



New Addition to the Ramsar Sites List

Why in News?

Recently, India has **added 11 more Ramsar sites**, or wetlands that are of international importance, **taking the number of such sites to 75.**

- Tamil Nadu has maximum no. of Ramsar sites (14), followed by UP which has 10 nos. of Ramsar sites.

What is Ramsar Site?

- **About:**
 - A Ramsar site is a **wetland of international importance** under the **Ramsar Convention**, which is also known as the '**Convention on Wetlands**' — an intergovernmental environmental treaty established by **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** in **1971**, and named after the city of Ramsar in Iran, where the convention was signed that year.
- Earlier, **India designated 10 new wetlands of international importance:**
 - Koonthankulam Bird Sanctuary, Gulf of Mannar Marine Biosphere Reserve, Vembannur Wetland Complex, Vellode Bird Sanctuary, Vedanthangal Bird Sanctuary, Udhayamarthandapuram Bird Sanctuary, Satkosia Gorge, Nanda Lake, Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary, Sirpur Wetland.

Which New Sites have been added?		
Name	States	Specifications
Tampara Lake	Odisha	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ It is among the most prominent fresh water lakes in Odisha, situated in Ganjam district.▪ The wetland is an important

		<p>habitat for vulnerable species such as Cyprinus carpio, common pochard (Aythya ferina), and river tern (Sterna aurantia).</p>
Hirakud Reservoir	Odisha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It is the largest earthen dam in Odisha started operating in 1957. ▪ Out of the known 54 species of fish from the reservoir, one has been classified as being endangered, six near threatened and 21 fish s

		<p>species of economic importance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It also provides important hydrological services by moderating floods in the Mahanadi delta, the ecological and socio-economic hub of the east coast of India.
Ansupa Lake	Odisha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It is the largest freshwater lake of Odisha situated in Banki sub-division of Cuttack district. ▪ The wetland is an oxbow lake

		<p>formed by River Mahanadi.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It provides a safe habitat to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ ◦
Yashwant Sagar	Madhya Pradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yashwant Sagar is one of the two Important Bird Areas (IBA) in the Indore region as well as one of the most important birding sites in Malwa region of Madhya Pradesh. ▪ It is considered to

		<p>be a strong hold of the vulnerable Sarus Crane in central India.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to its vast shallow reed beds, the wetland is considered heaven to a large number of winter migratory birds.
Chitrangudi Bird Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locally, it is known as "Chitrangudi Kanmoli". The wetland has been a protected area since 1989 and declared as Bird Sanctuary, comin

		<p>g under the jur isdic tion of Tamil Nadu Fores t Dep artme nt, Ra manat hapur am di vision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It is an ideal habita t for winte r mig rator y birds. Aroun d 50 birds belon ging to 30 f amilie s have been r eporte d from the site. ▪ Nota ble w aterb irds s potte d from the site area i nclud e: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦
<p>Suchindram Theroor Wetland Complex</p>	<p>Tamil Nadu</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Suchin dram Thero or Wet land c omple

x is part of the
Suchindrum-Theroor Mana kudi Conservation Reserve

- It is declared an **Important Bird Area (IBA)** and lies at the **southern tip of the Central Asian** flyway of migratory birds.
- **Copper plate inscriptions from the 9th century** mention Pasumkulam, Venchikulam, Nedumarthukulam, Perumkulam, Elamchi

		kulam and Konadunkulam.
Vaduvur Bird Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It is a large human-made irrigation tank and shelter for migratory birds as it provides a suitable environment for food, shelter, and breeding ground. ▪ Indian Pond Heron <i>Ard eola grayii</i> occurred in most of the surveyed tanks. ▪ Large concentrations of wintering waterfowl such as Eurasian Wigeon

		<p>Anas penelope, Northern Pintail Anas acuta, Garganey Anas querquedula were recorded in tanks.</p>
Kanjirankulam Bird Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It is notable as a nesting site for several migratory heron species that roost in the prominent growth of babul trees. ▪ The breeding population of migratory waterbirds arrive here between October and February

and include:
paint ed stork, white ibis, black ibis, little egret , great egret

- The site qualifies as an **Important Bird and Biodiversity Area IBA** as the threatened **Spot-billed Pelican Pelicanus philippensis** breeds here.
- The wetland exhibits rich biodiversity including many globally **near-threatened species including**

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Thane Creek	Maharashtra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It has been declared as Thane Creek Flamingo Sanctuary. ▪ Thane creek is fringed by mangroves on both banks & comprises around 20% of the total Indian mangrove species. ▪ The area is an important part of the wetland complex of the Central Asian Flyway of the birds and has been categorized as an I

		<p>important Bird Area (IBA).</p>
<p>Hygam Wetland Conservation Reserve</p>	<p>Jammu and Kashmir</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It serves as an abode to many residents and migratory bird species. ▪ It is also recognized as an Important Bird Area (IBA). ▪ It provides a plethora of ecosystem services including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦
<p>Shalbugh Wetland Conservation Reserve</p>	<p>Jammu and Kashmir</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The area has extensive reedbeds of Phragmites communis and Typha angustata, and

		rich growth of Nymphaea candida and <i>N. stellata</i> on open water. <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ It serves as an abode to more than four lakh resident and migratory birds of at least 21 species.
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UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims

Q. If a wetland of international importance is brought under the 'Montreux Record', what does it imply? (2014)

- (a) Changes in ecological character have occurred, are occurring or are likely to occur in the wetland as a result of human interference.
- (b) The country in which the wetland is located should enact a law to prohibit any human activity within five kilometres from the edge of the wetland.
- (c) The survival of the wetland depends on the cultural practices and traditions of certain communities living in its vicinity and therefore the cultural diversity therein should not be destroyed.
- (d) It is given the status of 'World Heritage Site.'

Ans: (a)

Exp:

- The Montreux Record is a register of wetland sites on the List of Wetlands of International Importance where changes in ecological character have occurred, are occurring, or are likely to occur as a result of technological developments, pollution or other human interferences. It is maintained as part of the Ramsar List.
- The Convention on Wetlands, called the Ramsar Convention, is an intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. The Convention was adopted in the Iranian city of Ramsar in 1971 and came into force in 1975.

Mains

Q. What is wetland? Explain the Ramsar concept of 'wise use' in the context of wetland conservation. Cite two examples of Ramsar sites from India. **(2018)**

Source: PIB

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