

Peatlands & COP26 - International Coverage:

- The Washington Post: *Serious about climate change? Get serious about peat.* <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2021/11/10/cop26-peat-carbon/>
- CBS News: *Saving soggy peat bogs becomes a weapon in the fight against global warming* <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/cop26-summit-climate-change-carbon-dioxide-peat-bogs-global-warming/>
- Bloomberg Law: *Biden Climate Plan to Save Forests Pivots on Swamps, Wetland* <https://news.bloomberglaw.com/environment-and-energy/biden-climate-plan-to-saveforests-pivots-on-swamps-wetlands>
- The Globe and Mail: *What lies beneath: Exploring Canada's invisible carbon storehouse* <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-what-lies-beneath-exploring-canadas-invisible-carbon-storehouse/>

Quote highlights:

- *"Meanwhile, at the Peatland Pavilion attendees were invited to work out their "bog age" - spanning from the Neolithic to the present day. As those who have spent two weeks at Cop26 - with the end not yet in sight - might feel some affinity with bog creatures this may prove a handy chart for many"* - featured in 63 regional articles titled **'New texts and more protests – what has happened on the 'last' day of Cop26'**
- *"Visiting the Peatland Pavilion at Cop26 on Tuesday, Mr Poots said peatland restoration will "play a key role in our plans to reduce carbon emissions" as envisioned through his draft green growth strategy."* – featured in 10 regional articles titled **'Stormont minister brands competing climate change bills 'embarrassing'**
- *"Peat's role in capturing carbon is so important that Cop26 delegates in Glasgow will be able to step inside a giant "peatland pavilion" to learn about it."* – **The Daily Record** (<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/scots-rocket-site-approved-government-25397868>)
- *"This is an opportunity to shine a light on the hard work, commitment and dedication of those who are bringing the world's first carbon neutral spaceport to life whilst ensuring peat restoration is considered at each stage."* (<https://www.thenational.scot/news/19702887.cop26-crofter-space-hub-figure-talk-peat-event/>)

Spokespeople for the Peatland Pavilion included:

- Stuart Brooks (National Trust):

"Stuart Brooks, of Scottish Heritage, will be trying to convince others at the Glasgow climate change conference just how important peat bog preservation is.

"We find peatlands, wetlands and swamps all over the planet — about 180 countries," he told CBS News. "In North America and South America, and in the tropics, in Southeast Asia and here in Northern Europe as well." <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/cop26-summit-climate-change-carbon-dioxide-peat-bogs-global-warming/>

- Richard Lindsay (University of East London):

“*The first thing you have to do in a leaky spaceship is plug the hole,*” said Richard Lindsay, a specialist in peatland ecosystems at the University of East London.
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2021/11/10/cop26-peat-carbon/>

+ Gardens Illustrated piece

HORTICULTURAL WHO'S WHO

RICHARD LINDSAY

The internationally renowned peat expert on his accidental career in conservation, the 1970s punk scene and the need for a long-term mindset in the pursuit of environmental sustainability

WORDS: JODIE JONES. PHOTO: CHARLE HOPKINSON

When he was five years old, Richard Lindsay mucked around with his father, his mother mucked with the garden, mixing under a compostator both, and observing the workings of a household.

As a child, the renowned peat expert was more interested in their plants as a conservationist. He once had an egg under his bed, he asked in Liverpool the Conservator called him "Norman" and his biology master one day on a project research programme that was to shape his life. "He took a trip to the Shetland Islands, which I thought was in the Antarctic and seemed pretty interesting." In fact, Richard was sent to Orkney, a post-war island near 100 miles north of mainland Scotland.

"That trip really ignited my interest. I helped out for the islanders' fires and did the usual of burning peat to intermeddled coals."

He went on to study biological sciences at the University of East Anglia, specialising in ecology and conservation, and graduated in 1975. "I went back to Liverpool in search of canal work and a job where the employment exchange suggested I become a conservation ranger. Nothing of my study here what it involved. I was part of a group sent to the Lake District National Park to learn dry-stone walling, forestry and the like, but when the rangers noticed I had a degree in conservation they set me to work on the Nature Conservancy Council."

The remit of this government agency was to designate and manage national nature reserves and Richard was dispatched to survey the Duddon Valley. It was his first detailed study of a peatland and it proved to be an extraordinarily rich example. "It was tremendous, in fact it is now classified as a Special Area of Conservation - and named the attention of the National Heritage Act, somewhat to his surprise, which meant he had to be in a landscape other than the common people who congregated on the King's Road in Chelsea. "I'd always been a punk, but I don't think I can say I was a punk rock band. I also spent my time working on remote Scottish post bags. I had a job in the forest and, alternating between these two worlds made for a great mix."

These all Richard was stimulated by the rapid rate of peatland destruction. Draining peat bogs for agricultural use began with the 18th-century Agricultural Revolution but accelerated after the Second World War, when food production became an overriding priority and reached its peak in the early 1980s with the Forestry Grant Scheme of tax breaks for rearing planting trees on deep land. "The cheapest land was drained peat bogs, and they were cleared at an alarming rate to make way for forestry plantings. But conservation didn't even exist. It doesn't exist until about 1980, the tide had to be turned."

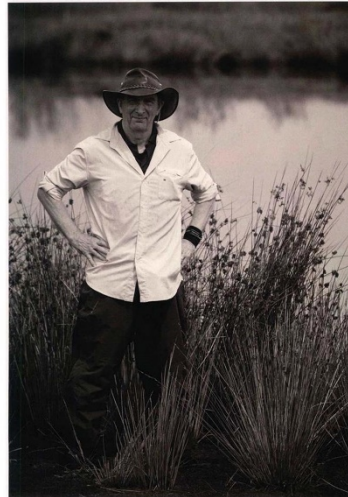
There are peatlands in every country in the world, and at that time many were threatened by harvesting and land grabbing. "Peatlands are the Cinderella habitat - unnoticed and undervalued, but they do so much for us, but the top 50cm of a hectare of peatland can contain as much carbon as a hectare of rainforest, and a typical peat bog is three to six metres deep. It's almost carbon-carbon capture system."

Richard joined a global assembly of scientists working to raise awareness of the issue and in 1986 they formed the International Mire Conservation Group. As chair, he led the group to a series of successes over the next 10 years, including lobbying the UK government to bring its end to the Forestry Grant Scheme in 1996. He is now head of environmental and conservation research at the University of East London and involved with a range of environmental bodies and scientific research groups.

"We still have big issues to address, including the reluctance of the horticultural industry to accept peat alternatives and the possibilities of paludiculture (wet agriculture), but we will get there. Draining land for farming already costs billions. Water levels are rising and flood events becoming more frequent. Do we just use resources more wisely, with more energy, energy and ultimately disaster relief, or do we plan for a more sustainable future?"

This month Richard will make the case for peat at the COP26 climate change conference in Glasgow. "I'm concerned that the current government will continue to do as we have done, but I feel optimistic about the future. There are peat fields in Japan that have managed over 20,000 years of climate change. Working in the field, you develop a 'peat' state of mind, which is always long-term. Think in the long term, we need the peatlands - we're going to die!"

USEFUL INFORMATION
 Find out more about the World Peatland Position from Richard's training at COP26 at www.peatlandposition.com



- Rob Stoneman (Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts):

“*Rob Stoneman, director of landscape recovery at the Wildlife Trusts, says very soon the government will probably pay land managers a few hundred dollars an acre to store carbon in a reclaimed peat bog. Corporations, too, might buy even more for credits from the carbon farmers of the future to offset their greenhouse gas emissions.*”

“*The thinking is, that if you are going to get to net-zero as promised in Britain, somebody is going to subsidize this,*” Stoneman said.
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2021/11/10/cop26-peat-carbon/>

- Hans Schutten (Wetlands International):

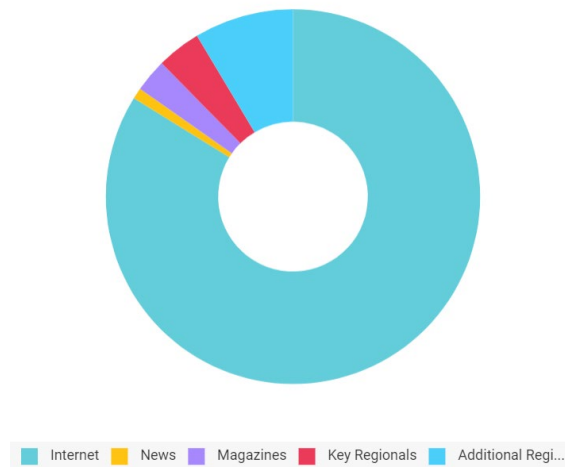
Speaking from the COP26 “Peatland Pavilion,” Hans Schutten, program head at sustainability group Wetlands International, praised the international drive to tackle peatland degradation, saying that it can’t come too soon.

“*The world is recognizing the huge urgency to take action on peatland damage now,*” Schutten said. “*We hope it’s more than just words.*”
<https://www.energyvoice.com/renewables-energy-transition/cop26/362883/scotland-peatlands-cop26/>

Common messaging and themes:

- The approval of the Sutherland spaceport
- Minister Poots visit to the Peatland Pavilion and the draft Northern Ireland peatland strategy
- The Peatland Pavilion offers a unique opportunity to position peatlands as a nature-based solution to climate change at the COP26.
- Critical role of NI peatlands.
- Regional newspapers (Orkney, John O'Groats, Caithness, Exeter etc) reporting local speakers in the Peatland Pavilion and communicating that there is good representation.
- Peatlands play a crucial role to mitigate climate change.

Volume – split by source type:



Volume – Trend by media:

