

Existing Ramsar sites in India

April 1, 2020

- According to India State of Forest Report, 2019, the country has **62,466 wetlands covering 3.83 per cent of its recorded forest area**. A total of **37 sites** (including 10 recent added) in India have been recognised under the convention.



- **Newly added Ramsar sites:**
- The new Ramsar sites of India are **in three states – Uttar Pradesh** (Nawabganj, Parvati Agra, Saman, Samaspur, Sandi and Sarsai Nawar), **Maharashtra** (Nauru Madhameshwar) and **Punjab** (Keshopur-Miani, Beas Conservation Reserve and Nangal).
- **In Maharashtra:**
- **NandurMadhmeshwar Bird Sanctuary** is located at Niphad Tehsil of Nashik District, known as the Bharatpur of Maharashtra. It's **Maharashtra's first Ramsar site**. It lies on the **bank of river Godavari**.
- **In Punjab**
- **Keshopur-Miani Community Reserve**
 - The Reserve is a mosaic of natural marshes, aquaculture ponds and agricultural wetlands maintained by the annual rainfall runoff.
 - The site is an **example of wise use of a community-managed wetland**, which provides food for people and supports local biodiversity.
 - Threatened species present include the **vulnerable Common pochard and the endangered spotted Pond turtle**.
- **Beas conservation reserve:**
 - The Beas Conservation Reserve is a 185-kilometre

stretch of the Beas River located primarily in the north-west of the State of Punjab.

- The Reserve **hosts the only known population in India of the endangered Indus river dolphin (*Platanista gangetica minor*)**.
- Further threatened species include the **endangered Masheer and Hog deer as well as the vulnerable smooth-coated otter**.
- In 2017, a programme was initiated to **re-introduce the critically endangered gharial** with 47 individuals released into the river 30 years after their disappearance.

▪ **Nangal wetland**

- The Nangal wetland draws sustenance from the **Sutlej River** (like Harike and Ropar).
- It is home to resident as well as migratory birds including the red jungle fowl, large Indian parakeet, Indian cuckoo, wood shrike, yellow-eyed babbler and crested bunting.
- The **migratory bird, Sarus crane has also been sighted**
- The wetland also houses threatened species like the **Indian pangolin** and an important habitat for the **smooth Indian otter, the hog deer and the sambar**.

▪ **Uttar Pradesh**

▪ **Nawabganj**

- Nawabganj Bird Sanctuary, **renamed in 2015 as Shahid Chandra Shekhar Azad Bird Sanctuary**, is a bird sanctuary located in Unnao district of UP.
- The sanctuary provides protection for 250 **species of migratory birds mostly from CIS (or formerly USSR)**.

▪ **Parvati Arga**

- Parvati Arga Bird Sanctuary is situated in the Gonda District.
- It sustains resident birds throughout the year and

migratory birds during winter season.

- **It was a part of the Saryu River.**
- As the river changed its flow path these lakes were left as its remains.
- Thus the sanctuary consists of **two lakes, Parvati and Arga**, situated about 1.5 km apart and both are **oxbow lakes**.

▪ **Saman**

- Saman Bird Sanctuary is in the Mainpuri district.
- The sanctuary is **best suited for Bird safari**.

▪ **Sandi**

- Sandi Bird sanctuary is situated in Hardoi district and the **Garra river formerly known as Garun Ganga**, passes near the sanctuary.
- This sanctuary has been **listed as an "important bird area"** by the **Bombay Natural History Society**.
- It is **also called "Deher Jheel"** in common parlance.
- In the past, the **rare Siberian white crane Grus leucogeranus** has been spotted here.

▪ **Sarsai Nawar**

- Sarsai Nawar Wetland is a bird sanctuary in Etawah district.
- It is the **roosting area of the largest flock of Sarus Crane Grus Antigone** in the region.
- The name of the lake is derived from the Sarus (Sarsai from Sarus, and Nawar meaning shallow wetland).
- **Three resident species of storks**, namely the **Painted Mycteria leucocephala**, **Wooly-necked** or **White-necked Ciconia episcopus** and **Black-necked Ehippiorhynchus asiaticus** feed in the lake throughout the year.
- The wetland is unusual in that the **principal vegetation is Cyperus rotundus** and there is **no emergent vegetation**.

