

INFOGRAPHIC

15TH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON WETLANDS

COP15 joins scores of countries from across the globe, united in the common purpose of protecting, restoring and ensuring the wise and sustainable use of our planet's wetlands.

- The Convention on Wetlands is an international treaty signed and adopted on **2 February 1971**.
- It's the **only international treaty focused on wetlands** and the only one focused on a single ecosystem.
- Today, the Convention counts 172 countries in its membership, officially known as Contracting Parties.
- **World Wetlands Day 2025** coincides with the 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Wetlands (COP15).
- Every three years, representatives of the governments of each of the Contracting Parties meet to facilitate **crucial discussions** on the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands and to agree on a work program for the next three years.
- In conjunction with COP15, the Convention will be releasing a new edition of "**The Global Wetland Outlook**" – an indispensable resource and roadmap for moving forward.
- COP15 will take place in Zimbabwe on **23-31 July 2025** in Victoria Falls under the same theme as World Wetlands Day 2025: "Protecting Wetlands for Our Common Future."
- The Republic of **Zimbabwe**, Ministry of Environment, Climate, Tourism and Hospitality Industry is the key partner for both COP15 and World Wetlands Day 2025.
- This meeting will be the second COP to take place in **Africa**.
- The Convention's list of Wetlands of International Importance includes more than **2,500 locations** (Ramsar Sites) in 172 countries, covering a total of more than 257 million hectares.
- Seven Ramsar Sites are among Zimbabwe's diverse array of ecosystems. This includes the singular **Victoria Falls National Park**, home to one of the largest and most spectacular waterfalls in the world, the Mosi-oa-Tunya or Victoria Falls.



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COP15 is a landmark moment for all of us. The global collaboration that will come out of this critical meeting to halt and reverse the loss of our planet's wetlands will impact our common future and the sustainability of our planet.

World Wetlands Day
2 February 2025
Protecting wetlands for our common future

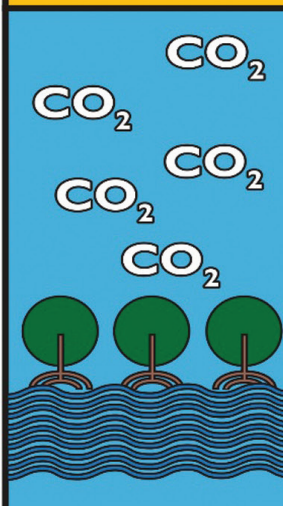
WETLANDS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

WETLANDS ARE KEY TO CLIMATE RESILIENCE.

- Wetlands are our most effective land-based ecosystem for addressing the climate crisis. By absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and storing it in their soil and biomass, wetlands **help mitigate climate change**.
- Coastal wetlands, such as mangroves, **sequester carbon** up to 55 times faster than tropical rainforests.
- Peatlands, which cover only 3% of the Earth's land surface, **store 30% of all land-based carbon**.
- Climate change is heavily impacting wetlands through more severe and frequent droughts and increased evapotranspiration due to higher temperatures. At the same time, the loss of wetlands could worsen the impact of climate change, as these ecosystems **provide essential services** that mitigate the effects of climate change.
- When drained, dredged and degraded, wetlands can emit significant quantities of greenhouse gases. Wetland **conservation, restoration and wise use** can prevent emissions, and in many instances, sequester significant amounts of carbon.
- It's critical that wetland protection and restoration be recognized as effective **nature-based solutions** for climate adaptation and mitigation and that they be incorporated into climate plans and legislation at all levels of government.
- To meet the 1.5 °C Paris Agreement climate goals, we must prevent further conversion and drainage of intact peatlands and **restore 50% of all lost peatlands** before 2030.



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