

Although the most numerous of the world's flamingos, the Lesser Flamingo is classified “Near Threatened” due to its declining population and the low number of breeding sites in the 2008 IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, indicating that it is considered likely to qualify for a threatened category in the near future. The major threats to the survival of the Lesser Flamingo are the loss and/or the degradation of habitat through altered hydrology and water quality, wetland pollution, extraction of salt and soda ash, particularly at its breeding sites. The Lesser Flamingo is an itinerant species and thus depends on a network of suitable sites which could be legally unprotected.

Summer is the time when these beautiful birds perform nuptial display to woo the partner. The nuptial displays of the Lesser Flamingo are different from, those of the Greater Flamingo. Greater Flamingo suddenly expose the bright scarlet parts of the plumage, and the Lesser Flamingo mass together, so that the displaying flock forms a darker red area in the pink matrix of the Chhaya rann. Flamingos’ intense display is likely to be observed at Chhaya rann wetland on Pink Celebration.

International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Lesser Flamingo, CMS Technical Series No. 18, AEW Technical Series No. 34 identified measures to address threats and fill current knowledge gaps. These measures include protecting the Lesser Flamingo and its habitats, appropriate management of key sites and increasing public awareness of the need for protecting the Lesser Flamingo and its habitats.

Since last three years, MWCC with local stakeholders and various target groups tries to raise public awareness on flamingos as Pink Celebration at Porbandar, the urban flamingo city. Every year, the event receives positive feedback from the participants, Forest Department, NGOs, conservationists, wildlife photographers and nature lovers of Gujarat.

The event provides an excellent opportunity to observe courtship dance of Lesser flamingos at Chhaya Wetland of Porbandar. More than 10000 flamingos congregating at one place is a heart rendering experience. Pink Celebration is not merely for enjoying the beauty of nature but henceforth will also stand for the challenges being faced for wetland conservation both by the conservationists as well as the Forest Department. As part of this we have planned a workshop jointly with the Forest Department and GIZ to understand the challenges and opportunities of conservation. This workshop will have conservation experts from various field put forward their views and experiences.

Porbandar City of Gujarat is well known as “Surkhabi Nagri” where Surkhab - the Flamingos are found in abundant in the vicinity of human habitation. Wetlands, in around Porbandar are covered with pink carpet of Flamingos. Each year about 35000 Lesser and about 9000 Greater Flamingos are recorded from wetlands of Porbandar during Asian Waterbird Census. April to June is the courtship time for these birds. They perform the most stunning and beautiful courtship dance during this period wherein; a tightly packed group of males walk and perform synchronized movements to woo their partners.

As Porbandar hosts a sizable population of flamingos, through Pink Celebration, we commit to increase state level awareness on flamingo and wetland conservation in Gujarat. There are ample of opportunities for sustainable tourism at Porbandar. In near future, we will establish long term goals and Porbandar will be highlighted at international level.

## **II.Objectives**

- a.** To spread awareness on importance of Flamingo as a wetland flagship species
- b.** To educate participants on importance of wetlands
- c.** Strengthening of existing knowledge and future capacity development
- d.** To highlight unique wetlands of Porbandar for legal protection











