

Greenstorm Unveils Winning Images Celebrating Beautiful Wetlands

Category: Business

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The winners of the 16th Greenstorm Global Photography Festival were announced today at a virtual ceremony that brought together leading environmental voices, visual storytellers and an international audience.



The Grand Prize-winning photograph by Mr. Steven Triet from Vietnam revealing the golden rice terraces of Lao Chai, Mu Cang Chai

Themed '**Beautiful Wetlands**', the festival, which is now in its 16th year, attracted 11,835 entries from 155 countries. The Grand Prize of USD \$10,000 was awarded to Steven Triet from Vietnam. Hanifi Ko (Turkey), Aref Tahmasebi (UAE) and Pepe Manzanilla (Costa Rica) received Special Jury Mentions, each carrying a prize of USD \$1,000.

Dr Muralee Thummarukudy, Director of the (G20 GLI) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) announced the Festival's winners.

G20 Global Land Initiative sponsored the festival for the second year running. It is using photography to both shine a light on the loss of terrestrial ecosystems and inspire actions all over the world to keep wetlands healthy in a bid to reach its ambition of reducing degraded land by 50 percent by 2040.

Dr Musonda Mumba, Secretary General of the Convention on Wetlands, and Chief Guest at the event, said, *“Wetlands are our planet’s natural infrastructure. They store carbon, clean water, protect us from floods and droughts, and sustain life in all its forms. But they are being degraded and destroyed faster than any other ecosystem.”*

“The Global Wetland Outlook 2025 shows the consequences of this loss and the solutions already working around the world. COP15 in Victoria Falls next week is our moment to change course-through global commitment, national action and local innovation,” Dr Musonda Mumba added while speaking at the ceremony.

According to the 2025 Global Wetland Outlook, released last week, wetlands are disappearing at a faster rate than any other ecosystem. About one-fifth of the world’s remaining wetlands are expected to vanish by 2050 without urgent action. The loss is valued at USD 39 trillion in benefits that support people, economies, and nature.

Some of the winning photos will be on display from 23-30 July 2025 at the 15th meeting of the Contracting Parties of the Convention on Wetlands taking place at Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.

Nature conservation through an artistic lens

The winning pictures, from the lush paddy fields in Vietnam to flamingoes in a lagoon in Tunisia, offer a breathtaking glimpse into the beauty and ecological diversity of the world’s wetlands.

From serene water bodies reflecting vibrant skies to the quiet resilience of marshland life, each photograph tells a story of balance, survival and the urgent need for conservation.

The winners were selected through a two-tier jury process. The first-level jury included Alex Wides (Italy), Anilkumar

(India), Dilek Yurdakul (Turkey), Jaclyn Bringuez (USA), Sahar Al-Zarei (UAE) and Thomas Onyango (Uganda).

The Global Jury curated the finalists and selected the winners. Renowned photographers Charlie Waite (UK), Latika Nath (India), and Nick Hall (USA) made up the Jury.

They observed that this year's entries covered a remarkable spread of subjects and pushed the boundaries, offering a clever, unusual and deeply human way of seeing wetlands.

They stressed that in a world increasingly shaped by artificial images, photographs grounded in nature give us hope and reconnect us. What's more, they remind us that even while we're caught up in our routines, nature is still out there, shapeshifting under sun, wind and tide.

"For 16 years, the Greenstorm Festival has harnessed the power of visual storytelling to ignite a passion for nature conservation among young people worldwide. These evocative images not only showcase nature's beauty but drive meaningful behaviour change, inspiring the next generation to protect and restore our planet's vital ecosystems," said Mr Dileep Narayanan, Founder and Managing Trustee of Greenstorm Foundation.

Narayanan started the festival 16 years ago to raise awareness about the earth's fragile ecosystems. Greenstorm Foundation runs the annual global photography festival, and is based in Kochi, India.

About Greenstorm Foundation

Greenstorm Foundation is a global creative conservancy committed to inspiring an attitudinal shift among youth toward environmental conservation through the power of creativity. Its flagship initiative, the Greenstorm Photo Festival, has engaged over 12 million young minds across more than 150 countries.

Founded in 2009 in Kerala, India, as a CSR initiative of Organic BPS, a purpose-driven brand consultancy, the Greenstorm has grown into one of the world's largest youth-led environmental photography movements.

In 2023, Greenstorm joined hands with the G20 Global Land Initiative of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), further amplifying its global impact. A registered not-for-profit public trust in India, the Foundation is led by trustees Anil K Menon, Dileep Narayanan, and George Korah. Over the years, Greenstorm has earned numerous national and international accolades, including the prestigious IAA Olive Crown Award for excellence in green communication.

About UNCCD-G20 Global Land Initiative

The Initiative was set up by G20 Countries in 2020, during the Saudi Arabia Presidency. It supports member and non-member countries and organizations to avoid, reduce and reverse land degradation globally, in all ecosystems. The G20's ambition is to reduce degraded land globally by 50 per cent by 2040. This includes supporting the international community to achieve its global commitments of restoring, by 2030, one billion hectares of degraded land, an area about the size of the United States.

