

Introduction to the Mondi Wetlands Programme (MWP)



Why are wetlands important?

What is the Mondri Wetlands Programme?

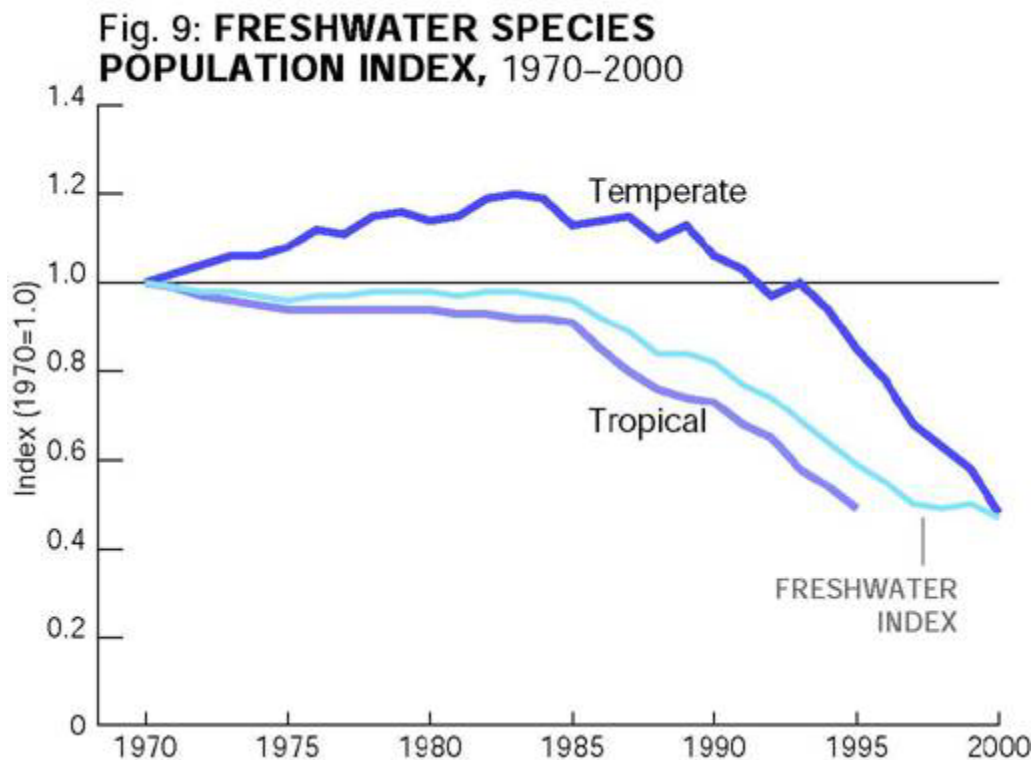
Water: a global challenge



- 1.1 billion without safe water supply
- 2.4 billion without sanitation
- 3-10 million deaths from waterborne diseases
- Freshwater ecosystems most rapidly destroyed ecosystems on earth
- Freshwater is the most species-rich ecosystem, but with greatest decline



A biodiversity crisis

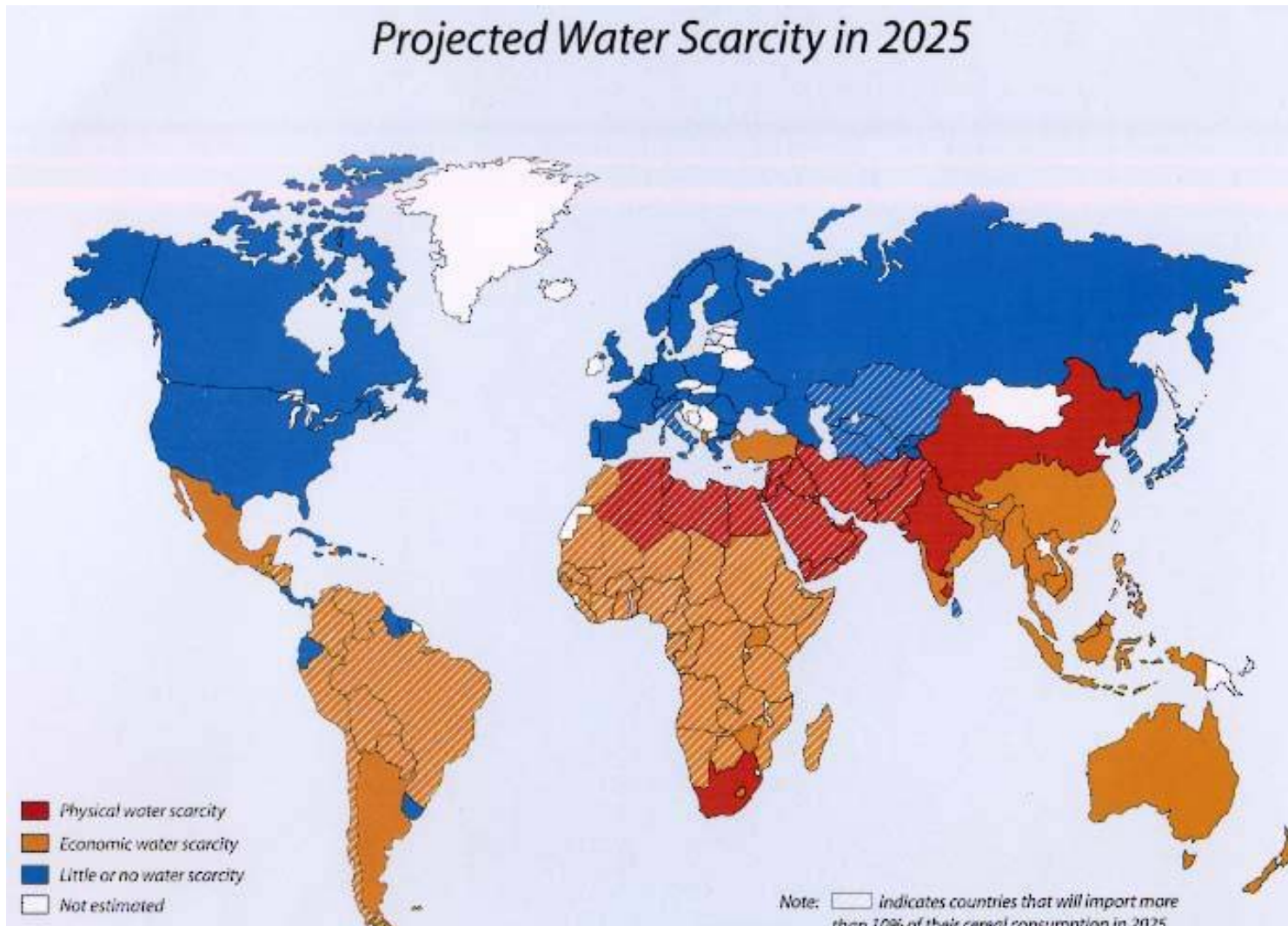


- Freshwater species losses over 50% since 1970 = greater than for forests and marine ecosystems (~ 30%)
- Severe human impacts

Water scarcity



Projected Water Scarcity in 2025

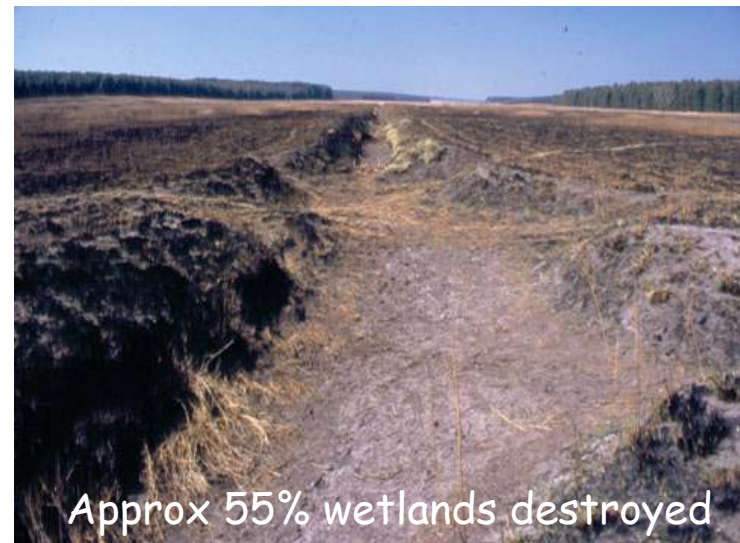
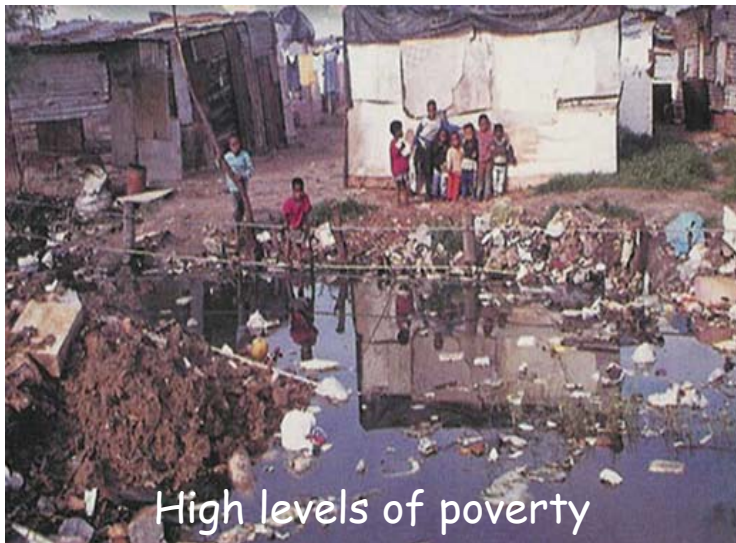
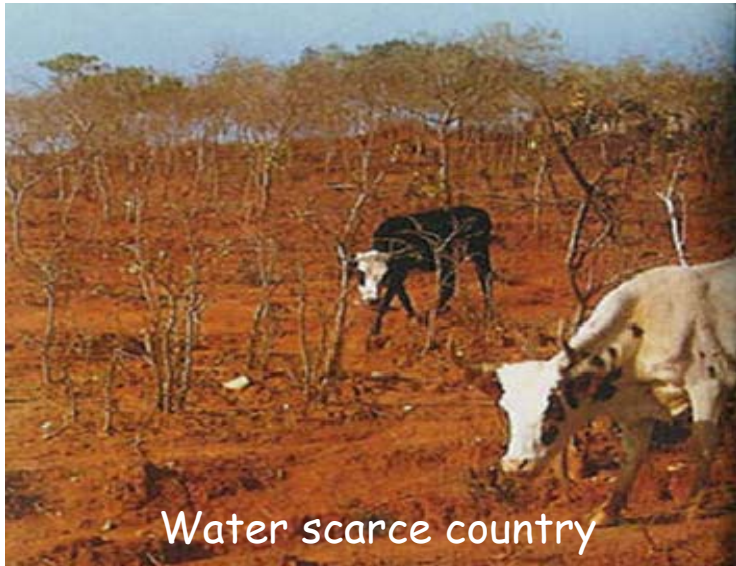


Source: IWMI

Examples of wetland types



South Africa's water problem



And wetlands manage water!

Wetlands manage South Africa's scarcest resource - WATER



They: **purify** water

store water ensuring supply in **droughts**

prevent **floods**

recharge **ground water**

control **erosion**

Wetlands **ALSO** provide natural resources for improving livelihoods,
are rich in biodiversity and havens for eco-tourism

55% of wetlands have been lost from poor land management



Erosion from cattle, roads and fire



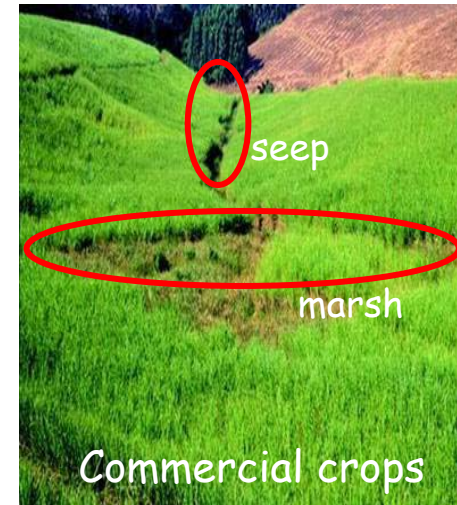
Drained for agriculture



Poorly planned plantation forestry



Pollution & urban development



Commercial crops



Continued wetland destruction leads to:

- less pure water
- less reliable water supplies
- increased flooding
- lower agricultural productivity
- more endangered species

Mondi Wetland Programme

Established in 1991



Project partners



When the MWP began in 1991, it was the only programme in South Africa to employ staff to work full time on practical wetland conservation issues outside protected areas - where most biodiversity is, and the greatest threats are.

Our mission:

To bring about social change that encourages wetland users and owners to manage their wetland resources in a more environmentally relevant manner



MWP solution to wetland challenges



- 1) Changing attitudes & practices
- 2) Working at political, top management & field levels

HOW:

By working in partnership with, and at no financial cost to:

- Communities: communal wetland users
- Government: extension services and National Departments
- Industry: plantation & sugar

By catalysing & supporting

- training
- working together
- guiding
- advising
- enthusing



MWP Programmes



1. Supporting the Plantation Forestry industry to sustainably manage its wetlands
2. Supporting Communal Wetland Users to use their wetland wisely
3. Assisting the sugar industry to apply better environmental, social, economic & agronomic practices
4. Rehabilitating wetlands (Working for Wetlands)
5. Wetland alliance for training education & research

Supporting communal wetland users to use their wetland wisely, improving livelihoods & wetland integrity



Supporting sustainable harvesting of wetland plants for building materials and weaving products



Assisting sustainable subsistence agriculture in wetlands to improve food security



Promoting weaving of conference folders from wetland plants



Conserving wetlands as a source of drinking water



Training government extension services to support communal wetland users

Assisting the sugar industry to apply better environmental, social, economic & agronomic practices



Developing a globally unique farm management system



Discouraging planting sugar cane in a wetlands



Discouraging planting sugar cane on steep slopes with no erosion control measures



Promoting better practice eg: contour ploughing controls erosion



Developing an environmentally responsible sugar "certification" system



Rehabilitating wetlands for water security, poverty alleviation and biodiversity protection



As a founding member, and a major catalyst initiating Working for Wetlands in 2000, MWP supports this R80 million a year government led initiative with free training, technical, and strategic support



Working for Wetlands employs previously unemployed people to rehabilitate degraded wetlands while:

1. Developing their marketable skills
2. Raising self esteem
3. Creating & supporting small business development



Wetland alliance for training, education & research



Developing critical thinking & problem solving skills



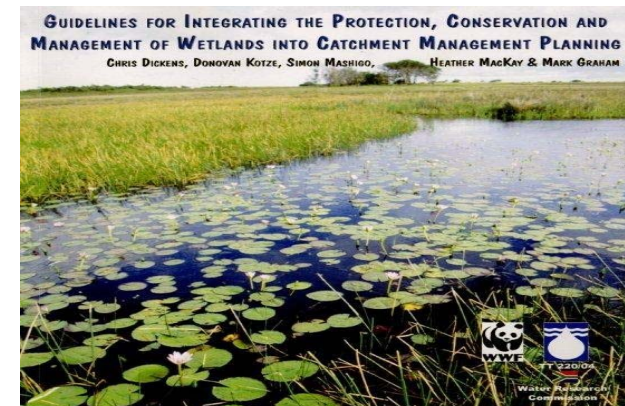
Developing professional skills & competence



Learning by doing



Task based learning



Developing applied management tools for better wetland management with partner organisations

Value of the MWP to Mondi



- Assistance to Mondi with **wetland mgt** - a requirement for international Forestry Stewardship Council certification
- Support to **mitigate impacts** of plantations on water/biodiversity
- Help to protect **water resources** on Mondi land
- Demonstrates **active land stewardship** & corporate **responsibility** by Mondi
- Helps **South Africa** succeed by funding a programme catalysing and supporting better wetland management
- Having a meaningful **partnership** with 2 environmental NGO's where all partners work together and benefit equally by working on issues of mutual concern

