



Wetlands Management for Biodiversity and Climate Protection

Situation

Wetlands are ecosystems located at the interface of land and water. We see them in various forms such as marshes, lagoons, estuaries, mangroves, peatlands, ponds, lakes, reservoirs, floodplains, and deltas. As highly productive ecosystems, wetlands are vital parts of the water cycle and support rich biological diversity.

There are over 750,000 wetlands in India which are spread over 152,600 sq km (National Wetlands Atlas 2011). Distributed across ten bio-geographic zones - from the Trans-Himalayas to the Indian Islands - these wetlands exhibit an enormous diversity and support a variety of ecosystem services like freshwater provision, food, fibre and fuels, groundwater recharge and purification, pollution abatement, flood mitigation, erosion control and carbon sequestration. They also provide cultural, and recreational benefits. Wetlands directly and indirectly support the livelihoods of millions of Indians. In India, 46 wetlands of international importance have been designated under the Ramsar Convention.

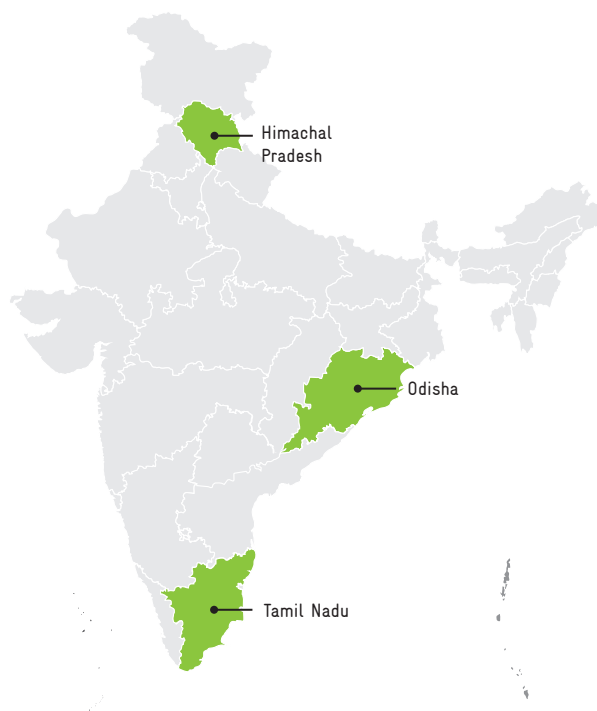
Many wetlands are threatened by reclamation and degradation through drainage and landfill, pollution,

An **ecosystem-based** integrated **management** of **wetlands** will secure and improve their **biodiversity** and ecosystem services

hydrological alteration, over-exploitation, and climate change resulting in loss of biodiversity and disruption in ecosystem benefits to the society. Wetlands in India form an integral component of biodiversity conservation, water and food security, and climate protection.

Objective

The main objective of the project is to strengthen the institutional framework and capacities for an ecosystem-based integrated management of wetlands of international importance (Ramsar sites) in India.





Approach

The Wetlands Management for Biodiversity and Climate Protection project is implemented in close cooperation with the National Plan for Conservation of Aquatic Ecosystems of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. Four main output areas define the implementation approach of the project:

- Integrated management planning for 3-4 pilot Ramsar sites based on biodiversity, ecosystem services and climate change risks.
- Capacity development of national, state and site level stakeholders for integrated wetland management.
- Development of a wetland monitoring system, including an instrument to track management effectiveness.
- Implementation of ecosystem-based sustainable livelihood measures as a Green Recovery measure post-COVID-19.

Four Ramsar sites have been selected as pilot sites under the project: Pong Dam and Renuka Lake in Himachal Pradesh, Bhitarkanika Mangroves in Odisha, and the Point Calimere Wildlife and Bird Sanctuary in Tamil Nadu. The Chilika Development Authority has been identified as a resource centre for wetlands management.



Contribution To 2030 Agenda

The Wetlands Management for Biodiversity and Climate Protection project contributes particularly to the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6: Clean Water and Sanitation, which aims to ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all; SDG13: Climate Action, which aims to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts; SDG 14: Life Below Water, and SDG 15: Life on Land, which aims to protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss.

By introducing **management** strategies based on **biodiversity** and ecosystem services, the **resilience** of wetlands can be **increased**

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Responsible

Mr Ravindra Singh,
Project Manager

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Indo-German Biodiversity Programme
A-2/18, Safdarjung Enclave,
New Delhi-110029, India
T: +91 11 4949 5353
E: biodiv.india@giz.de
W: www.giz.de/india

Registered GIZ offices in Bonn and Eschborn:

Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 36 + 40
53113 Bonn
T: +49 228 44 60-0
F: +49 228 4460-17 66

Dag-Hammarskjöld-Weg 1-5
65760 Eschborn
T: +49 6196 79-0
F: +49 6196 79-11 15
I: www.giz.de

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