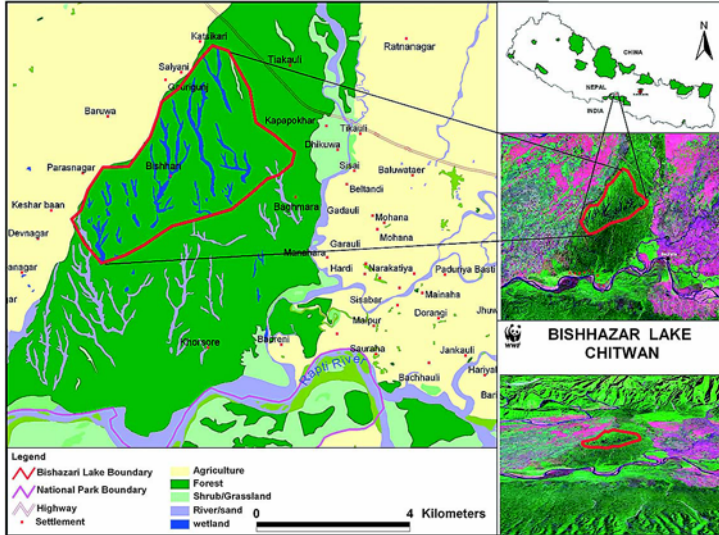


Beeshazar and Associated Lakes Chitwan



depth and based on one-time analysis during the summer season, the lakes can be considered to be eutrophic to hypertrophic.

■ HYDROLOGICAL VALUE:

Water is received from direct precipitation during the monsoon and through inflow of the Khageri irrigation Canal. The lake water is supplied to the canal and the stream during the dry season. The catchment area of the lake helps to control flooding in the Khageri River and recharges the ground water or the streams.

Flora: The terrestrial vegetation is dominated by Sal (*Shorea robusta*) forest. The prominent associated species include Myrobalan (*Terminalia alata*) Silk cotton (*Bombax ceiba*) and Bot Dhainyaro (*Lagerstroemia parviflora*). The wetland vegetation consist of Sedge (*Cyperus spp.*), Common Reed (*Phragmites karka*), Morning Glory (*Ipomea carnea ssp. fistulosa*) and Mikania (*Mikania micrantha*). The aquatic vegetation is represented by extensive coverage of floating leafed species mainly water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*), Water Chestnut (*Trapa bispinosa*) followed by Evening Primrose (*Ludwigia adscendens*). The free floating species include Water Velvet (*Azolla imbricata*) and Duckweed (*Lemna spp.*). The abundant submerged species include Hornwort (*Ceratophyllum demersum*), Hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillata*) and Water Nymph (*Najas minor*). In general, the vegetation is in floating leafed succession stage. Reed swamp formations are found in backwaters in finger like projections, characteristic of an ox-bow lake system.

Ramsar Designation Date: 13-08-2003
Coordinates: 27° 37'04.6" N,
 84° 26' 11.3 E
Area: 3,200 hectares
Elevation: 286 m

■ OVERVIEW:

Beeshazar is a surface and ground water fed natural fresh water lake located in the buffer zone of Royal Chitwan National Park. It is situated in the inner Terai valley (doon) of central Nepal in between the Mahabharat Mountain Range to the north and the Siwalik Range to the south. The lake bed is situated on the laterite soil. The oligotrophic state of the lake is shown by the low content of Chlorophyll "A" due to the rich growth of macrophytes which prevents the penetration of sunlight needed for photosynthesis. However, with respect to nutrient content and Sechi

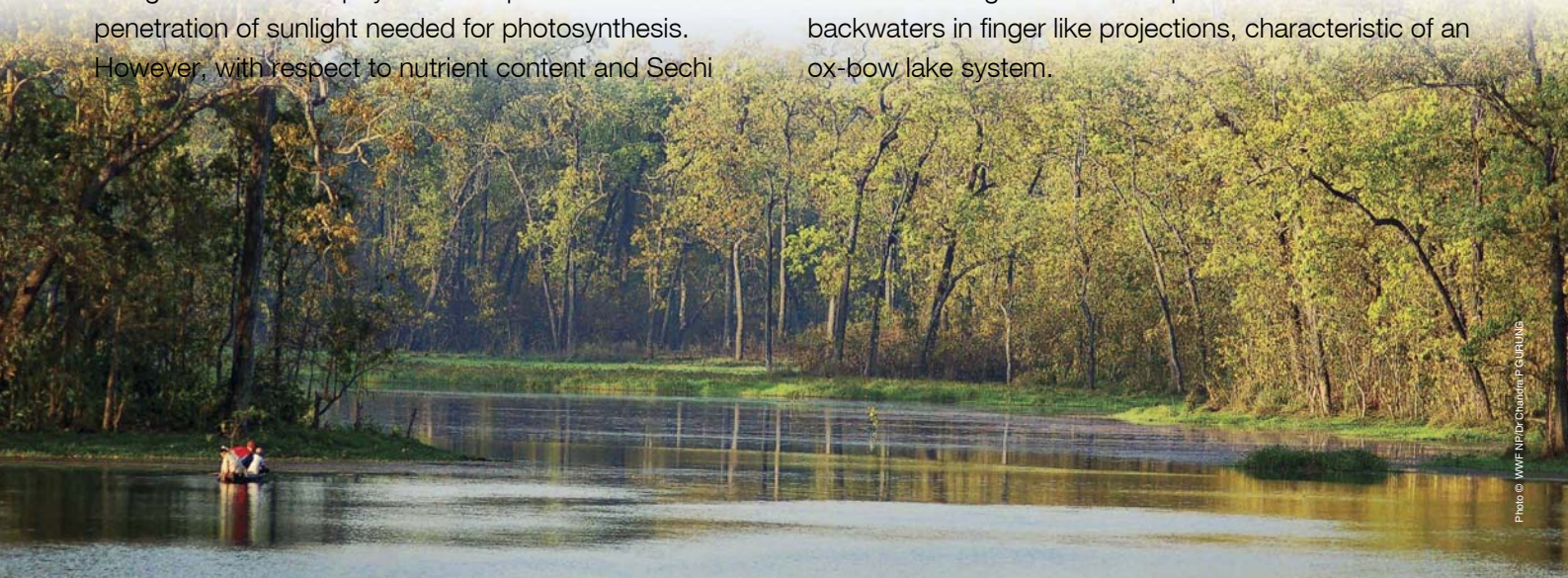




Photo © WWF/NP/Neera Shrestha/PRADHAN

Fauna: The fauna comprising lower risk species on the IUCN Red List are the Rhesus macaque (*Macaca mulatta*), Hanuman Langur (*Semnopithecus entellus*), Ferruginous duck (*Aythya nyroca*), Painted stork (*Mycteria leucocephala*), Black-necked stork (*Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus*), Indian black vulture (*Sarcogyps calvus*), Black vulture (*Aegypius monachus*), Grey-headed Fishing Eagle (*Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus*), Black-bellied tern (*Sterna acuticauda*), Great hornbill (*Buceros bicornis*), and Asiatic Rock Python (*Python molurus*). In total 17 fish species are recorded for Beeshazar e.g. the threatened *Puntius chola* and the endemic *Notopterus notopterus* and *Oxygaster bacaila*. The site supports the largest number of Marsh Crocodiles (15-20 individuals). 273 bird species of 61 families are recorded, of which 60 are wetland species. The forested wetlands provide a refuge for a significant number of storks, ibises, fishing eagles and a large number of lesser whistling teals. Egrets, herons and serpent eagles forage upon snakes on the meadows. The Tikauli forest serves as important corridor and refuge for wildlife migrations from the Churia to the Mahabharat range.

■ SOCIOCULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS VALUES:

The current use by local population includes fishing, grazing, fuel wood and fodder collection, domestic use and supply of water for irrigation in surrounding cultivated land.

■ THREATS:

- Unsustainable use of water resources
- Invasion of exotic species (unspecified)
- Leaching of inorganic fertilizer and pesticide from farmlands
- Development of major development projects and industries
- Development/expansion of settlements
- Pollution
- Weak earthen embankment of the reservoir



Photo © David COTTRIDGE

■ CONSERVATION MEASURES:

Invasive species are manually removed by local communities with the help of Local NGOs, Buffer zone user committees/Management committee and Royal Chitwan National Park. Due to the recent designation as buffer zone for the National Park, the management responsibility has been given to the Buffer Zone Management Committee. Armed Forest Guards control poaching and land encroachment. A wildlife museum is established at Tikauli and a visitor center is established at Sauraha. The District's Irrigation Office manages the Khageri irrigation canal.

Acknowledgement: DNPWC and WWF acknowledges the support of IUCN for preparation of Ramsar Information Sheet.

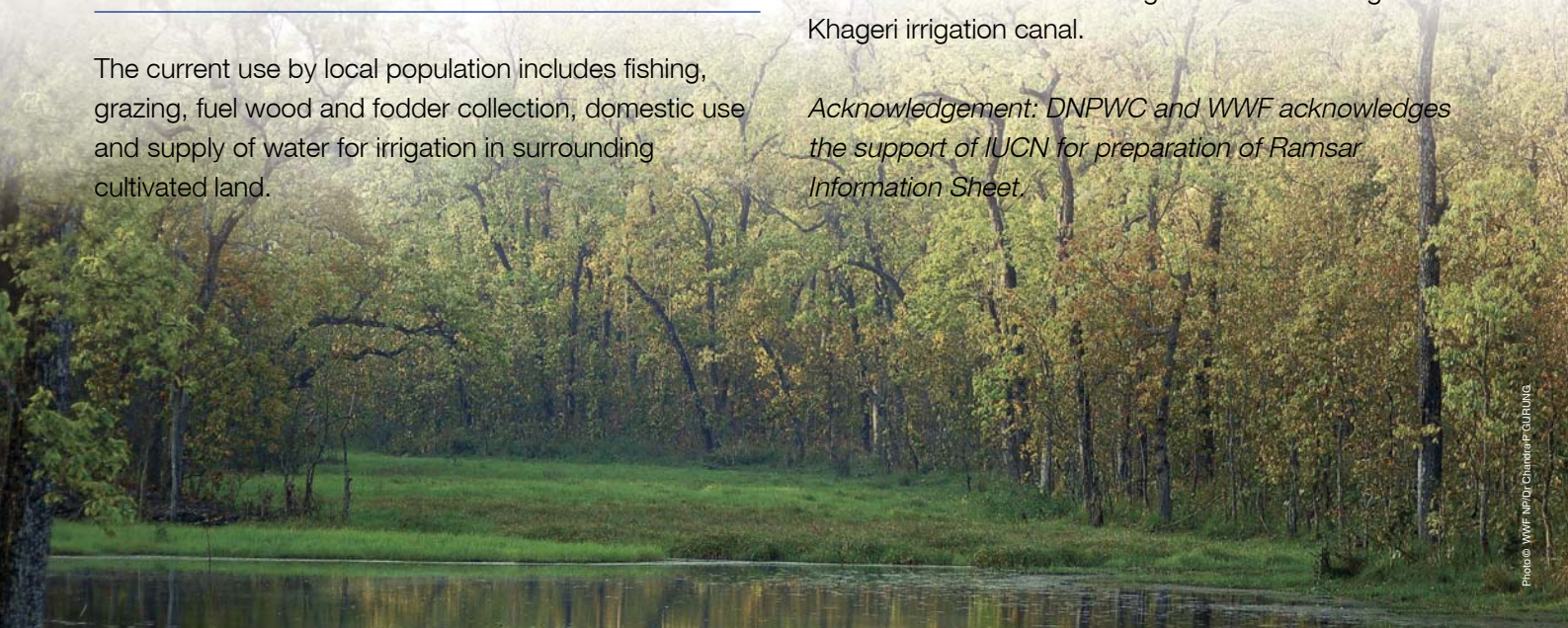


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