

An aerial photograph of a wide river with a large, light-colored sandbar in the center. Numerous birds are gathered on the sandbar. The riverbanks are lined with dense green vegetation. In the bottom right corner, a small red and white motorboat is moving through the water, leaving a wake. Two wavy lines, one blue and one yellow, curve across the bottom of the image.

THE SOURCE

2025 Annual Review of Wetlands International



Wetlands
INTERNATIONAL

**WETLANDS INTERNATIONAL
IS THE ONLY GLOBAL
NOT-FOR-PROFIT
ORGANISATION DEDICATED
TO THE CONSERVATION,
RESTORATION AND
SUSTAINABLE USE OF
WETLANDS**

What are wetlands?

Wetlands occur wherever water meets land – mangroves, peatlands, marshes, rivers, lakes, deltas, floodplains, flooded forests, rice-fields, and even coral reefs.

Wetlands exist in every country across the world and every type of region – polar, tropical, wet, dry, high and low altitude. Healthy wetlands are key to restoring nature and healing our climate, yet the world has lost 22% of its remaining wetlands since 1970. Urgent action is needed to reverse this decline and revive these natural wonders.

Our Vision

A world where wetlands are treasured and nurtured for their beauty the life they support and the resources they provide.

Our Mission

To inspire and mobilise society to safeguard and restore wetlands for people and nature.

FROM OUR CEO

If you just glance back at the headlines, 2025 looks like yet another year of wetland degradation and species declines – a continuation of the downward trend of recent decades. But peer below the surface and the picture is very different: 2025 was a year of milestone achievements for wetlands and Wetlands International, and growing global recognition of the central role of healthy wetlands in tackling the greatest challenges of our era: water and food security, climate change, nature loss and sustainable development.

During my first year as CEO, I saw both sides – not only the ongoing, short-sighted destruction of the world's wetlands but also real signs of hope for the future of our irreplaceable freshwater and coastal ecosystems. From solutions being implemented with communities and partners in wetlands across the globe to the success of the Convention on Wetlands COP15 beside the Victoria Falls, it was clear that momentum for wetland action was building and that wetlands were rising up the international agenda – and that decision makers were increasingly viewing them not as mere wastelands to be 'converted' into something more 'profitable' but as ecosystems that need to be protected and restored since they underpin our societies and economies.

Wetlands International and our partners played a key role in accelerating this change in 2025. Together, we helped open decision makers' eyes to the diverse values of healthy wetlands and influenced policies and practice. But we also made waves in wetlands themselves. We collaborated with communities, partners, donors, businesses and governments to deliver change on the ground, helping to safeguard vital wetlands from Argentina to Indonesia. This Annual Review is a snapshot of these solutions and successes, a glimpse of the



Coenraad Krijger (CEO of Wetlands International) together with Louisa Chinyavu (Regional Programme Manager) visiting the Lamu-Tana landscape in Kenya, one of our 12 flagship landscapes.

direct and indirect impact of our wetland work in 2025 to benefit people, nature and climate.

Throughout the year, we sent delegations from across our network to critical international fora, influencing policies and raising the profile of wetlands. Without a doubt, the highlight for me was the Ramsar COP15 in Zimbabwe. You can read more about the impressive outcomes of the conference in the Advocacy Achievements section but suffice to say it delivered significant wins for wetlands, paving the way for accelerated wetland action and impact by the over 170 Contracting Parties. It was also a powerful platform for Wetlands International, showcasing our diverse partnerships, effective advocacy, and breadth of solutions. Something that was demonstrated at other fora in 2025 where we made our presence felt from the 3rd UN Ocean Conference to New York Climate Week and Climate COP30 in Belem.

They also showcased our greatest strength – our extraordinary teams and leaders across the globe. So I was delighted when Julie Mulonga, the Director of our Eastern Africa office, was recognised by the Convention on Wetlands as a Woman Changemaker in the World of Wetlands.

Along with our efforts to influence global policy, we continued to collaborate with a wide range of partners on the ground, co-creating and implementing solutions in rivers and lakes, peatlands and mangroves in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America. Take your time to browse through the conservation achievements in the main section of this review to get a more detailed view of our impact in wetlands from the impressive indirect impacts of restoring 12 hectares of peatland in Mongolia to contributing to the designation of a vast new Ramsar Site of International Importance in Argentina – Peninsula Mitre, covering 370,000 hectares of freshwater and coastal wetlands.

2025 was also a pivotal year for three voluntary, global wetland initiatives that Wetlands International is central to – initiatives that were designed to scale up wetland action by building coalitions, sharing solutions and leveraging funding. Along with our partners, we announced



the Peatland Breakthrough and its first champion countries. Meanwhile, momentum continued to build behind the Freshwater Challenge, which saw country membership jump to over 50 and secured its first businesses supporters, and the Mangrove Breakthrough, which welcomed Mexico and Brazil along with a growing number of sub-national governments.

Wetlands International has always been, at our core, a science-based organisation dedicated to sharing knowledge, best practices, tools and solutions. On this front, 2025 was a bumper year. We contributed to agenda setting publications, including the Global Wetland Outlook and State

of the World's Saltmarshes, while also partnering on reports geared to leveraging funds for wetland action, such as the Mobilising the Mangrove Breakthrough regional reports, and changing narratives, like Africa's Forgotten Fishes.

Through WET HORIZONS, we highlighted the data products and geospatial tools that will help accelerate peatland restoration efforts across Europe, while continuing to expand the reach and impact of existing tools, such as the Global Mangrove Watch and the Waterbird Population Portal.

I am incredibly proud of the work of Wetlands International and our partners in 2025. To our community, civil society and government partners as well as our donors: thank you. Your trust and dedication helped push wetlands from the margins towards the frontline of climate and nature action. Together, we made a significant difference from local action to global policy – driving change that will benefit people, nature and climate.

But 2025 was still a difficult year, with wetlands continuing to be lost and degraded at an alarming pace. Safeguarding the world's wetlands cannot be done at the speed and scale required by relying on the models and approaches of the past. We need a truly transformative approach, which is why we developed a new strategy – Wetlands for Life – by consulting far and wide within our network and beyond.

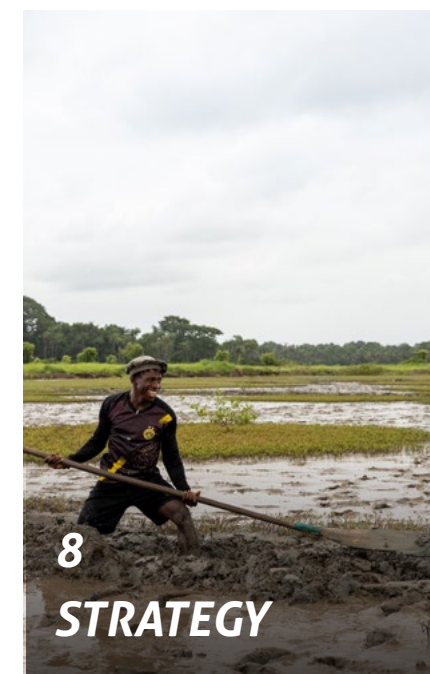
From now on, everything that we do, from science to policy and on-the ground solutions, needs to trigger transformative change for wetlands. Our approach will inspire and enable the stewards of the world's wetlands – from communities and cities to companies and countries – to scale up action to protect, restore and sustainably use the wetlands they are responsible for and so deliver transformative, global change.

The coming decade will be decisive. Building on our 30-year track record, Wetlands International is poised to lead a new era of action and impact. Together, we can reverse decades of decline and make healthy wetlands the cornerstone of a resilient and thriving future.



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WETLANDS FOR LIFE

Wetlands International Strategy (2026-35)

We are living in extraordinary times. The world order is being reshaped – as are the Earth’s systems themselves. The climate is changing rapidly. Ecosystems are being degraded. Species populations are plummeting. The result is that our societies and economies are facing growing risks – many of which are directly linked to the ongoing loss and degradation of the world’s wetlands. But all is not doom and gloom. There are solutions that can be scaled up, wetland positive policies and practices that can be rolled out and replicated.

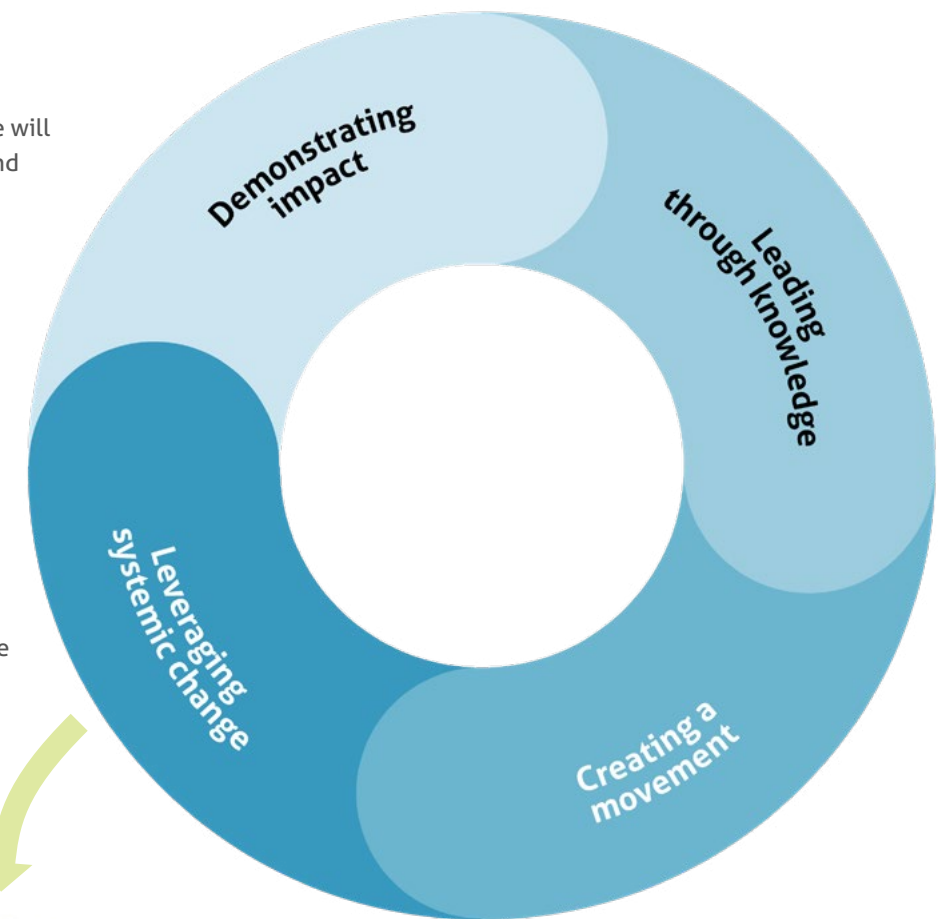
That is why we launched a major consultation to help us develop an ambitious strategy for the next decade. Gathering insights, recommendations and feedback from colleagues, members, civil society partners, donors and experts from across the globe, we worked all year on our new strategy. Approved at the very end of 2025, Wetlands for Life marks a new era for Wetlands International.

From now on, everything that we do, from science to policy and on-the ground practice, needs to trigger transformative change for wetlands, in support of people, nature and climate. While we continue to deliver significant wetland impact with partners at site level, our primary added value is not as an implementing agency but as a driver of systemic change at landscape, national and global levels. Our approach will inspire and enable the actual stewards of the world’s wetlands – from communities and cities to companies and countries – to scale up action to protect, restore and sustainably use the wetlands they are responsible for and so deliver transformative, global change.



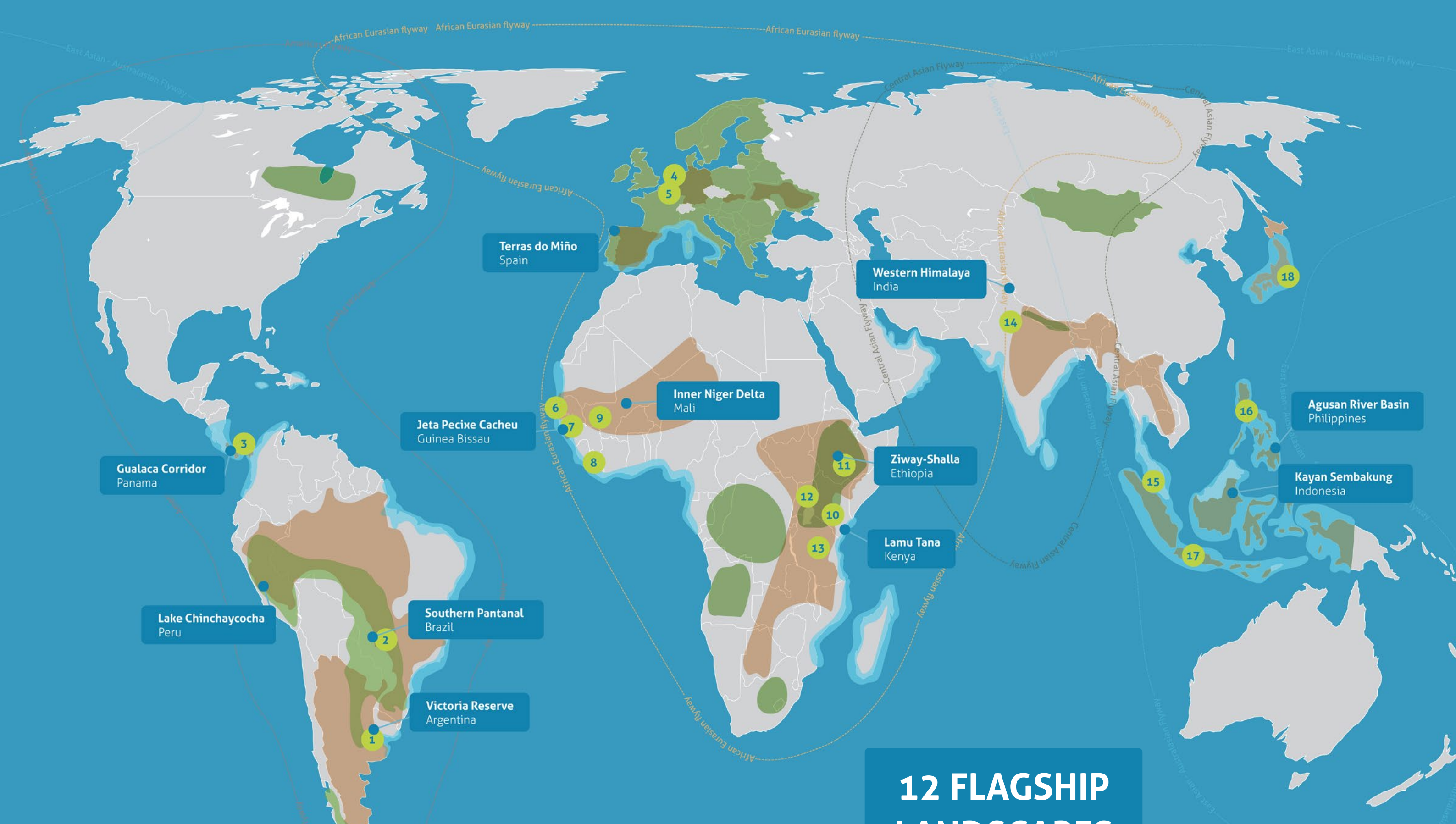
Impact Pathways

Building on our 30-year track record, we will **demonstrate impact** through our site and landscape level interventions. We will **lead through knowledge**, showcasing these successes to inspire others, while providing guidance to action where it is most needed and effective. We will **create a movement**, representing the voice of wetlands, building broader coalitions and alliances. We will **leverage systemic change** by ensuring governments adopt and implement new policies, businesses pursue sustainable practices, and financial institutions redirect their funding from harmful investments to wetland positive ones.



Global Impact

Safeguarding wetlands is key to achieving the global goals on climate, biodiversity and development. We will continue to co-create solutions and deliver significant wetland impact at site level. While substantial, these direct impacts only represent a fraction of the global goals for wetlands. Yet, they will be critical to achieving them because they will showcase solutions that help trigger the systemic change necessary to accelerate and scale up wetland action worldwide. Collaborating with a wide array of partners from communities to cities, companies and countries, we will work to transform the policies and business and finance systems that continue to degrade wetlands.



Terras do Miño
Spain

Western Himalaya
India

Jeta Pecixe Cacheu
Guinea Bissau

Inner Niger Delta
Mali

Ziway-Shalla
Ethiopia

Agusan River Basin
Philippines

Kayan Sembakung
Indonesia

Gualaca Corridor
Panama

Lake Chinchaycocha
Peru

Southern Pantanal
Brazil

Victoria Reserve
Argentina

Lamu Tana
Kenya

12 FLAGSHIP LANDSCAPES

in our new strategy

Wetlands International Offices

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Latin America & Caribbean - Argentina | 8 Sierra Leone | 15 Malaysia - Brunei |
| 2 Latin America & Caribbean - Brazil | 9 Sahel - Mali | 16 Philippines |
| 3 Latin America & Caribbean - Panama | 10 Eastern Africa - Kenya | 17 Indonesia |
| 4 Global Office | 11 Ethiopia | 18 Japan |
| 5 Europe | 12 Uganda | |
| 6 West Africa Coastal - Senegal | 13 Tanzania | |
| 7 Guinea-Bissau | 14 South Asia - India | |

Our focus

- Coastal Wetlands
- Freshwater Wetlands
- Peatlands
- Flagship Landscapes

This map uses Equal Earth Projection, designed to show the relative sizes of landmasses correctly.

ACHIEVEMENTS

This chapter presents our 2025 achievements. These are organised along our streams of work (Coasts & Deltas, Rivers & Lakes and Peatlands) as well as our overarching work (Advocacy, Landscape approach and Knowledge & Innovation) and show our ambition for transformative change in line with our new strategy.



COASTS AND DELTAS

Mobilizing the Mangrove Breakthrough

2025 was a banner year for the Mangrove Breakthrough – and global efforts to accelerate action and mobilize US\$4 billion to protect and restore 15 million hectares of mangroves by 2030. Brazil and Mexico endorsed the Breakthrough along with another ten governments at the state and municipal level – raising the total number of country signatories to 29 and subnational governments to 19. Together with our Global Mangrove Alliance partners, we worked on Mobilizing the Mangrove Breakthrough through a series of regional reports for Asia, the Americas and West-Africa, which identified actionable opportunities, local partnerships, and funding strategies in regions with the most mangroves worldwide. For three countries, Indonesia, Guinea-Bissau and Mexico, we developed propositions for transformative action. These aim to mobilize a blend of public and private sector funding to drive large-scale action for mangroves in priority countries.

Growing Recognition and Uptake of Ecological Mangrove Restoration

Ecological Mangrove Restoration (EMR), which focuses on restoring the hydrology and other enabling conditions for mangroves to regrow naturally, which is more successful than mass planting, built momentum in Africa, Asia and internationally. Along with its impressive impact in Guinea-Bissau (see next page) and in Lamu in Kenya, support for EMR increased significantly at village, government and private sector levels in Indonesia. At community level in North Kalimantan, trained farmers independently applied EMR principles to restore mangroves in abandoned aquaculture, while peer-to-peer exchanges and new village forest managers strengthened local capacity. Sub-national authorities in Indonesia, such as the Tarakan Forest Management Unit, integrated EMR into their 10-year plans, signalling institutional uptake. Nationally, draft revisions to a critical regulation now recognise natural regeneration, which is central to EMR, creating a pathway for formal adoption in government programmes. Exchange visits and global communications further positioned EMR as a credible, scalable alternative to conventional planting.

Expanding impact and influence of the Global Mangrove Watch

The Global Mangrove Watch (GMW) significantly expanded its impact in 2025, providing the scientific foundation for the Mobilizing the Mangrove Breakthrough reports at both regional and national levels. Through a 26% surge in platform engagement and the training of 83 experts via a Train the Trainer approach, GMW has increased its global footprint substantially. With over 100,000 real-time alerts, the platform's expanded coverage enabled rapid conservation responses, as illustrated by stories from Kenya and Indonesia, while active collaboration with the Global Mangrove Alliance chapter in Ecuador is helping to integrate this data into a formal national monitoring system.

COASTS AND DELTAS

Scaling Community-Led Mangrove Restoration and Climate Resilience in West Africa

Wetlands International expanded its mangrove restoration impact across West Africa. We closed a five-year partnership with Greenchoice in Guinea-Bissau by launching a new €2 million phase to expand Community-Based Ecological Mangrove Restoration. Across Cacheu and Cantanhez, 2,502 hectares were restored and over 80,000 hectares under improved protection, directly benefiting more than 10,000 people through sustainable livelihoods. We expanded climate-resilient management, community enterprises and flyway-scale cooperation. By advancing national policy platforms and mobilising the Mangrove Breakthrough country proposition, we positioned Guinea-Bissau to unlock large-scale finance for mangrove conservation and climate mitigation.

First Outcomes of our Flyways Work in West Africa boost knowledge and conservation

Wetlands International generated the first concrete outcomes of its flyways work in West Africa through targeted monitoring and capacity building. In the Saloum Delta, 394 birds were ringed and six Eurasian Whimbrels fitted with GPS transmitters, producing new insights into habitat use, feeding patterns and site fidelity in this critical tidal landscape. These first tracking results already inform site management and demonstrate the Delta's importance within the East Atlantic Flyway, reinforcing evidence-based conservation across coastal West Africa. National protected area staff were trained in bird ringing, colour marking and tracking, strengthening long-term monitoring capacity.

RIVERS AND LAKES

The spreading influence of Wetlands 4 Resilience

The Wetlands 4 Resilience (W4R) approach developed with support of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), aims to scale up holistic wetland restoration and deliver natural, social, financial and inspirational returns and build climate resilience. While working to increase understanding and adoption of the W4R approach globally (see strengthening landscape section below), our activities resulted in significant impacts in Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau and Bangladesh, with strengthened partnerships, increased awareness of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and community empowerment. For example, our W4R work contributed to new ecosystem service assessments in the Sundarbans in Bangladesh. Together, these achievements demonstrated stronger knowledge exchange, growing global visibility, and tangible progress in safeguarding rivers and lakes through integrated landscape approaches. Internationally, recognition of W4R grew with the launch of the first draft W4R Toolkit on Landscape Approaches to guide more coherent and resilience-oriented interventions.

Rising to the Freshwater Challenge

Wetlands International played a pivotal coordinating role as the Freshwater Challenge consolidated its position as the world's leading political platform for freshwater restoration and conservation, expanding to 53 countries and the EU and sustaining global momentum to restore rivers and wetlands at scale. Critical progress in 2025 included the successful development of a US\$5 million Global Environment Facility proposal, creating concrete implementation pathways in countries such as Brazil and Tanzania, as well as the launch of the Business Supporter Programme, which brought major companies, including GSK, Reckitt, EDEKA and IKEA into the initiative. Through recognition in four Plans to Accelerate Solutions under the COP30 Action Agenda and endorsement via a resolution at the Convention on Wetlands COP15, the Challenge strengthened its momentum and political leverage to embed nature-based wetlands solutions in global water and climate agendas – and prompted new countries to join.



RIVERS AND LAKES

Preventing conflict in Mopti through the Water, Peace and Security programme

In 2025, local stakeholders in the fragile Mopti region of Mali, supported by Wetlands International and other partners, assumed full leadership of the peace dialogue platforms, which had been established under the innovative Water, Peace and Security programme – marking a striking achievement in local ownership and sustainability. These fora have played a crucial role in preventing conflict over competing demands for increasingly scarce, natural resources derived from wetland ecosystems, including freshwater fisheries and cattle grazing areas.

Fighting fires and working for waterbirds

Finally, two snapshots of success, which showcase the breadth and scope of our work in 2025. In the Brazilian Pantanal, Wetlands International strengthened frontline wildfire resilience. We collaborated with local authorities and partnered with Indigenous fire brigades, providing them with the tools, infrastructure, and support needed to prevent and respond to fires year-round. The result: they were able to prevent the spread of wildfires on several occasions, benefiting the wetlands, wildlife and their communities. Meanwhile, halfway around the world, we collaborated with partners to coordinate the Asian Waterbird Census in India, which documented nearly 230 bird species, including about 35 threatened ones, across around 810 wetlands nationwide, highlighting the country's critical role in supporting global waterbird biodiversity – and the importance of counting for conservation.

PEATLANDS

Restoring Peatlands and Sustaining community Livelihoods in Mongolia

Under our partnership with Greenchoice, Wetlands International delivered impressive local-national impact in Mongolia through best practices like enhanced grazing management and capacity-building approaches, which linked on-the-ground restoration with long-term climate action. In Khashaat Nomgon, collaboration with our national partner and local communities restored 12 hectares of peatland, which sounds like an insignificant amount but this restoration not only enhanced freshwater supplies and supported sustainable livelihoods, but also improved ecosystem resilience in the face of climate change. Furthermore, it demonstrated the benefits of this approach to restoration in peatlands in Mongolia and elsewhere across the globe. At the national level, the project positioned peatland restoration as a climate solution by advancing a formal proposal for inclusion in Mongolia's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), strengthening both mitigation and adaptation commitments. Meanwhile, the Mongolia Peatland Initiative established a national expert platform to raise awareness, build capacity and embed peatland-positive approaches in environmental and climate legislation.

Landmark year for the Peatland Breakthrough

Wetlands International played a pivotal role in driving the development of the Peatland Breakthrough – a collaborative initiative under the Global Climate Action Agenda to mobilize partners, leverage funds and accelerate action to conserve, rewet and restore peatlands and enable their wise use. Working with a group of partners, we established a core team, defined global targets for peatlands, and engaged initial champion countries – Peru, Uganda and Germany. Showcased at Ramsar COP15, the Peatland Breakthrough was officially presented during Climate COP 30, opening an endorsement process to engage governments, finance, philanthropy and business – and pave the way for its full launch in 2026.

Driving peatland restoration in the High Andes

Wetlands International delivered the most comprehensive and up-to-date inventory of the Junín National Reserve in Peru, providing a critical evidence-base for restoration planning around Lake Chinchaycocha and across the country. Our work directly informs not only the Reserve's Management Plan but also decision-making by government authorities, including SERNANP, strengthening science-based management of other high Andean wetlands. By developing and applying a specialised carbon methodology for Andean peatlands (bofedales), we quantified the climate mitigation potential of restoration, while establishing an approach that can be replicated beyond the region. In parallel, participatory restoration with local communities and Indigenous People integrated traditional knowledge into project design, building local capacity, shared ownership and more durable, long-term restoration impacts.

PEATLANDS

Promoting paludiculture as a peatland-positive approach

In 2025, together with European partners, Wetlands International launched PaluWise as a dedicated initiative to accelerate peatland restoration and paludiculture across Europe. We have long pioneered and promoted paludiculture or wet agriculture, using crops that thrive in waterlogged conditions to avoid the need to drain and degrade wetlands. PaluWise translates years of practical experience into a structured programme focused on rewetting, regenerative production systems and long-term landscape impact. By embedding tools such as Landscape Ecological System Analysis and the 4 Returns framework, the initiative ensures that ecological recovery, social inclusion, governance reform and financial viability are addressed in an integrated way. The launch positions Wetlands International as a reference organisation for peatland restoration and paludiculture, laying the foundation for scaling landscape-level interventions that deliver emissions reductions, biodiversity recovery and sustainable economic models.

World's most southerly Ramsar site certified in Argentina

Located on the southern tip of South America, the newly-created Península Mitre Ramsar Site of International Importance covers 370,000 hectares of land and coastal areas. Wetlands International supported the government of Argentina to designate it as a protected area. Along with its historical and cultural importance, Península Mitre sustains rich biodiversity, including rare and endemic species as well as globally-important populations of birds, mammals and fish, and harbours 80% of all the peatlands in Argentina, playing a crucial role in mitigating climate change by storing and capturing huge amounts of carbon.

ADVOCACY

100% success rate for our priority resolutions

Working tirelessly before and during the Convention on Wetlands COP with champion governments and partners to support a set of priority resolutions, we were delighted when all of them were unanimously adopted by the more than 170 Contracting Parties at Victoria Falls. These critical decisions included the establishment of the Global Waterbird Estimates Partnership (GWEP) and delivery of the 2027 edition of Waterbird Population Estimates; restoration of degraded freshwater ecosystems, and recognition of the contribution to the Freshwater Challenge; achieving the equitable governance and effective conservation of wetlands as protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs); strengthening national actions for the conservation and restoration of waterbird flyways and critical sites; and enhancing the Convention's visibility and synergies with other multilateral environmental agreements and international institutions. Many other important resolutions that we supported were also adopted, including on sustainable livelihoods, priorities for scientific and technical work, and river dolphins (which morphed into one on freshwater indicator species).

Big wins for wetlands at Victoria Falls

Wetlands International prioritized the Convention on Wetlands COP15 in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe in July 2025, as a critical moment to strengthen national and global efforts to protect and restore wetlands. Rallying our network and collaborating with partners, we helped to secure five key strategic outcomes: an ambitious new Strategic Plan for the Convention clearly addressing the drivers of wetland loss; adoption of multiple resolutions on topics from flyways to freshwater (see left); mobilization of funds for the Convention and wetlands more widely; growing support for three global initiatives – the Freshwater Challenge, Mangrove Breakthrough, and Peatland Breakthrough; and catalysing a call to action for healthy wetlands as critical climate solutions ahead of UNFCCC COP30 in Brazil. These priorities were highlighted in the keynote speech by our CEO, Coenraad Krijger, delivered on the opening day on behalf of all six International Organization Partners.



ADVOCACY

Making waves at the UN Ocean Conference

Wetlands International played a key role at both the UN Ocean Conference (UNOC) in Nice and the Blue Economy and Finance Forum in Monaco, helping to drive a tangible shift in focus. Coastal wetlands — mangroves, saltmarshes, coral reefs and seagrasses — were no longer perceived as peripheral to climate and biodiversity efforts. Their roles as critical carbon sinks, biodiversity havens, and buffers against the worsening impacts of our changing climate were recognised in plenaries, pavilions, and policy conversations thanks to Wetlands International and our partners. Specifically, Brazil endorsed the Mangrove Breakthrough, which was also instrumental in the launch of the innovative Mangrove Finance Facility.

Motioning the way forward for wetlands at the IUCN Congress

Influencing the decisions at the world's largest conservation conference is critical to the overall mission of Wetlands International since the 4-yearly IUCN Congress guides what the global conservation community will prioritise in the coming years. In 2025, Wetlands International co-sponsored five motions and supported several others that were adopted, ensuring wetlands will be at the heart of global efforts for achieving climate stability, reversing nature loss, and supporting sustainable development. Our critical motions that were overwhelmingly adopted by the government and non-governmental members included prioritising wetlands conservation and restoration to tackle the dual climate and biodiversity crises; strengthening protective measures for protected areas against unsustainable tourism development; living in harmony with rivers through the rights of nature and ecocentric law; and safeguarding biodiversity and human rights in energy transition mineral governance. Many other wetland-related motions were adopted, signaling a turning point for wetlands and for how they are recognised across sectors as equally essential to ensure a safer planet for our shared future.

LANDSCAPE APPROACH

Combining work under the innovative WaterLANDS project and experience from six large-scale wetlands restoration sites across the Netherlands, Italy, Bulgaria, Estonia, Ireland and the UK, we developed a co-creation framework to guide collaborative ecological restoration across Europe and beyond. In addition, we formalized a landscape-level methodology to facilitate multidisciplinary knowledge integration on restoration. Both of these outcomes are structured around the 4 Returns framework.

Co-creation framework is pivotal to landscape interventions

The framework consolidates diverse expertise, participatory practices and tested methodologies into practical guidance that clearly defines the principles, stages and knowledge requirements of effective co-creation. By documenting real-world 'co-creation stories', challenges and lessons learned, it provides adaptable strategies to navigate socio-ecological complexity, stakeholder dynamics and governance barriers, accompanied by a curated toolkit of creative field-tested methods. The main focus is the inspiration component of the 4 Returns framework, which involves giving people hope and a sense of purpose, while restoring ecosystems.

From fragmented knowledge to an integrated approach

In 2025, we successfully consolidated and operationalized a Landscape Ecological System Analysis (LESA) methodology, establishing a relevant, field-tested landscape model that bridges science, policy, finance, and local action. By integrating multidisciplinary research with practical experience, we translated fragmented knowledge into a coherent approach for transformative, landscape-level change. The methodology combines ecological recovery, social inclusion, governance reform, and financial sustainability and has been tested and refined in specific sites, such as the Dragoman Marsh in Bulgaria and the Cuilcagh-Anierin Uplands in Ireland. Each Action Site has influenced hundreds to thousands of hectares directly and shaped restoration trajectories across much wider wetland regions, embedding community engagement and just transition principles at scale.



KNOWLEDGE AND INNOVATION

Thought leading on wetlands

2025 was a bumper year for Wetlands International publications with a range of influential reports being released throughout the year. Working with our partners, we developed three Mobilising the Mangrove Breakthrough Regional Readiness Reports for Asia, the Americas and West Africa as well as Country Summaries for Indonesia and the Philippines to provide governments, donors, financial institutions and NGOs with clear pathways to scale up efforts in support of the Mangrove Breakthrough goals. We published best practice guides for savings and loans groups, energy-efficient cook stoves and school clubs for mangrove-dependent communities. We also contributed to influential reports such as the 2025 Global Wetland Outlook, the State of the World's Saltmarshes and Africa's Forgotten Fishes.

Spreading the word through side events at Victoria Falls

Beyond our delegation's work on the negotiations at the Convention on Wetlands COP in Victoria Falls, our programme of events with partners facilitated the flow of inspiration and knowledge to enhance wetland protection, conservation and wise use through a local, national and global lens. Our events examined innovative finance mechanisms; identified earth observation opportunities; positioned wetlands as nature-based solutions for climate mitigation and adaptation; shared practical experiences of flyway conservation and funding; elevated the role of youth; delved into the details of National Wetland Inventories; strengthened action on sustainable lifestyles and culture; shone a spotlight on peatlands, freshwater, and mangroves; showcased standards, tools and guidance; and explored the Rights of Wetlands as a pathway for transformative change.

Delivering data to safeguard wetlands

Developing and improving mapping tools and data products are a critical component of our work. In 2025, through WET HORIZONS, which brings together 14 organisations to improve wetland knowledge and develop tools to enhance wetland action in Europe, we highlighted data products and geospatial tools that will help accelerate peatland restoration efforts across the continent. Use of the Global Mangrove Watch continued to increase and support more effective mangrove action globally. The Waterbird Population Portal provided current and historic estimates for over 800 waterbird species and 2300 biogeographic populations worldwide. Both of these tools helped drive wetland action.

FUNCTIONING OF THE ORGANISATION

Our network

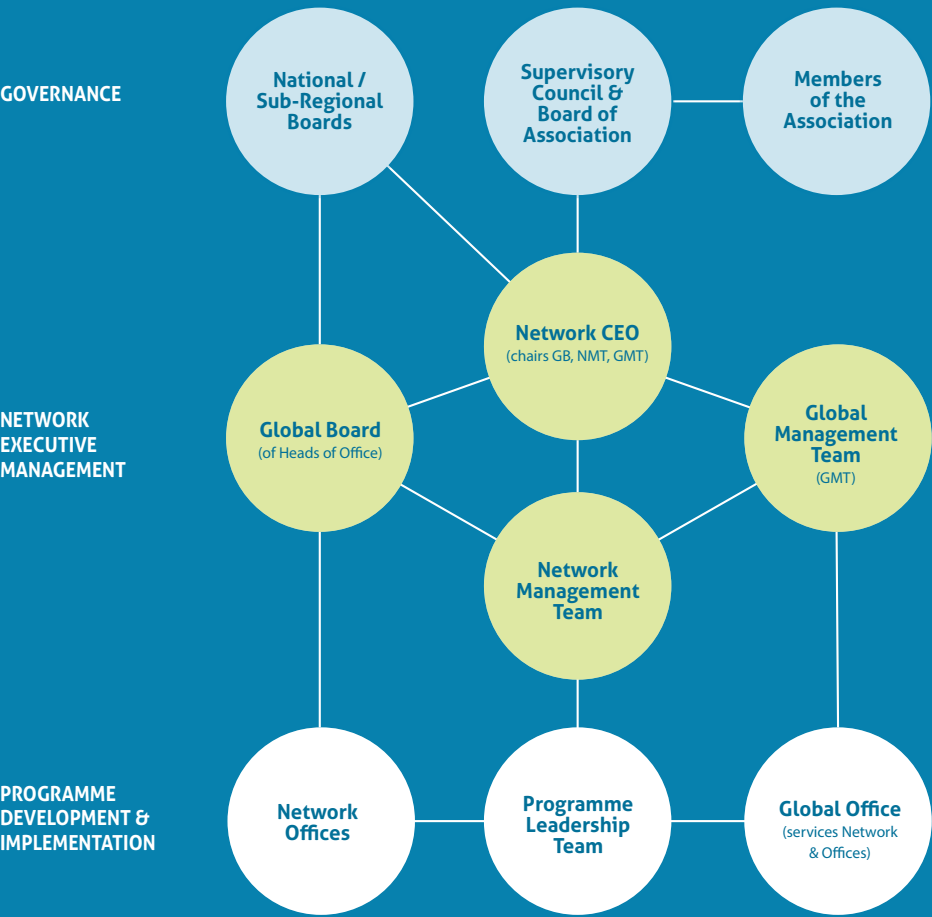
Wetlands International operates as a global network of offices with shared values and purpose, working on a joint strategy to safeguard and restore wetlands worldwide. We have offices in 18 countries and we are active in many more.

The Global Office, based in the Netherlands, facilitates collaboration across the Network and provides leadership and support in representation, programme development, communications, global advocacy, fundraising, and risk management. It nurtures the work and collaboration of the Network and ensures alignment with decisions taken by the Global Management Team and the Global Board.

The Global Board, consisting of the Wetlands International CEO and all Heads of Office, is responsible for strategic decisions on positioning, priority setting and institutional issues, which are then adopted by the Global Management Team.

Governance

Wetlands International is a non-profit organisation with charitable status in the Netherlands and in countries where it operates. The organisation has two complementary forms of international governance: an Association of Members (governments and NGOs), and a foundation overseen by a Supervisory Council whose members also constitute the Board of the Association. In cases where Wetlands International offices have an independent legal status, they are governed by their own boards and the organisation's CEO is an ex-officio member.



SOCIAL REPORT

GLOBAL OFFICE

TOTAL STAFF
Male 20 / Female 29

49



21
Nationalities

47
Average Age (years)



HEALTH

2%

Sick leave

1⁴

Absenteeism frequency



HIGHEST LEVEL EDUCATION

Phd 8
Master 30
Bachelor 8
Other 3

FTE

47

Parttime 13
Fulltime 36

STAFF TURNOVER

12

Staff Left

10

New Staff



CONTRACT

29 Permanent
20 Fixed



INTEGRITY PROCEDURES

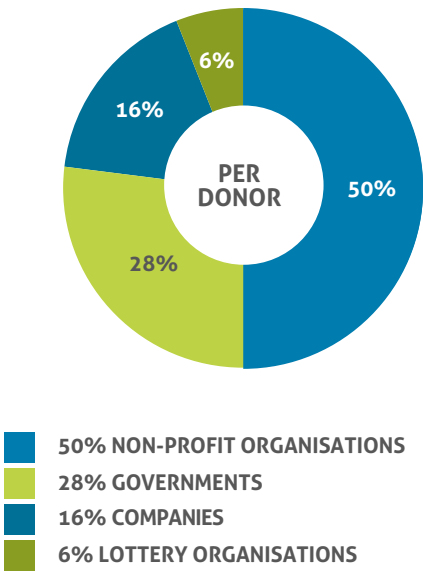
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Internal
External

SUMMARY OF FINANCE AND RESOURCING

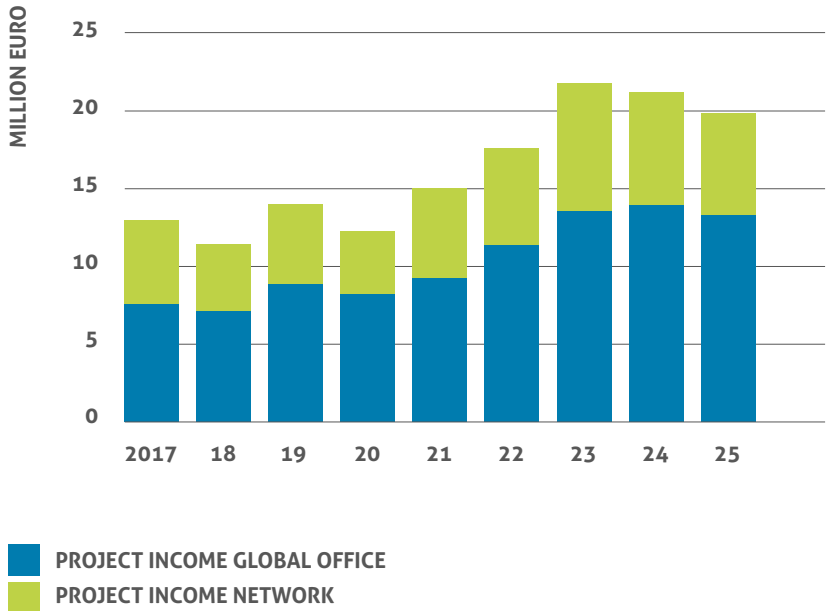
In 2025, Wetlands International recorded total income of approximately €19.8 million across the Global Office and Network Offices. Of this, €13.3 million was generated through the Global Office and €6.5 million through the wider Network. This reflects the continued role of the Global Office in managing and supporting a significant share of the organization’s international funding base, while also showing the important contribution of Network Offices to overall financial and programmatic activity.

Global Office income came from a diversified mix of funding sources. Non-profit organizations remained the largest source, representing approximately 49% of income, followed by governments at 28%, companies at 16%, lottery organizations at 6%, and other income at less than 1%. This funding profile underlines the importance of maintaining strong institutional donor relationships while continuing to broaden and balance the organization’s income base.

SOURCE OF INCOME GLOBAL OFFICE



TOTAL INCOME NETWORK AND GLOBAL OFFICE



TOP 5 RISKS

Wetlands International operates in a complex and changing external environment. During the year, management continued to monitor the principal risks that may affect the organization’s ability to deliver its mission, maintain financial resilience, protect public trust, and operate safely and responsibly across different contexts. The main risk areas identified for public reporting are: external context and operating space; financial sustainability and donor environment; cyber, data and systems resilience; reputation, partnerships and public trust; and safety, security and access.

These risks are managed through a combination of strategic planning, regular monitoring, strengthened financial forecasting, donor and pipeline oversight, ICT and data-security measures, partnership due diligence, issue escalation procedures, and duty-of-care arrangements. Management recognizes that not all risks can be eliminated, particularly where they arise from geopolitical, funding, security or civic-space developments. The organization therefore focuses on early warning, proportionate mitigation, clear accountability, and maintaining sufficient organizational resilience to respond to material changes in a timely and responsible way.

THE TOP 5 RISKS IN DECEMBER 2025:

Risk area		Mitigation measures
1	External context and operating space	Maintain regular external-context scanning and scenario planning; refresh strategic positioning and policy narrative; sharpen donor and stakeholder engagement around wetlands relevance; integrate geopolitical and donor risk assumptions into planning and budgeting cycles.
2	Financial sustainability and donor environments	Set and monitor core income and pipeline targets; strengthen resource development governance and prioritization; diversify donor base and funding instruments; require rolling income forecasts and early escalation of material pipeline gaps.
3	Cyber, data, and systems resilience	Refresh ICT risk assessment and security architecture review; strengthen access control, backup, incident response and user awareness; define minimum cyber hygiene expectations across the network; ensure business continuity arrangements for critical finance and collaboration systems.
4	Reputation, partnerships, and public trust	Maintain clear partnership due diligence and escalation procedures; strengthen issue response coordination for sensitive public matters; align external messaging across advocacy, programmes and partnerships; monitor reputational implications of major delivery or compliance issues.
5	Safety, security, and access	Maintain organization-wide duty-of-care framework and minimum-security expectations; define escalation and reporting lines for serious incidents; ensure high-risk contexts receive tailored management attention; review insurance and emergency support arrangements periodically.

THANK YOU

Conserving and restoring the world’s wetlands has never been more important, and we are hugely grateful to all who supported us in 2025. Our work is only possible with the support of our many partners, from national and local governments to knowledge institutions, civil society organisations and the private sector. Thanks also to all our Wetlands International Association members who provide vital financial support and collaborate closely in our programmes and policy advocacy.

We are immensely grateful to COMON Foundation, Postcode Lotterij, Effectief Spenden, Doneer Effectief and UBS-Optimus Foundation for providing core support that has enabled us to strengthen our organisation, make strategic investments to respond to challenges and opportunities as they arise.

We would also like to thank our other financial partners, including DOB Ecology, GreenChoice, Crankstart, Bezos Earth Fund, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), and the Dutch government (RVO, Embassies) as well as the Swiss and German governments, Asian Development Bank and the Luc Hoffman Flyways Fund (via Birdlife International) among others. Through our strategic collaborations, your support has significantly improved wetland conservation and restoration efforts, contributing

to climate adaptation and sustainable livelihoods, and boosting biodiversity, including through our work on flyways for migratory bird.

We also acknowledge the generous contributions of the Swedish Postcode Lottery, Good Energies, Cadence Giving Foundation, Flotilla Foundation, Mirova, EcoShape, Waterloo Foundation, and Turing Foundation. Your support was instrumental in launching guidance on community-based ecological restoration, conservation and management of mangroves, saltmarshes and tidal flats.

Additionally, we are deeply thankful to PEW Charitable Trust, Oceankind Trust, Foundation Nieuwe Waarde, the European Commission, the (German) International Climate Initiative, the Canadian government (CIDA, GAC via GGGI), and the European Space Agency. Your support has bolstered our efforts to elevate the role of wetlands in addressing global environmental challenges.

To all donors, members, partners, international and local actors, and the communities and traditional and Indigenous Peoples we work with: thank you. Your commitment continues to drive momentum and hope for the future of wetlands and the people who depend on them.



Kadiweu Indigenous firefighters of the Pantanal in Brazil.

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Published by Wetlands International

P.O. Box 471
6700 AL Wageningen
The Netherlands

Design and Layout

Joeri Borst, Endeke Huisman - Penong.com

Editor

Richard Lee
Joeri Borst



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