

## Thane Creek Flamingo Sanctuary (TCFS)

*Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | Environment*

### Why in News?

*Water samples collected from three key flamingo habitats in Navi Mumbai show rising toxicity levels.*

- **Location** - Situated along the eastern suburb of Mumbai, Maharashtra, between ***Mumbai and Navi Mumbai***.
- It was declared as a Wildlife Sanctuary in 2018.
- **Declared under**-The *Wildlife Protection Act, 1972* and managed by the Maharashtra Forest Department.
- **Rivers & Ecosystem** - The creek gets the largest source of fresh water from ***Ulhas River*** and numerous drainage channels. It receives saline water from Arabian sea.
- *Estuarine ecosystem* formed by Thane Creek, an inlet of the Arabian Sea.
- Rich in mangroves, mudflats, and tidal creeks.
- Acts as a natural buffer against coastal erosion and floods.
- **Vegetation & Flora - Mangroves** - Avicennia, Rhizophora, Sonneratia species.
  - **Carbon sink role** - Mangroves absorb CO<sub>2</sub>, contributing to climate change mitigation.
- **Mudflats**- Feeding grounds for migratory birds.
- Salt-tolerant vegetation adapted to tidal conditions.
- **Fauna - Flamingos** - Greater Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus roseus*) and Lesser Flamingo (*Phoeniconaias minor*).
- **Other birds** - Sandpipers, gulls, herons, egrets, ~200 bird species.
- Declared as an *Important Bird Area (IBA)* by *BirdLife International*.
- **Breeding & Migration** - Flamingos breed in Kutch, Gujarat, but migrate to TCFS for feeding.
- **Seasonal migration** - *October - May* and Peak congregation: *February - March*.

- TCFS hosts more than 1 lakh flamingos annually.
- Part of the *Central Asian Flyway (CAF)*, a major global migratory bird route.
- **Ramsar Site Recognition** - It was recognized as a Ramsar Site in 2022.
- **Threats - Pollution**- High total dissolved solids (TDS), biochemical oxygen demand (BOD), Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD), and alkaline pH levels in satellite wetlands.
- **Urbanization**-Wetland reclamation by CIDCO and real estate projects.
- **Habitat Loss**-Reduced tidal flushing, stagnant water.
- **Plastic & Sewage Pollution** - Marine debris affecting feeding grounds.
- **Climate Change** - Altered hydrology and salinity levels.

## References

[The Hindu | TCFS](#)

