Brief Report on national-level celebration of World Wetlands Day 2022
**Ramsar Convention**: Inter-governmental treaty that provides the framework for national action and international co-operation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. India ratified the Convention in 1982 and has since been working towards conservation, management and wise use of wetland.

**World Wetlands Day**: Annual event spearheaded by the Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands on the anniversary of signing of Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance in 1971; being organised by the Contracting Parties of the Convention on Wetlands since 1997. World Wetlands Day is the ideal time to increase people’s understanding of these critically important ecosystems.

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**World Wetlands Day 2022**

**World Wetland Day 2022** was celebrated on 2nd February 2022. This was an especially significant celebration because the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 75/317 on 30th August 2021, making it the first WWD celebrated as a United Nations International Day.

**This year’s theme** was ‘Wetlands Action for People and Nature’ highlighting the importance of actions to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands for humans and planetary health.

It aimed to spread the message of valuing-managing-restoring wetlands and was essentially ‘a call to take action for wetlands is the focus of this years’ campaign. It's an appeal to invest financial, human and political capital to save the world’s wetlands from disappearing and to restore those we have degraded.’
The national level celebration for World Wetlands Day 2022 was held by the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of India in collaboration with Forest & Wildlife Department, Govt. of Haryana and the Haryana State Wetland Authority, Environment Department, Haryana. The event was a hybrid event with physical presence at the Sultanpur National Park, a Ramsar site situated in Haryana, with the option of joining virtually through WebEx. The event was also screened live at the Ministry’s official YouTube Channel.

Shri Bhupender Yadav, Minister of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, and Labour & Employment, Government of India was the Chief Guest for the event, which was presided by Shri Manohar Lal, Chief Minister of Haryana. Shri Ashwini Kumar Choubey, Minister of State for Environment, Forest & Climate Change and Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Government of India was a Special Guest and Shri Kanwar Pal, Minister of Forests, Education, Tourism and Art & Culture, Haryana was the Host-in-Chief. (List of attendees is at Annexure 1 and the Programme invitation is placed at Annexure 2). The programme began with ceremonial plantation by dignitaries followed by a brief visit to the Sultanpur National Park for bird watching around the wetland.
A visit to the Nature Interpretation Centre was next along with a brief round of the exhibition area.
In the exhibition, one stall was arranged by MoEF&CC along with the GIZ, WISA and WWF to create awareness about the various ongoing wetland conservation and management activities. The stall also encouraged water conservation by engaging students and visitors.

The stall had various informative brochures, factsheets, field guides and badges for the visitors, stream of audio-visuals about the wetlands of the country, interactive activities and information on how to register oneself as Wetland Mitra.
The following programme for the day can be viewed in YouTube. The covered event commenced with the welcome addresses by Shri Jagdish Chander, PCCF-Chief Wildlife Warden, Haryana and Shri Kanwar Pal.
The National Wetlands Decadal Change Atlas, a space based observations of Indian Wetlands comparing the 2017-2018 data with the previous National Atlas which used 2005-2006 data, was released. Dr. N M Desai, Director, Space Applications Centre addressed the audience virtually.

This was followed by the announcement of two new Ramsar sites, namely Khijadia Wildlife Sanctuary (Gujarat) and Bakhira Wildlife Sanctuary (Uttar Pradesh). The Ramsar Certificates for the two sites were presented to Shri N.K.Janu, CCF Meerut, Uttar Pradesh and Smt. Arti Kanwar, Residetn Commissioner, Gujarat.

Brochures on the two new Ramsar sites and the two Ramsar sites from Haryana, namely, Sultanpur and Bhindawas were also released along with a brochure on the GoI initiatives for Wetland Conservation.
Other publications were also released, teaser videos on the wetlands were played and some important announcements were made, including that of Aravalli Biodiversity Park an OECM.

Shri Ashwini Kumar Choubey then addressed the gathered audience. Shri Manohar Lal also delivered an address. Shri Bhupendar Yadav then invited everyone to take the Wetland pledge before addressing the gathering. The programme was moderated by Mrs Manju Pandey, Joint Secretary MoEF&CC. The Vote of Thanks was delivered by Dr. Vivek Saxena, MD, Haryana Forest Development Cooperation.
Some of the publications released

(CTRL Click on image to open the publication)
Annexure 1: List of attendees at the venue

Shri Bhupender Yadav, Hon’ble MEFCC
Shri Ashwini Kumar Choubey, Hon’ble MoS (EF&CC)
Shri Manohar Lal, CM (Haryana)
Shri Kanwar Pal, MEF (Haryana)
Shri Sidhi Nath Roy IAS, Adl. Chief Secretary, Forest & Environment Department, Haryana
Shri Jagdish Chander IFS, PCCF - Chief Wildlife Warden, Haryana
Dr. Vivek Saxena IFS, Managing Director, HFDC, Haryana
Dr. Yash Garg IAS, Dy. Commissioner, Gurugram
Smt Manju Pandey, Joint Secretary, MoEF&CC
Mr Raghu Kumar Kodali, Scientist ‘F’, MoEF&CC
Dr. M. Ramesh, Scientist ‘E’, MoEF&CC
Shri Rajasekhar Ratti, Scientist ‘D’, MoEF&CC
Shri Chandan Singh, Consultant, MoEF&CC
Officers from Haryana, Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh
Representatives from various organisations including GIZ India, WISA and WWF
The IT team of MoEF&CC led by Dr S. Annadurai
School Students and Teachers
Members of Press