



**World  
Wetlands Day**  
2 February 2017

Wetlands for Disaster Risk Reduction

# Guide for World Wetlands Day 2017

## For partners, event organizers and educators

### About World Wetlands Day

World Wetlands Day is celebrated every year on 2<sup>nd</sup> February to raise global awareness about the value of wetlands for humanity and the planet. It also marks the date of adoption of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands in 1971, in the Iranian city of Ramsar. World Wetlands Day was celebrated for the first time in 1997.

### World Wetlands Day 2017

Wetlands for Disaster Risk Reduction is the theme for World Wetlands Day in 2017. Wetlands play an important role in reducing the impact of extreme weather events such as floods, droughts and cyclones.

Wetlands act as a natural sponge, absorbing and storing excess rainfall and reducing flooding. During the dry season, they release the water stored, delaying the onset of droughts and reducing water shortages.

The frequency of natural hazards has more than doubled; the majority are climate and weather related. According to UN- Water, 90% of all natural hazards are water-related. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) predicts even more extreme events going forward as a result of climate change.

However the general public are largely unaware of how wetlands safeguard us. In fact, people often see wetlands as wasteland; something to be filled in or converted to other uses. Scientists estimate that at least 64% of the world's wetlands have disappeared since 1900.

### Key messages

- Wetlands are a natural safe guard against disasters and help us cope with extreme weather events.
- Well managed wetlands ensure communities are resilient and can bounce back from disasters.
- Take actions that help conserve and promote sustainable use of wetlands.



[#WetlandsForOurFuture](#)

[#WorldWetlandsDay](#)

[www.worldwetlandsday.org](http://www.worldwetlandsday.org)



# Get involved in World Wetlands Day

## Partners, educators and event organizers:

### Promote World Wetlands Day

- Help create awareness of the day use the posters and hand-outs provided or create your own materials such as T-shirts, caps, banners etc. Indesign files are available and can be downloaded directly from: [www.worldwetlandsday.org](http://www.worldwetlandsday.org)
- Translate the materials provided into your local dialect.
- Promote World Wetlands Day on your website, on social media platforms, in newsletters or bulletin boards etc.
- Inform journalists and other media about how wetlands are important for “Disaster risk reduction”.

### Organize an Event

**World Wetlands Day is a wonderful occasion to bring people together to learn about wetlands.**

- A visit to a Wetland of International Importance (Ramsar Site) in your area, get in touch with the managers of the site. Consult the list of Ramsar Sites by country at [www.ramsar.org/sites-countries/the-ramsar-sites](http://www.ramsar.org/sites-countries/the-ramsar-sites)
- A field trip for people to do bird-watching, hiking, boat ride, swim, etc.
- A conference or a talk featuring wetland experts, local communities.
- An exhibition to present and showcase the arts or photographs about wetlands etc.
- A community walk for wetlands.
- Public wetland clean-up exercise.
- A press conference to make an important announcement.
- Bring people together to watch a film on wetlands.

### Register your event on the global map of events

- Sign up at [www.worldwetlandsday.org](http://www.worldwetlandsday.org)
- Register your event by completing the online form.
- After the event, upload a report, more pictures, video and publicity material.

### Encourage youth to participate in the Wetlands Youth Photo Contest

**From 2 February to 2 March 2017, young people between 18 to 25 years are invited to participate in a photo contest for a chance to win a free flight courtesy of Star Alliance Biosphere Connections to visit a Wetland of International Importance. (Ramsar Site)**

#### To participate

- Young people are invited to take a photo of any wetland that helps us cope with extreme weather events.
- Upload up to 3 photos on the World Wetlands Day website. [www.worldwetlandsday.org](http://www.worldwetlandsday.org)
- Other members of the public can participate by voting for their favourite photo and help contribute to the selection process.

### Invite the public to take action on wetlands

**Partners and organizers can help extend the effect of World Wetlands Day. Invite the public to commit to concrete actions that help to conserve wetlands.**

- Organize or join a wetlands clean-up exercise.
- Become a wetland “Ambassador” who advocates for wetlands.
- Use water sparingly and avoid toxic products that could flow into wetlands.
- Support actions that seek to restore degraded wetlands.



## Educators:

### Classroom discussion ideas

**After outlining the ways that wetlands help us prepare, cope with and recover from disasters, teachers might direct classroom discussion in several different ways:**

- Ask students to describe the role of wetlands for humanity and the planet. Get them to think about how wetlands protect us from extreme weather events.
- Pick a recent natural hazard that has affected your community directly. What role did wetlands play in lessening its impact? And in speeding up the recovery? What kind of actions could be undertaken to help prepare for the next extreme event?
- Organize a colouring competition for children. Use our Colour-in poster for kids. Invite the children to talk about their colour in poster.
- Organize a quiz for students to test their knowledge on the different wetland types such as coral reefs, mangroves and peatlands and how they help us cope with extreme weather events.

### Teacher resources on wetlands and disaster risk reduction

The US Environmental Protection Agency has this list of teacher resources on wetlands including activities, curriculum guides and interesting links:

[http://water.epa.gov/type/wetlands/outreach/education\\_index.cfm#cg](http://water.epa.gov/type/wetlands/outreach/education_index.cfm#cg)

A teacher guide to wetland activities aimed at grades 4-5 covering key aspects including food chain, water cycle, from Ducks Unlimited Canada: *Teacher's Guide to Wetland Activities* [www.fs.fed.us/outdoors/naturewatch/implementation/Curricula/DU-Wetland-Teacher-Guide.PDF](http://www.fs.fed.us/outdoors/naturewatch/implementation/Curricula/DU-Wetland-Teacher-Guide.PDF)

Extensive background publication on the use of protected areas in reducing disaster risk and mitigating climate change:

IUCN: *Safe Havens – Protected Areas for Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation* [www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/2014-038.pdf](http://www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/2014-038.pdf)

An in-depth study on the value of services that wetlands provide, including coastal protection:

TEEB: *The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity for Water and Wetlands* [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)

UNESCO published this teacher guide on disaster risk reduction with cross-referencing for fields ranging from mathematics to geography and science:

*A Teacher's Guide to Disaster Risk Reduction* <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002289/228963e.pdf>



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# Publicity materials:

**World Wetlands Day**  
2 February 2017



Wetlands for Disaster Risk Reduction

To help support World Wetlands Day activities around the world, the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention with the support of partners has produced a wide assortment of

information materials. These materials can be downloaded from [www.worldwetlandsday.org](http://www.worldwetlandsday.org). These materials can also be adapted to make them more relevant to your audience.

### Logos

- Horizontal and vertical layouts

### Posters

- Main poster
- Local event poster
- Photo contest poster
- Colour-in poster for kids

### Hand-outs

(also usable as posters or flyers)

- Wetlands: a natural safeguard against disasters.
- Five wetlands that help us cope with extreme events.
- Wetlands sustain lives: how will we use them?

### Powerpoint presentation

on how wetlands safeguard us against disasters.

### E-mail signature

### T-shirt design

### Comic strip

### Campaign Guide (this publication)

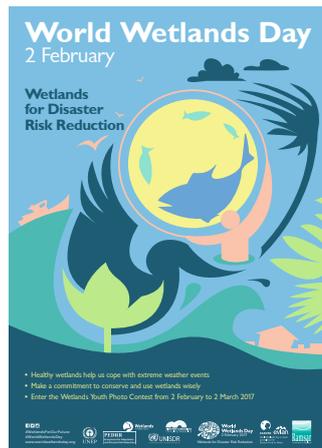
### Graphic Design guidelines

### Campaign website:

[www.worldwetlandsday.org](http://www.worldwetlandsday.org)

### Social media presence:

- Facebook: [www.facebook.com/RamsarConventionOnWetlands/](http://www.facebook.com/RamsarConventionOnWetlands/)
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/RamsarConv>
- Instagram: [http://instagram.com/ramsar\\_convention\\_on\\_wetlands](http://instagram.com/ramsar_convention_on_wetlands)



Please promote and use the hashtag **#WetlandsForOurFuture** **#WorldWetlandsDay**

Contact us:  
[ramsar@ramsar.org](mailto:ramsar@ramsar.org)  
[www.worldwetlandsday.org](http://www.worldwetlandsday.org)