

# Indo-Burma Ramsar Regional Initiative Annual Report 2019

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## Acronyms

<b>ACB</b>	<b>ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity</b>
<b>BANCA</b>	<b>Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Association</b>
<b>BMU-IKI</b>	<b>German Environment Ministry (BMU) International Climate Initiative (IKI)</b>
<b>CEPA</b>	<b>Communications, Education, Participation and Awareness</b>
<b>DoFWC</b>	<b>Department of Freshwater Conservation</b>
<b>EAAFP</b>	<b>East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership</b>
<b>FAO</b>	<b>Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations</b>
<b>FFI</b>	<b>Fauna &amp; Flora International</b>
<b>IBRRI</b>	<b>Indo-Burma Ramsar Regional Initiative</b>
<b>IOP</b>	<b>International Organization Partner</b>
<b>IUCN</b>	<b>International Union for Conservation of Nature</b>
<b>IWEC</b>	<b>Indawgyi Wetland Environmental Education Centre</b>
<b>KfW</b>	<b>German Development Bank</b>
<b>MoE</b>	<b>Ministry of Environment</b>
<b>MONRE</b>	<b>Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment</b>
<b>MoU</b>	<b>Memorandum of Understanding</b>
<b>MRC</b>	<b>Mekong River Commission</b>
<b>MWUN</b>	<b>Mekong Wetlands University Network</b>
<b>NWCD</b>	<b>Nature and Wildlife Conservation Division</b>
<b>R-METT</b>	<b>Ramsar Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool</b>
<b>RRI</b>	<b>Ramsar Regional Initiative</b>
<b>RRC-EA</b>	<b>Ramsar Regional Center - East Asia</b>
<b>WCS</b>	<b>Wildlife Conservation Society</b>
<b>WWT</b>	<b>Wildfowl &amp; Wetlands Trust</b>

## Background

The Indo-Burma Ramsar Regional Initiative (IBRRI) was approved by the 52<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Ramsar Convention Standing Committee (SC 52) in June 2016. Ramsar Regional Initiatives (RRIs) can be established at the initiative of Contracting Parties to support the effective implementation of the Convention and its Strategic Plan, in particular, through cooperation and capacity-building on wetland-related issues in specific regions or sub-regions.

The Ramsar Convention, also called the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, is an intergovernmental treaty that provides a framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.

The concept for the IBRRI was jointly developed by the Ramsar National Focal Points of the five countries (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam), and IUCN's Asia Regional Office, based on specific needs identified in these countries. The IBRRI aims to support the effective implementation of the Ramsar Convention among the five Contracting Parties by supporting the coordinated implementation of the objectives of the Strategic Plan of the Ramsar Convention.

The IBRRI 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting was held in Siem Reap, Cambodia, from the 26-28<sup>th</sup> February 2020, with the main aim to review the 2019 accomplishments in the IBRRI Region, develop a comprehensive 2020 work plan based on the IBRRI Strategic Plan, review and strengthen the Ramsar site network in the Indo-Burma Region and review the support needed to develop management plans and species conservation plans for all IBRRI Ramsar Sites (**Annex 1**). The meeting was attended by the Steering Committee (SC) members of the five member countries, as well as IBRRI partners working in the region (**Annex 2**).

This report summarises the IBRRI accomplishments in 2019 and discussions and key outcomes of the meeting.

## 3<sup>rd</sup> IBRRI Annual Meeting 2020

### Opening Remarks

Dr. Scott Perkin, Head of the Natural Resources Group, IUCN Asia Regional Office, provided remarks on behalf of the IBRRI Secretariat, thanking Dr. Srey Sunleang and the Ministry of Environment of Cambodia for hosting the meeting, and the IBRRI partners for attending. Dr. Perkin mentioned that IUCN is pleased to act as Secretariat for the IBRRI and to provide ongoing support for the initiative. Last year was an important year for the IBRRI, officially launching the Strategic Plan 2019-2024 on World Wetlands Day after several rounds of consultations in 2018.

Dr. Perkin concluded by congratulating Cambodia on a number of recent achievements on Ramsar implementation, including their plans for the designation of new Ramsar sites, significant progress on management plans and the publication of the “Guidance for the Wise Use of Freshwater Wetlands in Cambodia”.

H.E. Srun Darith, Secretary of State, Ministry of Environment, Cambodia then welcomed all participants to the meeting. He underscored the importance of wetlands in the IBRRI region, highlighting the impacts of recent floods and droughts to demonstrate the role that wetlands play in disaster risk reduction, local livelihoods and biodiversity. His Excellency discussed the significance of the Tonle Sap Great Lake in Cambodia, and the rich biodiversity of the country’s coastal wetlands, including mangrove forests, coral reefs and seagrass beds.

H.E. Srun Dairth urged all participants to look at the broader picture to consider how to more sustainably manage wetlands throughout the region, and work together to share lessons learned during the meeting.

### Session 1: Overview of agenda and update on the 2019 work plan (IBRRI Secretariat)

The IBRRI Secretariat provided an overview of regional wetland conservation activities, policy improvements and capacity building initiatives in 2019 (**Annex 3**). The inputs were provided to the Secretariat by IBRRI government representatives and partner organizations working in the region prior to the meeting. The main activities were grouped according to the five main operational objectives of the IBRRI Strategic Plan.

#### **Operational Objective 1:**

#### **Facilitate and promote wetlands knowledge and experience sharing**

##### *Trainings and dialogues*

There were various regional and national trainings in the IBRRI region in 2019. The IBRRI Secretariat co-organized a 10-day Regional Training of Trainers on wetlands management, with Mekong Wetlands University Network (MWUN), which was followed by national trainings in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam.

In Cambodia, the Ministry of Environment hosted a national training on “Guidance for the Wise Use of Freshwater Wetlands.” Officials from Lao PDR participated in training workshops on Integrated Spatial Planning at Xe Champhone Ramsar site. In addition, Myanmar hosted a training for wetlands managers and a training on habitat restoration, including wetlands, to increase local and national capacity. Law enforcement teams in Anlung Pring and Boeung Prek Lapouv Protected Landscapes also participated in a series of on-the-job trainings on Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART).

FAO organised national consultations on sustainable wetlands agriculture in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam. There is a regional workshop planned for 2020, including all IBRRI countries and China.

FFI Myanmar held training courses at the newly opened Indawgyi Wetland Environmental Education Centre (IWEC), and also conducted a study tour exchange between Indawgyi Ramsar site/Biosphere Reserve and Biosphere Reserves in Germany.

In 2019, the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) organised two network meetings under the project “Improving Biodiversity Conservation of Wetlands and Migratory Waterbirds in the ASEAN Region,” discussing challenges in conducting waterbird census and wetland assessment surveys; and the development of Phase II of the project.

The EAAFP Secretariat and ACB co-organised the Interactive Session for EAAF Site Managers during the 10th Meeting of Partners of the EAAFP in December 2018, providing an opportunity for them to share their experiences, best conservation practices, and challenges in managing flyway sites.

### *Research*

The IBRRI Secretariat published Climate Change Vulnerability Assessments for 10 Mekong WET sites, highlighting threats to wetland ecosystems, species and livelihoods, which informed the adaptation planning workshops, and will be used in the development of site management plans.

In June 2019, Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT) established an expert group to research the optimal ecohydrological state of Anlung Pring Protected Landscape. The group is working to identify the best hydrological regime for the site that supports maintaining a favourable habitat for key species such as Sarus cranes and ecological health indicators. In October 2019, WWT conducted a catchment analysis of pollution inflows around Anlung Pring wetland to identify priority target sites for sustainable rice farming.

### *Wetlands inventories*

In 2019, Myanmar published the “National Wetland Inventory Volume 1: Technical Data.” There are two additional volumes currently under review, “Volume 2: National Wetland Inventory” and “Volume 3: Compendium of Important Wetlands.” In addition, the Mekong River Commission completed a wetlands inventory for the Lower Mekong Basin.

## **Operational Objective 2:**

**Support integrated management of Ramsar Sites and other wetlands and ensure conservation of key wetlands species in the region**

### *R-METT:*

R-METT assessments were conducted at Prek Toal Ramsar Site, Cambodia and also discussed during the National Training Workshop on R-METT. Lao PDR completed the R-METT at Xe Champhone Ramsar Site, and the Myanmar wetland manager training covered R-METT, wetlands management, Ramsar site designation, and updating RIS. In addition, Thailand has developed a wetland management effectiveness assessment, which was adapted from the R-METT method.

### *Management plans:*

The BMU-IKI funded Mekong WET project organized Climate Change Adaptation Planning Workshops at 10 sites in the IBRRI Region. In Myanmar, management plans for four Ramsar sites were adopted in 2018-2019, and there is an additional management plan currently in preparation. Lao PDR approved the Beung Kiat Ngong Management Plan (2019-2024) and is currently developing a management plan for Xe Champhone Ramsar Site. Thailand developed “Guidelines for Participatory Wetland Management,” which includes the development of a working team, baseline data collection, the preparation of a wetland management plan, and evaluation and monitoring.

WWT continues to work with the Department of Freshwater Wetland Conservation of the Ministry of Environment, Cambodia to advance Boeung Prek Lapouv Protected Landscape’s zoning by engaging the provincial authorities. WWT also published a report on the Rapid Assessment of Wetland Ecosystem Services of Anlung Pring Protected Landscape in July 2019, and constructed a new patrolling station in Boeung Prek Lapouv to improve participation of the communities in law enforcement in December 2019.

### *Site Designation*

Cambodia designated Anlung Pring Protected Landscape as East-Asian-Australasian Flyway Network Site. The country is currently in the process of nominating Boeung Snae wetland to be a Protected Area. There are currently two Protected Landscapes, Ang Trapeang Thmor and Boeung Prek Lapov, that are on the list to be nominated as EAAFP sites. WWT assessed the wetlands of the Cambodian Lower Mekong Delta (CLMD), identifying eleven sites, and conducting field surveys to assess their ecological values and identify their eligibility for future conservation.

In Lao PDR the National Steering Committee met to survey Beung Sa Ngan, a potential new Ramsar site in Vientiane province.

In Myanmar, Inlay Lake was designated as a Ramsar Site in 2019, and was recognized as an EAAFP Flyway Network Site in 2020. The Gulf of Mottama Ramsar extension has recently been approved, drastically increasing its size from 42,500 hectares to 161,030 hectares. Myanmar plans to nominate three additional wetlands as Ramsar sites: Nanthar Island as a spoon-billed sandpiper habitat, Lampi Marine National Park, an ASEAN Heritage Park, and Thameehla Wildlife Sanctuary, a sea turtle nesting site. FFI Myanmar also identified six potential Ramsar sites in the Ayeyarwaddy River section of the central dry zone with the Forest and the Fisheries Departments.

In Thailand, the Ramsar Information Sheet for the Lower Songkhram River Basin is currently under review by the Ramsar Convention Secretariat. The Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and



Planning (ONEP) is preparing the Ramsar Information Sheet for Bangpu Nature Education Center, as well as site information sheets for two EAAFP sites.

Viet Nam plans to propose Can Gio Biosphere Reserve as a potential new Ramsar Site. ACB is also working to implement baseline and biodiversity monitoring surveys of existing and potential flyway sites and priority coastal areas. The surveys include the identification of wetlands of international importance for migratory waterbirds by conducting a series of waterbird counts in selected coastal areas in Indonesia, Malaysia, Viet Nam, and the Philippines.

### *Species Conservation and Invasive Species*

In 2019, Thailand concluded two GEF projects focusing on wetlands and wetland species. “Conserving Habitats for Globally Important Flora and Fauna in Production Landscapes Project and Maximizing Carbon Sink Capacity” aimed to mainstream the conservation of globally important and endangered biodiversity into the management of production landscapes through improved management of critical habitats. The project focused on three species: the eastern Sarus crane (*Grus antigone sharpii*), the spoon-billed sandpiper (*Eurynorhynchus pygmeus*) and the water onion (*Crinum thaianum*) in three locations. The “Conserving Biodiversity through Sustainable Conservation, Restoration and Management of Peat Swamp Ecosystems Project” sought to conserve and restore peatlands to increase their capacities to act as carbon sinks, as habitats for globally important species, and as sources of ecosystem services for improved livelihoods.

In Myanmar, BirdLife International worked with Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Association (BANCA) and EAAFP to survey bird hunting activities on the Irrawaddy floodplains, important wintering grounds for the Baer’s Pochard, and support work to engage local communities near Nanthar Island on the establishment of a new protected area. BirdLife also collaborated with Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) to survey bird hunting in the Mekong floodplains of Lao PDR. In Viet Nam, BirdLife International worked with Viet Nature Conservation Centre and WildTour to survey four priority IBAs from October to December, resulting in the discovery of two key sites of the critically endangered Spoon-billed Sandpiper in the Mekong Delta. The EAAFP Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force also supported bird surveys in the Gulf of Mottama, Myanmar and Khok Kham and Pak Thale, Thailand.

In Cambodia, WWT conducted a pre-flood invasive and non-native species removal activity in August 2019 in Boeung Prek Lapouv Protected Landscape, and 40 hectares of habitat were cleared of *Mimosa pigra*. WWT also developed protocol for the removal of invasive and non-native species in Boeung Prek Lapouv Protected Landscape.

### **Operational Objective 3:**

**Assist with the development and/or strengthening and implementation of policy frameworks, taking into account wetlands management and conservation across sectors and at all levels.**

### *National Wetland Committees and Working Groups*

Throughout 2019, IBRRI made significant progress on Operational Objective 3, through the development and continued meeting of working groups. Thailand’s Wetlands Technical Working Group and ONEP met regularly throughout the year on various topics including “Enhancing Participatory Wetlands

Management.” The Myanmar National Wetland Committee (NWC), formed in 2016, met twice in 2019 to enhance coordination in wetlands conservation and management throughout the country. The Viet Nam government established a national working group on wetlands, which will work towards a coordinated approach to wetlands conservation throughout the country.

### *Policies and strategies*

Various policies and strategies were developed over the last year to support the implementation of the IBRRI Strategic Plan.

In Cambodia, the Ministry of Environment developed “Guidance for the Wise Use of Freshwater Wetlands in Cambodia, 2019” with sections on wetland ecosystems in Cambodia, wetland management planning, and key wetland features. In 2019, Lao PDR developed a Ramsar Action Plan (2021-2025), which is based on the IBRRI Strategic Plan, and will support the implementation of the Ramsar Convention. Myanmar’s National Wetland Policy was endorsed by the government in January 2019, and is now guiding national wetland conservation activities. In Thailand, the Cabinet Resolution of Internationally and Nationally Important Wetlands, which is used as a tool for nominating new Ramsar sites in the country, is undergoing a second revision. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Viet Nam developed the Decree on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Wetlands, which was approved by the government in 2019.

The IBRRI Secretariat also hosted a Regional Wetlands Policy Dialogue with RRC-EA in May. The dialogue provided an opportunity to review wetlands policies in each country and highlighted the need to mainstream wetland ecosystem services into climate change related policies and commitments.

### **Operational Objective 4:**

#### **Support wetland communication, capacity building, education, participation, and awareness (CEPA)**

The IBRRI Secretariat organised a regional citizen journalism training for media partners from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam. The media partners then returned to their countries and hosted national training workshops with wetland communities, encouraging residents to use their mobile phones to document events in the wetlands, which will then be broadcast on national news.

IBRRI members and partners hosted a wide-range of CEPA events and activities. Each country hosted events for World Wetlands Day and/or World Migratory Bird Day, acting as an annual celebration of the importance of wetland ecosystem services and the flora and fauna that depend on them.

In Myanmar there was a celebration of the new EAAFP sites Nanthar Island Mayyu Estuaries and Meinmahla Kyun Wildlife Sanctuary, supported by the EAAFP Small Grant Fund. In addition, FFI and NWCD opened the Indawgyi Wetland Environmental Education Centre (IWEC), receiving over 12,000 visitors in 2019.

WWT and BirdLife International organised an event to celebrate the designation of Anlung Pring Protected Landscape as Cambodia’s first EAAFP Site. Awareness raising events were also held in Boeung Prek Lapouv Protected Landscape for schoolchildren and university students.

In Cambodia, BirdLife co-organised the Bird Festival and Nature Expo, ‘Bird and Nature Conservation for Us’, with NatureLife Cambodia and the Ministry of Environment at the Royal University of Phnom Penh. BirdLife worked with local schools near Boeung Prek Lapouv to integrate lessons about Sarus cranes into the curriculum, increasing student’s interest in these unique birds. BirdLife also worked with Greenhumour to develop a series of cartoons on threatened migratory wetland birds in Asia in support of World Migratory Bird Day.

### **Operational Objective 5:**

#### **Ensure sound and sustainable governance and management of the Regional Initiative and its contribution to the effectiveness of the Ramsar Convention**

There were various key accomplishments relating to Operational Objective 5, perhaps the most significant being the launch of the IBRRI Strategic Plan 2019-2024 on World Wetlands Day 2019.

In addition, the IBRRI Secretariat has begun preliminary discussions with EAAFP and RRC-EA regarding the development of a MoU with each party. The MoU will support joint work on wetlands in the region, and act as a formal agreement to enable the regional initiatives to collaborate on future plans.

The IBRRI Secretariat is also continuing discussions with ACB on developing an Indo-Burma Regional Wetlands Outlook, similar to the *ASEAN Biodiversity Outlook*, developed by ACB. The Outlook would provide an overview on the wetlands in the IBRRI region, including biodiversity, Ramsar Sites, EAAFP sites, site management, and threats to wetlands, among other topics.

In early 2020, Myanmar hosted the first-ever national meeting in which representatives from all of the Ramsar International Organization Partners (IOP) attended. Attendees discussed their work on wetlands conservation and the implementation of the Ramsar Convention within the country, and discussed potential synergies, overlaps in work plans, and gaps in implementing the National Wetland Policy (2019). Through the bilateral partnership with Norway, Myanmar has set aside funding to support government representative’s travel costs to join the upcoming IBRRI meetings and also secured funding to host the IBRRI Annual Meeting in 2022.

In Cambodia, WWT is supporting the Department of Freshwater Wetlands Conservation of the Ministry of Environment in establishing a National Ramsar Committee. A taskforce was established within WWT to develop a concept note and assist the process in collaboration with the other Ramsar IOPs in Cambodia (IUCN, WWF, BirdLife, as well as IBRRI). Supported by funding from the Darwin Initiative, WWT also established a partnership with Birdlife International, NatureLife Cambodia, and the Cambodian Rural Development Team for Conservation of Cambodian Lower Mekong Delta Wetlands.

Lao PDR developed a Ramsar Action Plan (2021-2025), which is based on the IBRRI Strategic Plan, demonstrating the government’s commitment to conserving wetlands in the country and to embed the IBRRI guidance within its national plans.

## Session 2: Partner presentations on 2019 achievements

### **Dr. Pyi Soe Aung, Staff Officer, Nature and Wildlife Conservation Division, Myanmar**

Dr. Pyi Soe Aung presented the bilateral partnership between the governments of Myanmar and Norway (**Annex 4**). He explained the accomplishments of Phase I of the project, including the endorsement of the National Wetland Policy in 2019, the National Wetland Inventory, which follows Ramsar guidelines of 13 different types of wetlands, including caves/karst ecosystems, and the establishment of a National Wetland Committee with 14 senior officials from nine wetland-related departments. Dr. Pyi Soe Aung explained that the advantage of the bilateral partnership is that there are no donor preferences, therefore spending is up to the government's discretion. Phase II of the project is already underway, with 3 million USD secured for 2019-2023, with activities including implementing wetlands policies, designation of new Ramsar Sites, based on species but also the feasibility of government to designate these sites, implementation of management plans, and staff capacity building.

The National Wetland Committee was approved by the President's Office, and wetlands policies are now based on the decisions of the NWC. Dr. Pyi Soe Aung volunteered to share the NWC members list and an English version of the Wetlands Inventory with any IBRRI partners that are interested.

### **Dr. Sansanee Choowaew, Mekong Wetlands University Network**

Dr. Sansanee Choowaew presented on the capacity-building activities hosted by the Mekong Wetlands University Network (MWUN) and supported by the Mekong WET project (**Annex 5**). A regional training of trainers with 28 trainees in March 2019, was followed by national trainings in the second half of 2019. Wetlands management tools including RIS, RAWES, R-METT, and VA Tools were translated into four national languages, and 115 wetlands site managers, practitioners, and personnel of wetlands organizations and government were trained. In 2020, MWUN will organise two transboundary study visits for 2020 with 56 total participants.

Dr. Sansanee emphasised that MWUN is an established regional network that is practitioner to practitioner and long lasting, therefore it is a useful network for disseminating wetlands knowledge in the region. MWUN would like to offer a degree program in wetlands, however there has not been enough interest for a full degree. Mahidol University in Thailand has a 3 credit course on wetlands management, but it is an elective course, and not compulsory. Chulalongkorn University and Kasertsart University, also in Thailand are developing courses and have numerous students completing thesis dissertations on wetlands, demonstrating that it is still a popular and important field for younger generations.

### **Mr. Saber Masoomi, Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust**

Mr. Saber Masoomi presented on WWT's work in Anglung Pring and Boeung Prek Lapouv wetlands in Cambodia (**Annex 6**). He discussed the Cambodia Lower Mekong Delta Conservation Partnership between WWT, which supports fundraising, BirdLife International, fostering government relationships and work on

the ground, NatureLife Cambodia organising CEPA activities and the Cambodian Rural Development Team, working on schemes for dry farming. WWT is investigating how hydrology is influencing the Anglung Pring wetland and Sarus Crane populations. The team conducted a study to understand pollution from farming in the wetland and are searching for a suitable market for sustainable rice in Viet Nam, because the site is located near the border. Mr. Masoomi mentioned that the Sarus Crane is only in the wetland for 4-5 months, making it difficult to develop ecotourism and consistent employment opportunities.

WWT has been actively involved in addressing invasive species in the wetlands. There have been suggestions to develop a machine for the removal of invasive species, which may be suitable for a small grant from the Mekong WET project. FFI suggested that invasive water hyacinth can be made into organic liquid fertilizer, which the fishermen can sell to the farmers. Dr. Scott Perkin, IUCN, recognized that invasive species are affecting wetlands throughout the IBRRI region, and suggested that this is a gap in the IBRRI Strategic Plan, and should be considered a priority moving forward, which many participants agreed with.

### **Dr. Li He, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations**

Dr. Li He presented on the programme development for an initiative on eco-friendly water management for sustainable wetland agriculture (**Annex 7**). The objective is to develop a strategy to minimize the impacts of agriculture on wetlands, to stem biodiversity loss. FAO has already conducted national consultations in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam, and plans to co-host a regional consultation that also includes China and Myanmar with IBRRI in 2020. FAO is also interested in pollution control and quality control, and plans to collaborate with the International Rice Research Institute and other organisations working on this topic.

After the presentation, the Mekong River Commission mentioned the recent publication of a 600 page report entitled “Final Report: Agricultural Land Use Monitoring (Pilot Study in the Selected Areas in each Member Country).” The report (available on MRC’s website) highlights agricultural encroachment in wetlands in the four MRC member countries, which may be useful for FAO’s programme development. FFI mentioned that in Myanmar’s riverine flooded areas there are problems with floods and drought in dry season, and suggested promoting the diversification of livelihoods, changing cropping patterns, and decreasing the reliance on irrigation to minimise impacts on wetlands.

## **Session 3: Country group review: Ramsar Site Designations and Management Plans**

Following the partner presentations, the meeting broke into country groups to discuss national Ramsar Site Designations and the state of management plans at the sites.

### **Lao PDR**

In Lao PDR, Beung Kiat Ngong has an approved management plan in place from 2019-2024. The government is still working with partners to develop the management plan for Xe Champhone (planned for 2020-2024). Funding sources include the Mekong River Commission, the FAO-funded Climate

Adaptation in Wetland Areas of Lao PDR project (CAWA), IUCN's Mekong Regional Wetlands and Peatlands Projects, and funding from WCS and WWF.

Lao PDR has a National Wetlands Inventory, which was last updated in 1996, and under revision by the Department of Water Resources. The country is currently developing a national designation strategy for future Ramsar sites, and is considering the Ramsar nomination of Beung Sa Ngan wetland, a 34 hectare swamp with a diversity of birds and fish.

The technical support needed includes budget support, capacity training, updating the RIS for each site, R-METT, and biodiversity surveys on turtles and birds. Challenges reported include land use change, invasive species and climate change impacts. The Lao PDR representatives listed the construction and improvement of water gates as a major success in the wetlands, however another participant mentioned that while the watergate will stop water leaving the wetland, there is still a bigger issue of water management that must be addressed.

### **Viet Nam**

In Viet Nam, Ramsar Sites are nominated by MONRE but are usually within National Parks, therefore they are managed by the Forest Department. Due to the overlap with National Parks, most Ramsar sites have developed management plans, however, they tend to be more focused on forests than wetlands; for example, forest managers in U Minh Thuong Ramsar site and National Park maintain high water levels to keep the forest wet and reduce the risk of fires, but this negatively affects the birds and hydrology of the peatland. As national parks, the majority of funding for most Ramsar sites comes from the government, with other funding from ecotourism, NGOs and INGOs. On average, approximately 80% of the management plan for a given site is completed, depending on budget restrictions.

The next site that Viet Nam plans to nominate for Ramsar designation is Can Gio Biosphere Reserve, a coastal wetland with dense mangrove forests. The Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment is also considering Phu My Species and Habitat Conservation Area for potential Ramsar nomination, a critical habitat for Sarus Cranes, with grasslands and *Melaleuca* forests. A final site to be considered for future Ramsar nomination is Dong Rui- Tien Yen, a mangrove site in northern Viet Nam. Support is needed to further investigate the fauna and flora at each site, and to develop the Ramsar Information Sheets.

Challenges in wetland management in Viet Nam include water management, climate change, and tourism impacts, and there is further need for capacity building, equipment for monitoring, and technical support on water management and wise use of wetlands. The Vietnamese government requested support on training and capacity building for R-METT, and training on the "wise use" principle to increase effective management. Myanmar voiced that the government is also finding similar challenges in practicing wise use of wetlands, and were considering a site-specific training on the topic to reach site managers.

### **Myanmar**

Myanmar has five sites that are Ramsar and EAAFP sites, and an additional site that is only an EAAFP Site (Nanthar Island and Mayuu Estuaries). Funding for the site management plans mostly comes from NWCD,

with support from international organizations such as NEA, FFI and KfW. Moeyungyi has a five year management plan, effective from 2019, with approximately 6% of the planned activities completed so far. The R-METT has only been conducted at Moeyungyi Wildlife Sanctuary, however the results are currently not considered in management decisions.

Myanmar has faced challenges in designating new Ramsar sites outside of the national protected area systems. The Gulf of Mottama Ramsar Site designation was the first time that the local government was responsible for a Ramsar Site, which was permitted after a law was updated, allowing for locally managed protected areas, and delegating management to local communities. The Fisheries Department now has a framework for Locally Managed Marine Areas, providing an opportunity for the future development of coastal Ramsar sites. Myanmar does not yet have financing instruments to provide government support to locally managed marine areas that are not designated protected areas, currently the Gulf of Mottama site is functional because it is donor-funded, but when this funding ends, there is a risk of no further funding source to implement activities.

The Myanmar government has an ambitious plan to nominate five new Ramsar sites, two of which will also be nominated as EAAFP sites, in the next four years. In 2020, the government will nominate Nanthar Island, a mudflat site that hosts spoon-billed sandpipers, as the next Ramsar site. In 2021, Lampi Marine National Park, a site with diverse coral reefs and sea turtles, will be nominated as a Ramsar site, along with the Ayeyarwaddy Central River Cluster, which will also be nominated as an EAAFP site. Thameehla Island Wildlife Sanctuary, a sea turtle nesting site, is planned for Ramsar nomination in 2022, along with Taninthari Mangrove Matrix, a coastal site including mudflats. Taninthari hosts a variety of birds including the Nordmann's greenshank, great knot, and the spoon-billed sandpiper, and will also be nominated as an EAAFP site. The final site, to be nominated in 2023 is Ye Win Cave, an 800 hectare cave ecosystem.

## **Cambodia**

Cambodia currently has five Ramsar sites and one EAAFP site. All of the sites have had management plans in the past, however, they are currently out of date, with the exception of Koh Kapik Ramsar Site Management Plan (2019-2023). Cambodia has no long-term sustainable financing for any of the Ramsar sites, which are generally supported by partner NGOs, making future planning difficult. Other challenges include risks of fire due to drought, illegal fishing and hunting, agriculture runoff and shrimp farming, and changes in site hydrology. The Cambodian government has recently been successful in developing community-based ecotourism, community fisheries, biodiversity monitoring, and increasing ranger capacity. The technical support needed ranges from forest fire prevention, sustainable financing, and transboundary cooperation at wetlands near the border with Viet Nam.

Cambodia has plans to designate seven new wetlands as either Ramsar sites or EAAFP sites. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment had identified the Northern Tonle Sap Flood Plain, Anlung Pring Protected Landscape, and Boueng Snae wetland as potential wetlands of international importance, as they are important areas for Sarus cranes, black headed ibis, painted storks, and black tailed godwits, among other species of birds. Four additional wetlands can potentially be nominated as EAAFP sites, including: Ang Trapeang Thmor Protected Landscape, Boeung Prek Laprov Protected Landscape, Prek Toal

Ramsar Site and Koh Kapik Ramsar Site. The government of Cambodia has requested technical and financial support from IBRRI partners to successfully conserve these wetlands.

### **Thailand**

Thailand has 14 Ramsar Sites, with all management plans funded by the annual government budget of 7 million Thai baht. Management plans for all sites are expected to be completed in 2020-2021, however the main challenge is that the participatory process requires many agencies, since wetlands fall under the National Water Resources Office, the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources and the Department of National Parks. The Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP) hires consultants for the participatory meetings seeking community input.

Thailand has an inventory of up to 100 wetland sites of national importance. ONEP has determined that 60 of these sites may meet the criteria for Ramsar designation, and plans to nominate the Lower Songklam River Basin, as the next Ramsar site in Thailand. The nomination will be followed by Bang Pu coastal wetland, as both a Ramsar and EAAFP site. The site located near Bangkok and could serve as a useful field trip and demonstration site, as it hosts black-tailed godwits and great knots. The government is also aiming to designate Bang Pakong River, an important wetland for Irrawaddy dolphins, and a Mekong WET project site, as a wetland of international importance.

### **Regional Overview**

- The IBRRI governments plan to nominate at least 18 new Ramsar sites and seven new EAAFP sites in the coming years, increasing the current number of sites by more than 50%.
- Challenges cited by governments include water management in wetlands, agricultural impacts, and lack of sustainable financing mechanisms
- Technical and financial support is needed to update RIS for sites throughout the region
- Two governments reported a lack of understanding of the 'wise use principle' within their networks, and suggested either national or regional trainings on this concept to support wetland conservation

### **Session 4: Country group review: Species**

During Session 4, the country groups were asked to identify the five most important wetland species in the country, using a spreadsheet with questions covering migratory species, species conservation plans, national Red Lists, and invasive species.

#### **Viet Nam**

In Viet Nam priority species include the Sarus crane in Tram Chim, black faced spoonbill in Xuan Thuy, Siamese crocodile in Bau Sau, green sea turtle in Con Dao and Delacour's langur in Van Long. There are monitoring plans and site specific management measures in place for all of the priority species, in addition to a national level conservation plan for the green sea turtle. There is a collaboration at the Tram Chim and Phu My Ramsar Sites to monitor Sarus cranes with Cambodia.



Viet Nam has at least four sites designated for species other than birds under Criterion 9, including sites designated for the Siamese crocodile, green sea turtle, and the Delacour's langur. The country also has also developed a government decree on the "Viet Nam Red Book" that mentions all of these species.

Invasive species in Viet Nam include *Mimosa pigra*, *Mimosa diploptricha*, water hyacinth, suckermouth catfish and golden apple snails. Measures to control the spread of invasive species have been included in the development of management plans. Viet Nam receives support from the International Crane Foundation to manage invasive species at Tram Chim Ramsar Site, however, management for the other wetlands is often done at the local management level.

## Myanmar

Priority species in Myanmar include the Sarus crane, spoon-billed sandpiper, Nordmann's greenshank, Irrawaddy dolphin, and Baer's pochard, which all have monitoring plans in place except for the Nordman's greenshank. The Myanmar government has also identified new priority species including the green sea turtle, black bellied tern, Indian hog deer and estuarine crocodile. Only the spoon-billed sandpiper and Irrawaddy dolphin have adequate site-level and national-level management measures to promote the conservation of the species.

Ramsar Sites have been designated under Criterion 9 for the hog deer and Irrawaddy dolphin. Myanmar has a national Red List of threatened species, however it has limited coverage of freshwater taxa and mangrove species. There has been a recent collaboration on bivalve biodiversity studies in the Sittaung River with a Russian university that led to the discovery of many species that are new to science, which should be investigated further. Additional support requested includes small grants for local community-based conservation, developing species conservation action plans, and reviewing Red-Listing of freshwater taxa.

Myanmar's wetlands are threatened by invasive species, including *Mimosa pigra*, water hyacinth, tilapia, and golden apple snails. To address these threats, the government and partners have implemented the mechanical removal of water hyacinth, and promoted local consumption of the golden apple snail. *Mimosa* has been included in the government's habitat restoration plan, and the government is encouraging the use of water hyacinth as an organic fertilizer, which can be sold to farmers. There is a need for research and new ideas and approaches to control the further spread of invasive species.

## Cambodia

Priority species in Cambodia include the masked finfoot, Irrawaddy dolphin, Indochinese silver langur, Mekong giant barb, and Sunda pangolin, all of which have site-level monitoring plans, and a national-level conservation plan. Other species of interest include fishing cat, hairy-noised otter, smooth-coated otter, spoon-billed sandpiper, Chinese egret, and the great knot.

Cambodia is also coordinating with Viet Nam on monitoring short-distance migrants, such as the Sarus crane, and working with Lao PDR to monitoring the Irrawaddy dolphin. Coordinated monitoring also takes place between national sites for the Mekong giant barb and masked finfoot.

Cambodia has a national Red List of Threatened Species, which includes freshwater species, however there are no Ramsar Sites designated under Criterion 9. The support needed from IBRRI includes conducting species surveys, development of eco-friendly products, support on management plans, sustainable financing, and updating Ramsar Information Sheets.

The most prominent invasive species in Cambodia's wetlands are *Mimosa pigra*, water hyacinth, and golden apple snails. The country is working on developing a site-level control mechanism for *Mimosa pigra* and water hyacinth with BirdLife, WWT, and NatureLife. Wetland managers and partners have blocked the spread of water hyacinth using bamboo fencing to physically prevent the spread, while promoting the use of water hyacinth in local handicrafts. At the national level, the MoE has developed wise-use guidelines with a 5-year plan for invasive species. The open billed stork provides biological control of the golden apple snail. Invasive fish species are also present, however not deemed as significant of a threat as invasive flora.

### **Lao PDR**

Wetland species of interest in Lao PDR include the Siamese crocodile, turtles (Asiatic soft-shell turtle, giant Asian pond turtle, elongated tortoise, Malayan snail-eating turtle), spot-billed duck, leopard cat, and the Wallago catfish. There are site-level monitoring programmes in place for the Siamese crocodile (implemented by WCS), the turtles, and the catfish. There are no national-level conservation plans for these species, however there is increasing awareness of freshwater turtle conservation in Lao PDR, and a need for further surveys. Neither Ramsar Site in Lao PDR was designated under Criterion 9, however further biodiversity studies of the turtle species present may trigger Criterion 9. Technical and financial support is needed to update the RIS for both Ramsar Sites.

Invasive species in Lao PDR are similar to its neighbours, including *Mimosa pigra*, water hyacinth, Golden Apple Snail and Tilapia. Control measures implemented thus far have had limited impacts, and the central government and local authorities have taken the lead in controlling the spread of invasive species.

### **Thailand**

Wetland species of interest in Thailand include green sea turtles, Baer's pochard, dugongs, *Solen* bivalves and *Boraras* fish. Species conservation work is often completed by organisations working at the site, but the work is not integrated at a national level. There has also been regional collaboration with Cambodia and Myanmar on the reintroduction of Sarus cranes. In southern Thailand, the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources has collaborated with NGOs to conserve green sea turtles, which rely on seagrass beds.

Four of Thailand's 14 Ramsar sites (Don Hoi Lot, Hat Chao Mai Marine National Park, Ko Kra Archipelago, Ko Ra-Ko Phra Thong Archipelago) were designated based on Criterion 9, for dugongs, dolphins and *Solen* spp. Thailand has a document called Thailand RED, which serves as a type of national Red List, however it currently only includes vertebrates, with future plans to include plants and corals. Support from the Species Survival Commissions was requested to provide technical support to study species.

The most threatening invasive species in Thailand's wetlands include the suckermouth catfish, golden apple snail *Salvinia molesta*, and *Mimosa pigra*. ONEP issued a Cabinet resolution on invasive species in 2018 that has been moderately effective in reducing the spread of invasive species. ONEP is also aiming

to do a full inventory of invasive species and promote the use of invasive species in cooking and other innovative ways. IBRRI could provide technical and academic support on invasive species, as there are no organizations working directly on this topic in Thailand besides ONEP and local governments at site level.

### **Dr. Scott Perkin, IUCN Red List**

Dr. Perkin presented an introduction to the IUCN Red List, and potential applications of the Red List in the IBRRI Region (**Annex 8**). He suggested conducting an assessment of endemic wetland species in the region, then developing an IBRRI Red List of Threatened Wetland Species, depending on whether funding was available. He also stressed the importance of informing local communities about the presence of endangered species, and targeted programmes to raise local awareness. FFI Myanmar supported the idea of a regional workshop on freshwater taxa, especially fish, and inviting specialists who work on the Mekong and Irrawaddy Rivers. FAO also raised the importance of engaging local farmers, such as those who produce ibis-friendly rice in Japan, keeping the water in the fields after rice harvesting to act as a refuge for waterbirds over the winter.

Myanmar is currently developing a National Red List. For the results from national Red List to be integrated into global Red List, IUCN needs reassurance that their guidelines and criteria have been followed, as the Red List is very stringent. IUCN would like to encourage the use of these criterion that allows for a standardized approach.

### **Regional Overview**

- Sarus cranes, green sea turtles, and Irrawaddy dolphins are three species that were most commonly reported by countries as wetland species of national interest
- There are at least 10 sites in the IBRRI region that were designated under Criterion 9, either for sea turtles, hog deer, or fish species
- *Mimosa pigra*, water hyacinth, and golden apple snails were reported as the most pervasive invasive species in the IBRRI region
- IUCN suggested that it may be useful to organize a workshop on invasive wetland species in the region. IUCN has a specialist group on invasive species that can provide support.
  - Governments should also be investigating prevention measures for future potential invasive species, for example, by contacting development agencies and monitoring fish and other species that they use for food and livelihood promotion.
  - Suggested conducting an assessment of endemic wetland species in the region, then developing an IBRRI Red List of Threatened Wetland Species, depending on whether funding was available.

### **Session 5: Country group review: CEPA**

The groups were asked to summarize the Communication, Capacity development, Education, Participation and Awareness (CEPA) undertaken in their country over the last year. There were varying degrees of CEPA engagement, however each country hosted a celebration of World Wetlands Day in 2019.

## **Cambodia**

The Department of Freshwater Conservation (DoFWC) leads CEPA activities in Cambodia. DoFWC does not have a national or site-level CEPA strategy, however the government and partners effectively hosted many events in 2019 including World Wetlands Day, World Migratory Bird Day, a celebration for Anlung Pring, the first EAAFP site in the country, the Bird Festival and Nature Expo, and Welcome to the Birds. Events were implemented DoFWC, Provincial Department of Environment and NGO partners, and funded by MoE, NGOs and the private sector.

All Ramsar sites have clear signage demonstrating the Ramsar Designation. DoFWC is planning on developing two wetlands educational centres at Anlung Pring and Prek Toal Ramsar sites. The Ministry of Environment is very active on social media, and engages with the general public on various wetland concepts and activities. The Ministry and partners have also developed educational programmes at Boeung Prek Lapouv and Anlung Pring Ramsar sites. Leaflets and brochures on the importance of wetland biodiversity, Ramsar sites in Cambodia, the impact of chemical fertilizers in wetlands, among others, help to disseminate information further.

## **Myanmar**

The CEPA strategy in Myanmar has previously been based on protected area management plans, however the country is currently preparing a national CEPA action plan that will be implemented by park managers, NWCD, and the Ramsar Committee. In 2019, NWCD promoted CEPA through celebrations for various international conservation days, public awareness raising via educational programmes and visitor centres, pamphlets and social media, and national broadcasting of wetland films and TV programmes. Indawgyi Lake has its own website with videos of the wetland. The activities are funded by the government, NGOs, and INGOs with donors including ACB-Kfw, NEA, BMZ, Darwin Initiative, Hermsen Foundation, Norad, AFD, and the Blue Action Fund.

There are three wetlands educational centres which are busy year-round with visitors, school programmes and the general public. As of this year, the country is also part of the WWT global network of wetlands centres, which raise awareness of the centres, and has an active marketing campaign, targeting private tourism operators, this increased the number of visitors by 3,000 people per month. In the next phase, NWCD are aiming to develop accommodation on site, by partnering with a private enterprise to develop an eco-friendly resort.

For the National Wetlands Committee meeting, the team developed a short video clip about Ramsar Sites and the value of wetlands in local language. It was presented to all NWC members to initiate discussion and act as a type of CEPA for policy makers. The NWC is also planning a study tour to Thailand to observe wetlands management approaches.

## **Thailand**

In Thailand, the national CEPA action plan is covered under the National Biodiversity Management Action Plan 2017-2020. Site level CEPA action plans are in the appendix of each site's specific management plan. The Department of Environmental Quality Promotion is responsible for implementing CEPA activities, with the majority of the budget from the Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning

(ONEP). CEPA activities include hosting World Wetlands Day celebrations, public exhibits and events, and technical seminars for academics, government staff, NGOs, and the private sector.

Wetlands are also integrated into the curriculum of several subjects in local schools, with optional field trips to nearby Ramsar sites, used as a “natural classroom” for classes and conservation clubs.

### **Lao PDR**

Lao PDR does not have a national CEPA action plan, however CEPA will be integrated into the National Implementation Plan, which is currently being developed. At site level, CEPA activities are integrated into site management plans. In 2019, Lao PDR developed a pilot curriculum for secondary schools and organised a scientific workshop for university students on wetlands. The government is working to raise community awareness through workshops, community patrolling, and media reports in newspapers and on television.

By improving signage at both Ramsar sites, the government raised awareness of the sites among local communities. Developing zoning for a core zone, fish and crocodile conservation zone, and buffer zone helped to better protect the wetland. World Wetland Day activities included a drawing competition and a performance on biodiversity in the wetland, engaging youth in storytelling and protecting the ecosystem. Funding for CEPA activities is provided by the FAO CAWA project, KfW, IUCN and RRC-EA, and implemented by partners and local and national authorities.

### **Viet Nam**

Viet Nam has no national CEPA strategy, however CEPA is integrated into legal documents such as the National Strategy on Biodiversity Decree on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Wetlands. Some sites have CEPA plans for the protected area, with separate activities for wetlands. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) implements wetland CEPA activities.

In 2019, Viet Nam organized a World Wetland Day celebration, sharing books and posters about wetlands and biodiversity. MONRE also hosted educational programmes on wetlands conservation for children and adults, as well as to build capacity of government officials. MONRE used television and other media channels to disseminate the newly developed Decree 66, which discusses the value and importance of wetlands and the responsibility of communities and local governments to manage them sustainably. Funding for CEPA activities in 2019 came from MONRE, local governments, UNDP, and GEF.

## Regional Overview

- IBRRI countries have varied approaches to CEPA. Some have integrated activities into the site management plans, while others, such as Myanmar are developing national CEPA Action Plans
- Every country held a celebration for World Wetlands Day in 2019
- Cambodia, Lao PDR and Thailand have worked to develop wetlands curriculums for school-aged children.
- There has been a shift from on-site CEPA activities, to online outreach initiatives. DoE Cambodia is very active on social media, and Indawgyi Lake in Myanmar has its own website to attract visitors.
- Wetlands education centres can serve as useful demonstration sites for CEPA activities, with Indawgyi Wetland Education Centre receiving over 16,000 visitors in 2019

## Session 6: Work plans

The IBRRI Secretariat presented the workplan for 2020.

The Secretariat will support the translation of Ramsar documents to national languages, based on the priorities of each country. Translators will be hired to do an initial translation of the documents, and then the IUCN national offices and governments will review the translations for technical terms and aspects, as suggested by Myanmar.

There will also be transboundary dialogues planned for 2020. One platform will discuss water management in wetlands in the Mekong Delta, between Cambodia and Viet Nam, with a first meeting covering technical aspects with researchers, and a second meeting discussing policy and implementation with governments. A second platform between Thailand and Myanmar, will potentially focus on coral reef connectivity and creating a network of marine protected areas in southern Myanmar and Thailand.

MWUN and IBRRI will also host two study tour exchange trips in 2020. The first exchange will involve wetland managers in Thailand and Lao PDR, visiting Ramsar sites in both countries. The second exchange will be between Cambodia and Viet Nam, visiting Ramsar sites in the Mekong Delta.

IBRRI will co-host a workshop on sustainable wetlands agriculture with FAO in 2020. As many government representatives mentioned during the meeting, water use and agricultural impacts are a growing threat to wetland biodiversity in the Indo-Burma region.

The Mekong WET project will support small grants for Ecosystem-based Adaptation in wetlands in the IBRRI region. NGOs and governments working on wetlands in the region are invited to apply for the grants, which will be advertised through the IBRRI network.

Finally, IBRRI will work with national governments to develop management plans for the Mekong WET project sites.

## Ideas for Future Activities

- Regional meeting of all Ramsar managers, potentially paired with the regional workshop on invasive species, and co-hosted by IBRRI and RRC-EA in 2021, under the new MoU.
- Developing a MoU with the Mekong River Commission to share data that benefits the member countries. It would also be useful for planning invasive species workshops and next steps.
- Build on the national IOP meeting in Myanmar, and replicate it in other IBRRI countries to discuss how to most effectively support the government's goals.

## Closing

During the closing statements, Mr. Raphael Glemet thanked the participants for attending the meeting and mentioned that the information shared during the meeting would be compiled to determine how IBRRI moves forward in 2020. The data gathered during the breakout groups will be used to develop a Regional Wetlands Outlook for IBRRI. There was considerable interest in a future workshop on wetland invasive species, support needed on revising RIS for many sites, and a desire to develop MoUs with EAAFP and RRC-EA to foster future collaboration in the region.

Dr. Srey Sunleang thanked IUCN for coordinating the meeting, adding that there has been a lot of discussion and information gathered, which will be useful for IBRRI in the future. As this was the third IBRRI meeting, it built on past meetings, and laid the groundwork for the future of the Regional Initiative. He thanked the governments, partners including ACB, EAAFP, and FAO among others, for their contributions to making the meeting such a success, and hoped that all who attended the field trip to Ang Trapeang Thmor would get to see the Sarus cranes.

## List of Annexes

<b>Annex 1 (attached)</b>	Agenda of the 3 <sup>rd</sup> IBRRI Annual Meeting
<b>Annex 2 (attached)</b>	Meeting Participant List
<b>Annex 3</b>	IBRRI Accomplishments 2019
<b>Annex 4</b>	Dr. Pyi Soe Aung, Staff Officer, Nature and Wildlife Conservation Division
<b>Annex 5</b>	Dr. Sansanee Choowaew MWUN
<b>Annex 6</b>	Mr. Saber Masoomi WWT
<b>Annex 7</b>	Dr. Li He FAO
<b>Annex 8</b>	Dr. Scott Perkin IUCN



Figure 1: Field Trip to see the Sarus Cranes at Ang Trapeang Thmor © Pheakdey Sorn



## Annex 1

### Agenda for the Annual Meeting of the Indo-Burma Ramsar Regional Initiative

26-28 February 2020, Angkor Era Hotel, Siem Reap, Cambodia

<b>26 February</b>	
08:30-09:00	Registration
09:00-09:40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National Anthem of Cambodia</li> <li>- Welcome remarks by Dr. Scott Perkin, IBRRI Secretariat (15 min)</li> <li>- Opening remarks by H.E. Srun Darith, Secretary of State, Ministry of Environment (15 min)</li> <li>- Group Photo</li> </ul>
09:40-09:55	Coffee Break
09:55-10:10	Round of introductions
10:10-10:45	<b>Session 1:</b> Overview of agenda and update on implementation of the 2019 work plan from all partners (IBRRI secretariat)
10:45-12:15	<b>Session 2:</b> Short partner presentations on 2019 achievements
12:15-13:30	Lunch
13:30-14:45	<b>Session 3:</b> Country group review: Ramsar Site Designations and Management Plans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review future Ramsar site designation priorities and opportunities for enhancing the regional network of Ramsar Sites and EAAFP sites, plan for updating RIS for all sites</li> </ul>
14:45-15:00	Coffee break
15:00-16:30	<b>Session 3 (continued):</b> Country group review: Ramsar Site Designations and Management Plans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review current status of Management Plans across the region, organise management plan development for all national Ramsar Sites, identify sites where managers have not been trained in R-METT</li> </ul>
18:00	Reception Dinner
<b>27 February</b>	
09:00-11:00	<b>Session 4:</b> Country group review: Species <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Towards a wetlands species conservation programme, potential need for Red Listing of data deficient wetland-dependent species, and the development of species actions plans</li> </ul>
11:00-11:15	Coffee Break
11:15-12:30	<b>Session 5:</b> Country group review: CEPA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discussion of IBRRI communication strategy, review of previous CEPA strategies, towards national CEPA action plans</li> </ul>
12:30-13:45	Lunch
13:45-15:15	<b>Session 6:</b> Work Plans Proposal of 2020 work plan (IBRRI Secretariat) Review of proposed work plan and discussion of roles and responsibilities
15:15-15:45	Coffee Break
15:45-16:15	Introduction to Ang Trapeang Thmor, and field visit details
<b>28 February</b>	
	Ministry of Environment, Cambodia will host a field visit to Ang Trapeang Thmor, a wetland visited by over 200 species of wetland birds, including the Sarus crane. 06:00 Departure 08:00-10:30 Tour the site 12:30 Return to Siem Reap, Lunch

## Annex 2

### Participant List

S/N	Travel from Country	Title	Name	Position	Organisation
1	Cambodia	Mr.	Long Kheng	Deputy Director	Dept. Freshwater Wetlands Conservation Ministry of Environment
2	Cambodia	Mr.	Ly Samphors	Wetland Project Officer	Birdlife
3	Cambodia	Mr.	Saber Masoomi	Country Coordinator (Cambodia)	WWT
4	Cambodia	Mr	Sorn Pheakdey	Water and Wetlands Coordinator	IUCN
5	Cambodia	Dr.	Srey Sunleang	Director	Dept. Freshwater Wetlands Conservation Ministry of Environment
6	Cambodia	Mr.	Sun Visal	Chief of Office	Dept. Freshwater Wetlands Conservation Ministry of Environment
7	Cambodia	Ms.	Yim Chansothea	Finance and Administration Assistant	IUCN
8	Lao PDR	Mr.	Chanthala Onephan	Deputy Director	Social Environment Division
9	Lao PDR	Mr.	Lonkham Atsanavong	Director General	Department of Environmental Quality Promotion, Ramsar National Political Focal Point
10	Lao PDR	Mrs.	Malaykham Viphongxay	Technical Officer	Social Environment Division
11	Lao PDR	Dr	Prayooth Yaowakham	Ecosystem and Wetland Specialist	Mekong River Commission
12	Myanmar	Mr.	Frank Momberg	Asia Pacific Development Director	Flora & Fauna International
13	Myanmar	Ms.	Phyo Thuzar Win	Range Officer	Nature and Wildlife Conservation Division, Forest Department
14	Myanmar	Dr.	Pyi Soe Aung	Staff Officer	Nature and Wildlife Conservation Division, Forest Department

15	Myanmar	Ms.	Thin Thin Yu	Staff Officer	Nature and Wildlife Conservation Division, Forest Department
16	Philippines	Ms.	Corazon A. de Jesus Jr.	Capacity Development Specialist and SGP Coordinator	ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity
17	ROK	Mr.	Doug Watkins	Chief Executive	EAAFP
18	Thailand	Ms.	Kathryn Bimson	Programme Officer, Water and Wetlands	IUCN ARO
19	Thailand	Ms.	Li He	Natural Resources Officer	FAORAP
20	Thailand	Mr	Raphael Glemet	Senior Programme Officer, Water and Wetlands	IUCN ARO
21	Thailand	Dr.	Sansanee Choowaew	Co-founder	Mekong Wetlands University Network
22	Thailand	Dr.	Scott Perkin	Head, Natural Resources Group	IUCN ARO
23	Thailand	Ms.	Sukanya Wisan	Environmentalist, Senior Professional Level	Biodiversity Management Division, Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning
24	Thailand	Ms.	Tanya Wattanakorn	Programme Assistant, Natural Resources Group	IUCN ARO
25	Thailand	Mr	Thotsaphon Wanphen	Field Coordinator	IUCN ARO
26	Thailand	Mrs.	Usaras Janpakdee	Environmentalist, Professional Level	Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning
27	Viet Nam	Mr	Le Ngoc Hung	Range Officer	Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Agency. Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE)
28	Viet Nam	Dr.	Tran Thi Kim Tinh	Deputy Head, Landscape and Ecology Department	Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Agency. Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE)
29	Vietnam	Mr.	Gian Tangphuong	Mekong Delta Programme Field Officer	IUCN Vietnam