



# Amrit Dharohar Capacity Building Scheme

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## Why in News?

The Central government is spearheading a significant transformation in the realm of **wetland tourism** with the '**Amrit Dharohar Capacity Building Scheme**'.

- This initiative, launched in June 2023, aims to revolutionize tourism practices at **ecologically-sensitive wetlands**, particularly **Ramsar sites** like **Odisha's Chilika Lake** and **Haryana's Sultanpur Bird Sanctuary**.

## What is Amrit Dharohar Capacity Building Scheme?

- **About:**
  - The 'Amrit Dharohar Capacity Building Scheme' is a collaborative effort between the **Ministry of Tourism** and the **Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change**.
  - The scheme will be implemented over the next three years (2023 onwards) to encourage optimal use of wetlands, and **enhance biodiversity, carbon stock, eco-tourism opportunities and income generation for local communities**.
    - The primary focus of the Scheme is to strategically transition from **high-volume tourism to high-value nature tourism** at ecologically-sensitive wetlands.
- **Aim:**
  - The aim is to **enhance livelihood opportunities for local communities** through harnessing the **nature-tourism potential** of the **Ramsar Sites across the country**.
- **Implementation:**
  - The scheme is being implemented in **convergence with various Central Government ministries and agencies**, State wetland authorities, and a network of formal and informal institutions and individuals, working together for a common cause.
- **Pilot Projects and Skill Development:**
  - Out of 16 identified Ramsar sites, five have been selected for pilot projects under the scheme.
    - These pilot sites include **Sultanpur National Park (Haryana)**, **Bhitarkanika Mangroves (Odisha)**, **Chilika Lake (Odisha)**, **Sirpur (Madhya Pradesh)**, and **Yashwant Sagar (Madhya Pradesh)**.
  - Training programs for participants are carried under the **Alternative Livelihood Programme (ALP) (a 30 hours/15 days training programme)** and **Paryatan Navik Certificate (boatman certification for tourism)**.

## Note

- **High-value travellers** as those who are **likely to spend more, stay longer**, and disperse beyond tourist hotspots.
- Nature tourism is based on the **natural attractions of an area** like birdwatching, photography, stargazing, camping, hiking, hunting, fishing, and visiting parks.
  - Nature tourists are experiential tourists who are interested in a diversity of natural and cultural resources.

## What is a Ramsar Site?

- A Ramsar site is a wetland designated to be of **international importance under an environmental treaty** signed in February 1971 at Ramsar, Iran under the auspices of **UNESCO**.
- Ramsar provides for national action and international cooperation regarding the conservation of wetlands, and wise sustainable use of their resources.
- **India has 75 Ramsar sites.**

# 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**

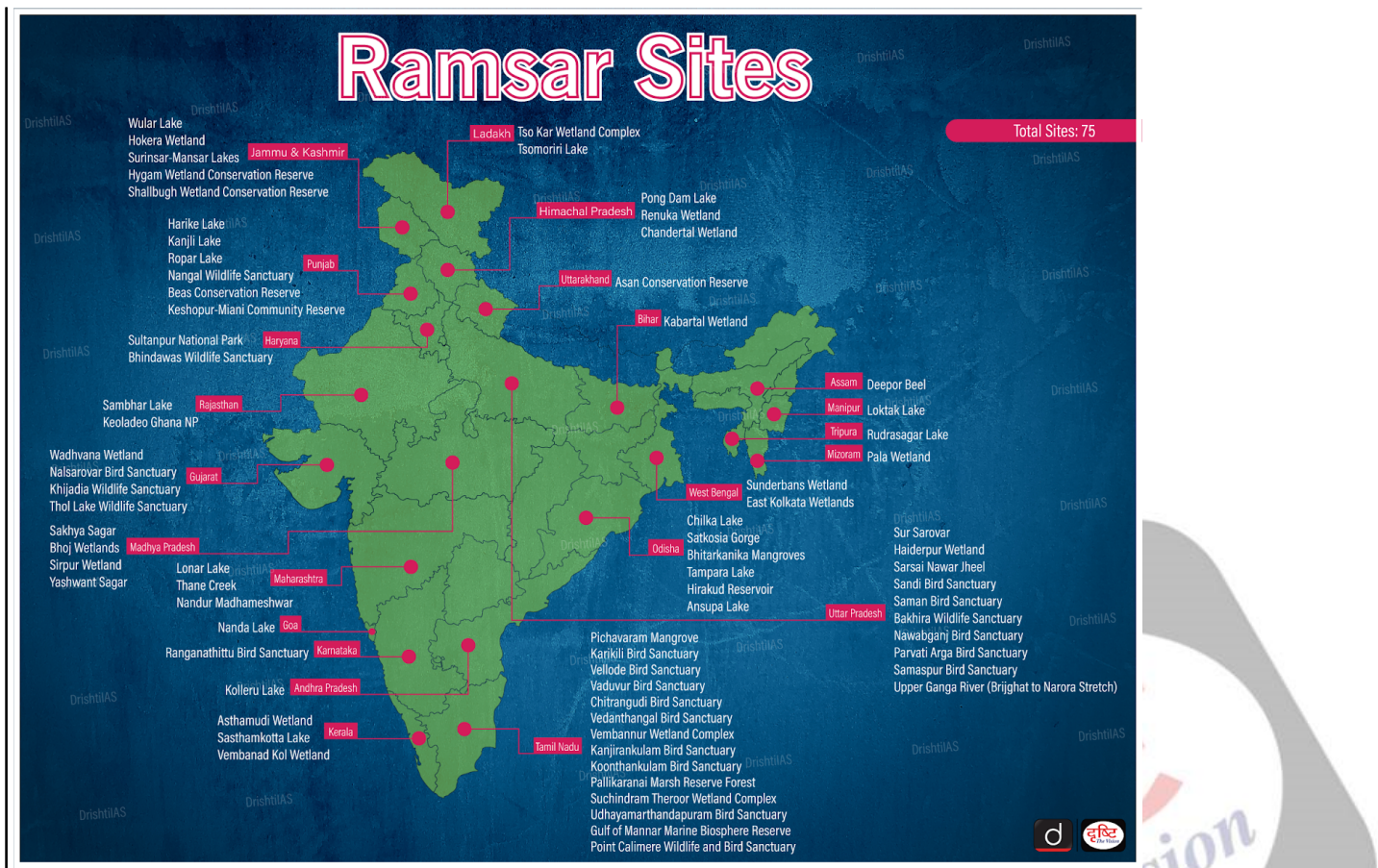
### India & Ramsar Convention

- 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





## UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

### Prelims

**Q1. "If rainforests and tropical forests are the lungs of the Earth, then surely wetlands function as its kidneys." Which one of the following functions of wetlands best reflects the above statement? (2022)**

- (a) The water cycle in wetlands involves surface runoff subsoil percolation and evaporation.
- (b) Algae form the nutrient base upon which fish, crustaceans, molluscs, birds, reptiles and mammals thrive.
- (c) Wetlands play vital role in maintaining sedimentation balance and soil stabilization.
- (d) Aquatic plants absorb heavy metals and excess nutrients.

**Ans: (c)**

**Q2. 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)**

PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/amrit-dharohar-capacity-building-scheme>

