

Training Course Report:
**Management Plans for Ramsar Sites in
Central, Southern and Eastern Europe**

Vilm, October 18th – 22nd, 2007

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Cover Picture: Participants of the workshop (photo: Andrea Burmester)

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Introduction

The German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) with its International Academy for Nature Conservation (INA) on the Isle of Vilm/Germany in cooperation with the Ramsar Secretariat (Gland, Switzerland) conducted a training course on "Management Plans for Ramsar Sites in Central, Southern and Eastern Europe - a contribution to the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas" from October 18th to 22nd, 2007.

The objective of the training course was to support and advise participants in the preparation of management plans of their sites by clarifying the concept and importance of management plans for Ramsar sites. Furthermore, participants had the opportunity to work on their own management plan with expert advice and they could share experiences in working groups.

The course was attended by 31 participants coming from 18 countries (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Malta, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, The Netherlands, Latvia, Russian Federation, Romania, Switzerland, Serbia, Slovakia). Most participants were in charge of the management of a Ramsar site in their country, others were representatives from NGOs and Ministries. Dr. STEPHAN AMEND (Consultant in the field of "Conservation and Development") and TOBIAS SALATHÉ (Senior Adviser for Europe in the Ramsar Secretariat) served as trainers.

Topics

Thematically, the training course was structured into the following parts:

- Introduction to the Ramsar Convention and wetland site management
- Introduction to the Programme of Work on Protected Areas of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the „Issue-based module on inland waters“ (J. STADLER, BfN)
- Reflection on what does planning and management mean in wetland management
- Criteria for Ramsar Sites according to the Convention
- The four main elements of a management plan
 - Description
 - Legal framework
 - Strategic plan
 - Zoning plan
- The contents of a management plan according to the Ramsar Handbook
 - Preamble
 - Description
 - Evaluation
 - Objectives
 - Rationale
 - Action Plan
- Management plans and their practical use
 - Annual operational plan
 - Monthly and annual evaluation
- Monitoring of Ramsar Sites
- Management effectiveness (Tracking tool of WWF) (A. BELOKUROW, WWF International)

- Problems of Transboundary Ramsar Sites (how to organise planning, evaluation, management activities, monitoring) using the example of
 - Prespa Lakes: Albania/Macedonia/Greece (N. ZDRAVESKI, NGO Lobing Resen)
 - Skadar/Shkodra Lake: Montenegro/Albania (V. SUBOTIV, GEF/WB Skadar/Shkodra Integrated Ecosystem Management Project)
- Importance of participation and communication (E. KOOPMANSCHAP, Wageningen International)

Group exercises

The topics above were presented in a balanced mixture of presentations and group exercises: After a theoretical input on the criteria for Ramsar sites according to the Ramsar Convention and a guided tour on Vilm, participants worked on the question “Could the Island of Vilm and its surrounding waters be designated as a Ramsar Site?” With this question, participants learned what all Ramsar sites have in common and what similarities and differences they have compared to other types of protected areas.

On strategic planning working groups were formed representing five Ramsar sites in Europe. As case studies served:

- Prespa Lakes (Albania/Macedonia/Greece)
- Lonjsko Polje Nature Park (Croatia)
- Skadar/Shkodra Lake (Montenegro/Albania)
- Protected Landscape Area Latorica (Slovak Republic)
- Prostyř Fenmire (Belarus)

During one full day, these groups learned to use the elements of a management plan according to the terminology of the Ramsar Site Handbook (feature, objective, factors, causes, activities, output, outcome). Participants were also introduced in the spreadsheets for strategic planning, operational planning, monthly and annual evaluation.

Zoning as a main instrument of management planning was practiced in working groups based on the features of the Island of Vilm and its surrounding waters.

Management effectiveness was introduced precisely by A. BELOKUROW from WWF International, and the use of the “tracking tool” was practiced. Although the participants were in different stages of preparing their management plans, all participants could benefit from the workshop. This was possible due to intensive group work and discussions after the presentations with advice from the trainers both having many years of experience in Ramsar Site and protected area management. In addition, the trainers kept adapting the programme to the needs expressed by the participants.

Follow up

The trainers asked participants to continue learning about management plans and recommended the two handbooks on which the course was based:

- STEPHAN AMEND et. al (2003): Management Plans – Concepts and Proposals. Durban/ Südafrika. (distributed as hard-copy).
- RAMSAR SECRETARIAT (2007): Ramsar Handbook 16. Managing Wetlands. Gland. (distributed on CD-ROM).

Additional training courses to be held in the Ramsar sites seem to be useful and were highly recommended.

Annex:







List of participants






No.	Name	Institution	Address	Country
1.	Alinazarov, Gulomscho	Volunteer at BfN Academy for Nature Conservation	Isle of Vilm 18581 Putbus	Germany
2.	Dr. Amend, Stephan Facilitator	Consultant	Bahnhofstr. 9 79725 Laufenberg	Germany
3.	Bazhina, Yekatherina	Nature Protection Board Referenz of Management division	Eksporta street 5 Riga	Latvia
4.	Belokurov, Alexander	WWF International	Avenue du Mont-Blanc 1196 Gland	Switzerland
5.	Belyakova, Olga	Institute of Zoology of National Academy of Science of Belarus	Akademicheskaya str.27 220072 Minsk	Belarus
6.	Blazevski, Aleksandar	UNDP GEF Prespa Lakes Baisn project Project Assistant	P.O. Box 78 7310 Resen	Former Yugoslav Repub- lic of Macedonia
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11.	Gotovac, Mato	WWF Mediterranean Programme/Youth center LIVNO	Fra Andjela Kaica 9/b 80101 Livno	Bosnia and Herzegovina
12.	Hima, Valerija	Lonjsko Polje Nature Park Public Service	Krapje 30 HR-44325 Krapje	Croatia
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14.	Karen, Jenderedjian	Ministry of Nature Protection Agency of Bioresources Management Department of Animal Resources Management	Government Building 3 0010 Yerevan	Armenia
15.	Koopmanschap, Esther	Wageningen International Wageningen UR	P.O. Box 88 6700 AB Wageningen	The Netherlands
16.	Lengyel, Peter	UNESCO Pro Natura/IUCN	Calea Plevnei 61 Bucharest	Romania
17.	Martirosyan, Ruzanna	Ministry of Nature Protection of the Republic of Armenia Natural Resources Management and Poverty Reduction Protect/Protected Areas Manag	Markaryan 2nd Avenue, House 1/1, apt. 4 Yerevan	Armenia
18.	Mekh, Natalia	Astrakhan State Nature Biosphere Reserve	Naberezhnaya Reki Tsarev, 119 414021 Astrakhan	Russian Federation
19.	Petersen, Barbara	Bundesamt für Naturschutz FG I 2.2	Konstantinstr. 110 53179 Bonn	Germany
20.	Puchala, Peter	State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic	Sturova 115 90001 Modra	Slovak Republic
21.	Rove, Ieva	Latvian Fund for Nature plant and biotope expert, project manager	Raina boulevard 31-6 1050 Riga	Latvia
22.	Sabo, Peter	State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic Administration of Protected landscape Area Latorica	M.R. Stefanika 1755 07501 Trebisov	Slovak Republic
23.	Salathé, Tobias Facilitator	Ramsar Secretariat Senior Advisor for Europe	Rue Mauverney 28 1196 Gland	Switzerland








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24.	Shugaeva, Olga	Ministry of Natural resources of the Russian Federatio	Bolshaya Gruzinskaya 4/6 street 123995-postalcode Moscow	Russian Federation
25.	Stolpe, Gisela Organisation	Federal Agency for Nature Conservation Academy for Nature Conservation Isle of Vilm	Isle of Vilm 18581 Putbus	Germany
26.	Subotic, Viktor	Ministry of Tourism and Environment of Montenegro GEF/WB SKADAR/SHKODRA Integrated Ecosystem Management Project	Rimski trg 46 81000 Podgorica	Republic of Montenegro
27.	Suda Lanzon, Nadia	Malta Environment and Planning Authority Nature Protection Unit, Environment Protection Direc- torate	St. Francis Ravelin Floriana	Malta
28.	Tanka, Gjergji	Directorate of Forestry and Pastures of Korca Region	Korce, Shpiperi	Albania
29.	Valasiuk, Sviataslau	Institute of Zoology of National Academy of Science of Belarus	Akademicheskaya str.27 220072 Minsk	Belarus
30.	Vider, Vesna	Management authority for Specail Nature Reserve Lake Public Enterprise "Palic-Ludas"	Kanjiski put 17 24413 Palic	Serbia
31.	Vugdelic, Marija	Public Enterprise for National parks of Montenegro National park Skadar Lake	Vranjina BB, Skadar Lake 81000 Podgorica	Republic of Montenegro
32.	Willmott, Amanda	Peel-Harvey Catchment Council Waterways & Wetlands Officer	Peel Watersways Centre 6/21 Sholl St, PO Box 332 WA 6210 Mandurah	Australia
33.	Xega, Niko	Directorate of Prespa National Park	Drejtoria Pyjore Korce, Shpiperi	Albania
34.	Zdraveski, Nikola	Coalition of NGOs for prospective Prespa NGO Lobing Resen	Boris Kidric str. No. 6/6 Resen	Former Yugoslav Repub- lic of Macedonia
35.	Zubure, Ingrida	Nature Protection Board	Eksporta 5 1011 Riga	Latvia








Programme

Thursday, October 18 th , 2007		
	13:41	Departure from Berlin Central Station together with the group
	17:50 18:10	Departure from Lauterbach/Mole to Vilm by ferry
	18:30	Registration and dinner
	19:30	Welcome to the participants, introduction to Vilm Island (ANDREA BURMESTER, Scientific Officer - International Academy for Nature Conservation, BfN)
	19.50	Ramsar sites in Germany (BARBARA PETERSEN, Ramsar National focal Point, BfN)
	20:00	Getting to know each other (STEPHAN AMEND, Consultant)
Friday, October 19 th , 2007		
	07:30	Breakfast
	09:00	Workshop Introduction, Background, (S. AMEND) <i>Aims, training manual, overview of the programme</i>
	09:20	The Ramsar Convention and wetland site management (TOBIAS SALATHÉ, Senior Advisor for Europe, Ramsar Secretariat)
	09.50	The Programme of Work on Protected Areas of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (JUTTA STADLER, Scientific Officer - Biodiversity Unit, BfN)
	10:10	„Issue-based module on inland waters“ (JUTTA STADLER, BfN)

	10:20	Coffee
	10:50	What does planning mean? (S. AMEND) <i>Adaptable management, planning is a process</i>
	11.30	The functions of wetland management planning (S. AMEND, T. SALATHÉ) <i>Objectives of site management, factors that affect the features, resolve conflicts, define monitoring requirements, identify and describe the management required to achieve the objectives, maintain continuity of effective management, obtain resources</i>
	12:30	Lunch
	13:30	Guided tour on Vilm Island (ANDREA BURMESTER, BfN)
	15:00	Coffee
	15.30	Could the Island of Vilm be a Ramsar site? (T. SALATHÉ) <i>What have all Ramsar sites in common? What similarities and differences do they have when comparing with other types of protected areas?</i>
 	17:00	Building a management plan: getting started (S. AMEND) General guidelines, stakeholders Defining geographic reach of planning, gathering information and work tools regarding the main ecological and social/economic aspects, gathering information about the legal and political bases of the protected area, launching and maintaining social/ environmental communication initiatives, supporting the actors so they can organize themselves.
	18:30	Dinner
	20:00	Informal meeting
Saturday, October 20 th , 2007		

	07:30	Breakfast
	09:00	Summary of a) general guidelines for Ramsar sites b) functions of Management Plans c) getting started (PARTICIPANTS)
	09:30	Contents of the management plan – an overview (T. SALATHÉ, S. AMEND) (Preamble/policy, description, evaluation, objectives, rationale, action plan)
	10:00	Group session sharing ideas about preamble/policy
	10:20	Group session sharing ideas about description
	10:40	Coffee
	11:00	Group session sharing ideas about evaluation
	11.20	Group session sharing ideas about rationale
	11:40	Presentation of group works
	12:30	Lunch
	14:00	<i>Connectivity of objectives, action plan, Annual Operational Plan, monthly and annual evaluation</i>
	14:00	Group session sharing ideas about objectives, action plan,
	14:45	Presentation of group works
	15:15	Coffee
	15:45	Group sessions sharing ideas about Annual Operational Plan
	16:15	Group sessions sharing ideas about monthly and annual evaluation

	16:45	Presentation of group works
	18:00	What have we learnt so far? (S. AMEND) Review of progress and feedback on workshop themes to date. Looking forward...
	18:30	Dinner
	20:00	Informal meeting
Sunday, October 21st, 2007		
	07:30	Breakfast
	09:00	WWF approach to measuring management effectiveness (ALEXANDER BELOKUROV, PROGRAMME OFFICER, WWF INTERNATIONAL)
	10:30	Coffee
	11:00	Designing a monitoring programme (T. SALATHÉ) Wetland Risk Assessment Framework Assessing and reporting change in ecological character The Montreux Record tool
	12:30	Lunch
	14:00	Management units, zonation and buffer zones (S. AMEND)
	16:00	Applying the elements of a management planning process in different ways (S. AMEND) Management cycles: key elements and different options for the preparation of management plans
	16:30	Coffee
	17:00	Group session: questions on management plans and planning for management

	18:00	Presentation of group works
	18:30	<i>Dinner</i>
	20:00	<i>farewell party</i>
Monday, October 22nd, 2007		
	07:30	<i>Breakfast</i>
	09:00	Transboundary Site Lake Skadar/Shkodra (VIKTOR SUBOTIC, Project Coordinator, GEF/WB) Planning for natural values in Transboundary Ramsar sites
	09:15	Transboundary Site Prespa Lake Basins (NICOLA ZDRAVESKI, NGO LOBING RESEN)
	09:30	Discussion on Transboundary Site Issues
	10:15	International Training of Trainers on Wetland (ESTHER KOOPMANSCHAP, Capacity Development and Institutional Change Programme, Wageningen International)
	10:45	<i>Coffee</i>
	11:15	Wrap up, training workshop evaluation and concluding session (S. AMEND, T. SALATHÉ)
	12:15	<i>Lunch</i>
	13:00	<i>Departure from Vilm by ferry</i>
	13:20	<i>Departure from Lauterbach by bus to Stralsund</i>
	14:05	<i>Departure train from Stralsund to Berlin</i>
	18:16	<i>Arrival in Berlin Central Station</i>

Map of participants' provenance

