

# UNFCCC COP26 Global Peatlands Pavilion

## Summary report



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## Abbreviations

<b>AFoCO</b>	Asian Forest Cooperation Organization
<b>AONB</b>	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
<b>ARA</b>	Adaptation Research Alliance
<b>ASEAN</b>	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
<b>BfN</b>	German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation
<b>BMUV</b>	German Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection
<b>CBD</b>	Convention on Biological Diversity
<b>CIFOR</b>	Center for International Forest Research
<b>COP</b>	Conference Of Parties
<b>DEFRA</b>	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs of the UK
<b>DRC</b>	Democratic Republic of Congo
<b>ESA</b>	European Space Agency
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
<b>GEC</b>	Global Environment Centre
<b>GEF</b>	Global Environment Facility
<b>GHG</b>	Greenhouse Gas
<b>GIZ</b>	German Agency for International Cooperation
<b>GMC</b>	Greifswald Mire Centre
<b>GNB</b>	Great North Bog
<b>GPA</b>	Global Peatlands Assessment
<b>GPI</b>	Global Peatlands Initiative
<b>Gt</b>	Gigatonne
<b>HES</b>	Historic Environment Scotland
<b>IFAD</b>	International Fund for Agricultural Development
<b>IFSA</b>	International Forestry Students Association
<b>IKI</b>	International Climate Initiative
<b>IPS</b>	International Peatland Society
<b>ITPC</b>	International Tropical Peatlands Centre
<b>IUCN</b>	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
<b>IWMI</b>	International Water Management Institute
<b>LTS</b>	Long Term Strategy
<b>MEAs</b>	Multilateral Environment Agreements
<b>MAHSFA</b>	Measurable Action for Haze-Free Sustainable Land Management in Southeast Asia
<b>MSF</b>	Michael Succow Foundation

<b>NABU</b>	Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union
<b>NBI</b>	Nile Basin Initiative
<b>NbS</b>	Nature-based Solutions
<b>NDC</b>	Nationally Determined Contribution
<b>NTS</b>	National Trust for Scotland
<b>NUI</b>	National University of Ireland
<b>Q&amp;A</b>	Questions and Answers
<b>RSPB</b>	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
<b>SRUC</b>	Scotland's Rural College
<b>SUPA</b>	Sustainable Use of Peatland and Haze Mitigation in ASEAN
<b>UEL</b>	University of East London
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom
<b>UNCCD</b>	UN Convention to Combat Desertification
<b>UNEA</b>	United Nations Environment Assembly
<b>UNEP</b>	UN Environment Programme
<b>UNEP-WCMC</b>	UN Environment Programme - World Conservation Monitoring Centre
<b>UNFCCC</b>	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>USFS</b>	US Forest Service
<b>WCS</b>	Wildlife Conservation Society
<b>WI</b>	Wetlands International
<b>WWF</b>	World Wildlife Fund
<b>YEW</b>	Youth Engaged in Wetlands

## Summary

The Global Peatlands Pavilion took place from 1-12 November 2021 in Glasgow in the Blue Zone at the 26<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. The Pavilion itself consisted of a physical space including a water droplet structure built out of reeds gathered from peatlands, and a 3D virtual pavilion with three “floors” of multi-media content, including over 200 exhibits. The programme brought together over 250 speakers from around the world from all sectors and disciplines. There were 45 sessions held over the 12 thematic days, covering topics such as peatlands in Nationally Determined Contributions, mobilising finance, adaptation and resilience, and peatland science and policy. Funded by a range of sponsors including governments, NGOs and businesses, the pavilion was the largest-ever gathering of its kind, with over 2700 people from more than 100 countries registering to the online platform and many more attending in person. It led to a number of impacts including the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Scotland and Chile to support the conservation, restoration and sustainable management of their peatlands. The pavilion launched the baseline map that will be used in the upcoming Global Peatlands Assessment; re-enforced commitments to include peatlands in NDCs in the Nile Basin; enabled dialogue on the development of a new European Peatlands Initiative; and hosted the launch of landmark reports by UNEP on the Economics of Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Management of Peatlands, by Ramsar on Peatland Restoration Practice, and by IUCN UK Peatland Programme on peat-free horticulture – Demonstrating Success.

## Introduction

### What is the UNFCCC COP26?

The 26<sup>th</sup> session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 26) to the UNFCCC was originally scheduled to take place from 9-19 November 2020, in Glasgow, UK and was postponed to 1-12 November 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The COP was attended by the countries that signed up as parties to the [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change \(UNFCCC\)](#) – a treaty that came into force in 1994 – as well as a significant number of observers.

To read about the outcomes of the Glasgow Climate Change Conference, click [here](#).

### History and purpose of the pavilion

The Global Peatlands Pavilion adventure started a few years ago, when Richard Lindsay from the Sustainability Research Institute, University of East London, first mentioned the idea. What seemed impossible back then became a reality this year. The Global Peatlands Pavilion was co-developed and delivered by the Global Peatlands Initiative led by UN Environment Programme (UNEP), Wetlands International, Scotland's Rural College (SRUC), University of East London (UEL), Michael Succow Foundation, Greifswald Mire Centre (GMC), National Trust for Scotland (NTS) and the IUCN UK Peatlands Programme. The Pavilion was also made possible thanks to the expressed interests of governments including Scotland, UK, Iceland, Ireland, Peru, Indonesia, Germany, Chile, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of Congo, Mongolia and the Nile Basin governments.

The purpose of the Global Peatlands Pavilion was to provide a hub for international peatland policy, practice, research and innovation exchange. Thanks to the hard work and collaboration of the UNEP-led Global Peatlands Initiative and its 46 partners to raise awareness on the importance of peatlands for climate, planet and people and strengthening the need to protect, restore and sustainably manage these precious ecosystems, delegates and online participants of the UNFCCC COP26 could benefit from the first-ever Peatland Pavilion. The Pavilion reflects the impact of the GPI and partners' work to garner growing international recognition of the importance of peatlands and their role as major global stores of soil carbon but also, in their damaged state, as large sources of greenhouse gas emissions.

The Global Peatlands Pavilion was featured at the UNFCCC COP26 in Glasgow, Scotland from 1-12 November 2021. During the two weeks, the Pavilion hosted 45 informative sessions and networking events physically and online on a broad range of topics. An average of approx. 20 COP delegates and 150 online participants joined each session. We welcomed over 250 speakers representing all types of stakeholders and over 2700 people from 100 countries registered to the online platform (52% of men, 48% of women). As far as we know, peatlands had never gathered so many people in one place before which shows the growing recognition of peatlands' importance to tackle and abate climate change. The Pavilion provided a space for diverse stakeholders to stimulate commitments, share experiences through facilitated discussions across sectors, and inspire collaboration for urgent action on peatlands to advance work on key thematic areas.

The Global Peatlands Pavilion achieved its objective by highlighting the importance of peatlands globally for the climate, people and the planet, among others as a key nature-based solution to climate change, nature loss and water resilience. Events were designed to facilitate multi-sectoral dialogue and emphasise inclusive networking and participation of audiences including party delegates, observers, scientists, business, civil society, youth groups and other participants.

## Building the pavilion

Seven days, four people, and many sweat drops – that’s what it took to build our peatlands pavilion. Taking many surprises in our stride, the team switched hats; from peatland experts they became building experts and improvised to find solutions. The tiny but mighty pavilion was both eco-friendly and impactful, reflecting the principles of the organizations involved in the pavilion and the GPI partnership.



*Image above: Peatlands Pavilion build team: (left to right) Jack Clough (UEL), Richard Lindsay (UEL, IUCN UK PP), Julie Van Offelen & Sarah Proctor (IUCN UK PP)*

## The Virtual Peatlands Pavilion

In parallel to the physical pavilion and online conference platform, the team also launched a global, captivating, and diverse Virtual Peatlands Pavilion, a graceful 3D structure that blends in with the breath-taking peatland landscape all around. The 'peaty structure' has delighted the eyes of peatland enthusiasts worldwide. Designed by University of East London (UEL) students Hussein Ali Kasim and Mohammed Patel and curated by Richard Lindsay, with support from Eleanora Minelli, UNEP GPI, Ben Clutterbuck, University of Nottingham Trent, and Jack Clough, University of East London, the Virtual Peatlands Pavilion features 200+ contributions from 61 organisations and individuals across almost all six regions of the world. Take the tour here: <https://storage.net-fs.com/hosting/6147066/7/>



The Virtual Pavilion, brought to life by the enchanting chirping melody shared by Molly Schutten, sound recordist, sound editor and sound designer, and by beboican, kangaroovindaloo, mlaramie, LX.70 and Prosoundeffects that welcomes visitors at the entrance, is composed of 6 Domes each with a different theme:

- **Dome 1 – Peatlands habitat** introduces the visitor to the world of peatlands, where they are found and what creatures find shelter among the cosy peat
- **Dome 2 – Peatlands and carbon** emphasises the function of peatlands as carbon stores but also, in their damaged state, as carbon sources
- **Dome 3 – Restoration** collects peatland restoration projects, a real testimony that shows the power of peatlands when brought back to their original state
- **Dome 4 – Paludiculture** explores the world of agriculture on organic soils under wet conditions (paludiculture) and displays interesting projects and initiatives that highlight the relevance of this technique for subsistence agriculture, GHG emissions reductions, production of clean biomass, and habitat preservation
- **Dome 5 – Peatlands and people** highlights the power of peatlands to effect significant climate action wins
- **Dome 6 – Live-stream portal** links to the sessions and to the [YouTube playlist](#)

The Virtual Peatlands Pavilion provides a legacy beyond COP26 as a knowledge hub for the public and diverse stakeholders as well as a place to share best practice and approaches needed to scale up and connect partners working across the world to protect, restore, and sustainably manage peatlands.

In order to accommodate the large number of documents, videos, webpages and photo collections contributed by our partners, Richard Lindsay has also created a Virtual Peatlands Pavilion Library – the ‘Dragonfly’ Library – which is currently being filled with the various content already provided but for which there was no room in the Virtual Pavilion. The Virtual Library has been designed to have the space and capacity to display further additional material. It can be accessed either through the Start Page of the Virtual Peatland Pavilion, or directly here: <https://storage.net-fs.com/hosting/6147066/9/>

The current setting of the Dragonfly Library is a peat-forming oasis within a desert landscape because COP27 will be held in Egypt, but the Library can subsequently, or additionally, be set in any peatland environment.



*Dragonfly Library*



*Atrium and courtyard*



*Internal view of the Atrium*

## Programme

The Global Peatlands Pavilion programme showcased the following themes:

**Day 1 – Peatlands as a Nature-based Solution - Demonstrating success:** Peatland action is happening, it is achievable, and can help secure global net zero by mid-century and keep 1.5°C within reach.

**Day 2 – Peatlands in Nationally Determined Contributions:** Evidence from successful examples of large-scale peatland restoration is showcased to inspire increased ambitions for peatlands in Nationally Determined Contributions.

**Day 3 – Adaptation and Resilience:** Protecting and restoring global peatlands can increase society’s resilience to some of the worst effects of climate change – including drought, flood & fire; their protection also enhances environmental integrity and promotes a sustainable future for communities.

**Day 4 – Mobilising Finance:** Carbon markets are unlocking funding from across sectors for peatland restoration and the resulting reduction in GHG emissions this entails. International organisations and businesses share their experiences of facilitating and engaging with finance mobilisation for peatland protection and restoration to aid discussions around Article 6 of the Paris Agreement and voluntary carbon markets.

**Day 5 – Working Together:** Accelerating action to tackle climate change. Existing peatland partnerships and multi-stakeholder groups share their actions and ambitions to scale up peatland restoration and sustainable management.

**Days 6 & 7 – Seeing Impact First-hand:** Inspiring opportunities for small groups of delegates to explore peatland sites and see climate action in-person.

**Day 8 – Demonstrating Success:** Peatland action is happening, it is achievable, and it not only helps secure global net zero by mid-century, but also provides a wide range of co-benefits to society.

**Day 9 – Peatland Science and Technology:** Sharing evidence and tools to demonstrate success and resources to help shape future ambition for peatland restoration and climate action.

**Day 10 – Peatland Policy:** Sharing success and ambition from peatland policies around the world. Sessions include an exploration of implementation of the UNEA4 Resolution on Peatlands and other relevant Multilateral Environment Agreements.

**Day 11 – Delivering Peatland Action in Partnership:** Transformative climate and nature action at scale requires collaboration and working together. The Global Peatlands Initiative and other specialised networks and partnerships have been coming together, exchanging experiences and sharing the latest science, practice, financial mechanisms, and policy incentives. New partnerships are being forged across sectors and regions including establishing new, joined-up institutions.

**Day 12 – Activating Multiple Stakeholders:** The global peatland community has the knowledge, experience, and expertise to inspire the step change that is needed in delivering successful peatland action at sufficient scale to secure global net-zero in time. Governments, business, and civil society collaborations are ready to step-up to the challenge and scale-up to help tackle the climate crisis.

Here below is a detailed overview of the different events that were held during the two weeks:

## DAY 1 – Peatlands as a Nature-based Solution - Demonstrating success | Monday 1st November

### **Global Peatlands Initiative (GPI) - Opening of the Peatland Pavilion - Countries demonstrating success**

During the Opening session of the Pavilion on Monday 1st of November, UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen called for more countries and more partners to take action for peatland protection and restoration through policies, investments in and inclusion of peatlands into their NDCs. Christiane Paulus, Director General from the Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety of Germany shared Germany's peatland protection targets within their Climate Change Act, for mitigation through peat soil conservation, together with their ambitious goal to reduce GHG emissions from peat soils by 5 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>eq. by 2030. Rubén Ramírez Mateo, Minister of Environment of Peru, shared Peru's efforts to highlight the importance of peatland conservation through the approval of a national policy for the multi-sectoral and decentralised management of wetlands, together with the inclusion of peatlands in their NDC. Pak Alue Dohong, Vice-Minister of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Indonesia, reflected on the achievements of working together with the Global Peatlands Initiative for the past 5 years, sharing Indonesia's best practices, lessons learned, and experiences in managing tropical peatlands to achieve their national peatlands agenda, while contributing to the international commitments by increasing the ambition of their climate goals and inspiring other member states to do the same. Further, Chile and Scotland expressed their commitments through the signing of an MoU for the conservation, restoration, and sustainable management of their peatlands. Michael Matheson, Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport from Scotland said *"If we protect, restore and sustainably manage these habitats, the rewards will be unprecedented"*, and María Carolina Schmidt Zaldivar, Minister of Environment from Chile celebrated the moment: *"You can count on Chile for peatland protection and restoration"* she said. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2RNcLNxOjZ4>



**Image on the left:** María Carolina Schmidt Zaldivar (left), Minister of Environment from Chile and Michael Matheson (right), Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport from Scotland signed a Memorandum of Understanding for peatlands on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> of November, during the opening of the Peatland Pavilion at UNFCCC COP26

**Image above:** Speakers at the opening event of the Global Peatlands pavilion

**Protecting and harnessing the power of peat in the fight against climate change.**



*John Martins (RSPB) highlighted the ecological, environmental and cultural value of peatlands*

Coordinated by RSPB, the event ‘Protecting and harnessing the power of peat in the fight against climate change’ was held on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> November. The session set out where we find the UK’s peatlands, the risks from their low levels of protection and poor condition; and the urgency of restoring and protecting these vital carbon stores and the biodiversity they support including inspiring examples from the RSPB and partners’ conservation efforts and nature reserve network. The session

introduced participants to the concept of nature-based solutions and demonstrated how peatlands operate as a nature-based solution and how their restoration as wetlands and protection is paramount. Notably, Beccy Speight, Chief Executive at RSPB, demonstrated peat’s importance for greenhouse gas emissions in the UK, using innovative mapping. The research conducted by the organization highlights peatland species benefitting from protection and restoration, improving condition status essential to meeting UK nature targets. *"The time to act is now. We have to make peatlands wet again"* said Tom Kirschey, Head of the International Peatlands and Southeast Asia Programme of the Nature

and Biodiversity Conservation Union (NABU). The recording is available here : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Qdx53V-Llc>

### **Evening networking with drinks reception**

The first day ended with a well-attended drinks reception which allowed all peatlands enthusiasts at the COP26 to gather for networking.

## **DAY 2 – Peatlands in NDCs | Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> November**

### **Importance of ASEAN Peatlands in Contributing to Global Climate Change Mitigation**

Coordinated by Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), including its 10 member states, IFAD, CIFOR, GEC, EU, BMUV and GIZ, the ‘Importance of ASEAN Peatlands in Contributing to Global Climate Change Mitigation’ was held on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> November. The event presented the importance of Southeast Asian tropical peatlands, which hold 77% of the



*SPM Budi Susanti, Director of Peatland Degradation Control, Ministry of Environment and Forestry Indonesia highlighted that "The goal of the SMPEI (Sustainable Management of Peatland Ecosystems in Indonesia) project is to secure carbon stock and conserve biodiversity while improving the living standards of the local communities"*

global tropical peat volume, and showcased their inclusion in Nationally Determined Contributions. Government representatives from Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, and Lao PDR, shared successful examples of peatland restoration and policies, showcasing the ASEAN Peatland Management Strategy in partnership with GEF and GEC to combat peatland fires and haze pollution, as well as the Measurable Action for Haze-Free Sustainable Land Management in Southeast Asia (MAHSFA) project, which seeks to develop an estimated US\$1.5 billion investment programme focusing on haze elimination and sustainable peatland management anchored in country and regional level activities. The recording is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WuVqw3IbFSM>

### **Accelerating peatland action through NDCs**

Coordinated by Wetlands International, the session showcased successful inclusion of peatlands in NDCs to inspire others. The session started with Anna Romanovskaya, Director of the Institute of Global Climate and Ecology, Russian Federation, who shared the need to rewet Russian peatlands as an important but underestimated action with the potential for meeting the Paris Agreement climate change mitigation and adaptation commitments. Indeed, peatlands around the world continue to be drained and, as Tatiana Minayeva, Director of Care for Ecosystems, shared, there are impacts other than drainage which turn peatlands from sink to sources of GHG emissions: artificial flooding, overgrazing and construction on peat soil. Thus, in order to reach the 1.5° C target, peatlands need to be urgently safeguarded and restored and, to make that happen, countries are trying to include them in their NDCs. During the session, Peru shared their [decree on the multisectoral and decentralised management of the country's wetlands](#), which bans the commercial extraction of peat, while allowing peat to be used for domestic purposes and traditional

activities. In July this year, Peru had also announced their commitment to include peatlands in their Nationally Determined Contribution during the [high-level Ministerial event](#), part of the 4<sup>th</sup> Global Peatlands Initiative Partners meeting. However, this inclusion can be seen as a challenge for some other countries. "Including peatlands in the NDCs is doable, is achievable and it's fundable" said Hans Schutten, Programme Head, Climate Smart Land-use at Wetlands International – and it can be done by following 3 steps: 1. We need to know where peatlands are, as highlighted by Hans Joosten, Emeritus Professor at Greifswald University, during the session; 2. emission factors and 3. A process to upscale into NDC. Collaboration is also key. "Let's act together to achieve more [...] we have to make sure that what countries raise to the table is actually addressed" said Romeo Bertolini, Deputy Director of Country Engagement NDC Partnership. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kky-rZCph24>



*Rubén Ramírez, Minister for the Environment, Government of Peru, shared a video during the presentation*

## Peatlands in climate commitments – Exchange of experience on NDCs and Long-Term Strategies



*"In DRC, there will be a Readiness project soon which will be looking at identifying peatlands areas and promoting their conservation involving local people" - Dr. Chris Dickinson Ecosystem Management Senior Specialist GCF*



*Haruni Krisnawati, Senior Researcher in the Ministry of Environment and Forestry of Indonesia, presented Indonesia's work for peatland restoration, protection and sustainable management*

This session enabled a high-level panel to exchange experiences on the inclusion of peatlands into climate commitments, such as the Nationally Determined Contributions to the Paris climate agreement, as well as Long-Term low greenhouse gas emission development Strategies (LTSS) for the period after 2030. Co-organised by FAO, UNEP, and GPI, the three tropical peatland countries of Peru, Indonesia, and Democratic Republic of Congo reinforced their climate commitments through the inclusion of peatlands in their NDCs and LTSS as long-

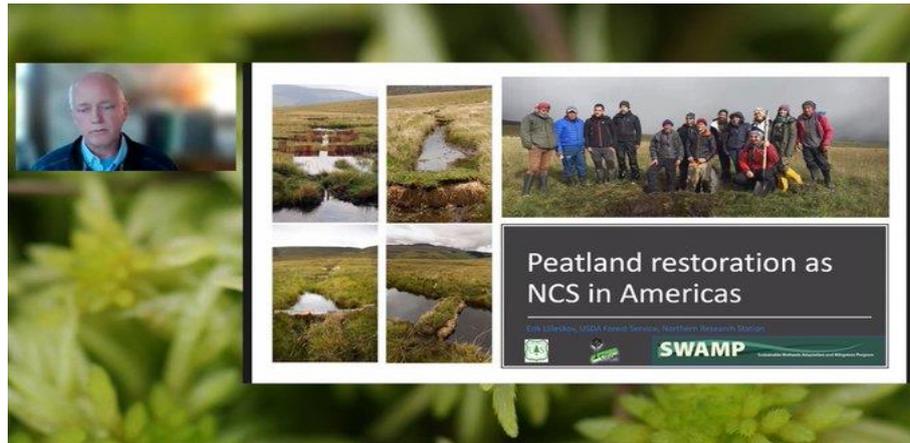
term strategies to combat climate change. These countries are leading the way with their successful cases, inspiring other countries to follow their example by valuing their peatlands and mitigating their emissions towards the achievement of the Paris Agreement’s long-term goals. During the session, the Ministerial representatives shared updates on the integration of peatlands into NDCs and LTSs and discussed what other countries can learn from their experience on improved peatland management for climate action. It was noted that there are good opportunities to address the seemingly overwhelming peatland challenges and countries are able to access climate finance and streamline nationwide governance mechanisms. Notably, securing the livelihoods of communities living in peatland landscapes came out as a priority area for the Congos and Indonesia. Peatland mapping was identified as a first step for climate action. Participants shared how to overcome the challenges around peatland mapping, monitoring, and policy making, drawing on the experience and expertise of the Global Peatlands Initiative. A special emphasis was paid to South–South and triangular cooperation in the spirit of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=50DqvB8mBwM>

### Peatlands restoration for greater resilience and adaptation



*“The degradation and drainage of peatlands is a serious issue and restoration becomes an important action because peatlands are effective NbS in climate change adaptation and mitigation” said Rupesh Bhomia, Scientist at CIFOR*

The last session of the second day was entitled ‘Peatland restoration for greater resilience and adaptation’ and was coordinated by US Forest Service and the Center for International Forest Research (CIFOR). The session started by highlighting that, while peatlands occur on every continent, they can take many different forms from warm tropics to cold circumpolar regions. Indeed, peatlands in the Northern Hemisphere cover ~ 3.6 million km<sup>2</sup> and contain between 400 and 600 Gt carbon while tropical peatlands cover ~ 0.4 million km<sup>2</sup> with a carbon pool of at least 80 to 90 Gt. Their degradation due to anthropogenic impacts has resulted in the loss of many valued ecosystem services, and efforts to restore degraded peatlands to enhance ecological integrity and human resilience have seen mixed levels of success. This session aimed at sharing some of those success stories and new learnings that have been gathered in the recent past to give a greater understanding of the connection between peatland restoration and the welfare of human societies. Panellists from USFS, CIFOR and others shared their scientific and practical knowledge on peatlands and society interlinkages. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AnF0twsGvMk>

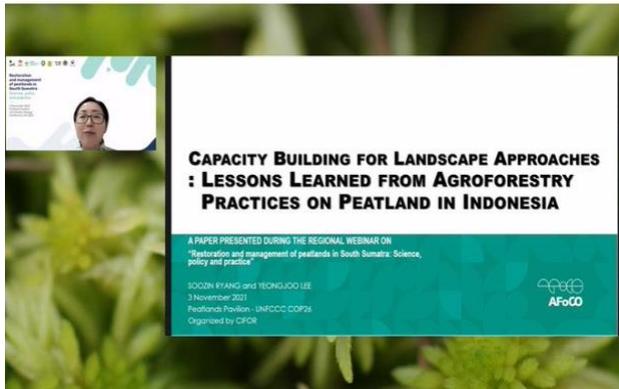


*"In the US, peatlands could contribute to natural climate solutions and uncertainties could be reduced by more resolved mapping of the peat condition" - Erik Lilleskov, Research Ecologist, USFS*

### DAY 3 – Adaptation and resilience | Wednesday 3rd November

#### **Restoration and management of peatlands in South Sumatra: Science, policy and practice**

The third day aimed at highlighting how protecting and restoring global peatlands can increase society's resilience to some of the worst effects of climate change including drought, flood and fire, enhance environmental integrity, and promote a sustainable future for communities. Kicking off the day and coordinated by CIFOR and AfoCO, the session entitled 'Restoration and management of peatlands in South Sumatra: Science, policy and practice' brought science, policy and practice experts working in South Sumatra together which, using the concept of ecosystem services, highlighted how peatland restoration and management can contribute to climate and livelihood improvement goals. Yustina Artati, Senior research officer at CIFOR and Ir. Bastoni, senior Researcher in Silviculture at the Research and Development Center for Environment and Forestry (BP2LHK) of Palembang, South Sumatra, shared how, by sustainably managing peatlands, we can ensure and develop socio-economic activities and revenues for local communities. Erizal Sodikin, Associate Professor, Department of Agronomy, Faculty of Agriculture, Sriwijaya University, South Sumatra, shared a practical example: the agri-silvi-fishery system, which can provide a secured income for these communities. It is important to highlight that, as mentioned by Soozin Ryang, Program Officer for Education and Training, AFoCO Regional Education and Training Center (RETC), capacity building among populations is critical to ensure a long-term impact. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t2JbZx3KN1c>



*"Capacity building in community-based peatland management is a critical long-term strategy" said Soozin Ryang, Program Officer for Education and Training, AFOCO Regional Education and Training Center (RETC)*



*Participants had the opportunity to ask questions to the panellists during a Q&A*

### **Towards a climate adapted Southeast Asia through Integrated Peatland Management**

Staying in the same region, participants then had the pleasure to learn from panellists about strategies for increased resilience (i.e., integrated fire management, sustainable financing mechanisms for peatland management, community-based best practices for peatland management and fire prevention, and sustainable livelihoods in peatland areas) to help communities adapt to and prepare for the impacts of climate change. The session, coordinated by the ASEAN secretariat, IFAD, CIFOR, GEC, EU, BMUV and GIZ, promoted concerted efforts between different actors (authorities, communities, and private sector) to advance sustainable peatland management in Southeast Asia to reduce emissions and adapt to climate change. One of the main remaining gaps is the lack of a peatland map in the region as shared by Berthold Haasler, Team Leader SUPA Project, GIZ: *"In order for the ASEAN member states to be able to plan more precise actions for peatland management, they need data on their location, size, condition and levels of degradation"*. Moreover, we need to better understand and raise awareness of their functions and their value, a point addressed by Peter Hanington, Chief Technical Advisor, GEF Sustainable Management of Peatland Ecosystem in Mekong Countries (Mekong Peatland Project) at IUCN. The ASEAN secretariat in collaboration with various partners and stakeholders are implementing several [ASEAN Haze and Peatlands Programmes](#), namely, the [ASEAN-EU Sustainable Use of Peatlands and Haze Mitigation in ASEAN \(SUPA\)](#); [ASEAN-IFAD Measurable Action for Haze-Free Sustainable Land Management in Southeast Asia \(MAHFSA\)](#); and the GEF-6 Project on Sustainable Management of Peatland Ecosystems in Mekong Countries ([Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar](#)) (the Mekong Peatlands Project), all of which were presented during the session and which are working to address these challenges and gaps. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=huA8FQwuUJs>



*"The new HAZE portal will be a knowledge repository useful to all ASEAN state members and an effective tool for collaborative exchange" - Michael Brady, Team Leader Value Chains, Finance and Investments at CIFOR*

### Scaling-up justice and social equity in the design of fire-free peat land governance



*"Peatland restoration could reduce the risk of fires. The Peatland Restoration Agency has been tasked with restoring 2.5 million ha of degraded peatlands across Indonesia" said Dominic Spracklen, Professor of Biosphere -Atmosphere Interactions, University of Leeds*

Coordinated by the University of East Anglia and World Resources Institute, this session focused on the problem of peat fires, an urgent governance challenge. Peat fires release disproportionate carbon emissions, incur inordinate damages to public health, human well-being and damage the economy. Further, some policies aimed at fire prevention have shifted the final burden of fire risk-reduction onto local communities and created dilemmas related to justice and equity. *"The complexity of fire-free peatland governance requires also to deal with the human aspect of those most affected by the incidence of fire and haze"* said Dicky Pulepessy, Lecturer at the University of Indonesia. The session aimed at sharing scientific findings with the academic community but also translating empirical research findings on the attributes of

equitable and effective peat fire governance to policy makers and practitioners. Through presentations and interactive Q&A across various disciplines and sectors, the event enabled participants to learn about the potential role of crowd-sourced data and new technology platforms to improve peat fire governance and consider how equitable and effective peat fire governance can be achieved and deliver benefits to people, nature and climate mitigation. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9yyEzYPVd8s>



*"There is no such thing as policy panacea or one size fits all solution and instead policy makers are likely part of the solution" said Rachel Carmenta, Lecturer in Climate Change and International Development at University of East Anglia*

### Principles of Nature-based Solutions (Nbs): Demonstrating Success

Coordinated by International National Trust Organisation, National Trust & National Trust Scotland, the session presented an impressive range of actions and commitments that have been delivered by the National Trusts across the UK for the conservation of peatlands. These actions were brought to life by case studies presented by National Trust organizations from all nations of the UK – demonstrating diversity of people and approaches. This was further highlighted by the launch of the [IUCN UK Peatland Programme's Peat-free horticulture – Demonstrating Success](#) publication with panellists providing inspiration and encouragement for others to adopt peat-free practices for horticulture. Indeed, peat-based horticulture is still a major challenge in the country, as shared by Ben McCarthy, Head of Nature Conservation & Restoration Ecology at the National Trust. Stuart Brooks, Head of Conservation and Policy at NTS and Chair of the IUCN UK Peatland Programme launched IUCN's latest Demonstrating Success publication on peat free horticulture <https://bit.ly/3tlvHrg>. Further, Zoë Quiroz-Cullen, Director, Climate & Nature Linkages at Fauna and Flora International set out the principles of nature-based solutions and in the context of peatlands stated: *"Drainage in one area can affect wider areas [...] you have to really focus on ensuring that there's great alignment across the board to get holistic management of peatlands"* and countries must thus collaborate and work together for tangible and impactful results. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JRIhS4G3ZdA>



*Hilary McGrady, Director General of National Trust and the other panellists of the session*

The day ended with an evening reception organised by the National Trust for Scotland at the Pollok House, Glasgow, to celebrate action for Peatlands. Around a hundred participants were welcomed at historic Pollok House for a drinks reception and were entertained by speeches from NTS, RSPB, Diageo, Wetlands International and the Scottish Government. Guests had the pleasure of receiving the latest IUCN UK Peatland Programme Demonstrating Success publication and a beautiful illustrated Guide to the Peatlands of Britain and Ireland from the author, Clifton Bain.



*Image on the left: Màiri McAllan, Scottish Minister for Environment and Land Reform delivered a powerful speech on the vital role that peatlands play in Scotland*

*Image on the right: R-L Philip Long, CEO NTS, Màiri McAllan, Minister for Environment and Land Reform, Stuart Brooks, Head of Conservation NTS, Jane Madgwick CEO Wetlands International, Kevin Cox Chair RSPB*

## DAY 4 – Mobilising Finance | Thursday 4th November

### Unlocking private finance for peatlands

Day 4 of the pavilion kicked off with the event entitled ‘Unlocking private finance for peatlands’ coordinated by Wetlands International. The session’s main goal was to identify barriers and enablers to unlock private finance for peatlands and to raise awareness on the fact that, if we are to reach the 1.5° C target, peatlands need to be urgently safeguarded and restored. To achieve this, public and private finance need to complement each other. Jane Madgwick, CEO of Wetlands International, shared a scary number: “there are 50 million hectares of peatlands around the world that must be brought back into good condition” she said. However, restoring peatlands costs money and as Kate Forbes, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Economy, in the Scottish Government rightly pointed out,



*“We know that there has been a gap between the public sector funding that has been committed and the spending required to meet the nature-related outcomes” said Kate Forbes, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Economy, Scottish Government*

private finance for peatlands and to raise awareness on the fact that, if we are to reach the 1.5° C target, peatlands need to be urgently safeguarded and restored. To achieve this, public and private finance need to complement each other. Jane Madgwick, CEO of Wetlands International, shared a scary number: “there are 50 million hectares of peatlands around the world that must be brought back into good condition” she said. However, restoring peatlands costs money and as Kate Forbes, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Economy in the Scottish Government rightly pointed out,

the public sector cannot fund it all. *"We know that there has been a gap between the public sector funding that has been committed and the spending required to meet the nature related outcomes"* she said. Private finance has to be mobilised at scale, and at the same time, perverse investments need to stop. *"We are not investing in saving peatlands, we are investing a lot in destroying peatlands"* said Carlos Manuel Rodriguez, CEO of the Global Environment Facility. Ricardo Ulate, on behalf of the Minister of Environment of Costa Rica, recognised the challenges faced by developing countries in terms of, i.e., mapping of peatlands, lack of knowledge and research, which prevents peatlands from being part of national GHG inventories, and as a consequence, their role in the carbon cycle goes unnoticed and unaccounted. *"Carbon projects can help save peatlands. Carbon finance could be a compelling source of income in place of land conversion"* concluded Dee Lawrence, member of the former Taskforce on Scaling the Voluntary Carbon Market. High-level keynote speakers were followed by an interactive panel discussion, supported by videos from local actors benefiting from restoration or conservation activities. The panel included: Ms. Ligia Castro, Advisor to the Minister and CC Director of Ministry of Environment of Panama; Mr. Ruben Veefkind, Strategy Manager Greenchoice; Ed Rumsey, Managing Partner Permian Global; Dee Lawrence, member of the former Taskforce on Scaling the Voluntary Carbon Market; Ana Gloria Guzman, Executive Director Conservation International Costa Rica; and Femke Tonneijck, Programme Head Wetlands International. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z7lll7vn45Q>



*"We are not investing in saving peatlands, we are investing a lot in destroying peatlands" said Carlos Manuel Rodriguez, CEO, Global Environment Facility*

## Generation peat: investing in Scotland's future

The second event of the day was entitled 'Generation peat: investing in Scotland's future' and coordinated by the Scottish Government. The session kicked off with a presentation from Dianna Kopansky, Global Peatlands Coordinator at UNEP, who highlighted the fantastic opportunity that restoration of degraded peatlands offers to cut greenhouse gas emissions while achieving a number of co-benefits and ecosystem services for a country like Scotland



*Image on the left: from left to right: Stuart Brooks, Head of Conservation & Policy, National Trust for Scotland, Andrew Millar, Chief Scientific Adviser for Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture, Scotland Government, Màiri McAllan, Minister for Environment and Land Reform, Scottish Government (second right) and Michael Alexander, Global Head of Water, Environment and Agriculture Sustainability, DIAGEO*

*Image above: Q&A session during the event*

with very extensive but degraded peatlands. The session continued with High-profile speakers that ignited discussions on the practical steps towards investing in peatlands as a nature-based solution to the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss. "Since 2012 around 30,000 hectares of degraded peatlands have been put on the road to recovery through actions supported by Peatland ACTION" said Màiri McAllan, Minister for Environment and Land Reform for Scotland. The Peatland ACTION project was presented by Emily Taylor, General Manager at Crichton Carbon Centre. Since 2012, Peatland ACTION is helping to restore damaged peatlands in Scotland. During the session, Minister McAllan also highlighted that "We will require a significant contribution from the private sector to meet the pace and the scale of change that we require". Some private companies such as DIAGEO, represented by Ewan Andrew, President, Global Supply & Procurement and Chief Sustainability Officer at the event, decided to take action and DIAGEO is now partnering with RSPB to restore 280 hectares of peatlands. An example that we hope will inspire others! The recording is available here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wYifUnl\\_ZvQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wYifUnl_ZvQ)

## Blended finance for peatland restoration

Coordinated by Scotland's Rural College, the session on 'Blended finance for peatland restoration' explored options for blending private finance with public funding for peatland restoration, giving participants the opportunity to discuss real-world examples of blended schemes in operation and under development in the UK (e.g the Peatland Code and Scottish Government's Peatland ACTION scheme), Ireland and North West Europe. The session looked at a number of blending models, including delineating private and public funds in time or space, carbon trigger funds and government-backed carbon price guarantees. Participants left the session with knowledge on strategies for moving from project to landscape scale for

larger and longer-term impact and options they could use in the design of their own blended finance schemes and how to implement them in practice. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zej1Mo9W-FA>



"Corporations can take the lead in developing large solutions for natural ecosystems" said Paul Chatterton, lead and founder, Landscape Finance Lab. "We know that we need to think beyond the targeted schemes and build a vision that will bring on board businesses, landowners and local communities to drive restoration at a landscape scale" added Deidre Lynn, Scientific officer at NPWS Data



"[...] if we are supposed to hit zero carbon by 2050, we need to really think about how we are going to do this," said Niall O' Brolchain, NUI Galway during the session.

### Economics of Peatlands: the case for urgent action

#### ECONOMICS OF PEATLANDS: THE CASE FOR URGENT ACTION

Peatland Pavilion , UNFCCC COP26  
Thursday, 4 November 2021  
17.00-18.30 (GMT)  
Blue Zone, Hall 4, SEC, Glasgow, Scotland



There is a need to design policy strategies and inspire private and public investment partnerships to conserve, restore and sustainably manage peatlands as a vital NbS

Join us online through our Virtual Pavilion

Picture by Ben Hall

Scan me!

On November 4<sup>th</sup>, world renowned economists Edward Barbier, Joanne Burgess, and Pushpam Kumar highlighted the urgent need for action for peatland restoration and protection. Launching the "[Economics of Peatlands Conservation, Restoration, and Sustainable Management](#)" policy report, panellists exchanged the

leading causes of peatland mismanagement – which are undervaluation and underinvestment. Edward Barbier and Joanne Burgess also highlighted the economic and environmental opportunities to create appropriate incentives together with promoting public and private investments for peatland protection as a triple win for people, the climate and

biodiversity. Klaus Glenk and Julia Marin-Ortega presented their research on peatland restoration in Scotland, demonstrating that peatland restoration has large net benefits, and that delaying restoration has a substantial cost for society. Johan Kieft shared his passion for peatlands, citing innovative finance mechanisms, incentives and policy measures that countries like Indonesia are already employing to make climate impact a reality.

There is more opportunity for impact when investments in sustainable land use include no peatland extraction and no peatland drainage commitments and when they also invest in protecting irrecoverable carbon stored in peatlands. Pushpam Kumar, Senior Economic Advisor for UNEP, highlighted that *"The monetary value of peatlands offers excellent justification to financial institutions and other economic sectors that costs associated with restoration of peatlands are indeed invested in sustainability and well-being"*. Dianna Kopansky, Global Peatlands Coordinator at UNEP, concluded that collective action and international cooperation must be promoted by all countries and stakeholders to end the underpricing and undervaluing of peatlands worldwide. She closed by stating that *"Our lives depend on nature, and peatlands provide us with multiple ecosystem services that we need to protect in order to thrive as a society"*. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S7aMrmlolO0>



*Speakers at the session*

### Peatland Partnerships in Climate Change Mitigation and Nature Recovery



Jack Rieley, Second Vice President of the International Peatland Society opened the session

Day 5 of the Global Peatlands Pavilion was held under the theme 'working together', a need that was already highlighted by participants in the previous days. Coordinated by the International Peatland Society (IPS) and moderated by Jack Rieley, Second Vice President of IPS, the session entitled 'Peatland Partnerships in Climate Change Mitigation and Nature Recovery' gathered a diverse panel representing policy makers,

academia, but also private sector and from all parts of the globe. Notably, the panellists highlighted the importance of international, multilateral research partnerships for providing unbiased, fact-based data and for gaining an understanding of the functioning of peatlands and their role in climate change processes. Indeed, the session reached the conclusion that fact-based, independently obtained, verifiable data and supporting information are essential for policy- and decision-making which can enable change. *"Effective peatland mapping and monitoring requires technical support like high-resolution optical sensors and radar satellite systems,"* said Florian Siegert, CEO of Remote Sensing Solutions GMBH. Of course, *"Peatland restoration requires context-dependent skills and peatlands have different features depending on where they are found"* we were reminded by Line Rochefort, Professor at Université Laval's Plant Sciences Department. In fulfilling the Sustainable Development Goals, environment, society **and** economy must be taken into consideration. *"Peatlands are champions of climate action and focusing on synergies across borders and bringing science to policy is the key to success"* said Alue Dohong, Vice Minister of Environment and Forestry, Indonesia. IPS offers a special COP26 Peatland Portal at <https://peatlands.org/cop26> with significant information and data on the impact of peatlands and peat. The book on Peatlands and Climate Change by IPS to understand the GHG balances of peatlands and presented by Maria Strack, Professor of Wetland soils and Greenhouse gas fluxes at the University of Waterloo is available [here](#) and the recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Deo6-Kr300>



*Alue Dohong, Deputy Minister of Environment and Forestry, Indonesia, shared that scientific knowledge evidence is the key to implementing sustainable peatland management on the ground*

### **Peatland restoration and climate change mitigation challenge: open meeting of Eurosite Care-Peat Restoration and Management Group**

Coordinated by Eurosite, North Pennines AONB Partnership, and the Care-Peat Project coordinated by Natuurpunt, Belgium, the session entitled 'Peatland restoration and climate change mitigation challenge: open meeting of Eurosite Care-Peat Restoration and Management Group' was held on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> November. The first speaker, Paul Leadbitter, Chair of Eurosite Care-Peat Peatland Restoration and Management Group, North Pennines AONB Partnership, kicked off the meeting and set the scene by giving a quick overview of why peatland restoration in Europe is crucial for reaching the climate targets of UNFCCC but also highlighting the social dimension of peatland restoration. Niall Ó Brolcháin from NUI Galway and Christopher Field, Senior Lecturer at the Manchester Metropolitan University, both highlighted the opportunity that peatland restoration offers in significantly reducing GHG emissions. *"Early results [from the Care-Peat project] from the UK and across Europe suggest that by rewetting degraded peatlands we can eliminate most of the GHG losses"* said Field. Eurosite, one of the GPI partners, shared lessons learned, having a lot of knowledge and experience in delivering impactful projects. *"We are trying to provide opportunities for peatland practitioners to network and exchange experience and practical site management since 1989"* said Wojciech Mróz, Project officer at EUROSITE, during the session. Finally, Terry Morley, Lecturer at NUI Galway, emphasised the need to adopt a landowner approach when considering peatland restoration as a key to success. *"Community involvement is central toward conservation, especially in the long term"* he concluded. The recording is available here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JXTc9U5I\\_9Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JXTc9U5I_9Q)



Wojciech Mróz, Project officer at Eurosite

## Connecting Peatland Research

### CONNECTING PEATLAND RESEARCH

Peatland Pavilion , UNFCCC COP26  
Friday, 5 November 2021  
15.30-16.30 (GMT)  
Blue Zone, Hall 4, SEC, Glasgow, Scotland



Coordinated by Scotland's Rural College, the session entitled 'Connecting Peatland Research' brought together members of the Global Peatlands Initiative Research Working Group with the international Adaptation Research Alliance (ARA) to discuss how the peatland researcher community can drive transformational change in global climate research

efforts towards more action-oriented, transdisciplinary, inclusive, empowering, and impactful approaches. The session was based on new research on impact culture and on the ARA principles, which were launched at COP26 as part of the UK COP26 Presidency Adaptation & Resilience campaign. It enabled participants to evaluate how their own research culture drives or inhibits impact, whilst discussing options to drive more healthy, transformational research with colleagues from across the peatland research community. One of the main points emphasised during the session was the need to involve local populations in research design, a point also highlighted by Jesse DeMaria-Kinney, Head of Secretariat from The Adaptation Research Alliance, who said *"It is critical to connect research to the needs of the most vulnerable by: 1. Linking knowledge to action; 2. Everyone has an equal right to be heard; 3. Learning by doing"*. Dianna Kopansky, Global Peatlands Coordinator at UNEP, shared the importance of partnerships and science, being the core of the GPI, highlighting how knowledge is being shared across our global network to bring decision-makers together, create public policy, and applying it alongside best practices for impact and action toward the conservation, restoration and sustainable management of peatlands. The recording is available here : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8SvXIRA3toQ>



*Dianna Kopansky (UNEP-GPI) and Mark Reed (SRUC) co-organised this session*

### **The Indigenous Peoples' Platform to face Climate Change in Peru**

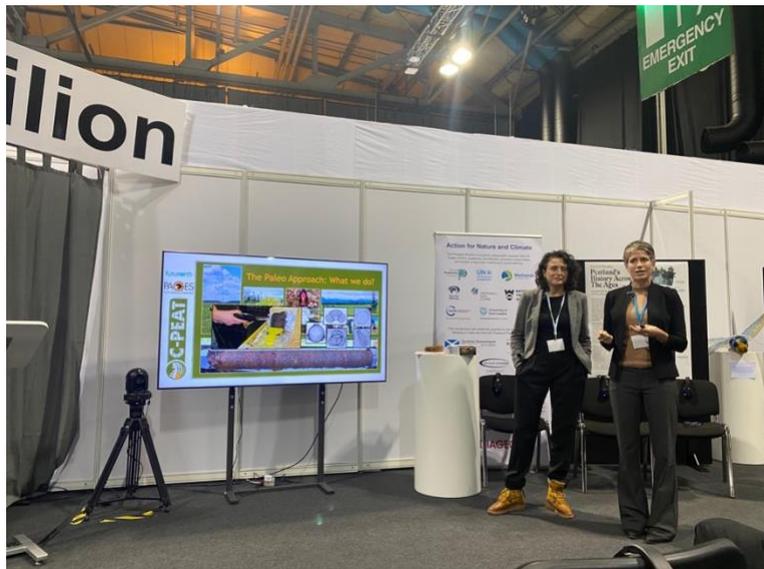
The Ministry for the Environment (MINAM) of Peru hosted a session in collaboration with the Indigenous People's Platform to face Climate Change, underlining the crucial role of indigenous knowledge and involvement in the protection of peatlands and the fight against climate change. The session showcased indigenous perspectives and noted that environmental problems related to the degradation of peatlands, including climate change and water management, are experienced differently by indigenous communities, and especially women, threatening food security among other things. The Vice-Minister for Strategic Development of Natural Resources, Alfredo Mamani, thanked Indigenous organisations for their vital contributions to environmental governance, and celebrated the public consultation with indigenous communities during the recent drafting of climate change legislation, one of the first examples of such collaboration. His Excellency Mr. Mamani emphasised the government's recognition of the value of indigenous knowledge and reiterated its commitment to learn from indigenous communities. The recording is available here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hCZENgD5QW4>



*Panellists at the 'The Indigenous Peoples Platform to face Climate Change in Peru' event organised by the Ministry of Environment of Peru (MINAM) on 5th November.*

### **Getting to know Peatlands, the largest natural land carbon stores on Earth**

The last session of the day, coordinated by C-PEAT – Carbon in Peatlands on Earth Through Time (C-PEAT) (affiliations: PAGES and Future Earth), informed participants on what peat looks like and where peatlands are found. The two panellists, Julie Loisel, Assistant Professor of Geography at Texas A&M University, and Angela Gallego-Sala, Professor in Ecosystems and Biogeochemical Cycles at the University of Exeter, handed around a sample of peat for participants to touch, giving a real dimension to a topic that



*Angela Gallego-Sala (left), Professor in Ecosystems and Biogeochemical Cycles at University of Exeter and Julie Loisel, Assistant Professor of Geography at Texas A&M University (right)*

often stays very theoretical in people's mind and encouraging peatland discussions and exploration of the importance of the paleo-archive. They explained how the peat record is used to understand how climate change and disturbance impacts their carbon storing capacity and discussed a novel way to help protect peatlands. *"Past can tell us about our future. The Paleo approach helps replying to questions about the future of peatlands"* said Angela during her presentation. Indeed, using tracers such as pollen and other biological proxies can help us understand peatlands past and what led to their present condition and

thus, help us forecast the future: a very helpful and complementary tool to identify hotspots for protection and restoration! Notably during the session, a poster displayed peat stratigraphy: a set of drawings representing peat cores and the peatland landscape they come from, with distinct layers that can be zoomed in on to see the different proxies that tell us the history of the ecosystem. These posters presented an artistic perspective on peatland landscapes and paleoecology (each poster can be downloaded at high resolution using the link <https://www.julieloisel.com/cpeat>). The interactive map of over 75 peatland sites that are being studied by the C-PEAT community was also launched and is available here: <https://www.julieloisel.com/cpeat>. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q4vRIefClZc>

## DAY 6 and 7 – Seeing impact first-hand | Saturday and Sunday 6-7th November

### The Flow Country: Is it time for a peatland world heritage site?

After a very interesting and productive week, the Global Peatlands Pavilion offered some relaxation and fun to its participants with ‘The Flow Country: Is it time for a peatland world heritage site?’ Virtual peatland field trip. Coordinated by The Flow Country Partnership, The Highland Council, NatureScot, the University of Highlands and Islands and RSPB Scotland, the trip took participants in an interactive flow country game, an “eagle-eye” flight over The Flow Country and showcased a beautiful video of The Flow Country including interviews with locals. Members of The Flow Country partnership were there to speak to guests about the Flow Country peatlands and argue their case for a world heritage site status bid. Additionally, the session provided information to visitors who are involved in peatland management around the world to consider whether peatlands in their own regions/countries could benefit from additional designation. Join us in supporting their application and find more information on their website [here](#) and the recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CEDZ0Dtctvg>

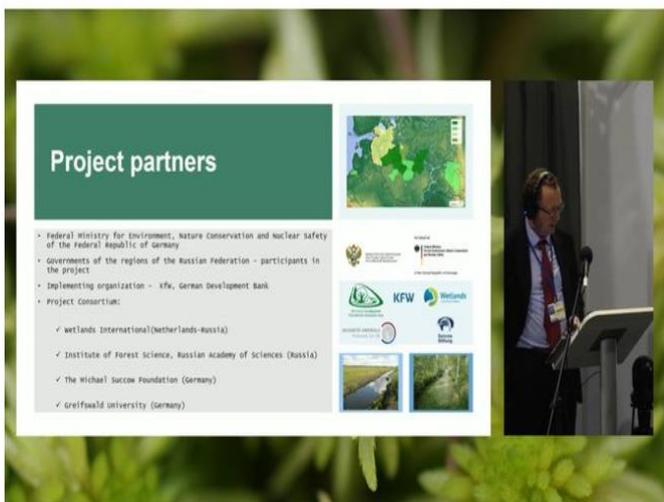


*Professor Roxane Andersen, University of Highlands & Islands Environmental Research Institute shared a wonderfully accessible story of the importance of blanket bogs in support of the fight against climate change – sharing the research that peatland scientists do and why it matters.*

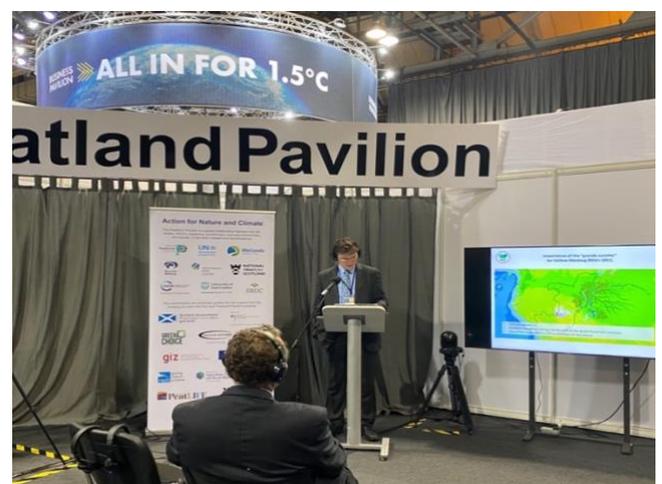
## DAY 8 – Demonstrating success | Monday 8th November

### **We walk the talk: inspiring peatland restoration success stories in Russia and the Congo**

Coordinated by Wetlands International, the session entitled 'We walk the talk; inspiring peatland restoration success stories in Russia and the Congo' kicked off week 2 of COP26. The session focused on two large-scale projects, one in Russia and one in the Congo, sharing the project outcomes for biodiversity, people and carbon and reflecting on the lessons learnt, hoping to inspire others. Peatlands in the Arctic, including in Russia, are of vital importance for the planet as highlighted Tatiana Minayeva, Care-for-Ecosystems and Alexei Okhlopkov from Government of Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug-Yugra: *"Peat in the arctic protects permafrost. Permafrost in West Siberia must stay frozen to be able to retain carbon"*. Beate Grzeski from the Embassy of the Federal Republic Germany in Moscow then explained why collaboration between countries, and in this case, between Germany and Russia, is key. *"The issue of fire risk and GHG emissions is very real in Russia and German-Russian cooperation can solve this problem and help the country to achieve national goals under the Paris Agreement"*. In the Congo Basin, the challenge is different. The peatlands there are still mostly intact, and the countries' priorities need to focus on protection and sustainable management. Tom Evans, Director at the Wildlife Conservation Society Congo highlighted the role of peatland protection for communities: *"Around 20,000 people live in the Lac Télé Community Reserve. The conservation of the Congo basin and areas around Lac Télé have a positive impact on local communities and directly tune in with their livelihoods"* he said. The recording is available here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m50lmJ3Z\\_Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m50lmJ3Z_Q)



Hans Schutten, Programme Head, Climate Smart Land-use at Wetlands International, explained that fires are expected on drained peatlands in Russia and peat releases GHGs as it dries out



Tom Evans from WCS Republic of Congo highlighted that around 20,000 people live in the Lac Télé Community Reserve. The conservation of the Congo basin and areas around Lac Télé have a positive impact on local communities and directly tune in with their livelihoods

## Partners for Wetlands: Decade for Wetland Restoration

Coordinated by the Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands, Wetlands International, WWF, IUCN, IWMI, WWT and BirdLife International, the session entitled 'Partners for Wetlands: Decade for Wetland Restoration' was held on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> November as a follow-up to a session held at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in September 2021. The event highlighted the need to rapidly scale wetland conservation to tackle the climate and biodiversity crises, and explored how to do so, using successful examples, and issued a call for ambitious wetland restoration during the UN Decade for Ecosystem Restoration.



Wetlands provide unrivalled opportunity to halt degradation of ecosystems towards biodiversity, sustainable development and climate global goals.

An estimated 35% of the world's wetland area was lost between 1970 and 2015 — three times the rate of forest loss. At least half of these should be restored by 2030 to enable global warming to remain below 1.5 to 2.0 °C.

The International Organization Partners of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands is a unique partnership committed to the protection, wise use and restoration of wetlands, and to leveraging this towards a successful UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.

Building on a session held at the World Conservation Congress in September 2021, the event will:

- Highlight the need to rapidly scale wetlands conservation to tackle the climate and biodiversity crises;
- Explore the readiness for this, based on examples of how wetland restoration successfully delivers climate outcomes;
- Issue a call for wetlands restoration by the International Organization Partners of the Convention on Wetlands.

### Moderated by:

**Moritz von Unger**, Policy Director, Silvestrum Climate Associates LLC

### Speakers:

**Martha Rojas Urrego**, Secretary General, Ramsar Convention on Wetlands

**Dr. J.R. Bhatt**, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, India

**Tony Juniper**, Chair, Natural England

**Nathalie Roth**, Founder and Managing Director, 4Climate

**Mark Smith**, Director General, International Water Management Institute (IWMI)

**James Dalton**, Director, Global Water Programme, IUCN

**Melanie Heath**, Global Director of Science, Policy and Information, BirdLife International

**Hans Schutten**, Programme Head, Climate Smart Land-use, Wetlands International

**James Robinson**, Director of Conservation, Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT)



Martha Rojas Urrego, Secretary-General of the Convention on Wetlands, opened the event, highlighting the role of MEAs as enablers for countries to make commitments and take action. Dr. J.R. Bhatt, Climate advisor, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change of India who delivered an inspirational speech on the need to protect and restore wetlands, sharing experiences and successes from India. Through panel discussion, Melanie Heath, Global Director of Science, Policy and Information at BirdLife International,

Mark Smith, Director General of International Water Management Institute, James Robinson, Director of Conservation at WWT, Hans Schutten, Programme Head, Climate Smart Land-use at Wetlands International and James Dalton, Director, Global Water Programme at IUCN explored the prominent role that the protection and restoration of wetlands, and especially peatlands, needs to play in order to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement, and help achieve food security and water security. To conclude the session, Tony Juniper, Chair of Natural England and Nathalie Roth, Founder and Managing Director of 4Climate, discussed the opportunities that platforms like the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and 50x50 provide, and the essential role that finance, including carbon markets, will play, and pathways to enhance financing for wetland restoration. The International Organization Partners of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands – BirdLife International, IUCN, IWMI, Wetlands International, WWT, WWF – constitute a unique partnership committed to the protection, wise use, and restoration of wetlands, and to leveraging this towards a successful UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. The recording is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VMSrbS0snCc>



Martha Rojas Urrego, Secretary-General of the Convention on Wetlands, said "The Convention on Wetlands is one of the oldest MEAs. There is an impact when countries jointly commit and take measures to protect wetlands. Partnership is the way to success"

### **Organic soils and peatlands in the Baltic countries: Mitigation measures & monitoring, paludiculture and Carbon farming approaches**

Coordinated by Michael Succow Foundation / Greifswald Mire Centre and Latvian State Forest Research Institute Silava, the session gave the floor to party delegates from Baltic states Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to describe their views on the importance of measures for mitigation and their current and future policy approaches. More specifically, panellists presented results from the Life projects OrgBalt and EUKI Paludiculture in the Baltics to highlight the feasibility of measures, scientific backgrounds on impacts and ideas for upscaling in a supporting policy environment. The session presented the concept of Paludiculture as a feasible



solution to manage peatlands sustainably in the Baltic countries. Indeed, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia are among top the 10 GHG emitters in Europe and these countries would highly benefit from switching unsustainable agricultural practices to paludiculture. However, as Jan Peters from MSF pointed out, "no farmer will switch to paludiculture without incentives. Knowledge transfer, training and carbon farming schemes are key". By informing participants about the science and application of mitigation measures and their monitoring in the Baltic countries, the session aimed at sharing knowledge on the importance of measures on peatlands and on facilitating future application and upscaling through adapted policies in the

Baltics and beyond. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fgz9etnGOaE>



From left to right: Jan Peters, GMC; Ieva Līcīte, LSFRI Silava (onscreen); Elina Baltroka, Latvian Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development; Kristi Klaas, Estonian Ministry of Environment and Kristina Simonaitytė, Ministry of Agriculture of Lithuania

### Peatlands, Climate Change and Cultural Heritage - Global Perspectives, Problems, Solutions

**PEATLANDS, CLIMATE CHANGE AND CULTURAL HERITAGE - GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES, PROBLEMS, SOLUTIONS**

Peatland Pavilion , UNFCCC COP26  
Monday, 8 November 2021  
16.00-17.30 (GMT)  
Blue Zone, Hall 4, SEC, Glasgow, Scotland



Coordinated by Dr Tom Gardner of Historic Environment Scotland (HES) with Dr Ben Gearey and Dr Rosie Everett of University College Cork (WetFutures Project), this session brought together policymakers to discuss the contribution that cultural heritage can make to the wider narrative of global peatland use. Led by the governmental UK heritage agencies, this event

demonstrated the rich cultural heritage of the world's peatlands, showcasing best-practice interactions between cultural heritage and climate change in peatlands, and exploring the benefits that understanding past peatland ecology and use can bring to modern management and restoration of peatlands. *"Cultural heritage matters. Through peatlands, we can tell stories about people, places and human-nature relationships. Human activity from the past is recorded in peat and can illustrate the impact that we're having now,"* said Hannah Fluck, Head of Environmental Strategy at Historic England during her opening speech. During the 90 min session, speakers then called on the UK and other countries to develop national and international policies that integrate the historic environment into global peatland restoration plans and projects. *"The next 10 years will count most in the fight against the climate & nature emergency. We need all hands on deck if we want to succeed, and building on the knowledge of the cultural heritage team is an important component to move forward"* concluded Dianna Kopansky, Global Peatlands Initiative Coordinator at UNEP. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zxhNbWFGpU4>



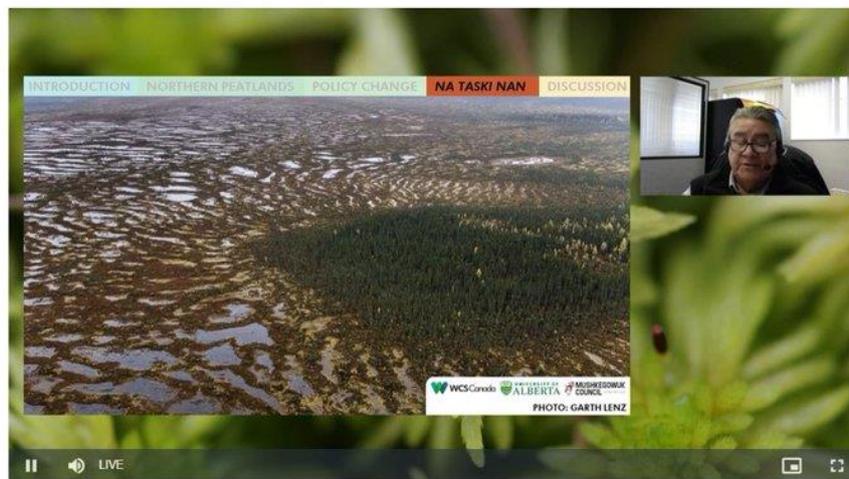
*Hannah Fluck, Head of Environmental Strategy at Historic England, Panellists of the session explained that cultural heritage matters. Through peatlands we can tell stories about people, places and human-nature relationships. Human activity from the past is recorded in peat and can illustrate the impact that we're having now.*

### **The essential carbon service provided by northern peatlands and the case study of the Hudson Bay Lowlands**

On 8<sup>th</sup> November during the event 'The essential carbon service provided by northern peatlands and the case study of the Hudson Bay Lowlands', Dr Constance O'Connor and Dr Justina Ray from the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) Canada, Dr Lorna Harris from the University of Alberta and WCS Canada, and Vern Cheechoo from Mushkegowuk Council, highlighted the importance of peatlands across Canada for both the climate and biodiversity crises. They shared the findings of a collaborative paper by Dr Harris and peatland researchers from across Canada, published that week in *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment* (<https://esajournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/fee.2437>). One quarter of the world's peatlands and the world's largest peatland carbon stock is in Canada, yet only ~10% are within protected areas and there are very few policies to protect peatlands from economic development and infrastructure. The paper describes the science and policy instruments and tools needed to protect these vast peatland carbon stores, as once lost through land conversion, the carbon is "irrecoverable" in that it cannot be recovered by 2050, as required for net-zero global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. In the session, Dr Ray highlighted that "*Canada has a disproportionate responsibility, for both positive and negative emissions... and an extraordinary responsibility for one of the largest intact global land sinks – the boreal forest and the peatlands within them*". The session also highlighted the Hudson Bay Lowlands – one of the largest remaining intact peatland complexes in the world that stores around 30 to 35 billion tonnes of carbon, which is close to three years of annual global GHG emissions and around 175 years of Canada's current annual GHG emissions. Dr Harris described the threats to peatlands across Canada, including mining and infrastructure development in the Hudson Bay Lowlands, and Dr Ray highlighted the particular risk of increased interest in the extraction of 'critical minerals' in this region, mainly in the so-called 'Ring of Fire' development. Vern Cheechoo described the importance of the Hudson Bay Lowlands as a homeland for Indigenous Peoples and shared the knowledge and insight of First Nations living in the region of the impacts of global climate warming and environmental change on the connected forests,

peatlands, and rivers. Vern highlighted the relationship of Indigenous People to the land and waters of the region, and the important connection to the land - *“that we are the land, we are the animals, we are the environment, and therefore whatever we are doing to the land, to the territory, we are doing to ourselves”*. Speakers stressed the urgent need for targeted policies from local to global scales to protect the vast peatlands of Canada for their massive carbon stores and global climate regulation, for biodiversity, and for their social and cultural importance as the homelands of Indigenous Peoples. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FtTpJThTs0o>

The essential carbon service provided by northern peatlands and the case study of the Hudson Bay Lowlands  
 Monday, November 8, 7:30 PM - 9:00 PM



*Vern Cheechoo, Mushkegowuk Council- Na Taski Nan (Mother Earth -who takes care of her children) Indigenous peoples are the guardians and stewards of these lands. Peatlands must be preserved and indigenous peoples must be leading the way*



*Justina Ray (WCS Canada) highlighted many policy gaps, both nationally and globally, to safeguard peatlands. Valuable solutions include: 1) increased investment in science to inform proper valuation of carbon storage and fluxes for accounting and reporting, 2) stronger impact assessment processes, and 3) incentivising protection of intact peatlands, with a priority for Indigenous-led conservation and monitoring efforts.*

At the end of the day, Historic Environment Scotland hosted a reception in the Lower Church, Glasgow Cathedral, which brought together international public sector bodies, academics, practitioners, advocacy bodies and policy makers to reflect on the immediately preceding HES-led session ‘Peatlands, Climate Change and Cultural Heritage - Global Perspectives, Problems, Solutions’. With further exhibits available to attendees, including the short films from the Bright Edge Deep exhibition, the reception acted as a networking space for international partners to consider how cultural heritage can contribute to climate change mitigation, adaptation and sustainability.



Rosie Everett, University of Warwick (left) and Ben Gearey, University College Cork (right)

## DAY 9 – Peatlands Science and Technology | Tuesday 9th November

### **Managing Carbon-rich Peatlands: from Research to Policy Action**

Coordinated by CIFOR, ITPC, USAID and IKI, the session entitled ‘Managing Carbon-rich Peatlands: from Research to Policy Action’ was held on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> November. The session called for science-based knowledge around sustainable peatland management to be adopted in decision making processes in tropical peatland-rich countries. Indeed, tropical peatlands worldwide are currently under different levels of pressure depending on the drivers and policy environment. In order to mitigate the impact and enable evidence-based policies, science-based information needs to be communicated to decision makers in a timely manner. On the other hand, policy-relevant research agendas often either miss the challenges or take too long to deliver this information. Therefore, the panellists of the session suggested that continued dialogues across the regions and among stakeholders, including dialogues between policy makers and scientific communities to improve the flow of information, should be encouraged to support appropriate actions. *“Science is key to understand climate change and it is a good base for policy makers and IKI BMUV, but Science-Policy-Practitioners dialogue is also critical”* said Thorsten Klose-Zuber, Head of the Climate Policy, Economy and Society Department at ZUG, Germany. This is, for example, the technique used in the DRC where the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development is working hand-in-hand with researchers to map the peatlands in the country. *“How can you manage peatlands if you don't know where they are?”* said Noel Gurwick, Senior Climate and Land Advisor, USAID. In Indonesia, Haruni Krisnawati from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry and Kristell Hergoualc’h, Senior Scientist in ecosystem functions at CIFOR, highlighted that countries need accurate and good quality data, especially GHG emission data, in order to enable policy makers to develop a strategic response. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jUdW1TFrcCg>



*From left to right: Kristell Hergoual'h ,Senior Scientist in ecosystem functions at CIFOR (on screen), Medrilzam, Director of Environmental Affairs, Ministry of National Development Planning (BAPPENAS), Haruni Krisnawati , Ministry of Environment and Forestry of Indonesia, Thorsten Klose-Zuber, Head of the Climate Policy, Economy and Society Department at ZUG, Germany and Jean Jacques Bambuta, peatland management unit coordinator at DRC’s Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development*

## Technology and data collection for peatlands management

### TECHNOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION FOR PEATLANDS MANAGEMENT

Peatland Pavilion , UNFCCC COP26  
 Tuesday, 9 November 2021  
 11.00-12.30 (GMT)  
 Blue Zone, Hall 4, SEC, Glasgow, Scotland



Coordinated by JICA, UNEP, DRC, Peru and ESA, the session organised on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> November shared that while well-defined policies are necessary for the good management and sustainable use of peatlands, it is essential to understand the distribution and use of peatlands as accurately as possible. In that regard, peatland science can help us to understand the

ecological mechanisms of peatlands, and peatland technology can help us to understand peatland resource availability – both of which contribute significantly to peatland management. Notably during the session, Jean Jacques Bambuta from the DRC’s Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development stated that detailed peatland mapping is pivotal for peatland protection because: *“We must know where peatlands are in order to better protect them”*. On the same line of thought, José Álvarez Alonso, General Director of Biological Diversity of the Peruvian Ministry of Environment mentioned the ongoing proposal to include peatlands into Peru’s NDCs, mentioning the importance of international cooperation to advance on the mapping efforts to identify all relevant peatland areas in the country and solidify their national peatland strategy. These challenges can be addressed with the help of new technologies. Mitsuru Osaki, Emeritus professor at the University of Hokkaido, stressed the need to extend peatland knowledge and make efficient, cutting-edge satellite technology available to all countries to identify and monitor new peatland areas. For example, Hirose Kazuyo, Director General at the Japan Space Systems, Nioki area, brought to

the fore the great advancement of satellite-based mapping in the field of peatland monitoring highlighting how, thanks to this method, a peatland forest has been recently found in Nioki area in DRC. Not only is satellite data needed, Corneille E.N. Ewango, Professor at the University of Kisangani in the DRC, also stressed the importance of ground truth data collection as key to validating the data and understanding the peatlands and their functions. Data accuracy and data integration is critical for ecosystem protection, said Niken Andika Putri, Remote Sensing Analyst, Sumitomo Forestry Group PT, Wana Subur Lestari, Indonesia. Moreover, Maria Nuutinen, Technical Lead on Peatlands at FAO, highlighted the importance of capacity development activities and strengthening of stakeholder partnerships for sustainable peatland management. Indeed, refined methodologies among key partners and stakeholders will be crucial to better map and monitor peatlands in tropical countries including Peru, Indonesia and the DRC. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jMushNpStLM>

Technology and data collection for peatlands management  
Tuesday, November 9, 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM



Takashi Nishimura, Deputy Director General, Global Environment Department, Japan International Cooperation Agency

Technology and data collection for peatlands management  
Tuesday, November 9, 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM



Maria Nuutinen, Forestry Officer and Technical Lead on Peatlands, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

### New advances in monitoring peatlands – Standardising what we measure where

This session, coordinated by CIFOR and SRUC, combined the work by CIFOR on Criteria and Indicators for peatland monitoring with the work done by the Global Peatlands Initiative for several years to establish core outcomes that should be measured where possible for effective peatland monitoring and research. Indeed, by standardizing what is measured across projects and countries for different types of peatlands, we aim to make it possible to synthesise findings to develop more evidence-based policy and practice. Mark Reed, Professor of Rural Entrepreneurship and Director of the Thriving Natural Capital Challenge Centres said: *"Measuring is of vital importance as well as using evidence for policy making. It's important to standardise monitoring practices so that people can collect data on the same variables in ways that cannot be synthesised"*. The session outlined approaches being pioneered by both groups, providing guidance on the most important variables to measure if evidence is to be used in national and global syntheses. It considered indicators that can track progress on the effects of restoration on biophysical, social, economic and governance outcomes, and give the opportunity to exchange knowledge with others interested in peatland monitoring around the world. Following presentations from CIFOR and SRUC, participants had the opportunity to discuss challenges around standardising methods for data collection and reporting and they are now able understand some of the challenges to be

encountered in the process of standardizing data collection, including methodological and reporting issues and the challenges of measuring social, economic and governance indicators, which may require the triangulation of qualitative methods. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mWe7m-ugfHE>

New advances in monitoring peatlands – Standardising what we measure where  
 Tuesday, November 9, 2:30 PM - 4:00 PM

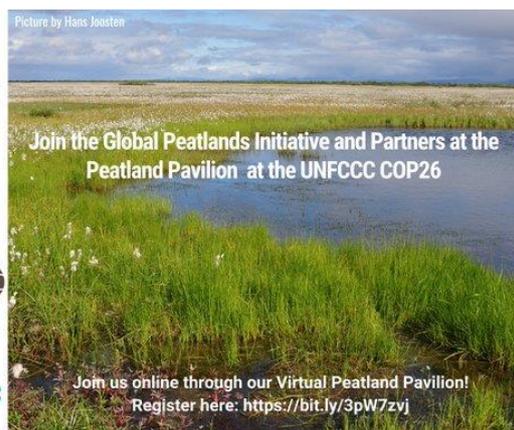


*Myrna Safitri, Deputy of Education, Socialization, Participation and Partnership, Kepala Badan Restorasi Gambut dan Mangrove (BRGM) said: “We must accelerate peatland restoration including the outcome of peatland restoration. Peatland restoration must be more inclusive and take in youth, women and the local communities at large”*

### State of peatland knowledge – Global Peatlands Assessment & Mapping

#### STATE OF PEATLAND KNOWLEDGE – GLOBAL PEATLANDS ASSESSMENT & MAPPING

Peatland Pavilion , UNFCCC COP26  
 Tuesday, 9 November 2021  
 16.00-17.30 (GMT)  
 Blue Zone, Hall 4, SEC, Glasgow, Scotland



On November 9<sup>th</sup>, the GPI launched its Global Peatlands Assessment (GPA) during the event: ‘State of peatland knowledge – Global Peatlands Assessment & Mapping’ co-organised by UNEP, GMC, UNEP-WCMC, and FAO. The GPA aims at filling the knowledge and research gaps on peatland distribution, status, trends and pressures, bringing the best

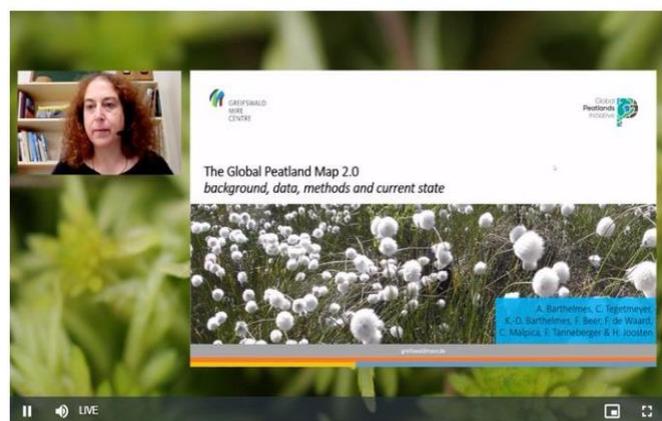
available science together to produce a global overview of the state of the world’s peatlands. Additionally, the Global Peatland Map 2.0 produced by GMC was shared by Alexandra Barthelmes, Coordinator of the Global Peatland Database at GMC as the base map for the GPA – improving the knowledge on the location and extent of peatlands worldwide, a need specifically expressed by Jean-Jacques Bambuta from the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of the DRC during the session. The GPA development team will

continually work to improve the knowledge base and engage experts in order to help countries make informed decisions, contribute to policies and plans and to help guide action for the conservation, restoration and sustainable management of peatlands. The GPA will also address the urgency of more general definitions for peat and peatland and takes an interdisciplinary approach to make use of the best science and available data to develop improved peatland probability distribution maps. On that topic, Hans Joosten, Secretary-General at IMCG, highlighted the diversity of definitions for peat, peatland and organic soil which hinder data harmonization. He explained the history of prevailing current definitions, presenting more generic definitions for peat/peatland/organic soil as basis to compile global data from various sources and discussing implications of definitions for mapping and assessing peatlands at global and regional scales. As highlighted by Jan Peters, Managing Director of the Michael Succow Foundation during the session, the assessment will provide a crucial baseline for future global peatlands assessments and as a basis for work towards a future Global Peatlands Inventory, illustrating the coordinated efforts of UNEP and the secretariat of the Ramsar Convention as requested by the [fourth United Nations Environment Assembly \(UNEA-4\) Resolution on the Conservation and Sustainable Management of Peatlands \(4/16\)](#).

State of peatland knowledge - Global Peatlands Assessment & Mapping  
 Tuesday, November 9, 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM



State of peatland knowledge - Global Peatlands Assessment & Mapping  
 Tuesday, November 9, 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM



*Lera Miles, Principal Technical Specialist, Planning for Places at UNEP-WCMC and Alexandra Barthelmes, Senior Researcher, Greifswald Mire Centre are both working on the Global Peatlands Assessment*

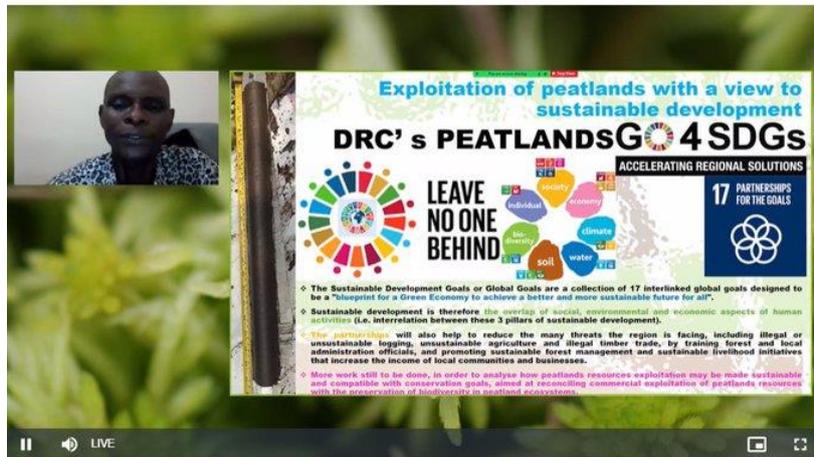
The map is available [here](#) and the recording here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z8eArecjxTM>

### **Protecting the Congo peatlands for climate mitigation and adaptation**

Coordinated by the Congopeat project, University of Exeter (UK); University of Kisangani (DRC); Marien N’Gouabi University (RoC) and UNEP-WCMC, the session provided information on the central Congo peatlands from the \$4 million CongoPeat project, a network of 50 scientists working together to assess the size, carbon stocks and threats to the central Congo peatlands. The panellists highlighted some of the threats to this newly discovered ecosystem and presented some possibilities for the continued protection of these peatlands to keep carbon locked in the peat. The Congo Basin peatlands were discovered in 2017 when scientists first mapped them. They revealed that these peatlands span 145,500 square kilometres, making this the world’s largest tropical peatland, and store 30 billion tonnes of carbon in peat, equivalent to 3 years of current global fossil fuel emissions. Considering the size of these

peatlands, much more work is still needed to accurately map them but also to understand the threats and identify solutions and, by organizing this session, the CongoPeat team not only aimed at raising awareness but also called for collaboration on this mammoth task, which will require the collaboration of all stakeholders. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xWM37eVjKMM>

Protecting the Congo peatlands for climate mitigation and adaptation  
 Tuesday, November 9, 7:30 PM - 9:00 PM



*Corneille Ewango, CongoPeat Co-Investigator; Associate Professor of Botany, University of Kisangani*



*From left to right: Sofie Sjögersten, CongoPeat Co-Investigator; Professor in Environmental Science, University of Nottingham, Ed Mitchard, CongoPeat Co-Investigator; Professor & Chair of Global Change Mapping, Edinburgh University Simon Lewis, CongoPeat lead scientist; Professor of Global Change Science, University of Leeds; Lera Miles, CongoPeat Co-Investigator; Principal Specialist – Area-based Planning, UNEP-WCMC, Richard Betts, CongoPeat Co-Investigator; Professor of Climate Impacts (University of Exeter)*

## DAY 10 – Peatland Policy | Wednesday 10th November

### Irish Peatlands Gathering 2021: a new beginning

Coordinated by Peatlands Gathering 2021, this session was an opportunity to present the key messages from the 8 sessions held during the first Peatlands Gathering in October 2021. The combined presentations outlined the state of Ireland's peatlands and the work being done by a range of agencies and communities in the country on these ecosystems. Peatlands play a significant role in the natural and cultural heritage of Ireland, and the country is a global hotspot for peatlands and peat carbon emissions. Work is ongoing to raise awareness of and develop approaches to reduce carbon emissions from degraded Irish peatlands, with a range of projects highlighted by Dr. Pippa Hackett, Minister for Land-use and Biodiversity of the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and the Marine. The session allowed participants to explore these magnificent ecosystems, beginning with an introduction from Tina Claffey, Irish Nature Photographer. *"Bogs are magical places that defy any distinction between land and water"* she said. *"Humans and peatlands were interconnected for years. Peatlands artefacts are elements that help us to learn from the past to build for the future"* added Ellen O'Carroll, Archaeologist, University College Dublin. Panellists also explained the challenges that they are facing to protect and/or restore their peatlands. For example, Patrick Crushell, Ecologist, Wetlands Survey Ireland brought to the fore the data gaps and the need to get farmers motivated and on board. A sensible question to which Brian Leddin TD, Elected representative of Dail Eireann, Chair of JOC Climate Action Committee replied: *"We need to let the farming community know that credits for land use emissions will be accounted for"*. Over the course of 90 minutes, the session highlighted the values and policy challenges for peatlands in terms of the role of their restoration as a Nature-based Solution for climate action, management of water resources and biodiversity, as well as supporting sustainable communities in peatland areas in Ireland. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7IEMww6NPIA>

Irish Peatlands Gathering 2021: a new beginning  
Wednesday, November 10, 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM



Catherine Farrell, Postdoctoral Researcher at Trinity College Dublin

Irish Peatlands Gathering 2021: a new beginning  
Wednesday, November 10, 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM



Pippa Hackett, Minister, Department of Agriculture, Forestry and the Marine, Ireland

**Irish Peatlands Gathering 2021: a new beginning**  
 Wednesday, November 10, 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM



*John Connolly, Kinsella Assistant Professor, Geography, Trinity College Dublin said “Accurate peatland mapping is pivotal. We need to know where peatlands and carbon stocks are in order to do proper carbon management”*

**Governance frameworks for peatland conservation and sustainable management in the Congo Basin**

Coordinated by CIFOR and US Forest Service, the session aimed at advancing the discussions on peatland governance and policy in the Congo Basin. Indeed, the Congo Basin has recently received international attention based upon estimates of peatland extent making it the largest continuous tropical peatland complex in the world, and their importance is well established: significant carbon storage, climate and water regulating services and reservoir of unique biodiversity. To meet the interest and importance of these sensitive ecosystems, including national commitments made under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and UNFCCC, strong institutional arrangements are however required. As such, a governance framework for peatlands that is cross-sectoral in nature is needed and requires coordination across both sectors and jurisdictional levels. This session introduced participants to the current governance frameworks in both the DRC and RoC outlining both opportunities and gaps drawing on Indonesia’s experience in integrating peatlands into their national agenda. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fj2sulCBefo>

Governance frameworks for peatland conservation and sustainable management in the Congo Basin  
 Wednesday, November 10, 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM



*Denis Sonwa, Senior Scientist at CIFOR said “The Congo Basin must be high on the global agenda thanks to its important services for climate, people, and biodiversity”*

Governance frameworks for peatland conservation and sustainable management in the Congo Basin  
 Wednesday, November 10, 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM



*Jean Jacques Bambuta, Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development DRC highlighted the need for robust domestic policies that encourage effective peatlands management*



*One of many COP26 delegates to visit the Peatland Pavilion in-between sessions: Chris Packham (right) explored peatland ecosystems from the comfort of the Pavilion using high quality and accessible VR technology developed by Richard Lindsay, UEL for the IUCN UK Peatland Programme.*

### **The England Peat Action Plan**

On Policy Day – November 10<sup>th</sup> – the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs of the UK (DEFRA) and Natural England presented the [England Peat Action Plan](#). The Plan articulates the government’s long-term vision for the management, protection, and restoration of their peatlands so they can provide a wide range of benefits to wildlife, people, and the planet. The plan builds into it increased ambition and a pathway toward the banning of the use of peat in horticulture. During the event, high-level speakers showcased the England Peat Action Plan, including England’s:

- World-leading plans to ban the sale of horticultural peat;
- Record investment in peatland restoration (through the Nature for Climate Fund and initiatives like the Great North Bog);
- Innovative plans to reduce carbon emissions from lowland farmed peatlands, centring on the Lowland Agricultural Peat Task Force;
- New baseline peat map currently under development, which will help with the prioritization of action and investment.

The session also highlighted Defra’s target for peatland restoration to be set as part of the forthcoming Net Zero Strategy and celebrated DEFRA joining the Global Peatlands Initiative. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q2mCllK2eAs>



**Panellists at the event included (top left to right):** Edward Barker (Defra); Christopher Dean, Moors for the Future Partnership; Andrea Kelly, Broads Authority National Park; Diana Kopansky, GPI; Prof. Chris Evans, Centre of Ecology & Hydrology; Renée Kerkvliet-Hermans, IUCN UK Peatland Programme; Naomi Oakley, Natural England.

### Peatland protection in Germany – a new policy approach

Also on Policy Day, the German Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV), GMC, UNEP and GPI co-organised an event entitled ‘Peatland protection in Germany – a new policy approach’. Jochen Flasbarth, State Secretary of the German Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety kicked off the session enthusiastically

#### PEATLAND PROTECTION IN GERMANY – A NEW POLICY APPROACH

Peatland Pavilion , UNFCCC COP26  
 Wednesday, 10 November 2021  
 15.00-16.30 (GMT)  
 Blue Zone, Hall 4, SEC, Glasgow, Scotland



by reasserting his and Germany’s commitment to protecting remaining intact peatlands and rewetting degraded peatlands to halt carbon emissions. He highlighted the importance of innovative approaches to recovering peatland ecosystem services while using them productively as opportunities to “combine land use practices in a modern and a clever way with making best use of what peatlands can provide for us”. These actions underpin Germany’s new draft Peatland Protection Policy, which is part of the German Climate Action Program 2030 together with the Federal Climate Change Act, which set



Jochen Flasbarth, State Secretary from the Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) highlighted that “it is important to combine land use practices in a modern and intelligent way and make the most of what peatlands can offer”

national targets for emissions on the LULUCF sector, where peatland conservation plays a key role in achieving these targets. Mechthild Caspers, Head of Division of the German Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety further presented this newly approved National Peatland Protection Strategy from the German national perspective, including the lessons learned during the development process and the outlook to the implementation process that is starting. By 2025, the German federal government will make 330 million euros available for peatland rewetting projects. The strategy aims to reduce annual GHG emissions from peatland soils by five million tonnes of [CO2](#) eq by 2030. The BMUV team in charge of the Peatland Strategy shared how they included principles, goals, and measures required for successful peatland protection at the federal level. The Strategy is based on cooperative approaches and intensified awareness raising and public relations work, bringing together different stakeholders for the implementation, including local communities, landowners and land managers. This explains why in Germany, the National Peatland Protection Strategy has been supplemented by a target agreement between the Federation and the Länder, serving as a link to the peatland protection strategies of the Länder. *"The main goal is to reduce GHGs emission from Bavarian peat soils by 2050. Landowners and land users are not forced to act but are invited to be part of the solution"* said Wolfram GÜthler, Bavarian State Ministry of the Environment & Consumer Protection, highlighting the challenges at the Länder level. The session enabled participants to hear about not only the national perspective but also scientific, EU and global perspectives. Bärbel Tiemeyer, Research Group Leader at the Thünen-Institut, expressed the involvement of the Thünen-Institut as an active stakeholder towards the protection of peatlands, and shared their contributions on technical knowledge, monitoring success within inventories, and scientific advisory services. At the EU level, Herwig Ranner, Climate Change Policy Officer from the European Commission, updated participants on activities and emerging regulations in the EU such as the soil thematic strategy and their restoration targets – which acknowledge peatlands as key biodiversity and high-carbon ecosystems. Germany has been extremely involved in peatlands protection, sustainable management and restoration, notably through their International Climate Initiative financing several peatland projects around the world. Dianna Kopansky, Global Peatlands Coordinator at UNEP, welcomed this significant progress for peatlands in Germany and called for more international collaboration, peer-to-peer exchanges and knowledge and lessons learning. *"We are the generation that can leave this planet in better shape for the future generations than we found it. Policy makers, practitioners and concerned citizens have an opportunity to make choices that support future generations"* she concluded. More information on the National Peatland Protection Strategy of Germany and the target agreement between the Federation and the Länder can be found [here](#). The recording is also available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9AA9KAun4o>

## Peatland protection in Germany – a new policy approach

Wednesday, November 10, 4:00 PM - 5:30 PM



*"Drained peat soil releases GHG. Although peatlands cover only 4% of the German territory, 1/3 of the GHGs that are caused by agriculture come from drained peatlands" said Mechthild Caspers, head of the division Precautionary Soil Conservation, Peatland Conservation; Biological Diversity and Climate Change in BMUV*

### Leveraging Multilateral Environmental Agreement synergies: Peatland protection and restoration for climate outcomes



On 10th November, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands Secretariat, UNEP, German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN), the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and GPI came together to advance the work on 'Leveraging MEA synergies: Peatland protection and

restoration for climate outcomes'. Multilateral environment agreements (MEAs) have started to acknowledge the importance of peatlands for the planet, the climate and people and to cooperate towards a common aim to save peatlands as the world's largest terrestrial organic carbon stock and to prevent this stock from being emitted into the atmosphere. Together with the participants, they explored common interests and areas of cooperation for peatland restoration among practitioners, donors, multilateral institutions and governments, and noted the new guidance tools just launched by the Convention on Wetlands. The session highlighted the ongoing synergistic cooperation towards a common aim to save peatlands within the long-term objectives of each MEA. Peru, the DRC and Germany shared their experience in working on peatland conservation and restoration and how that work helped progress their commitments under several MEAs. The countries also agreed that through MEA focal points and actions joining up for peatlands protection and restoration, with support from the GPI and MEA Secretariats, the work can increase in both scale and speed. Under the framework of the UNEA4 Resolution on Peatlands and through the mechanisms and enabling resolutions in all the MEAs present, the partners agreed that working together

for peatland conservation and restoration is a triple win for climate, nature and water impacts. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KjaCZQZX9ps>

Leveraging MEA synergies: Peatland protection and restoration for climate outcomes  
Wednesday, November 10, 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM



*Jamal Annagylyjova, Regional Coordinator for Central and Eastern Europe in the UNCCD Secretariat*



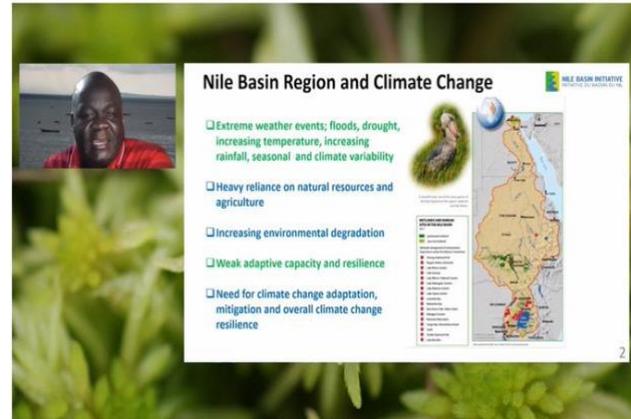
*Left to right: David Cooper, Deputy Executive Secretary, Convention on Biological Diversity; Dirk Nemitz, Team Leader AFOLU, Framework Convention on Climate Change and Jean Jacques Bambuta, Peatland Management Unit Coordinator at DRC's Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development*

### **Peatlands of the Nile Basin - NBI countries recognise their key role as nature-based solutions**

On Policy Day, the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), Succow Foundation, partner in the GMC, the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI), the Ministry of Water and Environment from Uganda, and the Ministry of Environment and Forestry from South Sudan, came together to raise awareness regionally and globally about the importance of peatlands in the Nile Basin. These peatlands, covering approximately 30,445 km<sup>2</sup>, are estimated to contain 4.2 – 10 Gt of carbon, representing 5 to 10 % of the known tropical peat carbon stock in the world. In the region, peatlands are fast being converted into agricultural land and the provisions of ecosystem services are being threatened. Governments of Uganda and South Sudan shared their recent experiences in incorporating peatland action into their climate change policies, especially NDCs and instruments, and also opened up a dialogue with other relevant players from the Nile Basin and beyond on how to scale up these efforts. They called for support from the international community and appreciated the efforts of the Global Peatlands Initiative and partners in helping connect them with experts and knowledge of peatlands conservation and restoration for the benefit of their most vulnerable populations. "Working together to have harmonised land use practices is key as well as linking up and learning from each other on how to sustain and manage peatlands" said Leonard Akwany, Regional Wetlands Expert, Nile Basin Initiative. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wRUV7YCMzfo>



Peatlands of the Nile Basin - NBI countries recognize their key role as nature-based solutions  
 Wednesday, November 10, 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM



*From left to right: Jan Peters, Managing Director, Michael Leonard Akwany, Regional Wetlands Expert, Nile Basin Initiative, Succow Foundation, partner in the Greifswald Mire Centre; said “Working together to have harmonised land use practices is Collins Oloya, Director Environment Affairs, Uganda key, as well as linking up and learning from each other on how Ministry of Water and Environment and Wani Nelson to sustain and manage peatlands” Mogga, Climate Change Department, Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Republic of South Sudan*

## DAY 11 – Delivering peatland action in partnership | Thursday 11th November

### Working Together for the Great North Bog

Coordinated by North Pennines AONB Partnership and UNEP, the session kicked off with an introduction of the Great North Bog (GNB), an ambitious, grand-scale peatland restoration initiative being developed by the North Pennines AONB Partnership, the Yorkshire Peat Partnership and the Moors for the Future Partnership. The mission of the GNB is to "Protect, care for and restore peatlands in the North of England, restoring 7,000 km<sup>2</sup> of carbon-rich peat in 20 years" explained Sarah Fowler, Chief Executive of the Peak District National Park Authority. To give a brief overview, these landscapes currently store 400 million tonnes of carbon, and damaged peatlands in the Great North Bog release 3.7 million tonnes of carbon annually. Alison Whalley, Project Manager from Environment Agency UK, emphasised the critical role of peatlands in building a green long-lasting legacy able not only to meet the 2030 climate targets to curb climate change but also to effectively address the twin crises of climate change and the destruction of nature. Panellists also brought to the fore some complex challenges. For example, Chris Woodley-Stewart, Chief Executive of the North Pennines AONB Partnership, stressed the importance of raising the profile of peatlands and the importance of restoring functioning wetland ecosystems, focusing on the necessity of working in tandem with landowners and managers: "We aren't working on lands that we own". Dianna Kopansky, Global Peatlands Coordinator at UNEP, also highlighted the two drivers for peatland mismanagement: namely undervaluation and underinvestment in these areas. Subsequently, she skilfully synthesised the essential ingredients for an effective peatland restoration: "People, continuum, drivers for change, and knowledge sharing. Peatlands take a long time to heal but they're powerful when they do". The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yvKT5MpDQ0A>



*Sion McGeever Deputy Director for Land Use at DEFRA said: "We are keen to make sure to be able to support the capacity on the ground and those who know how to make peatland restoration a reality"*

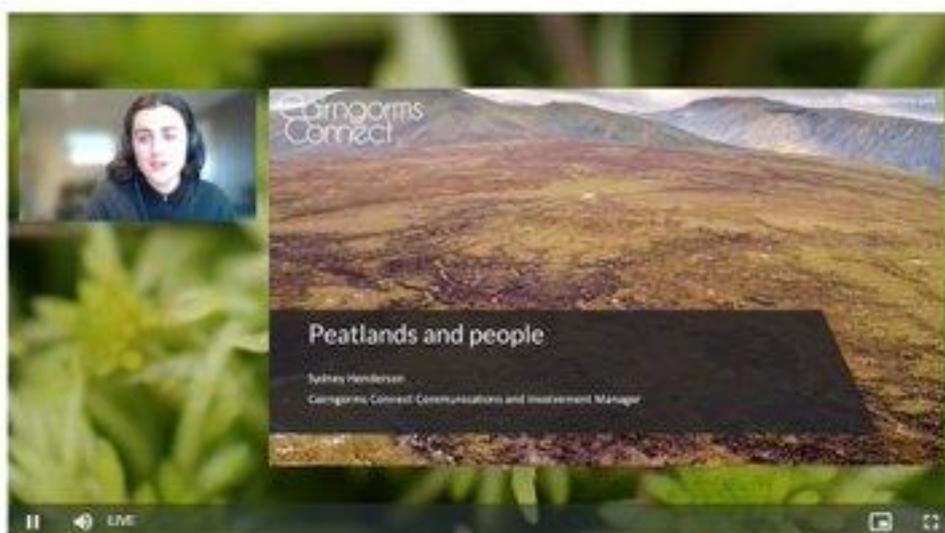


*Q&A section. Speaking: Chris Woodley-Stewart, Chief Executive, North Pennines AONB Partnership*

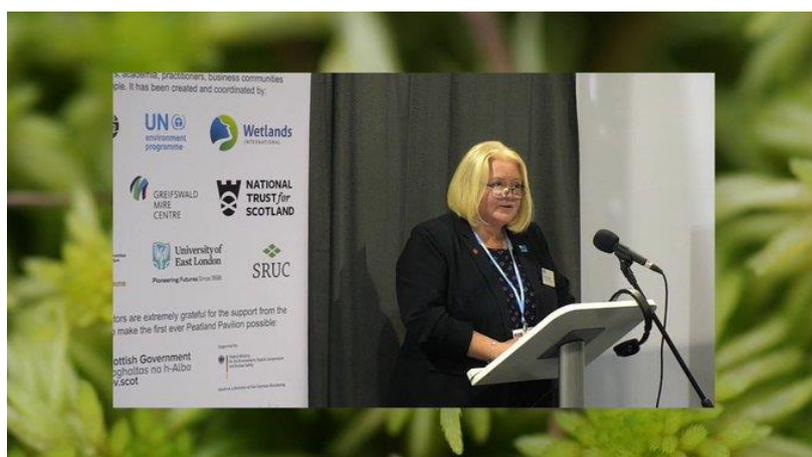
### **Peatlands, people and partnerships**

Coordinated by RSPB and Cairngorms Connect (the UK's biggest restoration project delivering, practically, for both carbon sequestration and climate adaptation), the session entitled 'Peatlands, people and partnerships' was held on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> November. Through a series of presentations and short videos, the session showed the importance of Cairngorms Connect for peatland habitats; it outlined the restoration processes, explaining why working in partnership makes a difference, and described what the restoration programme means for people: from those who undertake the restoration work, to those whose businesses depend on peatlands and nature-based solutions, to local community interests, the arts, and in particular young people. *"Working together across boundaries gets things done. The strength of Cairngorms Connect is shared commitments, ambitions, we are restoring peatlands and working in tandem with natural processes to deliver real benefits for both animals and humans"* shared Chris Donald, Operations Manager at SNH. Through this session, attendees gained an in-depth appreciation of peatland restoration beyond the well understood (and important) role of addressing the twin crises of climate and biodiversity. They gained clear insight into the strong connections that exist between peatlands and communities of place and interest - locally, nationally and internationally. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rB-njKV0wng>

Peatlands, people and partnerships  
Thursday, November 11, 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM



*Sydney Henderson, Communications and Involvement Manager, Cairngorms Connect, said: "People are of pivotal importance in the Cairngorms Connect project. We can't carry out peatland restoration without people and solid partnerships"*



*Anne McCall, Director of RSPB Scotland*

### **Ancient Peatlands for the Present and Future: A Youth Call for Action**

On Partnership Day in the Pavilion on 11<sup>th</sup> November, several youth organizations including RE-PEAT, the International Forestry Students Association (IFSA), and Youth Engaged in Wetlands (YEW), came together to hold a dynamic session on 'Ancient Peatlands for the Present and Future'. After insightful reflections, exercises, and a sensory workshop – which allowed people to engage with peatlands on a personal level – youth perspectives towards peatlands were discussed among a panel of distinguished youth advocates. The speakers highlighted the challenges faced by them including intergenerational injustice and appreciated that the Peatland Pavilion was a place where Green Zone, Blue Zone and no-access youth from around the world could gather, exchange and share their concerns about the neglect of youth and peatlands in the climate change discussions. They highlighted the importance of giving space to the diversity of perspectives which exist among youth and the role youth play in raising awareness for peatlands. The session and its coordination offered the young people the opportunity to connect across networks and regions and to start to generate a strong and unified youth voice for peatland action. The GPI youth members

encouraged more youth organizations to join the Global Peatlands Initiative – to build a strong youth movement to drive multigenerational collaboration towards the restoration and conservation of global peatlands. *“Young people are some of the most powerful voices, especially in the process of reimagining how we can live together and coexist on this planet”* said Frankie Turk, team member at Re-PEAT. *“A strong youth participation makes a meaningful difference in avoiding the worst outcomes of climate change. Raising awareness of the threats that degraded peatlands pose to climate, people, and biodiversity is their greatest goal”* added Angelica Manrique from ‘Jóvenes Peruanos frente al Cambio Climático’. The recording is available here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mn\\_u799VZ-I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mn_u799VZ-I)



Frankie Turk from Re-PEAT moderated the session

### Patagonian Peatland Initiative: conservation partnership for thriving peatlands



On Partnership Day, the ‘Patagonian Peatland Initiative: conservation partnership for thriving peatlands’ session organised by WCS Chile, the Ministry of Environment of Chile, University of Tierra del Fuego Argentina, Ensayos, Manfred Hermsen Stiftung, GMC, and GPI, took further steps to solidify action to protect the world’s most southern and rare peatlands of Tierra del Fuego. Outside the tropics, Patagonian peatlands constitute the southern hemisphere’s primary carbon sink, and the Patagonian Peatlands Initiative is aiming to establish a locally-based, multi-actor, multi-scale partnership through the conservation of Patagonia’s peatlands with support from and connection to the Global Peatlands Initiative. Patagonian peatlands have global implications in climate change mitigation and nature protection and will require international support grounded through local partners for action and impact. *“In Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego, human and non-*

humans have shared the same territories, the same ecosystems, the same peatlands from time immemorial. Peatlands include past and future history of the world” said Bárbara Saavedra, Director of WCS Chile. "Chile and Argentina are committed to the conservation of their peatlands. The Bi-National Seminar Peatlands of Patagonia was aimed at discussing strategies, challenges and opportunities for the conservation of these areas” added Nicole Püschel, Officer in charge of Climate Change and Biodiversity at WCS Chile. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-FpDNell91o> and as Camila Marambio, Founder of Ensayos pointed out "The Patagonian peatlands will be featured in the Chilean Pavilion at the next Venice Biennale". Stay tuned!

Patagonian Peatland Initiative: conservation partnership for thriving peatlands  
Thursday, November 11, 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM



Bárbara Saavedra, Director of WCS Chile said: "In Patagonia & Tierra del Fuego human and non-humans have shared the same territories, the same ecosystems, the same peatlands from time immemorial. Peatlands include past & future history of the world"

### Canada’s Peatlands as a Nature-based Solution to Climate Change

To close the day, the GPI, University of Waterloo (UW) Interdisciplinary Centre on Climate Change (IC3) and Water Institute (WI) held a session entitled ‘Canada’s Peatlands as a Nature-based Solution to Climate Change’. The event discussed the outcomes of the national, multi-stakeholder workshop series convened by UNEP-GPI and the University of

#### CANADA’S PEATLANDS AS A NATURE-BASED SOLUTION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Peatland Pavilion , UNFCCC COP26  
Thursday, 11 November 2021  
18.30-20.00 (GMT)  
Blue Zone, Hall 4, SEC, Glasgow, Scotland



Waterloo Water Institute in 2020. The workshop series aimed at catalysing the development of a pan-Canadian, multi-stakeholder peatlands network and at identifying key research gaps and priorities to support a national peatlands assessment. This session also aimed at promoting the work of Canada’s peatland science and policy network and building momentum toward the development of a Canadian peatlands research and knowledge mobilization agenda as a nature-based solution to climate change assessment. This research group would help to address some gaps existing in the country. For example, Kara Webster, Research Scientist, Natural Resources Canada highlighted during the session that “We have come a long way in the last decade in understanding emissions and removals of carbon from

peatlands at a national scale, but much more work needs to be done to fill data, knowledge and modelling gaps". She added, "In Canada, carbon losses from peatlands due to climate change-induced increases in fires and permafrost thaw will be larger than natural climate solutions actions will do to increase sinks", a comment echoed by Fereidoun Rezanezhad, Research Associate Professor, University of Waterloo: "Winter is a critical period for carbon cycling in Canadian peatlands. Climate warming will increase winter carbon loss in Canadian peatlands", emphasizing the urgent need for more research to be done. Steve Nitah, Senior Advisor, Indigenous Leadership Initiative (also, Lead for Conservation through Reconciliation Partnership, former Chief of Lutselk'e Dene and former chief negotiator for Thaidene Nene) reminded us that it is important to note that these changes will be impacting first and most strongly the communities that live on these ecosystems, and emphasised that "Indigenous leadership is key". "Managing peatlands in the face of climate change requires collaboration

Canada's Peatlands as a Nature-based Solution to Climate Change  
Thursday, November 11, 7:30 PM - 9:00 PM

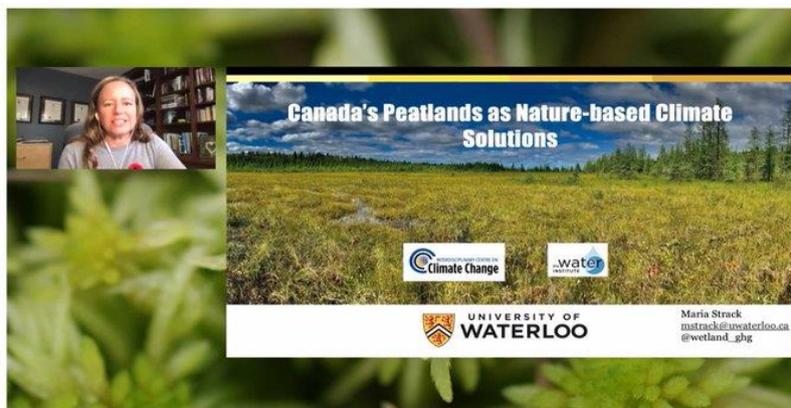


Panel discussion

among federal provincial & territorial governments, Indigenous organizations & governments, environmental non-governmental organizations, private sector & academia" added Maria Strack, Professor & Canada Research Chair in Ecosystems and Climate, University of Waterloo. Indeed, Canadian peatlands are under multiple threats that will require the involvement of all stakeholders including agriculture and agroforestry, climate change and peat extraction for use in horticulture and greenhouses – a topic addressed by Stéphanie Boudreau, Industry Science

Coordinator, Canadian Sphagnum Peat Moss Association, during the session. "The Canadian horticultural peat industry is committed to responsible management of the resource, including ecological restoration, independent, peer-reviewed research as the foundation for policies and regulation as well as for the development of best management practices" she said. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IWqbDcvG75o>

Canada's Peatlands as a Nature-based Solution to Climate Change  
Thursday, November 11, 7:30 PM - 9:00 PM



Maria Strack, Professor & Canada Research Chair in Ecosystems and Climate at the University of Waterloo



At the end of the day, Inger Andersen, Executive Director of UN Environment Programme, came to visit the Global Peatlands Pavilion and enjoy the cosiness of the water droplet!

## DAY 12 – Activating multiple stakeholders | Friday 12th November

### Activating stakeholders in peatland restoration – successes and failures

ACTIVATING  
STAKEHOLDERS IN  
PEATLAND RESTORATION  
– SUCCESSES AND  
FAILURES

Peatland Pavilion , UNFCCC COP26  
Friday, 12 November 2021  
09.00-10.30 (GMT)  
Blue Zone, Hall 4, SEC, Glasgow, Scotland



Coordinated by Government of Iceland & GPI, the event aimed at discussing best practices in how to activate stakeholders in peatland restoration and share learning experiences between participants. 10% of the land in Iceland is covered by peat. However, as Sunna Askelsdottir, Project Manager Wetland Restoration, Soil

Conservation Service of Iceland highlighted, half of the peatlands are drained, and we urgently need to upscale restoration efforts in the country. Gudmundur I. Gudbrandsson, Iceland’s Minister of Environment, highlighted that the only way to a successful peatland restoration and conservation in Iceland is including all stakeholders in the process. Mr. Gudbrandsson also claimed that: *“If peatlands aren't seen as an integral part of communities' livelihood, especially in developing countries, protection and restoration won't succeed”*, a point also emphasised by Malcom Noonan, Minister of State for Heritage and Electoral Reform of Ireland. Jorge López-Doriga, Chief Communication and Sustainability Officer of AJE Group Peru, then introduced the concept of ‘natural revolution’ which has created new types of companies different from those born from the industrial revolution. AJE is part of this movement and looking at creating beneficial products for the consumer’s health, thanks to natural components that support Peruvian forest conservation. He also presented the ‘Abanico del Pastaza’, the largest wetland complex in the Peruvian Amazon, stressing the importance of working together with the indigenous communities on-site during the harvesting of superfruits such as the aguaje, which represents a significant source of sustenance for native populations. The event also enabled direct and active knowledge sharing of best practices in peatland restoration among participants. Anne Gray, Director

Designate, Heather Trust (Scotland), showcased the importance of engaging with and facilitating stakeholders as the correct way to successfully involve them in peatland restoration, claiming that government engagement with landowners facilitates participation in restoration. However, she also stressed that engagement and persuasion alone are not enough to advance restoration activities. Scotland’s Peatland Action Programme puts together funding applications for moorland owners, farmers and deer management groups, representing a solid strategy that reassures those reluctant to engage in restoration. Understanding landowners’ concerns, perceptions and building trust with them is the way forward. Best practices from Ireland were also shared during the session. Maurice Eakin, Senior Wetland Ecologist at National Parks and Wildlife Service, Ireland, shared valuable strategies for engaging with stakeholders on peatland restoration, through open conversations with the community, involving negotiations, purchasing lands, compensation payments, scientific monitoring, collaborations, and a comprehensive restoration programme with Carbon Tax Funding. The best practices can be used to develop strategies in other countries such as Mongolia whose peatlands are threatened by human activities like burning and mining operations, which, coupled with climate change, constitute a significant threat to permafrost peatlands, a point emphasised by Nyambayar Batbaya, Director of the Wildlife Science and Conservation Center of Mongolia, during the session. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lm6ZvclOMgs>



*Gudmundur I. Gudbrandsson, Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources of Iceland said that “If peatlands aren't seen as integral part of communities' livelihood, especially in developing countries, protection and restoration won't succeed”*

Activating stakeholders in peatland restoration – successes and failures  
Friday, November 12, 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

**Mongolia**

Most of the territory of Mongolia is associated with arid and semi-arid steppes and semi-deserts but also has a large exposure of peatlands (Drozdov et al. 2022).

Surprisingly, Mongolia is the fifth country by permafrost area after Russia, Canada, China and the USA (Lynch et al. 2006).

In the dry continental climate, Mongolian peatlands fulfil many important ecological functions, ranging from

- human habitats
- prevention of soil erosion
- provision of critical hydrological functions
- maintaining groundwater levels
- food production
- safeguarding biodiversity
- providing highly productive habitats for livestock grazing
- cultural and recreational services

(UNEP, GRID-Arendal 2017, ADB-MIT 2017)

*Dr. Nyambayar Batbaya, Director and Research Biologist at the Wildlife Science and Conservation Center of Mongolia*

At the end of the event, Svenja Schulze, German Environmental Minister and representatives from the Core organization team decided to take a souvenir picture



### Dialogues towards a European Peatland Initiative



On 12<sup>th</sup> November, the 'Dialogues towards a European Peatlands Initiative' session hosted by the Irish Government, with support from Bax & Company, UNEP, GPI, Eurosite and GMC, welcomed an open exchange of ideas between Ministers of Ireland, Iceland, Germany and representatives of Lithuania, Scotland and the Netherlands. The open dialogues built on previous efforts that European governments, peatland experts and multiple stakeholders have been taking to work together for peatlands action across Europe. "Only 16% of European peatlands are safeguarded", Franziska Tanneberger, Director of the Greifswald Mire Centre,

reminded us, and a large proportion are still being degraded for agriculture or peat extraction. "Peat extraction must be phased out. Peatland conservation should become an integral part of the long-term climate action strategies" said Svenja Schulze, Minister of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety of Germany. European peatlands have been drained for centuries; a process that has even been incentivised by governments who are now taking action to reverse the trend. For example, Gudmundur Ingi Gudbrandsson, Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources of Iceland, shared how years back, the government handed out generous subsidies for draining wetlands, and ditches were signs of progress. The Icelandic Government is now supporting peatlands conservation, backed up by the renewed Climate Action Plan from 2020 which includes the specific actions of increasing the area of protected wetlands and increasing funding for restoration efforts. Another example was shared by Andrew Millar, Chief Scientific Adviser for Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture of Scotland who presented the Scottish Government's commitments through Scotland's Peatland Action Programme which has invested 30 million pounds and restored

more than 25 thousand hectares of peatland. In the next 10 years, they are committed to investing 250 million pounds of additional funding to restore 250 thousand further hectares. The dialogues continued with Pippa Hackett, Minister for Land Use and Biodiversity of Ireland, who shared the economic opportunity of peatlands through carbon farming and other innovations to reward farmers for their ecosystem benefits. The dialogues build on the concept and collaboration of the GPI, which has seen impact for peatlands at scale and speed as a result of peer-to-peer facilitated experience exchange and collective sharing. The UNEP-led Global Peatlands Initiative called for action by European governments with the support of multi-stakeholder partners to advance the implementation of the UNEA4 Resolution on peatlands and to take the opportunity to create momentum and establish a European Peatlands Initiative linked to the GPI to share knowledge, learn from each other and increase investment in peatland protection and restoration by establishing strategic partnerships for peatlands across Europe. Partners welcomed the opportunity and recognised that sharing knowledge, learning from each other in terms of policy approaches, and joining forces through strategic partnerships will help each country work together for the joint purpose of saving the valuable peatlands around Europe. *"We have a lot to learn from our partners across Europe. It is vital that we work together to elevate our national efforts and achieve our shared visions for these habitats"* said Malcolm Noonan, Minister of State for Heritage and Electoral Reform of Ireland. *"The only way to accelerate the recovery of peatlands is through European collaboration, focusing on three key aspects: raising awareness of the importance of peatlands to fight the climate emergency, sharing knowledge at an international level, and connecting to key stakeholders (including local communities, landowners and farmers)"* added Harm Schoten, Director at Eurosite. Aldert van Weeren, Wetland Product Foundation & Farmer, also called for the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) to include a more detailed mention of paludiculture and subsidies within the strategic plans of peat-rich member states, making the new EU CAP fit for paludiculture farming. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bBLiFg4egcl>



*Speakers at the Dialogues towards a European Peatlands Initiative event (missing Svenja Schulze, Minister of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety of Germany)*



*The iconic water droplet became the place to be during the little break in between events. This time Malcolm Noonan, Minister of State for Heritage and Electoral Reform of Ireland was the one that wanted to get photographed together with Niall O' Brolchain, NUI Galway!*

### **Peatland Rights and Cultures**

Coordinated by the Scottish Government, the event 'Peatland Rights and Cultures' focused on the cultures of peat, the science, and the legal rights of domestic peat managers across the world. Aiming to appeal to the international community who share similar cultures with peat to the Scottish crofting community, such as those in Ireland and Canada, the event enabled participants to learn from different UK stakeholders on their experience of managing local peat resources. The problem of peat use in horticulture was at the centre of the session and kicked off the conversations when Jane Barker, managing director of Dalefoot Composts stated *"Peat is not a traditional growing medium and it is not a good growing medium, but it has attributes that makes it appealing for gardeners. We need sustainable gardening"*. Indeed, this problem is hard to address and, as stressed by Rebekka Artz, Senior Research Scientist at The James Hutton Institute: "Historically extracted sites are still emitting a significant amount of carbon ". Countries are trying to address the problem. For example, *"Virtually all peat extraction in Ireland is unpermitted and unassessed"* explained Andrew Jackson, Environmental and Planning Law, University College Dublin, but others are still struggling to pass effective policies. *"Agriculture, peat extraction for horticulture, oil and gas exploration, and mining and infrastructure development put peatlands across Canada under threat"* said Dr. Lorna Harris, University of Alberta – Postdoctoral Fellow, Catchment and Wetland Sciences Research Group, University of Alberta. Dr Harris also highlighted the need for Indigenous protected areas and Indigenous-led stewardship for peatland protection across Canada. Transitioning to sustainable practices will require action from all stakeholders around the world and this session, aiming at establishing productive relationships with international partners working in this area, was a great step towards that goal. The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MBrOSuZun8U>

Peatland Rights and Cultures  
Friday, November 12, 2:30 PM - 4:00 PM



Rebekka Artz, Senior Research Scientist, The James Hutton Institute said: “Historically extracted sites are still emitting a significant amount of carbon.”

### Global Peatland Pavilion Closing Session: Key messages & way forward for CoP26 & Beyond

GLOBAL PEATLAND PAVILION  
CLOSING SESSION: KEY  
MESSAGES & WAY FORWARD  
FOR COP 26 & BEYOND

Peatland Pavilion , UNFCCC COP26  
Friday, 12 November 2021  
15.30-16.15 (GMT)

Blue Zone, Hall 4, SEG, Glasgow, Scotland



Coordinated by IUCN UK Peatland Programme & GPI, the closing session of the pavilion gave a recapitulation of the different commitments made and key highlights of the two weeks. With the UNFCCC COP26 coming to an end, each co-organizing partner took the floor to give their personal view on how to keep the momentum for peatlands high. Closing two

weeks full of events, discussions, networking and mingling, the Global Peatlands Initiative, Wetlands International, Scotland’s Rural College (SRUC), University of East London (UEL), Michael Succow Foundation, partner of the Greifswald Mire Centre (GMC), National Trust for Scotland and the IUCN UK Peatlands Programme came together to thank all speakers and event organisers for this incredible success and thank all the sponsors who had contributed to make this possible. The recording is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F4QnIZO3jsY>



*Richard Lindsay, Head of Environmental and Conservation Research at University of East London and Senior Scientific Advisor, IUCN UK Peatland Programme*

*Luckily, everyone had to get tested every day to enter the COP!*



## Sponsors

The expenses of the Global Peatlands Pavilion were covered by a great number of sponsors:



## Results of the Feedback Survey

The Global Peatlands Pavilion core organizing team designed a feedback form with the session organisers to share any feedback and/or outcome arising from the sessions. The team received 36 answers, out of 45 sessions.

To the question “what did you like about the pavilion?”, participants answered:

- The design of the pavilion
- The organization of the pavilion and support provided (pre, during and after COP) and technical support
- The diversity of speakers including youth
- The pavilion provided a unique platform for visibility and attracted a lot of interest
- The pavilion brought opportunities for networking which were successful (new projects in the making, partnerships developing nationally but also internationally, new funding opportunities, etc.) and helped raise awareness, share knowledge and launch products
- Participants appreciated the hybrid format of the pavilion and the interactive events
- Participants liked to have high level speakers joining science discussions
- The pavilion helped to build momentum for peatlands, which will help in the pursuit of funding opportunities and commitments
- The pavilion enabled the issues discussed to reach a large and new audience
- Wide range of translation options available

To the question “what could be improved?”, participants noted that:

- Overall (for all science pavilions at COP): disconnection between the scientific and practitioner talks and the political discussions. Need to link the discussions more to the negotiations
- Need for more voices including those most affected by climate change and ecological collapse
- Pavilion being in the blue zone, the access was restricted for the wider public (“bubble” effect – need to reach outside that bubble)
- Need for more visually attractive components
- There was a delay when screen sharing for remote speakers
- The recordings of the sessions were not available for sharing immediately
- A less busy calendar could help better highlight strategic themes and topics
- Consider financially supporting speakers that have limited resources to join
- Quality of translation was sometimes quite poor and participants highlighted that they would have preferred to pay for an interpreter instead<sup>1</sup>

To the question “If the team was to organise a Global Peatlands Pavilion at a future COP (Ramsar, UNFCCC, CBD etc), would you be interested in participating again?”, 100% of respondents answered “Yes”.

Of course, at this stage, the core organizing team cannot guarantee that the Global Peatlands Pavilion will come back at another international conference. We can see that Richard Lindsay has already started thinking about it!



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<sup>1</sup> We used an automated, real-time platform that uses artificial intelligence and machine learning algorithms to provide contextual translation in 22 languages. While the platform provides a good understanding of the broad context, there are sometimes variables that affect translation accuracy and errors are possible.

## Posterity of the pavilion

The Core organizing team has decided to donate the main items (two screens, posters, displays, etc.) to the Great Fen, a vast fenland landscape between Peterborough and Huntingdon with a dramatic and fascinating history and home of two National Nature Reserves, protected for their unique habitat and the varied wildlife they support. Find out more: <https://www.greatfen.org.uk>. The water droplet also found a home there (for now!).



Even the dragonfly got a new home with Scottish Minister Lorna Slater

The team also calculated the carbon footprint of the pavilion (transportation of the team, living, printing and shipping of items, headsets, AV electricals etc, based on the auto generated numbers from the COP26 emissions calculator platform) which summed up to 13.95 T of Carbon emitted and has decided to offset the carbon to compensate it.

The polaroid pictures taken during the sessions were also given to the people as a memory.



All the recordings of the Peatlands Pavilion sessions are now available on our [“Global Peatlands Pavilion” YouTube Channel](#). This channel will go beyond UNFCCC COP26 and, similar to the [Virtual Peatlands Pavilion](#), it will serve as a long-lasting resource for the global peatland community to share more knowledge about these valuable ecosystems, where we will store recordings of future COPs and international conferences to provide a legacy for the future of peatlands. For this reason, we have created a [specific playlist for COP26 called “Peatland Pavilion at UNFCCC COP26”](#).

We would greatly appreciate if you could support us by [subscribing to the YouTube channel by clicking here](#). The international peatland community is expanding, and it is through effective collaboration and strong partnerships that we can position peatlands on the global climate agenda as a super Nature-based Solution to address climate change, nature loss and resilience.

## Acknowledgements

The Peatland Pavilion organisers:



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Thank you for joining us on this journey to advocate for the conservation, restoration, and sustainable management of peatlands, because #PeatlandsMatter for our nature and climate future!

## Further resources

All articles, videos, stories below are linked to the content of this summary report. Many of these readings are products of Global Peatlands Pavilion events.

### Articles/ news/ press releases

- [ASEAN, peatland partners showcase best practices COP26 peatland pavilion](#)
- [An urgent call to protect South America’s largest peat reserve](#)
- [CIFOR-ICRAF at COP26 – people and nature together can reverse the damage to our planet](#)
- [CIFOR-ICRAF at COP26: Governance frameworks for peatland conservation and sustainable management in the Congo Basin](#)
- [COP26, A seminar organised by Landgræðslan on wetland restoration \(in Icelandic\)](#)
- [Dialogues Towards a European Peatlands Initiative at COP26](#)
- [European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency participation in COP26](#)
- [Healthy peat soils – hidden gem for carbon \(by FAO\)](#)
- [Faces of COP26: Meet the 24-year-old restoring Scotland’s peat bogs](#)
- [International Peatland Society will hold partnership event at COP26 Friday 5 November](#)
- [Launch of Policy Report on Economics of Peatlands Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Management](#)
- [Launch of the Global Peatland Map 2.0](#)
- [LIFE OrgBalt organised side event at the COP26 widely attended](#)
- [Managing peatlands in Indonesia’s South Sumatra for multiple benefits](#)
- [No Paris without peatlands: building collaboration at COP26](#)
- [Peatlands need you, you need peatlands: A call to support peatland actions](#)
- [Peru at the Peatland Pavilion](#)
- [Perú en la COP 26: participación de las comunidades indígenas es un factor clave frente a la emergencia climática](#)
- [Perú exhibe al mundo el aporte de los pueblos indígenas en metas climáticas](#)
- [‘Protecting the Congo Basin Peatlands to Safeguard Climate and Biodiversity’ Briefing \(by CongoPeat\)](#)
- [Rapid Net Carbon Loss From a Whole-Ecosystem Warmed Peatland](#)
- [Seeing Our Future More Clearly: How One Peatland Study is Changing How We Think About Carbon](#)
- [Turberas de Patagonia llegan a la COP26 \(by WCS Chile\)](#)
- [Turberas de Patagonia: un gigantesco vaso de agua en medio del desierto \(by WCS Chile\)](#)
- [UNFCCC COP26 Global Peatlands Pavilion](#)
- [Wetlands and climate change \(by Ramsar\)](#)

### Videos

- [Protecting the Peninsula Mitre Peatlands \(by Tompkins Foundation\)](#)
- [Rewetting and restoration of peatlands in Katingan-Mentaya, Indonesia](#)
- [Rewetting Russia’s peatlands](#)

- [Technology and data collection for peatlands management \(JICA, UNEP, GPI\) promotional video](#)
- [Video showcasing the unique value of the peatlands in the Republic of the Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo](#) (by CongoPeat)
- [Virtual Tour of the SPRUCE Experiment Site](#), more information about the SPRUCE experiment [here](#).

#### Story maps

- [Northern Peatlands in Canada - An Enormous Carbon Storehouse](#) (by WCS)
- [Restoration in the Scottish Highlands – a virtual field trip](#)

#### Podcasts

- [Podcast from Estonian Ministry](#)

#### Toolkits:

- [COP26 Ramsar Toolkit](#)

#### **For further information contact:**

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