

**Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Initiative (WHMSI)
Interim Steering Committee Meeting
June 5-6 2007
Minutes**

Attending: ISC members: Herb Raffaele-Chair (U.S.); Jorge Luis Cravino (Uruguay); Donald Anthony (St. Lucia); Carlos Drews (WWF); David Pashley (American Bird Conservancy); Charles Duncan (Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network); Alberto Yanosky (Guyra Paraguay-Birdlife); Richard Huber (OAS).
Other attendees: Scott Vaughan (OAS), Marina Ratchford (USFWS), Brian Hayum (USFWS) and Carolina Peña (OAS).

Tuesday May 5th

Raffaele and Vaughan opened the meeting, followed by introductions by participants, including new members. Alberto Yanosky will now serve as Birdlife representative in the ISC. Jenny Asch represented Costa Rica (J.J. Calvo was attending CITES). Representatives from Colombia, Ramsar, IAC, UNEP-SPAW and CMS could not attend due to scheduling conflicts.

Drews and Duncan made presentations on WHMSI-related activities being conducted by their programs. Drews' presentation on adaptation to climate change (management of fishing stocks, rising sea levels and Caribbean biodiversity, changes to water streams) triggered animated discussion on possible collaboration with other species initiatives.

Huber and Ratchford provided an update on the GEF and other potential sources of funding for the WHMSI capacity building proposal developed with input from the Second WHMSI Conference of 2006. Huber and Vaughan summarized the new GEF Biodiversity strategy and announced that Gustavo da Fonseca will be GEF's Biodiversity Team Leader starting on July 1st. The GEF is presently not funding regional projects, and the participants agreed that it would not be practical to continue pursuing the GEF as a source of funding at this time. Vaughan offered assistance to draft other WHMSI proposals for the GEF as appropriate, focusing on medium-sized projects. He also offered to host a policy and donor oriented meeting on migratory species at the OAS in the future.

Raffaele announced that the USFWS Wildlife Without Borders Latin America/Caribbean and Mexico programs have recently undergone strategic planning processes and will focus their future funding on capacity building in and around protected areas, addressing many of the same audiences and themes identified in the WHMSI capacity building proposal. The group also discussed the possibility of exploring other sources of funding such as Ramsar's Wetlands for the Future program and the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act program. Some participants considered the possibility of approaching foundations such as Moore and MacArthur.

The group also dedicated some time to discuss the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (NMBCA) program, and the need to include more input from Latin

American countries. Duncan and Pashley explained that NMBCA favors initiatives focused on umbrella species and coordinated by large NGOs, which provide continuity to projects and send funding to local NGOs.

Participants next discussed other action items from WHMSI 2, going through an extensive list of subject areas and identifying who will help to implement some of the suggested follow up actions. As a result of this discussion, Drews will draft a brief document (~4 pages) on the value of migratory species and will include suggestions for a WHMSI logo. *See attached list for other action items and responsibilities regarding follow up to WHMSI 2.*

ISC members focused next on the draft Terms of Reference. It was agreed that given the unofficial nature of the document, it should be renamed “**Purpose and Organization**”. Members discussed main comments and issues to resolve, and agreed on a process to address them. Incorporation of comments by Mexico and Argentina will be highlighted in the latest draft of the document and Raffaele will send a copy of this marked document to WHMSI focal points in these two countries (with cc to any other Mexican and Argentine government representatives involved in WHMSI) explaining any changes and inviting them to discuss this further in person. ISC members will receive a copy of these letters.

Members also agreed to include a sentence on “facilitation” within the guiding principles section.

Wednesday June 6th

Participants discussed the WHMSI relevant language from the Ministerial on Sustainable Development that took place in Bolivia in December 2006 and agreed that it should serve as a useful reference to promote implementation of WHMSI.

The next topic was a discussion of selected relevant upcoming meetings where WHMSI should be represented and/or organize side events. Specific events such as the Latin American Parks Congress in Bariloche and the PIF Conference in Texas will likely be attended by one or more ISC members, and participants agreed to make WHMSI presentations within their own sessions. In this regard, Ratchford will send an updated version of the WHMSI power point slides, incorporating Bolivia ministerial language, link to related Conventions (with text to be provided by Huber), and value of migratory species (text provided by Drews).

The final item of the meeting was a brainstorming on agenda, date, location and funding for WHMSI 3, resulting in the following outline:

Proposed Date: April-May 2008

Location: Trinidad & Tobago, Panama, Paraguay, or Ecuador

Participants: WHMSI focal points from 35 countries in the Western Hemisphere, ISC members, and all interested Convention and NGO partners. ISC members will reach out to selected indigenous groups and encourage them to participate as well.

Draft AGENDA

Note: WHMSI 3 will seek to facilitate coordination among related migratory species initiatives (WHSRN, PIF, Birdlife, Sea Turtles, Waterbird Council, others) by helping to organize side meetings before and after the official conference. The goal is to foster synergies for better collaboration and more efficient use of resources and to maximize Latin American participation in these initiatives.

WHMSI's Interim Steering Committee will meet in the afternoon of the day before Day 1 of the official conference.

Day 1:

1. Keynote address to plenary (e.g. Tom Lovejoy, Gustavo da Fonseca, Ezequiel Ezcurra)
2. Purpose and organization (formerly named ToR) document
 - 2.1. Ideas for the future of WHMSI
 - 2.2. Overview of how WHMSI fits into existing international instruments.
Discussion of document to be prepared and presented by Huber and Drews)
3. Capacity building: GEF update and follow-up, new focus of USFWS' Wildlife Without Borders-Latin America/Caribbean and Mexico programs
 - 3.1. Explore crafting of a new GEF proposal according to new priorities of GEF.
 - 3.2. Other resources
4. Presentations by key donors on their migratory species interests
5. Partnerships: Signed MOUs, outreach to other migratory species networks

Day 2: Field Trip

Days 3 and 4:

Thematic sessions with up to 2 themes per day. Working groups will address specific themes, including background presentations/case studies, group discussions and recommendations, incorporation of input and buy-in of governments and NGOs, and proposed follow-up for potentially joint projects.

Some potential themes include:

- Adaptation to climate change
- Interaction among marine conservation initiatives for migratory species (e.g. ACAP, albatross & petrel, etc.)
- Monitoring

- Capacity strengthening in project development and management for grass roots NGOs
- Invasive species
- Avian influenza
- Guidance to relevant funding programs (e.g. Neotropical Migratory Birds Conservation Act) from LAC

The process for selecting themes will be through a request for short papers (1-2 pages) that describe the proposed thematic sessions. These papers should include:

- justification/importance of theme
- targeted audience
- proposed case studies
- role of governments
- expected outcomes and follow up
- main organizer and collaborators

Afternoon of Day 4: Closing of Conference

Funding: Yanosky will explore the possibility of obtaining CIDA support for the conference.

List of upcoming events relevant to WHMSI

April 17-June 18, 2007: "Latin America Natural Reserve Management Training", Ría Celestún Biosphere Reserve, Mexico (With Ducks Unlimited of Mexico)

June 11-15, 2007: Environmental Decision Support for Sustainable Development Planning, National University of Costa Rica (with NatureServe).

July 19-23, 2007: 16th meeting of the Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds, San Juan, Puerto Rico. Ornithologists, wildlife and conservation professionals, resource managers, students, and other interested parties from around the Caribbean (and the US) will attend and participate in the meeting.

August 25-29, 2007: First regional workshop for Latin American decision-makers on wetlands and migratory birds, Panama. Spanish-speaking government authorities for Ramsar and CMS. Maria Rivera will make a presentation on WHMSI.

September, 2007: UNEP/TNC MAR Training of Trainers Course for MPA managers (2 weeks) in Tulum, Yucatan (they have added the concept of migratory species conservation to the training modules, featured for the first time at this 6th course)

September 19-21, 2007: Pan-American Ramsar meeting in Merida, Venezuela.

September 30-October 6, 2007: Second Latin American Congress on Protected Areas, Bariloche, Argentina. Capacity Building will be a main theme. USFWS is working with CI, IUCN, CREHO, and several others to organize symposia.

September and October 2007: Protected Areas Managers course for Brazilian managers, Minas Gerais, Brazil.

October 1-17, 2007: CREHO's International Course on Environmental Impact Assessment, Panama City, Panama.

October 15-19, 2007: Interdisciplinary principles and tools for endangered species recovery course for Latin American professionals, Corrientes, Argentina.

October 21-27, 2007: "Sustainable Development and Biodiversity Conservation in Latin America", Panama (With the Organization for Tropical Studies).

November 2007: "Training for Conservation Trainers in the Andes-Amazon Region" (With World Wildlife Fund and Colorado State University), Ecuador.

November 1-2, 2007: Meeting of U.S. Ramsar site managers at Caddo Lake, Texas.

November 5-9, 2007: 60th Annual Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute Conference, Punta Cana, Dominican Republic www.gcfi.org

November 20-23, 2007: VII International Congress on Natural Resources Management, Valdivia, Chile. <http://www.ceachile.cl/congreso/>

February 2008: "Wildlands Management in the Tropical Andes" course (With the Organization for Tropical Studies), Peru

February 2nd 2008: World Wetlands Day is celebrated around the world. The theme/slogan is "Healthy Wetlands, Healthy People". The US National Ramsar Committee is working on two nominations for new Ramsar sites in South Carolina and Florida, with the aim of announcing the designations on February 2nd, so there could be two potential events.

February 13-16, 2008: The 4th International Partners in Flight Conference, McAllen, Texas. The conference theme will be *Tundra to Tropics: Connecting Birds, Habitats and People*, which will be shared with International Migratory Bird Day for 2008. Conference details are being posted at www.PartnersInFlight.org as they develop. Although this conference is being organized by PIF, they welcome presentations and content on **all bird species**.

April 2008: SPAW Protocol Fourth Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee Meeting, tentatively Guadeloupe, French West Indies.

April or May 2008: Proposed tentative dates for WHMSI 3. Potential locations: Trinidad and Tobago; Panama; Paraguay; Ecuador.

October 6-9, 2008: IUCN World Conservation Congress.

October 28-November 4, 2008: Ramsar COP 10 in Seoul, South Korea.