

Side Event Title: The Importance of North Manila Bay on the East Asian–Australasian Flyway:
Results of biodiversity monitoring in and around restored habitats within North Manila Bay,
including the first large-scale satellite bird-tagging program in the Philippines

Lead Organiser/s: San Miguel Aerocity Inc.

Co-organiser/s: N/A

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San Miguel Aerocity Inc.

40 San Miguel Avenue

1550 Mandaluyong City, NCR

Date: 11 November 2025

Time: 17:00–18:30

Room: (to be filled out by the Secretariat)

Background

San Miguel Aerocity Inc., through the New Manila International Airport project, is setting a precedent in the Philippines by integrating biodiversity conservation into large-scale infrastructure projects under a public-private partnership.

Our Biodiversity Management Program has created over 400 hectares of wetlands for migratory birds through habitat restoration, adaptive construction, and community engagement, supported by extensive avifauna, macroinvertebrate and sediment monitoring to demonstrate Biodiversity Net Gains. This includes the first large-scale satellite bird-tagging program in the Philippines.

Our Program uses the UK DEFRA Biodiversity Metric adapted to national and local considerations and is guided by national legal frameworks, including the Republic Act No. 9147, which provides for the establishment and management of Critical Habitats outside protected areas to safeguard threatened species and their habitats.

This foundation reinforces SMAI's commitment to aligning project-level biodiversity actions with national conservation policies and international best practices such as the International Finance Corporation's Performance Standards on Environmental and Social Sustainability.

Objectives

Highlight the importance of North Manila Bay as a site on the East Asian–Australasian Flyway by presenting the results of monitoring associated with SMAI's Biodiversity Management Program, including:

- Flyway migratory route maps from North Manila to sites in Far East Russia, China, North and South Korea, and Japan
- Site utilization by avifauna around restored habitats, existing mudflats, fishponds, and saltpans
- Range and numbers of bird species within North Manila Bay

The secondary objective is to present the following ongoing studies in North Manila Bay being developed by a team of international consultants to:

- Establish criteria to demonstrate shorebird habitat functionality
- Establish links between sediment characteristics and macroinvertebrate abundance and specific avifauna species fidelity

Expected Outcomes

- To support the proposed inclusion of North Manila Bay as a Flyway Network Site under the EAAF
- Establish channels for knowledge transfer between the SMAI's team and other sites on the EAAF
- Learn of any other programs on the flyway which are seeking to establish links between sediment characteristics and macroinvertebrate abundance and avifauna, and develop shorebird habitat functionality criteria

Tentative Programme

Time	Topic and Speaker	Notes
1700-17h45	Presentation by Neil Tingin, San Miguel Aerocity Inc. (SMAI) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat creation in North Manila Bay • Monitoring the North Manila Bay Landscape • Bird tagging program • Challenges, success, and way forward of habitat creation studies 	
17h45-18h30	Q&A with Topic Leaders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat Creation: Wenly Sihombing (SMAI) • Biodiversity Monitoring: Marvin Jay R. Sarmiento (SMAI) • Avifauna Monitoring: Arne Jensen (NORDECO) • Bird Tagging: Ward Hagemeijer (Wetlands International) 	