



# Ramsar Sites Information Service

## Annotated List of Wetlands of International Importance

# India

**26 Ramsar Site(s) covering 689,131 ha**

### **Ashtamudi Wetland**

Site number: 1,204 | Country: India | Administrative region: Kerala State

Area: 61,400 ha | Coordinates: 08°57'N 76°35'E | Designation dates: 19-08-2002

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Ashtamudi Wetland. 19/08/02. Kerala. 61,400 ha. 08°57'N 076°35'E. An extensive estuarine system, the second largest in Kerala State, which is of extraordinary importance for its hydrological functions, its biodiversity, and its support for fish. The site supports a number of mangrove species as well as over 40 associated plant species, and 57 species of birds have been observed, including six that are migratory. Nearly 100 species of fish sustain a lively fishing industry, with thousands of fishermen depending directly upon the estuary for their livelihood. Population density and urban pressures pose threats to the site, including pollution from oil spills from thousands of fishing boats and from industries in the surrounding area and conversion of natural habitat for development purposes. Ramsar site no. 1204. Most recent RIS information: 2002.

### **Bhitarkanika Mangroves**

Site number: 1,205 | Country: India | Administrative region: Orissa

Area: 65,000 ha | Coordinates: 20°39'N 86°54'E | Designation dates: 19-08-2002

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Bhitarkanika Mangroves. 19/08/02. Orissa. 65,000 ha. 20°39'N 086°54'E. Wildlife Sanctuary. One of the finest remaining patches of mangrove forests along the Indian coast - 25 years of continued conservation measures have made the site one of the best known wildlife sanctuaries. The site's Gahirmatha beach is said to host the largest known Olive Ridley sea turtle nesting beach in the world, with half a million nesting annually, and the site has the highest density of saltwater crocodile in the country, with nearly 700 *Crocodylus porosus*. It is a major breeding and wintering place for many resident and migratory waterbirds and is the east coast's major nursery for brackish water and estuarine fish fauna. Like many mangrove areas, the dense coastal forests provide vital protection for millions of people from devastating cyclones and tidal surges - of India's 58 recorded species of mangroves, 55 species are found in Bhitarkanika, a wider mangrove diversity than in the Sundarbans! Traditionally, sustainable harvesting of food, medicines, tannins, fuel wood, and construction materials, and particularly honey and fish, has been the rule, but population pressures and encroachment may threaten that equilibrium. Ramsar site no. 1205. Most recent RIS information: 2002.

## Bhoj Wetland

Site number: 1,206 | Country: India | Administrative region: Madhya Pradesh  
Area: 3,201 ha | Coordinates: 23°14'N 77°20'E | Designation dates: 19-08-2002  
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Bhoj Wetland. 19/08/02. Madhya Pradesh. 3,201 ha. 23°14'N 077°20'E. Two contiguous human-made reservoirs - the "Upper Lake" was created in the 11th century by construction of an earthen dam across the Kolans River, and the lower was constructed nearly 200 years ago, largely from leakage from the Upper, and is surrounded by the city of Bhopal. The lakes are very rich in biodiversity, particularly for macrophytes, phytoplankton, zooplankton, both natural and cultured fish species, both resident and migratory birds, insects, and reptiles and amphibians. Since implementation of a management action plan was begun in 1995 with financial support from the government of Japan, a number of bird species have been sighted which had rarely or never before been seen in the region. WWF-India has been of great assistance in preparing the site's designation. A photo essay is available at [http://ramsar.org/photo\\_essay\\_india\\_bhoj.htm](http://ramsar.org/photo_essay_india_bhoj.htm). Ramsar site no. 1206. Most recent RIS information: 2002.

## Chandertal Wetland

Site number: 1,569 | Country: India | Administrative region: Himachal Pradesh State  
Area: 49 ha | Coordinates: 32°29'N 77°36'E | Designation dates: 08-11-2005  
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Chandertal Wetland. 08/11/05; Himachal Pradesh, 49 ha; 32°29'N 077°36'E. A high altitude lake on the upper Chandra valley flowing to the Chandra river of the Western Himalayas (4,337m asl.) near the Kunzam pass joining the Himalayan and Pir Panjal ranges. It supports CITES and IUCN Redlisted Snow Leopard and is a refuge for many species like Snow Cock, Chukor, Black Ring Stilt, Kestrel, Golden Eagle, Chough, Red Fox, Himalayan Ibex, and Blue Sheep. These species, over the years, have developed special physiological features as adaptation strategies to cold arid climate, intense radiation, and oxygen deficiency. Some 65% of the larger catchment is degraded forest due to overgrazing by the nomadic herdsmen, while 35% are covered by grasslands. Other threatening factors to this fragile and sparse vegetation are summer trekking, littering waste, and lack of sanitation facilities. Since declaring the site a nationally important wetland in 1994, the authorities have been providing funds for ecotourism facilities. Spiti Forest Department is the custodian and State Council of Science, Technology and Environment is coordinating conservation management. Ramsar site no. 1569. Most recent RIS information: 2005.

## Chilika Lake

Site number: 229 | Country: India | Administrative region: Orissa State  
Area: 116,500 ha | Coordinates: 19°42'N 85°21'E | Designation dates: 01-10-1981  
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Chilika Lake. 01/10/81; Orissa; 116,500 ha; 19°42'N 085°21'E. Added to the Montreux Record, 16 June 1993; removed from the Record, 11 November 2002. Brackish lake separated from the Bay of Bengal by a long sandy ridge and subject to sea water exchange, resulting in extreme seasonal fluctuations in salinity in different sections of the lake. Saline areas support aquatic algae. The site is an important area for breeding, wintering and staging for 33 species of waterbirds. It also supports 118 species of fish, including commercially important species. Significant numbers of people are dependent upon the lake's resources. Placed on the Montreux Record in 1993 due to problems caused by siltation and sedimentation which was choking the mouth of the lake; removed from the Record in 2002 following rehabilitation efforts for which the Chilika Development Authority received the Ramsar Wetland Conservation Award for 2002. Subject of a Ramsar Advisory Mission, 2001. Ramsar site no. 229.

## Deepor Beel

Site number: 1,207 | Country: India | Administrative region: Assam  
Area: 4,000 ha | Coordinates: 26°08'N 91°39'E | Designation dates: 19-08-2002

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Deepor Beel. 19/08/02. Assam. 4,000 ha. 26°08'N 91°39'E. Sanctuary. A permanent freshwater lake in a former channel of the Brahmaputra river, of great biological importance and also essential as the only major storm water storage basin for the city of Guwahati. The beel is a staging site on migratory flyways and some of the largest concentrations of aquatic birds in Assam can be seen, especially in winter. Some globally threatened birds are supported, including Spotbilled Pelican (*Pelicanus philippensis*), Lesser and Greater Adjutant Stork (*Leptoptilos javanicus* and *dubius*), and Baer's Pochard (*Aythya baeri*). The 50 fish species present provide livelihoods for a number of surrounding villages, and nymphaea nuts and flowers, as well as ornamental fish, medicinal plants, and seeds of the Giant water lily *Euryale ferox* provide major revenue sources in local markets; orchids of commercial value are found in the neighboring forest. Potential threats include over-fishing and hunting pressure upon waterbirds, pollution from pesticides and fertilizers, and infestation by water hyacinth *Eichhornia crassipes*. A proposal to create a sewage canal from the city directly to the beel is considered to be disastrous in its potential effects. Ramsar site no. 1207. Most recent RIS information: 2002.

## East Calcutta Wetlands

Site number: 1,208 | Country: India | Administrative region: West Bengal  
Area: 12,500 ha | Coordinates: 22°27'N 88°27'E | Designation dates: 19-08-2002

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

East Calcutta Wetlands. 19/08/02. West Bengal. 12,500 ha. 22°27'N 88°27'E. World-renowned as a model of a multiple use wetland, the site's resource recovery systems, developed by local people through the ages, have saved the city of Calcutta from the costs of constructing and maintaining waste water treatment plants. The wetland forms an urban facility for treating the city's waste water and utilizing the treated water for pisciculture and agriculture, through the recovery of nutrients in an efficient manner - the water flows through fish ponds covering about 4,000 ha, and the ponds act as solar reactors and complete most of their bio-chemical reactions with the help of solar energy. Thus the system is described as "one of the rare examples of environmental protection and development management where a complex ecological process has been adopted by the local farmers for mastering the resource recovery activities" (RIS). The wetland provides about 150 tons of fresh vegetables daily, as well as some 10,500 tons of table fish per year, the latter providing livelihoods for about 50,000 people directly and as many again indirectly. The fish ponds are mostly operated by worker cooperatives, in some cases in legal associations and in others in cooperative groups whose tenurial rights are under legal challenge. A potential threat is seen in recent unauthorized use of the waste water outfall channels by industries which add metals to the canal sludge and threaten the edible quality of the fish and vegetables. Ramsar site no. 1208. Most recent RIS information: 2002.

## Harike Lake

Site number: 462 | Country: India | Administrative region: Punjab  
Area: 4,100 ha | Coordinates: 31°13'N 75°12'E | Designation dates: 23-03-1990

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Harike Lake. 23/03/90; Punjab; 4,100 ha; 31°13'N 75°12'E. Bird Sanctuary. A shallow water reservoir with thirteen islands, at the confluence of two rivers. Dense floating vegetation covers 70% of the lake. An important site for breeding, wintering and staging birds, supporting over 200,000 Anatidae (ducks, geese, swans, etc.) during migration. The entire lake is leased on an annual basis to commercial fishery organizations. Ramsar site no. 462. Most recent RIS information: 1990.

## Hokera Wetland

Site number: 1,570 | Country: India | Administrative region: Jammu and Kashmir State

Area: 1,375 ha | Coordinates: 34°05'N 74°42'E | Designation dates: 08-11-2005

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Hokera Wetland. 08/11/05; Jammu & Kashmir; 1,375 ha; 34°05'N 074°42'E. Located at the northwest Himalayan biogeographic province of Kashmir, back of the snow-draped Pir Panchal (1,584m asl.), Hokera wetland is only 10 km from scenic paradise of Srinagar. A natural perennial wetland contiguous to the Jhelum basin, it is the only site with remaining reedbeds of Kashmir and pathway of 68 waterfowl species like Large Egret, Great Crested Grebe, Little Cormorant, Common Shelduck, Tufted Duck and endangered White-eyed Pochard, coming from Siberia, China, Central Asia, and Northern Europe. It is an important source of food, spawning ground and nursery for fishes, besides offering feeding and breeding ground to a variety of water birds. Typical marshy vegetation complexes inhabit like Typha, Phragmites, Eleocharis, Trapa, and Nymphoides species ranging from shallow water to open water aquatic flora. Sustainable exploitation of fish, fodder and fuel is significant, despite water withdrawals since 1999. Potential threats include recent housing facilities, littered garbage, and demand for increasing tourist facilities. Ramsar site no. 1570. Most recent RIS information: 2005.

## Kanjli

Site number: 1,160 | Country: India | Administrative region: Punjab

Area: 183 ha | Coordinates: 31°25'N 75°22'E | Designation dates: 22-01-2002

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Kanjli. 22/01/02; Punjab; 183 ha; 31°25'N 075°22'E. A permanent stream, the Kali Bein, converted by construction of a small barrage in 1870 into a water storage area for irrigation purposes. The site fulfils Criteria 3 because of its importance in supporting a considerable diversity of aquatic, mesophytic, and terrestrial flora and fauna in the biogeographical region, and acts also as a key regulator of groundwater discharge and recharge with the seasons. By this means and by direct abstraction of water for irrigation by the local population, the site plays a crucial role in the agriculture which predominates on the surrounding fertile plain, with fewer pressures upon water supplies than elsewhere in the Punjab. The invasive water hyacinth is present and must be removed from time to time; increasing pollution levels, deforestation in the catchment area, and excessive grazing are seen as potential threats. The stream is considered to be the most significant in the state from the religious point of view, as it is associated with the first guru of the Sikhs, Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. The stream itself and surrounding marsh is under provincial ownership and surrounding areas privately owned. The site is a center for environmental tourism and picnicking. Ramsar site no. 1160. Most recent RIS information: 2001.

## Keoladeo National Park

Site number: 230 | Country: India | Administrative region: Rajasthan

Area: 2,873 ha | Coordinates: 27°13'N 77°32'E | Designation dates: 01-10-1981

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Keoladeo National Park. 01/10/81; Rajasthan; 2,873 ha; 27°13'N 077°32'E. Added to the Montreux Record, 4 July 1990. World Heritage Site; National Park; Bird Sanctuary. A complex of ten artificial, seasonal lagoons, varying in size, situated in a densely populated region. Vegetation is a mosaic of scrub and open grassland that provides habitat for breeding, wintering and staging migratory birds. Also supported are five species of ungulates, four species of cats, and two species of primates, as well as diverse plants, fish and reptiles. The canal provides water for agriculture and domestic consumption. Cattle and water buffalo graze on the site. A field research station exists. Placed on the Montreux Record in 1990 due to "water shortage and an unbalanced grazing regime". Additionally, the invasive growth of the grass *Paspalum distichum* has changed the ecological character of large areas of the site, reducing its suitability for certain waterbird species, notably the Siberian crane. Subject of Ramsar Advisory Missions in 1988 and 1990. Ramsar site no. 230.

## Kolleru Lake

Site number: 1,209 | Country: India | Administrative region: Andhra Pradesh

Area: 90,100 ha | Coordinates: 16°37'N 81°12'E | Designation dates: 19-08-2002

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Kolleru Lake. 19/08/02. Andhra Pradesh. 90,100 ha. 16°37'N 81°12'E. Wildlife Sanctuary. A natural eutrophic lake, situated between the two major river basins of the Godavari and the Krishna, fed by two seasonal rivers and a number of drains and channels, which functions as a natural flood balancing reservoir between the deltas of the two rivers. It provides habitat for a number of resident and migratory birds, including declining numbers of the vulnerable Grey Pelican (*Pelecanus philippensis*), and sustains both culture and capture fisheries, agriculture and related occupations of the people in the area. Damage and losses due to flooding in monsoon seasons and partial drying out during summers, the results of inadequate management planning and action, are seen as areas for improvement. WWF-India has been of great assistance in preparing the site's designation. Ramsar site no. 1209. Most recent RIS information: 2002.

## Loktak Lake

Site number: 463 | Country: India | Administrative region: Manipur

Area: 26,600 ha | Coordinates: 24°26'N 93°49'E | Designation dates: 23-03-1990

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Loktak Lake. 23/03/90; Manipur; 26,600 ha; 24°26'N 93°49'E. Added to the Montreux Record, 16 June 1993. A large, but shrinking freshwater lake and associated swamplands supplied by several streams. Thick, floating mats of weeds covered with soil (phumids) are a characteristic feature. The lake is used extensively by local people as a source of water for irrigation and domestic use and is an important wintering and staging area for waterbirds, particularly ducks. It also plays an important role in flood control. Included on the Montreux Record in 1993 as a result of ecological problems such as deforestation in the catchment area, infestation of water hyacinth, and pollution. The construction of a dam for hydroelectric power generation and irrigation purposes has caused the local extinction of several native fish species. Ramsar site no. 463. Most recent RIS information: 1990.

## Nalsarovar

Site number: 2,078 | Country: India | Administrative region: Gujarat State

Area: 12,000 ha | Coordinates: 22°47'N 72°02'E | Designation dates: 24-09-2012

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Nalsarovar Bird Sanctuary. 24/09/12; Gujarat; 12,000 ha; 22°46'33"N 072°02'21"E. Wildlife Sanctuary. A natural freshwater lake (a relict sea) that is the largest natural wetland in the Thar Desert Biogeographic Province and represents a dynamic environment with salinity and depth varying depending on rainfall. The area is home to 210 species of birds, with an average 174,128 individuals recorded there during the winter and 50,000 in the summer. It is an important stopover site within the Central Asia Flyway, with globally threatened species such as the critically endangered Sociable Lapwing (*Vanellus gregarius*) and the vulnerable Marbled Teal (*Marmaronetta angustirostris*) stopping over at the site during migration, while the vulnerable Sarus Crane (*Grus antigone*) takes refuge there during summer when other water bodies are dry. The wetland is also a lifeline for a satellite population of the endangered Indian Wild Ass (*Equus hemionus khur*) which uses this area in the dry season. Local communities heavily rely on the lake as it provides them with a source of drinking water and water for irrigation, as well as an important source of income from fishing for Catla fish (*Catla Catla*) and Rohu (*Labeo rohita*). An average of 75,000 tourists visit the wetland annually. Ramsar Site no. 2078. Most recent RIS information: 2012.

## Point Calimere Wildlife and Bird Sanctuary

Site number: 1,210 | Country: India | Administrative region: Tamil Nadu

Area: 38,500 ha | Coordinates: 10°19'N 79°38'E | Designation dates: 19-08-2002

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Point Calimere Wildlife and Bird Sanctuary. 19/08/02. Tamil Nadu. 38,500 ha. 10°19'N 079°38'E. Wildlife Sanctuary. A coastal area consisting of shallow waters, shores, and long sand bars, intertidal flats and intertidal forests, chiefly mangrove, and seasonal, often-saline lagoons, as well as human-made salt exploitation sites. Some 257 species of birds have been recorded, 119 of them waterbirds, including the vulnerable species Spoonbill Sandpiper (*Euryhorhynchus pygmaeus*) and Grey Pelican (*Pelecanus philippensis*) and some 30,000 Greater and Lesser Flamingos. The site serves as the breeding ground or nursery for many commercially important species of fish, as well as for prawns and crabs. Some 35,000 fishermen and agriculturalists support their families around the borders of the sanctuary. Illegal collection of firewood and forest produce such as fruits (gathered by lopping off tree branches), the spread of *Prosopis chilensis* (Chilean mesquite), increasingly brackish groundwater caused by expansion of the historical salt works, and decreasing inflow of freshwater are all seen as potential causes for concern. Visitors come to the site both for recreation and for pilgrimage, as it is associated with Lord Rama. Ramsar site no. 1210. Most recent RIS information: 2002.

## Pong Dam Lake

Site number: 1,211 | Country: India | Administrative region: Himachal Pradesh

Area: 15,662 ha | Coordinates: 32°01'N 76°05'E | Designation dates: 19-08-2002

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Pong Dam Lake. 19/08/02. Himachal Pradesh. 15,662 ha. 32°01'N 076°05'E. Wildlife Sanctuary. A water storage reservoir created in 1975 on the Beas River in the low foothills of the Himalaya on the northern edge of the Indo-Gangetic plain. The RIS notes that "at a time when wetlands in northern India are getting reduced due to extensive drainage and reclamation, the avian habitats formed by the creation of the Pong Dam assume a great significance" - given the site's location on the trans-Himalayan flyway, more than 220 bird species have been identified, with 54 species of waterfowl. Hydrological values include monsoon-season flood prevention, both in the surroundings and downstream due to water regulation, groundwater recharge, silt trapping and prevention of soil erosion; electricity is generated for this and neighboring states, and irrigation water is being channeled to fertile areas of the Punjab and Rajasthan deserts. Low-yield subsistence fishing existed prior to impoundment, but since, a lucrative fishery has grown up, with 27 fish species and a yield increasing markedly each year - some 1800 fishermen now have direct employment and 1000 families benefit indirectly. A nature conservation education centre is found on the island of Ransar or Ramsar (sic). Recent management strategies have shifted away from law enforcement and use restrictions towards more participatory approaches and community awareness, and the site is well suited to "community-based ecotourism". Ramsar site no. 1211. Most recent RIS information: 2002.

## Renuka Wetland

Site number: 1,571 | Country: India | Administrative region: Himachal Pradesh State

Area: 20 ha | Coordinates: 31°37'N 77°27'E | Designation dates: 08-11-2005

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Renuka Wetland. 08/11/05; Himachal Pradesh; 20 ha; 31°37'N 077°27'E. Wildlife Sanctuary, Reserve Forest. A natural wetland with freshwater springs and inland subterranean karst formations, fed by a small stream flowing from the lower Himalayan out to the Giri river. The lake is home to at least 443 species of fauna and 19 species of ichthyofauna representative of lacustrine ecosystems like *Puntius*, *Labeo*, *Rasbora*, *Channa*. Prominent vegetation ranges from dry deciduous like *Shorea Robusta*, *Terminalia tomentosa*, *Dalbergia sissoo* to hydrophytes. There are 103 species of birds of which 66 are residents, e.g. Crimson-breasted barbet, Mayna, Bulbul, Pheasants, Egrets, Herons, Mallards and Lapwing. Among ungulates Sambhar, Barking deer and Ghorals are also abundant in the area. The lake has high religious significance and is named after the mother of Hindu sage Parshuram, and is thus visited by thousands of pilgrims and tourists. Conservation measures so far include community awareness, and prevention of silt influx from eroded slopes and 50 ha. of massive plantation in the catchment. The site is managed by the Shimla Forest Department, Himachal Pradesh. Ramsar site no. 1571. Most recent RIS information: 2005.

## Ropar

Site number: 1,161 | Country: India | Administrative region: Punjab

Area: 1,365 ha | Coordinates: 31°01'N 76°30'E | Designation dates: 22-01-2002

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Ropar. 22/01/02; Punjab; 1,365 ha; 31°01'N 076°30'E. National Wetland. A humanmade wetland of lake and river formed by the 1952 construction of a barrage for diversion of water from the Sutlej River for drinking and irrigation supplies. The site is an important breeding place for the nationally protected Smooth Indian Otter, Hog Deer, Sambar, and several reptiles, and the endangered Indian Pangolin (*Manis crassicaudata*) is thought to be present. Some 35 species of fish play an important role in the food chain, and about 150 species of local and migratory birds are supported. Local fisheries are economically significant, and wheat, rice, sugar cane, and sorghum are cultivated in the surrounding area. Deforested local hills leading to siltation, and increasing industrialization causing an inflow of pollutants, are potential threats, and invasive weeds are a further cause for concern. Nature lovers, birdwatchers, swimmers and boaters visit the site in considerable numbers. Ramsar site no. 1161. Most recent RIS information: 2001.

## Rudrasagar Lake

Site number: 1,572 | Country: India | Administrative region: West Tripura District

Area: 240 ha | Coordinates: 23°29'N 91°16'E | Designation dates: 08-11-2005

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Rudrasagar Lake. 08/11/05; Tripura; 240 ha; 23°29'N 090°01'E. A lowland sedimentation reservoir in the northeast hills, fed by three perennial streams discharging to the River Gomti. The lake is abundant in commercially important freshwater fishes like *Botia* spp., *Notopterus Chitala*, *Mystus* spp., *Ompok pabda*, *Labeo bata*, and freshwater scampi, with annual production of 26 metric-tons, and an ideal habitat for IUCN Redlisted Three-striped Roof Turtle *Kachuga dhongka*. Owing to high rainfall (2500mm) and downstream topography, the wetland is regularly flooded with 4-5 times annual peak, assisting in groundwater recharge. Aquatic weeds are composed of rare marginal-floating-emergent-submerged weeds. Lands are owned by the state with perennial water areas leased out to the subsistent fishermen's cooperative, and surrounding seasonal waterbodies are cultivated for paddy. Main threats are increasing silt loads due to deforestation, expansion of agricultural land and intensive farming, and land conversion for population pressure. Vijaya Dashami, one of the most important Hindu festivals with various sports events, attracts at least 50,000 tourists and devotees every year. A management plan is underway by the MoEF-India. Ramsar site no. 1572. Most recent RIS information: 2005.

## Sambhar Lake

Site number: 464 | Country: India | Administrative region: Rajasthan

Area: 24,000 ha | Coordinates: 27°00'N 75°00'E | Designation dates: 23-03-1990

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Sambhar Lake. 23/03/90; Rajasthan; 24,000 ha; 27°00'N 075°00'E. A large saline lake fed by four streams set in a shallow wetland and subject to seasonal fluctuations. It is surrounded by sand flats and dry thorn scrub and fed by seasonal rivers and streams. The site is important for a variety of wintering waterbirds, including large numbers of flamingos. Human activities consist of salt production and livestock grazing. Ramsar site no. 464. Most recent RIS information: 1990.

## Sasthamkotta Lake

Site number: 1,212 | Country: India | Administrative region: Kerala District

Area: 373 ha | Coordinates: 09°02'N 76°37'E | Designation dates: 19-08-2002

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Sasthamkotta Lake. 19/08/02. Kerala. 373 ha. 09°02'N 076°37'E. The largest freshwater lake in Kerala state in the southwest of the country, spring-fed and the source of drinking water for half a million people in the Kollam district. Some 27 freshwater fish species are present. The water contains no common salts or other minerals and supports no water plants; a larva called "cavaborus" abounds and eliminates bacteria in the water, thus contributing to its exceptional purity. The ancient Sastha temple is an important pilgrimage centre. WWF-India has been of great assistance in preparing the site's designation. Ramsar site no. 1212. Most recent RIS information: 2002.

## Surinsar-Mansar Lakes

Site number: 1,573 | Country: India | Administrative region: Jammu, Kashmir State

Area: 350 ha | Coordinates: 32°45'N 75°12'E | Designation dates: 08-11-2005

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Surinsar-Mansar Lakes. 08/11/05; Jammu & Kashmir; 350 ha; 32°45'N 075°12'E. Wildlife Sanctuary, Hindu sacred site. Freshwater composite lake in semi-arid Panjab Plains, adjoining the Jhelum Basin with catchment of sandy conglomeratic soil, boulders and pebbles. Surinsar is rain-fed without permanent discharge, and Mansar is primarily fed by surface run-off and partially by mineralised water through paddy fields, with inflow increasing in rainy season. The lake supports CITES and IUCN Redlisted *Lissemys punctata*, *Aspideretes gangeticus*, and *Mansariella lacustris*. This composite lake is high in micro nutrients for which it is an attractive habitat, breeding and nursery ground for migratory waterfowls like *Fulica atra*, *Gallinula chloropus*, *Podiceps nigricollis*, *Aythya fuligula*, and various *Anas* species. The site is socially and culturally very important with many temples around owing to its mythical origin from the Mahabharata period. Although the lakes support variety of fishes, fishing is discouraged for religious values. The main threats are increasing visitors, agricultural runoff, bathing and cremation rituals. Conservation is focused on awareness-raising. Ramsar site no.1573. Most recent RIS information: 2005.

## Tsomoriri

Site number: 1,213 | Country: India | Administrative region: Eastern Ladakh, Jammu & Kashmir

Area: 12,000 ha | Coordinates: 32°54'N 78°18'E | Designation dates: 19-08-2002

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Tsomoriri. 19/08/02. Jammu & Kashmir. 12,000 ha. 32°54'N 078°18'E. Wetland Reserve. A freshwater to brackish lake lying at 4,595m above sea level, with wet meadows and borax-laden wetlands along the shores. The site is said to represent the only breeding ground outside of China for one of the most endangered cranes, the Black-necked crane (*Grus nigricollis*), and the only breeding ground for Bar-headed geese in India. The Great Tibetan Sheep or Argali (*Ovis ammon hodgsoni*) and Tibetan Wild Ass (*Equus kiang*) are endemic to the Tibetan plateau, of which the Changthang is the westernmost part. The barley fields at Korzok have been described as the highest cultivated land in the world. With no outflow, evaporation in the arid steppe conditions causes varying levels of salinity. Ancient trade routes and now major trekking routes pass the site. The 400-year-old Korzok monastery attracts many tourists, and the wetland is considered sacred by local Buddhist communities and the water is not used by them. The local community dedicated Tsomoriri as a WWF Sacred Gift for the Living Planet in recognition of WWF-India's project work there. The rapidly growing attraction of the recently opened area to western tourists (currently 2500 per summer) as an "unspoilt destination" with pristine high desert landscapes and lively cultural traditions brings great promise but also potential threats to the ecosystem. Ramsar site no. 1213. Most recent RIS information: 2002.

## Upper Ganga River

Site number: 1,574 | Country: India | Administrative region: Uttar Pradesh

Area: 26,590 ha | Coordinates: 28°33'N 78°12'E | Designation dates: 08-11-2005

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Upper Ganga River (Brijghat to Narora Stretch). 08/11/05; Uttar Pradesh; 26,590 ha; 28°33'N 078°12'E. A shallow river stretch of the great Ganges with intermittent small stretches of deep-water pools and reservoirs upstream from barrages. The river provides habitat for IUCN Red listed Ganges River Dolphin, Gharial, Crocodile, 6 species of turtles, otters, 82 species of fish and more than hundred species of birds. Major plant species, some of which have high medicinal values, include *Dalbergia sissoo*, *Saraca indica*, *Eucalyptus globulus*, *Ficus bengalensis*, *Dendrocalamus strictus*, *Tectona grandis*, *Azadirachta indica* and aquatic *Eichhorina*. This river stretch has high Hindu religious importance for thousands of pilgrims and is used for cremation and holy baths for spiritual purification. Major threats are sewage discharge, agricultural runoff, and intensive fishing. Conservation activities carried out are plantation to prevent bank erosion, training on organic farming, and lobbying to ban commercial fishing. Ramsar site no. 1574. Most recent RIS information: 2005.



## Vembanad-Kol Wetland

Site number: 1,214 | Country: India | Administrative region: Kerala State

Area: 151,250 ha | Coordinates: 09°50'N 76°45'E | Designation dates: 19-08-2002

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Vembanad-Kol Wetland. 19/08/02. Kerala. 151,250 ha. 09°50'N 076°45'E. The largest brackish, humid tropical wetland ecosystem on the southwest coast of India, fed by 10 rivers and typical of large estuarine systems on the western coast, renowned for its clams and supporting the third largest waterfowl population in India during the winter months. Over 90 species of resident birds and 50 species of migratory birds are found in the Kol area. Flood protection for thickly-populated coastal areas of three districts of Kerala is considered a major benefit, groundwater recharge helps to supply well water for the region, and the value of the system for the local transport of people and trade is considerable. Ramsar site no. 1214. Most recent RIS information: 2002.

## Wular Lake

Site number: 461 | Country: India | Administrative region: Jammu & Kashmir State

Area: 18,900 ha | Coordinates: 34°16'N 74°33'E | Designation dates: 23-03-1990

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Wular Lake. 23/03/90; Jammu & Kashmir; 18,900 ha; 34°16'N 074°33'E. The largest freshwater lake in India with extensive marshes of emergent and floating vegetation, particularly water chestnut, that provide an important source of revenue for the State Government and fodder for domestic livestock. The lake supports an important fishing industry and is a valuable source of water for irrigation and domestic use. The area is important for wintering, staging and breeding birds. Human activities include rice cultivation and tree farming. Ramsar site no. 461. Most recent RIS information: 1990.