

WWD 2026: New Ramsar sites and plans in India

In 2025, the MoEF&CC has secured Ramsar tag for 11 wetlands taking the total tally from 85 in 2024 to 96 in 2025. On the eve of World Wetlands Day 2025 itself the ministry had [announced inclusion of 4 wetlands](#) in Ramsar list including Sakkarakottai Bird Sanctuary and Therthangal Bird Sanctuary in Tamil Nadu, Khecheopalri Wetland in Sikkim, and Udhwa Lake in Jharkhand have been included in the list of Ramsar sites in the country.

The list of 11 newly added Ramsar wetlands sites in India 3 each from Rajasthan & Bihar, 2 from Tamil Nadu and 1 each from Sikkim, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh is given below.

1 Khichan (Phalodi), 2 Menar (Udaipur) 3 Siliserh Lake in Rajasthan.

4 Gokul Jalashay, 5 Udaipur Jheel 6 Gogabeel Lake in Bihar.

7 Sakkarakottai Bird Sanctuary, 8 Therthangal Bird Sanctuary in Tamil Nadu

9 Khecheopalri Wetland, Sikkim, 10 Udhwa Lake, Jharkhand, 11 Kopra Reservoir Chhattisgarh

Sikkim [Khachoedpalri becomes state's 1st Ramsar site](#) Located at an altitude of 1,700 meters, the [Khachoedpalri Wetland](#) is renowned for its ecological significance and cultural importance.

Tamil Nadu [Ramsar tag for 2 more wetlands](#) Two bird sanctuaries Ramanathapuram district - Sakkarakottai and Therthangal - have been designated as Ramsar sites. With this, the State has 20 Ramsar sites and continues to have the highest number of Ramsar sites in India. Uttar Pradesh follows with 10 sites.

Jharkhand [Udhwa Lake becomes Ramsar site](#) The Udhwa Bird Sanctuary, spread over approximately 6.5 sqkm has been declared first Ramsar site in Jharkhand. The then Bihar govt had declared Udhwa Lake a bird sanctuary in 1991. The site [comprises two interconnected wetlands](#), Pataura Lake and Barhel Lake, which are surrounded by the hillocks of the Rajmahal Hills and linked by a channel to the Ganga River.

Rajasthan [Menar, Khichan get Ramsar tag on June 05, 2025](#) The Menar Wetland Complex is a freshwater monsoon wetland complex formed by three ponds, Braham talab, Dhand talab and Kheroda talab, and agricultural land that connects the latter two. Khichan Wetland, located in the northern Thar Desert, comprises two water bodies, Ratri nadi (river) and Vijaysagar talab (pond), riparian habitat and scrub land. This desert ecosystem supports drought-resistant plant species that provide habitat for over 150 species of birds.

In 2023, the [SWA had recommended](#) Khichan and Menar, along with three other sites in Rajasthan, for Ramsar designation. On Dec. 12, 2025, the [Siliserh Lake in Alwar district was declared a Ramsar site](#) making it India's 96th such recognised wetland. Built in 1845 by Maharaja Vinay Singh to supply drinking water to Alwar city, Siliserh Lake remains an important historical and ecological landmark, with its old aqueducts still visible around the site.

Bihar [2 more wetlands in Ramsar list](#) The two new additions in Sep 2025 are Gokul Jalashay in Buxar dist and Udaipur Jheel in W Champaran dist, bringing the total number of such wetlands to five in Bihar. According to information on these [two wetlands](#) shared by India with the Convention secretariat, the Gokul Jalashay is an oxbow lake located on the southern edge of the river Ganga. Udaipur Jheel is also an oxbow lake which surrounds a village. The two wetlands have a total area of 448 ha and 319 ha, respectively, as per the MoEFCC.

In first week of Nov. 2025, the [Gogabeel Lake in Katihar district got Ramsar wetland tag](#) bringing the total number of such protected sites in the country to 94. Bihar has now 6 Ramsar sites, standing at 3rd position in the country after Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh.

Chhattisgarh gets 1st Ramsar site The Kopra Reservoir in Bilaspur district on Dec. 12, was officially declared the state's first Ramsar Site. Fed largely by rainwater and small seasonal streams, it serves as a lifeline for surrounding villages - supplying drinking water, sustaining irrigation and supporting agriculture across fertile tracts that depend heavily on the reservoir's catchment. Beyond its water value, Kopra is being pitched as a biodiversity hotspot. The CM said that it's part of the Anjar Vision 2047, which includes a target: securing Ramsar status for 20 wetlands by 2030.

Chandigarh Ramsar proposal for Sukhna lake approved The approval was granted during the fourth meeting of the SWA under the chairmanship of Punjab Governor and UT Administrator Gulab Chand Kataria in Sept. 2025. The proposal will now be forwarded to the MoEF&CC for funding under the National Plan for Conservation of Aquatic Ecosystems (NPCA) Scheme. The SWA also considered and approved the 5-year Integrated Management Plan for Sukhna Wetland. The Rs 22.5 crore plan outlines a series of activities for the protection, conservation and scientific management of the wetland.

SC's sharp words on Sukhna lake The apex court on Jan. 21, 2026 expressed concerns over the drying up of Sukhna Lake to raise the issue of illegal construction while hearing the Aravalli Hills case. While warning the Haryana govt against repeating past mistakes, the bench led by CJI Surya Kant said the Sukhna Lake had been "completely damaged" due to the connivance of officials and the builder mafia. "Kitna sukhaoge Sukna Lake ko (How much will you dry up Sukhna Lake) due to connivance of state officials, builder mafia is operating... You have damaged the lake completely," the CJI-led bench said.

The rain-fed Sukhna Lake has long been plagued by dipping water levels. While the **SC blamed** "builder mafias" and bureaucratic collusion, environmental experts are demanding retrospective action and accountability for officials responsible for degradation. They emphasize swift measures to protect the lake and its catchment area, stressing that safeguarding water bodies is a constitutional duty.

Uttar Pradesh Govt scraps Ramsar plan for Dhanauri wetlands The state govt will not seek a Ramsar tag for the Dhanauri wetland because of its proximity to residential sectors & the Noida International Airport. Instead, YEIDA will develop the area as a biodiversity park spanning 112 ha. In addition to the existing 45 ha of marshland, another 30 ha will be added to complete the project. YEIDA CEO R K Singh said the Authority already holds about 25 ha in the area, and 12 ha belonging to the gram sabha will also be used for the project.

In June 2019, the Centre asked the UP govt to propose Dhanauri as a Ramsar site, but the state did not file a formal nomination. Despite meeting at least two Ramsar criteria - hosting more than 20,000 waterbirds annually & supporting over 1% of the biogeographic population of sarus cranes - the process remained stalled for years and eventually reached the NGT in 2023, where petitioners sought clarity on the wetland's notification status. "There was never a compulsory direction to obtain a Ramsar tag," a YEIDA official said.

Odisha ₹143cr released for 4 Ramsar wetlands: Ministry to HC The MoEF&CC informed the Orissa HC on Feb. 19, 2025 that Rs 143.21 crore was released for the conservation and management of 4 of the 6 Ramsar wetlands in Odisha under the National Wetlands Conservation Program (NWCP) and National Lake Conservation Plan (NLCP) until 2012-13.

Providing details of the funds allocated for wetlands in Odisha, Dr Mahato stated that the ministry released Rs 72.5 cr from 2021-23 for the Bhitarkanika mangroves. Between 1989-2024, Rs 30.87 cr was provided for Chilika Lake and Rs 33.40 cr for the Satkosia gorge between 2015 and 2025. As for Ansupa lake, the ministry released Rs 6.44 cr between 2008 and 2021. In the case of two other wetlands - Tampara lake and Hirakud reservoir - the integrated management plan (IMP) is under preparation and awaited, respectively.

The HC was hearing a PIL initiated suo motu by it on Jan 22, 2025 to monitor the conservation of 6 wetlands in the state. The proceeding was initiated following a Supreme Court order on

Dec 11, 2024, which called for the protection of 85 Ramsar sites across the country. Taking note of the affidavit, the HC scheduled March 5, 2025 as the next date to assess the progress of the implementation of the SC order, expecting affidavits from authorities concerned by then.

Telangana [Govt to seek Ramsar listing for major wetlands](#) Forests and environment Minister Konda Surekha on Feb. 01, 2025 announced that the state has decided to offer more protection to some of its major wetlands by submitting proposals to the Centre for inclusion in the list of Ramsar Convention-identified sites. He said that the govt had identified the Manjira and Kinnerasani reservoirs, Pakhal and Ramappa lakes, as well as Ameenpur lake in the city for inclusion in the list.

Tamil Nadu [Proposal to get Ramsar tag for Samanatham tank](#) The forest department in Oct. 2025 was preparing a proposal to include the Samanatham tank under the Ramsar Convention, and is likely to be submitted to the SWA soon for review, according to a senior forest official. Activists have been raising concerns over the rise in pollution and the loss of green cover near the waterbody, which attracts thousands of migratory bird species. Each winter, a large number of waterbirds flock to the tank, located on the outskirts of Madurai.

Arunachal Pradesh [Need to designate Sangetsar Tso as Ramsar sites](#) Incessant deposition of silt and littering at Sangetsar Tso – one of the high-altitude lakes, located at 12,165 feet, and an important habitat for many rare migratory birds – in Tawang district calls for immediate attention and designation of the lake as a Ramsar site, conservationists have said. Wakro (Lohit)-based Kamlang Tiger Reserve Range Forest Officer Buntly Tao said that active siltation would destroy the lake due to sediment deposits and other non-degradable elements. He added that microorganisms, which form the primary food source for these birds, would be damaged.

Assam [Ramsar tag urged for Rowmari–Donduwa wetlands](#) Conservationists are pushing to list Rowmari–Donduwa wetland as a Ramsar site, arguing its biodiversity, migratory bird populations and flood-buffering role meet international criteria - a push that would make it Assam's second Ramsar wetland.

SANDRP