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## ABOUT INDIA AND GANDHINAGAR

### **India**

India is the seventh largest country by area and with more than 1.3 billion people, it is the second most populous country. Bounded by the Indian Ocean to the south, the Arabian Sea to the south-west, and the Bay of Bengal to the south-east, it shares land borders with Pakistan to the west; China, Nepal, and Bhutan to the north-east; and Bangladesh and Myanmar to the east. In the Indian Ocean, India is near Sri Lanka and the Maldives, while its Andaman and Nicobar Islands share a maritime border with Thailand and Indonesia.

India lies within the Indomalaya ecozone and contains three biodiversity hotspots. Many Indian species descend from taxa originating in Gondwana, from which the Indian plate separated more than 105 million years ago. Peninsular India's subsequent movement towards and collision with the Laurasian landmass set off a mass exchange of species.

### **Gujarat**

Gujarat is a state in the western part of India with a coastline of 1,600 km – most of which lies on the Kathiawar peninsula – and a population in excess of 60 million people. It is the sixth largest Indian state by area and the ninth largest state by population. Gujarat is bordered by Rajasthan to the north-east, Daman and Diu to the south, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Maharashtra to the south-east, Madhya Pradesh to the east, and the Arabian Sea and the Pakistani province of Sindh to the west.

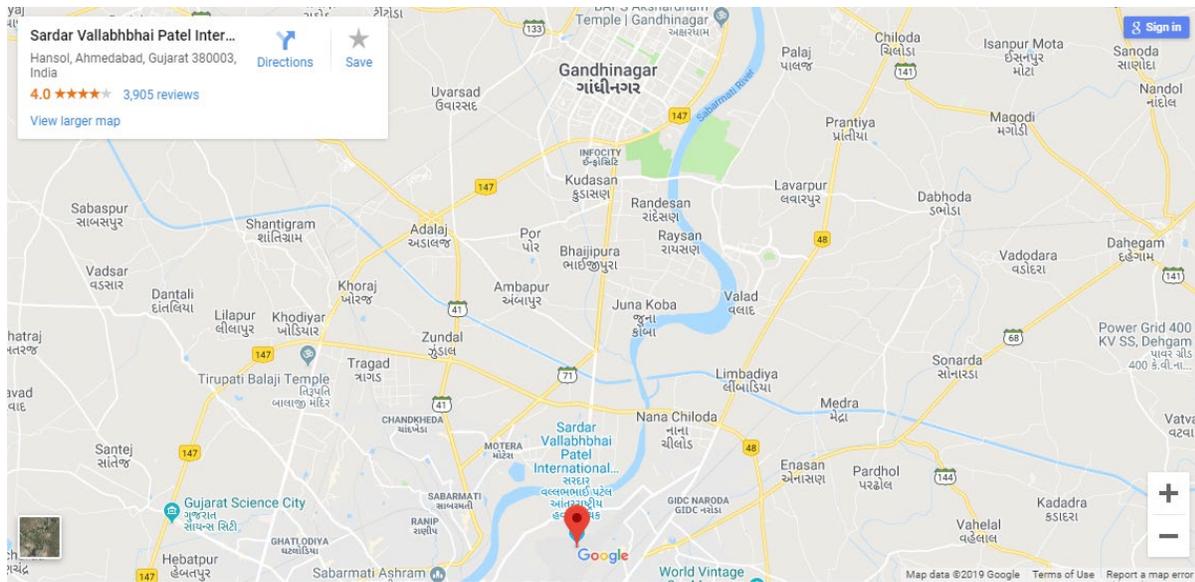
Its capital city is Gandhinagar, while its largest city is Ahmedabad. The Gujarati-speaking people of India are indigenous to the state.

Forest cover accounts for 9.7 per cent of Gujarat's total geographical area. Gujarat has four national parks and 21 sanctuaries. It is the only home of Asiatic Lions and, outside Africa, is presently the only natural habitat of lions. Gir Forest National Park in the south-western part of the state covers part of the lions' habitat. Apart from lions, Indian Leopards are also found in the state.

### **Gandhinagar**

Gandhinagar is the capital of the state of Gujarat and is located approximately 23 km north of Ahmedabad, on the west central point of the industrial corridor between Delhi, the political capital of India, and Mumbai, the financial capital. Often hailed as the greenest capital in India, it is fast emerging as a desirable destination for real estate for Gujaratis.





Terminal 1 is the older of the two and operates largely with domestic flights; Terminal 2 is newer and it operates with both domestic and international flights.

**The following international airlines go to Ahmedabad Airport:**

Air India, Air Arabia, Emirates, Etihad, Qatar, Singapore Airlines.

Arriving participants may approach the CMS COP13 information desk for assistance stationed at Terminals 1 and 2.

Alternatively, participants may take a taxi. Take only official, metered or pre-booked taxis. Do not accept rides from people that approach you in the terminal. The taxi costs about ₹500 - ₹650 (\$7-10) and takes 20 minutes. The distance between Ahmedabad Airport (AMD) and Gandhinagar is 17 km. Many of the major hotels run cars, which you can book in advance. For the cost of hotel transport, please consult your hotel.

**PASSPORT AND VISA REQUIREMENTS**

**There are no visas issued on arrival**, so you will have to apply for a visa at an embassy or consulate in your home country. All foreign nationals coming to India are required to have a valid passport and a valid Indian visa. Exceptions are citizens of Bhutan, Nepal and the Maldives. **We strongly urge that participants apply for visas at their earliest opportunity.**

Citizens of the following countries and territories, that hold ordinary passports are eligible to obtain an e-Visa:





## DAILY TRANSPORT FROM THE HOTEL TO CONFERENCE VENUE:

Daily group transport from hotel to conference venue and vice versa shall be provided for free at designated pick-up points/stations and time intervals at or near the recommended hotels. The schedule of daily group transport services will be posted in the lobby of the recommended hotels and on the CMS COP13 website. Delegates staying in hotels other than those recommended above, should arrange for their own transportation, at their own cost, to and from the venue (or to and from a designated transportation pick up point).

## VACCINATIONS

### Required & Recommended Vaccinations

The only vaccine required by international regulations is **yellow fever**. Proof of vaccination will only be required if you have visited a country in the yellow-fever zone within the six days prior to entering India.

The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends the following vaccinations for travellers to India:

**Adult diphtheria and tetanus** Single booster recommended if none has been given in the previous 10 years. Side effects include a sore arm and fever.

**Hepatitis A** Provides almost 100 per cent protection for up to a year; a booster after 12 months provides at least another 20 years' protection. Mild side effects such as headache and a sore arm occur in 5 per cent to 10 per cent of people.

**Hepatitis B** Now considered routine for most travellers. Given as three shots over six months. A rapid schedule is also available, as is a combined vaccination with hepatitis A. Side effects are mild and uncommon, usually headache and a sore arm. Lifetime protection occurs in 95 per cent of people.

**Measles, mumps and rubella** Two doses of MMR required unless you have had the diseases. Occasionally a rash and flu-like illness can develop a week after receiving the vaccine. Many young adults require a booster.

**Polio** Only one booster is required as an adult for lifetime protection.

**Typhoid** Recommended unless your trip is less than a week. The vaccine offers around 70 per cent protection, lasts for two to three years and comes as a single shot. Tablets are also available; however, the injection is usually recommended as it has fewer side effects. A sore arm and fever may occur.

**Varicella** If you have not had chickenpox, discuss this vaccination with your doctor.

These are recommended only for long-term travellers (more than one month):

**Japanese B Encephalitis** Three injections in all. Booster recommended after two years. A sore arm and headache are the most common side effects.

**Meningitis** Single injection. There are two types of vaccination: the quadrivalent vaccine gives two to three years' protection; meningitis group C vaccine gives around 10 years' protection. Recommended for long-term travelers aged under 25.

**Rabies** Three injections in all. A booster after one year will then provide 10 years' protection. Side effects are rare – occasionally a headache and sore arm.

**Tuberculosis** Adult long-term travellers are usually recommended to have a TB skin test before and after travel, rather than vaccination. Only one vaccine is given in a lifetime.

**Cholera** This oral vaccine is recommended for those whose activities or medical history put them at increased risk. If you are going to areas of cholera outbreaks that have limited access to safe water and medical care.

## TRAVEL AND MEDICAL INSURANCE

All participants traveling are recommended to have valid travel and medical insurance covering the period of stay in India.

The CMS Secretariat disclaims all responsibility for medical, accident and travel insurance, for compensation for death or disability, for loss of or damage to personal property and for any other loss that may be incurred during travel time or the period of participation. In this context, it is strongly recommended that participants secure prior to departure an international insurance for the period of participation.

## WEATHER

The weather and climate in Gandhinagar are influenced by the Arabian Sea. It has three main seasons: summer, monsoon and winter. Aside from the monsoon season, it is very dry. The month of February is characterized by essentially constant daily high temperatures, with daily highs around 31°C and lows around 15°C throughout the month.

## CURRENCY

The Indian currency is called the Indian Rupee (INR) and the coins are called paise. The symbol of the Indian Rupee is ₹. One Rupee consists of 100 paise with notes in denominations of Rs 10, Rs 20, Rs 50, Rs 100, Rs 200, Rs 500 and Rs 2000. Coins come in values of one rupee, two rupees, five rupees and ten rupees. It is best to arrive with some local currency, though you can easily withdraw cash at ATMs. Credit cards are accepted by most hotels and restaurants in Gujarat. **Please** note that you should notify your bank that you are going to use your credit card in India so that they do not block it. The exchange rate as of October 2019 is one U.S. dollar = 70.98 INR.

## OFFICIAL LANGUAGE IN INDIA

There are 22 major languages in India, written in 13 different scripts, with over 720 dialects. The official Indian languages are Hindi (with approximately 420 million speakers) and English, which is also widely spoken.

## ELECTRICAL CURRENT

India uses 230 Volts, 50 Hz alternating current as the power source. Plugs and sockets have either grounded / earthed 3-pin connections (Type D) or ungrounded 2-pin connections (Type C). Common electrical outlets used in the country:



You might need either a transformer (to reduce voltage) or an elevator. Some electronic devices are able to work in a wide range of voltages, i.e. from 100v to 230v, but please check its labels before plugging it in. Incompatible devices might be damaged, and could also generate a fire in the worst case.

## TIME ZONE

Indian Standard Time (IST) is the time observed throughout India, with a time offset of Coordinated Universal Time (UTC) +05:30. India does not observe daylight saving time (DST) or other seasonal adjustments.

## SAFETY AND SECURITY

Dial 112 for immediate assistance.

## SERVICES TO PARTICIPANTS AT THE CONFERENCE VENUE

### On-site registration

On-site registration will start on 15 February 2020 at 08:30 and run throughout the meeting. Participants are encouraged to register as early as possible in order to avoid congestion right before the opening of the Conference of the Parties, which will take place on 17 February.

Throughout COP13, strict security measures will be observed and the conference ID should be visible at all time and is mandatory for admission to the conference venue as well as to the various meeting rooms. A lost ID should immediately be reported to the CMS Secretariat.

### List of delegations

A list of delegations attending the COP will be made available on the [CMS website](#) under “information documents”, as well as distributed during the meeting. Participants not wishing their full coordinates to appear on the list of participants should notify the Secretariat staff at the registration desk.

### Documents

In order to minimize the environmental impact of the meeting and for reasons of economy, delegates are pre-session documents for the meeting, including the information documents, can be downloaded from the [CMS website](#). The Secretariat will not print documents for delegates at the meeting.

## Working languages of the meeting

The meeting will be conducted in English, French and Spanish, with simultaneous interpretation during plenary sessions.

## Internet, PC access and photocopying facilities

Participants will have access, free of charge, to a limited number of PCs located at the conference venue. Wireless internet (WIFI) will be available everywhere on the meeting premises. Limited printing and photocopying facilities will also be at the disposal of the meeting participants.

## Official Opening

The official opening of the COP will take place at the Conference venue at 09.00. on Monday, 17 February 2020. The formal sessions of the meeting will be held daily from 09.00. to 12:30 and from 15.00 to 18.45 at the Conference venue. These times might change.

## High-Level Panel

The High-Level Segment, which will be held in the afternoon of 16 February, will feature a special dialogue, involving Ministers and other dignitaries from around the world, such as executives of international organizations and other leaders.

The dialogue will be focusing on the importance of “connectivity” for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, which will be adopted at the end of 2020.

The event is open to all COP participants. English, French and Spanish interpretation will be provided.

More information about the High-Level Segment can be found on the [CMS website](#). The contact point in the Secretariat is Ms. Laura Cerasi, Email: [laura.cerasi@un.org](mailto:laura.cerasi@un.org)

## Champion Night

The Champion Night will take place in the evening of 16 February and will comprise an Award Ceremony under the dedicated Migratory Species Champion Programme at the Mahatma Mandir Convention Centre followed by a reception at the Gift Club Hotel.

The event is open to all COP participants. English, French and Spanish interpretation will be provided.

More information about the Champion Night can be found on the CMS website. The contact point in the Secretariat is Ms. Laura Cerasi, Email: [laura.cerasi@un.org](mailto:laura.cerasi@un.org)

## Exhibitions

The Mahatma Mandir Convention and Exhibition Centre in Gandhinagar offers an enormous space available for international and national exhibitions throughout the week. All COP13 participants are encouraged to present their work or any related issues relevant to the objectives of the Convention on Migratory Species and to COP13 Agenda in the form of an exhibit.

Those interested in this opportunity, please fill in the Registration Form for Exhibits found in the link below and return it to the attention of the dedicated focal point:

Mr. Sanjeev Tyagi

Director in the Gujarat Forestry Research Foundation

[directorgfrf@gmail.com](mailto:directorgfrf@gmail.com)

phone +919409306399

For more information please consult the dedicated website: [COP13](#)

## Side Events

Parties, observers and other entities participating in COP13 are encouraged to contribute actively to the success of the meeting by showcasing their work or any related issue of interest in the form of a side event. Initiatives and projects to be presented should be relevant to the objectives of the Convention and preferably to the items of the COP agenda.

Please find more information about Side Events here: [COP13](#)

## Time and room allocation

Side event space will be provided free of charge at the venue throughout the conference period. The Secretariat will allocate the accepted applications after the indicated deadline and will issue confirmation to organizers approximately one month prior to the conference. The Secretariat may have to decline or combine some of the applications due to space constraints.

Side events are typically scheduled at lunch time or evening and have a maximum duration of one hour to avoid overlap with important Working Groups and Committee meetings.

The following criteria will be taken into consideration for the allocation of side events:

1. Relevance to the Convention's work and COP agenda;
2. Feasibility and preference on certain dates in accordance with the COP programme;
3. Avoidance of thematic overlaps per time slot;

4. The expected level of participation and room size;
5. Order of request (when the registration is received).

It should be noted that side events could be rescheduled in the interest of the official sessions of the meeting.

#### Technical specifications

Side event rooms are normally equipped with a computer, a projector, a screen, internet access and power sockets. No interpretation for side events will be provided.

Organizers of side events are free to bring their own equipment, including technical items, at their own risk.

#### Catering

Organizers of side events might wish to offer food and drinks. Catering for the side event may be provided only by the official caterer for the venue. Contact details will be posted on the [CMS website](#) as soon as they become available.

#### Shipping of materials for exhibitions and side events

Organizers of exhibitions and side events that wish to ship items (information and display materials and/or equipment) to the conference venue may contact the designated person. Contact details will be posted on the [CMS website](#) as soon as they become available. Organizers of exhibits and side events will be responsible for the transport, setting up and dismantling of the materials and their customs clearance.

#### Conference Excursions

Conference excursions organized by the Government of India will take place in the vicinity of Gandhinagar on 21 February 2020. Participants will be able to choose between various options. We recommend bringing outdoor shoes and suitable clothes.

## Tourist Information

Information about India (e.g. excursions, museums, activities) will be provided at the information desk in the venue. Further information, including on tour operators, is also available on the following websites:

<https://www.incredibleindia.org/content/incredible-india-v2/en.html>

<https://www.indiatouristoffice.org/>