



## Wetland Action Sheet

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Wetlands are essential to our cities. They ensure we have water storage, they offer many life forms a home, they sequester carbon. They are as much a part of our geography as cities are. Here is how you can protect wetlands as communities and individuals.

- First, look out for them. In your neighbourhood, or on your way to work, college, school. Ask people who have lived in the area longer than you. Find these wetlands on Google Maps.
- Visit these wetlands and see how they are doing. Are they full of trash? Are they protected? Have they dried up? Take photos. If they are doing well, visit them often and monitor them.
- Educate yourself about just a few of them. Maybe only one or two so you can monitor them in the long term. What is their legal status? Were they man made? What is their history? Is there sewage flowing into them? One useful resource is the ISRO documentation of most of India's wetlands. Check if your wetland is listed there. If yes, it is protected in many ways and you need to monitor. If not, hmmm. It's bad news. You have to get it recognized as a wetland.
- Educate yourself about the laws.
- Tell your friends, neighbours, family about this wetland. And total strangers too. Make them like this wetland so much, they want to preserve it. Write to the local DC, or DM, to protect it. Write to your forest department or ministry, asking for details. Write to the tourism department if this is a tourism hot-spot, like many lakes are. Blog about it, put it on social media. Organize a clean up drive, if you must.
- If you like birding, document what birds come there. Make lists on e-bird. If you are not a birder, get onto social media and ask who is. On Facebook, visit Indian Birds and other relevant pages and invite folks to come and list the birds.
- Whatever you do, mobilize public love for the marsh, or pond or whatever it is. This is the backbone of protecting the wetland.
- Keep alert. Sometimes, such places are give away overnight to build on. Talk to local people nearby. If this happens, you may have to get all those who love the planet to fight back.