



Supported by:



on the basis of a decision  
by the German Bundestag



# WET HORIZONS

# Joint Launch of European Wetland Map on World Wetlands Day 2025

Joint Press Release-English

January, 2025



Funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or CINEA. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

# Joint Launch of European Wetland Map on World Wetlands Day 2025

## Joint press release

On time for the World Wetlands Day, the European Wetland Map ('EWM') is launched. This map significantly enhances the state-of-knowledge on wetlands across Europe by locating, assessing and merging the latest geospatial data. It combines various data from Geographic Information Systems (GIS) on wetland types and their distribution on mineral soil in coastal environments and floodplains, as well as for a large variety of peatlands in one most comprehensive, easily accessible resource.

*"Over a period of two years, we collected, checked and merged more than 200 geodata sets on wetlands and especially peatlands from various sources. Now we are happy about this standardized dataset that makes widespread European wetlands visible and enhances their analysis, understanding and management", says Dr Cosima Tegetmeyer of the Greifswald Mire Centre, one of the map's developers.*

Users can freely download the European Wetland Map for their own analyses. Politicians can find out where current land use and infrastructure might be at increasing risk by flooding in times of climate change and adjust decisions accordingly. Land users and landowners can recognize where their land overlaps with peatlands and wetlands – even if wetland features are no longer visible due to drainage, as in many of Europe's former extensive floodplains and peatlands.

*"The released European Wetland Map represents a significant step forward, for example in assessing climate mitigation and biodiversity policies for the European Commission. It allows more effective modelling of scenarios related to climate mitigation and nature restoration policies, thus aiding policymakers in coming to more informed, science-based decisions.", says Dr. Juraj Balkovic, research scholar at the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA).*

A vector dataset on the geographical distribution of the wetlands considered is available on a country basis in an ArcGIS geodatabase as well as a country-specific high resolution Geo-TIFF collection (grid size: 1 arcsecond).

**Background: The World Wetlands Day (WWD)** (Link: [www.worldwetlandsday.org](http://www.worldwetlandsday.org))

This day has been drawing attention to the importance of wetlands, including peatlands, on February 2nd every year since 1997. The Ramsar Convention, the international agreement for the protection of wetlands, was adopted on February 2nd in 1971.

Since 2021 the WWD has been recognized as an international day by the United Nations. Therefore, their restoration and protection is important.

Due to pollution, drainage and agriculture, fires and overfishing, wetlands, which include peatlands, are under threat worldwide or have already been destroyed. Yet they are guarantors of biodiversity and climate protection.

Among other things, wetlands offer people protection from drought and flooding, purify water and regulate the microclimate. In Germany for example, 95 % of former wetlands have been drained and are no longer recognizable as such today.



## ALFAwetlands and WET HORIZONS:

The **European Wetland Map** has been developed as part of the research and innovation projects “**ALFAwetlands – Wetland Restoration for the Future**” and “**WET HORIZONS**”, both funded by the **Horizon Europe Framework Program** of the European Union.

*“Enhancing wetland mapping was one of the key goals of our project, and I am proud to see this achievement realized while also showcasing the successful collaboration between two EU-funded projects”* says **Dr Liisa Ukonmaanaho**, project coordinator of ALFAwetlands, Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke).

Additionally, its preparation was supported by the project “**Building the European Peatland Initiative: A Strong Alliance for Peatland Climate Protection in Europe**” (Grant Agreement No. 81290291), funded by the **European Climate Initiative (EUKI)** under the **German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK)**.

The **Michael Succow Foundation** together with the **University of Greifswald**, both partner in the **Greifswald Mire Centre**, played a key role in the development of the map.

### Additional information:

World Wetlands Day: [www.worldwetlandsday.org](http://www.worldwetlandsday.org)

European Wetland Map: Tegetmeyer, C., & Kaiser, M., Barthelmes, A. (2024). The European Wetland Map ('EWM') [Data set]. Zenodo. <https://zenodo.org/records/14745285>

### More about collaborating projects:

[ALFAwetlands - wetlands restoration for the future project](#)

[LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [X](#), [YouTube](#)

[WET HORIZONS project](#)

[LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), [X](#), [Bluesky](#)

[EUKI Building a European Peatlands Alliance](#)

[Greifswald Mire Centre](#)

[Greifswald Moor Centrum \(@greifswaldmoor\)](#) • [Instagram-Fotos und -Videos](#)

[Greifswald Moor Centrum | Greifswald | Facebook](#)

### Pictures and material:

You might use EWM attached picture free of charge in context of reporting on the subject at WWD 2025, when giving these credentials. European Wetlands Map 2025 ©Greifswald Mire Centre

### Hashtags:

#WorldWetlandsDay #TagderFeuchtgebiete #WWD2024 #WetlandsandPeople #ActforWetlands #Moormussnass, #WetlandsinEurope, #WetlandMapforEurope #RestorationForFuture



Funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or CINEA. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.