

Sangai

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The Manipur Government has raised concerns with the Centre regarding a hydro-electric modernization plan for Loktak Lake, stating it could pose a threat to the endangered Sangai deer species and disrupt the lake's biodiversity.



[ref- mongabay]

About Sangai deer:

- The sangai is an **endemic and endangered subspecies** of Eld's deer found only in **Manipur**.
- It is the **state animal of Manipur**.
- Its **original natural habitat** is the **floating marshy grasslands** of the **Keibul Lamjao National Park**, located in the southern parts of the **Loktak Lake**, which is the **largest freshwater lake** in eastern India.
- **Conservation status:** Schedule-1 of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, Endangered on IUCN Red List.

Features:

- It is a medium-sized deer, with **uniquely distinctive antlers**, with **extremely long brow tine**, which form the **main beam**.
- It has a **dark reddish brown winter coat**, which **turns paler in summer**.
- The females **give birth to fawns throughout the year**.
- The deer walks on the hind surface of its pasterns with mincing hops over floating foliage, earning

it the nickname **Dancing Deer**.

Threat:

- Sangai faces threat from steadily **degenerating habitat of phumdi** as a result of **continuous inundation** and **flooding caused due to artificial reservoir**.
- The reservoir's water quality is **deteriorating** due to **pollution** and the **stoppage of nutrient supply**.
- Additionally, non-native plants like **Paragrass are invading the area**, contributing to a decline in the **phumdi's area**.
- Sangai faces threats of **diseases from the livestock, inbreeding depression** and **poaching**.

About Loktak lake:

- **Loktak Lake**, the largest freshwater lake in northeast India.
- It is renowned for being home to the country's only **floating** national park **Keibul Lamjao**.
 - Keibul Lamjao was created in 1966 as a wildlife sanctuary
- It is famous for its **floating vegetation**, known as **phumdis**.
- It was included on the **Montreux Record in 1993** as a result of **ecological problems** such as deforestation in the catchment area, infestation of water hyacinth, and pollution.
 - The **Montreux Record** is a register of wetland sites where changes in ecological character have occurred, are occurring, or are likely to occur as a result of technological developments, pollution or other human interference