

Yaya Tso Lake

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In news- Recently, the Biodiversity Management Committee, the panchayat of Chumathang village, along with SECURE Himalaya Project recently resolved to declare Yaya Tso as Ladakh's first biodiversity heritage site.

About the lake-

- Yaya Tso is known as **birds' paradise for its beautiful lake** located at an altitude of 4,820 metres.
- It is a **nesting habitat for a large number of birds and animals**, such as the bar-headed goose, black-necked crane and brahminy duck
- It also has the distinction of being **one of the highest breeding sites of the black-necked crane in India**.
- The lake could be reached from Mahe monastery on the way to Tsomoriri lake after driving up to the nunnery and then crossing a small mountain pass.
- The proposed Yaya Tso site will have an approximate area of 60 square kilometers, which will also include the lake's watershed.

What is the SECURE Himalaya Project?

- SECURE stands for Securing Livelihoods, Conservation, Sustainable Use and Restoration of High Range Himalayan Ecosystems.
- Launched in 2017, **SECURE Himalaya Project is a part of "Global Partnership on Wildlife Conservation and Crime Prevention for Sustainable Development" (Global Wildlife Program) funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF)**.
- The project **promotes sustainable management of alpine pastures and forests** in the high range Himalayan ecosystems to secure conservation of globally significant wildlife, including endangered snow leopard

and their habitats

- It seeks to ensure sustainable livelihoods and socio-economic benefits for communities in the selected high altitude landscapes in the Trans- and Greater Himalayan regions.
- It **contributes to the Global Snow Leopard Ecosystem Protection Program (GSLEP)**, a joint initiative of 12 range country governments, international agencies, civil society, and the private sector.