

Diverse Stakeholder Participation and Awareness Raising:

Japanese municipalities with Ramsar sites established a network called the “Domestic Committee for Ramsar Sites related Municipalities in Japan”. They have meetings regularly aiming to promote local level wetland conservation activities and contribute to the appropriate management of Ramsar sites by encouraging information exchange and cooperation between cities, towns and villages.

As for prefectural level efforts, several prefectures include wetlands when designating conservation areas such as wildlife protection areas, nature conservation areas and natural parks, and/or formulating their own environmental legislation and environment projects regarding wetlands.

Conservation and wise use of wetlands may not be achieved without the understanding and participation of local people who live in the neighborhood of the wetlands. In many Ramsar sites in Japan, there are a number of examples of cooperation and collaboration by many stakeholders promoting local level activities.

International Cooperation

International cooperation such as sharing experiences and technologies is vital to meet the goals of wetland conservation and wise use. Japan is engaged in a variety of international cooperation activities to meet the expectation to make an active contribution as a developed country in Asia. The following are some of the examples of international cooperation conducted by Japan.

Support, Survey and Information Exchange for the Conservation of Wetlands:

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) invites participants from developing countries to Japan for training courses on the conservation and wise use of wetlands. In addition, Japan has been carrying out several technology transfer projects for the conservation and sustainable use of wetland ecosystems in such countries as Iran, Uganda and Malaysia.

As for the financial assistance, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan supports various programs targeting wetlands conservation in Asia through voluntary contribution to the Ramsar Small Grants Fund. There is also a private sector small grant program by the Nagao Natural Environment Foundation in Japan.

The Ministry of the Environment of Japan organized surveys and workshops in Myanmar in order to compile a national inventory of important wetlands, which subsequently led to Myanmar's entry into the Ramsar Convention.

In addition, the Ministry has supported the designations of Ramsar sites and some other works in Malaysia, Vietnam, Thailand and Cambodia.

The Ministry has also supported the “Asian Wetland Symposium”, which has been held continuously and participated in by scientists, administrative bodies and NGOs for wetland conservation and management in Asia.

Japan proposed a draft resolution on encouragement and instructions to promote regional scientific and technical fora such as the “Asian Wetland Symposium”, and the draft was adopted at COP9 as Resolution IX.19.

Bilateral Efforts for the Conservation of Migratory Birds:

Japan has signed bilateral conventions/agreements for migratory bird conservation with 4 countries, the United States, Russia, Australia and China respectively, and is working for the prohibition of migratory bird hunting, promotion of habitat conservation and joint surveys. Japan also has concluded the Japan-Korea Environment Protection and Cooperation Agreement, whereupon regular meetings and joint surveys have been organized for the protection of migratory birds.

The East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP):

There are nine major flyways for migratory birds in the world. Japan belongs to the East Asian-Australasian Flyway, which is crucial to more than 50 million migratory waterfowl such as shorebirds, ducks, geese swans and cranes, including 33 worldwide endangered species. In addition, in Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu, migratory birds account for 60 percent of the recorded bird species, and as much as 80 percent in Hokkaido and Ryukyu islands. This indicates that the Japanese Archipelago is an important place for migratory birds.

The East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) is a framework for international collaboration and cooperation to conserve migratory water birds and their habitats within East Asia and Australasian region. The Partnership was launched in 2006 under the initiative of the governments of Japan and Australia. EAAFP sets up the “Flyway Site Network” which is a network of internationally important sites for migratory water birds, promoting activities for awareness raising, conservation and scientific study for migratory water birds at each network site. As of October 2018, Japan has 33 network sites including 22 Ramsar sites.

Reference :

**Annex II to Resolution VIII.13:
Criteria and guidelines for Identifying Wetlands of
International Importance**

Adopted by the 7th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (1999), superseding earlier Criteria adopted by the 4th and 6th Meetings of the COP (1990 and 1996), to guide implementation of Article 2.1 on designation of Ramsar sites. Criterion 9 was added by the Resolution IX.1 Annex B adopted at COP9.

Group A of the Criteria. Sites containing representative, rare or unique wetland types

Criterion 1: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it contains a representative, rare, or unique example of a natural or near-natural wetland type found within the appropriate biogeographic region.

Group B of the Criteria. Sites of international importance for conserving biological diversity

Criterion 2: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it supports vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered species or threatened ecological communities.

Criterion 3: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it supports populations of plant and/or animal species important for maintaining the biological diversity of a particular biogeographic region.

Criterion 4: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it supports plant and/or animal species at a critical stage in their life cycles, or provides refuge during adverse conditions.

Specific criteria based on waterbirds

Criterion 5: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it regularly supports 20,000 or more waterbirds.

Criterion 6: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it regularly supports 1% of the individuals in a population of one species or subspecies of waterbird.

Specific criteria based on fish

Criterion 7: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it supports a significant proportion of indigenous fish subspecies, species or families, life-history stages, species interactions and/or populations that are representative of wetland benefits and/or values and thereby contributes to global biological diversity.

Criterion 8: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it is an important source of food for fishes, spawning ground, nursery and/or migration path on which fish stocks: either within the wetland or elsewhere, depend.

Specific criteria based on other taxa

Criterion 9: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it regularly supports 1% of the individuals in a population of one species or subspecies of wetland-dependent non-avian animal species.