

Event note

13th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (COP13)

Wetlands for a Sustainable Urban Future

22-29 October 2018 | Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE)



Special Event: UN Ocean Conference Community of Ocean Action on Mangroves: Progress and Opportunities

22 October 2018, Dubai Festival Arena

The Ramsar Secretary General and the IUCN Director General invited Parties and Delegates to the Ramsar COP13 to a special side event “UN Ocean Conference Community of Ocean Action on Mangroves: Progress and Opportunities”.

The event was held on the 22th October 2018. Ramsar Secretariat and IUCN Director General both serve as focal points for the SDG 14 Communities of Ocean Action – Mangroves. The event was supported by Save our Mangroves Now! a joint mangrove initiative from BMZ, WWF Germany and IUCN.

Opening remarks were made by Ambassador Peter Thomson, UN Secretary General’s Special Envoy for the Ocean, Martha Rojas Urrego, Ramsar Convention Secretary General, , Stewart Maginnis, Global Director - Nature-based Solutions Group(IUCN) . and Elizabeth Marema, Law and Conventions Division UNEP.

Ambassador Thomson highlighted the critical role of mangrove ecosystems for coastal and ocean resilience and described the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands as the heartland to support actions for the Community of Ocean Action on mangroves conservation. He encouraged the submission of new voluntary commitments, and urged countries and other stakeholders to update existing ones.

Government representatives from Australia, Brazil, Fiji and Sweden presented insights from already existing voluntary commitments, including actions on restoration, protection and on blue carbon.

Honduras on behalf of the fourteen countries of the Ramsar Regional Initiative for the Conservation and Wise Use of Mangroves and Coral Reefs (Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, and Venezuela) described this Initiative and intend to submit it as a new voluntary commitment under SDG 14. The main actions of the initiative include the development of policies and regulations to promote the protection and conservation of mangroves and coral reefs and achieve their effective management through integrated management of watersheds and marine/coastal areas.

The Regional Partnership for the Conservation of the Coastal and Marine Zone of West Africa (Cabo Verde, Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Mauritania, Senegal, Sierra Leone) also expressed the goal to submit their work as a voluntary commitment under the UN Ocean Conference Community of Ocean Action on Mangroves. This partnership works on the mobilization of stakeholder awareness and exchange of good practices on the coastal erosion and coastal risk management and the protection of coastal and marine wetlands.

The event underlined the crucial opportunities that the Communities of Ocean Action provides to follow up on the Voluntary Commitments made during the Oceans Conference in June 2017. The event showcased a lot of action and enthusiasm in terms of mangrove conservation, yet the community has and need to offer more. A mid-term assessment on the submitted and updated Voluntary Commitments is due end of this year.



L-R: Elizabeth Mrema, UNEP; Peter Thomson, UN Special Envoy for the Ocean; Martha Rojas Urrego, Ramsar Secretary General; and Stewart Maginnis, Global Director IUCN. Photo by IISD/ENB | Francis Dejon. <http://enb.iisd.org/ramsar/cop13/22oct.html>



Mark Taylor, Australia



Ana Paula Leite Prates, Brazil



Sandeep Singh, Fiji



Michael Löfroth, Sweden



Carolina Montalván, Ramsar Regional Initiative of Mangroves and Coral Reefs



Ahmed Senhoury, Regional Partnership for Marine and Coastal Conservation in West Africa (PRCM)

Photo of Brazil, Fiji, Sweden and PRMC by IISD/ENB | Francis Dejon.

<http://enb.iisd.org/ramsar/cop13/22oct.html>. Photo of Australia and Honduras Ramsar Secretariat



Participants at the Special event: UN Ocean Conference Community of Ocean Action on Mangroves
Photo by Ramsar Secretariat

See more at <http://enb.iisd.org/ramsar/cop13/>

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