

Report on the celebration of World Wetlands Day 2025 on 02nd February 2025 at the Parvati Arga Ramsar Site, Gonda, Uttar Pradesh

World Wetlands Day (WWD) is observed on 2nd February every year worldwide to commemorate the signing of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance in 1971. The theme for WWD 2025 was ‘**Protecting Wetlands for Our Common Future**’ which underscores the critical role wetlands play in enhancing our lives and highlights the need for collaboration and foresight, as it calls for valuing and protecting these richly biodiverse, productive ecosystems and taking inspiring actions to safeguard our common future and wellbeing.

This year, the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEF&CC) celebrated WWD at Parvati Arga, Gonda, a Ramsar site of Uttar Pradesh designated in 2019. The event was conducted by the MoEF&CC in collaboration with the Department of Forest, Government of Uttar Pradesh and State Wetland Authority of Uttar Pradesh. The celebration commenced with a bird watching event early morning along the banks of Parvati Arga Ramsar Site. The formal proceedings commenced with the inauguration of an exhibition by the Hon’ble Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Shri Yogi Adityanath and the Hon’ble Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh, in the presence of Gonda District In-charge Minister Shri Dara Singh Chauhan, Hon’ble Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Govt. of Uttar Pradesh, Dr. Arun Kumar Saxena, Minister of State for Environment, Forest, and Climate Change, Govt. of Uttar Pradesh, Shri K.P. Malik, Director-General of Forest & Special Secretary, MoEF&CC, Shri Sushil Kumar Awasthi, and other senior officials from the Government of Uttar Pradesh and Government of India.

The exhibition saw participation from over 25 exhibitors representing different States, technical organisations, and Government departments. The exhibition included stalls focusing on water hyacinth and bamboo-based products, Mission LiFE, the Green Skill Development Programme of GoI, EIACP centres, and wetland conservation efforts in India by MoEF&CC and knowledge partners. It also showcased the outreach activities conducted by the National Museum of Natural History (NMNH), MoEF&CC under the ‘Save Wetlands Campaign (SWC)’ to highlight the contributions of young minds. The winning paintings from the nation-wide painting competition were exhibited, and as part of the SWC, the creative works of young participants were displayed on several walls.



The formal event commenced with the welcome address by Shri Anil Kumar, Principal Secretary, Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of Uttar Pradesh highlighting the state's growing commitment to wetlands conservation. He welcomed the dignitaries and the gathering and reaffirmed Government of Uttar Pradesh's resolve to protect and restore its rich wetland ecosystems through collaborative and inclusive approaches. He also mentioned that draft notification of 50 wetlands in the state is in the final stage and would be notified under the Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017. He further emphasized the importance of celebrating WWD in raising awareness among citizens, and youth and encouraging the Site managers and practitioners.

Shri Sushil Kumar Awasthi, Director-General of Forest & Special Secretary, MoEF&CC, reaffirmed the Ministry's commitment to wetlands conservation, highlighting India's evolving approach over four decades. From ratifying the Ramsar Convention (1982) to establishing the Ministry of Environment and Forest (1985), India's efforts expanded with the National Environment Policy (2006) and the Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules (2010, 2017), strengthening decentralized governance. Key initiatives include the 100-day transformative wetland rejuvenation programme (2019), the Save Wetlands Campaign (2023) for awareness and monitoring, and Amrit Dharohar (2023) promoting Ramsar Sites, nature tourism, and wetland livelihoods. To support states, the 2024 Interim Framework Management Plan was introduced for integrated planning. He celebrated Indore and Udaipur's recognition as Ramsar Wetland Accredited Cities, emphasizing India's holistic conservation strategy and the need for collaborative efforts to ensure wetlands remain resilient and sustainable for future generations.

Dr Arun Kumar Saxena, Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of Uttar Pradesh addressed the gathering highlighting the importance of Ramsar Sites in the country. He congratulated the Govt. of UP for standing second in the country with designating a total of 10 Ramsar Sites in the State. He explained the importance of wetlands in flood regulation, water filtration, ground water recharge, carbon sequestration and providing habitat to migratory birds. He urged the gathering to ensure cleanliness in and around wetlands and prohibit encroachment. Dr Saxena mentioned about the commitment of Government of UP to restore the wetlands and reviving the threatened or nearly extinct species. He praised the efforts of the MoEF&CC in wetlands conservation in the country and welcomed the initiative to develop eco-tourism infrastructure in Parvati-Arga Ramsar Site. Further, commending the success of 'Ek ped maa ke naam' initiative by the Government of India, he informed the gathering about the increase in green cover in Uttar Pradesh as per the recent Forest Survey of India report.

Addressing the august gathering in Gonda, Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh, Hon'ble Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, emphasized about the comprehensive development of Parvati Arga. He announced plans for a new nature-culture tourism corridor between Ayodhya and Devi Patan, which will boost employment opportunities. He highlighted the importance of Parvati Arga for aquatic ecosystems and biodiversity and explained that Indian culture has always valued nature conservation. He further mentioned that Gonda district with over 100 wetlands, has strong

potential to be recognized as a ‘Wetland City’. He further mentioned that to promote eco-tourism, the UP Government is developing Tikri Jungle as an open safari zone, which will enhance tourism in the Awadh region.

Addressing the event, Hon’ble Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Shri Yogi Adityanath appreciated the Ministry’s efforts towards preservation and conservation of ecology of Gonda District, which is blessed with Parvati Arga Bird Sanctuary, and Tikri forest area. He mentioned that due to their proximity to Ayodhya, both the sites have the potential to be developed as an eco-tourism hub attracting large numbers of tourists, providing an opportunity to them to connect to nature. He also welcomed the initiative of linking the wetland with the Sarayu canal for sustaining water flow in the wetland. He pointed out that Parvati Arga has long been known for its rich biodiversity, and now, it is gaining global recognition. Talking about the importance of Ramsar Sites in the country, he explained the importance of migratory birds, which travel thousands of kilometers to Parvati Arga, playing a vital role in environmental balance.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Shri Rajat Agarwal, Joint Secretary, MoEF&CC. He expressed sincere gratitude to all the dignitaries, speakers, partners, and participants for their active engagement and valuable contributions that made the event a resounding success. Shri Agarwal acknowledged the collaborative efforts of the Government of Uttar Pradesh, knowledge partners, and community representatives in showcasing diverse perspectives on wetlands conservation. In closing, he restated the Ministry’s commitment to strengthening India’s wetland conservation agenda through inclusive, and people-centric approaches.

During the event, the dignitaries on the dais launched three publications namely, the ‘Integrated Management Plan of Parvati Arga Ramsar Site’, ‘Factbook of India’s 85 Ramsar Sites’, and ‘*Vantangiya: Sangharsh se Sashaktikaran Tak*’ booklet. The Integrated Management Plan of Parvati Arga Ramsar Site outlines a comprehensive strategy for biodiversity conservation, sustainable wetland management, and community engagement, ensuring an adaptive management approach for wise use of the wetland. The ‘Factbook of India’s 85 Ramsar Sites’ provides information on the values, benefits and threats of 85 Ramsar Sites of India including information about the species of conservation significance. ‘*Vantangiya: Sangharsh se Sashaktikaran Tak*’ booklet highlights the integrated development efforts by the Gonda district administration for the upliftment of the Vantangiya community across five villages in Uttar Pradesh. The dignitaries also launched a video, which calls for saving the unique ecosystems, the Amrit Dharohars (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rJ1dm7FRoPQ>). Further details of the launches are attached as

Annexure I.

The Ramsar Site managers of the newly designated four Ramsar Sites of India namely, Udhwa Lake in Jharkhand, Theerthangal and Sakkarakottai in Tamil Nadu and Khecheopalri in Sikkim were also congratulated and were presented with the Ramsar certificates of these sites. With the addition of these wetlands, India now has 89 Ramsar Sites covering a total area of about 1.36 million ha. Tamil

Nadu continues to have the maximum number of Ramsar Sites (20) followed by Uttar Pradesh (10). List of 89 Ramsar Sites of India and details of the newly designated sites are attached as **Annexure II**.

During the event, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Amazon and ARGA, an initiative of the Government of Uttar Pradesh, to empower women entrepreneurs in and around Gonda district. As part of the MoU, Amazon will support women-led businesses associated with ARGA through its Saheli programme. This includes providing training in digital and performance marketing, product listing optimization, and advertising methods. Women entrepreneurs from the region will also gain access to data-driven insights and metrics to better understand customer expectations and market opportunities.

The winners of the Painting, Quiz and *Nukkad Natak* competitions on the theme of ‘Protecting Wetlands for our Common Future’ were also felicitated. The winning team of the *Nukkad Natak* competition, AP Inter College, Mankapur, Gonda, Uttar Pradesh, performed their skit in front of the dignitaries.

Events in the run-up to the World Wetlands Day 2025

In the run up to the World Wetlands Day 2025, MoEF&CC in collaboration with National Museum for Natural History (NMNH) conducted a series of awareness and educational events actively engaging students from over 250 schools and colleges. Over 42,000 people were sensitized through different activities, fostering a deeper understanding of wetland conservation. A major highlight of the celebration was the *Nukkad Natak* competition, where approximately 1,000 students from various institutions performed impactful street plays, spreading awareness through engaging and thought-provoking performances. Additionally, on the theme of ‘Protecting Wetlands for our Common Future’ a Nation-wide Painting Competition saw participation of 2,943 students and a total of 2,820 students participated in the slogan-writing competition, expressing their creativity through art to highlight the significance of wetlands. With support from the EIACP Centres and NMNH, students also volunteered for wetland cleaning and conservation activities. Furthermore, students from about 250 schools took “Wetland Pledge” during their morning assembly and classroom sessions to study the importance of wetlands and committed to volunteering as “Wetland Mitras” to ensure the health and sustainability of these vital ecosystems. These events not only educated young minds but also instilled a sense of responsibility and commitment towards conserving wetlands for future generations.

World Wetlands Day celebration in different States/UTs:

World Wetlands Day is celebrated every year across the states and UTs as well by the respective State/UT Wetlands Authorities (SWAs/UTWAs) in collaboration with various line departments, and community members. Aligning with the ethos of Sahbhagita and the goal of spreading mass

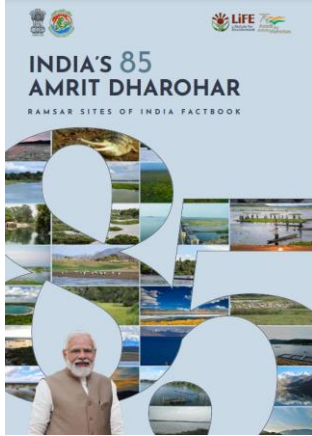


awareness about wetlands conservation under the SWC, the SWAs and UTWAs celebrated WWD in a befitting manner. The events were conducted by engaging the wetland Mitras, local communities, students as well as Govt officials. The activities based on the WWD 2025 theme of 'Protecting Wetlands for Our Common Future', involving Wetland cleaning drives, Bird census and bird watching sessions, Plantation drives, Quiz, Painting, Photography, and Nukkad Natak competitions, exhibitions, Seminars, and awareness rallies.

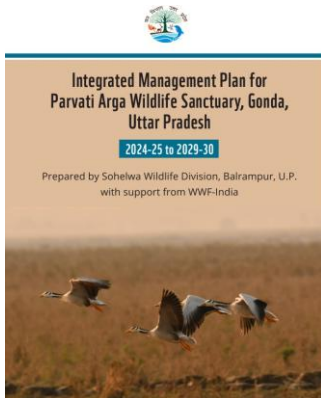
A compilation of photos of the events are attached as **Annexure III**.

Annexure I

Launches During World Wetlands Day 2025 Event



India's 85 Amrit Dharohar- Ramsar Sites of India Factbook: The "India's 85 Amrit Dharohar – Ramsar Sites of India Factbook" is a comprehensive resource that highlights the significance of India's 85 Ramsar sites, which are designated international wetlands. This book aims to raise awareness about these crucial ecosystems, showcasing their rich biodiversity, ecological functions, and their critical role in sustaining local and global environmental health. With detailed information on each Ramsar site, including their unique features, conservation efforts, and challenges, the factbook serves as a valuable tool for policymakers, conservationists, and the general public. It underscores India's commitment to wetland conservation and the protection of these natural treasures for future generations.



Integrated Management Plan of Parvati Arga Ramsar Site: The Integrated Management Plan for the Parvati Arga Ramsar Site provides a strategic framework for conserving biodiversity, promoting sustainable wetland management, and enhancing community participation. It adopts an adaptive management approach to ensure the wise use of wetland resources while maintaining ecological balance and supporting local livelihoods.



Vantangiya: Sangharsh se Sashaktikaran Tak: The Vantangiya Village Booklet documents the holistic and sustainable development efforts undertaken by the Gonda district administration in five Vantangiya villages—Ashrafabad, Butahani, Maheshpur, Manipur Grant, and Ramgarh—located in Gonda district, Uttar Pradesh. Prepared by the district administration with support from the Government of Uttar Pradesh, the booklet highlights the social, economic, and ecological upliftment of the Vantangiya community, traditionally forest dwellers with a unique cultural identity. It showcases initiatives in housing, education, health, livelihood, and wetland-linked development, reflecting a convergence-based approach for inclusive governance and community empowerment.



A video commemorating World Wetlands Day 2025, highlighting the importance of conserving these unique and vital ecosystems, known as Amrit Dharohars. The video serves as a powerful call to action, urging individuals, communities, and policymakers to recognize the critical role wetlands play in sustaining biodiversity, regulating

water cycles, and supporting livelihoods. Through compelling visuals and impactful messaging, it emphasizes the need for collective efforts to protect and restore these fragile ecosystems, ensuring their sustainable management for future generations.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rJ1dm7FRoPQ>.

Annexure III

List of 89 Ramsar Sites of India

	State/UT		Wetland	Date of Designation	Area (hectares)
1.	Andhra Pradesh	1.	Kolleru Lake	19-08-2002	90100
2.	Assam	2.	Deepor Beel	19-08-2002	4000
3.	Bihar	3.	Kabartal Wetland	21-07-2020	2620
		4.	Nagi Bird Sanctuary	11-10-2023	205.817
		5.	Nakti bird Sanctuary	11-10-2023	332.608
4.	Gujarat	6.	Nalsarovar	24-09-2012	12000
		7.	Wadhvana Wetland	05-04-2021	630
		8.	Thol Lake Wildlife Sanctuary	05-04-2021	699
		9.	Khijadia Wildlife Sanctuary	13-04-2021	512
5.	Goa	10.	Nanda Lake	08-06-2022	42
6.	Haryana	11.	Sultanpur National Park	25-05-2021	143
		12.	Bhindawas Wildlife Sanctuary	25-05-2021	412
7.	Himachal Pradesh	13.	Pong Dam Lake	19-08-2002	15662
		14.	Chandertal Wetland	08-11-2005	49
		15.	Renuka Wetland	08-11-2005	20
8.	Jammu and Kashmir	16.	Wular Lake	23-03-1990	18900
		17.	Surinsar-Mansar Lakes	08-11-2005	350
		18.	Hokera Wetland	08-11-2005	1375
		19.	Hygam Wetland Conservation Reserve	08-06-2022	802

		20.	Shallabugh Wetland Conservation Reserve	08-06-2022	1675
9.	Jharkhand	21.	Udhwa Lake Bird Sanctuary	08-01-2024	935.5
10.	Karnataka	22.	Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary	15-02-2022	518
		23.	Ankasamudra Bird Conservation Reserve	10-03-2023	98.76
		24.	Aghanashini Estuary	14-02-2023	4801
		25.	Magadi Kere Conservation Reserve	14-02-2023	54.38
11.	Kerala	26.	Ashtamudi Wetland	19-08-2002	6140
		27.	Sasthamkotta Lake	19-08-2002	373
		28.	VembanadKol Wetland	19-08-2002	151250
12.	Ladakh	29.	Tso Kar Wetland Complex	17-11-2020	9577
		30.	Tsomoriri Lake	19-08-2002	12000
13.	Madhya Pradesh	31.	Bhoj Wetlands	19-08-2002	3201
		32.	Sirpur Wetland	07-01-2022	161
		33.	Sakhya Sagar	07-01-2022	248
		34.	Yashwant Sagar	07-01-2022	823
		35.	Tawa Reservoir	08-01-2024	20050
14.	Maharashtra	36.	Nandur Madhameshwar	21-06-2019	1437
		37.	Lonar Lake	22-07-2020	427
		38.	Thane Creek	13-04-2022	6521
15.	Manipur	39.	Loktak Lake	23-03-1990	26600
16.	Mizoram	40.	Pala Wetland	31-08-2021	1850
17.	Odisha	41.	Chilka Lake	01-10-1981	116500
		42.	Bhitarkanika Mangroves	19-08-2002	65000

		43.	Satkosia Gorge	12-10-2021	98197
		44.	Tampara Lake	12-10-2021	300
		45.	Hirakud Reservoir	12-10-2021	65400
		46.	Ansupa Lake	12-10-2021	231
18.	Punjab	47.	Harikie Lake	23-03-1990	4100
		48.	Kanjli Lake	22-01-2002	183
		49.	Ropar Lake	22-01-2002	1365
		50.	Beas Conservation Reserve	26-09-2019	6429
		51.	Keshopur - Miani Community Reserve	26-09-2019	344
		52.	Nangal Wildlife Sanctuary	26-09-2019	116
19.	Rajasthan	53.	Keoladeo Ghana National Park	1-10-1981	2873
		54.	Sambhar Lake	23-03-1990	24000
20.	Sikkim	55.	Khachoedpalri wetland	15-07-2024	172
21.	Tamil Nadu	56.	Point Calimere Wildlife and Bird Sanctuary	19-08-2002	38500
		57.	Koonthankulam Bird Sanctuary	08-11-2021	72
		58.	Chitrangudi Bird Sanctuary	08-11-2021	260
		59.	Karikili Bird Sanctuary	08-04-2022	58
		60.	Pichavaram Mangrove	08/04/2022	1479
		61.	Pallikaranai Marsh Reserve Forest	08-04-2022	1248
		62.	Gulf of Mannar Marine Biosphere Reserve	08-04-2022	52672
		63.	Vembannur Wetland Complex	08-04-2022	20
64.	Vellode Bird Sanctuary	08-04-2022	77		

		65.	Udhayamarthandapuram Bird Sanctuary	08-04-2022	44
		66.	Vedanthangal Bird Sanctuary	08-04-2022	40
		67.	Suchindram Theroor Wetland Complex	08-04-2022	94
		68.	Vaduvur Bird Sanctuary	08-04-2022	113
		69.	Kanjirankulam Bird Sanctuary	08-04-2022	97
		70.	Karavetti Bird Sanctuary	24-05-2023	453.72
		71.	Longwood Shola Reserve Forest	24-05-2023	116.007
		72.	Kazhuveli Bird Sanctuary	16-01-2024	5151.60
		73.	Nanjarayan Bird Sanctuary	16-01-2024	125.865
		74.	Sakkarakottai Bird Sanctuary	15-07-2024	230.495
		75.	Therthangal Bird Sanctuary	15-07-2024	29.295
22.	Tripura	76.	Rudrasagar Lake	08-11-2005	240
23.	Uttar Pradesh	77.	Upper Ganga River	08-11-2005	26590
		78.	Nawabganj Bird Sanctuary	19-09-2019	225
		79.	Parvati Arga Bird Sanctuary	02-12-2019	722
		80.	Saman Bird Sanctuary	02-12-2019	526
		81.	Samaspur Bird Sanctuary	03-10-2019	799
		82.	Sandi Bird Sanctuary	26-09-2019	309
		83.	Sarsai NawarJheel	19-09-2019	161
		84.	Sur Sarovar	21-08-2020	431
		85.	Haiderpur Wetland	13-04-2021	6908
		86.	Bakhira Wildlife Sanctuary	29-06-2021	2894
24.	Uttarakhand	87.	Asan Conservation Reserve	21-07-2020	444

25.	West Bengal	88.	East Calcutta Wetlands	19-08-2002	12500
		89.	Sunderbans Wetland	30-01-2019	423000
25 States & UTs		89 Ramsar Sites			13,59,435.047

Year wise designation of 89 Ramsar sites

S. No.	Year of Designation	No of site designated (As per date of designation)	Sites designated upto 2013 and after 2014 to till date	Area covered in Ha
1	1981	2	26 (1981 to 2013)	633871
2	1990	4		
3	2002	13		
4	2005	6		
5	2012	1		
6	2019	11	63 (2014 to 2024)	724737.547
7	2020	5		
8	2021	14		
9	2022	19		
10	2024	14		
	Total	89	89	13,59,435.620

Newly designated Ramsar Sites

India added 4 more wetlands to the list of Ramsar sites during January 2025 to make total 89 Ramsar sites covering an area of **13,59,435.620** ha in the country. The 4 new sites include: **Khachoedpalri wetland in Sikkim, Udhwa Lake in Jharkhand and Therthanagal Bird Sanctuary & Sakkarakottai Bird Sanctuary in Tamil Nadu**. These new designated sites are a testament to the significant policy push from the MoEF&CC for wetlands conservation and management in the country. During 1982 to 2013, a total of 26 sites were added to the list of Ramsar sites, however, during 2014 to 2025, the country has added **63** new wetlands to the list of Ramsar sites. Currently, Tamil Nadu harbours maximum number of Ramsar Sites (20 sites) followed by Uttar Pradesh (10 sites).

Sl. No.	Name of the new Ramsar Sites	Date of designation	State	Total area in ha
1	Khachoedpalri wetland	15.07.2024	Sikkim	172.00
2	Udhwa Lake	08.01.2024	Jharkhand	935.50
3	Therthanagal Bird Sanctuary	15.07.2024	Tamil Nadu	29.295
4	Sakkarakottai Bird Sanctuary	15.07.2024	Tamil Nadu	230.495
			Total:	1367.29

*Date of designation is considered as the date of signing of designation letter by the Administrative Authority (Secretary EF&CC) for submission of Ramsar Site proposal to Ramsar Secretariat.

Khachoedpalri wetland:

Khachoedpalri Wetland is a representative example of a temperate Himalayan High Altitude Wetland Ecosystem (consists of permanent water body representative in the region, peatland (unique) and temperate forests) that supports regionally significant biodiversity. Located in the northeast Indian state of Sikkim, and part of the Indian Eastern Himalaya, this 172-hectare wetland in the Dhupuk Reserve Forest, Gyalshing district, Sikkim. Wetland supports complex ecological communities, including 682 species representing 5 kingdoms, 196 families, and 453 genera. Among these species, waterbird diversity is notable, due largely to Khachoedpalri's position along the Central Asian Flyway.

Migratory birds, such as the critically endangered Baer's Pochard (*Aythya baeri*) and Common Merganser (*Mergus merganser*), use Khachoedpalri's central lake as a resting site and breeding ground on their Trans-Himalayan journeys. In terms of its characteristics, Khachoedpalri's central lake is one of a few standing water features of its size and depth in the temperate zone of India, which occupies less than 10% of India's total land area. As such, Khachoedpalri also supports a number of other species at critical stages in their life cycles as well, including poorly documented amphibian populations. The wetland's surrounding temperate forest of Evergreen Oaks and Chestnuts serves to further shelter key populations, providing critical refuge during what can be volatile mountain conditions.

Further, this wetland ecosystem provides significant hydrological and other ecosystem services and forms an important habitat and layover site for 11 reported species of waterfowl including the critically endangered Baer's Pochard (*Aythya baeri*) as well as the Ruddy Shelduck (*Tadorna ferruginea*), Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*), Common merganser (*Mergus merganser*), Common Teal (*Anas crecca*) and Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*). Among mammals, the reported list includes regional endemics like the Assamese macaque (*Macaca assamensis*) - (NT), Red Panda (*Ailurus fulgens*) - (EN), Himalayan Black Bear (*Ursus thibetanus*) - (VU) and Goral (*Nemorhaedus goral*). These mammals depend on this wetland for food and habitat during most part of their lifecycle.



Panoramic view of Khachoedpalri Wetland



Great Crested Grebe



Common Merganser

Udhwa Lake Bird Sanctuary:

The Udhwa Lake Bird Sanctuary (ULBS) is located in the Rajmahal Subdivision of Sahebganj district of Jharkhand. The largest natural Gangetic floodplain wetland of Jharkhand was declared a sanctuary in 1991 under the Wildlife Protection Act (1972). The sanctuary comprises of two connected complex wetlands namely the Barhel lake (area of 410 ha) and the Pataura lake (area of 155 ha). The Udhwa Lake a natural wetland is situated in the alluvial plains of River Ganga and is surrounded by several hillocks of Rajmahal hills. The Udhwa Nala connects the wetland to the Ganges near the Farakka Barrage and it forms the main source of water to the wetland sanctuary. Additionally, several channels originate from the Rajmahal hillocks and drain into the Berhale lake.

The ULBS has a wide variety of habitats each supporting diverse flora and fauna. The Lake is rich in algae (over 41 species) and has 29 species of documented macrophyte that include six species of free floating, 17 species of rooted floating vegetation, seven species of submerged vegetation and six emergent vegetation. Among the vegetation the grass *Cyperus tagetum* (locally called petali) is widespread in the wetland and is locally used for livestock feeding. The fauna comprises of 146 species of birds, over 45 species of fish, mammals including fishing cat and Otter.

The ULBS wetland was the only sanctuary in the state of Jharkhand at the time of its separation from Bihar. The wetland provides habitats for over 146 birds that comprise of 80 species of water and water dependent birds. Further 79 species are resident while 39 are migrant and 28 species are resident migrants. The wetland has around 14 species categorized as threatened as per the IUCN Red list. These include the Asian Woolly-necked Stork, Lesser Adjutant Stork, Common Pochard etc. Considering the diversity and abundance of birds in the wetland ULBS is also designated as Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA) during 2016. The wetland complex forms an important landscape in the Central Asian fly way with the large number of birds that visit the wetland during the winters.



Bronze-winged Jacana



Cormorants and Darter



Open bill Stork



Black-headed Ibis

Therthanagal Bird Sanctuary:

Therthangal Birds Sanctuary, located at N 09°27.499' Latitude and E 078 ° 45.536' Longitude, is part of Therthangal Village in Ramanathapuram District of Tamil Nadu. The wetland is situated in a rural area. The Therthangal wetland was declared as a bird sanctuary in the year 2010, with an estimated area of 29.295 ha. It is notified as a bird sanctuary with the meaning and scopes of Section 18 (1) of Wildlife Protection Act 1972, through the G.O Ms. No 220/W6, Environment and Forest Department (FRV) dated 15.12.2010. Most notable feature of the sanctuary area is the prominent growth of Babul (*Acacia nilotica*) trees.

The sanctuary offers conducive breeding and feeding grounds for the birds, especially the migratory birds, which use the site as foraging ground. The Babul trees (*Acacia nilotica*) planted in the wetland act as nesting sites. The sanctuary includes earthen embankments, bunds and the seasonally water holding marshy lake, which is equally beneficial for the birds as well as the villagers. Excess water that is stored during rainy season within the bunds is later utilized for agricultural purposes. The sanctuary acts as a store space for an efficient flood and inundation control mechanism. The sanctuary controls the naturally occurring soil erosion. It also acts as a natural filtration system for nutrient removal from agricultural runoff and wastewater systems. The sanctuary is home for many threatened species including Black-headed ibis (*Threskiornis melanocephalus*), Spot-billed pelican (*Pelecanus philippensis*), Oriental darter (*Anhinga melanogaster*) and Pallid harrier (*Circus macrourus*) among others. The sanctuary also harbours rich biodiversity particularly among the lower vertebrate groups such as amphibians and reptiles (herpetofauna) as well as invertebrates. This sanctuary supports about 96 bird, 57 butterfly, 7 mammal, 11 reptile, 6 amphibian and 133 plant species.



Asian open bill



Painted Stork



Panoramic view of the wetland



Pelicans

Sakkarakottai Bird Sanctuary:

Sakkarakottai Birds Sanctuary located in Ramanathapuram District of southern Tamil Nadu. The wetland is a peri urban wetland. The wetland receives water from the tributaries of Vaigai River. The Sakkarakottaikanmai area was declared as a bird sanctuary in the year 2012, with an estimated area of 230.49 ha in Sakkarakottai, Rajasuriyamadai and Achadipirambu villages. It is notified as a sanctuary within the meaning and scope of Section 18 (1) of Wildlife Protection Act 1972, through the G.O. Ms. No.114; E&F (FR.5) dated 17.04.2012 and appeared in the Gazette Part II on Page No. 231 on 09.05.2012. Most notable feature of the sanctuary area is the prominent growth of Babul (*Acacia nilotica*) trees.

The sanctuary offers conducive breeding and feeding grounds for the birds, of which the most preferred nesting sites being the Babul trees (*Acacia nilotica*) planted extensively by the Forest Department under social forestry scheme. The sanctuary includes earthen embankments, bunds and the seasonally water holding marshy lake, which is equally beneficial for the birds as well as the villagers. The sanctuary acts as an efficient flood control & flood storage mechanism. Excess water that is stored during rainy season within the bunds is later utilized for agricultural purposes. The sanctuary controls the naturally occurring soil erosion. It also acts as a natural filtration system for nutrient removal from agricultural runoff.

The sanctuary is home to Vulnerable Indian spotted Eagle (*Aquila hastata*), Endangered Egyptian Vulture (*Neophron percnopterus*) and near threatened species including the Black-headed Ibis (*Threskiornis melanocephalus*), Spot-billed Pelican (*Pelecanus philippensis*), Oriental Darter (*Anhinga melanogaster*), Pallied Harrier (*Circus macrourus*) etc. The sanctuary also harbors rich biodiversity particularly among the lower vertebrate groups such as amphibians and reptiles (herpetofauna) as well as invertebrates.



Eurasian Moorhen



Eurasian spoonbill



Little grebe



Common Coot

Annexure III

Photos of World Wetlands Day celebration February 02 , 2025



Dignitaries on the dais including Hon'ble Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh Shri Yogi Adityanath, and Hon'ble Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh launching knowledge products on Ramsar Sites of India including Parvati Arga Ramsar Site



Inauguration of the exhibition stalls



Various exhibition stalls on water hyacinth products, local sustainable products made by SHGs, and initiatives of Zoological Survey of India, and EIACP Centres; (bottom left) Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh, Hon'ble Minister of State for EF&CC in the stall of Wetlands Division, MoEF&CC



Distributing Ramsar Site Certificates of the newly designated sites



Winning teams of the quiz and Nukkad Natak competition being felicitated by Hon'ble Minister of State for Environment, Forests and Climate Change Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh



World Wetlands Day celebration in the States/UTs



World Wetlands Day celebrations in the States/UTs