



Wetland Accredited Cities

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Context:

Indore and Udaipur have become the **first two Indian cities** to earn a place on the **global list of accredited wetland cities** under the **Ramsar Convention on Wetlands**. This recognition highlights the cities' commitment to preserving and sustainably managing their wetlands.

- **Indore:** The city's **Sirpur Lake** (a Ramsar site) is recognized for its importance as a **waterbird congregation area** and is being developed into a **bird sanctuary** to further enhance its ecological significance.
- **Udaipur:** Known for being surrounded by five major wetlands, including **Pichola, Fateh Sagar, Rang Sagar, Swaroop Sagar, and Doodh Talai**, Udaipur's wetlands play a crucial role in local ecology and water management.

About Wetland City Accreditation (WCA):

- The **WCA** is a **voluntary** system that recognizes cities that value their **natural or human-made wetlands**. This accreditation not only provides **international recognition** but also helps cities gain **positive publicity** for their conservation efforts.
- **Approved at COP12 of the Ramsar Convention (2015)** in Uruguay, the accreditation is valid for **6 years**, after which it must be renewed, provided the city continues to meet the criteria established by the Ramsar Convention.

Significance of Wetland City Accreditation:

1. **Promotes Wetland Conservation:** It encourages the conservation and **wise use** of urban and peri-urban wetlands, ensuring sustainable **socio-economic benefits** for local populations.
2. **Strengthens Ecosystem Relationship:** The accreditation encourages cities, especially those near **Wetlands of International Importance**, to strengthen their relationship with these valuable ecosystems.
3. **Supports National Initiatives:** It plays a role in the implementation of India's **Amrit Dharohar initiative**, led by the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC)**, which aims to protect and restore wetlands across the country.

Ramsar Convention Overview:

- The **Ramsar Convention** is an **intergovernmental treaty** established to provide a framework for the **conservation and wise use** of wetlands and their resources.
- Adopted in **1971** and coming into force in **1975**, it currently recognizes **85 Ramsar sites** in India, highlighting the country's efforts in wetland conservation.