

<b>Name:</b>	<b>38. WHANGAMARINO WETLANDS</b>		
<b>Region</b>	Oceania	<b>Country</b>	New Zealand
<b>Ecosystem</b>	Inland water		
<b>Nature of approach</b>	Improvement in capacity, design and policy measures (incorporation into relevant policies); Implementation of EBA measures (natural resource management, protected areas)		
<b>Description of approach</b>	<p><b>Objective/Expected outcomes</b> More than 90 per cent of New Zealand's wetlands have been drained, filled or otherwise destroyed in the last 150 years. A programme of wetland restoration activities was initiated to increase the resilience of the wetland habitats in several areas across New Zealand. This was expected to reduce their vulnerability to multiple threats, including projected increases in rainfall and associated flooding expected as a result of climate change.</p> <p><b>Actions</b> -Protection of the wetlands through formal designation as Ramsar Sites (under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance). -Restoration of the wetlands, including through construction of a rock rubble weir to reinstate a hydrological regime that restores minimum water levels, and recreates a "wet/dry" seasonal cycle. -Wetland mapping based on aerial photography to delineate areas of intact wetland habitat (priority for protection) and degraded wetland habitat (priority for restoration)</p> <p><b>Results achieved</b> The restoration of Whangamarino Wetland is a long term programme, although the restored wetlands are already providing benefits. Part of the scheme on the Lower Waikato River has provided water storage functions during large floods, of which there have been several since the restoration programme began in the mid 1990's. This has resulting in avoided costs in disaster prevention and reduced damage to surrounding farmland.</p> <p><b>Lessons learned (particularly highlighting the benefits and challenges related with ecosystem-based approach)</b> Restoration of the Whangamarino Wetlands is calculated to save millions of dollars in disaster prevention through reducing the vulnerability of people to flooding.  Co-benefits include recreational activities (tourism, birdwatching, fishing), carbon sequestration, and providing water for irrigation of farmland during dry periods.  Challenges include the balancing of objectives. At Whangamarino a trade-off exists between the increased use of the wetland for flood control and the conservation of other ecosystem values. The site is of considerable biodiversity value and supports large populations of bird species, as well as providing recreational services through fishing. Management objectives need to be carefully assessed to ensure that the impacts of increased flooding (which include increased sedimentation) are balanced against the potential impacts on other ecosystem services.</p>		
<b>Type of organisation</b>	Government	<b>Name of organisation:</b>	Government of New Zealand (Department of Conservation)
<b>Further information and contact details</b>	<a href="http://doc.govt.nz/conservation/land-and-freshwater/wetlands/arawai-kakariki-wetland-restoration-programme/objectives-and-achievements/">http://doc.govt.nz/conservation/land-and-freshwater/wetlands/arawai-kakariki-wetland-restoration-programme/objectives-and-achievements/</a> <a href="http://doc.govt.nz/upload/documents/conservation/threats-and-impacts/benefits-of-conservation/economic-values-whangamarino-wetland.pdf">http://doc.govt.nz/upload/documents/conservation/threats-and-impacts/benefits-of-conservation/economic-values-whangamarino-wetland.pdf</a> Contact: arawaikakariki@doc.govt.nz		