

“WETLAND CONSERVATION PROGRAMME, 2018” IN HIMACHAL PRADESH



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Wetlands are important features in the landscape that provide numerous beneficial services for people, wildlife and aquatic species. Some of these services, or functions, include protecting and improving water quality, providing fish and wildlife habitats, storing floodwaters and maintaining surface water flow during dry periods. These valuable functions are the result of the unique natural characteristics of wetlands. Wetlands are amongst the most productive ecosystems in the world, comparable to rain forests and coral reefs. An immense variety of species of microbes, plants, insects, amphibians, reptiles, birds, fish and mammals are part of wetland ecosystems. Climate, landscape, shape (topology), geology and the movement and abundance of water help to determine the plants and animals that inhabit each wetland. The complex dynamic relationships among the organisms inhabiting the wetland environment create complex food webs. Wetlands can be thought of as "biological supermarkets."

Himachal Pradesh encompasses a wide variety of wetlands, spread in various ecological zones which apart from biodiversity treasures are source of livelihood for the local community and have immense aesthetic & tourism values.

Presently, the State has three "Ramsar Sites- Wetlands of International Importance" namely Pong dam (Kangra), Renuka (Sirmaur) and Chandertal (Lahaul & Spiti). Besides, Rewalsar (Mandi) and Khajjiar (Chamba) have also been included by the Ministry of Environment Forests & Climate Change, Govt. of India for its conservation and management. The Himachal Pradesh State Wetland Authority (HPSWA) constituted in the year 2017 under the aegis of H.P. Council for Science, Technology & Environment (HIMCOSTE) is acting as a nodal agency for coordinating the Wetland Conservation Programme in the state with the active participation of all the stakeholders departments. Planning and implementation is being done keeping in view the requirement of multidisciplinary approach as the principle of "wise use". Various Departments and Agencies such as local administration, Forests, Fisheries, Tourism, Industries, HP Environment Protection and Pollution Control Board, HP University, Zoological Survey of India need to coordinate their effort for better management of wetlands. State & National level Research Institutes are also actively involved in the Wetland Conservation Programme in the state.

OVERALL OBJECTIVES

The core objective of the Wetland Conservation Programme is to conserve and restore wetlands with the active participation of the local community at the planning, implementation and monitoring level. Beside this the broad objectives laid down in the Management Plan are to conserve and to restore the habitats for migratory & resident species of birds of the area, to conserve the indigenous fish species and make fishery, sustainable livelihood for the local fishermen, to harmonize the relation between fishermen, wildlife and farmers, to enhance the income of the local people by undertaking income generation activities promotion of community based eco-tourism in the area to generate employment in the area and to make the tourists more sensitive to the values of nature.

MAIN COMPONENTS AND ACTIVITIES

To fulfill objectives, the Wetland Conservation and Management Action Plan under the Wetland Conservation Programme 2018, would involve components like; Habitat Improvement, Soil and water conservation, Deweeding & desilting, Income generating activities, Training and workshops, Research Studies covering site-specific conservation works and awareness activities.

The major proposed activities for the current financial year 2017-18 under the WCP for the five major wetlands are under mentioned:-

PONG DAM WETLAND

- Protection and monitoring.
- Gully plugging & Stream bank erosion mitigation.
- Purchase of all Terrains vehicles for monitoring.
- Trench to protect breeding colonies of birds.
- Water harvesting structures including, construction of non-geometrical bunds to create pond and mounds.
- Weed management
- Supplementary/alternate livelihoods
- Biodiversity conservation.
- Fisheries conservation.
- Financial outlay:Rs.140.50 Lakhs, sanctioned on 18.12.2017



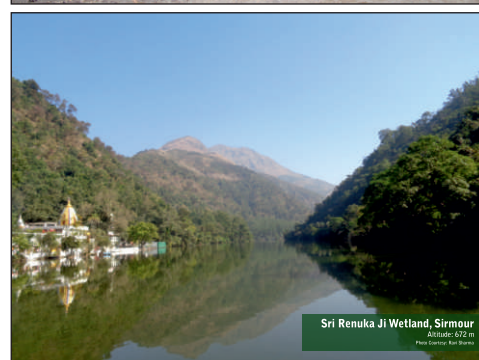
CHANDERTAL WETLAND

- Check dams construction.
- Geo-textile matting.
- Vegetative barriers with local grass and shrub.
- Live stock vaccination.
- Management of Pastures & grazing.
- Environment Educational & Awareness.
- Research Studies.
- Financial outlay:- 13.00 Lakh, sanctioned on 27.3.2017



RENUKA WETLAND

- Construction of Check wall and Toe wall for wetland protection.
- Construction of Bio-Engineering Structure.
- Plantation activities.
- Environment Educational & Awareness.
- Research studies and monitoring.
- Financial outlay:- Rs.50.50 Lakhs, sanctioned on 12.10.2017



REWALSAR WETLAND

- Survey of Human settlements and other human activities in the catchment.
- Creation of Plant Nurseries.
- Vegetative check dams construction.
- De-silting and de-weeding of lake.
- Solid waste management including provision of eco-friendly animal proof waste disposal bins.
- Construction of camping sites.
- Distribution of fuel, fodder trees and improved grass.
- Financial outlay:- Rs.53.33 Lakh, sanctioned on 17.3.2017



KHAJJAR WETLAND

- Manual De-silting and Dredging of the lake.
- Repairing/improvement of drainage system existing in the lake.
- Soil conservation by Vegetative/Brushwood Check Dams and Gully plugging/Stabilization.
- Construction of Water Harvesting Structure.
- Preparation of Wetland Atlas of H.P. through WWF-India.
- Conducting Khajjiar Wetland Integrated Ecological Study
- Financial outlay:- 163.95 Lakhs, sanctioned on 20.2.2017



MAJOR WETLANDS OF HIMACHAL PRADESH



"50% OF GLOBAL WETLANDS HAVE NOW BEEN LOST OR DESTROYED"

Protect Wetlands...!!



HIMACHAL PRADESH STATE WETLANDS AUTHORITY

HIMACHAL PRADESH COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT (HIMCOSTE)

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