Monitoring the extent and health of wetlands and their status over time is critical to inform the needed actions by governments and other actors at all levels.

The Convention on Wetlands has always recognized the importance of the national wetland inventories (NWI) as a key tool for informing national policies and other measures to achieve the conservation and wise use of wetlands. It is thus a priority in the Convention’s Strategic Plan.

This decision to give priority to inventories is also related to the commitment of Contracting Parties to provide data on the extent of wetlands, drawing from their inventories, as part of their National Reports. Further, the Convention is together with the United Nations Environment Programme co-custodian of indicator 6.6.1. of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on change in the extent of water-related ecosystems over time, using the same data provided in National Reports. Measuring the extent of this important ecosystem is also expected to contribute significantly to the Global Biodiversity Framework being developed under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The new toolkit provides practical guidance and examples of how to conduct an inventory, including a systematic process and resources to support each recommendation. There are also examples of good practice, methods for data collection, including Earth observation, and use of inventories in decision-making. It also links NWI to SDG targets, including suggestions for building the case for the conservation and wise use of wetlands. The toolkit is to be used by a variety of stakeholders involved in the assessment, monitoring and conservation and wetlands. It will be also used to develop training materials.

Download: A new toolkit for national wetlands inventories

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