

# Side Event

## Harmonious Co-existence of Human and Wetlands- Towards Sustainable Ecosystem Services-Report from WLC17

Recognizing that ecosystem services derived from lakes, including local history and culture, are rare assets of that region, we must take pride in them, and strive to maintain and develop them, as well as maintaining the balance between our use of current ecosystem services, and ensuring the next generations also can fairly and equitably enjoy these services.

## Session Agenda

Date: 26th October, 2018,  
Time: 18:15hrs to 19:30hrs.  
Venue: Room 8, Festival Arena,  
Intercontinental Dubai – Festival City, Dubai, UAE

### Introductory Remarks

18:15 - 18:25 Hrs

Ms. Jane Madgwick

CEO, Wetlands International

Ms. Reiko Nakamura, Secretary General Ramsar Center Japan

### Outcome of World 17- Lake Conference - Ibaraki Kasumigaura Declaration 2018

18:25 - 18:45 Hrs

### For Mainstreaming Lakes and other Lentic Water Systems in the Global Water Agenda

18:45 - 19:10 Hrs

### Questions from the Floor

19:10 - 19:25 Hrs

### Session Summary

19:25 - 19:30 Hrs

Dr. A.K. Pattnaik,

Member SICOM, ILEC Foundation, Japan



CONVENTION ON WETLANDS  
(Ramsar, Iran, 1971)



رامسار اتفاقية الأراضي الرطبة  
Ramsar Convention on Wetlands  
الأراضي الرطبة من أجل مستقبل حضري مستدام  
Wetlands for a Sustainable Urban Future  
دبي - 2018 . COP13 . DUBAI



International Lake Environment  
Committee Foundation (ILEC)



## **Report on the ILEC side event at Ramsar 13<sup>th</sup> Conference of Contracting Parties(COP-13) at Dubai on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2018.**

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Dr. Ajit Kumar Pattnaik

Member Scientific Committee, ILEC Foundation

I participated as a representative of ILEC Foundation at the Ramsar 13th Conference of Contracting Parties(COP-13) held during 21st -29 October 2018 at Festival Arena, Intercontinental Dubai Festival City, Dubai, UAE. The primary objective of my participation was to organize a side event at the COP-13 to disseminate the outcome of the World Lake Conference-17, held at Tsukuba International Congress Center, Ibaraki prefecture during 15 -19th September 2018. The side event was slotted on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2018, and the theme of the side event was "Harmonious Co-existence of Human and Wetlands- Towards Sustainable Ecosystem Services -Report from WLC17".(The side event proposal is attached).



### **About COP-13**

The 13th Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP13) to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands took place at the Festival Arena in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Ministerial Delegations representing 157 countries are met from 21 to 29 October to assess the progress of the Convention, negotiate 26 resolutions and consider emerging issues and priority actions. In total, more than 1,300 people attended the meeting including Contracting Party Delegates, Observers, Observer States and visitors.

During the COP meeting, "The Global Wetland Outlook; State of the World's Wetlands and their Services to People" was released which states that the world's wetlands are declining rapidly, 35 per cent have been lost since 1970; with wetlands disappearing three times faster than forests.

Dr Max Finlayson who happened to be an author of the report stressed the need for immediate action to reverse this trend. The report provides a valuable resource and roadmap for moving forward.

Dr. Thani Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, Minister of Climate Change and Environment at the Opening Ceremony said; "Wetlands have received the attention of our government, and hosting this prestigious event confirms our commitment to conserving our natural environment and protecting our ecosystems from urbanisation and human activities. We cannot risk losing these valuable ecosystems, as it will have an impact on our lives, society and our future. I hope that this conference will open more doors for greater collaboration, understanding and intervention to preserve and save the world's wetlands."

Martha Rojas Urrego, Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention, in her opening remarks said: "We are at a decisive moment here in Dubai. While tonight is an evening of celebration and yet, while we sit here tonight we know that wetlands are being lost at a rate three times that of forests. That since 1970, 35%, one-third of wetlands have disappeared. The Global Wetlands Outlook which is being released here at COP13 is both a distress signal and a wakeup call, that urgent action is needed to reverse this trend. The planning and actions put into motion at COP13 to halt and reverse the loss of our planet's wetlands will have echoing effects on future generations and the sustainability of our planet."

The theme for COP13 "Wetlands for Sustainable Urban Future," intended to highlight the high value of wetlands in cities. In populated areas, wetlands protect human life, offering a natural infrastructure to help buffer against the threat of flooding, which has become increasingly common with extreme weather events. During the COP the Wetland City Accreditation was introduced, and 18 cities were recognised that have taken extraordinary steps to safeguard their urban wetlands.

### **ILEC side event**

The ILEC side event was slotted on October 26th, 2018 during 18:15hrs to 19:30hrs at the venue of the Ramsar COP-13, i.e. Festival Arena, Intercontinental Dubai – Festival City, Dubai, UAE.



For the side event, a customised flyer was prepared by me, and adequate copies were made (copy of flyer attached) and was distributed to the participants of the COP. A0 size poster was also prepared and displayed at the entrance of the room assigned for the side event at the venue to draw the attention of the participants. Adequate hard copies of the WLC-17 declaration was also made and distributed to the participant of the side event. I also carried 100 copies of the printed brochure "For mainstreaming Lakes and other Lentic Water Systems in Global Agenda" by ILEC, which were circulated to the participants of the Ramsar COP-13.

Ms Jane Madgwick, CEO, Wetlands International and Ms Reiko Nakamura, Trustee Member, ILEC Foundation were the panelist of the ILEC side event.

In her opening remarks, Ms Jane Madgwick introduced ILEC and its activities and about the World Lake Conference. She appreciated the initiatives by the ILEC, by way of promotion of the sustainable management of lakes and their basins in collaboration with the global counterparts from the academic, administrative and private sectors engaged in the conservation of lakes.



Jane Madgwick giving opening remarks during the side event

She mentioned that the World Lake Conference is a biannual international conference dedicated to lentic freshwater issues which are being organised by ILEC in collaboration with the host country/ organisation.



She said that the theme of the World Lake Conference 17, “Harmonious Co-existence of Human and Wetlands- Towards Sustainable Ecosystem Services” is contemporary and appropriate.

She further mentioned that the ecosystem services flowing from the lakes and wetlands, quietly get unnoticed by the people and that could be a reason for degradation of a lake as people don't tend to care for it. She appreciated the pre-conference events by ILEC, the colloquium on “Mainstreaming Lakes and Other Lentic Waters in the Global Water Agenda” and the pre-conference Student Conference. She also mentioned the WLC-17 declaration and requested the participants of the side event to go through it.

After the opening remarks by Ms. Jane Madgwick there were three presentations. The first one was on ILEC Foundation and World Lake Conference. Brief introduction to ILEC and its activities were presented to the participants. Followed by which the outcome of the WLC-17, i.e. “Harmonious Co-existence of Human and Wetlands- Towards Sustainable Ecosystem Services” was introduced to the participants. The salient portion of the WLC-17 declaration was also highlighted.



Ms. Reiko Nakamura making her presentation during ILEC

The second presentation was on the “Student Conference” which was held again on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2018 just before the WLC-17. This presentation was made by Ms Reiko Nakamura, Secretary General Ramsar Center Japan who is also a Trustee member of ILEC.

She mentioned that the student conference during WLC-17 was a significant event. It would go a long way in mainstreaming the youth in conservation and wise use of lakes and their basins. In her presentation, she mentioned that 800 students from 70 schools participated in the conference and made presentations of their activities. She also said that most distinct outcome of the student conference was the statement made by the students during the opening ceremony of WLC-17 on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2018. She urged that students and youth should be encouraged to participate in such events.

This was followed by the third presentation on the colloquium on "Mainstreaming Lakes and Other Lentic Waters in the Global Water Agenda" organised on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2018 pre-WLC-17. I made this presentation.



I explained to the participants how the lakes and other lentic water are degrading globally even though they hold 90% fresh water in liquid form on the surface of the earth. I also mentioned that in spite of its immense importance, Lake does not find a place in the Global water agenda. I further explained to the participants about the Integrated Lake Basin Management(ILBM) and how this could help in the integration of the Lentic-Lotic water as they are intricately connected citing some examples.

This was followed by floor participation. The WLC-17 declaration was deliberated, and the participants of the side event actively participated in the discussion. Most of the participants were not aware of ILEC and its activities. So, most of the questions were on ILEC and its activities and the ILBM Platform. The participants also wanted to know about the JICA training programme and the ILBM platform. Some of them even showed their keen interest to participate in the next World Lake Conference.

The side event was well received by the participants of the COP-13. More than 45 participated in the side event from different parts of the globe. It was good strategy to organise the ILEC side event during the COP-13 to disseminate the outcome of the WLC-17 and about ILEC and its activities.

The focal points from Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Bhutan who were present during the side event suggested that ILEC should formally engage with Ramsar. In their opinion since the mission of ILEC is in many ways similar to that of Ramsar, so it would be more appropriate for ILEC to be connected to Ramsar.

During the SICOM meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2018, this was also discussed. It emerged during the discussion at SICOM that ILEC could be an observer to the Ramsar STRP (Scientific & Technical Review Panel). The Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) of Ramsar provide scientific and technical guidance to the Conference of the Parties, the Standing Committee, and the Ramsar Secretariat. In my opinion, this could be a good initiative as both the entities could be complementary to each other. If ILEC decide to initiate the process then Dr. Max Finlayson who is well versed with the Ramsar procedures can provide necessary guidance.