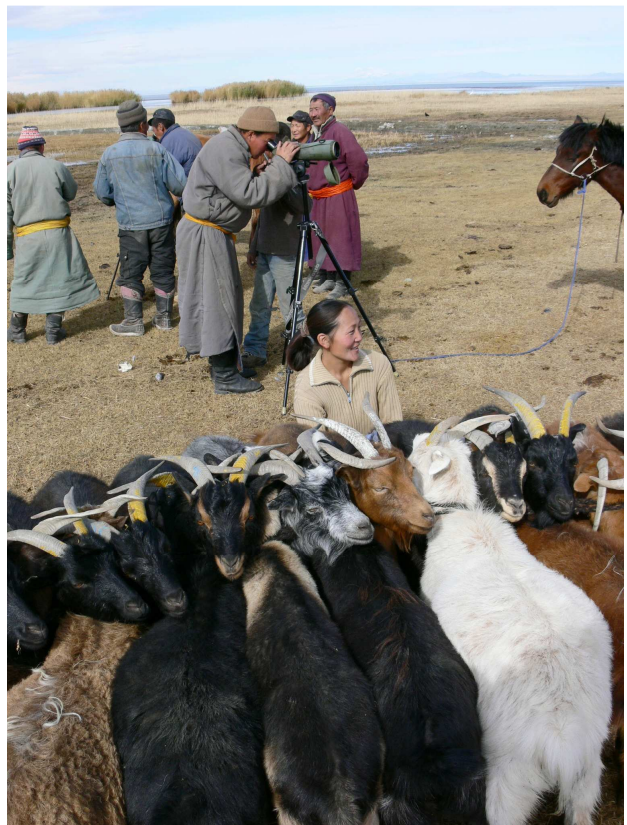




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Asian Waterbird Conservation Fund

Annual Report 2005-07



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1. Background

The Asian Waterbird Conservation Fund (the 'Fund') was established in July 2005 to provide financial support for projects at sites of importance for migratory waterbirds in the East Asia – Australasian Flyway.

The objective of the Fund is to support projects that will lead to the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their important wetland habitats in Asia through partnerships with local communities and which will bring socio-economic benefits to the local community at the site. Priority is given to those projects that can integrate the conservation of the migratory waterbirds with the sustainable management of the wetland habitats that the birds depend upon.

Cathay Pacific made an initial donation of HK\$500,000 (US\$62,500) into the Fund and WWF Hong Kong is responsible of the administration of the Fund. Further donations are being actively sought from other sources to increase the amount in the Fund, so that a greater number of worthwhile projects can be supported in future.

Each year, up to 25% of the amount in the Fund will be earmarked for disbursement to support approved projects. At present, the maximum amount that can be applied for each project is around US\$4,000.

There is a single call for applications to the Fund each year with the annual deadline being 31 October.

2. Progress and results of the projects

In the first year of operation of the Fund in 2006, two rounds of applications were organised, in March and October respectively. In March 2006, 26 applications were received from 9 countries. From these, three projects were approved totalling approximately HK\$96,200 (US\$12,025). In the October 2006 round of applications, 25 applications from 13 countries were received and one project with a grant of approximately HK\$32,000 (USD\$4,000) was

approved. The reason for this lower number of approved projects in the second round was that in future, the aim will be to cap the total amount granted per year to US\$ 12,000 (approx. HK\$93,600), with a ceiling of US\$4,000 (approx. HK\$31,200) per project. The deadline for future applications each year will be at the end of October.

2.1 First round of applications: March 2006

2.1.1 Public awareness campaign to enhance the conservation of migratory shorebird and their habitat at Chao Mai Marine National Park, Trang Province, Southern Thailand <Wetland International – Thailand Office>

The project aims to promote the sustainable management and wise use of wetlands to address local poverty and biodiversity management needs. The project site, Trang River Estuary, is a Ramsar Site which support over ten thousands migratory waterbirds every year, including many species of conservation concern such as, Black-necked Stork *Ephippiorhychus asiaticus*, Greater-crested Tern *Sterna bergii*, Chinese-crested Tern *Sterna bernsteini* and Asian Dowitcher *Limnodromus semipalmatus*.

In order to raise awareness, materials introducing “Chao Mai wetland biodiversity” have been produced. Five hundred posters and eight hundred project brochures have been printed and distributed to schools around the project area and are available at the Chao Mai Marine National Park and the Libong Non-Hunting Area.



A local training workshop on “Wetlands and Migratory Shorebirds Conservation” was organised in October 2006. Twenty participants from local communities and administrative organisation joined the workshop to learn about wise use of wetland and shorebird conservation and to discuss with each other the problems they faced. A field trip to the project site was also organized.

The project commenced in July 2006 and was completed in October 2006. However, as the funding has not yet been fully utilized, the Fund is in discussion with the project applicant to explore whether the project could be extended further.

Total amount awarded = US\$ 4,020

2.1.2 Capacity Building and Community Based Waterbird Conservation Activity in Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh <Wilderness Conservation>

This project aims to conserve the coastal wetlands and waterbirds at Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh. These wetlands, which consist of mudflat and seashore, are under threat from hunting, habitat alternation and pollution. The area supports over 250 species of waterbirds, including the globally endangered Spoon-billed Sandpiper *Eurhynchus pygmeus* and Nordmann’s Greenshank *Tringa guttifer*.

The project commenced in July 2006 and three community awareness meetings and two field trips have been organised.



The three community awareness meetings were organised with the local communities around the project site at Sonadia Island, Teknaf Peninsula and at the Pechardwip area. Over a hundred local fishermen and businessman attended the meetings to discuss the threats to their surrounding wetlands and to the waterbirds. They identified the main

threats to the wetlands as mangrove cutting, shrimp farming, bird hunting and improper tourism manners. Suggestions were made at the meeting for the long-term protection of the

wetland and birds, for example, recruiting volunteers to patrol the site and conducting meeting with government officials to set up a bird sanctuary.

Two waterbird surveys were conducted together with people from the local community at Sonadia Island in November 2006. Fifty-two species of waterbird were observed in the area surveyed.

The project applicant is preparing waterbird information materials (posters, leaflet and picture card) for volunteers and a waterbird monitoring stations is being set up at Sonadia Island and Teknaf Peninsula.

The project lasts for one and a half year and will be concluded in August 2007.



Total amount awarded = US\$ 4,005

2.1.3 Support of HUN Club's conservation and public awareness activities in Western Mongolia <Har Us Nuur (HUN) Club>

The aim of this project is to raise awareness of wetland values and conservation among the citizens of Hovd province, western Mongolia and to build capacity in wetland conservation through lectures, training in the field, and public awareness activities. As a Ramsar Site and national park, the Har Us Nur project site is used by Dalmatian Pelican *Pelecanus crispus* (Vulnerable) and Caspian Tern *Sterna caspia* as a breeding site. The site also regularly supports over 20,000 waterbirds every year.

The project commenced in July 2006 and will last for one and a half year.

Ten binoculars and two telescopes have been purchased to be used in the field activities and for sharing with the local conservation community.

Four field trips have been organised with participation of around forty students, teachers and local communities between July 2006 and May 2007, visiting the Khar Us Nuur National Park and Airag Nuur. During the field trip, the participants were able to experience bird-watching and the life of the local communities.



Bird lectures have been organised every week at the Hovd University since October 2006 so that students can learn about bird identification and conservation.

Three news clippings were generated reporting on the activities undertaken in the project and have reached thousands of people in the region.

The project activities, field trips and lectures etc., will continue until December 2007.

Total amount awarded = US\$ 4,000

2.2 Second round of applications: October 2006

2.2.1 Conservation Education on Waterbirds and Habitat with focus on the Inner Gulf of Thailand <Bird Conservation Society of Thailand>

The project aims at raising public awareness of bird conservation, the concept of Important Bird Areas (IBA), the importance of wetlands conservation and sustainable utilisation of wetland resources among all stakeholders. The targeted audience includes local communities, local youth and local schools in and around the communities in the Inner Gulf of Thailand.

The Inner Gulf of Thailand is an important bird area (IBA) for shorebirds in Thailand. Up to 35 bird species of global conservation concern can be found during the migration season or wintering at the project site, including Asian Dowitcher *Limnodromus semipalmatus*, Brown-headed Gull *Larus brunnicephalus* and Spoon-billed Sandpiper *Eurynorhynchus pygmaeus*.

The project commenced in May 2007 and will be completed in May 2008.

A brochure on wetland conservation with waterbird ID chart was drafted in early June 2007 and 3,000 copies will be published to be delivered to local schools and communities to raise public awareness on wetland and waterbird conservation.

A training workshop was organised in late June 2007 for up to 40 local people and district administration officers to understand more about wetland conservation and waterbird identification.



Nature visits and mobile conservation education at schools will be starting from September 2007 until March 2008 to disseminate information on the importance of wetland conservation.

Total amount awarded = US\$ 4,000

3. Revenue and expenditure

HK\$258,000 (US\$32,250) has been injected into the Fund in 2006-07 from the donation generated from WWF Hong Kong's Big Bird Race in 2006 and 2007.

A total of US\$12,025 (HK\$96,200) was granted to the three projects approved in March 2006 and US\$4,000 (HK\$32,000) has been granted to that in October 2006. First instalments of the funding have been received by the project applicants in July 2006 and March 2007 respectively.

Table 1: Summary on the Revenue and Expenditure

Revenue (date)	HK\$	
Cathay Pacific (July 2005)	500,000.00	
Big Bird Race (March 2006)	120,000.00	
Big Bird Race (March 2007)	138,000.00	
Sub-total	758,000.00	
Expenditure (date)		US\$
Project 2.1.1 – 1 st instalment (July 2006)	18,967.07	2,412
Project 2.1.2 – 1 st instalment (March 2007)	19,393.14	2,403
Project 2.1.3 – 1 st instalment (July 2006)	18,874.80	2,400
Project 2.2.1 – 1 st instalment (March 2007)	18,016.44	2,280
Administration Fee (fax, mail, etc.)	7.39	
Sub-total	75,258.84	
Net Balance	682,741.16	

4. Acknowledgements

The Fund would like to thank Mr. Taej Mundkur, Mr. Warren Lee Long and Mr. Doug Watkins for serving as the AWCF committee members and providing valuable advice.



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WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature, by:

- conserving the world's biological diversity
- ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable
- promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption

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