



**World Wetlands Day**  
Tuesday, 2 February 2016



Wetlands for our Future  
Sustainable Livelihoods

## Wetlands and Sustainable Livelihoods

Simply put, wetlands are essential for humans to live and prosper. Wetlands are some of the most important biodiverse areas in the world. More than one billion people depend on wetlands for their living. Wetlands provide freshwater and ensure our food supply. They help sustain the wide variety of life on our planet, protect our coastlines, provide natural sponges against river flooding, and store carbon dioxide to regulate climate change. Livelihoods from fishing, rice farming, travel, tourism and water provision all depend on wetlands.

### Importance of wetlands for sustainable livelihoods

Featuring some of the most important biodiverse areas in the world, the importance of wetlands for sustainable livelihoods cannot be overstated:

**Rice farming:** Approximately one billion households in Asia, Africa and the Americas depend on rice growing and processing for their main livelihoods. Rice grown in wetland paddies is the staple diet of 3.5 billion people, accounting for 20 % of all calories consumed by humans.

**Fishing:** Over 660 million people depend on fishing and aquaculture for a living. The average human consumes 19 kg of fish every year. Most commercial fish breed and raise their young in coastal marshes and estuaries. In addition, about 40 % of fish production is now through aquaculture.

**Tourism and leisure:** International tourists spent US \$ 1.3 trillion worldwide in 2013, and an estimated half of them seek relaxation in wetland areas, especially coastal zones. The travel and tourism sectors support 266 million jobs, and account for 8.9 % of the world's employment.

**Transport:** Rivers and inland waterways play a vital role in transporting goods and people in many parts of the world. In the Amazon basin, rivers carry 12 million passengers and 50 million tons of freight each year, sustaining 41 shipping companies.

**Traditional wetland product-based livelihoods:** Medicinal plants, dyes, fruits, reeds and grasses are just a few of the wetland products that provide jobs, especially in developing countries.



Convention on  
Biological Diversity



COP12 / MOP7 / MOP1  
PYEONGCHANG KOREA 2014

[www.cbd.int](http://www.cbd.int)



**The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity has actively been working to mainstream biodiversity and ecosystems into development:**

**Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development:** Wetlands will contribute to 7 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The protection and restoration of ecosystems, particularly wetlands, is an essential requirement to achieve Goal 6 (Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all). This is reflected in Target 6.6 (By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes) which is derived originally from the Convention's Aichi Biodiversity Target 14. Wetlands will also make a crucial difference to Goals 14 (Life below Water) and 15 (Life on Land), which include targets on coastal ecosystems and inland freshwater ecosystems. They will also indirectly contribute to Goals 2 (Zero Hunger), 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and 13 (Climate Action), which include targets on sustainable agricultural practices, water-related disasters, natural resources and resilience to climate change-related hazards and natural disasters.

**2015 Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030:** Wetlands are noted in Sendai Framework Priority 3: Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience. "Public and private investment in disaster risk prevention and reduction through structural and non-structural measures are essential to enhance the economic, social, health and cultural resilience of persons, communities, countries and their assets, as well as the environment. These can be drivers of innovation, growth and job creation. Such measures are cost-effective and instrumental to save lives, prevent and reduce losses and ensure effective recovery and rehabilitation." To achieve Priority 3, governments must "promote the mainstreaming of disaster risk assessment, mapping and management into rural development planning and management of, inter alia, mountains, rivers, coastal flood plain areas, drylands, wetlands and all other areas prone to droughts and flooding, including through the identification of areas that are safe for human settlement, and at the same time preserving ecosystem functions that help to reduce risks."

## Further Information

- CBD Programme of work on Inland Waters Biodiversity: [www.cbd.int/waters/](http://www.cbd.int/waters/)
- TEEB for Water and Wetlands report: [www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/teeb\\_waterwetlands\\_report\\_2013.pdf](http://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/teeb_waterwetlands_report_2013.pdf)
- Wetlands and the Sustainable Development Goals: [www.cbd.int/waters/doc/wwd2015/wwd-2015-press-brief-sdg-en.pdf](http://www.cbd.int/waters/doc/wwd2015/wwd-2015-press-brief-sdg-en.pdf)
- Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Convention): [www.ramsar.org](http://www.ramsar.org)
- Ramsar fact sheet: [www.worldwetlandsday.org/documents/10184/75781/FS\\_7+Livelihoods\\_EN\\_v5+%28%29.pdf/ada849ce-d11a-4dc2-9504-4d3349646beb](http://www.worldwetlandsday.org/documents/10184/75781/FS_7+Livelihoods_EN_v5+%28%29.pdf/ada849ce-d11a-4dc2-9504-4d3349646beb)
- Global Biodiversity Outlook 4: [www.cbd.int/gbo/gbo4/publication/gbo4-en.pdf](http://www.cbd.int/gbo/gbo4/publication/gbo4-en.pdf)
- Sustainable Development Goals: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300>
- Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction: [www.unisdr.org/we/coordinate/sendai-framework](http://www.unisdr.org/we/coordinate/sendai-framework)

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