The frequency of disasters worldwide has more than doubled in just 35 years. Disasters are a major setback to development, resulting in loss of lives, livelihoods, critical assets and disruption of services.

In celebration of World Wetlands Day 2017, this Roundtable Discussion will feature the role of wetlands in protecting people and enhancing their resilience to disasters. It will focus on how wetlands can be optimized to reduce the risk of floods, droughts and storm surges in rural and urban areas. Drawing from practical examples, the Roundtable will discuss how sustainable wetlands management can contribute towards more resilient development.

The Roundtable will represent different perspectives, including speakers from Governments, civil society, humanitarian and development agencies. It will be conducted as an interactive, free-flowing dialogue between speakers as well as with the public audience.

Outcomes of the discussion are expected to reflect on the following:

- Challenges and solutions in harnessing wetlands for disaster risk reduction;
- Opportunities for increasing/scaling-up investments in wetland management solutions for disaster risk reduction (including in post-disaster recovery and reconstruction).

The outcomes of the Roundtable will be shared as a contribution to the 2017 Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction, which will be held on 22-26 May in Cancun, Mexico.

SPEAKERS

Ms. Maria Teresa Almojuela
Charge d’Affaires, Permanent Mission of the Philippines to the United Nations, Geneva

Ms. Inger Andersen
Director General, International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

Dr. Garry Conille
Under Secretary General of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)

Dr. Robert Glasser
Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR)

Ms. Jane Madgwick
Chief Executive Officer, Wetlands International (WI), Chair of the Roundtable

Mr. Naohisa Okuda
Director, Biodiversity Policy Division, Nature Conservation Bureau, Ministry of the Environment Government of Japan (MOEJ)

Ms. Martha Rojas-Urrego
Secretary General, Ramsar Convention On Wetlands

2 February 2017
11:00 – 12:40 hrs
followed by light refreshments

VENUE:
Centre International de Conférences Genève (CICG)
17 Rue de Varembé
CH - 1211 Genève 20