



Welcome to WWT

Pioneering, respected and bold, WWT is an ambitious wetland conservation charity with over 80 years of experience. From our UK wetland sites, engaging over 1 million visitors a year, to the sustainable management of wetlands in Madagascar, we are recognised as an organisation that balances sound science and evidence with broad conservation action on the ground. With strong UK and international partnerships and connections we offer an inspiring and diverse working environment, based in the very heart of one of the UK's premier wetland reserves at Slimbridge in Gloucestershire.

Our Foundation

Founded by the world famous conservationist Sir Peter Scott in 1946, WWT has a long history of pioneering conservation delivery. Some of WWT's past achievements include:

- Pioneering planning and action for the recovery of some of the worlds most threatened wetland birds including the Hawaiian goose, Madagascan pochard and spoon-billed sandpiper.
- Development of techniques and implementation of large-scale and long term monitoring programmes for wetland birds, including pioneering national volunteer-led surveying.
- The development and conservation management of over 5,000 hectares of wetlands in the UK of national or international importance, from a diverse urban wetland in the very heart of London to one of the largest wetland creation projects in the UK at Steart Marshes.
- Provision of sound science and a strong evidence to underpin conservation action, understanding a broad spectrum of threats to wetland species and habitats from lead poisoning and disease to climate change.
- Highly effective international community-led wetland projects in Madagascar and Cambodia.
- Hitting above our weight in influencing international wetland policy in the UK and internationally as an International Organisation Partner (IOP) of Ramsar and specialist input to other Partnerships and multilateral environmental agreements.
- Development of Wetland Link International, a global community of wetland centres and engagers to promote the value of wetlands.

Our Future Vision

WWT's vision for wetlands is

“A world where healthy wetland nature thrives and enriches lives”

WWT recognises that to achieve this vision we now need a step change in how wetlands are understood and valued. The vision emphasises that the scope is global and that healthy wetlands are critical not only to wetland wildlife but to all our lives.



Our six ambitious goals for wetlands over the next 25 years are:

1. The UK's wetlands and their wildlife are thriving and increasing.
2. Everyone in the UK can access wetlands that provide amazing experiences and inspire support for their conservation.
3. Wetlands in the UK are recognised as part of our natural infrastructure, providing space for wildlife and people and vital services to us all.
4. Decision makers globally understand the threats to wetland nature and are taking ambitious action to remove them.
5. Wetlands are managed in a way that benefits wetland nature and enhances people's lives across the world.
6. Risks are decreasing for all wetland nature and no species have gone extinct.

The role that WWT can play in achieving these goals has also changed. We focus on where we will be most effective in today's world and what we are uniquely capable of achieving. But we also recognise the need to think flexibly and retain the ability to seize important opportunities as they arise.

WWT's direction of travel to these goals is embedded in its 5 year strategy (2017-2022).

Our Strategy

Divided between five main aims our Strategy emphasises the broader nature of our conservation outcomes.

Aim 1: Create, restore and manage larger, more connected and more healthy wetlands in the UK.

WWT has a long history of creating, restoring and managing some of the UK's most important wetlands. However, many wetlands are isolated pockets in an otherwise poor landscape for wildlife. Even these precious remnants can be unhealthy due to pollution or drainage.

While the resources to develop and connect wetlands in the UK for biodiversity targets alone are difficult, they also provide a natural wealth of services to people and this is the key to their future. The Strategy emphasises the importance of demonstrating, communicating and influencing key decision makers on how wetlands also work hard for people as well as wildlife.

We will take every opportunity to improve and extend our own wetland sites and develop pioneering techniques to restore populations of individual species back to wetlands where they have been lost or failed to colonise.

Aim 2: Move and inspire people engaging with our wetlands to support wetland conservation.

Connecting people to wetlands and wetland nature has always been a major role for WWT and over one million people visit our wetlands annually. Through experiencing wetlands up close, the activities they can do, and how we engage with them, we aim for all our visitors to



have an amazing wetland experience. Through this positive engagement we believe visitors can be inspired to become wetland supporters and protectors.

Aim 3: Connect people with wetlands where they live and work in the UK.

In addition to seeking inspiration from our wetlands, there are opportunities for all of us to connect and engage with wetlands where people live and work. From ponds and mini-wetlands in our own gardens, wetlands in our local community, to stream and river corridors through our towns and cities; there are opportunities to create new wetlands that provide homes for wildlife while providing vital services such as preventing local flooding, cleaning up water and providing important green (and “blue”) spaces for people.

Working with partners, we will continue to develop community-led projects in UK cities. We will work with developers, stakeholders and decision makers to make it easier for wildlife-rich wetlands to be part of new developments and provide advice to communities or individuals to help them adopt and manage their local wetlands and to protect them from inappropriate development.

We will investigate the health and wellbeing benefits of having access specifically to wetlands, and explore how these benefits can be maximised. We will demonstrate how decision-makers can put these ideas into practice, through the creation and restoration of healthy wetlands with public access.

Aim 4: Offer and promote solutions to conserve the world’s most threatened wetland hotspots and improve the livelihoods of their people.

Wetlands support a very large share of global biodiversity. Wetlands in the tropics are the most species-rich, but in many developing countries they are being degraded and destroyed at an alarming rate. Many of these wetlands support the livelihoods of some of the world’s poorest people. If they are degraded it is often the poor that are affected most. Conserving wetland nature depends upon working with these communities, and with other partners, to create ways of improving lives without further loss of wetlands.

We will continue to develop our long term- community led wetland projects in Madagascar and Cambodia and look for opportunities in other threatened wetland global hotspots, including Myanmar.

We will develop our links in hotspots where we are working to influence wider regional or national wetland policies to or to help develop best practice.

We will focus our efforts on influencing international wetland policy through our IOP status with Ramsar, wetland link international and the world wetland network.

Aim 5: Strengthen wetland conservation on priority global flyways.

Migratory flyway populations are always subject to risk because they depend on multiple wetlands across numerous international boundaries. The flyways across East Asia and Australasia and across North West Europe take birds over some of the most developed regions in the world. Wetlands are being lost and degraded and managed unsustainably across these flyways. By focusing on threats to migratory populations along these priority flyways we can help protect the wetlands on which they depend.



We will continue to strengthen our impact on wetland conservation in the East Asian Australasian flyway, using partnership work on threatened species such as spoon billed sandpiper and Baer's pochard, and on developing monitoring techniques, as gateways to develop wider influence on flyway wetland protection and management.

We will continue to strengthen waterbird conservation on the north-west European flyway, assessing and focussing our work on threats and action where it will have the greatest impact.

We will more effectively use the developing network of wetland centres along global flyways as an effective voice for international wetland conservation efforts.

The Role

The role of Director of Conservation will be key in delivering the Conservation Directorate-led programmes within the five year Strategy and in helping to shape and balance the future direction of WWT as a whole.

Key to success will be:

- Focussing our conservation efforts, within the framework of our Strategy, where they will be most effective
- Leading and organising a highly skilled multi-disciplinary team in delivery of the Strategy
- Providing skilled support to and working effectively in partnership with all other WWT teams, including political advocacy, marketing and communications, fundraising and site operations
- Developing national and international partnerships and connections to help support our work and Vision.



WWT IN NUMBERS

48

Dedicated staff and volunteers in the HQ Conservation Directorate, driving forward our wider conservation work

22

National and international conservation partners working with WWT over the last five years

1700

WWT staff, casual workers and volunteers working together across our wetland sites and HQ teams

3,000

Hectares of nationally or internationally important wetland habitats managed by WWT

£22 million

WWT's annual turnover across its site management and wider conservation programmes.

£2.3 million

Annual investment in WWT's Conservation Directorate and the projects it is leading

200,000

Members supporting the conservation work of WWT

1,000,000

Visitors to our wetland sites every year, connecting to wetlands

490

Hectares of new wetlands created at Steart – one of the largest wetland creation projects in the UK