

Asian Development Bank

Scaling up the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Initiative at COP 26



2 November 2021 | 10:30–11:45 a.m. (GMT)
MDB Pavilion

Nature for the first time is one of the key themes for a climate COP with the message now clear that to solve the climate crisis focus must also be on safeguarding ecosystems and protecting natural habitats. Wetlands, of all the world's ecosystems, are arguably under most threat with 85% estimated to have been removed by 2000 according to the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). To address this continuing decline at the start of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and in this super year for nature, ADB is launching a major new Regional Flyway Initiative (RFI). It will support the conservation and restoration of wetlands, the protection of migratory waterbirds, and the benefits these have on livelihoods in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway. ADB, in collaboration with the East-Asian Australasian Flyway Partnership and key delivery partner BirdLife International, will work with stakeholders and developing member countries to identify priority wetlands of international importance for migratory waterbirds that can also deliver key ecosystem services, such as climate resilience as well as supporting local livelihoods. The strategic goal will be to develop investment projects for 50 priority wetland sites totaling \$3 billion investment for implementation beyond 2030. The proposed event will introduce the RFI and set out the opportunities that investing in wetland restoration, sustainable management and protection can provide, both for biodiversity as well as people.

SESSION FORMAT:

Moderator: **Warren Evans, ADB**

- High-Level Panel Discussion: (40 minutes)
 - » **Bruno Carrasco, ADB (in person)**
 - » **Patricia Zurita, CEO, BirdLife (in person)**
 - » **Carlos Manuel Rodriguez, CEO, GEF (in person)**
 - » **Khwankhao Sinhaseni, Conservation Manager, Bird Conservation Society of Thailand (BCST) (CSO) (virtual)**
 - » **Alex Zhang, Coastal Wetland Forum and Eco Foundation Global (virtual)**
- Discussion and Q&A
- Closing Remarks

OBJECTIVES:

- Showcase the RFI from ADB as a major new initiative under ADB's Nature Positive Investment Roadmap which will deliver many of the goals set out in the MDB joint nature statement to be launched at COP26.
- Build momentum from the RFI launch event at COP15 to establish the RFI as a key mechanism for DMCs to deliver on climate commitments.
- Demonstrate the opportunities presented by the RFI to deliver key ecosystem services and livelihood support as well as delivering for migratory waterbirds and other biodiversity values.
- Engage with DMCs to communicate the RFI to central government and to establish the regional nature of the initiative and build consensus from all parties around a common vision for the sustainable management and protection of priority sites along the flyway.
- Mobilize additional partnerships, especially potential financing partners to support the RFI, particularly for the proposed sustainable financing mechanism.