



WORLD WETLANDS DAY 2012

**REPORT BY
TCF-BANDHAVGARH**

THE CORBETT FOUNDATION

**Village- Bijheria
PO-Tala Bandhavgarh
Distt.-Umaria**

WORLD WETLANDS DAY

2012

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A **wetland** is an area of land whose soil is saturated with moisture either permanently or seasonally. Specifically, wetlands are characterized as having a water table that stands at or near the land surface either permanently or seasonally for a long enough period each year to support aquatic plants, therefore a patch of land that develops pools of water after a rain storm would not be considered a "wetland" though the land is wet.

A wetland can be natural or artificial (Manmade as reservoirs, tanks ext.). Wetlands include swamps, marshes and bogs, lakes and rivers among others. The water found in wetlands can be saltwater, freshwater or brackish water. Wetlands are considered the most biologically diverse of all ecosystems. Plant life found in wetlands includes mangrove, water lilies, cattails, sedges, tamarack and many others. Animal life includes many different amphibians, reptiles, birds, insects and mammals. Wetlands also serve as natural wastewater purification systems. The study of wetlands has recently been termed as **Paludology**.

Wetlands are the integral part of healthy environment and they provide fundamental ecological services like flood control; ground water replenishment; shoreline stabilization and storm protection; sediment and nutrient retention and export; water purification and reservoir of biodiversity. In addition, wetlands are important feeding, breeding, and drinking areas for wildlife and provide a stopping place and refuge for waterfowl. Wetlands are also the source of food for large number of humans. They are regulators of water regimes and sources of biodiversity at all levels - species, genetic and ecosystem. Wetlands constitute a resource of great economic, scientific, cultural, and recreational value for the community. Wetlands play a vital role in climate change adaptation and mitigation.

But these wetland values are increasingly facing several anthropogenic pressures. The rapidly expanding human populations, large scale changes in land use/landcover and burgeoning development projects, encroachment and improper use of watersheds has all caused a substantial decline of wetland resources and also have negative impact on the quality of wetlands. Thus, wetlands should be conserved, protected, restored and rehabilitated and it needs efforts from all sections of human society.



World Wetlands Day

The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Convention) was adopted on **2nd February in 1971** to maintain the ecological character of Wetlands of International Importance and to plan for the "wise use", or sustainable use, of all of the wetlands in the territories of member countries. Each year since 1997, February 2nd is celebrated as the World Wetlands Day by various government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and various other social groups to raise public awareness about importance and benefits of wetlands. This year's focus is on "responsible wetland tourism" so that wetland tourism should not have negative impact on the quality of our wetlands.

The Corbett Foundation

The Corbett Foundation (TCF) is a registered public charitable trust set up by **Mr. Dilip D. Khatau** on April 22, 1994. TCF began with an initial mandate of supporting the conservation of flora and fauna of Kumaon and Garhwal area famous as the "Corbett Country". Since then, it runs various medical, awareness and wildlife conservation programs in and around the **Corbett Tiger Reserve** to get the support of local communities for the conservation of wildlife and environment. In 1999, TCF established a division called **Kutch Ecological Research Centre (KERC) in Kutch**, Gujarat for watershed management, human health, sustainable development, veterinary services, wildlife conservation and environment and wildlife awareness programs and eco-tourism programs. TCF extended its operations in **Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve** since 2009 and in **Kanha Tiger Reserve** since 2010 and soon expanding its operation at **Kaziranga Tiger Reserve** in the year 2012. TCF all division regularly organizes various environment and wildlife awareness programs for the local communities so that they can understand the value of environment and wildlife conservation and provide their support for the cause as from the beginning, we believe that until and unless we get the support and cooperation of local communities, we are not able to achieve the goals of wildlife and environment conservation.



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World Wetlands Day in Bandhavgarh

It is now universally accepted that awareness among the mass media is crucial for the conservation of our wetlands. **The Corbett Foundation-Bandhavgarh** utilized **WORLD WETLANDS DAY** (2nd February) as a platform to create awareness among the school **KIDS** about the importance of conservation of wetlands. On this occasion, we organized awareness program for the kids of Government Junior High School, Tala and Government Junior High School, Gadhpuri. The programme was organized at a local wetland located in the Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve.



Participants introduction to World Wetlands Day

The programme was started with introduction of participants, followed by briefing about the **World Wetlands Day** celebration by Dr. Sharad Kumar. During this session participants were informed about the RMASAR convention and how **World Wetlands Day** got representation all over the world for creation of awareness for the wetland conservation. Students were also informed about World Wetlands Day, 2012 theme “**WETLAND TOURISM and RECREATION**”. By this participants were became aware about how through wetland tourism local communities getting livelihoods and what is sustainable wetland tourism.



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Interactive session with participants



Dr. Sharad on importance of Wetlands



After the introduction, school KIDS were asked to share their knowledge about role of wetlands in human life and beneficial services provided by wetland for the human society. This exercise will help the student in understanding the importance of wetland conservation. After interactive session with KIDS, they were introduced to the direct and indirect benefits or services provided by the wetlands and how crucial they are for sustaining human life on earth. During this exercise, they were introduced to wetland's services through the local examples.

After this participants were educated about the various threats faced by our wetlands and how under the pressure of human development, area under the wetlands decreased very rapidly and how due to uncontrolled human activities around these important areas putting negative impact on their quality. In addition this, participants also informed about the consequences of degradation of wetlands and how this affect the human life in long run. This will helps in getting their support for the conservation of wetlands.



Information on threats to WETLANDS



Information on consequences of Wetlands degradation



How **WE** can contribute in Wetlands Conservation



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In the last session, KIDS were informed how we can help in the conservation and protection of wetlands and how by doing changes in our lifestyle, we can provide great help in maintaining the quality of our wetlands. **80 KIDS and 5 teachers** were participated in the program and promised their support for the wetland conservation. In the last of the program, participants have taken an oath:

“Today we have taken the pledge that we do our best for the conservation, preservation and protection of wetlands and we use all means to create awareness among local communities about the importance of wetlands conservation.



KIDS taking pledge with Dr. Sharad for the conservation of Wetlands