

# Coal Ministry Approaches Environment Ministry for Inclusion of Five Coal Mine Pit Lakes in Ramsar List

## Ministry Seeks World Bank Assistance in Repurposing Abandoned Coal Mines

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India's coal sector is making sustained efforts to fulfil the fast escalating energy demands by further augmenting coal production. At the same time, the coal sector is also taking various initiatives towards adopting the path of sustainable development with emphasis on care for environment and host of measures to protect forests and biodiversity. As part of various sustainable activities, Coal India Ltd (CIL) has undertaken– Conservation of coal mine pit lakes, maintenance of ecological character of wet lands and inclusion of such pit lakes in prestigious Ramsar List with the assistance of respective State Governments and the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEFCC).

The suitability of coal mine pit lakes for inclusion in Ramsar List was discussed with MoEFCC, the nodal Ministry for identification of wet lands for placing on the Ramsar List. As per the guidance of MoEFCC, CIL has identified five pit lakes in the States of West Bengal, Odisha, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh for consideration of including in Ramsar list. CIL is in process of preparing Ramsar Information Sheet (RIS). These mine pit water bodies are regularly visited by different species of birds and also has avifauna population. The environment around these water bodies has ameliorated due to the efforts of CIL through large scale plantation and other soil moisture conservation activities.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Coal is obtaining support and assistance of World Bank, GIZ and other global institutions for repurposing of abandoned mine sites to make them safe, environmentally stable and suitable for appropriate commercial usage. Reclaimed lands will be repurposed for economic usage such as solar parks, tourism, sports, forestry, agriculture, horticulture, townships etc. Vast experience of these institutions in handling mine closure cases in different countries will be highly beneficial and will facilitate adoption of best global practices in repurposing of Indian coal mine sites.

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