

International Plant Protection Convention's statement on World Wetlands Day

Wetlands and Agriculture: Partners for Growth

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2 February 2014

[World Wetlands Day](#) is celebrated on 2 February 2014. This year's theme, Wetlands and Agriculture: Partners for Growth, is particularly relevant for the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and its contracting parties.

Wetlands are a key component of the plant resources that support the IPPC's strategic objectives of food security, economic growth and sustainable agriculture. They provide food and agricultural products directly through production activities such as rice paddies, grazing marshes, and aquaculture. Wetlands also contribute to agriculture indirectly through ecosystem services. These ecosystem services include providing water for agricultural use, regulating water purification processes, supporting nutrient cycling, and providing cultural services such as recreational spaces.



Portland Bight, Jamaica. ©Ted Lee Eubanks

Pests such as invasive plants can devastate wetlands. A 2012 [IPPC study on risks of aquatic plants](#) illustrates cases of invasive aquatic plants disrupting agricultural production by clogging irrigation canals, clinging to rice seedlings, clogging dams and impeding lake navigation.

World Wetlands Day provides an opportunity to reflect on the role that wetlands play in agricultural, environmental and cultural systems and the need to protect these resources from pests. A proposed [IPPC Commission on Phytosanitary Measures \(CPM\) Recommendation](#) on aquatic plants has been posted on the IPPC website (www.ippc.int) and will be discussed for adoption at the ninth session of the CPM (31 March – 4 April 2014). You are invited to review the [Recommendation](#) dealing with this important issue.