



IMCG Resolution 2018 concerning the Dutch OBN Network

During the period August 20th –31, 2018, in the 34th year of its existence, the International Mire Conservation Group (IMCG)¹ held its 18th International Field Symposium in the Netherlands, as part of IMCG's regular field assessments and symposia.

An IMCG delegation from 23 countries and 6 continents, accompanied and supported by Dutch researchers and management professionals, travelled across the Netherlands studying the diversity and functionality of peatlands and the issues facing them, with a special focus on their restoration. The IMCG General Assembly, held in Utrecht, August 31, 2018, adopted the following considerations:

The IMCG is impressed by:

- the high ecological qualities of the mire areas visited, despite the enormous environmental impacts, especially by drainage, eutrophication of surface and groundwater and atmospheric nitrogen deposition;
- the successes of restoration measures in many of the visited sites: valuable habitats and species have profited from these measures, whereas in the larger reserves natural processes have been re-activated that allow the preservation of the valuable components while considerably reducing the degree of human intervention and intensive management;
- the focus on public awareness by facilitating public access;
- the close co-operation between nature managers, researchers and policy makers in preparatory research, planning and implementation of restoration measures.

The IMCG compliments the Dutch OBN² network with these results and wishes to stress that the Symposium participants were strongly inspired by the efficiency of the knowledge network in restoration practises in The Netherlands.

However, the IMCG has learned that the research agenda is becoming dominated by short-term policy considerations at the expense of necessary, innovative research of ecosystem functioning before and after restoration.

The intense cooperation between managers and researchers has proven to be successful and cost-effective. IMCG therefore urges that the common priorities of scientists and nature managers remain the corner stone of the Dutch knowledge network.

¹ The International Mire Conservation Group is the global network of over 600 specialists from 63 countries having particular responsibility for and interest in the conservation and wise use of mires and peatlands worldwide.

² The Dutch OBN Knowledge Network for Nature Restoration and Management is an Independent and innovative platform where policy makers, site managers and scientists cooperate in the management and restoration of natural areas; OBN develops and disseminates knowledge to enhance nature quality management and conservation in the Dutch landscapes and in the Atlantic Region.