

NEWSLETTER

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NIPPON KOEI
Challenging mind, Changing dynamics



Anzali Wetland
Ecological Management Project



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Cover photo by Mr. Ashouri

From upper left Squacco Heron, Whiskered Tern, Grey Heron, Great Reed Warbler and Brack-crownnd Night Heron



Message from the Project Director of the Project

Dr. Mohammad Baghr Sadough
Deputy Head of Directorate for Natural Environment

Protection of Wetlands: DOE's National and International Responsibility

Iran is one of the founders of the earliest international environmental conventions for the protection of wetlands, i.e. the Ramsar Convention (Ramsar-1971). The responsibility for management, protection and restoration of wetlands in the country falls under the DOE in accordance with Article 16 of Law of Environmental Protection and Enhancement. Aligned with this responsibility, DOE carries out various activities, including:

- Specialized supervision of DOEs outside the headquarters and providing them with required guidelines and regulations;
- Conducting essential studies on Iranian wetlands;
- Overseeing Environmental Impact Assessment studies conducted for the proposed utilization of wetland habitats;
- Cooperation with international communities and organizations and the fulfillment of international commitments regarding the management of wetlands;
- Restoration of Degraded wetlands;

The Anzali Wetland Complex is recognized as being of international importance and value by the Ramsar Convention. Unfortunately, the ecological integrity of the wetland has deteriorated as a result of infrastructure development and other unsustainable human activities without due consideration of the environmental impacts including:

Conducting developmental activities regardless of environmental considerations, e.g. construction of Anzali ring road crossing the wetland, discharge of agricultural, domestic and industrial effluent into the wetland, sedimentation due to the deposition of soil from the upper watershed catchment, diminished water in the wetland, reed over-growth and distribution especially in the hot season, changing land use in the wetland to agricultural, motor boat traffic causing insecurity in the area, over-hunting of water fowls, local people collecting bird eggs, increase in the level of heavy metals especially Pb in sediment and water, pumping water to agricultural lands in the upstream areas, aggregation of non-decomposable solid waste in the wetland mainly from rivers entering into the wetland, dumping solid waste by visitors, construction of fish ponds around the wetland, construction of canals for conducting water to upper watershed catchments and so on.

We hope that through implementing restoration activities under the Anzali Wetland Ecological Management project and with the participation of all stakeholders, particularly local people in protection and restoration of the wetland, the site will be regenerated and the socio-cultural values of the site will also be restored.



Message from the Project Manager

Mr. Masoud Bagherzadeh Karimi
Deputy of Habitats and Protected Area Bureau



The Anzali Wetland is one of the most important wetlands in the country. The area is especially significant as a spawning and nursery ground for fish and as breeding, staging and wintering areas for a wide variety of waterfowl. It was registered as a Ramsar site in 1975 in accordance with the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance. The International Waterfowl & Wetlands Research Bureau (IWRB) now known as the international NGO Wetlands International has also recognized the wetland as an important habitat for birds. The Shiahkeshim protected area, Selkeh wildlife refuge and Sorkhankol protected area are considered as important habitats within the Anzali Wetland Complex.

The biodiversity and ecosystem services provided by the Anzali wetland are currently facing various threats. Despite considerable efforts made by DOE and other relevant authorities to restore the wetland, it seems that the participation of local stakeholders has been missing. Therefore, the Anzali Wetland Management Project aims to enhance the participation of local stakeholders and actively engage and involve local communities in conservation and restoration activities.

Message from the Provincial Project Coordinator

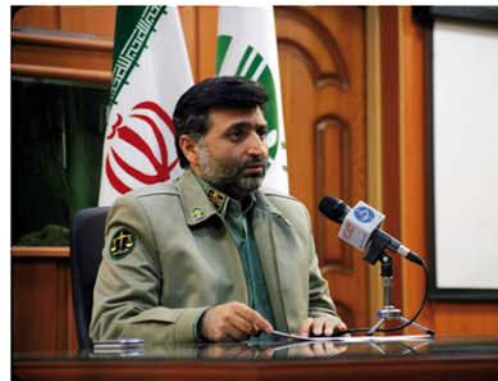
Mr. Amir Abdoos
General Director of Guilan DOE



Guilan province is a fresh Greenland, luxury of God, with a lot of water body caused by precipitation. There are so many rivers, ponds, wetlands, fertile and cultivated land in this province. Among these mentioned blessings of God, wetlands are a complex of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystem which includes the most reproductive, complicated and sensitive habitats in the province.

The ecosystem of the wetland is strongly affected by water regime in watershed area and catchment so that by any change in water regime, all biological aspects, and biodiversity of ecosystem will change. If human developmental activities remain some additional effects, it can be impossible to rehabilitate the ecosystem and it is difficult to make ecological balance. If we define biodiversity as possibility of separating the gene, species, and habitat, such biodiversity can be easily found in the wetland. International Anzali Wetland's complex ecosystem and the outstanding biodiversity it supports make it one of the most significant wetlands in the Northern hemisphere.

Recommencement of the JICA Project can contribute to clarifying the forgotten aspects of the Anzali Wetland management and finding its undisclosed problems. The project also intends to promote the sustainable and wise use of the Anzali Wetland area. I wish success to everyone involved in the project.



Message from the Chief Advisor of the Project

Mr. Shin-ichiro Tanimoto
JICA Expert Team



How do you find importance of nature? Forestry, fishery, tourism or wildlife habitat? Those functions are

obviously important for people.

Nature provide various services to human (it is recently called "ecosystem services"), and the economic value of the services all over the world was estimated at US\$ 33 trillion (about 330 quadrillion Rials) per year (Natural Capitalism, 2000, Paul Hauen, Amory B. Lovins, L. Hunter Lovins), and the global value of wetland ecosystems was estimated at US\$ 14.9 trillion (about 150 quadrillion Rials) per year ([http : // www. ramsar. org/ cda/ en/ ramsar- info- pack- avail- able- on / main/ ramsar/ 1% 5E20595 _ 4000_ 0 __](http://www.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-info-pack-available-on/main/ramsar/1%5E20595_4000_0__)).

The value of the Anzali Wetland is a part of it.

The Anzali Wetland is the core of the nature in Guilan province. The complex nature must generate huge benefit. The Anzali Wetland Ecological Management Project is establishing the basic management system for the wetland conservation. We, JICA Expert Team that has been dispatched by The Japan Government in order to support the project, would like to endeavor to proceed with the project activities so that we would maintain the precious benefit from the wetland for our children and descendant.

Outline of the Project

Background

The Anzali Wetland has an area of around 190 km² and is located on the southern coast of the Caspian Sea. It was registered as a Ramsar site in June 1975 in accordance with the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance. However due to range of influences related to human activity, the Wetland has been degraded, and in 1993 the Anzali Wetland was listed in the Montreux Record as it was necessary to be restored.

Under such situation, and upon the request of the Government of Iran, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) implemented "the Study on Integrated Management for Ecosystem Conservation of the Anzali Wetland" between February, 2003 and March, 2005.

As a next step, the Government of Iran asked the Government of Japan to consider a technical cooperation project for implementing the main components out of the six components proposed in the Master Plan. In response to the request of the Government of Iran, the Government of Japan decided to conduct "the Anzali Wetland Ecological Management Project" in February 2007, the Project commenced in November 2007.

Although the Project was interrupted from October 2008 in the middle of the project implementation stage, the intention of recommencing of the Project was shown to the Government of Japan by the Government of Iran in January 2010, and the Project was restarted in April 2011. It will last until July 2012.