

## World Wetlands Day

### “Sustainable Systems to Conserve Wetlands”

Date & Time: 02<sup>nd</sup> February, 02:30 pm-5:30 pm

Start Time: 02:30 pm

End Time: 5:30 pm

The international webinar was organized on World Wetlands Day. The webinar began at 02:30 pm.

#### ➤ Address by Prof. Tanu Jindal

An introduction to the theme was addressed by **Prof. (Dr.) Tanu Jindal, Group Additional Pro VC (R&D), Director of Amity Institute of Environmental Toxicology, Safety, and Management, Amity University, Noida (India)**. She welcomed the dignitaries and introduced this year's theme for World Wetlands Day, Sustainable Systems to Conserve Wetlands. Prof. Tanu Jindal gave a welcoming speech highlighting the theme. She discussed the Amity education group, Amity Science Technology, and Innovation Foundation, collaboration with CSIR-NEERI, and Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences (Domain). She also discussed harming wetlands/threats such as climate change, over-fishing, the inflow of agricultural fertilizers & pesticides, and dumping of the industry's wastes.

#### ➤ Address by Prof. (Dr.) Balvinder Shukla

An inspirational message was addressed by **Prof. (Dr.) Balvinder Shukla, Vice Chancellor, Amity University, Noida (India)**. She addressed the theme of World Wetland Day. She said that wetlands are land areas saturated with water. Wetlands provide sustainable livelihoods and are essential to human health and well-being. She congratulates Prof. Tanu Jindal and her team for the organization of this webinar.

➤ **Address by Dr. D.K. Bandyopadhyay**

An inspirational message was addressed by **Dr. D.K Bandyopadhyay, Chief Advisor FPO, and Chairman, Amity Law School, Amity University, Noida (India)**. He addressed the theme of world wetland day. He said that wetlands are essential to human well-being, inclusive economic growth, and climate mitigation and adaptation. He discussed the multiple benefits and services provided by wetlands that are essential in achieving sustainable development goals (SDGs). Wetlands are aligned with 17 SDGs goals.

**Speaker-wise discussion points (as per program flow):**

1. **Dr. Sanjay Deshmukh**, Professor of Life Science, University of Mumbai.

- (i) He said that wetlands are very important for living beings.
- (ii) Wetlands provide water for human consumption and agriculture.
- (iii) They are the Earth's greatest natural carbon stores.
- (iv) They support biodiversity and abundant and unique nature.
- (v) He discussed the Ramsar wetland area. It is designated as internationally important under the Ramsar Convention and is located in Thane, Maharashtra.

2. **Dr. (Mrs.) Rajesh Dhankhar**, Professor, Department of Environmental, M.D. University, Rohtak.

- (i) The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands defines wetlands as “areas of marsh, fen, peat land or water, whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary.
- (ii) These comprise areas that transition between terrestrial (and) areas and aquatic (water) areas.
- (iii) These are a distinct ecosystem that is flooded by water, either permanently (for years or decades) or seasonally (for weeks or months).

- (iv) Wetlands are particularly important providers of all water-related ecosystem services.
- (v) Wetlands are productive areas for plant life, animals, and wetland agriculture.
- (vi) Wetlands are the major habitat for most of the world's water birds and key habitat for migratory species.
- (vii) Wetlands have high recreational, historical, scientific, and cultural value.
- (viii) Wetlands are an important source of food.

3. **Mr. Tarun Kathula**, Scientist F, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC).

- (i) India is one of the few countries where wetland cover is on the rise.
- (ii) Two third of the population of wild tigers is in India (2,967 in 2018 from 1827 in 1972).
- (iii) The population of elephants was 29964 in 2017 (from 12000 in 1970).
- (iv) Asiatic Lion population is over 674 in 2020 (from 177 in 1978)
- (v) 15.98 million hectares of land are available for wetlands in India.
- (vi) 75 wetlands have been designated as Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites).
- (vii) In April 2022, the honorable PM launched Mission Amrit Sarovar with the objective of the construction/development of at least 75 Amrit Sarovar (ponds) in every district of the country.

4. **Dr. Abhilasha Bhawsar**, Assistant Professor, Department of Environmental Science and Limnology, Barkatullah University.

- (i) She discussed the river continuum concept.

- (ii) There are several factors that affect the wetlands like agriculture, grazing land, human settlement, deforestation, soil erosion, industries, sewage disposal, and urbanization.
- (iii) She also discussed sustainable measures to conserve wetlands.
- (iv) No anthropogenic activity in the riparian zone of the wetland; catchment area has to be conserved; there is a difference in the beautification of wetlands and the conservation of wetlands; local species should be given importance; community, and involvement, aquatic biodiversity should be studied well; avoid interfering the nature; stop exploiting wetlands; and sewage disposal only after proper treatment are the sustainable measures.

5. **Dr. Surabhi Mehrotra**, Assistant Professor, Department of Architecture and Planning, MANIT, Bhopal.

- (i) She discussed Bhoj wetland. It consists of two lakes and is located in Bhopal.
- (ii) Bhoj wetland is covering a 31 sq. km area.
- (iii) Fishing, drinking water (40 %) of the population, agricultural waste, and recreational are the major issues that affect the wetland.
- (iv) She also discussed Loktak lake, Manipur. It is the biggest freshwater lake in India.
- (v) Loktak is also known as the mother of Manipur.
- (vi) Surface area varying from 250 sq km to 500 sq km during rainy season with a typical area of 287 sq km.
- (vii) The Loktak wetland complex comprises several smaller lakes.
- (viii) Until 1983, the area used to experience large water level changes during the year.
- (ix) Analysis of land use patterns of Loktak lake between 1977 and 2015 has shown that the lake has undergone a significant alteration in land use over the period.

(x) The ecosystem in Manipur consists of two interrelated biomass, wetlands and forests.

(xi) She discussed the livelihood insecurity of Champu Khangpok floating village.

➤ **Vote of thanks**

The vote of thanks was given by Dr. Abhishek Chauhan, Senior Scientist, Amity Institute of Environmental Toxicology, Safety & Management, Amity University, Noida (UP)

**Prof. Tanu Jindal**



**Prof. (Dr.) Balvinder Shukla**



**Dr. D.K. Bandyopadhyay**



**Dr. Sanjay Deshmukh**



**Dr. (Mrs.) Rajesh Dhankhar**



**Mr. Tarun Kathula**



**Dr. Abhilasha Bhawsar**



**Dr. Surabhi Mehrotra**



**Dr. Abhishek Chauhan**



**Poster Competition**

