

## S07-2 Inventory of sites important for birds in Asia

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**Abstract** The Important Bird Area program in Asia was launched at the first Pan-Asian Ornithological Congress, Coimbatore, India in November 1996. Since then several international and regional workshops have been held. Almost all countries in Asia are working on identifying IBAs and compiling information. More than 2 000 sites have been nominated so far, and a summary book focusing on the status and conservation needs for maintaining these sites is to be published in mid-2003.

**Key words** Important Bird Areas, Asia

### 1 Introduction

The Important Bird Area (IBA) program for Asia is a conservation project of BirdLife International. It was launched at the first Pan-Asian Ornithological Congress, Coimbatore, India, in November 1996, when the compilation of the BirdLife International Asian Red Data Book was underway (1995–2001).

### 2 Structure and procedures

Since the launch of the Asian IBA program, a series of international and national workshops have been held for instruction of the IBA criteria, discussion of potential IBAs and the building of a network of compilers:

- Tokyo, Japan (October 1997): International workshop.
- Genting Highlands, Malaysia (February 1998): Workshop for Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia.
- Irkutsk, Russia (March 1998): Workshop for Russia.
- Phnom Penh, Cambodia (March 1998): Workshop for Cambodia.
- Changhwa, Taiwan (August 1998): Workshop for Taiwan.
- Bangkok, Thailand (November 1998): Workshop for Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar.
- Beijing, China (December 1998): Workshop for Mainland China and Hong Kong.
- Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia (July 1999): Workshop for Mongolia.
- Seoul, South Korea (August 1999): Workshop for South Korea.
- Bogor, Indonesia (August 1999): Workshop for Indonesia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.
- North-western India (September 1999): Workshop for India.
- Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia (October 1999): Workshop for Mongolia.

- Genting Highlands, Malaysia (October 1999): International workshop.
- Penang, Malaysia (August 2001): Workshop for Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei.
- Yangon, Myanmar (December 2001): Workshop for Myanmar.

IBA workshops were also held concurrently with Red Data Book workshops in the Philippines in 1995 and 1996, before the Asian IBA Program was officially launched.

More than 200 ornithologists and conservationists have participated in these workshops. With the exception of several countries with which BirdLife International has not yet developed contacts, the IBA data have been collected by BirdLife partners and affiliates, and by participants in the workshops.

The overall progress of IBA compilation in Asia is coordinated by the Wild Bird Society of Japan (BirdLife partner in Japan), which is also the major fund-raiser for the IBA Program in eastern Asia. The Royal Society for Protection of Birds (BirdLife partner in the United Kingdom) is coordinating and providing funds for IBAs in South Asia as well. BirdLife Asia Division Program Offices in Bogor and Hanoi are coordinating the compilation of IBAs in Indonesia, Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, and Vietnam. The BirdLife Vietnam Program Office has also undertaken a thorough revision of IBAs in Indo-China.

### 3 Results

Most countries have finished the first stage of producing preliminary lists of IBAs. To date, 2 114 IBAs have been identified in Asia (Table 1), covering a combined area of probably over 2 000 000 km<sup>2</sup>. This represents at least 7% of the total area of Asia, excluding Central Asia and the Middle East which have their own IBA programs. The size of IBAs varies from 337 920 km<sup>2</sup> (Changtang Plateau, Tibet),

which is slightly larger than Vietnam) to 4 ha (Okhla, India) and 200 m<sup>2</sup> (Camp O'Donnel, Philippines). About 40% (841 sites) of IBAs in Asia receive no protection in any form at all, while many of the remainder are not fully protected or properly managed.

## 4 Discussion

Compilation of IBAs in Asia is ongoing, and their numbers and total area are expected to increase. A synopsis summarizing the first stage of the IBA program will be published in 2003. But it will take several more years to publish

a full inventory of Asian IBAs comparable to those for Europe (Heath and Evans, 2000) and Africa (Fishpool and Evans, 2002). However, two IBA inventories have been published, for the Philippines and Taiwan, and others (e.g., for Nepal) are in preparation.

## References

- Fishpool LDC, Evans MI, 2002. Important Bird Areas in Africa and Associated Islands: Priority Sites for Conservation. Cambridge: BirdLife International.
- Heath MF, Evans MI, 2000. Important Bird Areas in Europe: Priority Sites for Conservation. Cambridge: BirdLife International.

**Table 1** Number of IBAs identified in Asia as of August 2002 (Figures subject to change)

Country or territory	Number of IBAs (number protected in parenthesis)	Area of IBAs (ha)
Russia (east of the Yenisey River)	124 (53)	>1 277 520
Mongolia	32 (13)	>2 698 794
Japan	193 (115)	>556 143
North Korea	33(25)	262 882
South Korea	37(20)	101 882
China (Mainland)	422 (277)	109 128 761
China (Taiwan)	53 (32)	652 677
China (Hong Kong)	2 (2)	>3 150
China (Macao)	1 (1)	80
Vietnam	65 (28)	>1 619 052
Lao PDR	44 (31)	?
Cambodia	39 (14)	?
Thailand	72 (56)	5 125 753
Myanmar	52 (17)	8 030 300
Pakistan	64 (47)	4 089 043
Nepal	25 (15)	2 521 400
Bhutan	14 (11)	>997 800
India	313 (198)	>6 844 913
Bangladesh	23 (9)	108 262
Sri Lanka	112 (96)	>325 898
Maldives	1	?
Malaysia	70 (51)	3 777 700
Singapore	4 (4)	>2 545
Brunei	?	?
Philippines	117 (65)	>2 189 722
Indonesia	202 (93)	21 491 689
East Timor	?	?