

## Wetlands Highlights

### Bihar gets its first and India's 39<sup>th</sup> wetland of international importance – 'Kabartal Lake'

Kabartal, also known as Kanwar Jheel, in Begusarai, Bihar has finally been recognized as a wetland of international importance under Ramsar Convention in October 2020. It is the first wetland in Bihar and 39<sup>th</sup> in India to be recognized as a wetland of international importance. Nevertheless, Kabartal is one of the most important wetlands in Bihar. Apart from Kabartal in Bihar, 10 more wetlands in India have been recognized as wetlands of international importance under the Ramsar Convention in last one year, including one from Maharashtra, three from Punjab and six from Uttar Pradesh.

Source : <https://south-asia.wetlands.org/news/kabartal-and-asan-conservation-reserve-designated-as-ramsar-sites/>



Photo credit: [south-asia.wetlands.org](http://south-asia.wetlands.org)

#### Wetland of International Importance



### Other Indian wetlands recognized as wetlands of international importance



Lonar Lake



Soor Sarovar



Asan Wetland

Lonar Lake in Buldhana, Maharashtra, Soor Sarovar Lake in Agra, Uttar Pradesh and Asan Barrage in Dehradun, Uttarakhand have been recognized as wetlands of international importance by India under the Ramsar Convention. The Lonar Lake was created by the impact of a meteorite on basalt bedrock thousands of years back. It covers an area of about 77.69 hectares and 365 hectares around the lake, which had been declared as a wildlife sanctuary by the State Forest Department in June 2000. On the other hand, Soor Sarovar Lake covers around 713 hectares and is home to hundreds of bird species (migratory and local), reptiles with more than 300 pythons, and hundreds of fish species. It was declared as a bird sanctuary in 1991 and now as a wetland of international importance. The Asan Conservation Reserve is spread over 444 hectares converging with the

Yamuna river in Dehradun. Its habitat supports almost 330 bird species, including Reading Headed Vulture, White Rumped Vulture, Baer's Pochard, and 49 fish species with endangered Putitor Mahseer. Almost 10 more Indian wetlands were enlisted under the Ramsar Convention in January 2020. After the addition of 4 more wetlands in October 2020, the list includes a total of 41 wetlands of India as wetlands of international importance.

Source : <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/india-names-lonar-lake-sur-sarovar-as-wetlands-of-international-importance/articleshow/79240659.cms>

<https://www.jagranjosh.com/general-knowledge/ramsar-sites-in-india-1605708327-1>

### **The Centre has asked States and UTs to set up Wetlands Authority**



*Photo credit: un-ihe.org*

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has notified a new Wetland Conservation Rules in January 2020, which restrain the expansion or establishment of industries, and disposal of wastes of construction and demolition in the wetlands. The ministry has directed the States and Union Territories to set up an authority, which will prepare the strategies for conservation and beneficial use of wetlands within their jurisdiction. According to the directives from the ministry, the state authorities will be headed by the Minister of State Department of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and will be responsible for undertaking measures for elevating the awareness and sensitization among the local communities on the importance of wetlands.

Source : <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/environment/centre-notifies-new-wetland-conservation-rules-asks-states-uts-to-set-up-authority/articleshow/73161225.cms?from=mdr>

### **The Bihar State Wetlands Authority resolved to rectify the land use classification of wetlands**



*Kabartal Lake*

As per the directions from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, New Delhi, under the new Wetland Conservation Rule, a State Wetland Authority has been set up in Bihar. After the establishment of the Bihar State Wetland Authority, a meeting under the chairmanship of Mr. Sushil Kumar Modi, Hon'ble Minister, Department of Environment, Forest and Climate Change was held on 28 August 2020. Under the category of wastelands of Bihar Soil and Water Conservation and Land Development Act 1970, measures for minimizing these unproductive lands, including waterlogged areas, have been decided to be propelled by funding wetland drainage programs. The authority has

updated the land records and effectively removed the wetlands from the category of wastelands and placed them under a new category named 'wetlands'. It has also been decided by the State Wetland Authority to constitute a review process, which includes all the developmental processes relating directly or indirectly to wetlands. The Principal Secretary, Department of Environment, Forest and Climate Change emphasized that different departments need to incorporate wetlands in their development plans and processes. Very recently, Kabartal Lake has been recognized as a wetland of international importance with the efforts of Bihar State Wetland Authority and Wetlands International. Moreover, the Kabartal has been given high priority by the Authority for its conservation and wise use as supported by all the members of the Authority. The meeting was represented by different departments, including water resources, tourism, agriculture, fisheries, environment and forest, and other research institutions.

Source : <https://south-asia.wetlands.org/news/bihar-state-wetlands-authority-resolves-to-update-land-records-by-removing-wetlands-from-the-wastelands-category/>