



Khichan and Menar as New Ramsar Sites

Source: PIB

The **Khichan (Phalodi) and Menar (Udaipur) wetlands in Rajasthan** have been declared **Ramsar Sites**, bringing India's total to 91, the highest in Asia.

- **Khichan** is famous for hosting thousands of **migratory Demoiselle cranes**, while **Menar (Bird Village)**, is recognized for its **community-led bird conservation efforts**.
- Rajasthan now has **4 Ramsar Sites**, including **Sambhar Lake** (Nagaur & Jaipur) and **Keoladeo Ghana National Park** (Bharatpur).
- **About Wetlands:** They are areas of **marsh, fen, peatland, or water (natural or artificial)** with **water that is static or flowing**, including **marine areas with a depth not exceeding six meters**.
 - Wetlands are **ecotone**, having land transitional between **terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems**.
- **About Ramsar Convention:** It was adopted in **1971 in Ramsar, Iran**, and provides a global framework for **wetland conservation and wise use**. **India joined it in 1982**.
 - The **Montreux Record** (threatened list) lists wetlands with **deteriorating ecological character** due to human activity or pollution. India has **two wetlands** in the Montreux Record:
 - **Keoladeo National Park, Rajasthan (1990): A UNESCO World Heritage Site.**
 - **Loktak Lake, Manipur (1993): The largest freshwater lake in Northeast India**, known for its **Phumdis** (floating masses of **vegetation, soil, and organic matter**).
 - **Chilika Lake** was included in the Montreux Record in **1993** but was removed in **2002** (first site from Asia).

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