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.

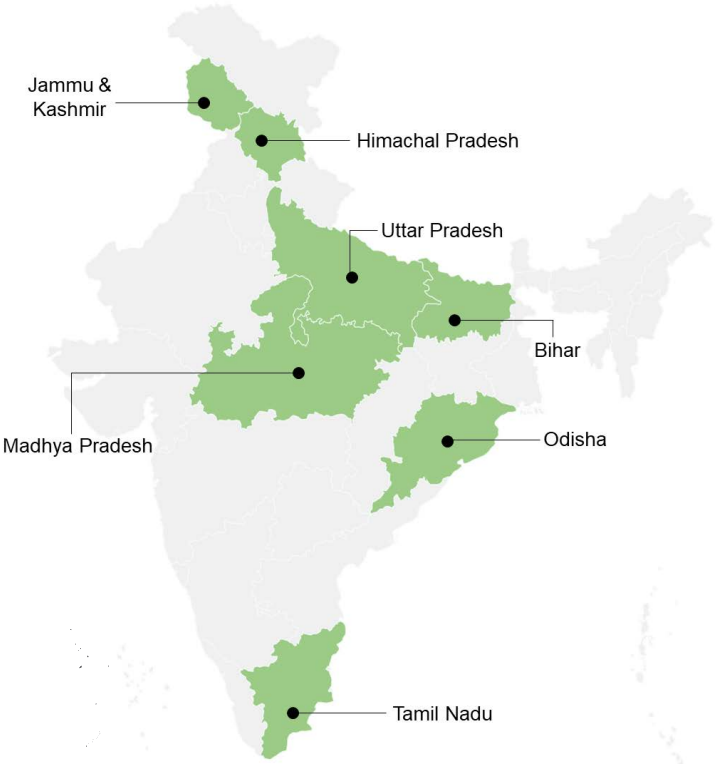
There are over 750,000 wetlands in India which are spread over 15.98 Mha (National Wetlands Decadal Change Atlas 2021). Distributed across ten bio-geographic zones - from the Trans-Himalayas to the Indian Islands - these wetlands exhibit an enormous diversity and support a variety of ecosystem services 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, 75 wetlands of international importance have been designated under the Ramsar Convention.

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

Implementing **ecosystem-based** wetland management strategies secures **biodiversity,** ecosystem services and livelihoods of **communities** while offering solutions for **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.



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IKI INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE INITIATIVE

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

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 priority 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.
- Demonstrating approaches for community engagement as well as Green Recovery Measures post COVID-19 through ecosystem-based sustainable livelihood and adaptation measures.

The project is being presently implemented in seven states : Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh, in collaboration with the State and Union Territory Wetland Authorities.

Contribution To 2030 Agenda

The 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.

Strengthening capacities and networks for enhanced ecosystem-based **wetland management** to safeguard **biodiversity** and ecosystem services, secure **livelihoods** and build **climate resilience.**

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Responsible

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