

Kolleru lake

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The survival of **Kolleru Lake** has recently been under severe threat as **aqua ponds** continue to encroach and thrive in the **heart** of the **wetland**



[ref-outlook traveller]

About the Kolleru lake:

- The Kolleru lake is **Asia's largest freshwater lake ecosystem**, situated in **Andhra Pradesh**.
 - It is also the **largest shallow freshwater lake in Asia**.
- Kolleru Lake was declared as a '**Ramsar Convention**' site in **2022**.
 - The Ramsar Convention is an **intergovernmental agreement** dedicated to the **conservation and rational use of wetland ecosystems**.
- It is located between **Krishna** and **Godavari** deltas.
- Kolleru lake contains **numerous fertile islets** called **lankas**.
- It is a unique wetland ecosystem that serves as a **breeding and feeding** ground for **220 avian species** including nearly **100 species** migrating from the **Paleartic region**.
 - **Reason-** Kolleru Lake falls in the **Central Asian Flyway Zone** of **migratory birds**.
- **Avifauna:** Siberian crane, ibis, painted storks, grey pelicans, Asian open-bill, painted storks, glossy ibises and white ibises etc.

Measures taken for protection of the Kolleru lake:

- In **1999**, the State government declared majority of the area of the lake as the **Kolleru Wildlife Sanctuary (KWS)** under the **Wildlife Protection Act of 1972**.
 - KWS is present between the **basins** of the **Godavari** and the **Krishna rivers**.
- In **2006**, the **Andhra Pradesh government** executed '**Operation Kolleru**' as per the directives of the **Supreme Court** and demolished **1,776 aqua ponds** present within the **KWS**.
 - **Operation Kolleru** was aimed at protecting the **KWS**.
- The **Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ)** surrounding the KWS will be identified by the state Forest Department through the survey and the area under **encroachments** will also be recognised.
 - Declaration of the site as an **ESZ** will help in **conservation** of the Kolleru Lake ecosystem,

by restricting various activities.