

DRIVERS OF RIVERSCAPE CHANGE

- Six major dams namely Dakpathar Barrage, Hathnikund Barrage; Wazirabad Barrage; ITO Barrage, Okhla Barrage and Gokul Barrage interrupt the River's flow, which has altered aquatic habitat.
- Rapid urbanization with increased tourist influx has led to the issue of solid and liquid waste being dumped into the River and its tributaries.
- Drains carrying domestic and industrial wastewater mainly from cities like Yamuna Nagar, Karnal, Panipat, Sonapat, Delhi, Agra flow into the River. About 60% of the untreated wastewater is released into the Yamuna River.
- Illegal riverbed mining is another issue in the Yamuna basin that altered or blocked the River's channel.
- Riverbank agriculture with intensive use of chemical pesticide and fertilizer is adding to the chemical load in the water of the River.



VIBRANT GANGA



Yamuna River

AN ELIXIR OF LIFE



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GENERAL INFORMATION

- The Yamuna is the second-largest tributary of the Ganga by discharge and the longest tributary in India.
- It originates from the Yamunotri Glacier at a height of 6,387 metres on the southwestern slopes of Banderpooch peaks of the Lower Himalaya in Uttarakhand.
- The River flows through the state of Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Delhi NCR, and Uttar Pradesh.
- The Yamuna River flows through biogeographic zones namely, Himalaya (2B West Himalaya); Semi-Arid (4A Punjab Plains) & Gangetic Plains (7A Upper Gangetic Plains)
- Important tributaries of the Yamuna River are Tons, Hindon, Chambal, Betwa, Sindh, Ken.
- The National Chambal Sanctuary, the first protected area notified to protect the aquatic habitat and the key aquatic species, viz Gharial in a Yamuna basin. Apart from National Chambal Sanctuary, Son River Sanctuary and Ken Gharial Sanctuary are also dedicated for Gharial conservation in the basin.

SALIENT FEATURES

- Yamuna River travels a total length of 1,376 kilometres and has a drainage system of 366,223 sq. km. About 22814 sq. km. of the river basin is under forest cover.
- Several tributaries join it along its path, and transform it into a fourth-order river.
- 152 species of plant species, belonging to 56 families, have been recorded from the Yamuna's bank.
- Overall 139 species of fish belonging to 78 genus and 33 families have been reported from the Yamuna River. In particular, the River provides a suitable habitat for golden mahseer and snow trout in the cold waters of the Himalayan Zone.



- The six turtles reported from the River are *Kachuga tentoria* (Indian tent turtle), *K. kuchuga* (Painted roofed turtle), *K. dhongoka* (Three stripped roofed turtle), *Lissemys punctata* (Indian flap-shell turtle), *Aspideretes gangeticus* (Indian soft-shell turtle) and *Chitra indica* (Narrow headed soft-shell turtle).
- A total of 126 species of birds, belonging to 18 orders and 44 families are known from Okhla bird sanctuary and 57 bird species belonging to 8 orders and 17 families are known from Hathikund barrage in the Yamuna basin.
- Semi-arid zone of Agra in the Yamuna basin shows presence of five species of anurans.
- The River also sustains endangered Gangetic dolphin and critically endangered Gharial.

ENDANGERED

- Reptiles
Indian narrow-headed softshell turtle
- Avifauna
Indian skimmer, Black-bellied tern
- Fish
Golden mahseer
- Mammals
Gangetic dolphin

CRITICALLY ENDANGERED

- Reptiles
Gharial, Red-crowned roofed turtle

KEY PROTECTED AREAS

- Govind Pashu Vihar, Churdhar Sanctuary
- Okhala Bird Sanctuary
- Sariska National Park, Kalesar National Park, Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary
- Panna National Park, Soor Sarovar Bird Sanctuary
- National Chambal Gharial Sanctuary

INTERESTING FACTS

- In Hindu mythology, Yamuna is represented as Goddess riding a turtle and is associated intimately with folklores involving Lord Krishna.
- As per Hindu mythology, tears of Yama, sister of Yam, formed the Yamuna River. The Yamuna River is also known by the name Kalindi.
- The Taj Mahal, UNESCO World Heritage Site, famous for its Mughal architecture is located on the right bank of the Yamuna River, in Agra, Uttar Pradesh.
- The Kumbh Mela recognized as UNESCO Cultural Heritage is organized in Prayagraj, at the confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati rivers, every 12 years.

Yamuna River can be divided into three zones, viz.

