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**MESSAGE**

I am happy to know that the Department of Environment & Forests, A&N Islands is observing the "World Wetland Day" on 2<sup>nd</sup> February, 2018 in these Islands with rest of the Country and World. The theme for this year is "**Wetlands for a Sustainable Urban Future**". 2<sup>nd</sup> February, 1971 saw the world coming together to pledge support towards saving one of the most productive of all the ecosystems – the Wetlands, at Ramsar Convention held at Ramsar, Iran.

Conservation and prudent use of wetlands has been given priority the world over. The wetlands are amongst the most precious natural resources which perform multiple environmental functions in recharging aquifers, conserving floral and faunal diversity and providing various ecosystem services. Wetlands in the urban areas make the cities liveable in many important ways. They reduce flooding, replenish drinking water, filter waste, provide urban green spaces and are sources of livelihoods. Urban Wetlands should be integrated for sustainable future planning and development.

Wetlands are unique and distinct ecosystems but their insensitive depletion, despite their exceedingly critical role towards human survival, is indeed a matter of serious concern. Therefore, on this occasion I appeal to the people of these Islands to join hands for coordinated and concerted efforts for conservation of Wetlands.

**(Admiral D K Joshi)**  
**Lieutenant Governor**  
**Andaman & Nicobar Islands**