Professor Mitsch is being honoured for his many achievements, including as co-author of the innovative textbook *Wetlands*, which has been described as the “wetland bible” and the “Single best combination text and reference book on wetland ecology”.

The book has essentially defined the field of wetland science since its first edition in 1986. In 1992-2012, Professor Mitsch designed, built, and managed one of the most productive research and teaching laboratories in the world, the Delmar research and teaching laboratory. The laboratory has already established a reputation as a destination for visiting scientists from around the world and a key location to address the conservation of large ecosystems such as the Florida Everglades. Professor Mitsch was instrumental in organizing two important international meetings, the biennial *Wetlands* (WITSA biennial conference 1992, Ecolorum 2012, which he chairs).

Professor Mitsch is the Chair of the Ramsar Committee USA and is an inspiring teacher to all those who work under his guidance.

The Ramsar Convention owes some of its earliest foundations to the visionary philanthropist, Dr Luc Hoffman who created the Tour du Valat. The visionary philanthropist, Dr Luc Hoffman created the research centre in 1954. It was important to preserve the natural beauty and diversity of the area, and he believed it was necessary to promote their findings to other wetland scientists, researchers, and students globally to share knowledge and create new forms of standardization of the methods and practices to ensure better protection. In 1997, the Ramsar Convention was established.

The Tour du Valat research centre continues to develop integrated research and management programmes, which promote exchanges between scientists and wetland users. One of its most successful activities was the repopulation of the Greater Flamingo in the Camargue. This population of birds continues to thrive to the present day, and a large part of the Tour du Valat estate, located in the Camargue Ramsar Site, is classified as a Regional Nature Reserve.

The Tour du Valat also has a unique documentation centre in the Mediterranean region, specialized in wetland ecology and visited by many scientists, researchers and teachers. One of the institutions that participated in this initiative in 1994, and it has contributed to the implementation of *Ramsar* principles across the whole Mediterranean basin.

We are proud to recognize this globally important centre’s achievements on behalf of all those involved in the conservation and management of wetlands.
The Ramsar Wetland Conservation Awards will be presented on 3 June 2015 in Punta del Este, Uruguay at the 12th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (COP12). This year, the Ramsar Awards are presented in three categories: Wetlands, Innovation and Young Wetland Champions. On this occasion, the jury has also conferred a Merit Award to recognize three individual's outstanding achievements in the wetlands community.

The Ein Afek Nature Reserve (EANR) is the last remnant of the Acre Valley wetland, which were drained in the 1920s. Pumping from the aquifer began in 1969 for drinking water and agriculture, resulting in severe degradation of EANR. In 2001, the EANR became the first Managed Reserve in Israel. The first steps were to manage a nature reserve in Israel. The main aim is to conserve and restore the ecological and natural values of the reserve. The Ein Afek Nature Reserve is now of great importance for nature conservation and nature tourism, wetland education and research.

In 2006, Oceanium’s plan to restore a highly degraded mangrove forest was realized with the support of Senegal’s Livelihood Fund and was able to begin the large scale task of replanting mangroves along the west coast of Senegal.

The “DANONE-Evian Fund for Water” is a partnership between the Ramsar Convention and the Danone Livelihoods Funds / Evian / Charlie Waite / Jeremy Houghton

The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands is the international treaty that provides the global framework for the conservation and wise use of all wetlands. It entered into force in 1975 and is one of the world’s most successful environmental agreements. It has 126 Parties and is one of the world’s most diverse species. They are of great educational and scientific interest and indispensable for the countries that “manage resources” that they provide, to understand the important and complex role of wetlands in the world.

The Convention is important for the preservation of the natural environment and to highlight the constant threats that they are. The group has greatly increased the awareness of the local population and has made the world aware of the threats to their region.

The Foundation’s website has become the main medium of information on wetlands in Bogotá. The Foundation has network of volunteers who can help to save the wetlands and publish wetland news to promote wetland conservation through active participation.

We are delighted to award to Ms Hazzan the Ramsar Wetland Conservation Award for her outstanding work to bring to life the principles of ‘Wise Use’. We are delighted to reward the Foundation Humedales Bogotá for their implementation and organization of community-building events such as cleaning-up and restoring wetland areas, eco-tourism and observation of migratory birds. We are delighted to reward the Fundación Humedales Bogotá for their implementation and organization of community-building events such as cleaning-up and restoring wetland areas, eco-tourism and observation of migratory birds.