



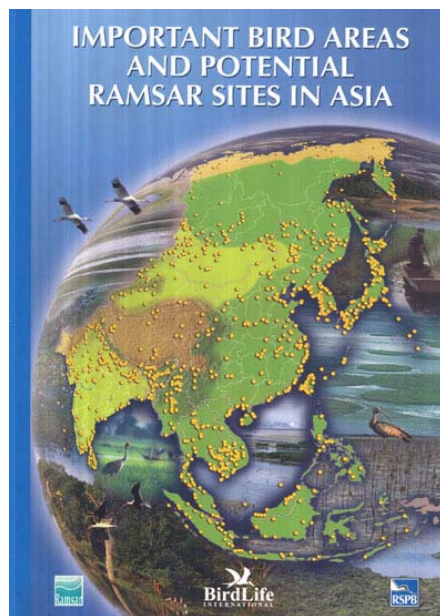
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The Launch of “*Important Bird Areas and Potential Ramsar Sites in Asia*”

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BirdLife International¹ Vietnam Programme – On 19th October 2006, as part of World Bird Festival 2006, the BirdLife International-Vietnam Programme launched a publication entitled “*Important Bird Areas and Potential Ramsar Sites in Asia*”. The launch was attended by representatives from a number of international and national institutions active in wetland conservation in Vietnam, including the Vietnam Environmental Protection Agency (VEPA); the national administrative authority for the Ramsar Convention in Vietnam.



Front cover of the Book
Source: BirdLife

The book describes 1,111 Important Bird Areas (IBAs) in 28 Asian countries and territories that meet criteria for Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites). At least one IBA was identified as a potential Ramsar Site in each country and territory. A total of 144 Ramsar Sites had been designated by the Contracting Parties within Asia, as of August 2005. Of these, 123 (85%) overlap with one or more IBAs. Some of the Ramsar Contracting Parties in the Asia region have designated more than 20% of their potential Ramsar Sites, including Bangladesh, Hong Kong, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines and Thailand. However, Vietnam, Indonesia, Myanmar, and South Korea have designated less than 5% of their sites. Eight countries and territories in the region are not yet Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention, and it was recommended that they accede to it and begin the process of designating some of their potential Ramsar Sites.

As for Vietnam, 27 of 63 IBAs meet Ramsar site criteria, but so far only two IBAs have been designated as Ramsar Sites, namely Xuan Thuy National Park (Nam Dinh Province) and Bau Sau Lake, Cat Tien National Park (Dong Nai Province).

“This publication is a small contribution by the BirdLife International Asian Partnership in facilitating the identification, designation and protection of more wetlands areas in Asia which meet Ramsar criteria for birds. We hope it will support active participation by Vietnam to the Ramsar Convention as this book indicates a further 25 potential Ramsar Sites in Vietnam”, Mrs Pham Tuan Anh, BirdLife Vietnam Programme Manager, said.

Mrs Pham Viet Hong, representative of VEPA, said: *“This publication will be an important reference document for the proposal of new Ramsar sites in Vietnam. In addition, we strongly believe that with its solid experience in study of birds and wetlands areas, BirdLife International, and the BirdLife International Vietnam Programme in particular, will make an important contribution to Vietnam’s implementation of the conservation and wise-use of wetlands”*. She added that VEPA needs support from organisations and individuals in efforts for conservation and sustainable management of wetlands in Vietnam, especially in view of VEPA’s commitment to designate at least five new Ramsar sites before 2008.

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

- 1) BirdLife International is a global alliance of conservation organisations working in more than 100 countries worldwide who, together, are the leading authority on the status of birds, their habitats and their conservation. Further information about BirdLife’s work in Vietnam, Cambodia and Myanmar can be found at www.birdlifeindochina.org.