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Setting up of Tri-state Coordination Mechanism for Conservation Riverine Protected Area in India

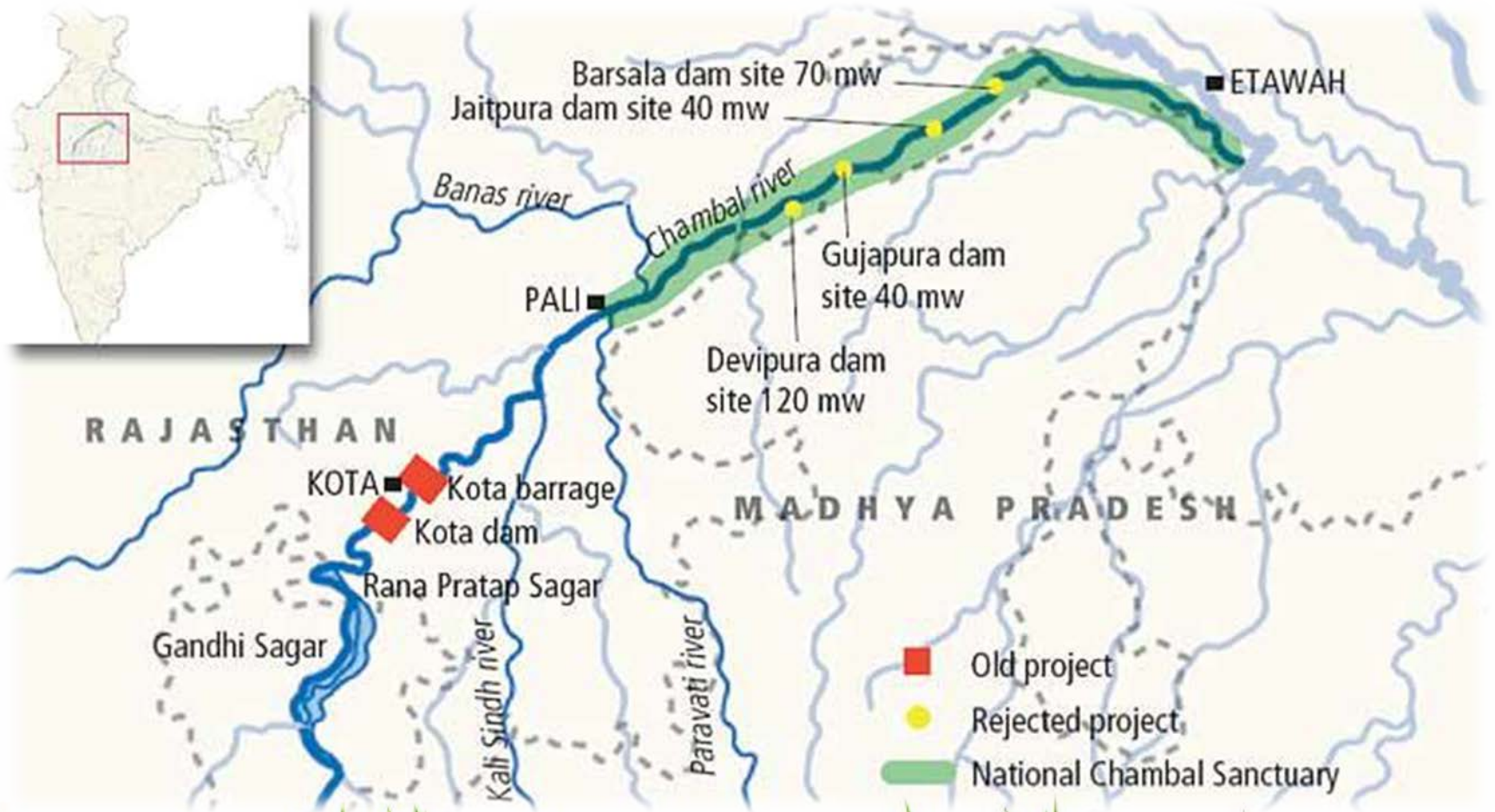


National Chambal Sanctuary



- National Chambal Sanctuary is a unique habitat of many endangered species
- About 600km long stretch of Chambal river
- Spread over three Provinces: Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh
- It is an IBA
- Important species found are Gharial, Gangetic Dolphin and Crowned Roof Turtle

Location



Gharial and Gangetic River Dolphin



Gharial

- Listed under Sch I of Wildlife Protection Act, 1972
- Appendix I of CITES
- Critical Endangered under Red List

Gangetic River Dolphin

- Listed under Sch I of Wildlife Protection Act, 1972
- National Aquatic Animal of India
- One of the two fresh water dolphins in India

Rich Fauna of the Chambal Sanctuary

- Home to about 50 percent of world population of Gharial
- A total of 56 reptile species
- Over 300 bird species
- 58 mammal species
- 147 fish species



Issues



- Wildlife Management is primarily a Provincial Subject
- Habitat distributed over three Provinces
- Pressures of sand collection and nest destruction
- Illegal fishing
- Depletion of water level in pinch period

Addressing the issues

- Needs Coordination at the State level
- A well harmonized conservation strategy for the whole Sanctuary
- Protection



National Tri-State Chambal Sanctuary Management and Coordination Committee

- The Govt of India established a National Tri-State Chambal Sanctuary Management and Coordination Committee at three levels
- The Objectives were:
 - To look into entire gamut of issues and to recommend effective conservation and management regime
 - To devise an institutional framework to coordinate among stakeholders
 - To develop a conservation Strategy and Action Plan
 - Examine socio economic relating to community-gharial interface
 - Methodology and institutional setup for monitoring of population
 - Coordination among the three Provinces and Centre

The Three levels

- National Steering Committee
- Core group for development of management plan and monitoring the implementation
- At field level, for coordination of actions of various departments



The Conservation Strategy: the Key actions

- Policy prescriptions
- Training and capacity building
- Habitat Restoration and species recovery
- Research
- Community involvement in conservation
- Monitoring of threats
- Protection
- Landscape and river-scape connectivity
- Monitoring and review



Initiatives taken for illegal fishing and sand removal

- Intensive foot patrolling along the Chambal river to check illegal sand mining.
- River patrolling to check illegal fishing
- Identification and protection of gharial nests
- Developing local intelligence and informers to pre-empt illegal fishing and sand mining
- Conducting raids and arresting persons involved in illegal fishing and mining & invoking action under Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972
- Preparation and implementation of winter patrolling plan



Gharial Nest Protection

- Identification of Gharial nests
- Securing a wire mesh over the nest by inserting 1 foot long staves at four corners
- Daily monitoring of the nests
- Removal of wire mesh before hatching
- Watching nests during hatching to prevent depredation



Control of Illegal Fishing

- Effective legal actions against offenders
- Seizure and confiscations of vehicles and tools
- Imposition of penalty
- Prosecution of cases in courts

Community involvement

- Garnering support of local people in conservation through activities such as cattle camps, health camps, public meetings and rallies
- Organizing awareness camps especially for school children
- Developing eco-tourism facilities to attract visitors to NCS



Population monitoring of Gharials

- Census undertaken in Uttar Pradesh part of the river
- Census undertaken from October to March; at least one census per month
- River is divided into 12 stretches of roughly 15 kms each
- Simultaneous census on all stretches to avoid duplicity
- Census based on “direct sighting”

