The Global Wetland Outlook: Special Edition 2021 highlights the importance of wetland services for sustainable development

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The Global Wetland Outlook: Special Edition 2021 is now available. This special edition shows wetlands offer unmatched opportunities for reducing emissions, adapting to climate impacts and reversing biodiversity loss. But in spite of this, the report confirms that wetlands remain the world’s most threatened ecosystem. With 35% of global wetland area lost since 1970, they are disappearing three times faster than forests, leaving more than a quarter of wetland species threatened with extinction.

This special edition from the Convention on Wetlands’ Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) is an update to the first Global Wetland Outlook released in 2018. The report draws on more than 30 global and regional studies to document the latest wetland trends, their impacts and opportunities wetlands offer for achieving global climate and sustainability goals.

Despite widespread loss, wetlands remain our most valuable ecosystem. They contribute unrivalled services for climate mitigation, adaptation and biodiversity and human health worth more than US $47.4 trillion a year.

"Wetlands present untapped opportunity to tackle the climate and biodiversity crises with the greatest returns. With less than a year for countries to renew their nationally determined contributions and agree a new global framework for conserving biodiversity, it’s critical we see targets, investments and attention across both agendas committed to wetlands," says Martha Rojas Urrego, Secretary General of the Convention on Wetlands.

The report emphasizes best practices for ensuring wise use of wetlands at national, regional and global levels, which are fundamental to preventing further loss and degradation. It stresses the importance of better integration across agriculture, urban development and wetlands management sectors to safeguard wetlands and their vital services for human and planetary health.

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