



World Wetlands Day 2025

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Why in News?

The Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) organised the [World Wetlands Day 2025](#) celebrations at the **Parvati Arga Ramsar Site**, Gonda, Uttar Pradesh (UP) on **2nd February 2025**.

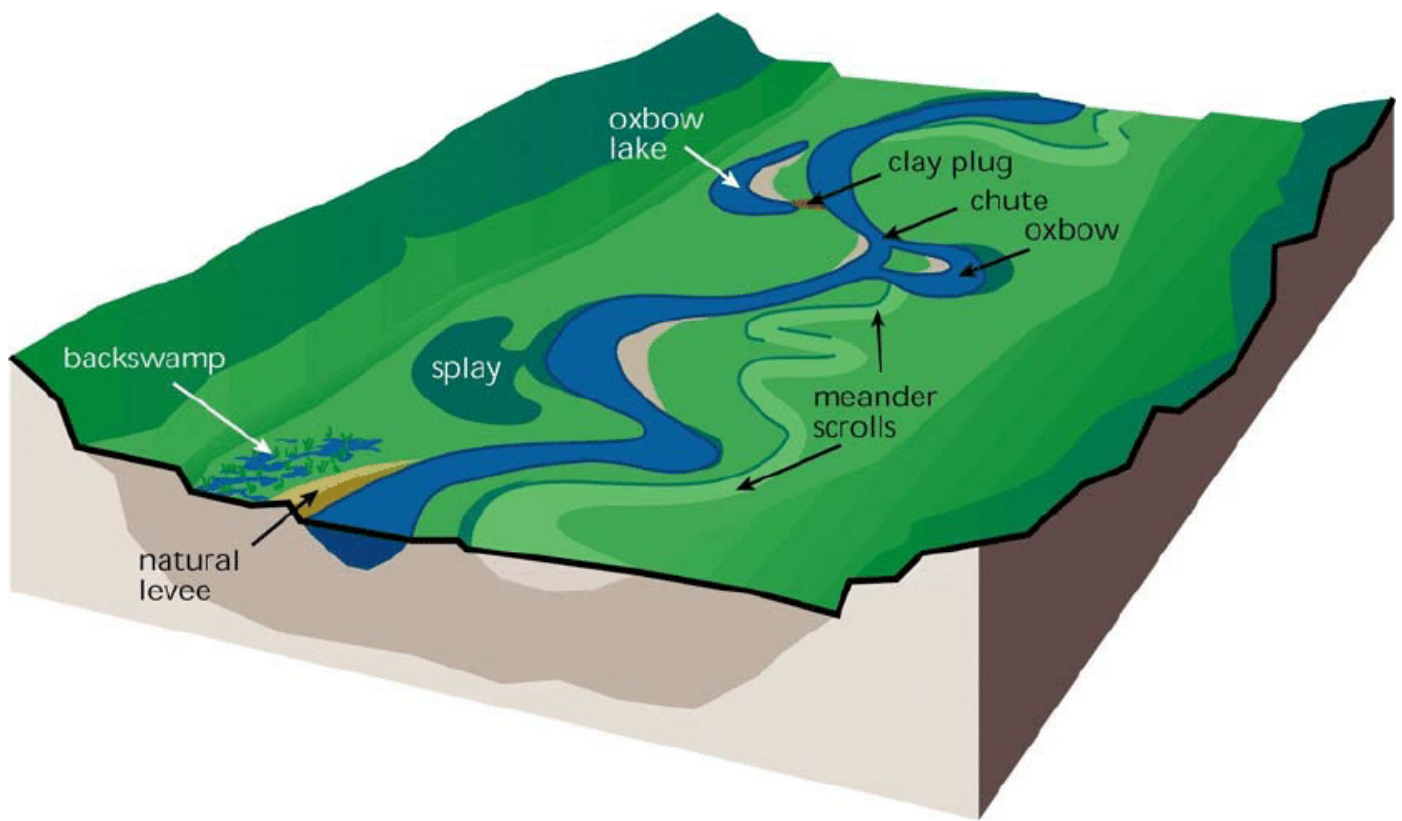
What are the Key Facts Regarding World Wetlands Day 2025?

- **About:** It is observed annually to raise awareness about the **importance of wetlands** and marks the adoption of the [Ramsar Convention on Wetlands](#) in **1971** in Ramsar, Iran.
- **Theme for 2025:** Protecting Wetlands for our Common Future.
- **New Ramsar Sites:** **Udhwa Lake** in Jharkhand, **Theerthangal and Sakkarakottai** in Tamil Nadu and **Khecheopalri** in Sikkim are included in the list of Ramsar sites.
 - These are the **first** Ramsar Sites of **Sikkim and Jharkhand**.
 - With this, **Ramsar sites (Wetlands of International Importance) in India increased to 89**.
 - **Tamil Nadu** continues to have the **maximum** number of Ramsar Sites (20 sites) followed by **Uttar Pradesh (10 sites)**.
- **New Corridor:** The government announced a new **nature-culture tourism corridor** will be developed between **Ayodhya and Devi Patan** in UP.
- **Amrit Dharohar Initiative:** [Amrit Dharohar](#) was launched in **June 2023** to conserve Ramsar Sites that focuses on **four key components** i.e., **Species and Habitat Conservation, Nature Tourism, Wetlands Livelihood and Wetlands Carbon**.
- **Threat:** The biggest threat to wetlands is **pollution from industrial and human effluents**, which degrade these ecosystems.

What are Key Facts About Parvati Arga Ramsar Site?

- **About:** It is a **permanent freshwater environment**, consisting of **two oxbow lakes** i.e., **Parvati and Arga**, which are **rain-fed** and located in the **terai region** (Gangetic plains).
 - The nearby **Tikri Forest** is also being developed as an **eco-tourism site**.
 - **Oxbow lakes** are **U-shaped lakes** formed when a meander of a **river is cut off**, creating a **standalone water body**.

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- **Ecological Significance:** It is a refuge for **critically endangered [white-rumped vulture](#), [Indian vulture](#), and [endangered Egyptian vulture](#).**
- Migratory birds like **Eurasian coots, mallards, greylag geese, northern pintails, and red-crested pochards** visit the site in the winter months.
- **Invasive Species:** It faces threats from [invasive species](#), notably the **common [water hyacinth](#)**.
- **Cultural Landmarks:** The region is home to cultural landmarks such as the birthplaces of **Maharishi Patanjali** and [Goswami Tulsidas](#), boosting religious and cultural tourism.

RAMSAR CONVENTION

About

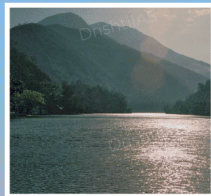
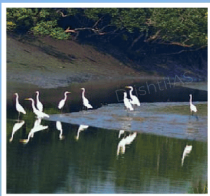
- Also known as the Convention on Wetlands.
- An intergovernmental treaty, adopted in 1971, in Ramsar, Iran.
- Entered into force in 1975.
- Wetlands that are of international importance are declared as Ramsar sites.
- Largest Ramsar Site in World: Pantanal: South America

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: 2nd February



India & Ramsar Convention

- Came into force in India: **1982**
- Total Number of Ramsar Sites: **85**
- 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

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)

