

# Arctic wetland biodiversity at focus of the partnership between Wetlands International and Shell

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Wetlands International



# Wetlands International

“We safeguard and restore wetlands for people and nature”

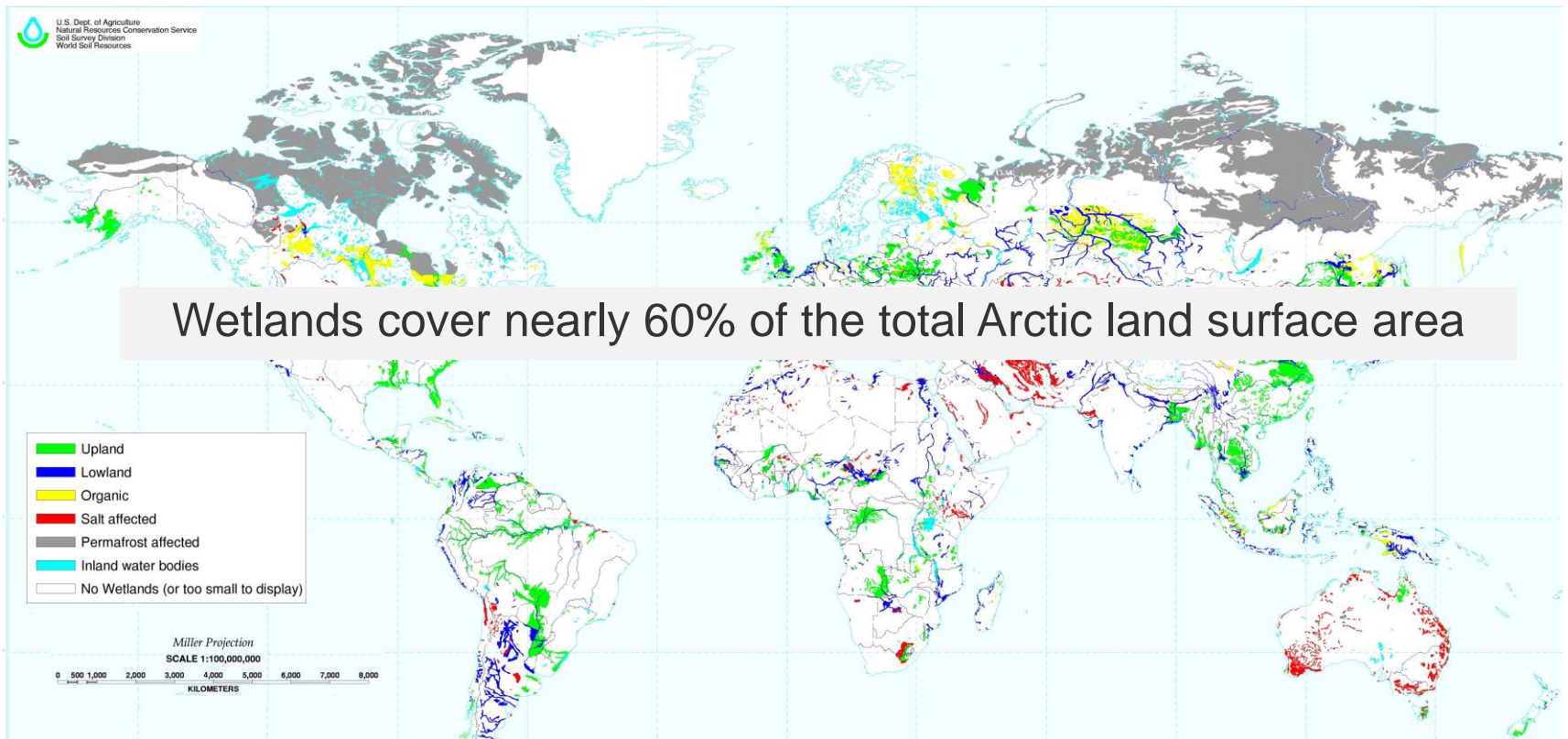


- An independent, non-for-profit NGO
- Active in around 100 countries
- People and Nature: safeguarding and restoring wetlands is urgent and vital for water security, biodiversity, climate regulation, sustainable development and human health.
- We work locally and globally on important issues
- Knowledge - Policy - Practice
- Enable others to take action



# What are wetlands?

Wetlands occur where water meets land



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## Arctic wetlands

- Permafrost peatlands
- Shallow peat tundra
- Raised bogs
- Shallow lakes
- Rivers and deltas
- Periodically flooded lands
- Coastal wetlands
- Shallow sea waters



# Wetlands International working with business

- Traditionally, focus on working with governments
- Increasingly, collaboration with corporates. Since 2008 with Shell.
  - Identify common objectives
  - Collaborate as ‘critical friend’: sometimes different positions
  - Identify risks and opportunities to:
    - reduce negative impact on wetlands
    - develop contributions to wetland conservation & restoration



# Why work together: Wetlands International

## Shell and Wetlands International partnership

- Most Oil & Gas reserves are in wetland areas
- Energy production & processing is becoming more water intensive
- Many of Shell's operations affect wetlands
- Search for oil & gas is extended into more remote and pristine areas: e.g. the Arctic
- Working with a large company can increase our influence, e.g. by:
  - identifying potential impacts at an early stage
  - contributing to alternative approaches and solutions
  - leverage for creating a level playing field
  - improve public and corporate policies and practices

# Why work together: Shell



## Shell and Wetlands International partnership

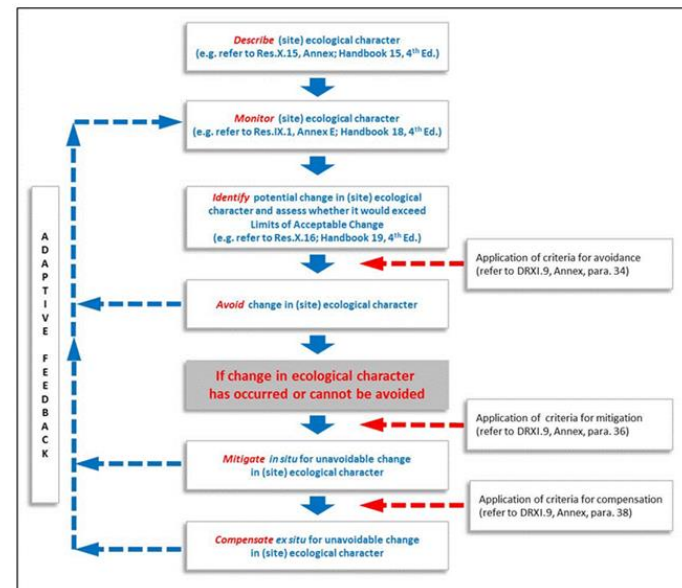
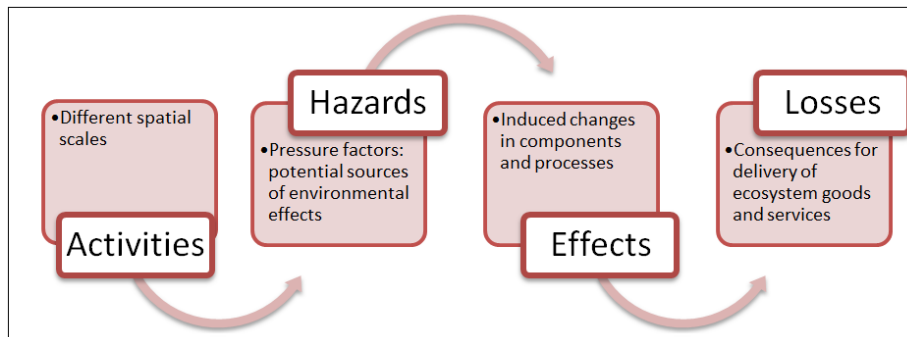
*A common goal: improve the environmental performance of Shell and the energy sector.*

### **Collaborations with NGO's help in the following ways:**

- Contribute to designing projects that minimise our environmental impact,
- Convening and providing access to experts to guide effective project delivery,
- Enhancing our employees' knowledge and understanding of sustainable development,
- Advancing scientific expertise both internally at Shell and externally across the sector,
- Trusted advisers / 'critical friends' in conversation sector to provide credibility and robust challenge.

# Wetlands International's way of working

- Develop science-based practical solutions to conservation challenges
- Test the approaches and methodologies in pilots
- Upscale innovations to the policy level
  - via national/international legislation
  - via company standards
- Upscale innovations in practice
  - e.g. by developing tools



# Focus on the Arctic

- Arctic very important for wetlands
- Large knowledge gaps in relation to wetlands in arctic
- Wetlands represent wide range of values for both people and biodiversity

Regulating services:  
e.g. maintenance of  
permafrost



Provisioning services: e.g.  
livelihoods of indigenous  
people

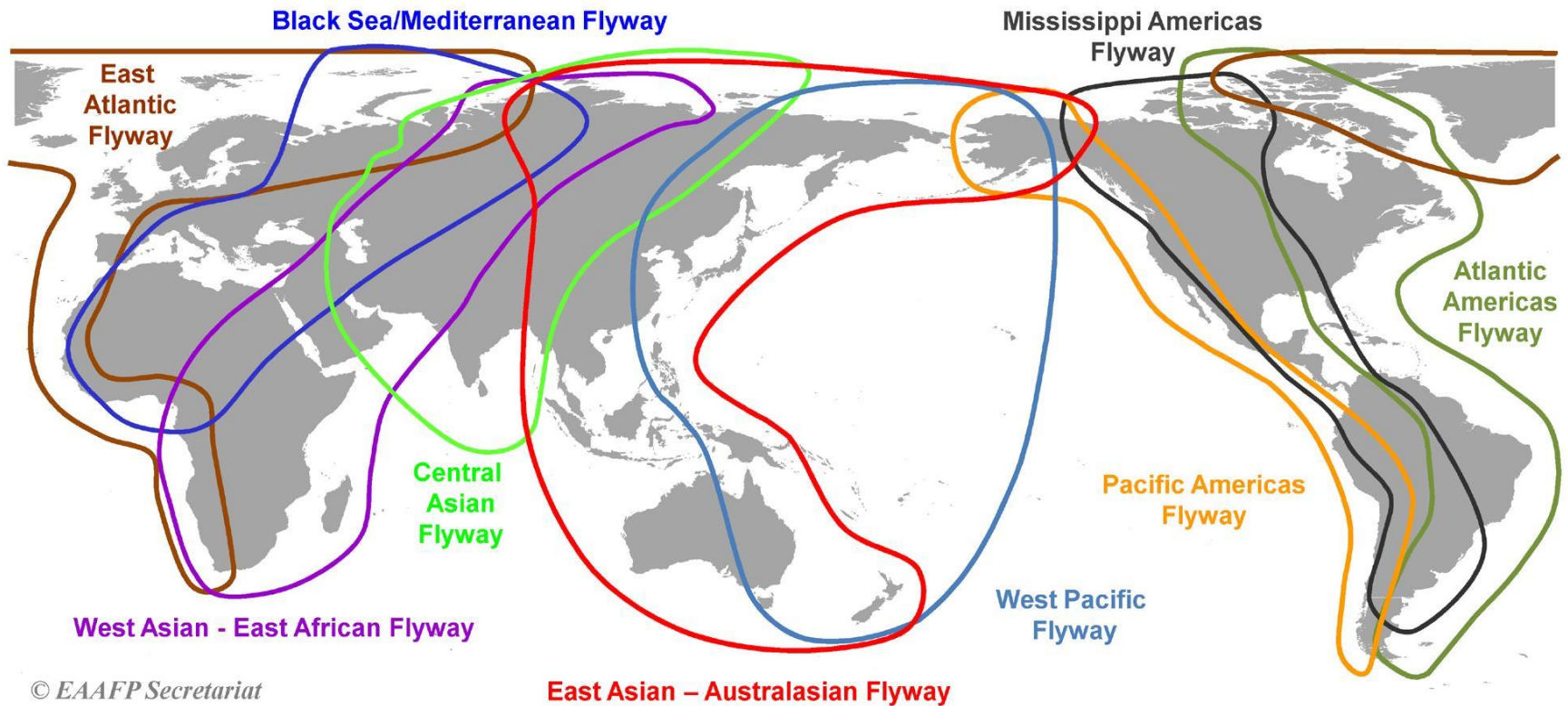


Habitats for biodiversity



# Arctic connected through flyways

## Bird Migration Routes to the Arctic



# Working with Shell in the Arctic

- We collected and analysed information on Arctic wetland diversity and associated biodiversity
- Assessed the potential hazards and impacts from oil & gas
- Described options for their mitigation and restoration

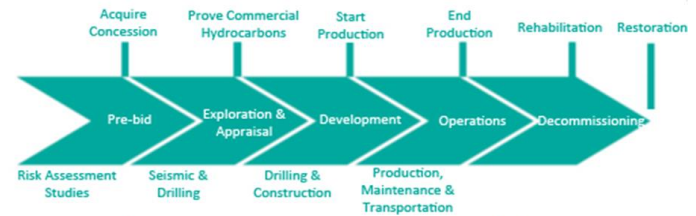
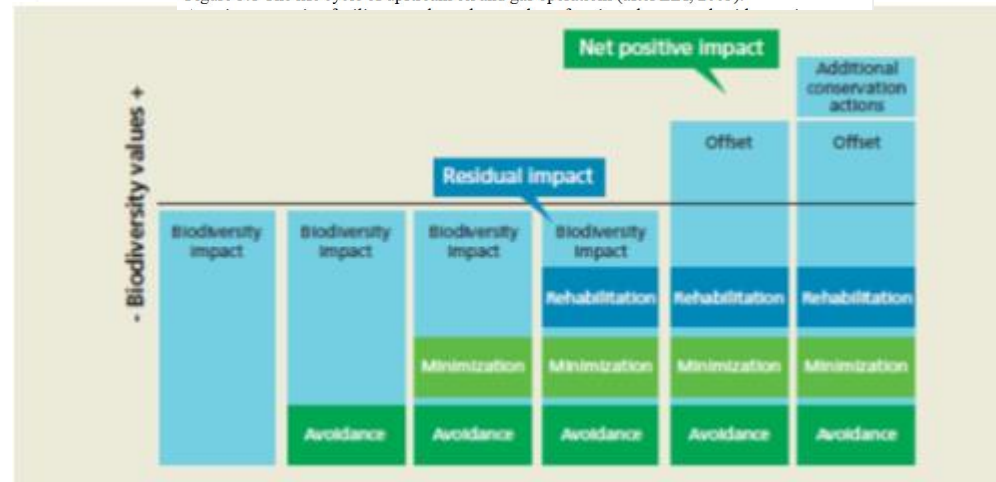
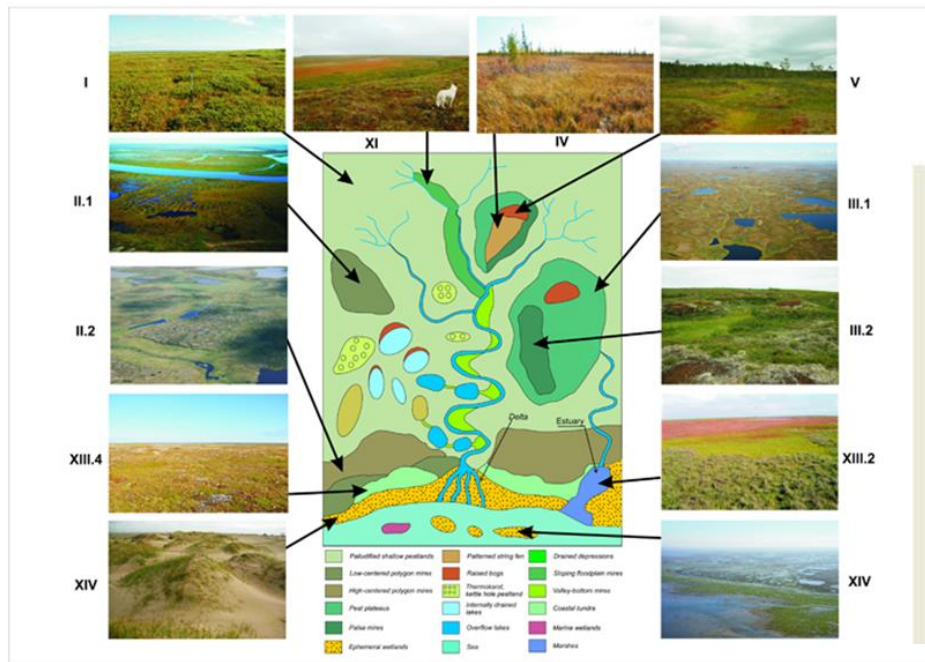


Figure 3.1 The life cycle of upstream oil and gas operations (after EBI, 2003).





# Safeguard & restore Arctic wetlands

For People and Nature

Thank you!

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# Position on Arctic oil and gas

- Risks are not adequately quantified
- Adequate management of even the risks that have been identified is not in place
- No internationally agreed standards to manage risks

As long as this is not in place, Wetlands International's position:

- We do not support (off shore) exploration and production in the Arctic
- Still, developments are taking place: so to reduce negative impacts & achieve sector-wide improvements, we collaborate with and seek to influence industry directly

*Policy changes & better practices are needed from corporates and governments alike.*