

# Mudbank

## Responsible business supporting biodiversity and flyway conservation

Mudbank is an innovative approach for business to support the conservation of wetlands and migratory waterbirds around the globe. To offset the impact of development projects, Mudbank invests on behalf of companies in the permanent protection of important coastal habitat along migratory flyways. It is designed to be an option in the Mitigation Hierarchy—and not just an “in lieu of” solution.

Mudbank maximises the positive impact on biodiversity conservation by offering a portfolio of critical sites where investment can effectively enhance the survival of waterbird populations. This international approach has both local and global benefits for waterbird conservation. Mudbank provides the expertise to ensure the long term sustainability of offsets; administering the acquisition, management and monitoring of waterbird habitat, working with (supported by) companies, governments, (conservation and International Flyway Agreements) NGOs and local stakeholders.

### Why waterbirds and flyways?

Waterbirds are a charismatic and diverse group of nearly 900 wetland dependent bird species and one of the most remarkable examples of global biodiversity. Many species complete arduous annual migrations of several thousands of kilometres between their breeding and non-breeding areas. These migration routes that span across continents are called flyways.

Wetlands and shorelines are critical to migratory waterbirds. Within a flyway, birds need 'stepping stones' of high quality habitat where they can stop, rest and refuel. Different species of waterbirds congregate to rest and feed in large numbers of wetland stopover sites within the different countries of a flyway at different times of year.

Safeguarding the future of waterbird populations requires coordinated international action throughout the length of a flyway and the permanent availability of the most important stopover sites. Yet many critical sites currently have little or no protection and are under increasing threats.

Bar-tailed Godwit feeding on mudflats, by Jan van de Kam



**Wetlands**  
INTERNATIONAL

# The need for effective biodiversity offsets

Coastal areas and wetlands are some of the most productive and biologically diverse on the planet. Human activity along the world's coastlines is fast increasing, driven by growing populations and rapid economic development. The rate of loss and deterioration of wetlands is accelerating in all regions of the world. The pressure on wetlands is likely to intensify in the coming decades due to increased global demand for land and water, as well as climate change.

In order to secure economic growth while protecting nature, regulators are increasingly requiring offsets to compensate for

adverse impacts arising from development. Well-designed offsets are a solution for business to demonstrate a commitment to sustainable development and preferably a net positive impact by leaving biodiversity better off.

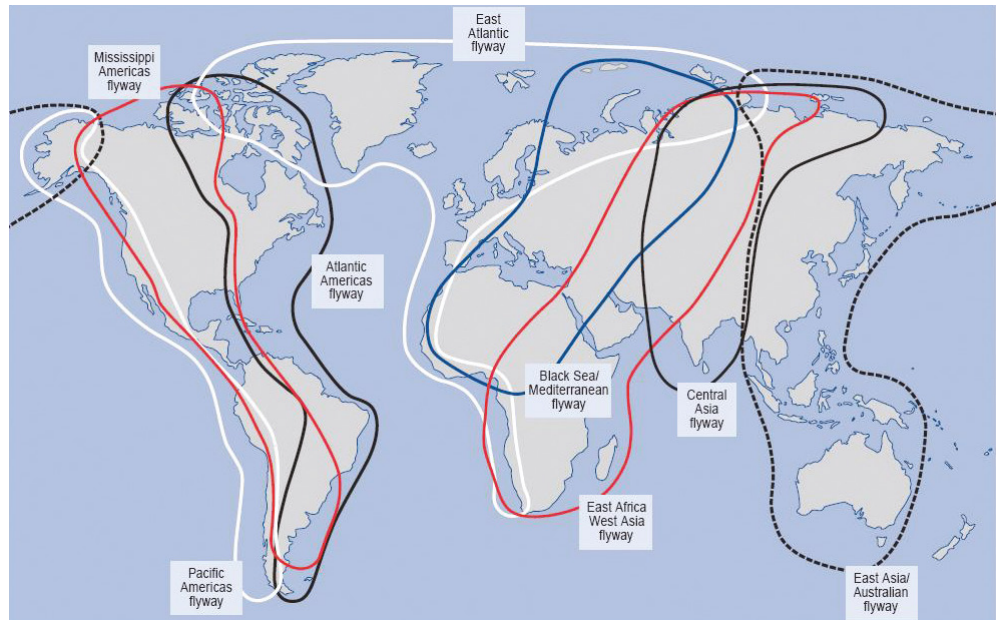
Mudbank is a strategic approach to comply with environmental and social policies and processes, seeking to deliver maximum biodiversity benefits, efficiently and cost effectively. This affords companies an opportunity to ensure a continued license to operate while establishing a conservation track record with regulators and stakeholders.

## Mudbank can secure better conservation outcomes

Local offsets for waterbirds will be ineffective if large geographic areas of their international range are left unprotected. Mudbank can secure better conservation outcomes for waterbirds both locally and along the flyway through offsets that protect large blocks of critical unprotected habitat. While Mudbank takes into account the need to return benefits to the local project site, its unique approach is to target habitat outside the project's borders, protecting waterbird biodiversity at the broader flyway scale.

Mudbank offsets provide immediate gains for biodiversity by conserving critical threatened habitat along a flyway based on expert science. By identifying and pooling large blocks of habitat, Mudbank has the capacity to address key threats along a flyway and quickly offset multiple projects that provide a measurable lasting benefit for waterbird biodiversity. Mudbank will work with governments, stakeholders and intergovernmental flyway initiatives in the region to broker deals in a transparent and accountable manner, subject to monitoring and independent audits.





**Example: The Yellow Sea bottleneck**

The East Asian – Australasian Flyway connects virtually every country in the Asia-Pacific region. The overwhelming pace of coastal land reclamation in the Yellow Sea region of East Asia is resulting in the tremendous loss of valuable waterbird habitat. The loss of these important waterbird food and rest stops is a 'bottleneck' that is leading to alarming declines in the many waterbird populations along the flyway. Simply conserving more habitat in Australia for instance, is not enough to halt the decline since many of the Australian populations must pass through this Yellow Sea bottleneck. More Yellow Sea habitat must be protected to better ensure the long term survival of waterbird populations along the flyway.

# Mudbank and the Mitigation Hierarchy

Mudbank follows the accepted Mitigation Hierarchy of avoiding, minimising and mitigating project impacts. Offsetting with Mudbank compensates for residual, unavoidable harm, and aims to achieve a net positive impact for biodiversity. Mudbank is not an appropriate mechanism for offsetting damages in areas of high biodiversity or where development should not occur in the first place.

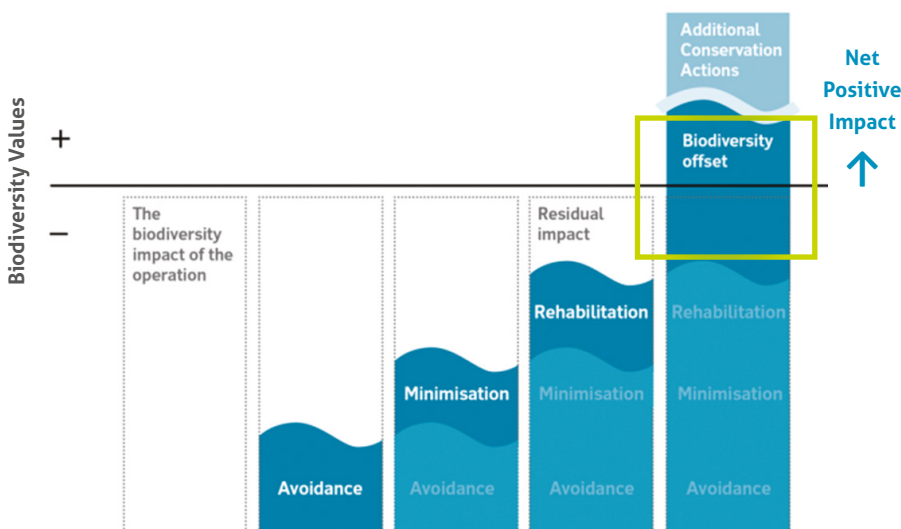


Table: The Mitigation Hierarchy, Rio Tinto

# Join our efforts

Together, we can deliver offsets that are more effective and efficient than a business as usual approach. For more information on how Mudbank works with businesses to achieve better biodiversity outcomes for waterbirds, please contact:

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## Stay in touch

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Yellow Sea mudflats and industrial development, by Jan van de Kam



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