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## New Ramsar Sites in Bihar | Bihar | 10 Jun 2024

### Why in News?

According to the officials, two of Bihar's [wetlands](#) have been added to the **global list of wetlands of international importance** under the [Ramsar Convention](#).

- This brings the total number of such wetlands in **India to 82**.

### Key Points

- [The Nagi and Nakti bird sanctuaries](#) in Bihar's **Jamui district** are now part of the Ramsar Convention.
  - Both the bird sanctuaries are built on [human-made wetlands](#) primarily developed for irrigation through the construction of the **Nakti Dam**.
  - Both sanctuaries were designated as Bird Sanctuaries in 1984 due to their importance as **wintering habitats** for migratory species.
  - This includes one of the largest congregations of **red-crested pochard (Netta rufina)** and [bar-headed geese \(Anser indicus\)](#) on the [Indo-Gangetic plain](#).
  - The catchment area features [dry deciduous forests](#) surrounded by hills.
- **Flora and Fauna:**
  - These wetlands provide habitats for over 150 species of birds, mammals, fish, aquatic plants, reptiles, and amphibians.
  - They host globally threatened species such as the endangered [Indian elephant](#) and the vulnerable native catfish.
  - According to the [Asiatic Waterbird Census 2023](#), the Nakti Bird Sanctuary reported 7,844 birds, the highest in the survey, followed by the Nagi Bird Sanctuary with 6,938 birds.
- These sites were declared as Wetlands of International importance on the occasion of [World Environment Day on 5th June](#).

### Red-Crested Pochard

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- The red-crested pochard (*Netta rufina*) is a **large diving duck**.
- Its **breeding habitat is lowland marshes and lakes in southern Europe** and it extends from the steppe and semi-desert areas on the **Black Sea to Central Asia** and Mongolia, **wintering in the Indian Subcontinent and Africa**.
- **Conservation Status:**
  - [IUCN Red List](#)- Least Concern
  - [CITES](#)- Appendix II

# RAMSAR CONVENTION

## About

- Also known as the Convention on Wetlands.
- An intergovernmental treaty, adopted in 1971, in Ramsar, Iran.
- Entered into force in 1975.
- Wetlands that are of international importance are declared as Ramsar sites.
- **Largest Ramsar Site in World: Pantanal: South America**

## Montreux Record

- Adopted in Montreux (Switzerland) in 1990.
- Identifies Ramsar sites that need priority conservation attention at national or international level.

## Wetlands

- A place in which the land is covered by water – salt, fresh, or somewhere in between – either seasonally or permanently.
- Take many forms including rivers, marshes, bogs, mangroves, mudflats, ponds, swamps, billabongs, lagoons, lakes, and floodplains.
- **World Wetlands Day: 2<sup>nd</sup> February**



## India & Ramsar Convention

- Came into force in India: **1982**
- **Total Number of Ramsar Sites: 75**
- Chilika Lake (Odisha), Keoladeo National Park (Rajasthan), Harike Lake (Punjab), Loktak Lake (Manipur), Wular Lake (Jammu and Kashmir), etc.
- **Related Framework in India**
- The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has notified Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017 under the provisions of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 as regulatory framework for conservation and management of wetlands.
- The 2017 Rules decentralise wetlands management and provide for the constitution of the State Wetlands Authority or Union Territory Wetlands Authority.

## Key Facts

- **Largest Ramsar Site:** Sunderbans, West Bengal
- **Smallest Ramsar Site:** Vembannur Wetland Complex, Tamil Nadu
- **State with the maximum number of Ramsar Sites:** Tamil Nadu (14)
- **Wetlands in Montreux Record:**
  - Keoladeo National Park: Rajasthan
  - Loktak Lake: Manipur



