

# WORLD WETLANDS DAY CELEBRATED AT ALL 75 RAMSAR SITES IN INDIA

Relevant for: Environment | Topic: Environmental Conservation, Sustainable Development, and EIA

The State Governments and Union Territory administrations celebrated World Wetlands Day (WWD) at all 75 Ramsar sites this year with over 200 events. The National Flag was hoisted at the Ramsar Sites. The wetland pledge was administered during these events. Over 50 activities were held with student engagement in which drawing competition, quiz competition, exposure activities, and bird watching were organized.

This is in line with emphasis on participatory management of wetlands by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi who in Mann ki Baat on January 29, 2023 highlighted the invaluable role played by local communities in conservation of Ramsar Sites. The celebrations held across the country are as follows:

In Jammu and Kashmir, citizens took a pledge to conserve wetlands at Wular Lake.



Flag hoisting at Wular (Jammu & Kashmir)



Wetland Mitras at Wular (Jammu & Kashmir)

In Himachal Pradesh, students High School Chamba were exposed to values of wetlands in

seminar organized. In Bilaspur, students received prizes for winning entries in painting and slogan competition on the theme of World Wetlands Day. In Haryana, a workshop for students was organized at Sultanpur National Park, Haryana.



WWD celebrations at Kanjli (Punjab)

In SarsaiNawar, Uttar Pradesh, a bird watching session for students was organized wherein the different habitat preferences for species were discussed. In Bihar, a workshop for citizens and students was organized at the State's Ramsar Site Kanwar Jheel, Begusarai. And in Madhya Pradesh at Indore and Bhopal public events were held on the occasion wherein the respective City mayors emphasised the value of wetlands conservation for sustainable urbanization.



Bird festival organised at Bakhira Wildlife Sanctuary (Uttar Pradesh)



Wetland pledge administered at Yashwant Sagar (Madhya Pradesh)

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Prize distribution for painting and quiz competition at Kabartal (Bihar)

In Manipur, Chief Minister Shri N Biren Singh conveyed a special message on World Wetlands Day. Public Seminar and a series of events were held at Loktak Lake and in Arunachal Pradesh, State Wetlands Authority released a special poster on the occasion.



Awareness campaign organised by students at DeeporBeel, Assam

In Odisha, Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik issued a special message on World Wetlands Day reminding the citizens on the important role wetlands play in maintaining ecological balance and mitigating the effects of climate change, while reiterating the pledge of the government to conserve the state's Ramsar Sites. Special functions were held at Tampara Lake and Ansupa Lakes wherein students and citizens participated.



Awareness campaign for school students organised at Satkosia Gorge (Odisha)

In Tamil Nadu, the Forest Minister M. Mathiventhan unveiled a plaque at the Pallikaranai eco-park, Chennai on the occasion of World Wetlands Day.



Awareness campaign at Pichavaram Mangroves (Tamil Nadu)



Bird watching trail at Thane creek (Maharashtra)



WWD celebrations at Ranganathittu (Karnataka)



Painting competition organised at Ashtamudi (Kerala)

### **About World Wetlands Day**

The World Wetlands Day is observed on 2<sup>nd</sup> February every year all over the world to commemorate the signing of Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance in 1971. India is a party to the Convention since 1982 and has so far declared 75 wetlands as Ramsar sites covering 23 states and Union Territories.

The 2023 theme for World Wetlands Day is 'Wetland Restoration' which highlights the urgent need to prioritize wetland restoration. It is a call on an entire generation to take proactive action for wetlands, by investing financial, human and political capital to save the wetlands from disappearing and to revive and restore those that have been degraded.

India has the largest network of Ramsar Sites in Asia, making these sites a critical ecological network for conservation of global biological diversity and supporting human well-being. The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) launched Mission Sahbhagita in 2022 with a mission of 'a healthy and effectively managed network of 75 wetlands of national and international significance which support water and food security; buffer from floods, droughts, cyclones and other extreme events; employment generation; conservation of species of local, national and international significance; climate change mitigation and adaptation

actions; and recognition, conservation and celebration of cultural heritage.’

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