

| Issue 1/2024 | 3rd May 2024 | Spring Newsletter |

SWS Europe News

This is our first newsletter for some time. We will be producing one quarterly and we're interested in everything to do with European Wetlands so if you have any events, courses or publications you would like us to share with the SWS membership then please get in touch. Your SWS Europe committee are the following:

Matt Simpson – President – <u>matthew@35percent.co.uk</u>
Keith Edwards – Secretary - <u>edwards@prf.jcu.cz</u>
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Marta Baumane – Students - <u>marta.baumane@bio.ku.dk</u> Columba Martínez-Espinosa – President Elect - <u>martinez-espinosa@tourduvalat.org</u>

<u>MEETING</u> - The 19th Europe Chapter Meeting will happen in Biebrza, Poland – 24-26 June 2024. Please join us for an exciting few days. Website details below.

ACCREDITATION - We are promoting the SWS wetland scientist professional accreditation program for wetland scientists and practitioners to raise the profile of a career in wetlands and bring it in line with other professions. If you are interested in becoming accredited then visit www.wetlandcert.org

We are happy to announce that registration for the upcoming 19th SWS Europe Chapter Conference is now officially open!

To register for the conference, please fill out the registration form provided <u>HERE</u>. This form will allow you to specify your preferences regarding transportation, accommodation, dietary requirements, and invoicing details. Please note, that the Early Bird payment deadline is May 20th, 2024.

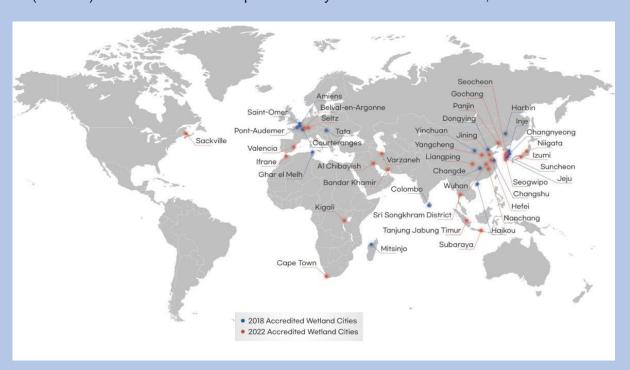
We also invite you to participate in the Wetland Summer School. This event is dedicated to practitioners and researchers in the field of wetland conservation and restoration who have (or can have in the future) a significant impact on the condition of these ecosystems. The number of places is very limited, and it is necessary to submit your application through the dedicated registration form. Should you have any questions or require further assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out to us at swseurope24@bagna.pl.

DATES

- 19th Society of Wetland Scientists Europe Meeting WETLANDS ACROSS TIMESCALES 24-26 June 2024 https://swseurope2024.bagna.pl/. Abstract submission and registration now open
- Society of Wetland Scientists International Meeting Taipei, Taiwan– 11-16 November 2024 https://www.sws.org/annual-meetings

The updated list of Ramsar sites now includes 2.513 sites designated by 172 contracting parties, comprising an area of 2,572,574 km². The country with the highest number of sites is the UK, with 175 sites occupying an area of almost 13,000 km²; Mexico has 144 sites occupying an area of >87,000 km². Although Botswana only has one Ramsar site listed, the Okavango Delta occupies > 50,000 km²; Brazil has 27 sites occupying almost 27,000 km².

Under the Ramsar Convention, there are now **43 accredited wetland cities**; 13 of these are in China where the first city was accredited (Changshu). New wetland cities will be formally accredited at the 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (COP15) which is due to take place in July 2025 in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.



https://www.ramsar.org/our-work/activities/wetland-city-accreditation

Wetlands face an existential threat from plastic pollution

"Global production of plastic has surged since the mid-20th century, from two million metric tons in 1950 to 460 million metric tons in 2022. This rise in plastics use has triggered a corresponding increase in plastic waste—with devastating effects on wetlands and their inhabitants". In several Ramsar Sites collaborative efforts are under way by the public and private sectors to implement innovative waste-removal strategies. For example, Thane Creek, a Ramsar Site in India, is seeing a broad successful collaboration between governments, intergovernmental organizations, local communities, NGOs, and the private sector for clean-up efforts.

The first formal negotiation around the global plastics treaty has just taken place in Ottawa, Canada. "The **Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Plastic Pollution** is tasked with developing a comprehensive approach that addresses the full life cycle of plastic, including its production, design, and disposal by the end of 2024".

https://www.ramsar.org/news/zero-waste-perils-plastic-wetlands-fight-back-against-existential-threat-pollution

A special seminar was held at the University of South Bohemia on 19 October 2023 to celebrate the 90th birthday of **Jan Květ**, one of our most distinguished members, as well as wetlands in general. The seminar consisted of two plenary talks. The presentation by chapter member Dominik Zak (Aarhus University) vividly described the biogeochemistry and nutrient cycling in riverine wetlands, with numerous examples from Dominik's work in cooperation with his team at Aarhus as well as collaboration with other academic institutions, such as the paludiculture group at Greifswald University. The second plenary was given by Ivana Bufková (Šumava National Park) who presented an overview of the peatland restoration projects being undertaken as part of the Life for Mires project.



- ❖ To celebrate World Wetlands Day, we held an online winter conference last February, where seven students and early career researchers presented their recent work. Megan Hudson won the best presentation award with a thought provoking talk on local expert knowledge in agricultural peat management. Lukasz Kosub gave a keynote talk on wetlands in north-eastern Poland.
- ❖ In 2017 and 2020, hundreds of people reported on the state of their wetlands. That information has fed into the Global Wetland Outlook, Ramsar COP, and the Convention on Biological Diversity. Help us update that study by filling in the World Wetland Survey before 31 May 2024. We welcome every report on a wetland, no matter who or where you are, the size or story of the wetland. We want as full a picture as possible.
- Do you and your collaborators want to potentially organise the next SWS Europe meeting? Do get in touch with our SWS Europe Chapter Board members.

