

**Statement by  
David Cooper  
Acting Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity  
World Wetlands Day  
“Wetlands and Human Wellbeing”  
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Wetlands are very special ecosystems. Comprising rivers, lakes, swamps, and peatlands, estuaries, mangroves and coral reefs, wetlands make up only 6% of the earth’s surface. Yet they provide home to some 40% of the world’s biodiversity.

And wetlands provide essential benefits for people. Wetlands deliver food and clean water, they store floodwaters and protect coastal communities from the impact of extreme events. And they lock away carbon and help to cool the planet.

They also support livelihoods: Almost 1 billion households in Asia, Africa and the Americas rely on rice growing and processing for their main livelihoods. More than 660 million people depend on fishing and aquaculture for a living.

So this World Wetlands Day, we are highlighting how wetlands support human well-being.

But wetlands are under threat. Over a third of the world’s wetlands have disappeared over the last 50 years.

We must reverse this loss. We must act for wetlands.

The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework is the world’s plan to do that. The four goals of the Biodiversity Plan aim: to Protect and restore nature; to prosper with nature; to share benefits fairly; and to invest and collaborate for nature. Its mission is to halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity, this decade.

Specific targets are to restore and conserve wetlands, to tackle pollution and invasive species and to ensure that agriculture, aquaculture, forestry and fisheries are sustainable.

Such actions are also essential to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals

Working together, through the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands let us act for wetlands and human wellbeing.