



About the Ramsar Convention

Intergovernmental treaty
signed in Ramsar, Iran, 1971

The Convention's mission is the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world.

It provides a framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.

There are presently:

159 Contracting Parties to the
Convention

1,889 Ramsar Sites (Wetlands of
International Importance)
covering
186 million hectares

Key facts

- ✓ *The Convention is the key intergovernmental treaty concerned with wetlands*
- ✓ *Ramsar Sites form a global network of important wetlands for conserving ecosystems and species*
- ✓ *Wetlands play a critical role in the water cycle; managing freshwater for people and for wetlands is one of the Convention's most significant challenges*
- ✓ *Supporting the Ramsar Convention, managing and designating Ramsar Sites can help in the fight against global species extinction*

www.ramsar.org

Press release

The Ramsar Convention kicks off a global celebration of 40 years of conserving wetlands with the launch of an animated 40th anniversary Ramsar logo

Gland, Switzerland | 7 June 2010. On 2 February 2011 the global community will celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

Over the past 40 years the Ramsar Convention has inspired advances in the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national action and international cooperation to sustain the diverse socio-economic benefits wetlands deliver to people throughout the world. These benefits – such as the provision of freshwater, food, fuelwood, storm protection, water purification and regulation, and more – are indispensable to human well-being.

The launch of the 40th anniversary logo presents a worldwide invitation to all those who care about wetlands - governments, NGOs and civil society - to begin planning their contribution to next year's festivities in celebration of 40 years of wetland action.

The Convention's member countries are committed to developing and implementing wetland action plans at the local, national and regional levels, and to encouraging accession of non-member states. The launch of the logo took place at a workshop for the development of such plans in the Arabian Peninsula with representatives from four Contracting Parties (Bahrain, Iraq, United Arab Emirates and Yemen), two non-Contracting Parties (Kuwait and Oman), as well as regional governmental organizations and NGOs including two of Ramsar's International organization Partners, BirdLife International and IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature).

To encourage anniversary celebrations, the Convention's web site now includes a special section dedicated to the 40th anniversary. There will be a commemorative book, a photo competition to celebrate Ramsar Sites, special events in Geneva on 2 February 2011 as well as news of events already at the planning stage in a number of countries. More information about the launch, the availability of the logo, and the 40th events already planned are available here: www.ramsar.org/40-anniversary/

Looking towards the future, Ramsar's Deputy Secretary General, Nick Davidson, notes that, despite the many achievements by countries in safeguarding wetlands over the last 40 years, the global challenge for sustaining water and wetlands remains huge as the world's demands on our natural environment continue to increase.

"Ramsar's 40th anniversary next year provides us all with the opportunity to redouble our efforts to achieve a more secure future through maintaining the major benefits wetlands provide to people's health and livelihoods", he adds.

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