Gogabeel Lake: India's 94th Ramsar Site (2025)

1. Introduction

- India has added Gogabeel Lake in Bihar to its list of Ramsar Sites, marking the 94th internationally recognised wetland under the Ramsar Convention.
- This inclusion highlights India's continued commitment to wetland conservation and sustainable management.
- Date of Recognition: November 2025
- Location: Katihar District, Bihar

2. Geographical and Ecological Features

- **Type:** Oxbow Lake (formed when a river meander is cut off from the main channel).
- Position: Lies between the Ganga and Mahananda Rivers in north Bihar.
- Ecological Role:
 - Functions as a **floodplain wetland**, maintaining local hydrological balance.
 - Serves as a critical habitat for migratory and resident birds, fish, and aquatic plants.
 - Acts as a natural flood buffer and groundwater recharge zone.
- **Seasonal Dynamics:** During the monsoon, the lake connects to both the Ganga and Mahananda rivers, enriching biodiversity and water exchange.

3. Community-Based Conservation

- Bihar's First Community Reserve: Gogabeel is managed by local communities, making it an example of community-led conservation.
- Local residents are directly involved in maintaining, monitoring, and conserving the wetland's biodiversity.
- Promotes eco-friendly livelihoods such as sustainable fishing, bird tourism,

4. Significance for Bihar

- First Community Reserve in Bihar.
- Sixth Ramsar Site in the state (after Gokul Jalashay and Udaipur Jheel).
- Highlights Bihar's growing contribution to India's wetland conservation network.
- Positions Bihar **third among Indian states** (after Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh) in number of Ramsar sites.

5. India's Growing Global Role in Wetland Conservation

- Total Ramsar Sites (as of Nov 2025): 94
- Total Area Covered: Over 13.6 lakh hectares.
- Global Ranking:
 - □□ United Kingdom 176 sites
 - □□ Mexico 144 sites
 - □□ India 94 sites (Rank 3 globally, Rank 1 in Asia)
- India has added **67 wetlands in the last 11 years**, reflecting its **accelerated conservation efforts**.
- The announcement was made by Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav, reaffirming the government's emphasis on community-based and sustainable wetland management.

6. About the Ramsar Convention

- **Full Name:** Convention on Wetlands of International Importance.
- Adopted: 1971 at Ramsar, Iran.
- Came into Force: 1975.
- Total Member Countries: 172 (as of 2025).
- Total Ramsar Sites Worldwide: 2,546 sites.

• Objective:

- To conserve and wisely use wetlands through international cooperation.
- To recognise wetlands of ecological, economic, and cultural importance.

7. Importance of Ramsar Sites

- Recognised for their role in:
 - **[Hydrological regulation** balancing water cycles and recharging groundwater.
 - □ Flood control and drought mitigation.
 - [Biodiversity conservation supporting endangered species and migratory birds.
 - [[[[ivelihood generation providing fish, reeds, and raw materials.
 - [Climate resilience acting as carbon sinks and buffers against extreme weather.

8. Exam-Oriented Key Facts

Fact **Details Newly Added Site** Gogabeel Lake, Katihar District, Bihar **Designation Year** 2025 Ramsar Site Number (India) 94th Type of Wetland Oxbow lake / floodplain wetland **Significance** Bihar's first community reserve **Bihar's Ramsar Sites (Total)** 6 India's Rank (Global) 3rd (after UK and Mexico) **India's Total Ramsar Sites (2025)** 94 Ramsar Convention Year & Place 1971, Ramsar (Iran) India's Area under Ramsar Sites 13.6 lakh hectares (approx.) **Environment Minister (2025)** Bhupender Yadav

9. Broader Environmental Significance

- Integrates local and global efforts: Combines grassroots stewardship with international conservation goals.
- Supports Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Especially SDG-13 (Climate Action) and SDG-15 (Life on Land).

- Nature-Based Solutions: Enhances India's approach to climate resilience and ecological restoration.
- Symbol of India's Leadership: Reflects India's growing global standing in environmental diplomacy.

10. Conclusion

- The inclusion of **Gogabeel Lake** as India's 94th Ramsar site represents a milestone in wetland protection and community-led conservation.
- It highlights India's integrated vision for balancing development with ecology.
- Gogabeel stands as a **model for sustainable coexistence** between **people** and nature, strengthening India's **eco-conservation** and climate resilience agenda.

<u>Facebook</u>

<u>Instagram</u>

Youtube

