderships created that initiated further actions in the location of the project or in other wetlands?

RESPONSE:

Categories	Frequency	%
Yes	47	56.0
No	19	22.6
N/A or blank	18	21.4

QUESTION 18: Please mention any awards that the project has received to date

RESPONSE: 17 projects indicated having received formal awards for their work, while a much larger number mentioned more informal types of recognition from various stakeholders.

III. IMPACT

QUESTION 13: Have local or national wetland policies been created or modified as a result of this project?

RESPONSE:

Suggested Categories	Frequency	%
Yes	13	15.5
Yes (unspecified or pending approval)	8	9.5
No	48	57.1
N/A or blank	15	17.9

QUESTION 14: Has new legislation been passed relating to the wise use and conservation of wetlands?

RESPONSE:

Suggested Categories	Frequency	%
Yes	13	15.5
Yes (pending or similar)	5	6.0
No	49	58.3
N/A or blank	17	20.2

QUESTION 15: Has a new Ramsar site or other protected area been established as a result of the project?

RESPONSE:

Suggested Categories	Frequency	%
Yes	13	15.5
Yes (pending or similar)	10	11.9
No	50	59.5
N/A or blank	11	13.1

QUESTION 16: If a management plan was drafted, is it being implemented?

RESPONSE:

Categories	Frequency	%
Yes	8	9.5
No	12	14.3
Partially	11	13.1
N/A or blank	53	63.1

QUESTION 20: In general, has the project had a noticeable positive impact in the management and wise use of wetlands in the medium and long terms?

RESPONSE:

Categories	Frequency	%
Yes	66	78.6
No	4	4.8
Other	1	1.2
N/A or blank	13	15.5

IV. SUSTAINABILITY

QUESTION 2: Once the original project was completed, was there follow-up?

RESPONSE:

Categories	Frequency	%
Yes	73	86.9
No	5	6.0
N/A or blank	6	7.1

QUESTION 3: If the answer was “Yes”, which kinds of actions/activities have been carried out to date?

RESPONSE:

Categories	Frequency	%
Monitoring of the previous actions / activities	27	32.1
Extended duration	32	38.1
New follow-up activities	44	52.4
Update / refresh knowledge	31	36.9
Maintenance of equipment / infrastructure	12	14.3
More copies of documents / materials	28	33.3
Other	39	46.4
N/A or blank	12	14.3

NOTE: The percentages shown are not cumulative, as more than one option was possible for each project.

QUESTION 4: How long have follow-up activities taken place?

RESPONSE:

Categories	Frequency	%
0-3 months	6	7.1
3-6 months	4	4.8
6-12 months	2	2.4
12-24 months	3	3.6
More than 24 months	3	3.6
To date	56	66.7
N/A or blank	10	11.9

QUESTION 5: In case follow-up activities have not yet taken place, are they envisaged in the future?

RESPONSE:

Suggested Categories	Frequency	%
Yes, in the next 6 months	3	3.6
Yes, in the next year	5	6.0
No	21	25.0
N/A or blank	55	65.5

QUESTION 6: If the reply to the previous question was negative, is there any other organization or person currently following-up the activities initiated during the original project?

RESPONSE:

Categories	Frequency	%
Yes	17	20.2
No	10	11.9
N/A or blank	57	67.9

QUESTION 10: Have the persons trained during the project (beneficiaries) stayed in the site, or have they migrated?

RESPONSE:

Suggested Categories	Frequency	%
Yes, mostly	43	51.2
No	4	4.8
N/A or blank	26	31.0
Partially (less than half or only for some time)	11	13.1

QUESTION 19: In case a second project was drafted to follow-up on the activities of the first, please specify:

1. The original project helped to mobilize additional funds:

RESPONSE:

Categories	Frequency	%
Yes	30	35.7
No	16	19.0
N/A or blank	38	45.2

2. If the new project was sponsored, please indicate the amount (US\$), duration and source of the funding:

RESPONSE:

Suggested categories (USD)	Frequency	%
5,000 >	1	1.2
5,000 - 20,000	10	11.9
> 20,000	13	15.5
N/A, blank or no details provided	60	71.4

NOTE: The above categories were introduced *ex post* to facilitate the categorization of responses.

3. Specify the stage of implementation of this new project:

RESPONSE:

Categories	Frequency	%
Beginning	6	7.1
Less than half	0	0.0
More than half	5	6.0
End	8	9.5
Closed	10	11.9
N/A or blank	55	65.5

4. Please briefly explain how the new project complements or raises the profile of the activities carried out during the original project:

RESPONSE:

Suggested categories	Frequency	%
Continue activities	7	8.3
Implementation on site or elsewhere	10	11.9
Complement / refine / fill gaps	18	21.4
N/A or blank or other	55	65.5

NOTE: These categories were suggested retroactively based on the most frequently encountered responses. The percentages are not cumulative.

QUESTION 21: Do you consider that international donors should continue to fund the Wetlands for the Future Fund (WFF)?

RESPONSE:

Categories	Frequency	%
Yes	80	95.2%
No	0	0.0%
N/A or blank	4	4.8%

V. LESSONS LEARNED

QUESTION 8: Main lessons learned by the proponent:

RESPONSE:

Suggested Categories	Frequency	%
Importance of networking	31	36.9
Importance of building capacities (includes complaints)	24	28.6
Importance of continuity and follow-up	12	14.3
Importance of translating technical knowledge into common language	16	19.0
New insights to better design future projects	34	40.5
N/A, blank and other	12	14.3

NOTE: Percentages are not cumulative. Categories were suggested retroactively based on the most frequently encountered responses.

The information provided by the 4 non-completed projects is discussed in Section 4.2.2 (page 19)

Annex VIII. Questionnaire Format (Blank, English)

Wetlands for the Future Fund (WFF) Questionnaire

This questionnaire constitutes the first effort to gather relevant information about Wetlands for the Future (WFF) projects in a consistent (if not exhaustive) manner. In addition to allowing the Ramsar Secretariat to better understand the challenges and accomplishments faced by each project, this questionnaire will also serve to make the necessary adjustments to improve the Fund in the future. The Ramsar Secretariat would very much appreciate filling out the section that applies to your project (A or B) and submitting it to the address at the end. Thank you!

Section A – Information on Completed Projects

1. Was the original Wetlands for the Future project successfully completed?: Yes No
If you replied “No” above, please go to **Section B**
2. Once the original project was completed, was there follow-up? Yes No
3. If the answer was “Yes”, which kinds of actions/activities have been carried out to date?
 - Monitoring of the previous actions/activities
 - The duration of the original activities was extended
 - New activities were carried out to follow-up on those of the original project (specify):

 - Activities to update / refresh the knowledge of former participants
 - Maintenance to equipment and infrastructure
 - More copies of the documents/materials were printed and/or distributed
 - Other (specify): _____
4. How long have follow-up activities taken place?

<input type="checkbox"/> 0 – 3 months	<input type="checkbox"/> 12 – 24 months
<input type="checkbox"/> 3 – 6 months	<input type="checkbox"/> More than 24 months
<input type="checkbox"/> 6 – 12 months	<input type="checkbox"/> To date
5. In case follow-up activities have not yet taken place, are they envisaged in the future? Please indicate:
 - Yes, in the next 6 months
 - Yes, in the next year
 - No
6. If the reply to the previous question was negative, is there any other organization or person currently following-up the activities initiated during the original project? Yes No
Name: _____
Type of activity: _____

7. Main accomplishments of the project: _____

8. Main lessons learned by the proponent:

9. Have the undertaken activities resulted in concrete improvements for the local and/or regional wetlands?

Yes No

10. Have the persons trained during the project (beneficiaries) stayed in the site, or have they migrated?

11. Do you consider that the people trained during the project (beneficiaries) have had a positive multiplier effect in their communities (e.g. by passing on their knowledge to others, taking action, mobilizing additional resources, etc.)?

12. Have the local authorities taken into account the information generated by the project in their decisions affecting the wetland?

Yes, in the following case: _____

No

13. Have local or national wetland policies been created or modified as a result of this project?

Yes. Name of the policy instrument and date of adoption:

No

14. Has new legislation been passed relating to the wise use and conservation of wetlands?

Yes. Name of the legislation and date of adoption:

No

15. Has a new Ramsar site or other protected area been established as a result of the project?

Yes. Name: _____

No

16. If a management plan was drafted, is it being implemented?

Yes No Partially Not applicable

17. Were new networks or leaderships created that initiated further actions in the location of the project or in other wetlands?

Yes, in the following case: _____

No

18. Please mention any awards that the project has received to date:

19. In case a second project was drafted to follow-up on the activities of the first, please specify:

- 5. The original project helped to mobilize additional funds: Yes No
- 6. If the new project was sponsored, please indicate the amount (US\$), duration and source of funding: _____
- 7. Specify the stage of implementation of this new project:
 - Beginning
 - Less than half
 - More than half
 - End
 - Closed
- 8. Please briefly explain how the new project complements or raises the profile of the activities carried out during the original project:

20. In general, has the project had a noticeable positive impact in the management and wise use of wetlands in the medium and long terms? Yes No

Please explain: _____

21. Do you consider that international donors should continue to fund the Wetlands for the Future Fund (WFF)? Yes No

Please explain: _____

Section B – Information on Non-completed Projects

1. The project was not adequately completed due to:

External factors. Please explain: _____

Internal factors. Please explain:

Other (specify): _____

2. Did the project have some/any positive impact despite not having been completed? Please explain:

3. Were corrective measures taken to mitigate the shortfalls in the project? Please explain:

4. Was additional funding obtained for corrective measures or to continue the original project despite its condition? Please specify:

Yes. Source, amount and activity: _____

No

5. Main lessons learned from the factors that led to project failure:

6. Based on your experience, what would be your recommendation to avoid the problems or limitations that prevented the successful completion of the project:

Thank you very much for having taken the time to answer this questionnaire. The information submitted will be treated as confidential and will be used only for the internal management of the Wetlands for the Future Fund (WFF). Please address any additional comments regarding this questionnaire to: americas@ramsar.org

Annex IX. List of Projects that submitted filled Questionnaires

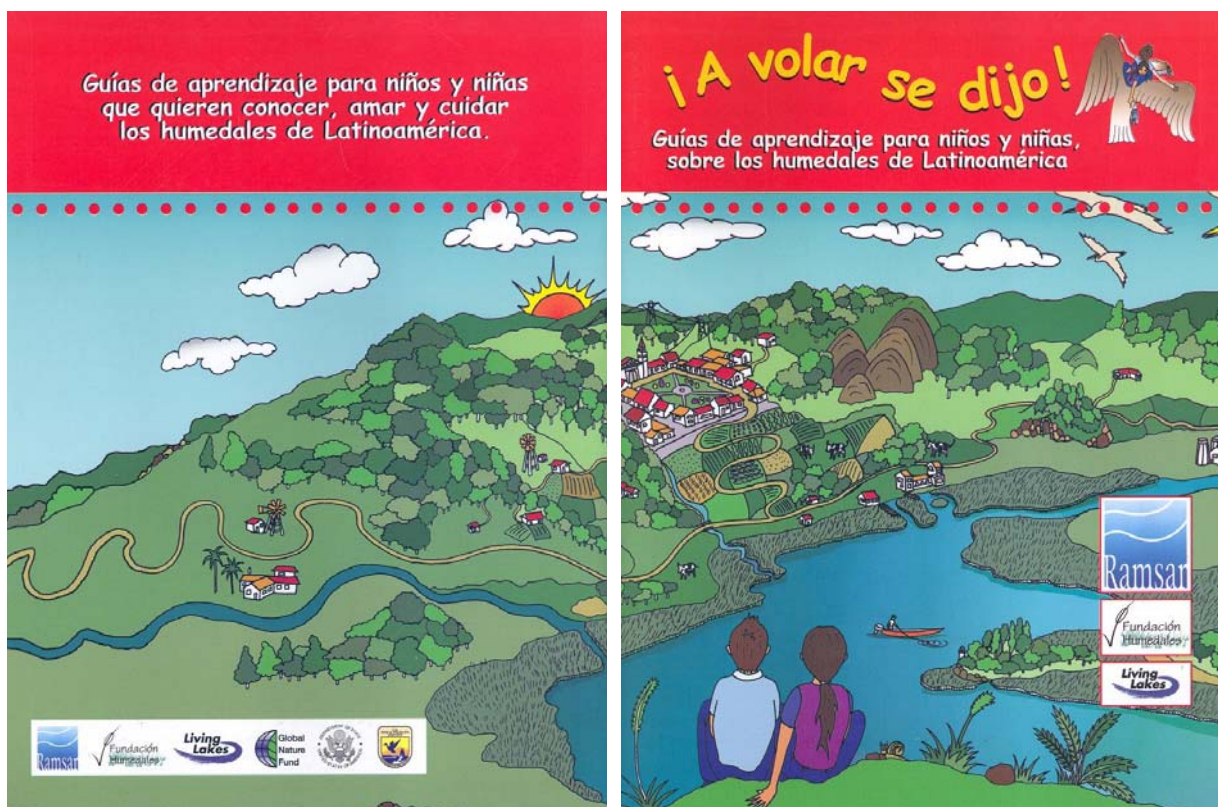
No.	Project Code
	Argentina
1	97AR-7
2	98AR-2
3	99AR-1
4	WFF/00-2/ARG/3
5	WFF/02/ARG/5
6	WFF/02/ARG/6
7	WFF/02-2/ARG/1
8	WFF/02-2/ARG/2
9	WFF/02-2/ARG/7
10	WFF/03/AR/1
11	WFF/03-2/AR/3
12	WFF/04/AR/2
13	WFF/04/AR/3
14	WFF/04/AR/4
15	WFF/04/AR/6
	Bolivia
16	99-BOL-1b
17	WFF/01-2/BOL/1
	Brazil
18	98BR-1
19	99BR-3
20	99BR-4
21	99BR-6
22	WFF/00-2/BRA/2
23	WFF/04/BR/1
	Chile
24	Chile-99CH-1
25	Chile-99CH-6
26	WFF/02/CHI/1
27	WFF/02-2/CHI/1
28	WFF/02-2/CHI/2
29	WFF/04/CL/2
	Colombia
30	Colombia-97CO-1

31	Colombia-99CO-1
32	Colombia-99CO-2
33	WFF/00-2/COL/2
34	WFF/01/COL/1
35	WFF/01-2/COL/1
36	WFF/01-2/COL/4
37	WFF/02/COL/1
38	WFF/02/COL/2
39	WFF/03-2/CO/1
40	WFF/03-2/CO/2
41	WFF/04/CO/1
42	WFF/04/CO/2
	Costa Rica
43	Costa Rica-95-96CR-5
44	Costa Rica-97CR-3
45	Costa Rica-97CR-9
46	Costa Rica-98CR-7
47	Costa Rica-99CR-2
48	WFF/00/CRI/1
49	WFF/02/CRI/1
50	WFF/04/CR/1
	Ecuador
51	WFF/03/EC/1
	El Salvador
52	WFF/02-2/ESL/1
	Guatemala
53	WFF/01-2/GT/1
54	WFF/04/GT/1
	Mexico
55	Mexico-98MX-2
56	Mexico-99MX-3
57	WFF/00/MEX/1
58	WFF/02/MEX/2
	Panama
59	WFF/00/PAN/1
	Paraguay
60	WFF/01/PAR/1

61	WFF/01/PAR/2
62	WFF/02/PRY/1
63	WFF/03-2/PY/1
	Peru
64	WFF/02/PER/1
65	WFF/03/PE/1
66	WFF/03-2/PE/1
	Suriname
67	Suriname-97SU-1
68	Suriname-98SU-1
	T & T
69	98TT-1
	Venezuela
70	WFF/02/VEN/1
71	WFF/03/VE/2
72	WFF/04/VE/2
	Various
73	98X-3 = 98/USA/1
74	98X-13
75	98X-14 = WFF/98/CR/4
76	98X-15
77	WFF/00/ORMA/1
78	98X-18 = WFF/98/CRI/18
79	98X-19 = WFF/98/CRI/21
80	98X-21
81	98X-22 = WFF/98/CHL/2
82	WFF/03/REG/WKS
83	WFF/WKS/3/00
84	WFF/01-2/CAR/1

Annex X. Pictures of Outputs from Selected Projects

Project **WFF/03-2/CO/1** “Plan Educativo Divulgativo Ramsar - Desde la Laguna de Fúquene - Fase 1 Formulación Plan y Producción Piezas Didácticas”, Fundación Humedales, 2004.

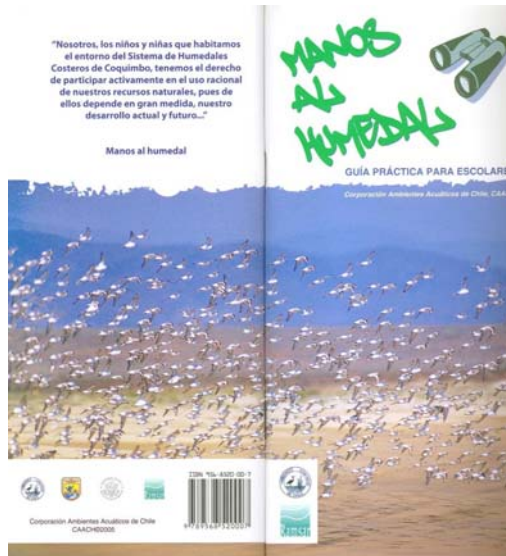


Learning guide for children on wetlands in Latin America (30 pages, 1000 copies).



Educational Wetland Video (DVD) (19 min., 200 copies).

Project **WFF/04/CL/2** “Comunicación, educación y concienciación del público para el uso racional del Sistema de Humedales Costeros de Coquimbo, Chile”, Corporación Ambientes Acuáticos de Chile, CAACH, 2004.



Practical Guide for children on wetlands and birds (52 pages, 1000 copies)



User's Handbook for the rational use of coastal wetlands in Coquimbo, Chile (136 pages, 1000 copies).

CORREDOR DE VIDA

EL CORREDOR DE HUMEDALES PARAGUAY-PARANA,
CON SU RICA DIVERSIDAD BIOLÓGICA Y ÉTNICA,
CONSTITUYE UNA UNIDAD HIDROLÓGICA, ECOLÓGICA,
Y CULTURAL, Y ES IMPERATIVO QUE SEA PRESERVADO.

UN VIDEO DOCUMENTAL DE


comunicación para un mundo sustentable

CON EL APOYO DE





EN CO-PRODUCCION CON




POR MAS INFORMACION:

CORREDOR DE VIDA

"El uso racional de los humedales consiste en su uso sostenible para beneficio de la humanidad de manera compatible con el mantenimiento de las propiedades naturales del ecosistema".
Convención de RAMSAR.

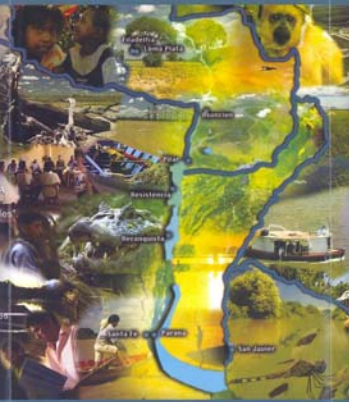
"Proteger este extraordinario sistema promoviendo el uso racional, acorde a la visión de Ramsar, es de urgencia vital".

"Los Humedales son LOS RÍÑONES DEL PLANETA, y nos brindan irremplazables beneficios económicos y sociales".

"El corredor de humedales funciona como una unidad y requiere ser manejado integralmente".

"Sensibilizar y poner en valor los productos de los humedales y su patrimonio cultural, beneficia a las comunidades".

"Si las futuras guerras pueden ser por el agua, entonces es urgente cuidar nuestros humedales".



Estos son algunos de los testimonios, estas son algunas de las imágenes, estos son algunos de los hombres, animales, y plantas que habitan nuestros humedales.

Corredor de Vida
Video Documental
Duración: 40 min.
Dirección:
Hilary Sandipani
Producción:
Rubén Oyazabal,
Cámara y Edición:
Francisco Blanco
Sonido directo:
Alvaro Machado
Música:
Leonardo Croatto
Post- audio:
Sonus E-Studio
Fotografía fija:
Natalia Grande
Asesor científico:
Francisco Rilla
Locución:
Andrea Villaverde
Guión:
Hilary Sandipani,
Francisco Blanco
Editor de texto:
Jorge Cappato


LIFELINE

Video documentary on the Pantanal (English / Spanish) covering wetlands in Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay. The video was widely broadcast on national TV (TVEo – Televisión Nacional) and master copies were provided to all 3 countries (VHS in NTSC/PAL and DVD, 40 min.).




CORREDOR DE VIDA

EL CORREDOR DE HUMEDALES PARAGUAY-PARANA,
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Y CULTURAL, Y ES IMPERATIVO QUE SEA PRESERVADO.



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DVD-PAL

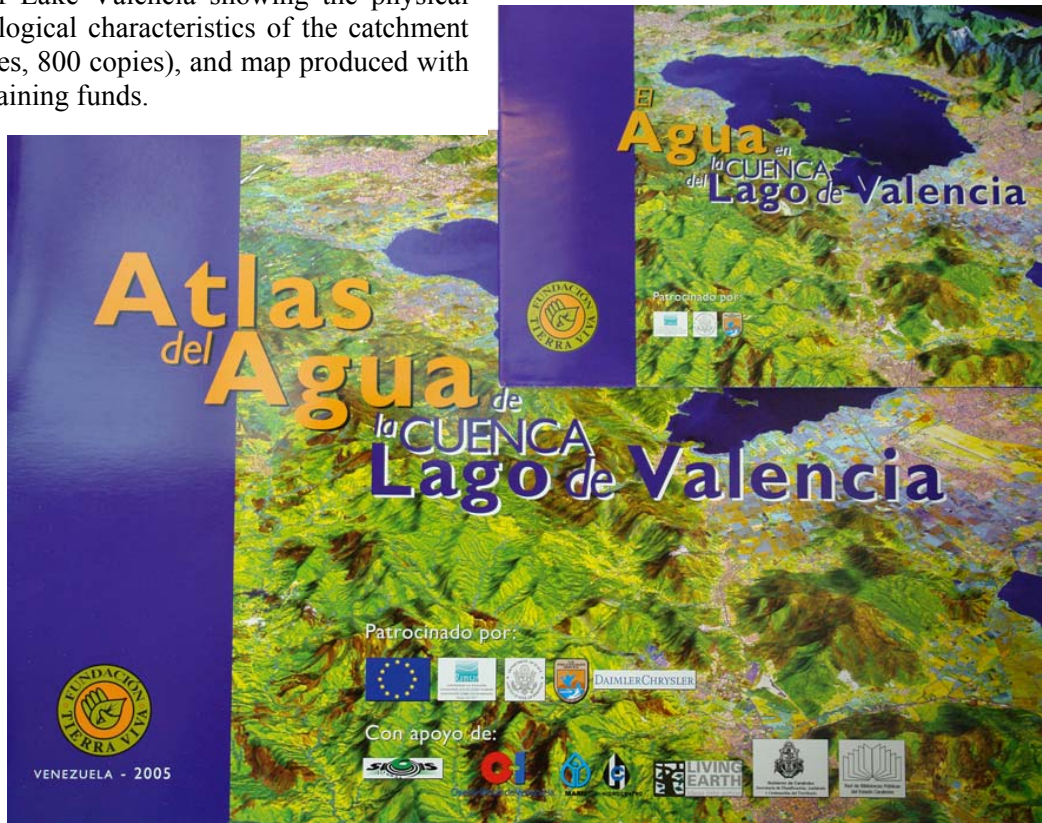
Corredor de Vida



Lifeline

Project **WFF/03/VE/2** “*Publicación y distribución del Atlas del Agua de la Cuenca del Lago de Valencia y Manual del Monitoreo del Agua*”, Fundación Tierra Viva, 2003.

Atlas of Lake Valencia showing the physical and biological characteristics of the catchment (55 pages, 800 copies), and map produced with the remaining funds.

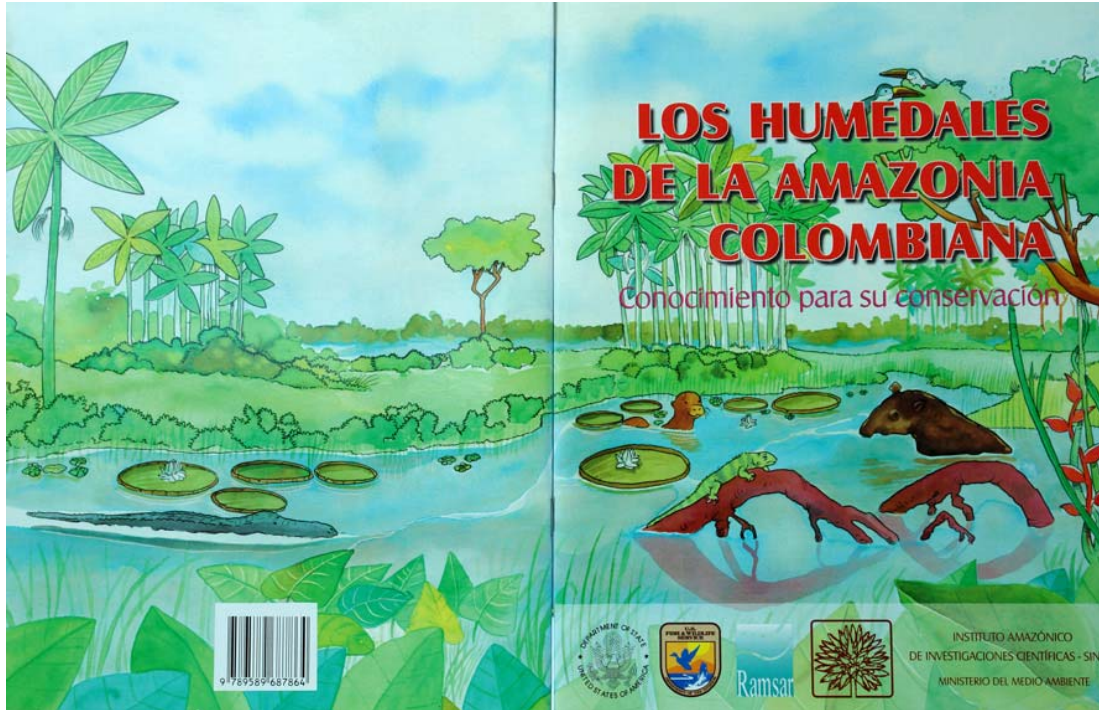


Project **WFF/03/VE/1** “*Programa educativo ambiental en humedales de Venezuela: Capacitación para el desarrollo de Proyectos Pedagógicos de Aula (PPAs) y Unidades Didácticas Ambientales (UDAs)*”, Universidad Pedagógica Experimental Libertador, 2003.



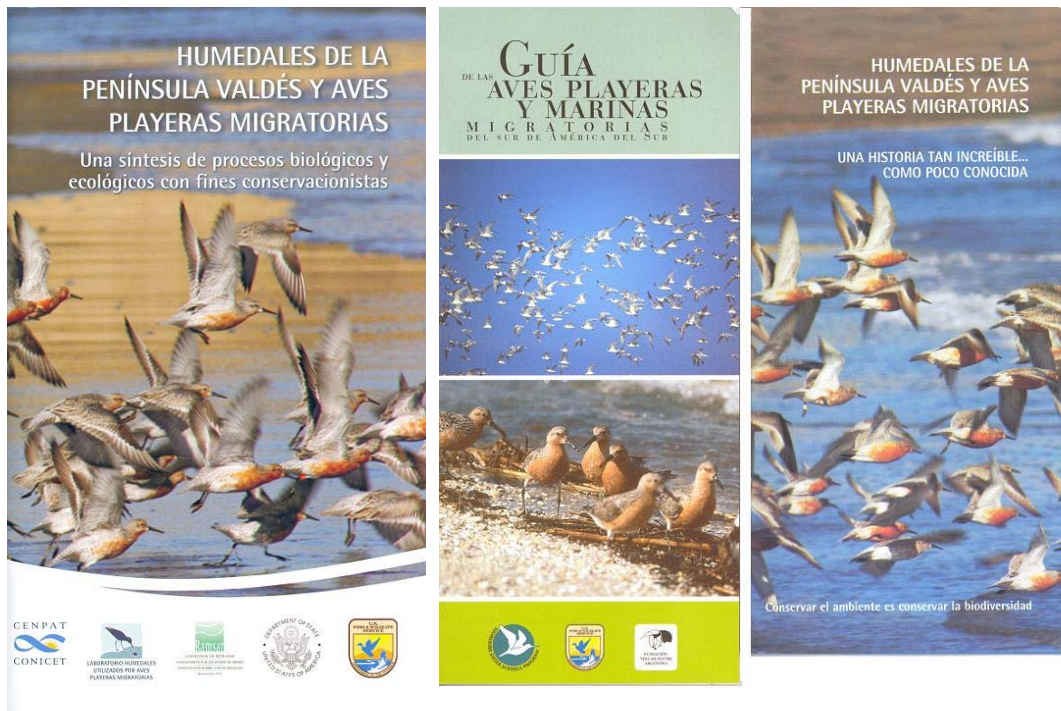
Four educational booklets for young students on a selection of important Venezuelan lagoons: Cuare, Tacarigua, Unare and Valencia. The project also involved numerous seminars and sessions for students, and the submission of 2 Ramsar Information Sheets.

Projects **99CO-2** and **WFF/00-2/COL/2** “*Publicación de cartilla sobre ecosistemas acuáticos de la Amazonia Colombiana*”, Instituto Amazónico de Investigaciones Científicas SINCHI, Ministerio del Medio Ambiente, 1999-2000.



Educational Booklet for children on the general characteristics of wetlands in the Amazon basin, the water cycle, and the wildlife frequently associated with these ecosystems. This booklet has been circulated all over the Amazon basin countries for education purposes. (32 pages, 4500 copies in total).

Project **WFF/04/AR/4** “*Importancia de los humedales costeros patagónicos como sitios críticos para la supervivencia de aves playeras*”, Centro Nacional Patagónico, 2004.



Instructional (technical) materials and general information booklets on migratory waterfowl in the Valdés Peninsula, Argentina (500 copies)



Project **WFF/02-2/CHI/2** “Educational material on water resources and sustainable development for children 11-13”. The output of this project was distributed to 3000 schools in the North of Chile (Regions I, II, and III) with the assistance of the Chilean Ministry of Education, as well as all over Latin America.