

**World Wetlands Week 2010 Celebration**  
**Victoria, Seychelles**  
**02<sup>nd</sup> – 03<sup>rd</sup> February 2010**

The World Wetlands Week 2010 celebrations in Seychelles continued on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February with a series of activities including the “adoption” of the North East Point Wetlands by the Seychelles Scouts Association (SSA) in the presence of the national and international media. Minister Joel Morgan (Minster of Environment, Natural Resources and Transport) and Mr. Anada Tiega, Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention as well as other officials of the government of Seychelles participated to the event.

The representative of SSA read a statement in which he indicated that his association would take good care of the North East Point wetland which has partly been invaded by the creepers and restore its functions.

The Wild Life Club of Seychelles organized a workshop on “zon”, a wetland local invasive at Roche Caiman Community Centre. This workshop was the occasion for young kids and some adults to show the series of objects which could be manufactured with the “zon” and other wetlands related plants.

Before this, the Ministry of Culture organized a viewing of 3D modeling at the Natural History Museum with a special focus on the importance of wetlands in the history and culture of Seychelles. The guided visits at the National Museum of Natural History this day were all articulated around the wetlands theme.

Further demonstrating the commitment of the youth of Seychelles to protect the natural environment, this third day of the celebration of WWW was the occasion to see the major importance that youngsters play in the success of wetlands conservation in the country as they were well represented in most of the ceremonies.

The Wildlife Club and Young Citizens Group of the Plaisance Secondary school, gave an excellent presentation of their knowledge on wetlands as well as of the projects they carry out over the weekends. This includes participating in wetland safaris and assisting in ongoing restoration programmes of the wetlands of the Seychelles.



*Mr Anada Tiega (Ramsar Convention, Secretary General) and Mr Luigi Cabrini (Director, Sustainable Tourism WTO) learning from the Wildlife Club and Young Citizens Group representative of the Plaisance Secondary school*

One of the major events of this celebration was the signing of a Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ramsar Secretariat and the United Nations World Tourism Organization under the auspices of the Government of Seychelles. This ceremony was followed by an interview of the Ramsar Secretary General on the National TV (Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation) on the global importance of wetlands, the theme of the WWD 2010 and the reasons for which the MoC was signed with UNWTO; the interview can be seen at [www.sbc.sz](http://www.sbc.sz)



*Mr Anada Tiega and Mr Luigi Cabrini at the signing of the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ramsar Convention and the UN World Tourism Organisation.*

The signing of this MOC provides an opportunity for all Contracting Parties to gain and share information on development of sustainable tourism strategies centered on wetlands; it cannot be denied that the wonders of their natural resources are often what draw curious individuals to nations.

Finally, the day ended with the presentation by the Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention Mr. Anada Tiega of the certificates for the designation of two wetlands (Mare aux Cochons and Aldabra Atoll) as Ramsar sites of International Importance to the Government of Seychelles. The certificates were received by Minister Joel Morgan (Minster of Environment, Natural Resources and Transport) on behalf of the Seychelles Government. The Minister handed over the Aldabra certificate to Mr. Maurice Lousteau-Lalane, Chair of the Seychelles Island Foundation Board of Trustees, which is the organization responsible for the management of the site which is already a UNESCO World Heritage site.



*Mr Anada Tiega hands over the new Seychelles Ramsar site certificates to Minister for Environment, Mr Joel Morgan.*



*Handover of the Ramsar site certificate for Aldabra Atoll to Mr. Maurice Lousteau-Lalane, Chair of the Seychelles Island Foundation Board of Trustees responsible for management of the site.*

In addition to the Seychelles Island Foundation, the Ramsar Secretary General and the Environment Minister, the ceremony was attended by Mr. Luigi Cabrini of UNWTO, Dr. Frauke Fleischer-Dogley and Dr. Nancy Bunbury of SIF, Mr. Kevin Erwin of the Ramsar STRP, Mr Didier Dogley (Permanent Secretary) and Mr Wills Agricole (General Director of the Environment/Head of the Ramsar Administrative Authority).

The 3<sup>rd</sup> of February, Day 4 of the WWW 2010 celebrations, focused on visits to the wetland sites of Mahe; specifically to the newly designated Ramsar site of International Importance 'Mare aux Cochons'.

Accompanied by Mr Terrence Vel (representative of the Wildlife Club of Seychelles) this not to be missed opportunity was taken up by Mr Luigi Cabrini (Director of Sustainable Tourism, WTO), Mr Abou Bamba (Ramsar Senior Regional Advisor, Africa), Ministry of Environment officials, Seychelles Wildlife Club members and representatives of civil society groups in Seychelles.

Located in the Morne Seychellois National Park, this Ramsar site (No. 1905) is unique in that it is the only high altitude freshwater wetland on Mahe.

Clearly demonstrated by the guides and the evident high levels of maintenance, this National Park and Ramsar site are in good hands. As informed by Mr Jean Claude Labrosse of the Ministry of Environment, it is essential now that steps be taken to ensure that the invasive species affecting Mare aux Cochons and its surrounding catchment are cleared before they irreversibly affect the ecology of this special area.