



# **SITE PARTNERSHIP GUIDELINE**



**Site Partnerships**

**2023**



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*Jennifer George, Consultant 2022*

**Cover photo:** China Coastal Waterbird Census Team. © Mingyu Liu  
*“The census is conducted by our surveyors in a professional manner”*

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## ACRONYMS

EAAFP	East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership
FNS	Flyway Network Site
CEPA	Communication, Education, Participation & Awareness
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
INGO	International Non-Government Organisation

## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 PURPOSE OF THE GUIDELINE

The purpose of this document is to provide guidelines for strengthening the engagement of the local government and community at EAAFP Flyway Network Sites with the aim of greater support for the conservation of migratory waterbirds, their habitats and local implementation of the EAAFP Strategic Plan. It recognises the importance of Site Partnerships in fulfilling a Government Partner's commitments to the EAAFP strategic objectives and that each country's arrangement will reflect their own existing structures and needs.

Throughout this document case studies demonstrate the guidelines. They are not intended to be "how to" prescriptions, but inspiration to enhance collaboration at the Site level for the benefit of migratory waterbirds and their habitats.

SECTION ONE: Provides an overview of the EAAFP and its relationships with Partners.

SECTION TWO: Provides a definition and principles of what EAAFP call a Site Partnership, and the impacts and benefits and how it adds value to the work of conserving migratory waterbirds and their habitats, who is involved in the Site Partnership and how it works together with the National Partnership.

SECTION THREE: Provides suggestions on how to go about establishing a Site Partnership and offers examples and templates for use to strengthen your existing mechanisms at Flyway Network Site level.

### 1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE EAST-ASIAN AUSTRALASIAN FLYWAY PARTNERSHIP

The East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) provides a flyway wide framework across 22 countries from Alaska (USA) and Russia in the north, to Australia and New Zealand in the south, and transverses the breadth of Asia from Bangladesh to China and Japan. Its purpose is to promote dialogue, cooperation and collaboration between a range of stakeholders to conserve migratory waterbirds and their habitats. It was launched internationally in 2006 as a "Type II Partnership" as defined by the Johannesburg 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) *"characterized by collaborations between national or sub-national governments, private sector and civil society actors, to form voluntary transnational agreements in order to meet specific sustainable development goals."*<sup>1</sup> This type of Partnership is distinct from the 'traditional' Type I agreements which are regarded as legally binding intergovernmental commitments designed to aid states in the implementation of sustainable development goals. The then President of the World Resources Institute, Jonathan Lash, described the alternative Type II approach in more colourful terms as *"The beginnings of a shift from the stiff formal waltz of traditional diplomacy to the jazzier dance of improvisational solution-oriented Partnerships that may include non-government organizations, willing governments and other stakeholders"*.<sup>2</sup>

It is important to recognise that this type of approach does not require binding commitments from governments, and so there are no national government policy imperatives for specific funding to fulfil specific commitments. The success of the EAAFP relies very much more on the strength of National and Site Partnerships and the relationships generated at all levels within those Partnerships. In addition, the

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<sup>1</sup> EAAFP Website

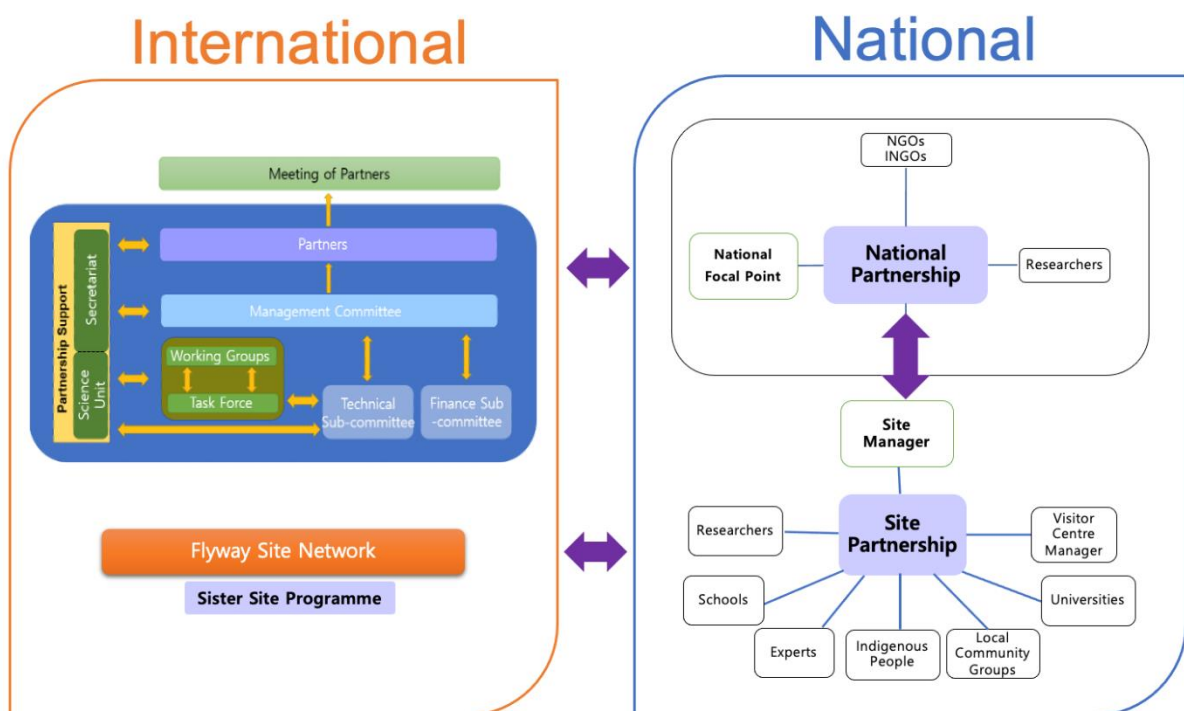
<sup>2</sup> Wilson, Marion - "The New Frontier in Sustainable Development: World Summit on Sustainable Development Type II Partnerships" [2005] VUWLawRw 16; (2005) 36 Victoria University of Wellington Law Review 389

Partnership works at the flyway scale based on the willingness of Partners to work together collaboratively at an international / flyway scale.

### 1.3 THE EAAF PARTNERSHIP OBJECTIVES

1. Develop the Flyway Network of Sites of international importance for migratory waterbirds.
2. Enhance communication, education and public awareness of the values of migratory waterbirds and their habitats.
3. Enhance flyway research and monitoring activities, build knowledge and promote exchange of information on waterbirds and their habitats
4. Build the habitat and waterbird management capacity of natural resource managers, decision makers and local stakeholders.
5. Develop flyway wide approaches to enhance the conservation status of migratory waterbirds.

### 1.4 STRUCTURE OF RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN THE EAAF



## SECTION 2: UNDERSTANDING THE SITE PARTNERSHIP MECHANISM

*People, their decisions and actions are at the heart of effective wetland and migratory waterbird conservation.*

*Local communities, Site Managers, local and national government decision-makers, educators, NGOs, and civil society all have a role to play in conserving migratory birds and their wetland habitats.*

### AN INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK TO MOBILISE WORK AT SITES

The EAAFP provides an international framework of Sites to implement conservation activity. Much of the practical work of the Partnership occurs at the Site level. The people on the ground, whether Site Managers, farmers, fishing people, indigenous peoples, or other local community groups, local experts, and passionate volunteers are critical to the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats. Across the Flyway many NGOs take care of wetlands, know the issues, have ideas on how to manage Sites and are important contributors. Many people at Site level offer their time freely and enthusiastically and these attributes need to be nurtured for a thriving Site Partnership. Building and maintaining positive relationships, convening, and communicating are central to their success.

The linking of local organisations, NGOs, local citizens, land and resources users, and local government formally and informally is what is needed for a successful Site Partnership. It provides a mechanism for the local community at Flyway Network Sites to become more engaged, and for the Flyway Network Site to integrate into what is happening locally. It is an example of bringing alive the saying, “Think Globally: Act Locally.”

Flyway Network Sites and other internationally important Sites are central to the conservation of migratory waterbirds. All actions for the migratory waterbirds happen at the Sites and everything else radiates out. Empowering activities at the Sites will strengthen the EAAF Partnership.

There is a wide range of Flyway Network Site capacity across the Flyway. Focusing on enhancing capacity is the core to making Site Partnerships work well. Some Sites have extensive and well-funded Visitor and Education Centres with hundreds of thousands of visitors each year. There are also Flyway Network Sites with no resident people, managed remotely by a Site Manager, or rangers. So, each Site Partnership will reflect local circumstances.

### 2.1 KEY ELEMENTS OF A SITE PARTNERSHIP

#### LOCAL COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Site Partnerships are the mechanisms that support and mobilise the people and relationships within a local area to enhance the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats.

#### IT IS A NETWORK

A Site Partnership is a local network of stakeholders who are engaged to support the conservation of migratory waterbirds at a Flyway Network Site. It builds and supports relationships between all involved and enables the people on the ground to collaborate and improve outcomes for the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats.

#### RELATIONSHIPS NOT OBLIGATIONS

The Site Partnership works through relationships rather than obligations and provides a mechanism that:

- Strengthens the relationships between people and builds the capacity and outreach of network Sites.

- Builds a broad coalition across sectors at each Site – this will help integrate migratory waterbird needs with other needs such as land use and development and recreation.
- Provides a mechanism for how information is generated in collaboration with stakeholders and to be used to inform conservation actions for migratory birds and their habitats.
- Provides a process for how information is distributed.
- Facilitates Site planning for the implementation of the EAAFP Strategic Plan.
- Facilitates data and information gathering to inform sub national priorities , as well as contributing to international commitments under the conventions and opportunities to collaborate as well as report to the National Focal Point.
- Facilitates local Flyway Network Site activities for the benefit of migratory waterbirds.
- Promotes the implementation of the EAAFP CEPA Action Plan.

#### SUB-NATIONAL PRIORITIES

Working together, Site Partnerships can provide a mechanism to set local priorities to enable the implementation of on-ground activities and to build capacity of Flyway Site staff and volunteers, to communicate flyway information to a larger group, and to identify new potential Flyway Sites.

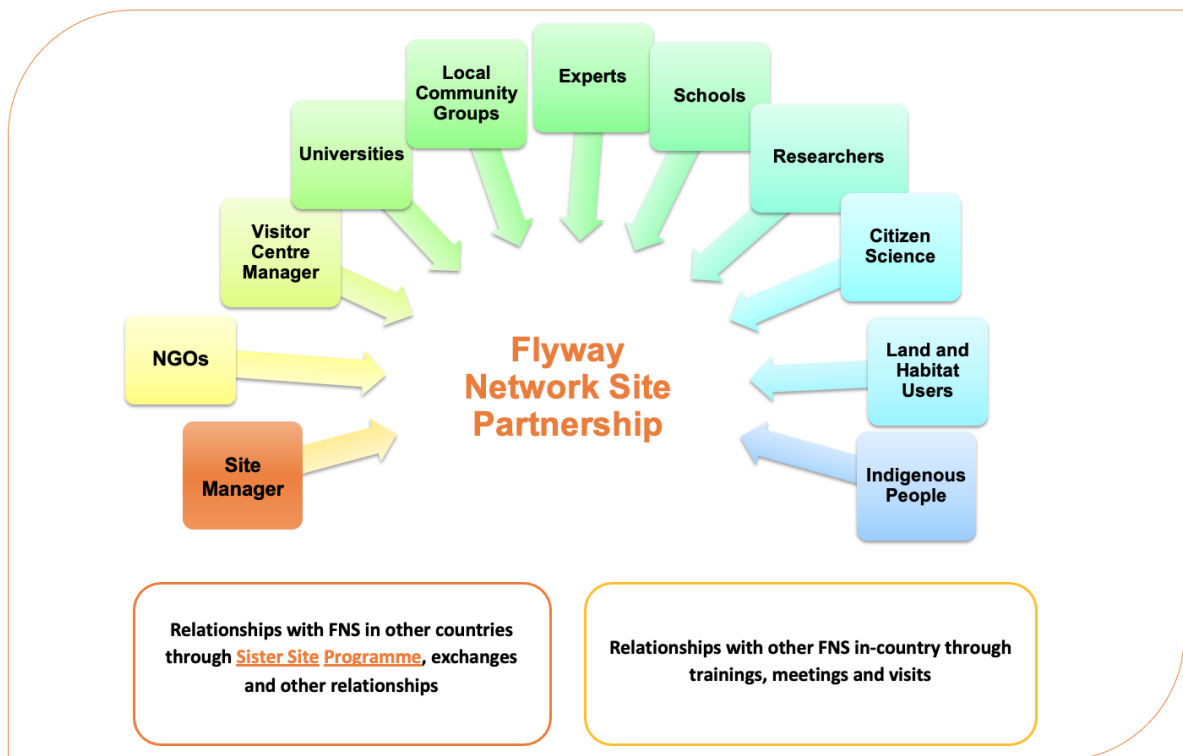
#### SITE MANAGER IS KEY

The Site Manager has a key role for the Site Partnership. They facilitate the local network and are the link between work at the Site and the National Focal Point.

#### SITE PARTNERSHIPS NEED A LEADER

Whether it is the Site Manager or a scientist or a local passionate person, Site Partnerships need leaders. These people do not have to be part of the government, or an NGO. They need the soft skills of networking, listening and being supportive.

## 2.2 DIAGRAM OF A SITE PARTNERSHIP MECHANISM



- Site Managers collate information for the National Focal Point on the activities of their Flyway Network Site. This information may also be valuable for reporting to other international frameworks such as Ramsar Convention, bilateral and multilateral Agreements.
- The Site Manager, NGOs, and experts participate in an annual Site Partnership Meeting.
- The annual Site Partnership Meeting could include:
  - The annual Site Partnership Meeting could include:
    - Report on Site activities, especially that address elements in the EAAFP Strategic Plan.
    - Contribute to the National Partnership Workplan.
    - Share highlights, successes, and innovations.
    - Discuss any current site management issues.
    - Identify Site capability needs and research opportunities.
    - Make Connections with other Site Managers, experts, researchers and NGOs.
    - Develop an Annual Workplan and Budget for the Flyway Network Site.

**Case studies of successful activities can be shared with other Flyway Network Site through the National Partnership mechanism.**

## 2.3 POTENTIAL SITE “PARTNERS”

Site Managers are encouraged to network with Local Government agencies, community groups, researchers and other local people that have responsibilities in relation to the Sites, or that derive benefit from the Flyway Network Site. By working together people can address the specific needs of the migratory waterbirds at each of their most critical locations.

Each Site Partnership will be different depending on the local circumstances. Examples of who might be involved:

- Local Government, Site Managers and Visitor Centre Managers bring communication channels, information, data, research capability and analytical expertise. They provide facilitation and strategic planning.
- Universities, researchers, experts and academia bring international and national networks, data and knowledge, and are trusted voices.
- Wetland and species scientists/researchers and experts.
- Local community groups e.g., Birdwatching groups, volunteer groups involved in habitat restoration and maintenance, churches, museums, village committees.
- Philanthropy brings networks; trust, credibility, and longevity; risk appetite; innovation and agility; diversity; and capacity to leverage investment and impact.
- Business brings data insights; purchasing power, supply chain relationships, communication expertise, research and development capability, marketing expertise, and risk management.
- NGOs bring relationships and broad networks; people power, credibility and local knowledge, and on-ground delivery knowledge and experience.
- Adjacent landowners and habitat users bring local knowledge and can become valuable allies and supporters.
- Indigenous and traditional communities bring a deep connection with traditional and ecological knowledge to Sites and on-ground delivery and access to land.
- Individuals in the community bring passion and expertise.
- Local businesses bring local knowledge, business skills and sponsorship.
- Include other Flyway Network Sites which do not have a visitor center, infrastructure or staff but who share local experts, volunteers and even the same Site Manager.

## 2.4 PRINCIPLES OF A SITE PARTNERSHIP

***Although our birds are the connection,  
it is people that connect at a Flyway and local level to make it all work.***

The EAAFP, by its nature as a Type II Partnership, does not have prescriptive obligations as to implementation and so there is flexibility in how each Site Partnership carries out its role. The following are common guiding principles:

- Build enduring diverse and collaborative local relationships of mutual respect.
- Develop a shared local vision that drives action and change.
- Build from existing strengths to reflect the needs, social conditions, existing structures and local culture.
- Build towards sustainability and future generations.
- Include indigenous people and traditional knowledge.
- Learn by doing together.

## 2.5 IMPACTS AND BENEFITS OF A SITE PARTNERSHIP

This is the ‘why’ of developing Site Partnerships. Many benefits exist for the National Focal Point, the Site Managers, the local community and the EAAFP as a whole to positively impact the migratory waterbirds at each Flyway Network Site. These may include some of the following:

- Foster and facilitate increased engagement and appreciation in the community of migratory waterbirds and their habitats with a visible entity for the local community.
- Harness the enthusiasm of volunteers to engage in citizen science.
- Create enduring connections among local networks.
- Create a shared vision for the local community in the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats.
- Provide a mechanism that identifies FNS threats, concerns, successes and innovations with its community and prioritises the actions needed to support the work at the FNS.
- Inform citizens through information dissemination, teaching and outreach materials and activities.
- Greater engagement of land use groups (agriculture, fish farming, developers) and resource users (fishers, eco-tourism, harvesters) to work together as a Site Partnership to find win – win outcomes for migratory waterbirds and their habitats, and the land users.
- Grow a community of engaged civil society and conservation experts.
- Provide a base for monitoring and research of the migratory waterbirds at each Site, data collection, analysis and reporting.
- Promote understanding through monitoring and publishing data of local migratory waterbirds.
- Strengthen and support regular year round site level monitoring of waterbirds and wetlands that link to national and EAAF scale monitoring programmes (such as the Asian Waterbird Census).
- Provide a mechanism to report on activities to the community, to the National Focal Point to share with government.
- Develop training specific to the needs of the FNS and local citizens.
- Offer a place to inspire and teach the next generation.
- Make best use of experts who have long standing, practical experience in research, monitoring, who just want to get on and make a difference.
- Provide a basis to develop relationships with other FNS’s and Sister Site Programmes.

- Provide an environment where those with common passion for migratory waterbirds and their habitat have enjoyment, fun and enhance community wellbeing.
- Promote the Site as having an economic benefit to the local business community e.g., In Cambodia's Mekong delta, rice farmers are switching to the varieties loved by the world's tallest flying bird to help stop its decline.

## 2.6 BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER SITES

Building relationships with other Flyway Network Sites is a valuable way to enhance and collaborate with monitoring, research, CEPA and capacity building. Relationships with other national Flyway Network Sites help build enthusiasm and share resources. Some Flyway Network Sites will have stronger resources than others due to location and nearby population while remote Sites may have valuable environmental and habitat assets.

A Flyway Network Site with strong human resources has much to offer the more remote Flyway Network Sites in your country which have little or no resident human capacity. At the same time the more remote Flyway Network Site gives volunteers from populous regions unique opportunities to participate in work and locations they would not otherwise have access to. The exchange of resources builds enthusiasm and relationships that inspires and motivates.

The key elements that build relationships between Flyway Network Sites within the same country are:

- Sharing the same species.
- Collaborating on monitoring and research.
- FNS may have complementary assets and capacity to offer e.g., differing skills each can learn from.
- Experience in supporting other Sites to become a Flyway Network Site.
- Maintaining contacts with other Sites keen to develop relationships.

## 2.7 SITE PARTNERSHIPS WORK WITH NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

The working relationship between the Site Partnership and the National Partnership is based on what works for you in your context. Regular communication (at least 2 times a year) and meetings - face to face where possible is essential. A strong Site Partnership will slot easily into a National Partnership when the Site Partnership has clear objectives and a strong locally derived mandate. These 2 mechanisms allow experts, NGOs and experienced volunteers across the Flyway to contribute both at local level with practical expertise and at national level to contribute their knowledge and experience.

Site Managers, NGOs or other locally designated persons are the voice of the Flyway Network Site at the National Partnership level:

- National Focal Point disseminates CEPA material to Site Partnerships via the Site Managers.
- National Focal Point organises national training workshops for Site Managers.
- Site Managers provide the National Focal Point with on the ground data and information for reporting to the government and the EAAFP. The information may also be helpful to report under other international frameworks such as Ramsar and bilateral or multilateral agreements.
- The Site Manager, NGOs and experts participate in an annual National / Sub-National Partnership meeting and report back to the Site Partnership. The annual meeting might include:
  - Report on Site activities, especially that address elements in the EAAFP Strategic Plan.
  - Contribute to the National Partnership Workplan.
  - Share highlights, successes and innovations.
  - Discuss any current Site management issues.
  - Identify Site capability needs and research opportunities.

- Make connections with other Site Managers, experts, researchers and NGOs.
- Case studies of successful activities and innovations can be shared with other Flyway Network Sites through the National Partnership mechanism as the following case study demonstrates.

#### *CASE STUDY*

#### **At a National Partnership meeting in Japan, a successful Site Partnership activity to engage the next generation was shared**

*Yatsu Higata (Tokyo) developed a 3-step program of Junior Rangers.  
A young student completes 3 stages of training at the Site.  
Once completed they receive a badge and a jacket and can officially do volunteer work:  
As a Visitor Guide; and  
Teaching a new group of young students  
15 Rangers take 30 younger ones through the steps.*

## SECTION 3: ORGANISING THE SITE PARTNERSHIP

### 3.1 KEY ELEMENTS

When establishing a Site Partnership there are some key elements to consider.

1. **ADMINISTRATION** - An entity to sponsor, organise and maintain communication – may be the Site Manager or a well-regarded NGO, or an indigenous entity having ownership of the Site, who may all work together to facilitate and keep records.
2. **A LEADER / COORDINATOR**  
Someone who is supportive and inspires people; someone who brings skills of coordination, listening and being inclusive to the Partnership.
3. **A BUDGET** - even if very small.
4. **ENGAGEMENT** - Stakeholders hold important differences in ways each perceives and values the use of the Site. Identifying and engaging with all relevant stakeholders working on the ground supporting the Flyway Network Site is required. Include and recognise funders, local businesses, land and resource users such as farmers, developers or subsistence use as key parts of the solutions for conservation of the migratory waterbirds and habitats.
5. **BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER** - Meet as needed, discuss, prioritise needs for the Site, enjoy.
  - a. Plan local events and report.
  - b. Monitor and research.
  - c. Build capability.
  - d. Engage in CEPA activities.
  - e. Socialise and have fun.
6. **DELEGATION** - Site Managers may delegate some or all functions to an NGO or others to organise, gather data, monitor, report, plan and provide reports to the Site Manager.
7. **COMMUNICATION WITH LOCAL PARTNERS**
  - a. There are many ways to communicate with local Partners to keep in contact and keep everyone inspired and up to date with news and events. How it works will depend on local circumstances and resources available.
  - b. Use internet technology that suits the local environment – WeChat, Zoom, Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp webinars.
  - c. Use traditional forms of communication such as phone calls, newsletters – online and hard copy.
  - d. Request reports from community Partners about issues of concern.
  - e. Ad hoc informal discussions.
  - f. Organise meetings as needed to discuss issues with Partners and to check progress on projects.
  - g. Socialise and talk about migratory waterbirds and their wetland habitats.
  - h. Working with community groups and influencers to communicate awareness of issues affecting the Flyway Network Site.
  - i. Build capacity and technical expertise at the Site.

### 3.2 FUNCTIONS OF A SITE PARTNERSHIP

This is about what a Site Partnership does. While there needs to be governance and administration to support the Site Partnership, the primary focus is to work with local leaders and communities on the practical work of monitoring, research and CEPA activities related to the migratory waterbirds at the Site. It is this that inspires the commitment, passion, and drive for individuals in the community.

Site Managers may be local government or an NGO or another entity such as indigenous people responsible for the Site. They will be managing all the wider administration and reporting of the Site. Managing the local network of Partners may be in addition to that work so it may be helpful to delegate to a well-regarded local NGO or community group. How that works depends on the local circumstances.

Important outcomes of Site meetings are building relationships, getting to know each other, enjoying the activities and building cooperation locally between Site Managers, NGOs, civil society and land users. These meetings will develop the activities the Site Partners want to get involved in, develop a Site activity or work plan that will assist in implementing the EAAFP Strategic Plan.

### 3.3 SITE PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITY / WORKPLAN

Useful tools in developing a Site Activity Plan include the EAAFP Strategic Plan, the National Partnership Workplan, local management plans and local experiences. The objectives in the Strategic Plan provide a framework for the Site Partnership to organize thinking and can list activities that they plan to do for each of the objectives.

A work plan is about action. It provides a framework to support and inspire people and mobilise communities to become more involved with migratory waterbirds and habitat conservation. It is on the ground that people are inspired as the following quotes suggest:

*“Having a meaningful purpose has played a fundamental role to drive them all to keep up the passion...”*

A plan would include activities that implement the key functions of monitoring, research, capacity building and CEPA. Seek to develop a good match between the available expertise and passions in the community, and the needs of the Site and the migratory waterbirds. These will include:

- Care for the habitat.
- Count and monitor bird numbers.
- Monitor condition (health status) of network sites
- Research designed and carried out by universities, local experts, and volunteers.
- Promote citizen science and initiatives.
- Practical workshops for waterbird identification, bird counting, banding, habitat maintenance.
- Engage the local community with CEPA activities.
- Engage with those whose livelihoods depend on the Sites.
- Social events where people get to know each other, review activities and plan events.
- Attend other local meetings and include matters about migratory waterbirds and their habitats in those meetings.

A Site activity plan sets out the actions agreed on by the Site Partnership for the coming year and how they will be achieved. It looks at the EAAFP Strategic Plan and the National Partnership Workplan and says, “let’s develop our local Site workplan and identify activities we want to do specifically focused on migratory waterbirds at our Site.”

Site Partnerships are encouraged to share their plans with the National Partnership. This would enable other Site Partnerships to see plans from other Flyway Network Sites, how they may assist each other, and where there is the potential to make connections and build relationships. This might be combining training, sharing monitoring information or building formal Sister Site Programmes. This can be achieved by knowing what each Site Partnership is doing.

### 3.4 TEMPLATE OF A SITE PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITY / WORK PLAN

Activities are arranged under the following headings and supported by case studies across the Flyway and other regions of the globe. The success of many of these case studies is the focus on outcomes for the migratory waterbirds rather than whether it is a particular type of activity. However, the activities have been organised generally to conform with the EAAFP Strategic Plan for uniformity.

**A sample template is set out below.** It starts with the objectives of the EAAFP Strategic Plan and is the format the National Focal Point uses to report to the EAAFP Meeting of Partners (MOP). Therefore, it helps to establish consistency for the Site Managers reporting to the National Focal Point and streamlines the process.

OBJECTIVES FROM THE EAAFP STRATEGIC PLAN	ACTIVITIES YOUR SITE PLANS TO UNDERTAKE OVER THE COMING YEAR
<b>Objective 1</b> Development of the Network of Sites of international importance for the conservation of migratory waterbirds along the East Asian-Australasian Flyway.	Examples of activities may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop relationships with other Flyway Network Sites – this may include interest in Sister Site Programmes.</li> <li>• Plans for proposing new Flyway Network Sites.</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 2</b> Enhance communication, education and public awareness of the values of migratory waterbirds and their habitats.	Examples of activities may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List of NGOs working on migratory waterbirds locally.</li> <li>• Celebrate achievements – award ceremonies, locally.</li> <li>• List of interested people who are not involved in an NGO but who could provide expertise – social media, scientists, ambassadors, other NGOs working with flora and fauna.</li> <li>• Ways to promote regional meetings with bi-monthly online meetings, webinars to keep connected on common issues and successes.</li> <li>• Support and promote local engagement in national and/or international events e.g. the national coordination of the Asian Waterbird Census, and activities supporting the World Migratory Bird Day, popular bird vote, etc.</li> <li>• Develop and distribute CEPA material.</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 3</b> Enhance flyway research and monitoring activities, build knowledge and promote exchange of information on waterbirds and their habitats.	Examples of activities may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate on research with other Flyway Network Sites.</li> <li>• Monitoring activities to cover seasonal changes at the site.</li> <li>• Identify research topics of importance to migratory waterbirds on your part of the Flyway that your country would like to pursue.</li> <li>• Engage local volunteers and train.</li> <li>• Run arts and music events, bird festivals.</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 4</b> Build the habitat and waterbird management capacity of natural	Examples of activities may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify capacity needs and interests within your stakeholders.</li> </ul>

resource managers, decision makers and local stakeholders.

- Run local training workshops for citizens on waterbird identification, banding and tracking, invasive species, etc.

Each of the objectives in this template are expanded in the following pages with case studies and ideas that aim to inspire Site Partnerships.

### 3.4.1 OBJECTIVE ONE

**Development of the Network of Sites of international importance for the conservation of migratory waterbirds along the East Asian-Australasian Flyway.**

#### NOMINATING NEW FLYWAY NETWORK SITES

One of the significant challenges for the EAAFP is the nomination of additional Flyway Network Sites. The process requires time that is not always available for government and Site Managers. NGOs and INGOs can take a key role in undertaking this work due to their wide ranging experience, access to data and information.

A Site Partnership can initiate the nomination of a new FNS using the following three steps.

1. Local Government/Management Authority, NGO, non-governmental Partner, Governmental Partner -  
- Identification of potential Sites for the Network, by reviewing available data and determining which Sites meet the Criteria.
2. Local Government/Management Authority, NGO, non-governmental Partner, Governmental Partner -  
- For the selected Site, preparation of a Site Information Sheet (SIS) including a boundary map.
3. Local Government/Management Authority  
- Consultation on Site nomination at the local scale, with stakeholders including Site Managers, management authorities and relevant organizations.

For the full nomination process and benefits of a new Flyway Network Sites refer to Appendix 1.

The following two case studies showcase NGOs engaging and negotiating with wide ranging communities.

## CASE STUDY

### Nomination of a new Ramsar Site – challenges and successes

#### Issue:

Designating the Gulf of Mottama as a Ramsar Site to safeguard its wetland ecosystem services and secure its long-term conservation.

#### Action:

CEPA activities by the **Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Association (BANCA)**, BirdLife Myanmar began in 2012 in the Gulf of Mottama targeting some of the 100 village communities as well as State and Regional Government authorities to raise awareness about the value of the Gulf for everyone and the value of designating it as a Ramsar Site.

- Annual mobile education awareness program in the coastal villages of the Gulf of Mottama.
- World Wetlands Day events were carried out at National, State and Regional Levels.
- Presentations were made to different government authorities about migratory shorebirds across the Flyway and the conservation actions of the many different countries.
- Frequent engagement with both the local community and government officials to ensure the essential cooperation and collaboration with the multi-level stake holders involved.

#### Outcome – more than just the designation:

- Stronger understanding of the benefits of wetland conservation and migratory species conservation and the direct link with community livelihoods.
- Building the capacity of local communities, assisting in the formation of Local Conservation Groups are crucial for community led conservation approaches.
- Northern part of the Gulf of Mottama designated a Ramsar Site.

#### Challenge:

Time to understand the needs and views of both the local communities, as well as the government officials responsible for wetland conservation and the Ramsar Site designation process.

#### Keys to success:

*Working at local, regional and national levels with communities and government officials.*

## PARTNERING WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

## CASE STUDY

**Outreach to Indigenous people in Alaska to nominate a Flyway Network Site**  
**Listen – Understand - Respond**

**Qupaluk Flyway Network Site Nomination**

**Issue:** In 2016 the Bureau of Land Management and US Fish and Wildlife Service presented the EAAFP Flyway Network Site concept to representatives of Alaska native communities. The aim was to solicit input, increase understanding and gain support for the nomination of a Flyway Network Site.

**Actions:** Five outreach events communicated the data showing the high value of the habitat and shared information about the EAAFP and the Flyway Network Site system.

**Challenges:** The challenges were the diversity of opinions, the distrust of the federal government and misconceptions about what a Flyway Network Site would mean for the area.

**Keys to success:** The key to success at these events was listening, allowing time for dialogue, being realistic and honest. Through this we emphasised the maintenance of traditional practices, discussed the benefits of holistic management of migratory birds sharing experiences, responding to questions and making time for follow up questions. This became a collaboration with US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Geologic Survey, Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope and Bureau of Land Management Subsistence Advisory Panel.

**What we learned:**

- Listen more than you talk.
- Historical events and treatment of indigenous people will colour current interactions.
- Give people time to consider a proposal, discuss with others and come back with more questions.
- If you ask for input, take that input, and include it as much as possible.
- Understand the differences between why it matters to conservation and the impact the activity will have on indigenous practices.
- Respond quickly and in a conversational manner.

Many countries on the EAAF have indigenous people with strong connections to internationally important Sites for migratory waterbirds. Many communities also have strong traditional connections to these birds and their habitats. Indigenous and local communities often have rich knowledge of an area, of how areas have changed over time, relationships between species, and how sustainability can be practiced based on many thousands of years of stewardship. In many cases, indigenous people have ownership and stewardship over their traditional lands across the Flyway. Building Partnerships of respect acknowledges the deep connection of Indigenous peoples locally, and recognizes the work that they do, and the value they bring to living land and water and protecting the natural environment. Offering support in advocacy, capacity building, the translation

of resources, learning culturally appropriate responses, access to technical resources such as smart phones and monitoring equipment will impact the relationship for the benefit of all.

When the EAAFP Partners work with Indigenous communities — and all communities that live on landscapes and have done for generations — we enable those communities to do the work that they are not only really good at doing, but that is really valuable to them.



*Habitat on Qupaluk Flyway Network Site © Casey Burns, BLM*

### 3.4.2 OBJECTIVE TWO

Enhance communication, education and public awareness at the Site level of the values of migratory waterbirds and their habitats

#### CEPA

CEPA is an important function of any Site Partnership. The CEPA Working Group is a fundamental part of the culture and support networks of the EAAFP. The CEPA Working Group has its own strategy which is available in a number of languages on the EAAFP website. It notes, *“The key actors for the implementation of this CEPA strategy include those working at the Flyway, national and Site level. These include governments, Site Managers, multilateral environmental agreements, technical and academic institutions, development agencies, private sector groups, non-governmental organizations and local communities.”*

Site Partnerships are invited to establish strong working relationships with the CEPA Working Group and use their experiences.

#### COMMUNICATION

Communication is a primary tool for bringing about awareness of migratory waterbirds and their habitats. What is communicated often is based on the stories and information discovered through monitoring and research. It is also important for reaching out to those whose actions pose threats to habitats or migratory waterbirds to change attitudes. Often this will involve collaborating with influencers or industry organisations. Examples from other Flyways include; working with local Mufti's in Turkey, and increasing private land available to migratory waterbirds in the Central California Valley by collaborating with rice farmers and the California Rice Commission.

## CASE STUDY

## Communication and Education to form alliance with local Mufti religious leaders

**Burdur Gölü (Lake Burdur)** is a large saline lake in southwestern Turkey, a Ramsar Site, and the world's most important wintering Site for the threatened White-headed Duck *Oxyura leucocephala*.

**Issue:**

Threatened White-headed Duck seen as a pest by local people.

**Action:**

Doğa Derneği (BirdLife in Turkey) launched the 'Conserving Lake Burdur Project', supported by the UNEP/GEF Wings Over Wetlands (WOW) initiative that aims to conserve migratory waterbirds along the African–Eurasian Flyway. Through the project:

- Over 1,500 local farmers from 44 villages were trained on the use of drip irrigation—a technique that saves both water and fertilizers by slowly releasing water directly to the roots of plants.
- The Ministry of Education devised and delivered to more than 30 schools a special program for local school children to foster a greater appreciation of wetland habitats and species.
- The most innovative, and perhaps the most significant approach was to forge an alliance with Burdur's Provincial Mufti.

**Outcome:**

- Working together, Doğa Derneği, the Provincial Mufti and the Burdur Centre Ulu Mosque Imam Nuri Çınar drafted a sermon advocating better water management and highlighted the responsibility of humans in protecting the environment and wildlife. It is estimated that the sermon reached approximately 52,000 people across more than 1,000 mosques and has helped engender support for Doğa Derneği with both local government and the region's people.
- *"Since the project's inception, local attitudes to the lake and its conservation have improved dramatically and the area's wildlife is responding positively".*

### CASE STUDY

#### Preparing a communication, education and public awareness-raising (CEPA) strategy to promote the international importance of the Peel-Yalgorup Ramsar Site, Australia

**Issue:** Assess impact of CEPA activities and gaps identified to develop a CEPA Plan.

**Challenges:** Funding and a dedicated person to do the work.

**Keys to success:** Engaged stakeholders; Long-term ongoing Ramsar Technical Advisory Group (collaborative management & participatory planning approaches).

**Outcome:** Australia's first Ramsar Site-specific stand-alone CEPA Plan, which encourages government, community and industry to become more involved in the care and management of the 26,530 ha Ramsar Site.

The Plan has been a driver for attracting funding for CEPA activities.

**Useful for other Sites:** The Plan is publicly available and can inform the development of CEPA Plans at other Sites. It supports all stakeholders who have an interest in developing a strategic approach to CEPA activities - [https://www.bushlandperth.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Peel\\_Yalgorup\\_MP.pdf](https://www.bushlandperth.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Peel_Yalgorup_MP.pdf)

## EDUCATION

Education has a wide scope and is not limited to teaching school and university students. Adult education and outreach can play an important part in promoting awareness of a community's impact on migratory waterbirds. Some Sites host local schools and universities and build long term relationships, support initiatives in education, arts, sports, cuisine, work with schools to include teaching resources. They may run training workshops to upskill volunteer workers and introduce new volunteers to working with migratory waterbirds and the Flyway Network Site and use material from the Secretariat in local language to educate local communities about their impact on migratory waterbirds.

The following case study from Mongolia describes an education and communication activity but also illustrates how research and monitoring forms the foundation for CEPA activities.

#### *WORLD MIGRATORY BIRD DAY - EAAFP*

World Migratory Bird Day celebrates and highlights the ecological importance of migratory birds and calls for their global conservation through international cooperation. It is celebrated twice a year, the second Saturday in May and in October. The EAAFP has been helped by taking the lead in the EAAF. Refer to the EAAFP website for further details.

#### *SMALL GRANT FUND AVAILABLE - EAAFP*

A Small Grant Fund is available to provide financial support to EAAFP Partners and collaborators from EAAFP Task Forces and Working Groups who plan to organize public events and/or conservation action-oriented workshops at national or local level through participation in the World Migratory Bird Day. Refer to the EAAFP website for further details.

The following case study from Mongolia describes an education and communication activity but also illustrates how research and monitoring forms the foundation for CEPA activities.

### CASE STUDY

#### Education on World Migratory Bird Day to change local attitudes Chukh Bird Research Station (CBRS), Eastern Mongolia

**Issue:** Chukh Lake, in north-eastern Mongolia which is an important stopover Site for many species of migratory birds, especially for shorebirds, but this small steppe lake is very sensitive during the dry periods, and it needs stronger awareness among the local herder families. 78 herder families live around Chukh Lake together with 65,284 head of livestock. Large numbers of livestock especially cattle and horses drink from the lake and stand in the lake to cool off during the warm seasons. Vehicle parking near the lake and large numbers of livestock disturb the shorebirds and some species of ducks and geese with their chicks resting and feeding on the shore of the lake.

**Challenge:** To change the attitude of the local people and explain why migratory shorebirds need to be kept at peace on the shore during their migration season and the importance of wetland sharing.

**Action:**

- A total of 35 people including school children, university students and local people participated in an organized event at the Chukh Bird Research Station (CBRS).
- A coordinator of CBRS introduced their result from migratory shorebirds monitoring for two years at Chukh Lake and presented migration studies of shorebirds, cranes and species of raptors tracked from Eastern Mongolia over three years.
- A 12th grade student from a local school gave a talk about her three years of experience at bird research station.
- Students were given hands-on training on how to band and measure shorebirds, how to identify them and introduced the the safety rules for handling birds.
- World Migratory Bird Day themed t-shirts and “Shorebirds of Chukh” calendars were provided for all participants.

**Lesson:** It shows there are many strands to education from teaching students, to training in bird monitoring and bird handling and educating neighbouring land users in how their activities impact on migratory waterbirds and how working together can generate positive outcomes for both.

*“Share the shore with shorebirds”*

### EDUCATION INITIATIVES AND ACTIVITIES ARE AS BIG AS YOUR IMAGINATION

Here are some suggestions:

- Enhance local communities, local students and the public’s understanding on the impact of plastic pollution to migratory birds.
- Provide education speeches on how we can be a solution to plastic pollution and save the migratory birds to High School students.
- Competitions for schools to make video or cartooning with prizes sponsored by a local business.
- Guided birdwatching.
- Self-guided tours interacting with an App on mobile phones.
- Shorebird Chests in Estonia are prepared and available for educational purposes filled with all required resources to teach groups.
- Holiday science and birding programs for students.
- Virtual tours, conferences and workshops.
- Local music, poetry and arts festival to celebrate the return of migratory waterbirds.

## CASE STUDY

### Participation and Education

#### Developing an international volunteer program for 'hands-on' habitat management working with the local university and members of the local bird society

##### Green Holiday: Weekend Volunteer Tours for Wild Bird Society of Japan

**The concept** of Green Holiday was shared with volunteers in another country of the Flyway and a locally based Green Holiday project has now been launched by the Wild Bird Society of Japan in collaboration with the national Ecotourism agency for the protection of a wetland of international importance through the removal of invasive cordgrass (*Spartina alterniflora*) from the mudflats.

**The program:** lectures, a guided tour and practical conservation action working with local people to encourage young people to take action for nature conservation.

**Result:** Removed invasive cordgrass, 56 Japanese volunteers and over 500 volunteers from the other nation participated in the conservation work through the Green Holiday over 2 years. Key to success: Translators (Chinese/Japanese) and facilitators were essential to the success of the action and also having key sponsors.

**Challenges:** Organising several activities, cross communication, limited staff, a modest budget.

## PARTICIPATION AND AWARENESS

Bringing people to the Flyway Network Site helps build awareness through participation in annual activities around habitat maintenance or habitat improvement through planting or celebrating the arrival or departure of birds on their migratory journey. There may be:

- Award ceremonies for volunteers.
- Involving a cultural Foundation to host arts and music to welcome and farewell the migratory birds
- Support the creation and distribution of media to promote the stories of migratory waterbirds.
- Engaging ambassadors and social influencers to promote activities.

Birds play a part in every culture, its traditions and its myths. Birds are celebrated universally in histories, music and art. Birds celebrate life and philosophical symbols, represent freedom from earthly constraints and the embodiment of soaring beauty and grace. Music and art are powerful mediums to communicate awareness of migratory waterbirds in local communities and can also take that awareness to destinations and venues far beyond a Flyway Network Site.

## CASE STUDY

**NGO, Corporate, EAAFP collaborate to enhance migratory waterbirds awareness through art**  
**International Crane Foundation China Program**



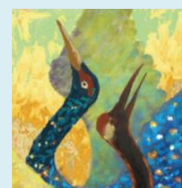
**Issue:** The Yangtze River basin in eastern China is one of the two most important wintering Sites for cranes in Asia. The basin supports several species of wintering cranes, including nearly the entire population of critically endangered Siberian Crane. An important goal of the education campaign is to increase awareness and understanding of crane conservation through their work.

**Action:**

- They partnered with the Centre for East Asian-Australasian Flyway Studies, Huatai Securities and the environmental education non-profit organization “Roots and Shoots” to organize a poster contest featuring the cranes found in the Yangtze River basin. Over 120 entries were received from all ages, including professional and amateur artists, and 20 winning posters were chosen.
- They displayed the posters at two public outreach events – the “One Yangtze River with Thousands of Cranes Roadshow” – in Beijing and Shanghai.

**Outcome:** At the beginning of 2021, the International Crane Foundation China Program began a new education campaign, “One Yangtze River with Thousands of Cranes”.

**Keys to success:** Having a clear aim and partnering with other organisations.



Images © [International Crane Foundation](https://www.icfchina.org/)

These case studies illustrate successful activities that have been inspired on the EAAF Flyway. Ideas for such initiatives can include:

- Connect with professional arts, music, cultural, indigenous centres to discuss collaborations to promote the Site and the birds.
- Photo exhibition of migratory birds with the name of species and habitat for participants to understand more about ecology of migratory birds.
- Road show of exhibition including creative activities for the public e.g. make an origami Crane.
- Art gallery exhibition for professional artists and indigenous and traditional use interactive exhibitions showcasing connections with the birds, wetlands stories.
- “Farewell to the Birds” day – where a quartet plays specially composed music.

- The Youth Choir sings songs celebrating migratory waterbirds.
- Migratory waterbirds story turned into a children's musical.
- Nature journaling course.
- Local artists run printmaking courses focused on migratory waterbirds, painting birds courses – can also bring in some revenue.
- Bird and nature photography course.
- Poetry written and published for migratory waterbird species.

### CASE STUDY

#### Music Festival celebrating return of migrating petrels organised by an NGO Environmental Conservation NGO raises awareness through an annual music event

**Background:** The West Coast Penguin Trust is an NGO based on the West Coast of New Zealand dedicated to conserve penguins and other seabirds. Although the Trust is not connected to an EAAFP Flyway Network Site it provides an example of an Environmental Conservation NGO raising awareness. It organises the annual **Taiko Festival Rap** celebrating the return of the Westland Petrel (Taiko) to the shores of New Zealand for the breeding season. The Taiko travels from its winter Sites ranging from Australia to Peru and Chile.



#### Action:

- Friday evening starts with watching the migratory birds return, followed by the musical entertainment.
- Saturday morning is planting at the local conservation Site, then a community market day with arts and crafts, children's activities with clowns and conservation activities organised by a NGO, a mural of the Westland Petrel and then into the evening is a festival of entertainment including poets, live bands and DJs.



**Outcome:** Raised awareness in communities not normally engaged with migratory bird conservation.

### CASE STUDY

#### Year of the Wrybill, a species indigenous to New Zealand Celebrating the Wrybill for a year promoting through art and cultural activities

A campaign was created around one species with a special feature - it's curved beak. The "Year of the Wrybill" included competitions, poetry, original compositions of music performed at the site, videos of students talking about the wrybill, Johan Kok's Flung Scarf of Wrybill video featuring birds performing their aerial ballet to the music, Facebook postings.

**CASE STUDY**  
**The Flock Project**

**The importance of having a champion to drive momentum and a great story of migration to tell - Engaging with the community and school children to raise awareness of migratory shorebirds.**

**Issue:** Recent population counts indicated that both populations of Bar-tailed Godwits and Red Knots are declining, and this project was aimed at raising community awareness of the threats facing these species.

**Action:** Cut out shapes or profiles of shorebirds were hand painted by local school students, adults joined in, the birds formed a flock and small groups even 'travelled' across the globe. From small beginnings it highlighted the threats faced by migratory waterbirds locally and internationally. This was supported by local businesses who provided paint and services.

**Outcome:** Once project champions were able to undertake visits the project quickly gained momentum and flocks of up to 2,500 were seen on school and community grounds. This was also enhanced when the Prime Minister of New Zealand was persuaded to be involved and also a visiting delegation of senior officials from China who visited the Shorebird Centre. Several smaller project groups were also created in other parts of New Zealand and in several other countries in the Flyway.

**Keys to success:** Having project champions to drive the momentum and a great story of migration to portray. A lot of this was achieved utilising social media.

**Use by other Sites:** This project is easily transferred to other countries and cultures and can be used as a tool to raise awareness of the threats towards migratory shorebirds or water birds. Each country can adopt bird profiles/ shape to suit their own circumstances and can undertake 'exchanges' of the profiles with other countries and schools that share the same birds. (Find out how to make your own flock <https://shorebirds.org.nz/the-flock/2> )



**The Flock Project - © Miranda Pukororo**

### **“The Bowerbird Collective”**

The Bowerbird Collective strives to strengthen emotional connections to nature through the arts

Formed in 2017 by Simone Slattery and Anthony Albrecht, the Bowerbird Collective has produced more than 180 concerts around regional Australia and created acclaimed works that tell conservation stories. These include ‘Where Song Began’ based on Tim Low’s book about the evolution of songbirds, as well as several online works in collaboration with the EAAFP including ‘Invisible Connections’, ‘On the Wings of a Godwit’ and ‘The World Migratory Bird Day Virtual Choir’.



Anthony Albrecht and Simone Slattery – The Bowerbird Collective

**On the Wings of a Godwit** - <https://bowerbird productions/godwit/>

**Winaityinaityi Pangkara - The Country of the Birds**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=pGZY6TLYKUg>

**The World Migratory Bird Day Virtual Choir**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=9iJScyiuuAI>

**Bird Meets Arts - YSFAC AND EAAFP** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=i1sz4WnR5KQ>

[www.bowerbirdcollective.org](http://www.bowerbirdcollective.org)

### **MORE IDEAS FOR CEPA ACTIVITIES**

- Community open day for the Site.
- Bird trivia Quiz event as part of a social event.
- Following tracked migratory waterbirds on their migratory journeys and sharing.
- Collaborate with other NGOs working on habitat restoration, flora and fauna on Site and locally.
- Appeal for donations to support a particular issue e.g., “Great Knot Food Drop” when there was a big food shortage in the Yellow Sea and food was dropped for them.
- Book reviews of interest e.g., “Pathway of the Birds” by Andrew Crowe detailing how Polynesians learned to follow the migratory birds in their navigation.
- Art and story competitions centred around particular species.
- NGO organising inter-village football matches in South Thailand has been used effectively to reduce shorebird hunting as a leisure activity (providing not only the will to stop killing shorebirds, but the way to redirect that energy, or remove the barrier to changing behaviour).
- Youth Eco clubs, especially in communities where there are few activities for young people, and where clubs are used to teach young people to organise themselves e.g., into a campaigning voice.
- Bird festivals.
- Welcome to the Birds event.

## ADVOCACY

- Displays at local markets.
- Host local and national politicians, mayors and other leaders.
- Meet local land developers and local people using habitats to discuss ways to work together. Invite them to events at the Site.
- Rewarding and publicizing local conservation achievements by senior local administrators, local leaders or other local champions through accolades such as certificates, official congratulatory letters or prizes.
- Locally organized festivals in celebration of particular flagship species such as cranes or key Sites, supported by materials (translated as appropriate) produced at regional level, attract significant attention from politicians and local government as well as other audiences.
- Drawing attention to, sharing high-quality resources already made and available publicly about migratory waterbirds on the EAAF. An example is *Saving a Flyway – Yellow Sea*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UVV8Li3K3aA&list=UUF6q9ARdBnoFmmPdhJxtww&index=16>

### 3.4.3 OBJECTIVE THREE

Enhance flyway research and monitoring activities, build knowledge and promote exchange of information on waterbirds and their habitats

## MONITORING

One of the most important functions of a Flyway Network Site is monitoring waterbirds and their habitats. The role of the Site Partnership in monitoring is to support monitoring initiatives and to have ongoing training for those involved in monitoring. Monitoring your particular Site is a significant contribution to all Sites by adding to national information and ultimately to the information recorded across the whole Flyway. Site Managers benefit from dedicated and trained volunteers to maintain the work.

This critical task of the Site Partnership is often supported by NGOs and INGOs with extensive experience to:

- Train local volunteers.
- Share the waterbird monitoring data with the National Partnership and also use email, social media, and traditional media to make the local community aware of migratory waterbirds in their area.
- Contribute to long-term regular waterbird and wetland monitoring programmes, that provide the EAAFP with regular local to flyway scale updates. E.g., Asian Waterbird Census – a largely citizen science initiative involving site management staff, coordinated by Wetlands International (<https://www.eaaflyway.net/asian-waterbird-census/>)
- Contribute to other data gathering and sharing platforms e.g.,
  - eBird <https://ebird.org/home> which is an international web platform managed by the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology.
  - Asian Waterbird Census - citizen science initiative coordinated by Wetlands International (<https://www.eaaflyway.net/asian-waterbird-census/>).

The China Coastal Waterbird Census Team developed relationships with other Flyway Network Sites and provide valuable contemporaneous monitoring data. When asked in an interview, “*What is the most crucial part of conserving migratory waterbirds like Spoon-billed Sandpipers?*”, co-founder of CCWC Jing Li responded,

*“Habitat, habitat and habitat” and that “data is the most impactful activity, we share the data output in scientific papers, reports and Twitter.”<sup>3</sup>*

Loving the local collaboration with the amazing, creative Art Teachers passionate about nature Jing Li also acknowledged that, *“Fisherman community, including people harvesting on the mudflat, running fishponds and incubating baby clams are also important local Partners. The fishpond, mudflat, and land near the seawall are also habitats for migratory shorebirds and it is challenging for people and wildlife to share the same space and sometimes share food. It is difficult; we understand little about their needs and have some pilot projects now with those who have a positive attitude toward birds feeding on their fishpond.”*



China Coastal Waterbird Census Report 2012-2019 Cover Photo

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<sup>3</sup> [https://www.eaaflyway.net/flyway-story-11-ms-jing-li/?fbclid=IwAR2ifEM5rTuvA9yzUe9RXI2DQoh2QHQjc3R6M\\_HxLtj4bHWf079VW0oHDx4](https://www.eaaflyway.net/flyway-story-11-ms-jing-li/?fbclid=IwAR2ifEM5rTuvA9yzUe9RXI2DQoh2QHQjc3R6M_HxLtj4bHWf079VW0oHDx4)

## CASE STUDY

### The China Coastal Waterbird Census Team (CCWC) Having a meaningful purpose keeps the passion for migratory bird surveys

**The CCWC team is the largest group of Chinese volunteer waterbird watchers in coastal China. Over 200 birdwatchers have carried out monthly surveys since September 2005.**

**Question:** In 2005 birdwatchers at Xiamen University and Mai Po, Hong Kong reported a flock of Dalmatian Pelicans and after comparing dates wondered if they were the same flock.

*“Why don’t we stop blind guessing and actually see if they are the same group?”* they asked.

Putting the idea into action they called for people in different provinces along the coast to conduct a simultaneous survey.

**Action:** Bird watchers from 10 Sites joined the first survey. Building on the success of the survey and the excitement it generated there is now a survey at the same time every month covering 13 regular survey Sites.

**Outcome:** Fifteen years of consistent surveys have built the credibility of the CCWC. They have published reports providing valuable information about the population and migration pattern of waterbirds along the coast of China and a scientific paper.

**Ongoing training:** The CCWC organizes regular surveyor training workshops to review survey techniques, enhance bird identification skills and share updated knowledge.

**Volunteer outcome:** Having a meaningful purpose has played a fundamental role to drive them all to keep up the passion for continuous surveys over 16 years.

*“All this tells the truth that every individual can contribute a little to the world,  
and together we can make it better”*

## RESEARCH

As part of the workplan, Site Partnerships should identify questions that are long-term or have significant impact and so request researchers to lead an investigation of the question. Many of the key questions being addressed currently are at the scale of the Flyway (Godwit usage of the Flyway), Eco Region (Yellow Sea), political grouping (ASEAN Flyway Network) or functional (hunting, etc).

A Site Partnership might make a good sample Site for contributing to a project, but it might be that a research question developed at that Site, is better addressed at another Site.

Having a Flyway Network Site provides a research base from which to gather the raw field data that underpins our knowledge about individual species of migratory waterbirds across the Flyway.

This also provides the basis on which to connect with other Sites sharing the same species and interested in the same research. Important connections are NGOs, INGOs, Scientists, Community groups, citizen / volunteers.

The China Coastal Waterbird Census Team case study above illustrates the powerful and long-term impact volunteer citizen scientists have, practically for migratory waterbirds, and how their passion connects them across different Sites on the Flyway through monitoring of the waterbirds.

### CASE STUDY

#### Monitoring and Research

#### The importance of international expertise to support monitoring and build capacity at Sites

*“In Mongolia, bird ringing activities started relatively recently. The first stationary bird ringing scheme was established in 2015 by Wildlife Science and Conservation Center of Mongolia (WSCC) at the Khurkh Bird Ringing Station (Khurkh BRS). Since then, the network of Mongolian bird ringing stations is growing gradually, and today there are three bird ringing stations operating in Mongolia. Though, the project is fully depended on our invaluable overseas and local volunteers to run these stations. WSCC will be eternally grateful for their devotion. The objective of the bird ringing stations in Mongolia is to carry out a long-term bird migration monitoring study in the country and make scientific contribution to the regional bird research and conservation initiatives. In addition, the program aims to provide hands-on field training opportunity for a young generation of biologists in the country.”*



Science and Conservation Center of Mongolia lectures about plastic pollution ©EAAFP

The 2020 Mongolian Bird Ringing Program at EAAFP Flyway Network Site organised by NGO - the Wildlife Science and Conservation Center of Mongolia ([Annualreport2020.pdf](#)) illustrates monitoring, research, and capacity building coming together for the conservation of migratory waterbirds. It also shows the valuable contribution NGOs play as a Site Partner.

This collaborative research to track migration routes of a particular species working with the local university and researchers from four other countries on opposite sides of the world. While only 2 birds were caught it highlighted that the relationships and international collaboration from working at the Site laid a foundation for future collaboration, and other research.

### 3.4.4 OBJECTIVE FOUR

Build the habitat and waterbird management capacity of natural resource managers, decision makers and local stakeholders.

#### CAPACITY BUILDING

The Site Partnership has a key position in the EAAFP in contributing to capacity building by investing in people and their knowledge, skills and understanding. The purpose is to create a community of practice and learning with the people at Site level. It includes more than technical knowledge and covers how to engage the wider community, fundraising, mentoring, habitat care, and to ensure succession. Some ideas:

- Local experts support with advice.
- Study groups, training, mentoring to build the capacity of Site partners and increase their understanding of migratory waterbirds and their habitats.
- Technical training available for volunteers.
- Waterbird identification training.
- Bringing experts together – local species.
- Setting up expert groups for a particular species.
- Developing and disseminating CEPA material.
- Developing local language CEPA material.
- Local meetings / workshops.
- Small group of local experts who support the Site Partnership / Site Manager with advice for a variety of activities.
- Study groups, training, mentoring to build the capacity of Site Partners and increase their understanding of migratory waterbirds and their habitats.



Releasing 5 individuals of Asian Dowitcher after banding them, on northward migration, at Chukh lake © Chukh Bird Research station

## MORE IDEAS FOR CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES AT SITES

- Waterbird Identification course for the public.
- Wetland monitoring course for the public
- Expert speakers about migratory waterbird tracking projects.
- Waterbird Census – train new volunteers.
- Species monitoring with people at other Sites that are not FNSs but who share the same birds.
- Catching, banding, attaching tracking devices on birds – and training others to assist.

There are many examples across the Flyway of habitat care involving community volunteers, local government and Flyway Network Site staff. Many are on the EAAFP website and the Secretariat can assist with information.

- Tree planting and weeding of habitat, clearing drains.
- Invasive species removal from Flyway Network Site.
- Volunteers collect plastic from beaches.
- School trips to collect rubbish from and then discuss the impact of plastic pollution on migratory waterbirds.
- Pest trapping – traps provided by local conservation groups who train citizens to trap around their homes.
- Establish a nursery for plants to plant at the Site. Involve businesses to contribute, schools to help.
- Tree planting at a local high school.
- Tree planting day or morning for volunteers with refreshments afterwards.
- Planning for Site extension.



## MANAGING COMPETING RESOURCE AND LAND USE ISSUES

One of the most challenging factors for Site Partnerships are threats from neighbouring activities. Often engaging with people using the Site, land or resources, to find ways to work together, is a starting point in initiating dialogue that will bring about win-win solutions where there has been conflict.

## RESOLVING CONFLICT BETWEEN FARMERS AND MIGRATORY WATERBIRDS USING CROP FIELDS

One of the most challenging threats to waterbird habitat is agricultural land use practice. As a group, farmers have a strong connection to their land, often for generations or as their traditional home. As a group they often “know best” and their practices are guided by tradition, scientific practice and management and commercial viability. In fact all these qualities make neighbouring farmers also strong allies and conservers of habitat and species when their own livelihoods and attitudes are not challenged. The following case studies all demonstrate how understanding mutual needs, sharing resources and changing or modifying land use practice can be a win-win for farmers and migratory waterbirds. Furthermore, the attachment of farming communities

to their land and environment can make them staunch advocates and conservers of migratory waterbirds once they are embraced.

### **CASE STUDY Collaboration and Capacity Building**

**Making a difference when you collaborate and problem solve with local farmers demonstrates how even large scale industrialised commercial agriculture systems can buy into the conservation of migratory waterbird conservation**

**A project to protect and enhance agricultural habitat in California's Central Valley to sustain healthy migratory shorebird populations in the Pacific Flyway in the face of changes in land use and climate collaborating with the California Rice Commission and private landowners.**

**Issue:** The Central Valley of California has lost over 90% of its natural wetlands. In the Sacramento Valley, approximately 150,000 hectares of flooded, post-harvest rice fields complement the 33,000 hectares of managed seasonal wetlands to provide a mosaic of flooded habitats for waterbirds.

**Action:** INGO, Audubon California, Point Blue Conservation Science, and The Nature Conservancy worked directly and collaboratively with local rice farmers, the California Rice Commission, and the United States Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to develop rice field management practices that enhance the habitat value of farms for shorebirds and other waterbirds.

**Outcome:** Actively flooding rice fields from November through January and then delaying the drawdown by two weeks or more, then staggering the dewatering of rice fields by 25% each week during February and March extended the traditional flooding period and created a mosaic of water depths that supports multiple waterbirds. Over eight years over 120,000 acres of California rice lands has been enhanced for waterbirds.

**Keys to success:** (1) Collaboration and effective communication are essential to scaling conservation outcomes. (2) Having a strong Partner in the agricultural industry was paramount to reaching and engaging rice growers.

*"Bringing the landowners in at the beginning of this process and including them in development of the practices themselves provided an important opportunity for building trust and cultivating relationships"*

### CASE STUDY

#### Working with landowners to address competition with migratory waterbirds in Russia

**Issue:** The Daursky State Nature Biosphere Reserve, Russia includes wetlands supporting autumn gatherings of migratory cranes, waterfowl and shorebirds. Croplands (mainly wheat) located around the reserve attract up to 70,000 staging cranes, geese, and ducks, causing the loss of up to 70% of grain in some wheat fields. Crop depredation is the cause of conflict between farmers and waterbirds and between the local community and Daursky Reserve. Farmers began illegally shooting cranes (including globally threatened species) to protect their crops.

**Action:** Developed and tested methods of reducing crop depredation by waterbirds at the Daursky Biosphere Reserve. The solutions included:

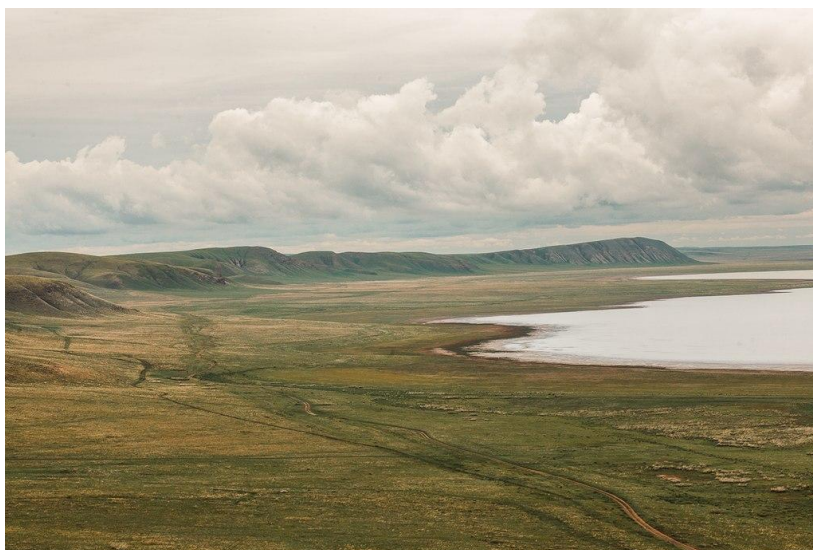
- Moving crop fields farther from wetlands with waterbird roosting sites;
- Planting lure crops (millet and wheat) at locations close to roosting sites;
- Providing alternative food by growing it on fallow lands near wheat fields;
- Adjusting dates and technology of harvesting.

**Challenges:** Persuading farmers to test the suggested methods of reduction of crop depredation.

**Outcome:** Experimental trials of the recommendations showed significant reduction of crop depredation. Local people stopped shooting rare species of cranes and geese and their relationship with the Daursky Nature Reserve and local community became significantly better. Local people helped in conservation of cranes and their habitats (wetlands).

**Key to success:**

- Working closely with local communities and finding a practical and acceptable solution to reduce the loss and damage to crops by the cranes.
- Ongoing monitoring, ring banding, training of volunteers continues to provide up to date material for research and monitoring but also is communicated with the public, farmers, local government, EAAFP and others regionally and internationally.
- The EAAFP Crane Working Group, established to encourage the international cooperation on the conservation of cranes and storks, is also an important support for this work.



The Daursky State Nature Biosphere Reserve, Russia (Wikipedia)

**CASE STUDY**  
**Awareness raising and capacity building in the Philippines**  
**reducing conflict between farmers and migratory waterbirds seen as pests**

**Issue:** Candaba wetlands continue to be drained or converted to wet agriculture severely limiting the habitat available for waterfowl. The conversion to fishponds causes the vegetation cover to become patchy and siltation is also apparent. The area is mostly privately owned with a small part that is state-owned. The land has been classified as “alienable and disposable land” thus posing a concern for conservation in the long term. Because of declining yields in agriculture, farmers are forced to sell their land and recently these wetlands are being filled to give way to real estate development including housing subdivisions, economic zones, etc. During our interviews, we learned that farmers consider migratory birds as pests and at that time they were indifferent to the idea of protecting them.

**The approach:**

- We carried out rapid ecological, socio-cultural and economic assessments from August 2017 – September 2018.
- We organised the training of members of the Macagatal Irrigators Association and other community members as bird watching guides in March 2018 and also training in sustainable agricultural practices in September 2018.
- These training events were conducted by the Department of Tourism and Agricultural Training Institute of the Department of Agriculture, respectively. Led the preparation of a management plan.

**Challenges:**

- Getting the trust of the farmers and convincing them that they can still derive their livelihood from their farms even if there are migratory birds present and using the area.
- Conflicting information coming from the Department of Agriculture during the Agricultural Training Institute training, i.e. ‘birds are pests’.

**Outcome:**

- The preparation of a management plan that included designating a certain portion of the 132-hectare property as a conservation area (including for migratory birds) to be supported by a Barangay (Village) Resolution.
- Training farmers in the Philippines as bird watchers is a case study that can be replicated by sites that have migratory birds on rice paddies and where farmers perceive migratory birds as pests.

**Key to success:** Support from the Village Officials; Municipal Agricultural Office of Candaba; Department of Tourism (Central and Region 3); Key officials of the Macagatal Irrigators Association.



*Candaba farmers and their trainers at an indoor training*

**Photos:** Society for the Conservation of Philippine Wetlands

## CASE STUDY

**Philanthropy supported by the Cambodian government conserves cranes' favourite food.****Issue:**

At 176cm (just under 6ft), the eastern sarus crane is the tallest flying bird. The Eastern Sarus Crane, found in south-east Asia, is considered highly endangered: fewer than 200 are estimated to remain across the wetlands of Cambodia and Vietnam, a sharp decline from nearly 900 in 2002.

**Challenge:**

- The impacts of the climate crisis, such as erosion and saltwater intrusion are causing wildlife to become increasingly threatened across the Mekong Delta of Cambodia and Viet Nam.
- Among the birds affected are the cranes.
- When the crop has not yet been harvested, the cranes walk on the embankments around the fields and eat the grains from rice at the edges of fields.

**Action:**

- NatureLife, with the support of Cambodia's Ministry of Environment and funded by IUCN Netherlands lease land from the farmers, who are paid, 10 years' rent upfront, calculated at 30% higher than their net income from the land.
- NatureLife uses the land to grow native short-grain rice varieties such as boka teourm and pong roluk (Khmer names), which are the cranes' favourites.
- At harvest time, half of the crop on the 17 hectares (42 acres) of leased land is left to supplement the diet of the cranes and other birds.
- NatureLife also offers the farmers the option of a daily allowance for cultivating the land, which provides a regular income.
- Techniques are provided for free by NatureLife's Partners.
- The farmers agree to cultivate rice varieties preferred by the cranes, not use chemicals on their crops, not hunt or snare visiting wildlife, and not encroach on protected land.
- If the farmers adhere to all criteria, NatureLife pays the market rate for the 5% of the crop left unharvested and receive seeds at a subsidised rate, organic fertilisers and pesticides and training in organic farming.

**Outcomes:**

- More than 40 farmers from Koh Chamkar and nearby Chress village have joined the initiative bringing almost 38 hectares under the program.
- NatureLife: "We commit to the farmers that we will use the land only for growing rice and that the soil will remain suitable for cultivation in the long term".
- The arrangement also prevents farmers from selling land to developers or changing its use, thus retaining the area for visiting cranes for the next decade.
- NatureLife's long-term vision is to protect more than 1,000 hectares of the landscape for the cranes.
- Potential to sell local rice products that are environmentally friendly for the economic benefit of FNS and the wider community.

**Keys to success:**

- Collaboration.

### 3.5 IN CONCLUSION

In conclusion, these case studies show that building capacity of Site Partnership members at an EAAFP Flyway Network Site can take many forms. These depend on the circumstances, people and resources at a Flyway Network Site and needs to be driven by the local needs and priorities and innovations may be supported by INGOs.

Growing relationships at Site level that include all with an interest in migratory waterbirds and / or their habitats, strengthens conservation outcomes. Engaging and collaborating with land users, big and small, who may see the birds as pests or not have considered them at all, has the potential to leverage significant impact for the work of the Flyway.

Further case studies can be found by contacting the Secretariat, the EAAFP website, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter.

## SECTION 4: ROLES WITHIN A SITE PARTNERSHIP

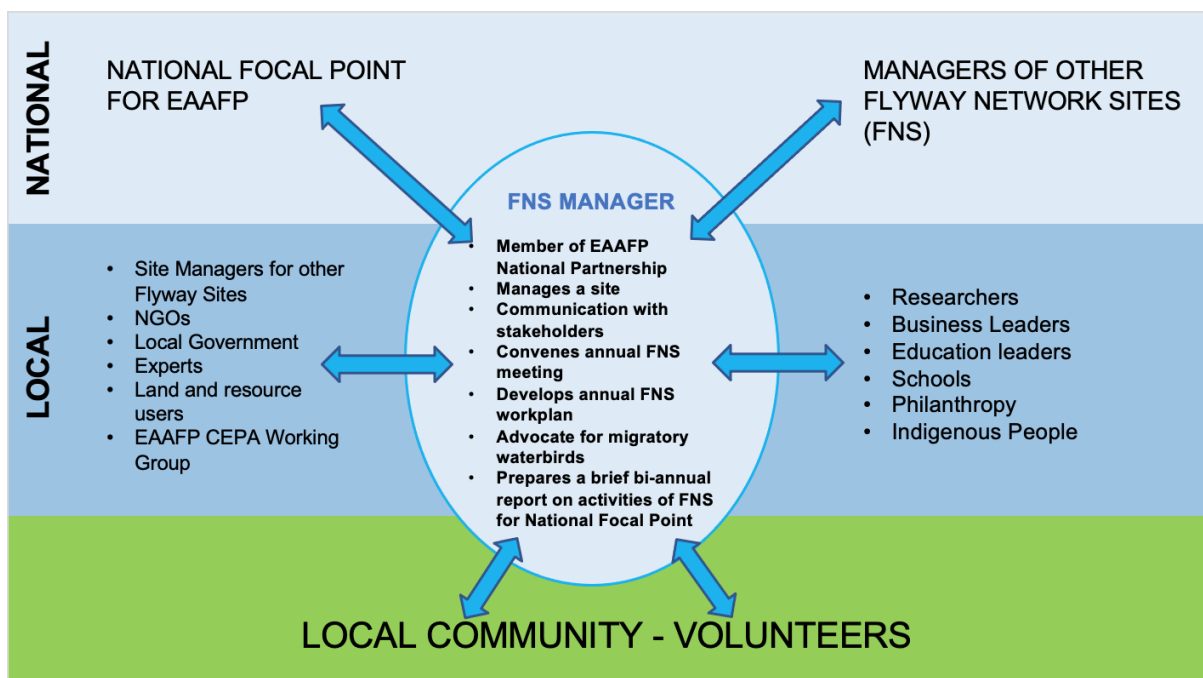
### 4.1 ROLE OF THE SITE MANAGER

The Site Manager has a key role for a Site Partnership. They are the link between work at the Site and the National Focal Point.

They facilitate the local network and may have, or contribute to, the following responsibilities:

1. Updating the EAAFP Site Information Sheet for the Flyway Network Site.
2. Managing the Site to maintain its waterbird and ecosystem functions.
3. Promoting local recognition of the international importance of the Site for migratory waterbirds.
4. Strengthening community support for the management of the Site.
5. Exchanging information and expertise on Site management with other Flyway Network Site Managers.
6. Participating in national or international activities for the conservation of migratory waterbirds.
7. Promoting the nomination of other internationally important Sites to enhance the Flyway Site Network.
8. Promoting the CEPA program.
9. Ensuring that any tourism (including ecotourism) at the site is undertaken in ways that avoid disturbance to feeding, roosting and nesting and related activities of migratory waterbirds using the site.

#### 4.1.1 DIAGRAM OF SITE MANAGER ROLES AND RELATIONSHIPS



Additional Role Guideline for Site Managers and Visitor Centre Managers taken from EAAFP Website is at Appendix 2.

As a way to strengthen relationships between Site Managers, Japan set up a structure to help them keep in touch with each other and share experiences in managing their flyway Sites. There are three Site Manager networks covering Anatidae (20 Sites), Shorebirds (12 Sites), and Cranes (7 Sites). Some Sites belong to more than one network depending on the species that visit. The networks also include interested NGOs. Each network publishes and disseminates newsletters, shares information through their mailing list, holds meetings that share information and exchange opinions and experiences on managing their migratory species.

## 4.2 ROLE OF THE SECRETARIAT IN SITE PARTNERSHIPS

EAAFP Secretariat supports Site Partnerships with advice when requested, for example on technical issues affecting the Site like disturbance caused by drones, provides CEPA material with translation into local language, contacts with other Flyway Network Site, assistance with running workshops.

The Secretariat collects experiences of people working at Sites across the Flyway through the Storytelling Template and on the Friday Facebook post. These are a resource for ideas and inspiration for Site Partnership activities and may be requested from the Secretariat.

## 4.3 ROLE OF NGOS AND INGOs AND CIVIL SOCIETY TO SUPPORT FNS

NGOs and INGOs can make a significant contribution to the work of the Site Partnerships. Depending on the Site and the Site Partnership's priorities, NGOs and INGOs could well be formal members of the Partnership. Some of the work done for Site management may include: helping with on ground management especially when there is a lack of resources, support with Site monitoring, public awareness and education, and advocacy when the Sites have concerns with development or other risks to the Site. NGOs often assist with capacity building as shown by the following quote from the Wildlife Science and Conservation Center of Mongolia.

*“The aim of the Khurkh Bird Ringing Station (KBRS) is to carry out a long-term bird migration **monitoring study** in eastern part of the Khentii Mountain range in Mongolia. In addition, the ringing station provides an opportunity to train the younger generation of biologists in the country.*

*All operations at KBRS are volunteer based. One staff of [Wildlife Conservation Society](#) (EAAFP INGO Partner) undertakes the role of coordinator. Most of the volunteers are from several universities in Mongolia, but volunteers from abroad are common and increasing.*

***Capacity building** has always been a major part of any **research and conservation projects** in Mongolia. As the country develops its economy there is more and growing need for better and skilled professionals in the field of natural science, particularly in wetland, hydrology and natural resource management. Our capacity building program has partnered with several top universities in Mongolia, universities in USA, UK, Germany, China, Russia, and Sweden, and organizations such as the International Crane Foundation, US Forest Service, UN NEASPEC, WWF Mongolia, and Wetlands International.”*

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1: BENEFITS OF AND PROCESS TO BECOME A FLYWAY NETWORK SITE

#### NOMINATING A NEW SITE TO THE FLYWAY SITE NETWORK

##### **Benefits of being part of the Site Network**

The Flyway Site Network has been operating since 1996 and provides the primary foundation for implementation of international cooperative efforts to conserve migratory waterbirds in the East Asian — Australasian Flyway.

Being part of the Flyway Site Network will give national and international recognition to Sites of specially declared areas of their importance for migratory waterbirds.

The Flyway Site Network can provide a mechanism for developing broader and more effective information and knowledge bases to assist Site Managers. This mechanism will give Site Managers opportunities for information, knowledge and practical experience that might not otherwise be available. Being part of the Flyway Site Network can also open up greater opportunities for Site Managers to seek funding to support conservation measures for their Sites.

Participation in the Flyway Site Network provides an opportunity for encouraging greater local participation in conservation activities at the Site. Local communities can contribute substantial effort and support for conservation and protection of the Site. Community engagement in Site conservation and sustainable management is essential if Sites are to be managed in harmony with the values of both the environment and broader community needs.

##### **Criteria for inclusion in the Flyway Site Network**

To be considered for inclusion in the Flyway Site Network, the Partnership has adopted the following criteria:

- a. Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971) criteria for internationally important Sites modified for migratory waterbirds. That is:
  - i. Criterion 2: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it supports vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered species or threatened ecological communities.
  - ii. Criterion 5: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it regularly supports 20,000 or more waterbirds.
  - iii. 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.
- b. The staging criteria as developed under the Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Strategy (the pre-cursor framework to the EAAFP). That is:
  - i. A staging Site should be considered internationally important if it regularly supports 0.25% of individuals in a population of one species or subspecies of waterbirds on migration.
  - ii. A staging Site should be considered internationally important if it regularly supports 5,000 or more waterbirds at one time during migration.

- c. Under exceptional circumstances a Site can be nominated if it supports migratory waterbirds at a level or stage of their life cycle important to the maintenance of flyway populations. Justification of such nominations will be considered by the Partnership on a case-by-case basis.

#### **Flowchart for nominating a new Site**

1. *Local Government/Management Authority, NGO, non-governmental Partner, Governmental Partner*  
Identification of potential Sites for the Network, by reviewing available data and determining which Sites meet the Criteria.
2. *Local Government/Management Authority, NGO, non-governmental Partner, Governmental Partner*  
For the selected Site, preparation of an EAAFP Site Information Sheet (SIS) including a boundary map.
3. *Local Government/Management Authority*  
Consultation on Site nomination at the local scale, with stakeholders including Site managers, management authorities and relevant organizations.
4. *National Government Partner*  
Consultation on Site nomination at the sub-national and national level with stakeholders including scholars and relevant National Government Partner to the EAAFP Secretariat with a letter requesting that the Site be included in the Network.
5. *EAAFP Secretariat*  
Secretariat conducts an in-house review, then refers the nomination to the Working Group chairs and/or at least three relevant experts (for 14 days) to seek comments on the provided justification of the criteria met and other scientific aspects of the nomination.
6. *EAAFP Secretariat & nominating Government Partner*  
Communication to finalize the SIS with further clarification or additional information as identified by the outcomes of the independent review.
7. *EAAFP Chair*  
The Secretariat advises the Chair of the Partnership on the nomination, showing the results of the review process, and requests the Chair to endorse the nomination by writing formally to the nominating National Government Partner about the official inclusion of the Site in the Network.
8. *EAAFP Secretariat*  
The Certificate of Participation for the new Network Site is prepared and delivered to the nominating National Government Partner at around the same time as the notification. Notification to all Partners about the inclusion of the Site in the Network.
9. *Government Partner & Local Government/ Management Authority*  
Announcement of the inclusion of the Site in the Network. Delivery of the Certificate to the local government and/or management authority, with a small presentation ceremony where possible.

## APPENDIX 2: ROLE GUIDELINES FOR SITE MANAGERS AND VISITOR CENTRE MANAGERS TAKEN FROM THE EAAFP WEBSITE

Note: Site Managers have an external as well as site-based focus. Visitor Center Managers have a customer focus at the site. Both are included in this guideline. The following is from the EAAFP website.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide training for local schoolteachers on migratory waterbirds. For teachers that do not have any Flyway Network Site around, training materials are provided. Seeking funding from the Education Dept/Ministry.
- Site Managers /Visitor Center Managers help to identify the extended audience of the EAAFP e-Newsletter and supply the necessary contacts to the Secretariat.
- Conduct CEPA activities for local citizens.
- Find innovative ways to engage citizens in becoming stewards of the EAAF and EAAFP.
- Train local citizens to become champions of the Flyway Network Site.
- Engage with museums to develop exhibitions on the EAAF and the FSN and provide essential information.
- Engage local artists to develop art, performance and film on EAAF themes.
- Promote engagement with Native/ Aboriginal/ Indigenous people and provide opportunities for their active involvement in site management.
- Work with Native/ Aboriginal/ Indigenous people to ensure their stories and, where possible, their languages are used in Flyway Network Site materials.

### WORKING WITH OTHERS

- With the help of NGOs engage with local communities to ensure their participation in decision-making & monitoring. Local knowledge about history, values, and traditional management techniques are taken into account in management planning.
- With INGOs and Gov Focal Points, encourage the Education Department/Ministry to include the concept of migratory waterbirds and conservation of their habitats in the school curriculum.
- Collaborate with local schools to develop relevant Flyway Network Site materials to contribute to a Flyway Network Site education tool kit.
- Collaborate with Local Government and Education Departments to plan and encourage schools to take a trip to their local Flyway Network Site.
- Send materials (Brochure, e-Newsletter, etc.) to local academic institutions and encourage lecturers and students to conduct monitoring and research on migratory waterbirds and habitats in the EAAF and share this information with the Secretariat, Government contacts and the National Partnership.
- Collaborate with the Secretariat to develop a scheme for voluntary translation.

### SUPPORT FROM THE SECRETARIAT

- Secretariat and Partners provide training and materials for Site Managers /Visitor Center Managers.
- Secretariat develops and maintains a mailing list for Site Managers /Visitor Center Managers to keep them informed of activities across the network and key relevant EAAFP materials.
- Secretariat, collaborates with Site Managers /Visitor Center Managers and the Wetland Link International (WLI) network, to encourage the exchange of wetland centre staff, develop common Flyway messages and materials, etc.

- Secretariat, in collaboration with Site Managers /Visitor Center Managers and the WLI network, encourages Flyway Network Site and Wetland Centres to promote site twinning.