

VIBRANT GANGA



# Sharda River



भारतीय वन्यजीव संस्थान  
Wildlife Institute of India

## GENERAL INFORMATION

- Sharda River originates in the Kalapani area in Himalayas at an elevation of 3,600 m asl in the Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand.
- The river flows along the India Nepal international border in the Himalayan region and enters the Gangetic plains near Tanakpur in Uttarakhand and traverse around 350 km before joining Ghaghra River in Sitapur District of Uttar Pradesh.



## SALIENT FEATURES

- Out of the catchment area of the Sharda River (14,871 km<sup>2</sup>), around 34% is in Nepal and remaining (66%) falls within the Indian territory.
- The river passes through two biogeographic zones, the Himalayas and the Gangetic Plains.
- River supports rich diversity of flora and fauna viz., Smooth-coated otter, Gangetic dolphin, mugger, gharial, and 55 species of water and water dependent birds.

- The characteristic umbrella species of the Sharda River include Gangetic dolphin, smooth-coated otter, gharial and mugger.
- The endangered bird species of the river include Black-bellied tern (*Sterna acuticauda*), Oriental darter (*Anhinga melanogaster*), Common crane (*Grus grus*), and Peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*).

**The Sharda River can be divided into two zones, viz.**



Himalayan or  
Upper zone  
(Kalapani to Tanakpur)

Lower zone  
(Tanakpur to Ghaghara  
confluence)



## THREATENED SPECIES

### Mammals

Gangetic dolphin  
Smooth-coated otter

### Avifauna

Black-bellied tern  
Oriental darter

### Reptiles

Gharial  
Mugger  
Indian softshell turtle



## INTERESTING FACTS

- The river, which is situated in the greater Himalayas and has been given the name Kali or Mahakali in honour of the goddess, is significant from a religious standpoint.
- The Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, the most revered pilgrimage, passes through the region where the river originates.
- The goddess Kali temple, from which Kalapani gets its name, is located near the Lipu-Lekh mountain pass, on the border between India and Tibet.

## DRIVERS OF RIVERSCAPE CHANGE

- Rapid and extensive deforestation, as well as an increase in farmland and the construction of dams in the higher reaches are the major drivers of change.
- Large scale water abstraction from the upper and lower Sharda Barrages has resulted in reduction in discharge which has led to narrowing of the River.



### NMCG

**National Mission for Clean Ganga,**  
Department of Water Resources, River  
Development & Ganga Rejuvenation,  
Ministry of Jal Shakti, Major Dhyan Chand  
Stadium, India Gate, New Delhi - 110001



### GACMC

**Ganga Aqualife Conservation Monitoring Centre**  
Wildlife Institute of India,  
Post Office Mohbewala,  
Dehradun - 248002, Uttarakhand  
[wii.gov.in/nmcmc\\_phase\\_2\\_introduction](http://wii.gov.in/nmcmc_phase_2_introduction)  
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