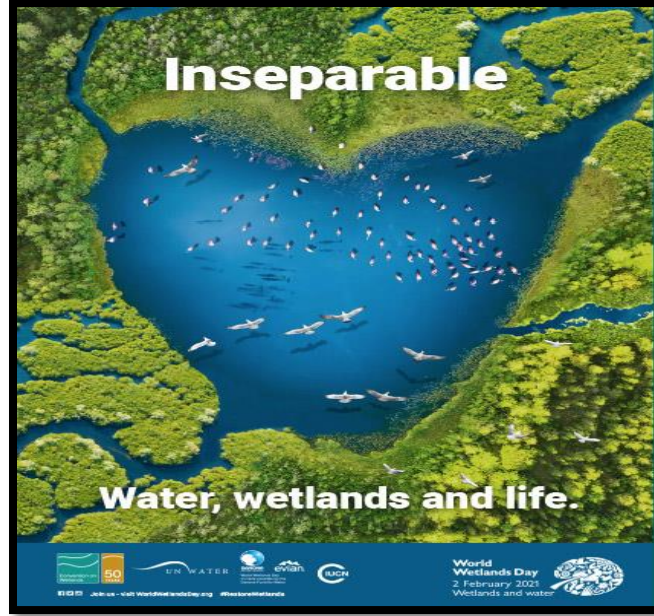




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TAMIL NADU STATE WETLAND AUTHORITY



WORLD WETLANDS DAY 2021: WETLANDS AND WATER- INSEPARABLE AND VITAL FOR LIFE



Every year, on the 2nd of February, we celebrate World Wetlands Day (WWD) to raise global awareness about the high importance of wetlands for people and our planet. WWD is also an occasion to commemorate the signing of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands in the Iranian city of Ramsar in 1971.

“Wetlands and water”, the theme for WWD 2021, shines a spotlight on wetlands as a source of freshwater and encourages actions to restore them and stop their loss.

We are facing a growing freshwater crisis that threatens people and our planet. We use more freshwater than nature can replenish, and we are destroying the ecosystem that water and all life depend on most – Wetlands.

The 2021 campaign highlights the contribution of wetlands to the quantity and quality of freshwater on our planet. Water and wetlands are connected in an inseparable co-existence that is vital to life, our wellbeing and the health of our planet.

What wetlands do?

Fresh and saltwater wetlands sustain humanity and nature. They support our social and economic development through multiple services:

1- Store and clean water

- Wetlands hold and provide most of our freshwater.
- They naturally filter pollutants, leaving water we can safely drink.

2- Keep us fed

- Aquaculture is the fastest-growing food production sector, while inland fisheries alone provided 12 million tonnes of fish in 2018.
- Rice paddies feed 3.5 billion people annually.

3- Underpin our global economy

- Wetlands, the most valuable ecosystem, provide services worth US \$47 trillion a year.
- More than one billion people rely on wetlands for income.

4- Provide nature a home

- 40% of the world's species live and breed in wetlands. Annually, about 200 new fish species discovered in freshwater wetlands.
- Coral reefs are home to 25% of all species.

5- Keep us safe

- Wetlands provide protection from floods and storms with each acre of wetland absorbing up to 1.5 million gallons of floodwater.
- Wetlands help regulate the climate: peatlands store twice as much carbon as forests, with salt marshes, mangroves, and sea grass beds also holding vast amounts of carbon.

So what are the solutions to water scarcity?

We could have enough water for nature and us if we:

- Stop destroying, start restoring wetlands.
- Don't dam rivers or over extract from aquifers.
- Address pollution, cleanup freshwater sources.
- Increase water efficiency, use wetlands wisely.
- Integrate water and wetlands into development plans and resource management.

Source: the official website of WWD: <http://www.worldwetlandsday.org/>