



Activities of the Domestic Ramsar Committee for Relevant Municipalities (Japan)

～ Network of municipalities for the conservation of Ramsar Sites ～

【 Voluntary network of municipalities 】

Aim

To promote wetland conservation at the regional level and contribute to the wise use of wetlands, by means of promoting information exchange and cooperation between municipalities with Ramsar Sites or other wetlands

Activities

1. Training on the conservation and use of Ramsar and other wetland sites
2. Lobbying and petitions to raise funds for Ramsar Convention matters
3. Support for activities that increase the number of domestic Ramsar Sites
4. Cooperation in Ramsar Convention-related activities implemented by municipalities in their respective regions, etc.



Establishment History

- First Meeting held in Kushiro City, Hokkaido in June, 1989 in preparation of the 5th Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention (COP5) in 1993.
- Meeting was voluntarily attended by 8 municipalities associated with the 3 Ramsar Sites at the time: Kushiro-shitsugen, Izu-numa and Uchi-numa and Kutcharo-ko.
- Objectives included inviting COP5 to Kushiro, exchange of information and opinions on the promotion of conservation of Ramsar Sites, lobbying to the government on issues relating to Ramsar Site conservation, etc.



Administration

- Chair, vice-chair and auditor municipalities are elected for 3-year terms. Chair municipalities assume the role of secretariat.
- Meeting types:
Principal Member Meeting (Annual, representative-level)
Municipalities Meeting (Triennial, mayor-level)



Membership

- “Membership is open to mayors of Ramsar Sites, etc. in agreement with Committee objectives” (Committee regulations). Membership is voluntary.
- Membership: 53 municipalities (as of July, 2012)

Data (Figures are taken following COPs)

Year	2008	2012
Ramsar Sites	37	46 (9 new)
Relevant prefectures	20	27 (7 new)
Relevant municipalities	62	76 (14 new)

【 Place for CEPA among Municipalities: Education and Exchange event 】

As municipality representatives often change positions after just a few years, there were difficulties in retaining knowledge and experience, as well as maintaining relationships between municipalities. In response, the Committee organizes symposia, site visits and workshops for representatives and groups, providing a forum for learning and the exchange of opinions and information.



Aim

- To harbor cooperation among relevant parties in the wise use of wetlands, and promote activities and regional revitalization
- Particularly in recent years, emphasis has been on information exchanges to promote the creation of wetland conservation and use plans



Implementation

- “Learning and Exchange” activities are held in conjunction with Principal Member and Municipalities meetings. During these, lectures by wetland conservation and use specialists are interspersed with groundbreaking examples of conservation and wise use policy shared by municipalities.



History of Education and Exchange event

1. Kaga City, Ishikawa 16-17 January, 2010
Theme: Cultivating and enjoying wetlands
Adopted document: Kaga Message
2. Takashima City, Shiga 5 August, 2010
Theme: Wise use of wetlands and regional regeneration
3. Naha City and Tomigusuku City, Okinawa 17-19 October, 2011
Theme: Striving for the revitalization of the environment, people and communities through wetland tourism



Results of each session are summarized in a report and distributed to each municipality.

【 2011 Learning and Exchange in commemoration of the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the Ramsar Convention 】

17-19 October, 2011 Naha City and Tomigusuku City, Okinawa

Day 1: “Ramsar Convention 40th Anniversary Symposium”

Theme: Striving for the revitalization of the environment, people and communities through wetland tourism

Outline

- Sharing understanding of the history, current state and challenges of initiative throughout the country
- Discussion of the next decade for municipalities and Japan, leading up to the 50th anniversary of the Ramsar Convention

Content

Lectures from 5 experienced Ramsar Site conservation and use practitioners, including 2 lead municipality representatives

- Keynote Address 1: “Ramsar Convention and Biodiversity: History of the COP and the theme of COP11”
Mr. Yoshihiro Natori, Executive Director, Wetlands International Japan
- Keynote Address 2: “Ramsar Convention, Tourism and Regional Revitalization: Regeneration of Katano-kamoike, Shibayama-gata and Katayamazu Hot Spring”
Mr. Shuichi Teramae, Mayor, Kaga City
- Case study 1: “Wise Use and Ecotourism in Kushiro City: Regional revitalization and international cooperation”
Mr. Yoshikatsu Kikuchi, Secretary General, Kushiro International Wetland Centre
- Case study 2: “Takashima, Headwater of Biwa-ko Strategy” and Regional Revitalization”
Mr. Kiyoji Nishikawa, Mayor, Takashima City
- Case study 3: “Use, Current State and the Future of Manko”
Mr. Kazuo Nakamura, Chair, Council for Nature Conservation of Manko Tidal Flat



The participation of municipalities and various initiatives are indispensable in the promotion of the purpose of Ramsar Site designation. In the future, in addition to increasing membership of newly designated Ramsar Site municipalities, the Committee will strive to create a forum for municipalities to learn together about, and implement the conservation and use of wetlands.

An opportunity to consider CEPA

Over 100 people participated in the symposium, who from a familiar tourism perspective contemplated the conservation and wise use of wetlands, as well as the Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness (CEPA) required to achieve it.

Day 2: Excursion and group work in Manko



Site visit to Mankoii



Group Work to apply lessons learned in other wetlands



Sharing opinions on the symposium and excursion, and thoughts on the conservation, restoration, wise use and CEPA of Manko



Discussion on “Applying conservation, restoration, wise use and CEPA in each Ramsar Site”



Discussion and presentations on expectations for the Domestic Ramsar Committee for Relevant Municipalities and the national government

