**Press Release**

**GOVERNOR CHAIRS 2ND MEETING OF THE UT WETLAND AUTHORITY**

**SUKHNA LAKE TO BE DECLARED AS WETLAND UNDER WETLAND (CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT) RULE 2017**

Chandigarh July 23: The Second Meeting of the Union Territory of Chandigarh Wetlands Authority was held today under the Chairpersonship of Shri V.P. Singh Badnore, Governor of Punjab & Administrator, UT Chandigarh at Punjab Raj Bhawan, Chandigarh.

              It has been unanimously decided to declare Sukhna Lake as Wetland under Wetland (Conservation and Management) Rule 2017. Besides officers of UT Administration of Chandigarh, representative of Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change, GoI and representative from Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun, Officers from Haryana and Punjab were also invited as Special Invitees.

              Sh. V. P. Singh Badnore emphasized on the ecological importance of declaring Sukhna as a Wetland.  He urged the Officers, representing Govt. of Punjab and Govt. of Haryana to join hands with UT Administration Chandigarh in the effort to conserve Sukhna Lake since State of Haryana and Punjab are also beneficiaries of this effort.

              Sh. Debendra Dalai, IFS, Chief Conservator of Forests, UT Chandigarh made a detailed Presentation on the ecological role of wetland, boundary delineation of Sukhna Wetland spreading over 565 acres and catchment area of Sukhna Wetland spreading over 10395 Acres as finalized by Survey of India  that includes 2525 acres of Haryana and 684 acres of Punjab as well.  He also made a detailed presentation on the recommendations of the Technical Committee enlisting the activities to be prohibited/ regulated/ promoted both in the Wetland as well as in the Catchment areas. The activities proposed to be prohibited/ regulated/ promoted as recommended by the Technical Committee were unanimously agreed by all the members present.

              After detailed deliberation and discussions, it has been decided to declare Sukhna Lake comprising 565 acres as Wetland under Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017 and catchment area falling within the jurisdiction of UT Chandigarh as Zone of Influence, **after following due process of law**.

              It was further decided that since the part of the catchment areas also falls within the administrative boundary of Haryana & Punjab, a request shall be made to Govt. of Haryana and Punjab to take similar action to regulate the activities as prohibited/ regulated/ promoted in their respective part of the Sukhna Catchment which is essential for maintaining proper health of the Sukhna Wetland.

              The meeting was attended by Sh. Manoj Parida, IAS, Adviser to the Administrator, UT Chandigarh, Sh. Arun Kumar Gupta, Principal Secretary (Environment & Forests), UT, Sh. Ajoy Kumar Sinha, IAS, Finance Secretary, UT, Sh. Sanjay Kumar, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary (Forests), Govt. of Punjab, Sh.  Alok Nigam, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary (Forests), Govt. of Haryana, Sh.V.S. Tanwar, IFS, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Haryana, Sh. C.D. Singh, IFS, Additional Director General (Central), Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change, NRO, Chandigarh and other officers.