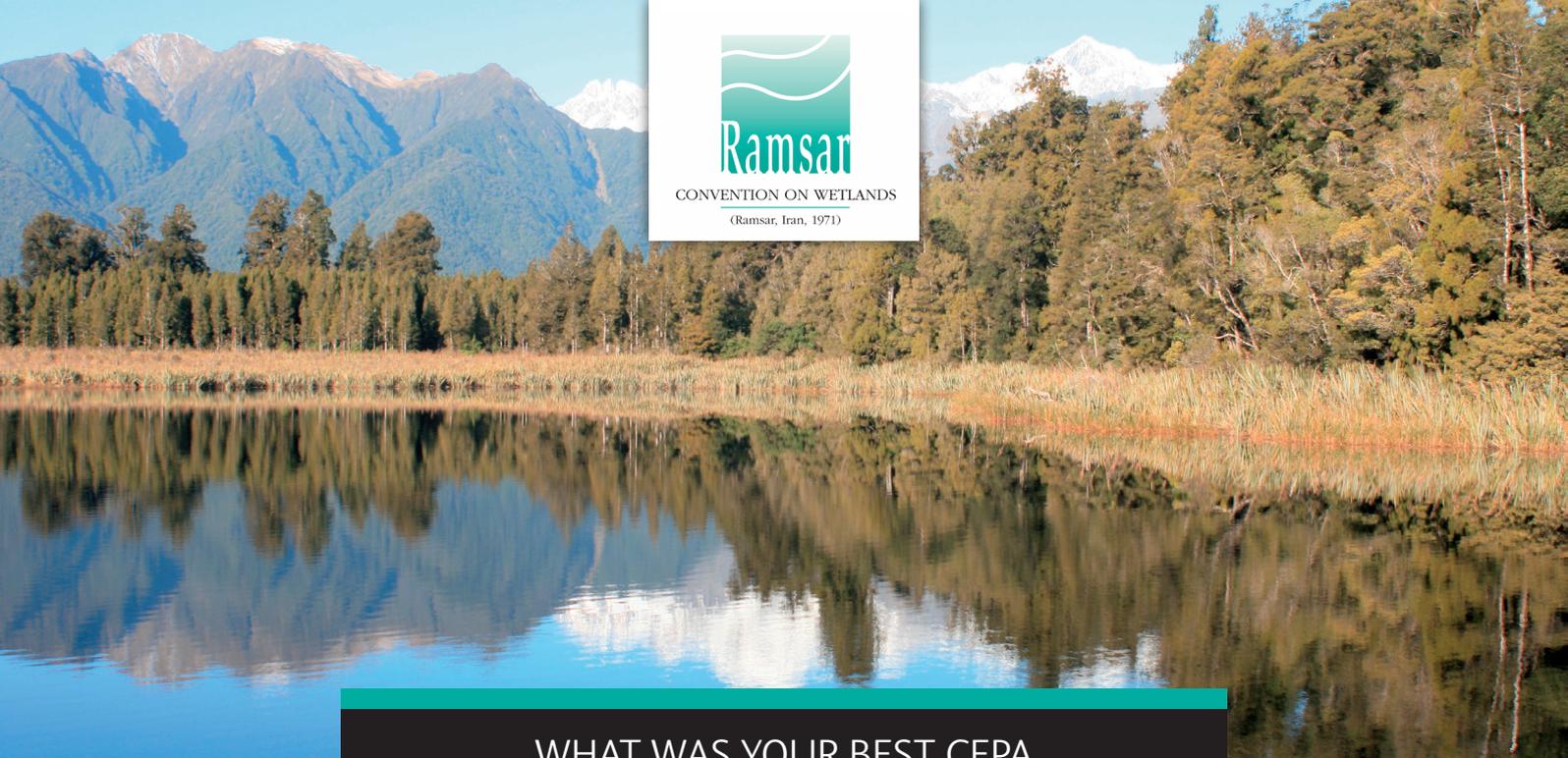




CONVENTION ON WETLANDS
(Ramsar, Iran, 1971)



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WHAT WAS YOUR BEST CEPA INTERVENTION IN THIS TRIENNIUM?

Jan Simmons

CEPA Government Focal Point, New Zealand



Your Position/Role and Country:

Ramsar CEPA Govt Focal Point,
New Zealand

Title of your CEPA activity/product

National Wetland Restoration
Symposium

Other collaborators – please identify other organizations that assisted you or were your partners

The National Wetland Restoration Symposium 2010 was organised by the National Wetland Trust, Department of Conservation, Fish & Game NZ and Environment Bay of Plenty.

Key stakeholder group(s) targeted by your product/activity (e.g. decision-makers, teachers, families, journalists etc.)

The forum brought together scientists, wetland managers, community groups, iwi (Maori), landowners and businesses.

When did this event take place/when was your product launched?

The event took place from 3 – 5 March 2010. This was the 4th National Wetland Restoration Symposium held in New Zealand.

What was your key message?

Tips and techniques for wetland management and restoration of freshwater and estuarine sites.

Jan Simmons

CEPA Government Focal Point, New Zealand

Brief description of your product/ activity / material you used

The wetland symposium is a national biennial event open to anyone with an interest in wetlands and combines a mix of presentations, technical sessions, workshops, field trips and practical training sessions. Handouts and presentation notes were available to participants (presentation notes can be downloaded from www.wetlandtrust.org.nz) with poster/displays sessions and also plenty of time for networking and informal discussion. This combination of formal and informal discussion has proved a winner, with the wetland symposium gaining interest and support as it has developed over the years.

Presentations focused on scientific research being undertaken, an overseas case study (Florida Everglades), project planning for wetland restoration, cultural perspectives, obtaining positive community involvement, as well as useful information on wetland flora and fauna. A field trip to a wetland site helped put this knowledge into perspective, with practical demonstrations on the various aspects of managing a wetland and identification of the constraints and realities wetland managers often have to face.

As a precursor to the symposium, a 24 page feature article on wetlands was published in a popular national magazine New Zealand Geographic. There was also media coverage of the symposium in local papers.

What was your intended outcome from this product/activity? (e.g. change in behaviour of target group; volunteer help with a wetland project; newspaper article)

Raising the profile of wetlands and sharing knowledge and practical techniques for wetland restoration and management for participants to learn from and apply to their own wetland situation.

What kind of impact did this activity/product have on the target audience?

There was a very positive response, with 95% of survey respondents indicating that the content of the symposium was relevant and helpful for their work and a similar percentage agreeing that it was very useful for information sharing and networking. It is not easy to strike a balance between scientific data and basic knowledge but the mix of formal and informal session seems to allow all needs to be catered for. As one participant said, it was the “most practical symposium that I have attended” and this was certainly a key objective of the organising committee.

Is there a follow-up activity/product planned, if yes briefly describe

Yes, the 5th National Wetland Restoration Symposium is being held 21 – 23 March 2012, with the theme “wetlands – are we getting it right?” Again, it will be practical forum for knowledge exchange, training and networking.

Why do you identify this as your best CEPA intervention? What makes it stand out?

The wetland symposium is an excellent forum for a wide cross-section of people involved with wetland restoration and management to share knowledge/skills, to network and raise awareness of wetlands.

What was the source of your funding?

Sponsorship and in-kind support with participants paying a registration fee. The fee was discounted for some community groups thanks to grants provided by Government agencies.



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