

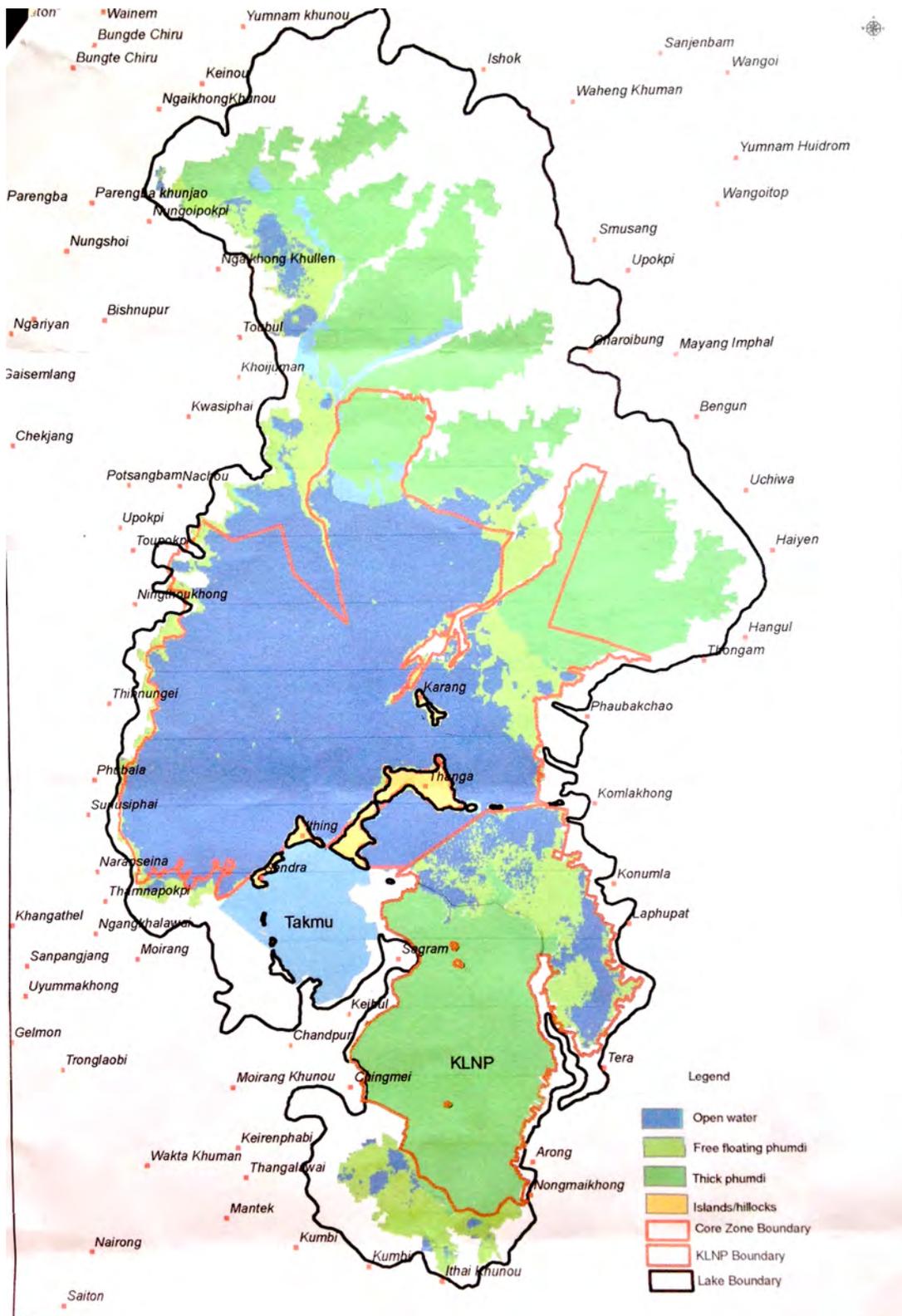
# All Loktak Lake Area Fishermen Union

Langol Sabi  
Floating Village  
Loktak Lake, Manipur  
India 795133



# STATUS LOKTAK REPORT LAKE

11<sup>th</sup> July 2016



Map of Loktak Lake (courtesy: Loktak Development Authority)

## Introduction

A visit to Manipur travelling by air, one cannot miss the vast expanse of water while the plane circles to touch down on Imphal valley. The emerald rings of phumdis<sup>1</sup> have been a distinctly unique feature of Loktak Lake. This freshwater lake, which supports wetlands ecosystem has been designated as a Wetland of International Importance by the Ramsar Convention in 1990. The Lake with an area of 236.21 sq km, considered the largest fresh water lake in the Northeast India, entered the Montreux Record on 26<sup>th</sup> June 1993.

The lake has been a central theme in Meitei folklores and cultures, which has been captured in oral literature, spiritual rituals, songs and ballads. The birth of the legendary Khamba-Thoibi romance, which is a core part of Meitei culture in terms of dance, music and religious functioning, originated from this lake. Hijam Anganghal's 'Khamba-Thoibi Seireng', a poem of 39000 lines is considered to be a national epic of the Meitei indigenous people. It is elaborated on the centuries old ballads, stories and ritualized practices of the people of the Moirang Principality of Loktak lake area.

According to a case study done by Wetlands International South Asia, titled 'Integrated Wetland and River Basin Management - a case study of Loktak Lake',

*'Loktak Lake is the largest wetland in Northeastern region of India and has been referred as the lifeline of the people of Manipur due to its importance in the socioeconomic and cultural life. It plays an important role in the ecological and economic security of the region. The lake has been the source of water for generation of hydroelectric power, irrigation and water supply. A large population living around the lake depends upon the lake resources for their sustenance.'*

*The staple food of Manipur is directly linked to Loktak Lake. The lake is rich in biodiversity and has been designated as a wetland of international importance under Ramsar Convention in 1990. The Keibul Lamjao National Park, in the southern part of the lake, is home to the endangered Manipur Brow Antlered Deer, locally called Sangai. The lake has been also the breeding ground of a number of riverine fishes and continues to be a vital fisheries resource. It supports a significant population of migratory and resident waterfowl.'*

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<sup>1</sup> A heterogeneous mixture of vegetation, organic debris and soil in floating condition.

The IUCN's Red List of 2011 has further illustrated the ecological precariousness of the lake, where the Union had listed 15 fish species as endangered freshwater species out of which 7 are from Manipur. Erstwhile popular and abundantly found fishes such as Ngakha Meingangbi (*Puntius manipurensis*), Ngatup (*Schistura kanjupkhulensis*), Ngatup makhal ama (*Schistura minutes*), Ngatup manba nga (*Schistura reticula*), Ching-ngakra (*Pterocryptis barakensis*), Ching-ukabi (*Badis tuivaiei*) and Nung-nga (*Psilorhynchus microphthalmus*) were enlisted in the Red List. Although, no species was categorized as globally extinct or extinct in the wild in the Eastern Himalaya assessment region, Manipur's State fish Pengba (*Osteobrama belangeri*) was reported to be regionally extinct in wild as the route of this Myanmar origin minor carp has been disturbed with the construction of Ithai dam across Manipur river for the operation of Loktak Hydroelectric Project, three decades ago. With Manipur having more than 200 fish species, the drying up of wetlands due to siltation and conversion of Loktak, into a water reservoir after the commissioning of the above project, has caused drastic change in Manipur's aquatic environment forcing many species to become vulnerable.

In another comprehensive report<sup>2</sup> by environmental journalist Sobhapati Samom covered in the regional newspaper Assam Tribune, it was reported that Manipur's edible aquatic insects found in Loktak were vanishing from its natural habitat due to the continuous degradation of the lake. The Giant Water Bug locally known as Naoshek (*Lethocerus indicus*); a beetle, Tharaikokpi (cybister); water bug, Konjeng Kokphai (*Diplonychus rusticus*); the common pond skater, Long Khajing (*Gerris lacustris*) and the Maikhumbi (Baetidae) - a family of mayflies, have been vanishing rapidly from the lake. This was brought to light by a research done by Dr. M Bhubaneshwari Devi and O. Sandhyarani while studying the diversity of insect fauna in Loktak lake. The study also found that there were 31 edible aquatic insects out of the 100 insect species in Loktak. The lake is home to 48 different fish species among which, the Lameithanbi (*Esomus altus*) has become a rarity in the lake recently. Naoshek, which was abundantly available during summer months not only in the markets but also in paddy fields and periphery of the lake in the past, has become rare due to continuous use of pesticides and insecticides besides huge quantities of fertilizer.

Besides the fish and aquatic insects, the lake is also home to a large number of migratory birds and waterfowl. In another report<sup>3</sup> in The Assam Tribune, it was mentioned that the migratory birds population was declining in Manipur's wetlands. The Assistant Director of Bombay Natural Historical Society, Dr. S. Balachandran noted that the increase or decrease in water levels of wetlands, are the determining factor for the decline of migratory birds

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<sup>2</sup> Weblink of the said report can be accessed here

<http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=may2016/oth052>

<sup>3</sup> Weblink <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=feb0711/oth07>

population. The lake ecosystem has been a unique home for aquatic vegetation, which has been central in anchoring the fauna population as well as being a source of sustainable livelihood for the indigenous lake dwellers.

Ecological abundance aside, the lake has been a site of numerous armed conflicts. Surviving with the looming presence of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act, 1958, which guarantees absolute impunity to the Indian Military, the lake dwellers have also often been harassed by the state police and non-state actors. Internal displacements, not singularly because of the dam but also by military operations have been a recurrent theme in the lives of indigenous communities of the lake. Loktak Operation in 1999, Operation Stinger in 2005 and Operation Summer Storm in 2008 are some of the illustrative examples<sup>4</sup>.

## Points of Crisis

This pivotal lake has become a platform of crisis, further induced by various developmental projects, legislations, encroachments and urbanization. Even with its inclusion in the Montreux Record, not much has been done to mitigate the ecological as well as humanitarian crisis that the lake is embroiled in. In the following sections, the report spells out the key points of crisis in the lake.

### Ithai Dam

The long-term impact of the Loktak Multipurpose Hydroelectric Power Project on both human and natural environment in the central Manipur valley has been immense. The vision of policy planners for this hydropower project was limited only to the production of electricity and of earning revenue on commercial basis. Their vision did not encompass the loss of thousands of highly productive agricultural lands nor the displacement of several hundred families living in the peripheral areas of the Loktak lake nor of the permanent impact on the State's economy resulting from the huge loss of fish resources that used to sustain both food requirement and economy of the rural population.

For Loktak, it was the construction of Ithai Dam that brought forth multitudes of problems including both permanent submergence and frequent inundation of agricultural and

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<sup>4</sup> Weblink for more details on these operations can be found here  
[https://www.google.co.in/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=9&ved=0ahUKEwiQ\\_ZjVx97NAhXKtI8KH563C9gQFghTMAg&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.asiapacificmediationforum.org%2Fresources%2F2014%2FHomen\\_Than\\_gjam\\_Development\\_Environmental\\_Protection\\_Displacement\\_Northeast\\_India.pdf&usq=AFQjCNHxL4kk5RwWjG XKELftLFF6yck0pg&bvm=bv.126130881,d.c2l&cad=rja](https://www.google.co.in/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=9&ved=0ahUKEwiQ_ZjVx97NAhXKtI8KH563C9gQFghTMAg&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.asiapacificmediationforum.org%2Fresources%2F2014%2FHomen_Than_gjam_Development_Environmental_Protection_Displacement_Northeast_India.pdf&usq=AFQjCNHxL4kk5RwWjG XKELftLFF6yck0pg&bvm=bv.126130881,d.c2l&cad=rja)

settlement lands, internal displacement of human population, drastic changes in hydrological balance of lake and its supporting river systems, adverse impacts on its ecosystem, loss of important fish fauna and sharp decline in migratory waterfowl population which again has been a colossal loss to Manipur's natural heritage.

Before the construction of the dam, the villagers were primarily farmers, but were later compelled to adapt themselves to the lifestyle of a fishing community as their agricultural lands were submerged by the project. These are classic examples in the case of villagers in Nongmaikhong and Khordak villages in Bishnupur district. However with the legislation of the Manipur Loktak (Protection) Act, 2006, their situation was further worsened by way of restricting them from fishing inside the lake. The provisions of the Act will be detailed in the next section.

The Ithai Dam, an integral component of the Loktak Hydroelectric Project under the National Hydro Power Corporation, a public sector company, was commissioned in 1983 with a capacity to generate 105 MW of power supply to the Northeastern states. The project also facilitates lift irrigation of 23000 hectares of land in the Manipur valley according to the NHPC documents. However, Ithai barrage with a height of 10.7 m and 58.8 m in length, has been responsible for rapid environmental degradation and the benefits promised has not materialized in actuality.

Due to construction of the dam in 1979, the water level in the wetland increased and the natural movement of water in and out of the lake was hindered. This has led to increased siltation in the lake. The construction of the dam has further inundated the area around the lake and people were forced to migrate to the phumdis for shelter and thereby taking up fishing for their livelihood. Due to the blockage of the water flow, there has been unprecedented growth of phumdis, which blocks the sunlight falling on the lake affecting the fishes in the wetlands. Remote sensing studies conducted jointly by the Manipur Remote Sensing Application Centre and the Space Application Centre, Ahmedabad (1999) shows that the area under phumdi had increased from 10,499 ha in 1990 and 13,506 ha in 1994. Consequently, the water mass had reduced from 15,441ha in 1990 to 7875 ha in 1995.

In 2006, the Ministry of development of Northeastern region had sanctioned Rs 41 crores for integrated management and development of Loktak Lake which also entails removal of the phumdis and cleaning up of the lake, but this has been mired with controversy and scam. As

the company contracted for the said purpose turned out to be an incompetent one with dubious credentials<sup>5</sup>.

This dam built on the Manipur river which consists of its tributaries the Iril, The Imphal, the Thoubal, the Sekmaiing, the Khuga and the Chakpi rivers is said to be very ill conceived, unscientific and strategically misplaced according to Dr. Rk Ranjan<sup>6</sup> (Ithai Barrage: A fatal threat to natural drainage system of Manipur). The point where the dam is constructed is the confluence of the Manipur and the Khuga river. Some of the problematic cases regarding the Ithai barrage are as follows:

Instead of reclaiming 40,000 hectares of surplus land from the peripheral areas of the lake and its distribution of the displaced/affected people, more than 30,000 hectares of land had been getting submerged after every shower.

It was also promised that the project will provide continuous supply of water by lift irrigation for multiple cropping (60,000 hectares of land) in order to achieve adequate production starving of water. For the lack of water, the power generation capacity of the project has gone down to such a level that the power production unit had to be closed down in 1992.

It was also promised that the electricity produced by the project would be sold to the consumers in Manipur at a rate below 10 paise per unit. But presently the people pay much higher and people have been cheated by the project beyond imagination.

At the time of project execution of the Loktak Multipurpose Hydroelectric Power project during the late 1970s, there was no reference on Rehabilitation & Resettlement packages for the affected population. The Memorandum of Understanding between Manipur Government and the project-implementing agency National Hydroelectric Power Corporation Limited had no reference on R&R package for the project, as a result of which local people resorted to litigation in court for compensation on agricultural lands.

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<sup>5</sup> Tehelka's comprehensive report on the scam can be found in the following weblink [http://archive.tehelka.com/story\\_main44.asp?filename=Ne030410the\\_lake.asp](http://archive.tehelka.com/story_main44.asp?filename=Ne030410the_lake.asp)

<sup>6</sup> Weblink of the article can be found here <http://ifp.co.in/page/items/20746/20746-ithai-barrage-a-fatal-threat-to-natural-drainage-system-of-manipur-valley>

When the Loktak hydel project was conceived there was no provision of resettling and rehabilitating the to-be-affected people living in the project area. More than four decades down the line, there are still indigenous people living in the peripheral shores of Loktak lake fighting for their rights - the right to be fairly compensated by the Government for displacing them from their traditional lifestyle and depriving them of their means of livelihood and sustenance.

### Manipur Loktak (Protection) Act, 2006

Further problems were exacerbated by the legislation of the Manipur Loktak (Protection) Act (LPA) in the year 2006 by the Government of Manipur. The Act was hurriedly passed without any public consultations of the stakeholders such as the fishermen community, lake area dwellers and independent scientists and environmental experts. The Act further empowers the state to reconstitute an executive body, the Loktak Development Authority (LDA) by denotifying the preexisting LDA, creating a new committee, which is a heavily bureaucratized, undemocratic and authoritarian body to look after the management and conservation of the lake. The Authority's composition and functioning negates the Resolution VIII.19 of Ramsar's Guiding Principle for taking into account the cultural values of wetlands for effective management of sites, numbered 27, which encourages cross-sectoral cooperation. This also gives no room for representation of the indigenous communities and negates participatory policy making.

The brutalities of the Loktak Protection Act was manifested on 15-25 November 2011, whereby the newly constituted LDA along with the Manipur Police committed an atrocity which stunned the State of Manipur. The LDA burnt down inhabited huts which have traditionally been built on floating masses of vegetation known as phumdi by the indigenous Meitei community whose only source of livelihood is fishing and gathering aquatic vegetables. Family members inhabiting these huts were forced to torch their own home and those evicted families were forced to live in open makeshift sheds.

Approximately 777 phum-huts out of 1147 inhabited by about 10,000 people in and around the lake were evicted. The arsoning and dismantling of phum huts was justified by adopting a half-hearted compensation of Rs 40,000 (which is roughly around 590 USD) per family. The amount did not take into account the cost of the homesteads or the fishing equipment, not to mention rehabilitation. Despite protests, the LDA went ahead with destruction of 14 Phum-huts in January 2012 without any notice. Between March 8, 2012 and March 29, 2013, the LDA destroyed 56 phum-huts in contravention to the Guahati High Court order of January

25, 2012. On February 16 2013, a contempt notice was issued against the authorities for violating the court orders. However, another arbitrary effort was made on March 29, 2013.



Manipur State Government forcibly evicting indigenous Meitei fishing community from the lake.

Pic Courtesy: Salam Rajesh

The Act has defined the traditional dwellers of the lake as ‘Occupiers’, which is further in clear contradiction to the Ramsar’s Resolution VII.8, which gives room for recognition of stakeholders. The Act itself is in clear violation of the statutes given in United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, as indigenous communities who have been living in harmony with the lake for centuries as its guardians and beneficiaries, are sought to be legally defined as encroachers. Families living on the 1147 inhabited floating huts on the Loktak Lake possessed voting cards. They have a separate polling station during elections

called Champu Khangpat. With such existing legal rights, it is absurd to accuse the indigenous people of Loktak as ‘encroachers’ or ‘occupiers’.

The Act also perpetrates the outdated legal principle of eminent domain embodied in colonial Land Acquisition Act 1 of 1894.

According to the Loktak Protection Act, it is illegal to conduct any research on Loktak without the prior approval of the LDA. Section 5 of the Act states that ‘No person shall without the previous approval of the Authority obtain any lake resources or knowledge associated thereto for research or for commercial utilization or for bio-survey and bio-utilisation.’ It further states that ‘No person shall, without the previous approval of the Authority, transfer the results of any research relating to lake resources’. These clauses violate the very tenet of the Ramsar Convention, which is founded on developing knowledge-based framework for the conservation and wise use of wetlands.

Another highly controversial clause in the Act which usurps the rights of the people to seek judicial remedy in case of human rights violation is the clause numbered 33, which states that ‘No suit, prosecution or other legal proceeding shall lie against the State Government or any officer or other employee of the State Government or the Authority constituted under this Act or any member, officer or other employee of the Authority for anything which is in good faith done or intended to be done under this Act.’ This is in clear violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 8, and also International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights Article 2 (3), which ensures effective remedy in case of violations of basic human rights.

A comprehensive report<sup>7</sup> comparing the Loktak Protection Act, 2006 and the Guidelines issues by the Ramsar Convention has been prepared by Centre for Organisation Research and Education, Manipur in the year 2011. This can be further referred for a detailed analysis of the particular legislation.

### Pollution at Catchment Areas

The lake has further been deteriorated due to pollution at catchment areas. One of the most heavily polluted river, the Nambul, which flows through urban areas of Imphal is a major

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<sup>7</sup> Weblink of the said report can be accessed here

[https://www.google.co.in/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwi-8s3ut9zNAhUfS48KHX6RDU0QFggiMAE&url=https%3A%2F%2Fhumanrightsmanipur.files.wordpress.com%2F2012%2F03%2Fcritique-of-llpa2006-from-ramsar-convention-perspective-2011-final1.pdf&usq=AFQjCNHztwG6Kf2\\_HCEDnwzhBaaADdq5Lw&bvm=bv.126130881,d.c2I](https://www.google.co.in/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwi-8s3ut9zNAhUfS48KHX6RDU0QFggiMAE&url=https%3A%2F%2Fhumanrightsmanipur.files.wordpress.com%2F2012%2F03%2Fcritique-of-llpa2006-from-ramsar-convention-perspective-2011-final1.pdf&usq=AFQjCNHztwG6Kf2_HCEDnwzhBaaADdq5Lw&bvm=bv.126130881,d.c2I)

source of degrading the lake water quality. Through its 54 km long journey to the lake, the river traverses through thickly populated Imphal city, covering the length of over 10kms. The National Rivers Conservation Plant under the Union Ministry of Environment and Forest, had listed it among the country's most polluted rivers. During the rainy season, solid wastes are carried down by the river's current all the way to Loktak lake.



Waste dumped from Nambul River at Loktak, February 2016

Pic courtesy: Indigenous Perspectives

The effect can be visibly noticed at the Yangoi Marin<sup>8</sup>, which is where the Nambul river drains into the lake. There the stench of heavily polluted river with an assortment of garbage and waste can be distinctly noticed. Unplanned waste disposal in Imphal city has had a significant bearing in the pollution of the Nambul river.

Furthermore, the Government's decision to cover with cemented blocks the Naga river, which has been erroneously rechristened as Naga nullah (Naga drain), a tributary of the Nambul river has had detrimental effect on the health of the river. Concretised retaining walls and check dams in the upstream portion of the river have been constructed in a unscientific manner to prevent frequent flooding during the rainy season.

Furthermore, in a study conducted by the Manipur University, Consortium for Scientific Research, Kolkata and Ecology and Environment Wing, Government of Manipur titled 'Influence of Nambul River on the quality of fresh water in Loktak Lake' published in the year 2013; it was found that the physico-chemical parameters and trace element concentration of Nambul river were almost greater than that of the lake leading to the conclusion that it might take some significant role for pollution and eutrophication of the lake. It is also noted that the use of pesticides and fertilizers in farming has also led to an increased case of water pollution and eutrophication. The LDA has not addressed these issues in any of their strategic plans to clean Loktak lake.

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<sup>8</sup> A video link can be accessed here  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qoTd3P3O9sU>

## Future Threats

With the new Government of Manipur's Tourism policy, 2014 and a push for unlocking the potentials of Northeast India in terms of natural resources, the survival of the lake has become even more threatened. Developmental projects in the name of economic progress, has further undermined the precarious ecological balance of the lake. Hotels and tourism industries are rapidly gaining popularity in the lake region, with the government going in a Public Private Partnership venture with Imphal based hospitality chain The Classic to run the state tourist house in Sendra island, renamed Sendra Park and Resort. On one hand, the Loktak Protection Act, 2006 spells out strategies to conserve and protect the lake, yet it allows private investors and big businesses to lease land in the islands situated in the middle of the lake for constructing and operating hotels and tourist spots. Additionally, the motorboats and hovercrafts used by the tour operators, the LDA and the Indian Army are extremely detrimental to the health of the lake. The blades of the motor often cut through the aquatic vegetation disrupting the fish habitats. Oil spills from the fuel engines may also cause havoc for the delicately maintained ecological balance of the lake. These boats are also responsible for cutting the fishing nets used by the indigenous fishing community who depend on the lake resources for their livelihood. The LDA's anti-people stance is further reflected in its refusal to compensate for the damages done to the fishing equipment.

Furthermore, the Government of Manipur plans to construct a ring road covering the entire area surrounding the Loktak lake, in addition to the ongoing Khuman Yangbi Road inside the lake, connecting Mayang Imphal to Toubul village (Refer Map). This construction along with the proposed ring road is against the very premise of wetlands conservation. The Khuman Yangbi road is also responsible for cutting off a large portion of Loktak lake, allowing private investors and politicians to acquire a portion of the lake illegally for their commercial benefit. It is imperative that this pressing problem of encroachment and ecological destruction must be addressed immediately. The area needs to be cleared of non-traditional beneficiaries in order to safeguard the health of the lake.

## Draft National Wetlands Rules 2016

The sixth edition of the Ramsar Convention Manual states that *“Wetlands are among the world's most productive environments. They are cradles of biological diversity, providing the water and primary productivity upon which countless species of plants and animals depend for survival”*. Contracting parties to the convention are required to develop a

National Wetlands Policy in consonance with the Convention's objectives and recommendations. As a signatory to the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance concluded in Ramsar, Iran in 1971, India is duty bound to protect all major wetlands within its territory.

In May of 2016 the Government of India made public a draft Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2016 for comments. However, it was largely seen that none of the Ramsar recommendations and guidelines have been conformed with when formulating and proposing the Wetland Rules 2016. It was seen that no effort was made to consult various stakeholders including wetland ecosystem communities, local governments, state governments and even central government agencies. In Manipur State (North East India) wetland ecosystem communities settled within and in the peripheral shores of Loktak Lake, a Ramsar site, were not consulted prior to drafting of the Wetland Rules 2016.

The Draft policy if passed by the Parliament would further empower the existing authoritarian and undemocratically constituted Loktak Development Authority in executing the draconian Loktak Protection Act, which would further undermine the rights indigenous peoples of the lake and deteriorate the precarious ecological health of the wetlands system of Loktak.

A detailed critique<sup>9</sup> of the Draft Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2016 has been prepared by Indigenous Perspectives. This may be further referred to, for a comprehensive understanding of the policy draft.

Table1. Comparison of Loktak lake situation with Ramsar Convention's Guidelines and Principles

Ramsar's outline	Loktak Lake scenario
Wetlands are cradles of biological diversity, providing water and primary productivity upon which countless species of plants and animals depend for survival.	Consequent to the development of the Loktak Multipurpose Hydroelectric Power Project in Manipur, and commissioning of the Ithai Barrage - an integral component of the hydel project in 1983, significant changes occurred in the hydrological regime and

<sup>9</sup> Weblink of the said critique can be accessed here

<http://indigenousperspectives.tumblr.com/post/145500615839/reject-the-draft-wetlands-conservation-and>

	<p>ecological character of the Loktak Lake and its supporting river systems resulting in massive loss of biological diversity including native plants and aquatic vegetation, migratory waterfowl and fish species, and displacing hundreds of families settled in the lake's peripheral shores.</p>
<p>Wetlands have been identified as one of the key life support systems on this planet in concert with agricultural lands and forests. This has been a key theme in the evolving global support and political commitment for sustainable development and environmental conservation as articulated in the Ramsar Convention's Strategic Plan 1997-2002.</p>	<p>Recent developments happening within and in the peripheral shores of Loktak Lake sharply violate the principles and vision outlined by the Ramsar Convention.</p> <p>(1) Construction of Ithai Barrage at the confluence of Manipur River and Khuga River south of Loktak Lake had caused extensive damage to human settlements, agricultural lands, fish farms, and wetland ecosystem of the lake by converting the lake into an artificial water reservoir for the Loktak hydel project.</p> <p>(2) Initiation of an Integrated Tourism Project of the Manipur Government at Loktak Lake area threatens to physically modify the wetland area, cause physical damage to the wetland ecosystem and marginalize local communities.</p> <p>(3) Imposition of The Manipur Loktak Lake (Protection) Act of 2006 by the Government of Manipur had marginalized and displaced fishermen community dependent on the resources of the Loktak Lake for their livelihood and sustenance.</p>

## Recommendations

In light of the above-mentioned issues, we would like to make the following recommendations:

- We seek the Ramsar Secretariat to commission an Independent Expert Fact Finding Team to review the status of the Loktak Lake - a Ramsar site of International Importance.
- We further urge the office of Ramsar Secretariat to review the Human and Ecological impacts of Ithai Dam on the Loktak Lake.
- Additionally, we request Ramsar Secretariat to press upon the Government of India to review The Manipur Loktak (Protection) Act, 2006 based on the principles of wetlands conservation as established by the Ramsar Convention.
- We would also request the Secretariat to press upon the Government of India to review the newly drafted National Wetlands Rules 2016.

Submitted by,

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