



Rajasthan's Menar Bird Village to Become Wetland

For Prelims: Wetlands, Wetlands in India

For Mains: Significance of Wetlands, Importance of Ramsar Listing

Why in News?

Recognised as the “**bird village**” following community-driven conservation efforts, Menar in Udaipur district is set to be notified as **Rajasthan's new wetland**.

- This will pave the way for getting the [Ramsar site](#) status for this rural heartland of the Mewar region.

What is a Wetland and its Significance?

▪ Wetlands:

- **Wetlands** are ecosystems saturated with water, either seasonally or permanently. They include **mangroves, marshes, rivers, lakes, deltas, floodplains and flooded forests, rice-fields, coral reefs, marine areas** no deeper than 6 meters at low tide, as well as human-made wetlands such as waste-water treatment ponds and reservoirs.

▪ Significance:

- Wetlands are **a critical part of our natural environment**. They mitigate floods, protect coastlines and build **community resilience to disasters, reduce the impacts of floods, absorb pollutants** and improve water quality.
- Wetlands are **critical to human and planet life**. More than 1 billion people depend on them for a living and 40% of the world's species live and breed in wetlands.
- They are **a vital source for food, raw materials, genetic resources** for medicines, and hydropower.
- **30% of land-based carbon** is stored in peatland.
- They play **an important role in transport, tourism and the cultural and spiritual well-being** of people.
- Many wetlands are **areas of natural beauty**, and many are **important to Aboriginal people**.

What are the Key Highlights of Menar Wetland?

▪ About:

- The two lakes in the Menar village – **the Brahma and Dhandh** play host to a large number of **migratory birds** every year.
 - The Forest Department has initiated the process for notification of Menar as a wetland, which will recognise its role in the storage of sediment and nutrients and

enable the local authorities to maintain the respective lakes.

- With the status of wetlands, the two lakes will be strengthened for **increasing the vegetation of aquatic plants and protecting biodiversity.**

▪ **Observed Species:**

- More than **150 species of local and migratory birds** inhabit the two lakes in the winter season.
 - They include **Greater Flamingo, White-tailed Lapwing, Pelican, Marsh Harrier, Bar-headed Goose, Common Teal, Greenshank, Pintail, Wagtail, Green Sandpiper and Red-wattled Lapwing.**
 - Bird lovers and tourists flock to the village after the arrival of migratory birds from as far as **Central Asia, Europe and Mongolia.**

▪ **Other Ramsar Sites:**

- At present, Rajasthan has **two wetlands recognised as Ramsar sites -**
 - **Keoladeo Ghana** in Bharatpur district
 - **Sambhar Salt Lake** in Jaipur district.

What is the Significance of Ramsar Listing?

- It is like an **International Organization for Standardization (ISO) certification.** They can take it off the list as well if it doesn't meet their standards continuously. It's **a feather in the cap** but there is a cost to it and that cost can be paid only if there is brand value.
- **Ramsar tag makes it incumbent upon authority to strengthen the protection regime** there and creates defenses against encroachment.
- A number of species of birds prefer to **avoid the Himalaya and instead choose the route passing through Afghanistan and Pakistan** to enter the Indian sub-continent via Gujarat and Rajasthan. Thus, **Gujarat becomes the first landing point of many international migratory species** of ducks, waders, plovers, terns, gulls etc and shorebirds as well as birds of prey.
- Wetlands in India **act as foraging and resting grounds for the migratory birds** during winter.
 - According to **Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)**, CAF (Central Asian Flyway), which includes 30 countries, covers at least 279 populations of 182 migratory waterbird species, including 29 globally threatened and near-threatened species, which breed, migrate and winter within the region.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQs)

Q. Consider the following statements: (2019)

1. Under Ramsar Convention, it is mandatory on the part of the Government of India to protect and conserve all the wetlands in the territory of India.
2. The Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2010 were framed by the Government of India based on the recommendations of Ramsar Convention.
3. The Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2010 also encompass the drainage area or catchment regions of the wetlands as determined by the authority.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

Ans: C

[Source: TH](#)

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