

The information on Harike Lake submitted to the Ramsar Convention by the Indian Government is typed below:

Harike Lake (Punjab)

Area: 4100 ha.

Location: 31°13'N - 75°12'E. Situated in the districts of Kapurthala, Ferozepur and Amritsar.

Degree of protection: The wetland has been identified as one of the sites for conservation under Indian National Wetland Programme. The State Government has prepared a Management Action Plan for conservation of the wetland, and has been funded by the Central Government. This wetland has also been declared as wildlife sanctuary by the State Government.

Site description: Harike Lake, formed by damming of Beas-Sutlej watershed, is the biggest watershed of Punjab. This lake attracts a number of migratory birds. On account of heavy siltation due to denuded catchment area, the ponded area is gradually decreasing. The lake is heavily infested by water hyacinth. The main fish fauna in the lake is Hilsa.

Criteria for inclusion:

- International and National importance: Harike wetland is source of water supply for drinking and irrigation and has an important role in the economy of the State. During the winter period, about 196 species of birds visit the lake, which include migratory species as well as resident birds. The livelihood of nearby villagers to some extent depend upon fish resources of the lake.
- Changes in ecological character: A major chunk of Harike Lake is infested by water hyacinth. The lake is also getting contaminated with chemicals and insecticides used in the surrounding areas. Due to deforestation in the catchment area, the lake is getting heavily silted and the ponded area is gradually decreasing.
- Management practices: State Government has prepared an Action Plan for the conservation of the lake, which includes removal of water hyacinth and its utilisation for generation of biogas, afforestation, water quality monitoring and protective measures, which has been funded by the Central Government.