

GLOBAL WETLAND OUTLOOK 2025

REPORT RELEASED BY THE CONVENTION OF WETLANDS

August 2025

The [Global Wetland Outlook 2025: Conserving, restoring and financing wetlands](#) was launched at a press event at the United Nations Office at Nairobi on 15 July during the Twentieth Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment.

This new report released by the Convention on Wetlands and developed by its [Scientific and Technical Review Panel \(STRP\)](#), warns that wetlands, ecosystems that provide water, food, livelihoods, and climate protection, are disappearing at an alarming rate. If current trends continue, up to 20% of the world's remaining wetlands could vanish by 2050, putting an estimated \$39 trillion in global benefits at risk.

The [Global Wetland Outlook 2025](#) presents the most comprehensive global assessment of wetlands to date. It builds on the 2018 and 2021 editions and offers the latest scientific and economic data on wetland loss, degradation, and the urgent actions needed to reverse these trends. The report is being launched in the lead-up to the 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Wetlands (COP15), which will take place in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, from 23 to 31 July 2025.

Wetlands currently cover about 6% of the Earth's surface but contribute more than 7.5% of global GDP through services such as clean water, flood protection, food security, and carbon storage. Despite their importance, wetlands are vanishing faster than any other ecosystem—an average of 0.52% per year. Since 1970, 22% of wetlands have been lost, equivalent to more than half a billion football pitches.

Dr Musonda Mumba, Secretary General of the Convention on Wetlands highlighted that *“Wetlands bankroll the planet, yet we are still investing more in their destruction than in their recovery. The world is sitting on a \$10 trillion opportunity—restoring wetlands could unlock these benefits, but we’re running out of time.”*

The report also finds that one in four of the world's remaining wetlands is in poor ecological condition. The steepest declines are in Latin America, the Caribbean, and Africa. The GWO 2025 includes a range of case studies that demonstrate the cost of inaction, as well as promising examples of recovery. In Zambia's Kafue Flats, a \$300,000 restoration effort triggered further investment in biodiversity, water systems, and



livelihoods, supporting 1.3 million people. In Asia, the Regional Flyway Initiative is protecting over 140 key wetlands used by 50 million migratory birds and nearly 200 million people.

Dr Hugh Robertson, Chair of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel of the Convention on Wetlands and lead author highlighted that *“Wetlands are not a marginal issue. They are fundamental to the water cycle our planet depends on, for our global response to climate change, and are essential for the well-being of billions of people and protecting species under imminent threat of extinction.”*

The report outlines four pathways to reverse wetland loss: integrating wetland value into decision-making, recognizing their role in the water cycle, embedding them in financing mechanisms, and mobilizing partnerships for on-the-ground restoration.

Conservation and wise use of wetlands are vital for human livelihoods. The wide range of ecosystem services wetlands provide means that they lie at the heart of sustainable development. Yet policy and decision-makers often underestimate the value of their benefits to nature and humankind.

Understanding these values and what is happening to wetlands is critical to ensuring their conservation and wise use. The Global Wetland Outlook summarizes wetland extent, trends, drivers of change and the steps needed to maintain or restore their ecological character

The full Report, including additional materials and resources, is available at the website www.global-wetland-outlook.ramsar.org.

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