

Sixth Workshop of the Regional Strategy for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of High Andean Wetlands

La Paz, Bolivia, 23 September 2009 – The Ramsar Secretariat and the Bolivian Ministry of Environment and Water jointly organised the Sixth Workshop of the Regional Strategy for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of High Andean Wetlands in La Paz, Bolivia. The workshop's main focus was on the evaluation of the Regional Strategy and the implementation of its regional projects. CMS Information and Capacity-Building Officer, Francisco Rilla, CMS's main focal point for Latin America, participated in this event, which took place from 21 to 24 September 2009.



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The Regional Strategy is a conservation approach for the Andean region, which was initiated by Ramsar, following a resolution from 2002. Participating in the Strategy are associated countries, organisations like WWF, BirdLife International and IUCN and technical networks, such as the High Andes Flamingo Conservation Group (GCFA). The Strategy's six specific objectives include regional capacity-building, the improvement of scientific knowledge of High Andean Wetlands and awareness-raising campaigns.

Although CMS does not yet belong to the "Contact Group" of countries and organizations, its participation was well appreciated. CMS has been involved in the conservation of the High Andean region for many years via its three Latin American Memoranda of Understanding, the MoU on the Conservation of High Andean Flamingos and their Habitats, the MoU on the Conservation of the Ruddy Headed Goose between Chile and Argentina and the MoU on the Conservation of Southern South American Grassland Birds. During a one-hour presentation, CMS was given the chance to set out its conservation strategies in Latin America and to discuss future actions with the other participants.

Another topic highlighted during the workshop was the implications of climate change for the High Andean region. As the melting of glaciers is progressing

rapidly, all stakeholders, ranging from political decision-makers to local communities need to act and respond to the new challenge.

During a field trip to the Titicaca Lake, at 3810 metres the world's highest navigable fresh water lake, the workshop participants had the chance to speak to the community leaders about the sustainable use of their homeland ecosystems, which they rely on for their livelihood. The ecosystem services provided by the Andean Wetlands are not unlimited and their sustainable use is essential for the survival of all species in this region.