



International Youth Forum on Wetlands

**23 - 24 April 2018
Akonolinga, Cameroun**

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Theme :

Involving young people in the sustainable management
of wetlands is an absolute necessity

I - Introduction/context

The wider environment is nowadays at the centre of many concerns. Indeed, many naturally abundant resources are used and managed in an unsustainable way, which risks leaving future generations with no access to these resources. Wetlands are one of the ecosystems that provide many resources essential for humanity (and are amongst the most diverse and productive), and are the key focus for the Ramsar Convention and its principle of "conservation and wise use through local, regional and national actions, through international cooperation, as a contribution to the achievement of sustainable development worldwide". Although wetlands are considered as the backbone of nature, they are part of the overall ecosystem that have proved their importance for both local populations and the international community. However, they continue to suffer enormous human pressures that are fatal for their future.

Faced with this growing crisis, the global community should be organized through various stakeholders including young people to find appropriate solutions. Thus this approach is meant to be participatory for the awareness of young people, future decision-makers. Unfortunately, in Africa and in the wider world there is no real mobilization of young people on the issue of wetlands. Recognising the mission of the Ramsar Convention and in order to help its success, it is from this perspective that the NGO Volunteer for the Environment is organizing a pan-African youth forum on these ecosystems. This forum will be held from 23 to 24 April 2018 in Akonolinga (Cameroon) in order to promote an exchange of information and to create a number of resolutions and recommendations likely to ensure better involvement of young people on the issue of wetlands. This forum will also serve as the completion of programme of the International Youth Program on Wetlands (IPYW) and the delivery of internship certificates launched by the NGO Volunteer for the Environment "VPE" since November 2017 and which lasts 6 months.

II – Main objective: Promoting better wetland management through youth involvement.

III – Specific objectives :

- Recruit a good number of young Africans that are aware of the wise use / management of wetlands
- Create an international partnership network between young people on the issues regarding wetlands.
- Reinforce the capacity of young people on the management of the network and on the tools required for sustainable management of wetlands.
- Develop a strategic plan for the period 2018-20 within the framework of a better involvement of young people in the management of wetlands

IV – Expected results

- A good number of young pan-African partners are mobilised and aware of the question of sustainable wetland management.
- The role of young people in wetlands is recognised and valued
- A partnership network of young people is created and launched
- Young people have their capacity built in order to manage the network and are provided with tools for sustainable wetland management.
- A strategic plan for 2018-20 is produced for the better integration of young Africans in the management of wetlands

V – Host country : Cameroon

VI - Town: Akonolinga

VII – Target groups:

- Experts in wetlands and networking
- Development partners and support organisations (funders)

- Decentralised regional associations
- Young Africans from 18 to 35 years old working in environmental fields which share the belief in sustainable management and wise-use of wetlands.

VIII – Participants: 40 in total:

20 international youth

10 young Cameroonians

04 regional associations

06 Experts (Communicators / Facilitators)

Programme of activities

Sunday the 22nd April 2018

Arrival and welcome of international participants

Monday 23rd April 2018

08.00: Arrival and registration of participants

09.00: Arrival of authorities

09.30: Opening ceremony

- * Welcome from the Mayor of Akonolinga
- * Speech of the director of Volontariat Pour l'Environnement (VPE)
- * Speech from the president of the organising committee
- * Speech from the Coordinator of the Cameroonian Network for the Conservation of Mangroves and Wetland Ecosystems (RCM)

- * Opening speech by the Governor of Mefou and Afamba

10h 30 : Coffee break

11h 00 : Continuation of the communications workshop

- 1) Protection of wetlands: limitation or necessity?
- 2) Stakeholders and sustainable management of wetlands
- 3) Urbanism and wetlands
- 4) Wetlands and climate change
- 5) Management of an international network of young Africans : the wetland example
- 6) Funding the international programme for youth and wetlands
« IPYW »

13h 30 : Lunch break

14h 30 : Back to work

- * Amendment and adoption of the internal statutes and rules
- * Coffee break
- * Amendment and adoption of the strategic plan for the network (2018 – 2020)

24 April 2018

08h 00 : Next steps

- * Coffee break
- * Field trip

12h 00 : Lunch

* Election du bureau de séance / Choosing the meeting room ?!

- * Create the structure and members
- * 1st meeting of the steering group
- * Closing ceremony.

18h 00 : Special wetland party

- * Presentation of certificates to the 10 young interns of the International Youth Program on Wetlands.
 - * Cocktail
 - * Culture music event
- End