

IUCN Resolutions on the Yellow Sea – status, progress and way forward

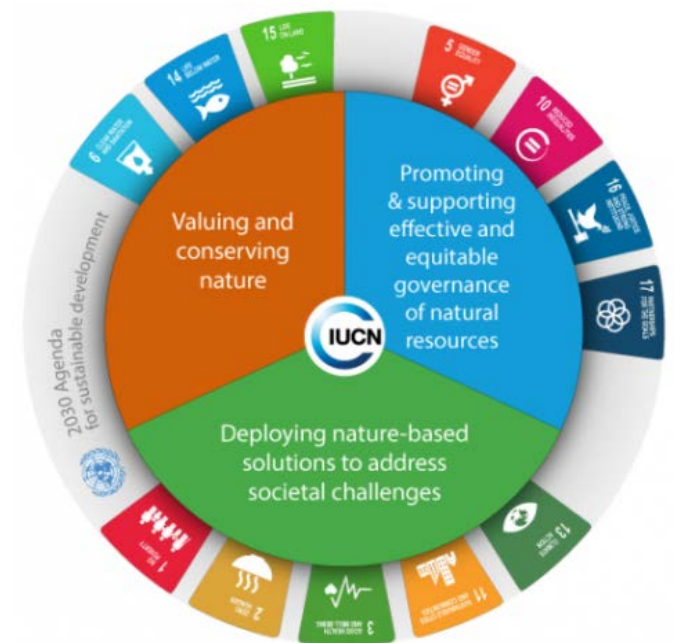
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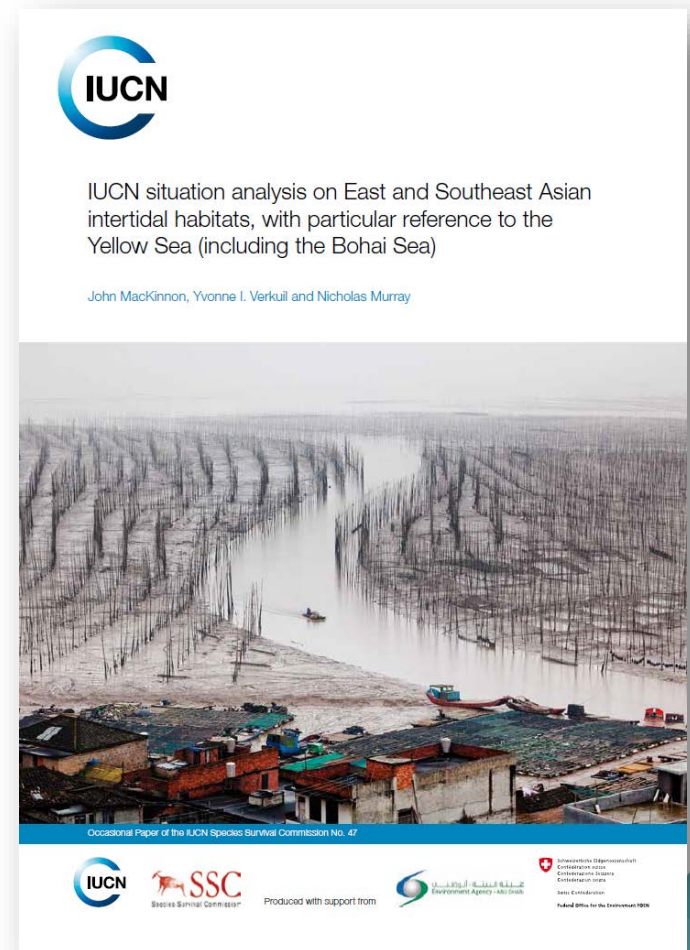
IUCN

- Founded in 1948, IUCN is an inter governmental organisation and the world's largest global environmental organization.
- A unique democratic Union with more than 1,200 State and NGO Member organizations in 160 countries.
- Headquarter based in Gland, Switzerland;
- The leading provider of the latest knowledge about biodiversity, with more than 16,000 experts and scientists.
- The only environmental organisation with official Observer Status at the UN General Assembly.
- PRC and RoK a state member; MoLEP in DPRK is government agency member



IUCN situation analysis on YS intertidal habitats – Mud matters !

In 2012 IUCN Species Survival Commission and IUCN Asia commissioned an independent report to assess the state and conditions of intertidal habitats along the EAAF in response to growing concerns expressed by IUCN over observed declines in biodiversity, loss of ecological services, and an increase in ecological disasters;



IUCN situation analysis – Mud matters ! But how much ?

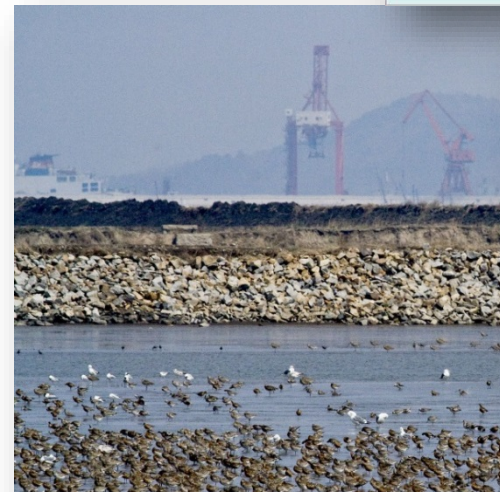
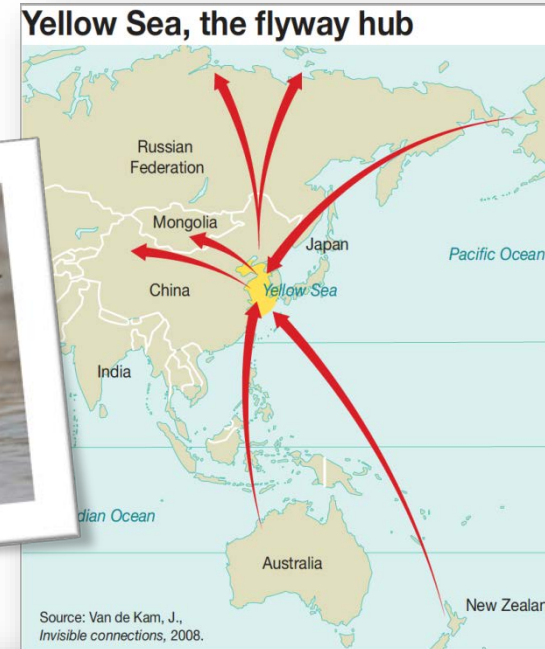
One of the largest area of intertidal flats on the planet; it provides ecosystem services such as food, shoreline stabilization, protection from storm events, maintenance of biodiversity;

- Study by the Korean Ocean Research and Development Institute (KORDI 2006) : US\$32,660/ha/annum ,
- Ecosystem service values for 170 km² of intertidal flats planned for reclamation in Xinghua Bay, Fujian, China, were estimated at US\$38,235/ha/annum with an estimated loss of value of US\$8,250/ha/annum if the land were reclaimed for agriculture or ponds.
- Service values exceeding at least US\$30 billion per annum for the Yellow Sea. Estimate that the historical loss of 51% of China’s coastal wetlands resulted in an annual loss of US\$46 billion.



IUCN situation analysis – Mud matters for birds !

- ✓ Crucial staging area for migratory waterbirds in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway (EAAF) with millions of individuals during their annual migration;
- ✓ Important breeding area for several waterbirds and during the northern winter for over a million waterbirds, most of them;
- ✓ Critically threatened by a wide range of pressures, resulting in their degradation and destruction, especially through unprecedented rates of conversion; around 66% of intertidal wetlands in the Yellow/West Sea have been lost in the past 50 years;
- ✓ Populations of a number of migratory bird species have recently declined sharply.



World Conservation Congresses 2012 and 2016

- ✓ Held once every four years, the IUCN WCC brings together several thousand leaders and decision-makers from government, civil society, indigenous peoples, business, and academia, with the goal of conserving the environment and harnessing nature based solutions;
- ✓ Resolutions voted by members (governments and NGOs)



- **Resolution 26:** Conservation of intertidal habitats and migratory waterbirds of the EAAF, especially the Yellow Sea, in a global context;
- **Resolution 28:** Conservation of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway and its threatened waterbirds, with particular reference to the Yellow Sea;
- **Resolution 51:** Improving conservation and sustainability of the Yellow Sea.



Summary of Resolutions

IUCN members approved Resolution 026 - Conservation of intertidal habitats and migratory waterbirds of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway, especially the West/Yellow Sea, in a global context.

- ✓ Urges governments to increase protection and conservation of sites on the YS including calls for a consideration of the possibility of nominating a trilateral World Heritage Site for the intertidal zone of the West/Yellow Sea;
- ✓ Encourages governments along the EAAF to enhance implementation of the EAAFP Collaborative Work Programme for Shorebird Conservation;
- ✓ Urges Parties to the Ramsar Convention to consider additional needs and priorities for remaining tidal flats at national, regional and global scales;
- ✓ Support the YSLME (review of SAP, support to its implementation).

Implementation of Res 26 – National Dialogues



Implementation of Res 26 – Working Group for the Conservation of the Yellow Sea intertidal wetlands

“Initiate the development of a joint transboundary cooperation mechanism to enhance the conservation and management of the intertidal wetlands of the Yellow Sea.”

- Ministries of DPRK, PRC and ROK responsible for the conservation and management of coastal wetlands and biodiversity;
 - NGOs and experts;
 - IUCN, EAAFP, RRC-EA and the Ramsar Secretariat;
- ✓ Strengthen survey and knowledge sharing on tidal flats;
 - ✓ Implement awareness and outreach programmes at international and national levels;
 - ✓ Facilitate common approaches to the protection, restoration, management of intertidal wetlands;
 - ✓ Act as a point of liaison with other ministries, projects, facilitate a coordinated approach with regard to international conventions;

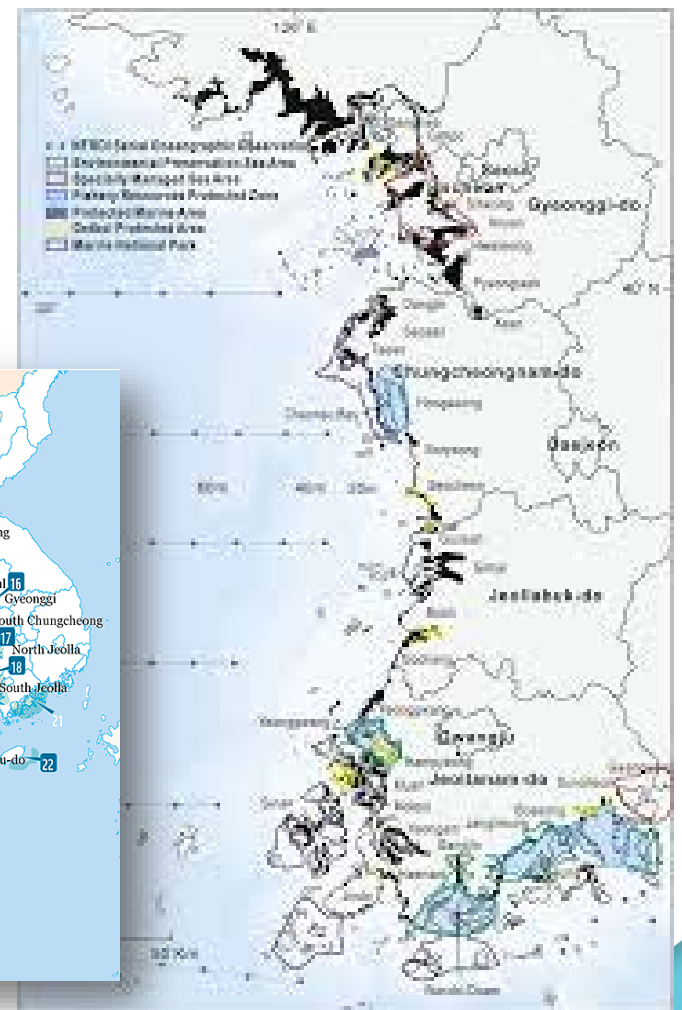


Implementation of Res 26 – The Yancheng symposiums 2017 and 2018

1. Agreement on a China coastal wetlands conservation alliance was made, to coordinate the efforts of all sites in the serial World Heritage nomination to complete nomination and implement effective management plans;
2. The guarantee of inclusion of Tiaozini in phase 1 of the proposed World Heritage nomination was announced, ensuring the conservation of what is the most important site for Spoon-billed Sandpiper in the world;
3. Creation of the Yancheng wetlands institute and a number of Memorandums of Understanding with International organisations ;



Implementation of Res 26 – Yellow Sea and World Heritage



Implementation of Res 26 – Policy

“Illegal and irregular reclamation activities caused a number of problems to marine ecosystems and lawful businesses” and that “those effects have become a major public concern, so the administration decided that reclamation would be closely looked at in its annual inspection last year.”

Gu Wu, head of SOA’s National Marine Inspection Office – 2018



The spoonbill sandpiper is among the endangered shorebirds that could benefit from China's move to protect coastal wetlands. TONY CHOI

China moves to protect coastal wetlands used by migratory birds

By Erik Stokstad | Jan. 30, 2018, 5:20 PM

China has armored its coastline over the past several decades, building sea walls and turning more than half of its marine wetlands into solid ground for development. The impact on the almost 500 species of migratory birds that rely on this habitat has been severe. But the tide is turning in favor of wildlife, conservationists believe, as the government is now moving to tighten regulations and designate new reserves to protect coastal wildlife.

- ✓ the government will nationalise reclaimed land with no structures built on it and will halt reclamation projects that have yet to be opened and are against national policies
- ✓ all structures built on illegally reclaimed land and that have seriously damaged the marine environment will be demolished.
- ✓ the central government will stop approving property development plans based on land reclamation and will prohibit all reclamation activities unless they pertain to national key infrastructure, public welfare or national defence.
- ✓ local authorities will no longer have the power to approve reclamation projects

What's next ?

- Update IUCN Situation Analysis on East and South East Asian Intertidal habitats with particular reference to the Yellow Sea;
- Support an assessment of ecosystem services provided by intertidal wetlands;
- Joint workshop/work conference of coastal wetlands managers;
- Development of a (digital) map of the currently protected intertidal/coastal wetlands Yellow Sea to include all nationally and regionally protected areas;
- Support a joint strategy on site conservation on the Yellow Sea (Ramsar, Protected Areas, World Heritage)
- Establishment of twinning project within the YS for nature conservation and management between selected areas;
- Lead the drafting of a new Resolution for WCC;

YSLME and Resolution 26 – Which cooperation ?