

To Sustain and Restore Wetlands, their Resources and Biodiversity for Future Generations

Global Newsletter - December 2008

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Climate Summit: little progress but peat on agenda

Wetlands International was present at the <u>UN climate summit</u> in Poznan (1-12 December 2008). A team advocated for policies to address the global problem of emissions from degraded peatlands (3000Mt/CO2/yr). Under the current <u>Kyoto Protocol</u> these emissions are largely ignored and not included in the emissions reduction targets and efforts of industrialised countries. For the new climate treaty, promising options are on the agenda.

With a divided Europe and the US waiting for a new president little progress was made at this Conference of Parties (COP). Although full inclusion of <u>peatland emissions</u> in a new climate deal remains a huge challenge, important good progress was made in Poznan. The team held successful events including various meetings with key delegations, institutions and NGOs. The growing attention shows the progress on this issue. Promising options to include soil carbon (peatlands) in policies in developed and developing countries (<u>REDD</u>) are on the agenda.

<u>Click here</u> to download our PowerPoint presentations, policy brief, reports and fact books.

'Flyway Think Tank' under CMS comes to life

A new initiative from Wetlands International of creating a 'Flyway Think Tank' was accepted at the Conference of the Parties to CMS, the UNEP Convention on Migratory Species. This Flyway Conservation Working group under the Scientific Council (ScC) of Conference of Migratory Species will lay the groundwork for developing flyway approaches by being a think tank on flyways that will bring together experts worldwide.

This work will subsequently be interpreted into advice on how to best serve waterbird conservation needs in the various flyways in the world. Read more on Avian Influenza and Waterbirds on our website, and on the Task Force on the Avian Influenza, Wildlife and the Environment Web (AIWEb).

Ramsar convention shies away from crucial policies

The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (COP 10), held in October in Korea, shied away from addressing the current global wetland issues like climate change, water and development policies. Click here for the speech of Wetlands International CEO Jane Madgwick at the Convention.

More promising is the new <u>resolution</u> that recognises the importance of promoting international cooperation for the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats.

<u>Click here</u> for more information on this resolution.

EU excludes undrained peatlands for biofuel production

All peatlands that are currently undrained will always be excluded from biofuel production for the EU markets. As a result, biofuels from these areas will not receive the subsidies and support that other biofuels do receive.

This is the final outcome of the <u>EU renewable</u> energy directive. The specific criterion about peatlands is a direct result of <u>Wetlands</u> International's advocacy activities. Wetlands International welcomes this criterion in the directive, but had advocated for excluding all peatlands, as many peatlands – both in Europe and the tropics – are already drained to some extent.

Excluding palm oil from peatlands remains challenge for RSPO

A proposal of Wetlands International to exclude peatlands from production has not been approved at the annual Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil meeting in November in Bali. This means that even 'RSPO certified palm oil' might be planted on drained peatlands, causing enormous greenhouse gas emissions.



But in his closing remarks to Round at the General Assembly, the President of the RSPO (Jan-Kees Vis of <u>Unilever</u>) stated that if the palm oil sector wanted to become sustainable, it had to break the link between palm oil and climate change. He specifically pointed out that expansion should not be on peatlands and replacement of high conservation value forest.

Wetlands International agrees with these promising words. In the meantime, RSPO certified palm oil should be considered unsustainable.

New short films from the Central Kalimantan Peatland Project (CKPP)

The Central Kalimantan Peatland Project (<u>CKPP</u>) of the consortium of Wetlands International and partner organisations has released a series of short videos on its work in Indonesia's peatlands.

Next to the main films in <u>English</u> and <u>Indonesian</u>, there are topic-related videos addressing <u>palm oil</u>, <u>firefighting</u>, <u>poverty reduction</u>, <u>hydrological</u> <u>restoration</u>, <u>healthcare</u>, and <u>illegal logging</u>.

All these short films can be seen on: http://ckpp.wetlands.org/



Saloum-Niumi: First Transboundary Ramsar Site in Africa

The <u>Saloum-Niumi Complex</u> has been officially declared as the first African Transboundary Ramsar Site by the Governments of <u>The Gambia</u> and <u>Senegal</u>. Shared between these two countries, the Saloum-Niumi complex forms a single ecological system comprising coastal wetlands and savannah forests, and includes one of the largest tracts of mangrove forest in West Africa.

The <u>Wings Over Wetlands</u> (WOW) Project of Wetlands International and partners has actually been fostering the cooperation between the site authorities on the ground in both Senegal and The Gambia, building the foundation for the transboundary protected area.

Through the WOW Project, the <u>Direction des Parcs Nationaux du Senegal</u>, the Department of Parks

and Wildlife Management of The Gambia, and Wetlands International Africa Office in Dakar have developed and are now implementing an integrated transboundary management plan for the Saloum-Niumi Wetland complex.



Stories from the wetlands and livelihoods demonstration projects

Wetlands International guided four projects to show the link between people's livelihoods and wetlands. Click below for the stories of people from these project areas.

Planting trees to eat fish in Mali

Read the story on the proud Fatoumata Dienta and her Acacia plantation in Akka village, in the Inner Niger Delta of Mali, Africa.

Fighting fire in eastern Sumatra, Indonesia

The story of Edi Candra of Desa Sungai Rambut. Sumatra, Indonesia and the community fire brigades he started with his colleagues in the village.

<u>Maintaining Seasonal Wetlands for agriculture in Southern</u> <u>Africa</u>

"The Dambo is like a Dairy Cow", a poem by Chancy Mhone accompanies the story of this demonstration project.



Protection of Green Coast sites in Aceh requested

Green Coast partners in Aceh (Wetlands International and WWF) have submitted an official request to Aceh Provincial Government to protect 11 coastal sites. In these areas, the Green Coast project supported local communities to restore the coastal nature (mangroves, reefs) to increase coastal resilience and help fish stocks to recover.

As the <u>Green Coast</u> program in Aceh will be completed mid 2009, there is a need for long term endorsement and protection from the Aceh Government of the Green Coast demonstration sites, having high ecological and economic values.



New publication:

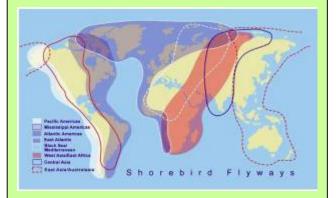
Fact book for UN-FCCC policies on peat carbon emissions

Available at: www.wetlands.org

International agreement joins-up flyway conservation

A new resolution has been agreed which recognises the importance of promoting international cooperation for the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats. The resolution was passed today (3 November 2008) in South Korea at the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

"Waterbird populations around the world are continuing to decline as a result of the loss and degradation of wetland habitats and their unsustainable exploitation", said BirdLife's Head of Conservation, Richard Grimmett. "This resolution recognises the crucial fact that conserving the world's waterbirds is an international challenge. Only by working together along flyways can we effectively conserve our precious migratory birds"



The theme of the International conference was 'Healthy Wetlands, Healthy People', reflects the importance of wetland habitats to people. During the last eight days, around 2,000 representatives from 165 countries, international bodies and non-governmental organisations have gathered to advance wetland conservation.

New location Wetlands International Headquarters

Wetlands International Headquarters has moved! From 19th of December 2008, the Headquarters will be located at **Horapark 9 in Ede**, Gelderland Province in The Netherlands. Tel: +318-660910 Fax: +31 318-660950. Postal address remains the same: P.O. BOX 471, 6700 AL Wageningen.