

The purpose to declare Ramsar Sites under Ramsar Convention is to **stop the worldwide loss of wetlands and to conserve them**, through wise use and management. This aim requires **international cooperation, policymaking, capacity building and technology transfer**. Wetlands for the list are selected because of their **ecological, botanical, zoological, limnological of hydrological importance**.

In this article, we are providing you with the latest list of Ramsar wetland sites in India along with the PDF in both Hindi and English medium.

RAMSAR Sites in India

Ramsar Convention

- Ramsar Convention is the **only intergovernmental treaty that** gives a solid framework to the nations for the **conservation and use of wetlands and their resources** and helps to protect such unique ecosystems.
- It is also known as the **“Convention on Wetlands”**. It was adopted in the **Iranian city of Ramsar** on 2nd February 1971 and came into force on 21 December 1975.
- So, 2nd February is celebrated as **“World Wetlands Day”** every year.
- Currently, 169 countries are a party to this convention.
- The secretariat of the Ramsar convention is located in **Gland, Switzerland**.

The mission of the Convention

- The mission is “the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and international actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world”.
 - Contracting parties vow for international cooperation to protect wetlands in the following three ways known as “three pillars for co-operation”.
1. Make judicious use of all their wetlands
 2. Designate suitable wetlands for the **list of “Wetlands of International Importance” (Ramsar List)** and ensure effective management of the wetlands.
 3. International cooperation on transboundary wetlands shared wetland systems etc.

Wetlands

- Wetlands are one of the most productive ecosystems in the world and essential for human survival.
- It is a place where the land is covered by salty or freshwater. Swamps, Marshes, ponds, the edge of the lake or ocean, river mouths and deltas etc. are examples of the Wetlands.
- Wetlands are home to various species of mammals, birds, fishes and invertebrates. They support the cultivation of crops like rice, and also provide ecological services benefiting the human race like water filtration, storm protection, flood control etc.



Designation and Management of Ramsar Sites

- When a country agrees to join the convention, it has to designate at least one wetland site as a wetland of international importance.
- The information on acceding country's first Ramsar site is sent to **UNESCO** with other documents. UNESCO acts as a convention's repository.
- Management of their Ramsar sites lies primarily with the contracting parties to maintain their ecological character and retain their essential functions and values for sustainable development.
- For transboundary sites management, the authorities on all sides of the border of a particular site should agree to collaborate and notify their intention to the convention secretariat at Gland.

Bodies of the Convention

- Government agencies of the contracting parties i.e. nations are known as **the country's 'Administrative authority'**. They appoint a **National Focal Point** to coordinate the national implementation of Ramsar projects and act as the daily focal point.
- Every three years, Parties meet at Conference of Parties (CoP), to administer convention.
- Most recent **CoP 12** was held in **Punta del Este, Uruguay in 2015**. **CoP 13** will take place in **Dubai, UAE in 2018**.
- Between CoPs, the parties are represented by the **Standing Committee** which meets annually.
- **"Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP)"** and **"Communication, Education, Participation, and Awareness (CEPA)"** are two technical advisory bodies of the convention.
- There are five International Organisational Partners (IOPs) to provide the necessary support to parties.
 - Birdlife International
 - International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
 - International Water Management Institute (IWMI)
 - Wetlands International
 - World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)

Benefits of Joining Ramasar Convention:

- Facilitates development at the national level of policies and actions for the wise use of wetlands.
- Presents an opportunity for a country to be heard in the principal forum on conservation and wise use of wetlands.
- Brings increased publicity and prestige for wetlands.
- Encourages international cooperation on wetlands and brings access to expert advice on national and site-related problems of wetland, conservation and management.
- Provides access to financial aid through the Convention's Small Grant Fund.
- Brings access to information and advice on the application of the Conventions' internationally-accepted standards, such as guidelines on the application of the wise use concept and management planning in wetlands.

OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE CONVENTION

- To recommend sites for inclusion in the "List of Wetlands of International Importance".



- To ensure wise use of wetlands.
- To establish reserves and promote training in wetland research, management and wardening.

List of RAMSAR Sites in India

- Currently, there are 46 sites in India designated under the Ramsar List. These are given below:

1. **Jammu and Kashmir**

- Hokera Wetland
- Surinsar-Mansar Lakes
- Wular Lake

2. **Ladakh**

- Tso Kar Wetland Complex
- Tsomoriri Lake

3. **Haryana**

- **Bhindawas Wildlife Sanctuary**
- **Sultanpur National Park**

4. **Himachal Pradesh**

- Chandertal Wetland
- Pong Dam Lake
- Renuka Wetland

5. **Punjab**

- Beas Conservation Reserve
- Harike Lake
- Kanjli Lake
- Keshopur-Miani Community Reserve
- Nangal Wildlife Sanctuary
- Ropar Lake

6. **Uttarakhand**

- Asan Conservation Reserve



7. **Uttar Pradesh**

- Nawabganj Bird Sanctuary
- Parvati Arga Bird Sanctuary
- Saman Bird Sanctuary
- Samaspur Bird Sanctuary
- Sandi Bird Sanctuary
- Sarsai Nawar Jheel
- Sur Sarovar
- Upper Ganga River (Brijghat to Narora Stretch)

8. **Rajasthan**

- Keoladeo Ghana NP
- Sambhar Lake

9. **Assam**

- Deepor Beel

10. **Tripura**

- Rudrasagar Lake

11. **Manipur**

- Loktak Lake

12. **West Bengal**

- East Kolkata Wetlands
- Sunderbans Wetland

13. **Bihar**

- Kabartal Wetland

14. **Orissa**

- Bhitarkanika Mangroves
- Chilika Lake

15. **Madhya Pradesh**



- Bhoj Wetlands

16. **Maharashtra**

- Lonar Lake
- Nandur Madhameshwar

17. **Gujarat**

- Nalsarovar Bird Sanctuary
- **Thol Lake Wildlife Sanctuary**
- **Wadhvana Wetland**

18. **Andhra Pradesh**

- Kolleru Lake

19. **Tamil Nadu**

- Point Calimere Wildlife and Bird Sanctuary

20. **Kerala**

- Asthamudi Wetland
- Sasthamkotta Lake
- Vembanad Kol Wetland

More about 4 New Sites added in 2021

Haryana

Bhindawas Wildlife Sanctuary

- It is the **largest wetland** site in the state of Haryana
- It is a **human-made freshwater wetland**.
- Its **first Ramsar site** of Haryana.
- The site is located in the **Jhajjar** district, at a distance of 15 km from Jhajjar town.
- In June 2009, it was also declared as a **bird sanctuary** by the Government of India.
- Over **250 bird species** can be spotted in this wetland site throughout the year. It is a resting and roosting site for these birds.
- **Ten globally threatened species** are found here including the
 - endangered **Egyptian Vulture, Steppe Eagle, Pallas's Fish Eagle, and Black-bellied Tern.**



Sultanpur National Park

- Sultanpur National Park/Ramsar site is situated at **Sultanpur village** located on **Gurugram-Jhajjar** highway at a distance of 15 km from Gurugram.
- It supports almost 220 species including, **winter migratory and local migratory waterbirds** at critical stages of their life cycles.
- It also includes **ten globally threatened species**, like **sociable lapwing**, and the endangered **Egyptian Vulture, Saker Falcon, Pallas's Fish Eagle and Black-bellied Tern**.

Gujarat

The Lake Wildlife Sanctuary

- The Lake is an **artificial lake** at Thol village located in Kadi, Mehsana District, Gujarat.
- It is located on the **Central Asian Flyway** and almost **320 bird species** are found here.
- This wetland hosts more than **30 threatened waterbird species**, like the critically endangered **White-rumped Vulture** and **Sociable Lapwing**, vulnerable **Sarus Crane, Common Pochard and Lesser White-fronted Goose**.

Wadhvana Wetland

- **Location:** Dabhoi taluka of Vadodara district.
- **Area:** Irrigation Tank Area 10.38 sq. km.
- **Main Attractions:** Over 200 species of birds, scenic beauty, rich biodiversity. The variety of Birds include **both resident & Migratory**
- It includes some threatened or near-threatened species such as
 - the endangered **Pallas's fish-Eagle, the vulnerable Common Pochard,**
 - near-threatened **Dalmatian Pelican, Grey-headed Fish-eagle and Ferruginous Duck.**

Montreux Record

- Out of these 46 sites, currently, 2 sites in India are included in the Montreux Record.
1. **Keoladeo National Park, Rajasthan (1990)** – **first site** to be included in this list
 2. **Loktak Lake, Manipur (1993)**
- **Chilika lake**, Odisha was included in the list in 1993 but was removed in 2002.
 - **Montreux Record** is a register of wetlands sites on the List of Wetlands of International Importance where changes in ecological character have occurred, are occurring, or are likely to occur.
 - The ecological character of a Ramsar site may degrade because of technological developments, pollution or other human interference.



Haiderpur Wetland:

- Recently **Haiderpur Wetland** of Western **Uttar Pradesh** has been recognized as **47th Ramsar site** in the country and 10th in Uttar Pradesh and 2463rd in the world, which has been confirmed by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- The Haiderpur Wetland is spread over an area of 6908 hectares on the Muzaffarnagar-Bijnor border between the Ganges and the Solani River. It is a part of Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary.

Last Addition:

In July 2022, five new sites from India were added to the List of Ramsar Sites.

The new sites are:

- Karikili Bird Sanctuary – Tamil Nadu.
- Pallikaranai Marsh Reserve Forest – Tamil Nadu.
- Pichavaram Mangrove – Tamil Nadu.
- Sakhya Sagar – Madhya Pradesh.
- Pala Wetlands – Mizoram.

