



Message from Martha Rojas Urrego Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention On the occasion of the World Environment Day

5 de junio de 2019



Bukit Batok Urban wetland in Singapore

We need a healthy environment in which we can thrive. Wetlands are fundamental in sustaining our planet's environmental health. Wetlands are as varied as the variety of environmental benefits they provide. They provide us with freshwater, ensure our food supply and sustain biodiversity.

The focus of the **World Environment Day is to take action to Beat Air Pollution**. Clean air, clean water and a clean environment depend on healthy wetlands.

Wetlands are crucial for pollution control, nutrient recycling and ground water recharge. In cities, wetlands improve urban air quality. They provide moisture, oxygen and biogenic essentials.

They serve as a buffer against high air temperatures and provide wetness during heat waves.

When preserved as green spaces in cities, wetlands offer a space for recreation and access to a variety of plant and animal life. Studies confirm that interacting with nature reduces stress and improves our health. However, urban wetlands are often endangered by urbanisation pressure, pollution and land conversion for construction purposes.



Qunli Stormwater Wetland Park in China

China provides a global example of how integrating wetlands and green areas in cities can be a solution to environmental challenges. China has adopted a series of measures at the provincial and national levels, all aimed at the protection of wetlands. These include wetland protection regulations, establishment of 602 wetland nature reserves and the creation of 898 pilot national wetland parks. This effort relies on a range of innovations, from green roofs on buildings to more urban wetlands and is being hailed as concrete action to solve some of the environmental problems that challenge the world's most populous country.

In the capital of Romania, Bucharest, Văcărești Nature Park is an urban wetland that has been created from an abandoned reservoir. Just 4km from the center of Romania's largest and most densely populated city this wetland site provides a green lung purifying air for the city

and is a unique example of a developing green infrastructure that provides myriad benefits to local communities.

These inspiring examples are just a couple of best practices, which can be duplicated by other countries and cities.

As the international community steps up efforts to beat pollution we must ensure that wetlands gain the global attention as the clean, pollution free environment depend on healthy wetlands. The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands is a ready-made mechanism for bringing together 170 countries and providing the global framework to conserve and sustainably use all wetlands.

URL de origen: <https://www.ramsar.org/es/node/51496>