

Management planning

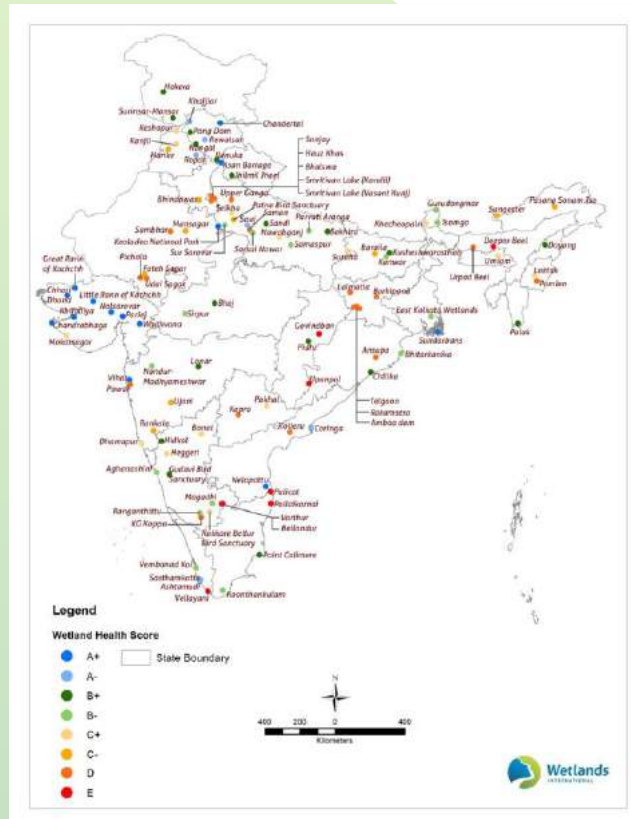
The information on wetlands biodiversity and ecosystem services values and threats (from the brief documents) and wetlands condition forms the basis of a management plan for wetland rejuvenation. At the first stage, a framework plan is developed which highlights;

- Key management components and actions required to maintain ecosystem services and biodiversity values and address threats
- Institutional arrangement for management plan implementation and inter-agency coordination
- Monitoring plan to assess effectiveness of management plan implementation
- Financing needs and convergence sources

Funding for the management plans is linked with the MoEFCC's National Plan for Conservation of Aquatic Ecosystems. The framework plans will be detailed as per Ministry's guidelines within first six months of implementation.

Replication and upscaling

The wetlands rejuvenation programme has been rolled out in all districts of India. The State Wetlands Authorities are enlisting atleast two priority wetlands in each district. The Ministry is also creating a pool of trainers and Organizations which would provide handholding support to the state governments in planning for wetlands rejuvenation using the four-pronged approach.



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Rejuvenating Wetlands

A Transformative Idea of The Government of India's 100 Days Programme



Ministry of Environment,
Forest and Climate Change
Government of India

About the programme

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) aims to conserve a network of healthy wetlands which sustain rich biodiversity and provide wide ranging ecosystem services for societal well-being.

'Wetlands rejuvenation' is a transformative idea of the Government of India, within the framework of its 100 days programme. Under this programme, the MoEFCC aims at undertaking systematic rejuvenation of selected wetlands on the basis of well-defined and targeted management plans and with active stakeholder collaboration. The State Wetlands Authorities and wetlands managers are at the forefront of programme implementation, with the Ministry providing an enabling environment in the form of programmatic framework, capacity development, and financing (on convergence basis).

The programme is structured around a four-pronged approach:

1. Developing baseline information
2. Rapid assessment of wetlands condition
3. Enabling stakeholder platforms
4. Management planning

Technical handholding for the programme is done by six knowledge partners: Wetlands International South Asia, Salim Ali Center for Ornithology and Natural History, World Wide Fund for Nature India, Chilika Development Authority, The Environmental Planning and Coordination Organization and Gujarat Ecological Education and Research Foundation.

In the first cycle of the programme, 130 wetlands were selected in consultation with State Governments. Six handholding workshops in all parts of the country were organized by the MoEFCC to impart technical support to the wetlands managers in implementing the programme



Developing baseline information

For each wetland, a brief document has been prepared in a standard format. Following information has been collected :

- a) Identification, Location and Jurisdiction
- b) Site characteristics
- c) Biodiversity
- d) Ecosystem Services
- e) Pre-existing rights and privileges
- f) Present and potential threats

For wetlands to be notified under Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017, information on activities proposed to be prohibited (other than those mentioned in Wetlands Rules), regulated and permitted is also provided in the brief document.

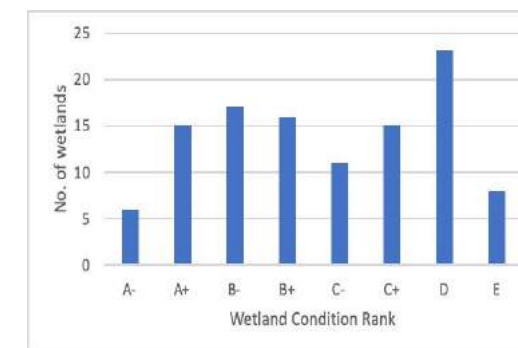
Rapid assessment of wetlands condition

A rapid assessment of wetlands condition in the form of a report card system was done. Following nine indicators under four categories were used for the assessment:

1. **Wetland area** (% area converted to non-wetland use since 2000)
2. **Hydrological regimes** (extent of choking of natural inlets and outlets, % of water quality samples meeting the desired level of Biological / Chemical Oxygen Demand)
3. **Biodiversity** (% wetland area covered by invasive macrophytes, annual January waterbird count as a proportion to maximum count observed count in last 10 years (only for protected areas of high ornithological value)
4. **Governance** (Status of wetlands mapping, management plan and notification under extant regulation)

For each indicator, a score was assigned based on the extent to which the desired values were met. A wetland condition score was computed by using a weighted average of individual indicator scores. These were subsequently converted into ranks ranging from A+ (very good) to E (very low).

The assessment indicated that every one in four wetlands has low to very low rank in terms of present wetland condition (category D to E). Wetlands in urban and peri-urban areas had lower condition rank as compared to the others.



Stakeholder platforms - 'Wetlands mitra'

For each wetland, an informal, voluntary and non-statutory network of concerned citizens by the name of 'Wetland mitra' has been constituted. This is to foster and promote community engagement in wetlands conservation and management efforts. By involving themselves within the wetland mitra

network, citizens gain an opportunity of shaping wetlands management by bringing onboard indigenous and local knowledge, and views of diverse stakeholder groups. As wetland mitra network member, the communities also build their capacity on various dimensions of wetlands management.

