

UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO

# WORLD WETLANDS DAY

February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2017

- Symposium
- Poster Session
- Public Lecture



William G. Davis Centre

[www.uwaterloo.ca/wwd](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/wwd)



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# Welcome to the World Wetlands Day 2017

## Research Symposium & Poster Session!

Since 2013, Philippe Van Cappellen's Ecohydrology Research Group has hosted a celebration of World Wetlands Day at the University of Waterloo. The University of Waterloo WWD event is one of many worldwide events hosted today in celebration of wetlands and their protection under the Ramsar Convention. Signed by 169 countries, the Ramsar Convention is one of the most successful and long-lasting global environmental treaties ever ratified, protecting more than 215 million hectares of 2,247 designated wetlands worldwide. Canada joined the convention on May 15, 1981 and currently has 37 wetlands designated as Ramsar Sites with a total surface area of 13 million hectares.

### Public Lecture (DC 1351):

#### *From the age of carbon to the age of water - the role of wetlands*

We are currently living in the age of carbon. Yes, carbon provides the infrastructure of living creatures and the building blocks of life. Our problem is that our economies are currently designed around carbon, from the fossil fuels that power transport and agriculture, to the ubiquitous plastics and chemicals, many of which are also derived from oil. We are now starting to see the consequences of carbon emissions, leading to climate change. In 2015, at the climate change summit in Paris, almost all countries agreed to take steps to decarbonise their economies and reduce emissions.

On the other hand, water is the sustaining flow that supports life. But our understanding of the vital role of water is still in its infancy and the agreements, laws and policies governing water are equally weak. We need to realise that at the same time as carbon emissions are warming the planet, the global water cycle and local water cycles are changing and speeding up. The land masses are losing water and wetlands are being lost and degraded, while atmospheric moisture and sea levels are rising. We need to be much more aware of where the water is currently located and stored, where it is moving to, and where it needs to be.

We need to safeguard the water that sustains our economies, in terms of drinking water supply, irrigation for agriculture, water for industrial processes and energy generation. We also need to safeguard the water that sustains nature, its glorious biodiversity, and its complex functions and processes, which are essential for life on this planet. Wetlands provide the vital link, wherever the water meets the land. In many places, wetlands are at risk either from human decisions or from climate change. Water-related disasters, such as droughts, floods, and coastal storm surges, are becoming increasingly frequent and severe. However, I will show examples of how wetlands can help to reduce disaster risks. More research will help us understand all the multiple services that wetlands provide, and a better understanding of global and local water cycles will lead to better water management. It's time to move away from the age of carbon, towards the age of water.

# World Wetlands Day 2017 Program

12:30	<i>Registration Opens in DC 1301</i>
1:00 – 1:15	<b>Opening and Welcoming Remarks</b> <b>Ania Grobicki</b> , Ramsar Secretariat
<b>Session 1</b>	
1:15 – 1:45	<b>Jan Cibrowski</b> , University of Windsor <i>Developing Great Lakes wetland bioindicators of environmental condition and recovery from degradation with reference to watershed based risk of stress</i>
1:45 – 2:15	<b>Owen Steele</b> , Ducks Unlimited Canada <i>Wetlands and flood attenuation in Ontario: natural adaptation to a changing climate</i>
2:15 – 2:30	<b>Colin McCarter</b> , University of Waterloo <i>Domestic wastewater (nutrients) transport in peatlands and peat</i>
2:30 – 3:00	<b>Maria Strack</b> , University of Waterloo <i>Land-use change induced greenhouse gas emissions from northern peatlands: impacts of oil sands extraction and mitigation opportunities</i>
3:00 – 3:15	<i>Coffee Break served in DC 1301</i>
<b>Session 2</b>	
3:15 – 3:45	<b>Gail Chmura</b> , McGill University <i>Blue carbon consideration can stimulate restoration of marine wetlands and mitigate climate change</i>
3:45 – 4:15	<b>Jennifer Bowman</b> , Royal Botanical Gardens Habitat changes in Cootes Paradise Marsh following 20 years of carp management
4:15 – 4:30	<b>Christine Ridenour</b> , University of Waterloo <i>Internal phosphorus and silicon loading in a degraded coastal wetland (Cootes Paradise Marsh, Lake Ontario): Insights from a sediment core incubation experiment</i>
4:30 – 4:45	<b>Frederick Cheng</b> , University of Waterloo <i>Size matters: Small wetlands as biogeochemical hotspots in landscape nutrient cycles</i>
4:45 – 5:15	<b>Rick Fehr</b> , Nipissing University and Western University <i>When wetlands were supposedly settled and redeemed from their evil state: Reconsidering Indigenous and settler histories in Southwestern Ontario</i>
5:15 – 6:45	<i>Reception and Poster Session (DC 1301)</i>
<b>Public Lecture (DC 1351)</b>	
7:00 – 8:00	<b>Ania Grobicki</b> , Ramsar Secretariat <i>From the age of carbon to the age of water – the role of wetlands</i>

## Public Lecture Speaker Bio

Dr. Ania Grobicki has degrees in Chemical Engineering from the University of Cape Town and in Economics from the University of South Africa, together with a PhD in Biotechnology from Imperial College, London. While in South Africa she led projects on the restoration of urban wetlands and urban catchment management, in and around Cape Town. Her experience and knowledge of water issues includes work on the water needs of cities, industry, agriculture and energy, as well as policy development and practice related to water supply and reuse; water quality; water and health; effluent treatment technologies; and river basin management. Ania led the CGIAR Challenge Programme on Water and Food as its first Co-ordinator, based at the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) in Sri Lanka. Thereafter she was based at WHO in Switzerland as Head of Secretariat for a multi-stakeholder forum on strengthening research for health, focusing upon developing the research-policy interface. As Executive Secretary of the Global Water Partnership (2009-2015) she managed the world-wide multi-stakeholder network and its global secretariat, based in Sweden. At GWP, Ania developed action programmes on water and climate change adaptation, integrated drought management, and integrated urban water management. She has been deeply involved in the stakeholder consultations and negotiations in the run-up to establishing the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals, and in particular the global water goal. From 9 March 2015 Ania took up the position of Deputy Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, advising on global policy, developmental, technical and scientific issues related to the implementation of the Convention. Dr. Ania Grobicki fulfilled the role of Acting Secretary General ad interim from 26 November 2015 to 22 August 2016.

### UW World Wetlands Day 2017 Organizing Committee

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