



The Changshu Declaration on Wetlands Final Resolution adopted at the 10th INTECOL International Wetlands Conference, Changshu, People's Republic of China, 19–24 September 2016[☆]



More than 800 INTECOL wetlands conference participants from over 72 countries, representing a wide range of expertise in wetland science, technology, policy and management, acknowledge the auspicious historical moment in which we have gathered here and come to agreement on the following issues:

Whereas in 2015 all countries have agreed on the Sustainable Development Goals containing the following three important targets referring to wetlands:

- (1) to protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes (SDG Target 6.6).
- (2) to sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts. . . and take action for their restoration (SDG Target 14.2);
- (3) to ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in line with obligations under international agreements (SDG Target 15.1);

Whereas development activities have resulted in the loss of more than 40% of the world's wetlands in the past 40 years, and the threats to wetlands are growing through expanding agriculture, urbanization, pollutions, over-exploitation of water resources and climate system;

Whereas wetlands are intrazonal ecosystems, the qualitative significance of which in Chinese history is indicated by their Chinese geographic identification, as different wetland types induced the different cultures over time;

Whereas healthy wetlands support a beautiful and healthy earth, sustain happy lives and improve all human communities, especially for those living in cities; what is called 'Jiangnan (south China) culture' or 'waterside culture' originates from the word 'wetland culture', which has a long history;

Whereas there are about 53.6 million hectares of wetlands in China, which will be effectively managed by the government;

Recognizing wetlands including lakes, marshes, rivers, coastal zones, and artificial wetlands, with multiple ecosystem services providing a diversity of regulatory, provisioning and supporting services, including those that sustain the livelihoods and well-being of local communities;

Recognizing the value of wetlands in urban flood control and improving the health of city dwellers, and noting the prestigious Wetland City label to be awarded under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands;

Recognizing the need to allocate an adequate quantity, and quality of water flowing with appropriate timing to enable the sustainable functioning of wetland ecosystems, within a legal

[☆] ADDENDUM: The Organizing Committee of the 10th INTECOL International Wetlands Conference wishes to point out that the water cleansing and purification functions of wetlands have been overlooked in the wording of the Changshu Declaration. However during the conference, these important functions were discussed in numerous presentations, workshops, and plenary lectures. Since the issue was addressed in many contributions the Committee would like to also draw attention to these functions and request these are also considered in our joint efforts to make wise use of all wetlands and where possible, to consider them when restoring wetlands.

framework, as set out in Resolution 12 of the 12th Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention;

Recognizing the need for increased wetland monitoring, assessment, national wetland inventories and earth observation, moving towards the establishment of a Global Wetlands Observation System;

Therefore call upon financial institutions worldwide – development banks, investment banks, ministries of finance, and private sectors – to invest in the conservation, wise use and restoration of wetlands for their unique biodiversity, carbon capture and storage, and to reduce climatic variability and water risks;

Therefore call upon the private actors and the business sector to consider their supply chains, and to ensure that wetlands are not harmed or destroyed by their business practices, for long-term sustainability;

Therefore call upon farming communities and the agriculture sector to acknowledge that wetlands must be conserved and restored within agricultural landscapes, for sustaining biodiversity and pollination services, recharging aquifers and buffering the risks of droughts and floods;

Therefore call upon land use planners to recognize wetlands as a valuable global public good, and to ensure that wetlands are protected and embedded within both urban and rural landscapes;

Therefore call upon river basin managers and catchment committees concerned with issues of water allocation, to recognize upstream wetlands as valuable water providers, and downstream wetlands as essential water retention and detention infrastructure, for flood management, and for aquifer recharge and for biodiversity within the basin, catchment or watershed;

Therefore call upon coastal development planners and authorities to recognize the critical importance of coastal wetlands, particularly intertidal areas, for the conservation of globally important migratory waterbird species and other valuable ecosystem services and ensure their protection and sustainable management;

Therefore call upon urban managers to enhance the beauty of their cities by restoring and valuing their wetlands, for urban flood control, for eco-tourism, for children's education, and for providing health and happiness to local urban dwellers. We encourage them to strive for accreditation of their city as a Wetland City under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

We thank the Government of the People's Republic of China, Nanjing University, RAMSAR Administrative Authority of China, Changshu Government and Nanjing University Ecological Research Institute of Changshu, and the other organizations for hosting, sponsoring and contributing to the 10th INTECOL International Wetlands Conference.

We acknowledge the success of this conference BY ACCLAMATION.

Signed on behalf of the participants in Changshu, People's Republic of China on 24 September 2016 by R. Eugene Turner, Jos T.A. Verhoeven, Ania Grobicki, Jenny Davis, Shirong Liu and Shuqing An.

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