

The ICF

Bugle

Inspiring a Global Community

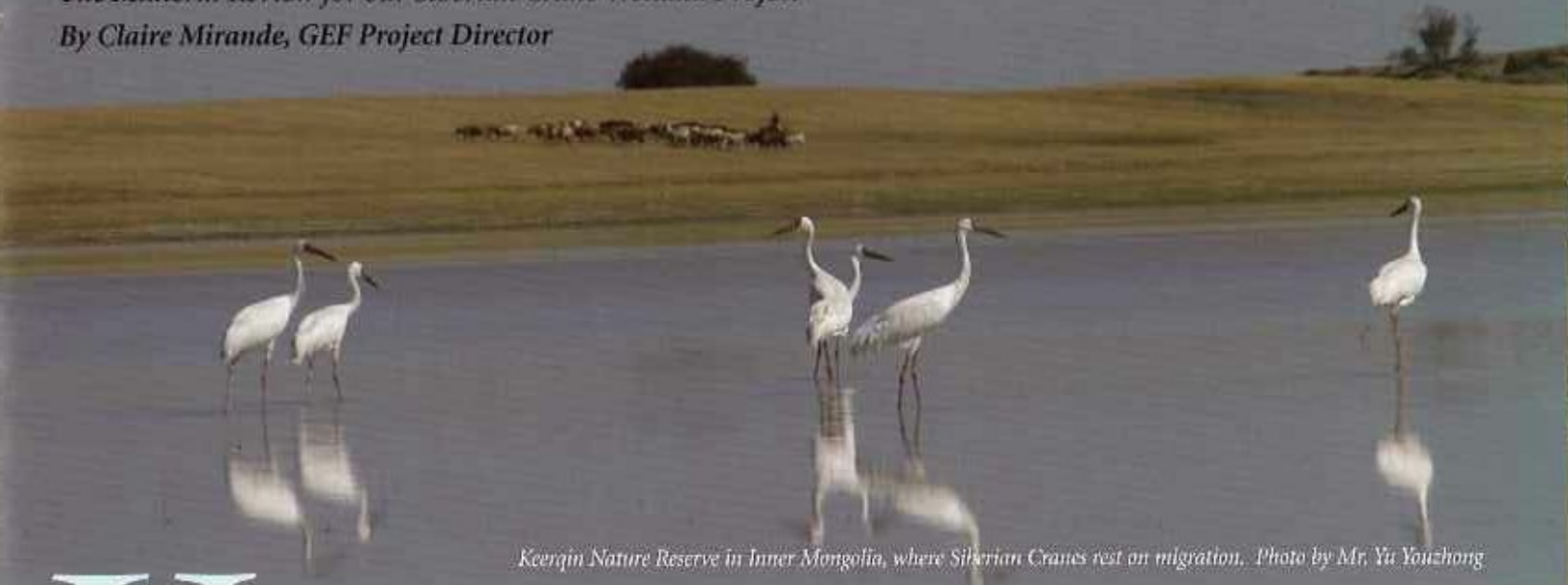
Volume 32, Number 4

November 2006

Safeguarding a Chain of Important Wetlands

The Midterm Review for our Siberian Crane Wetland Project

By Claire Miranda, GEF Project Director



Keerqin Nature Reserve in Inner Mongolia, where Siberian Cranes rest on migration. Photo by Mr. Yu Youzhong

Using the charismatic and culturally significant Siberian Crane as a flagship species, the UNEP/GEF (United Nations Environment Programme / Global Environment Facility) "Siberian Crane Wetland Project" began in 2003. ICF is working with the governments of four countries — China, Iran, Kazakhstan, and Russia — to develop a coordinated approach towards the conservation of internationally important wetlands along two flyways of the Siberian Crane. The project runs for six years. This summer, at the project mid-point, UNEP brought in an independent reviewer who guided us through a midterm review.

We are pleased to report on achievements. In China, in response to growing water shortages for wetlands in Northeast China, our project team obtained support from diverse government sectors to develop water and wetland restoration plans for project sites. We expect, early in 2007, that a high-level meeting will be convened to discuss coordination

of water management for both human and ecological needs.

Virtually 99% of the world's Siberian Cranes winter in the Poyang Lake Basin. To develop an informed response to threats from water development projects, comprehensive wintering waterbird surveys and applied research are underway. These studies look at the fragile relationships between water levels, water plants, and waterbirds. To provide better long-term protection for cranes and other waterbirds throughout the lake basin, a network of 15 county level protection stations has been developed. Additional protected areas have been established, with total area increasing from 150,000 to over 201,900 hectares (about 500,000 acres). One of the new sites, Nanjisan (33,300 hectares), is waiting for final approval as a national nature reserve.

In Russia, the Sterkh Foundation's work on raising public awareness has been exemplary. Activities included an international festival, films, booklets, statues, and a nine-story high Siberian Crane painted on an

Continued on page 2

Follow the Whooping Cranes

Would you like to receive email updates about the status of the Whooping Cranes in the eastern flock including the 2006 Direct Autumn Release? Please send your email address to ICF's Web Editor Ann Burke at aburke@savingcranes.org



Richard Urbanek, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



apartment building! Colleagues in Yakutia are conducting research and monitoring on the breeding population and speeding up efforts to identify and protect important migratory stopover sites. Reforms within the Ministry of Agriculture have led to loss of staff and budget for federal level wildlife refuges (zakazniks). Our project team is working with both federal and regional agencies to craft creative solutions to allow continued protection at the main Siberian Crane sites in West Siberia during this difficult transition.

In Kazakhstan, project implementation started nearly two years behind schedule due to government restructuring, but has boldly accomplished much. The team has developed innovative solutions to protected area reform and expanded the boundaries for the Naurzum Nature Reserve from 32,400 to over 191,000 hectares (472,000 acres). They have produced a variety of high quality publications and developed curricula for schools. The government has recently signed the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

In Iran, the government designated a Non-Shooting Area and Ramsar Site to afford protection to the wintering grounds of the Siberian Crane on the private rice fields (damgahs) and traditional duck trapping areas in Fereydoon Kenar. Duck trapper associations are meeting regularly, with significant progress towards community dialogue and participation. Along the Caspian Sea, Bujagh National Park was established to protect important migratory bird habitat at the Sefid Rud River Delta.

ICF has worked with these four countries to strengthen international research and protection activities along the two flyways. A crane site network has been approved in Western and Central Asia under the CMS Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the Siberian Crane and in cooperation with Wetlands International. Site nomination criteria and procedure have been approved and a list of sites developed with nine range countries. Highly popular and outstandingly creative Crane Day Celebrations are held at over 60 sites in nine countries inspiring children, local communities and governments, as well as potential donors.

The midterm review helped us to evaluate and revise our plans for the remaining three years. As we continue activities at site, national, and regional levels, we are seeking mechanisms that will enable key accomplishments to be sustained after the end of the project. We are deeply grateful to our colleagues in China, Iran, Kazakhstan, and Russia who have made these successes possible.

For more information see www.sicwp.info and www.sibeflyway.org.



Thoughts from ICF President Jim Hook . . . the Indianapolis Prize, and launch of ICF's 2006 Annual Campaign

On August 22, 2006, we were thrilled to learn that our co-founder and close colleague, George Archibald, had been awarded the inaugural \$100,000 Indianapolis Prize and the accompanying Lilly Medal in honor of more than 30 years dedicated to saving the world's cranes.

The Prize was initiated by the Indianapolis Zoo "as a significant component of its mission to inspire local and global communities to celebrate, protect, and preserve our natural world through conservation, education and research. This biennial award will bring the world's attention to the cause of animal conservation and the brave, talented and dedicated men and women who spend their lives saving the Earth's endangered animal species."

In making the announcement at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., Indianapolis Zoo President and CEO Michael I. Crowther said, "George is an icon in animal conservation. With his revolutionary work and dedication to the preservation of cranes, there is absolutely no question that the population is stronger because he is their champion. He is a true hero and we are honored that he is the first recipient of the Indianapolis Prize."

In accepting the award, George recognized the efforts and contributions of many people in the field including the dedicated staff, board of directors and supporting constituents of the International Crane Foundation. Without hesitation, he made the decision to invest the entire \$100,000 Prize in ICF, to provide "a shot in the arm for our wonderful people." Specifically the funds will be allocated to a broad range of ICF initiatives:

- Africa Program
- Sandhill Crane Research
- Muravioyka Park, Russia
- Lumbini Crane Sanctuary, Nepal
- China Crane News
- Russia Crane News
- ICF operations



I know all ICFers join me in extending our congratulations to George for this significant recognition by the conservation community. We are happy for George and proud to be part of the organization he founded.

As we consider our 2006 Annual Campaign, "Enriching Our Alliances," and our key educational and communications initiatives, we need to focus on one of ICF's greatest strengths — the charismatic cranes. They have enabled ICF to attract and involve remarkably diverse individuals and organizations to a common cause. These alliances are key to our long-term vision for finding effective solutions to the severe challenges facing cranes and the places they live. Our success depends on learning from these partners as we implement

solutions, as we train and involve others globally, and as we share the lessons among our colleagues on five continents. Over the years George has led ICF in pursuit of this vision in some of the world's most remote and sometimes hostile locations.

Support ICF's 2006 Annual Campaign "Enriching Our Alliances"

As you read this issue of *The ICF Bugle*, we will have already launched our Annual Campaign, soliciting much needed support from ICF constituents, most of whom are in the United States with 70% in the upper Midwest. **Your contribution will be doubled by challenge grants that this year total \$300,000 generously provided by the Makray Family Foundation, the Eugenie Mayer Bolz Family Foundation, ICF's Board of Directors and George's Indianapolis Prize.**

These are exciting times at ICF, and we all look forward to a successful 2007.

A Cash Feather in His Cap

Crane conservationist George Archibald of Wisconsin is to get a \$100,000 award

By Frederic J. Frommer
Associated Press

WASHINGTON -- George Archibald, co-founder of the International Crane Foundation will receive the inaugural \$100,000 award from the Indianapolis Zoo for conservation of an animal species. He said he'll plow the money back into the Wisconsin-based foundation to aid crane recovery efforts in Africa, Asia and North America.

"I feel that I'm one of many, many people in this field, and I represent a whole team of people," Archibald said Monday, a day before the zoo was to announce the award at the National Press Club.

The prize is being funded by Eli Lilly & Co.

Archibald, 60, co-founded the crane foundation in Baraboo, Wis., in 1973, and it has helped with recovery efforts of birds ranging from the whooping crane in North America to the Siberian crane in Asia.

Archibald has managed to build interest in cranes and galvanize it into action, said Michael Crowther, president and CEO of the Indianapolis Zoo.

"He built a constituency of people who are interested in cranes who didn't know they were interested in cranes until George persuaded them of that," Crowther said.

Citing Archibald's work in Afghanistan, Africa, Asia, and the Arctic, Crowther

added, "If there's any border, George makes it his business to cross it."

In this country, Archibald's work has focused on the whooping crane, the tallest bird in North America. In 1941, there were only about 20 whooping cranes left.

The foundation is working with other groups in a 5-year-old effort to establish a second migratory flock of the endangered birds, this one migrating between Wisconsin and Florida.

The flock now numbers just over 60; the goal is to create a flock of about 125 birds, including 25 breeding pairs.

The birds raised in captivity are taught their migratory route by following ultra light aircraft from the Necedah National Wildlife Refuge in central Wisconsin to a refuge in central Florida, where they spend winter.

"Then on some magic day in April or late March, they soar up into the sky, and they leave for Wisconsin, arriving back within a week -- all on their own, without any human assistance," Archibald said.

He estimates there are about 450 whooping cranes in North America -- the 60 in the flock he's helping to build up; 220 in a flock that migrates from Canada to Texas; a non-migratory flock in Florida that numbers about 50; and 120 in captivity.

There are 14 other types of cranes in the world, in Asia, Africa and Australia -- and 10 are endangered, Archibald said.

Of particular concern are three populations of Siberian cranes that breed in the Russian Arctic and migrate to Iran, India and China.

Archibald is working with authorities in Afghanistan and Pakistan to secure the flyways so that the birds are not killed.

Archibald's work has also focused on the demilitarized zone between North and South Korea, where endangered cranes and other wildlife have benefited from the half-century stand-off by finding an area off-limits.

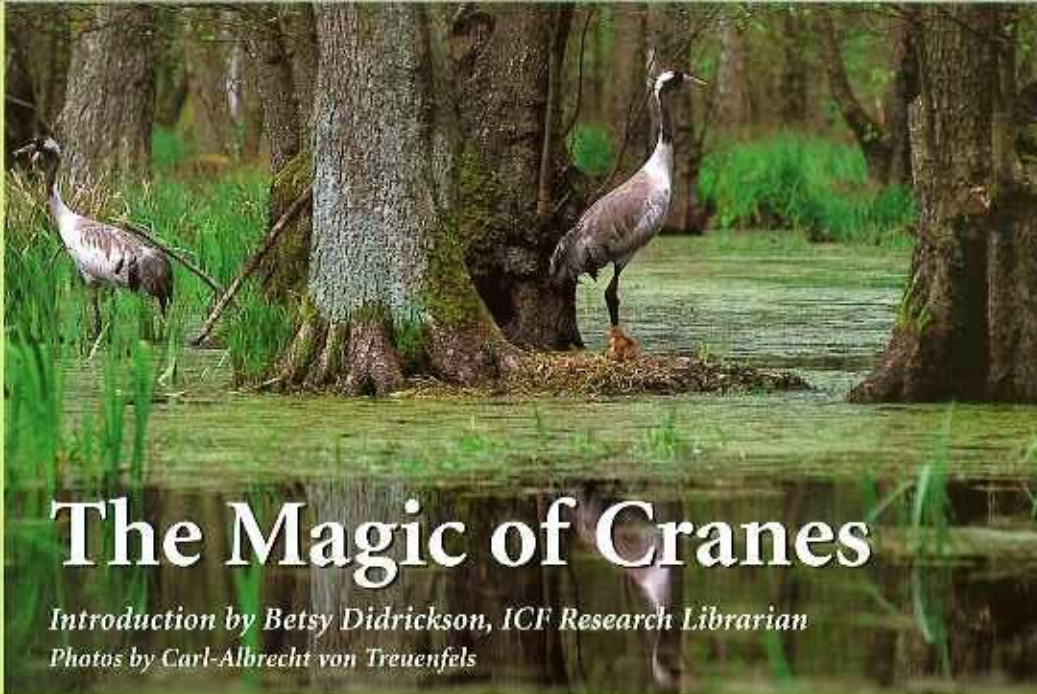
Archibald said he had an interest in birds since childhood, then learned of cranes' vulnerability during his studies at Cornell University.

"So I felt a real burden for that group of birds because they're very beautiful," he said.

Visit the "What's New" section on www.savingcranes.org to view an inspiring film clip about George's work, ICF and the Indianapolis Prize.

ICF Co-founder George Archibald checks on Slidell, a Grey Crowned Crane that lives at ICF. George is donating his entire prize to ICF's 2006 Annual Campaign to inspire matching contributions from members. Photo by Betsy Didrickson

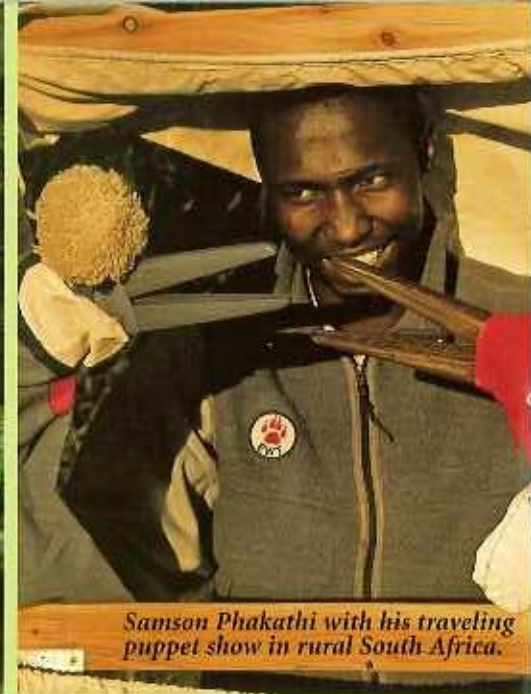




The Magic of Cranes

Introduction by Betsy Didrickson, ICF Research Librarian

Photos by Carl-Albrecht von Treuenfels



Samson Phakathi with his traveling puppet show in rural South Africa.

One of the most rewarding aspects of my job as the research librarian at the International Crane Foundation is the opportunity checking and proofreading the manuscript, or in this case, reviewing the translation into English. The Magic of Cranes was originally written by a long-time crane enthusiast, past president of WWF Germany and an ICF Board Member. He has devoted over forty years to the study of cranes. I contacted the translator Matthew Gaskins in Berlin and emails flew fast and furiously for the next few weeks. I realized the crane world had a new resource: a comprehensive book on cranes, lavishly illustrated with fantastic photos combined with well-written, personal pieces. All wrapped into one book on my favorite topic – cranes! The translation from German came out brilliantly, as demonstrated by the quality of the text in Carl's writing along with the extraordinary photographs in this book showcase cranes in a way we've not seen before. It's mag

From *The Magic of Cranes*, Carl-Albrecht von Treuenfels writes:

For decades now, my sense of the seasons, my appointments book, vacation and travelling schedules, work habits, and visits to, or by, friends have all been determined to a considerable extent by cranes. It all began—albeit on a small scale—during my schooldays in the Duchy of Lauenburg, in the German state of Schleswig-Holstein. It was there, near my rural home, that a few Eurasian Cranes (*Grus grus*) had built their nests (photo above left). In the 1950s they belonged to a group of only about twenty to thirty breeding pairs of this species that were left in western Germany. Their departure in autumn and their subsequent return from their winter quarters in what seemed to me at the time to be mystical and far distant locations 'some-

where in Africa', moved me as much as their clearly audible—yet, at the time, rarely observable—courtship rituals in the springtime.

Each year, when long lines and V-formations of these large birds would pass over our farm in March and April, I was always overcome by a strange longing for the distant, deserted marshes and forests of Scandinavia and Eastern Europe. And in the autumn, I would accompany them in my thoughts on their passage 'to the tropics'. Only later did I learn that these imaginings were wrong. And yet, a fair amount of the mystery and magic that surrounded these creatures when I was a child still mesmerizes me today. Although I have, for forty-five years now, followed the fifteen species of cranes to the remotest corners of the planet and witnessed field work conducted with cutting-edge technology, these elegant birds still enchant me just as

I am not the only one to have succumbed to their spell. All over the world, there are growing numbers of self-proclaimed 'craniacs' sharing their observations, experiences, and knowledge. Their interest in cranes and commitment to the birds' well-being and survival have connected them to people all over the world—across cultural, social, political, and linguistic divides. Indeed, the cohesive force behind this network—with people contacting one another and starting new initiatives—is our shared concern for the fate of these 'birds of happiness'.



Grey Crowned Cranes in Africa.



Peace cranes at Sadako monument in Japan.

“help” crane books along their journey to publication. This task usually entails factually published in Germany in 2005. The author, Carl-Albrecht von Treuenfels is a study and protection of cranes. At Carl’s behest, we began communicating with the ever seen a book quite like this. As a librarian, I was delighted at the prospect of this trays of the cranes—a coffee table book, reference work, travelogue, and a memoir the charming translation of the poem at right. The knowledge and passion

...

much as when I was a young boy.

The internet has empowered this unique global community dedicated to the study of cranes. Data and news concerning the appearance and disappearance of particular flocks during the migratory season are exchanged; color combinations of leg rings and coordinates beamed from transmitters on the backs of individual cranes are passed on. The more comprehensive and effective this information network gets, the clearer it becomes how the well-being and fate of these birds are linked to the human condition. This realisation may be related to the fact that cranes are ‘birds the size of humans’, as the Sami of northern Scandinavia put it. But it almost certainly stems, as well, from the cranes’ dependence on intact wetlands—which humans also need as water reservoirs. These large birds have therefore become flagship species for comprehensive preservation

efforts concerning natural resources upon which humans, animals, and plants depend. During the past fifty years, many cranes have been forced, at least during certain seasons, to change from being creatures wary of civilization to animals dependant on farmers’ crops and food from humans. As a result, cranes have, in many places, become more accessible to people. Above all, the increasing numbers within certain crane species have led to the reappearance of these birds in locations where, for many years, they had been absent.

During their seasonal migratory flights, the cranes pass over an increasing number of areas and cities where their V-shaped flocks had long since disappeared and their trumpet calls been silent. It is, however, only a minority of the fifteen species of cranes that thus draws attention to the family of cranes as a whole. Eleven species are considered to

Continued on page 6

The Magic of Cranes

*The cranes they fly in sharp formation
Across the grey autumnal sky
This fragile line, this navigation
Their voices, coarse, we hear on high.*

*Southwest they soar, their long parade
To unknown lands where they will stay.
They fly persistent, unafraid
With stars at night to show the way.*

*The firmament with voices rings;
They tell of ease and tell of pain.
It is as if their souls could sing
Quite happy, then quite sad again.*

*The large birds know how far along
And where their trip will take them,
But I must wait and miss their song
Until next spring awakens.*

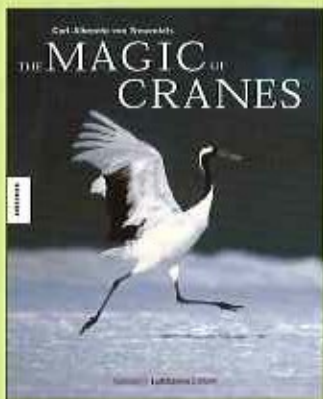
*When in the winter for them I yearn
My heart so often hopes they will
Be yearning, as I am, to return
Back home, this valley, so tranquil still.*

*And then one day I hear their call,
A duet crossing from the moor
An end to icy winter’s pall.
Their calls of love unlock spring’s door.*

*Luck, one says, is what their art is,
As heralds of fate on heavenly wing.
Are they the souls of our departed?
Then let them live, for joy they bring!*

Continued from page 5

be endangered or even threatened with extinction, a situation that requires a different kind of attention from humans—one that is not always immediately apparent to the public at large, but is often all the more passionate. Cranes are ambassadors of nature, whose majestic appearance and distinctive calls encourage us to see that there are other unique beings in this world—beings that also have a right to exist.



This book is available on the ICF Website, www.savingcranes.org (click on SHOP) or by calling 608-356-9462 x. 117 for \$50.00 + \$7.50 shipping in the continental U.S. Proceeds help ICF enhance its alliances around the world. Thank you for your thoughtful purchase. Hardcover, 240 pages with nearly 200 color photographs.

Lufthansa

ICF's Official Airline

Lufthansa German Airlines has often assisted Carl-Albrecht von Treuenfels in his crane travels, and also helped some of the field projects described in his book (see pages 4-5 of this issue). We are grateful to Lufthansa for the generous help over many years to the cranes and to ICF. Lufthansa will be providing ICF with 100 copies of Carl's book, to assist with our crane work!

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This year ICF had 24,265 visitors. ICF's Education Department gave 8,858 individuals and 5,970 school children guided tours. We'd like to thank the Education Department and Giftshop staff for doing a terrific job hosting visitors and introducing them to the cranes of the world. For more information about group tours in 2007 contact the Education Department office at 608-356-9462 ext. 127.

The ICF Bugle is the quarterly newsletter for members of the International Crane Foundation. ICF was founded in 1973 by Ronald Soney, Ph.D (1948 - 1987) and George Archibald, Ph.D. Bugle comments or questions? Please write Kate at kate@savingcranes.org or P.O. Box 437, Baraboo, WI 53913

Editor: Kate Fitzwilliams
Memberships are vital to ICF. Please join or give a membership to a friend at the following annual rates:

Student or Senior Citizen.....	\$25
Individual.....	\$35
Family.....	\$50
Associate.....	\$100
Sustaining.....	\$250
Sponsor.....	\$500
Patron.....	\$1,000
Benefactor.....	\$2,000

Conservation in the bag

The Phu My Lepironia Grassland Conservation Project

By Dr. Tran Triet, ICF's Director of Southeast Asia Programs



When I first visited floodplain grasslands of the Ha Tien Plain in 1997, I saw a vast, diverse, and relatively undisturbed region that flowed from fresh to brackish to salt water as the plain gradually sloped from the Mekong River to the Gulf of

Thailand. What I also saw was the first stage of rapacious development with no end in sight. Shrimp farming was big business and lands were rapidly being converted from pristine wetland to salty shrimp ponds. Though governments, local farmers, and NGOs like ICF all understood this form of development followed a boom and bust model, all felt powerless to stop it because no alternative models existed. ICF's Phu My project evolved from that incongruent landscape.

By 2000 ICF had completed surveys of the Ha Tien Plain and we had identified the most important wetland areas existing in the region. We met with the government in 2001 and, though important wetland areas were designated on maps, it did not reduce wetland loss significantly. By 2003, ICF shifted its focus to a small area of remaining wetland near the village of Phu My and we decided to concentrate upon a very different process.

Phu My village, located in the far southwestern corner of Viet Nam, is now home to 4,945 acres of wetland that supports the last extensive remnant of the *Lepironia* grassland ecosystem in the Mekong river delta. Though the Phu My wetland is important for biodiversity conservation it also provides an economic base to the Khmer ethnic minority who harvest *Lepironia* for the production of woven goods and have lived in this region for centuries.

Phu My is among the poorest villages in Viet Nam and weaving, using the wetland plant *Lepironia*, is a traditional livelihood activity of its local people. ICF was awarded a World Bank Development Marketplace grant in 2003 and with additional funding from the International Finance Corporation and the Department of Science and Technology of Kien Giang Province, the Phu My *Lepironia* wetland conservation project or "Ha Tien - Habitats - Handbags" was established. Our goal was to protect this important wetland by implementing an innovative model that integrated nature conservation with improving daily income of local people whose livelihood depended upon harvesting natural resources from the wetland.

The project began by successfully convincing the Kien Giang provincial authority to grant protection status for the Phu My wetland. Under protected status, however, access to the wetland was

organized so that local people could learn and pursue a more sustainable approach to harvesting the wetland's natural resources. People had been making large rice drying mats out of *Lepironia* and this process required a great amount of raw material and time. In addition, *Lepironia* was considered an open resource so many people would come from distant areas to harvest the vegetation. Before the project began, resource extraction was unsustainable with or without development of shrimp farms.

Members of the project team worked with villagers to provide skill training to make fine handcraft products like hats, handbags and storage bins from the harvested *Lepironia* instead of drying mats. Once the product was established, our team assisted the community in marketing and selling their products to tourists and higher-value export markets.

After one year of on-the-ground operation, the project has provided skill training for 150 people and employed 32 full-time workers. Out of 350 families living in the project area, 200 of them are making handcraft products for the Phu My project, increasing their daily income to 30,000 Vietnam dong (\$1.86 U.S. dollars), which is three times greater than their previous wage.

Since the protection of the Phu My wetland, conservation activities such as wildlife monitoring, invasive alien species control and wetland restoration are occurring. Phu My villagers have excluded the Phu My wetland from outside harvesters. Degraded grasslands were restored and illegal land encroachment was prevented. Thus, with better management and protection, families continue to increase their income while Eastern Sarus Cranes - a flagship species of the area - also rebound in their use of Phu My during the dry season.

Handbags are, therefore, responsible for improving habitats of people, cranes and the many other species needing a wetland home.

Top photo by Bao Hoa.

Early dry season (December to February) is the main *Lepironia* harvesting season in Phu My. *Lepironia* is dried and stored for use all year round.

Middle photo by Tran Triet.

For generations, *Lepironia* weaving has been a traditional livelihood activity of Phu My villagers.

Bottom photo by Nguyen Van Hung. Since the project began, the number of Sarus Cranes using Phu My has increased from sporadic occurrence to 40-45 birds (about 5% of the entire Southeast Asia population).





Photo by Carl-Albrecht von Treuenfels

Double Your Gift to Crane Conservation

by supporting ICF's Enriching Our Alliances campaign.

Thanks to the Makray Family Foundation, the Eugenie Mayer Bolz Family Foundation, ICF's Board of Directors, and George Archibald (through the donation of his recent Indianapolis Prize) **your gift will be matched 100 percent!**

Please help us meet our ambitious goal of raising \$600,000 to strengthen strategic partnerships to protect cranes and their habitats worldwide. See page 2 for more details, and use the enclosed envelope to make your gift, or call David Koehler, Director of Development, 608-356-9462, extension 140.

The Renuka and P. R. DasGupta Fund Established at ICF By ICF Vice President Jim Harris

Bibhuti R. DasGupta met us with a kind smile and quiet voice. He was looking for a home for his gift to the Earth. He offered to place in ICF's care the assets of the foundation he had created in memory of his parents, the Renuka and P. R. DasGupta Foundation. He wished for the work of this foundation to continue into perpetuity. I never knew his parents, but I am grateful that ICF can carry on their memory, and the purpose and spirit of that foundation, for the advancement of well being for disadvantaged humans, for animals, plants and for the protection of Mother Earth.

The Renuka and P. R. DasGupta Fund now rests within ICF's

endowment, and will support our efforts for cranes and the places where they live, so rich in water, plants, and wildlife. Our hope for long-term success, for the cranes, continues to depend on improving the welfare of local people as part of our vision for these rural landscapes.

We are grateful to B. R. DasGupta for his generosity and his caring for the future. Our thanks also to Barbara Cochrane, who brought us together. The Renuka and P.R. DasGupta Foundation could not have run in its past life without Barbara's meticulous work as treasurer and friend.



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See page 2