# Puttenahalli Lake as Urban Commons Bangalore, India

ofwater is away from the city and into the valleys surrounding. Each valley

at the ridge top gives birth to small streams which cascade down to form ma-

jor stream systems. 

Bangalore City sits on two river basins, the Cauvery(

the river is appr 150km away from bangalore) and the Dakshina Pinakini

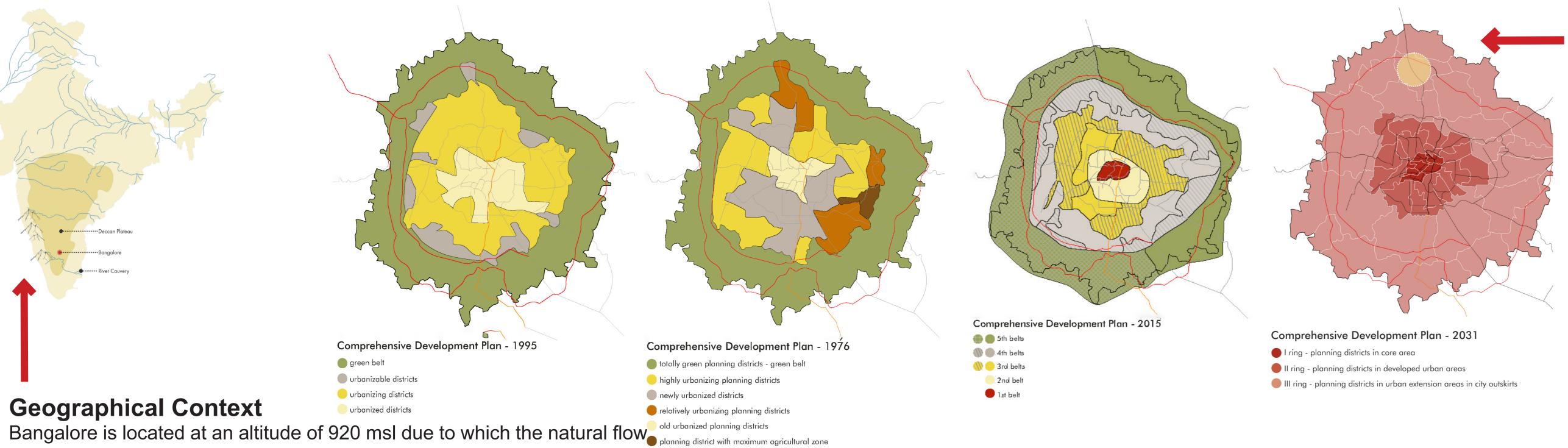
Rainfall: 920mm of rain over 60 rainy days every year

Lakes and Tanks: Over 200

PROJECT: PROFESSIONAL

SDGs CONSIDERED: 3 - 6 - 11- 13

IN PROCESS STATUS:



HIstorical Background

Most of Bangalore's lakes are actually irrigation tanks, built over the

course of many centuries, starting with the Gangas, the Cholas and the

In the 16th Century, Kempegowda built tanks and irrigation wells as well.

Traditionally interlinked through a chain or 'cascade' system, this en-

sured water was not wasted. Several Rulers and Empires such as the

Hoysalas, Vijaynagara, Marathas, Tipu Sultan, Haider Ali, Wodeyars

Hoysalas who built tanks with high bunds to store water.

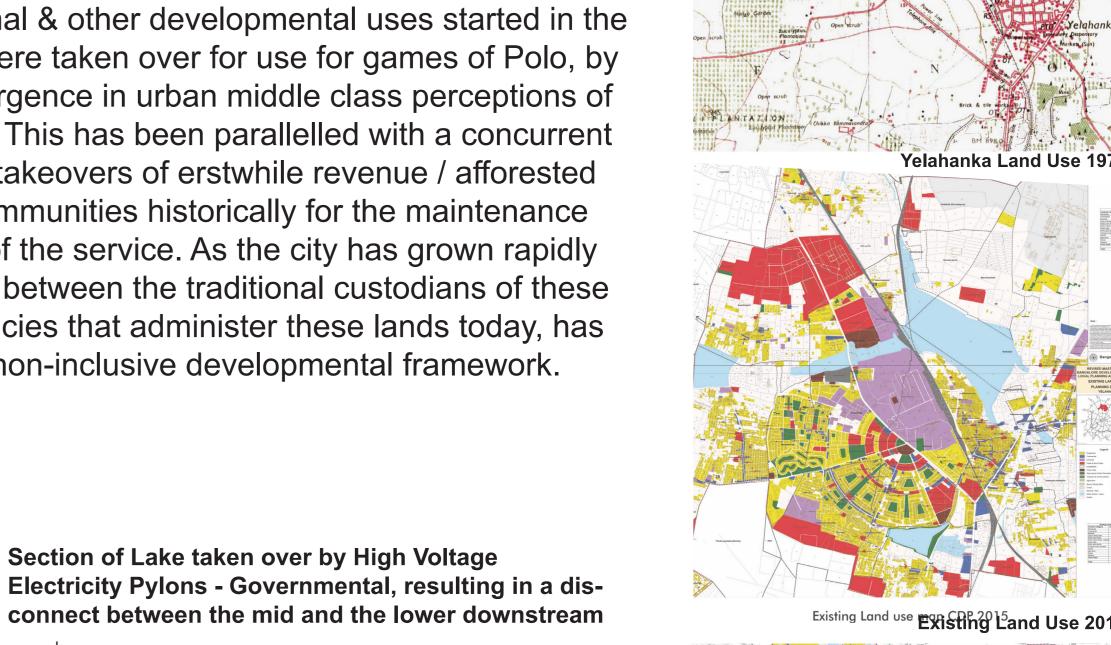
have all been patrons of lakes and tanks.

### **Urban Development framework**

**Upstream - Attur Lake 2** 

Developmental Plans indicate the rapid urbanisation around Bangalore between 1975 and 2019. This massive growth has resulted in the gradual depletion of significant urban ecology including the takeover of a large no of lake systems for a variety of uses, prominent amongst which are governmental acquisition such lands for large infrastructure works - stadiums, transport interchanges, market places, etc. This process of conversion of lake land into recreational & other developmental uses started in the colonial era, when dried up lake lands were taken over for use for games of Polo, by British officers, a practice that finds resurgence in urban middle class perceptions of lake lands as recreational spaces today. This has been parallelled with a concurrent process of governmental administrative takeovers of erstwhile revenue / afforested land, originally alloted to members of communities historically for the maintenance and upkeep of lakes and forests in lieu of the service. As the city has grown rapidly & exponentially, this growing disconnect between the traditional custodians of these lands and numerous governmental agencies that administer these lands today, has resulted in a dysfunctional, inefficient & non-inclusive developmental framework.

Section of Lake taken over by High Voltage

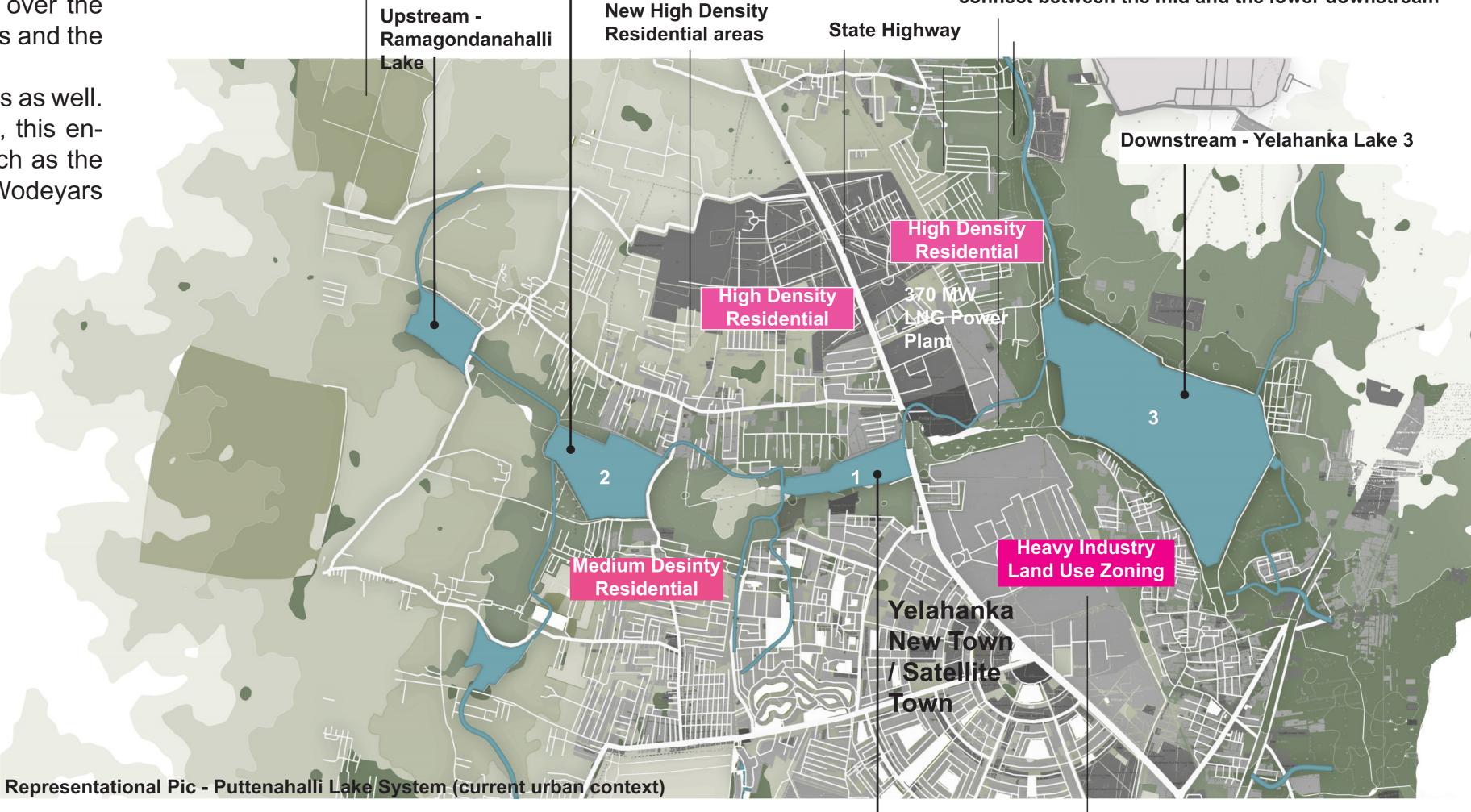


Proposed Land Use map CDP 20.

Proposed Land Use 2031 large increase of Residential development

## **Urban Planning Context - Yelahanka**

The Comprehensive Development Plan for 2031 continues to indicate a dominant heavy industrial land use (purple) alongside large growing residential zones. This continues to place enormous pressure on the Lake system as high GHG emissions, high poolutants from a blast furnace and lit up night skies from these industrial areas continue to disturb the sensitive eco systems around the lakes including the bird sanctuary at Puttenahalli



Mid-Section - Puttenahalli Lake 1

The Puttenahalli Lake System comprises of an upstream 'Attur' Lake, a middle section referred to as the 'Puttenahalli Lake' and the downstream collection space called the 'Yelahanka Lake'. At a sort of junction between the yelahanka Satellite township and new high density residential areas to the top, the 'cascade' system has been subject to indiscriminate dumping of sewage and effluent generated from adjoining residential and industrial areas. A notified 'bird sanctuary' now thrives at the mid-section but is constantly under threat from large infrastructure projects planned by the local governments on the water shed areas of the lakes, an increasingly busy state highway and growing urban development

3 decade old Static Land Use Zoning

continues to pose significant threats to

avian, aquatic and human settlements

## Depletion of the Puttenahalli Lake Cascade

Satellite images (google earth) indicate the 'cascade' Lake System and the radical changes to this connected system resulting in gradual depletion of individual upstream and downstream sections of the system. It is generally agreed that the prime reason for the depletion of lakes in bangalore is largely the disenchantment & erosion of a sense of ownerrship of traditional community users. Other reasons include, usage of erstwhile lake land as dumping grounds













**Local Governmental Agencies** 

















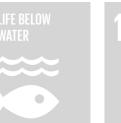
















The Lakes Legend -

4 Jakkur aLake

5 Nagwra Lake

1 Attur Lake - Upstream

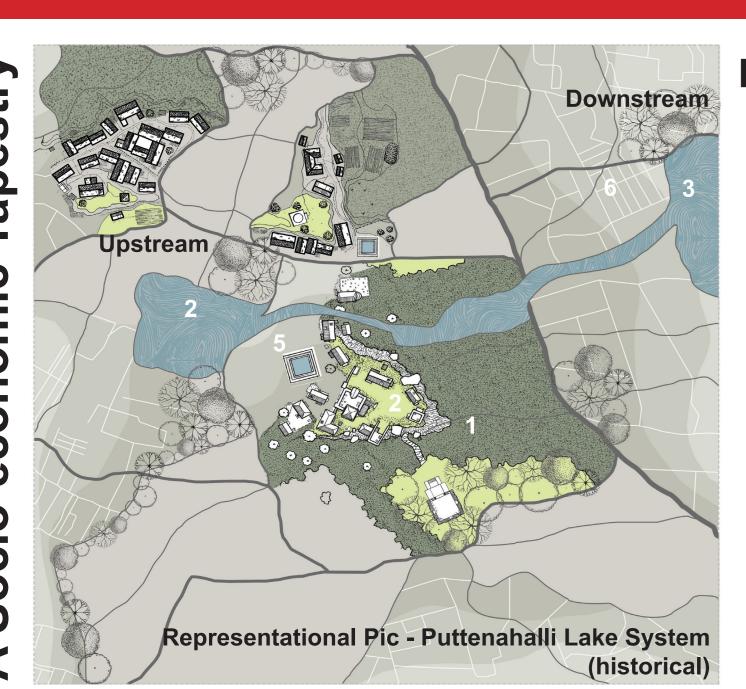
2 Puttenahalli Lake - Mid section

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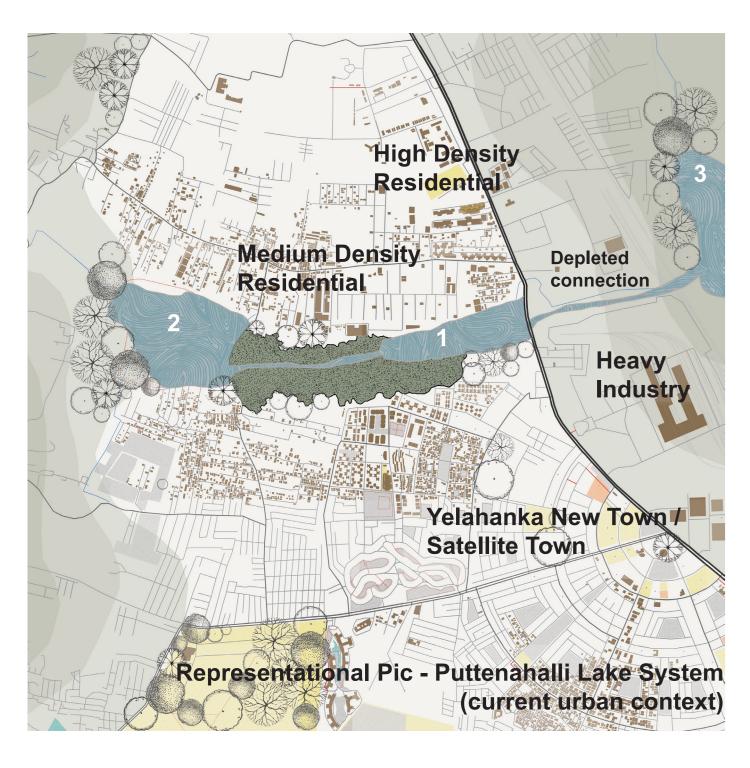
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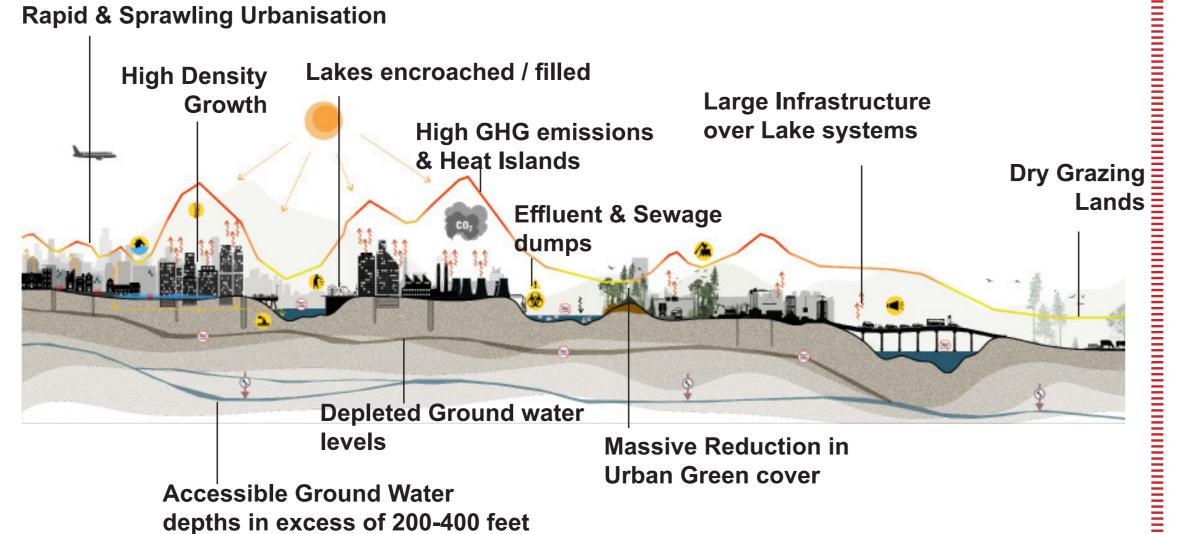
## **Socio - Cultural Context -**More than just Ecology

The Lake lands and the water shed areas represented more than just ecological systems. Communities / Individuals that were alloted the creation and maintenance of these lands in lieu of tax revenues, created a social fabric that formed socio-economic and metaphysical relationships with the lake and its surrounds. Upstream and downstream section of the lake (wetlands), were scientifically allocated for different activities - eg. agricultural fields along the lower downstream





# A Dystopian Urban Scenario - Current Urban Context...now

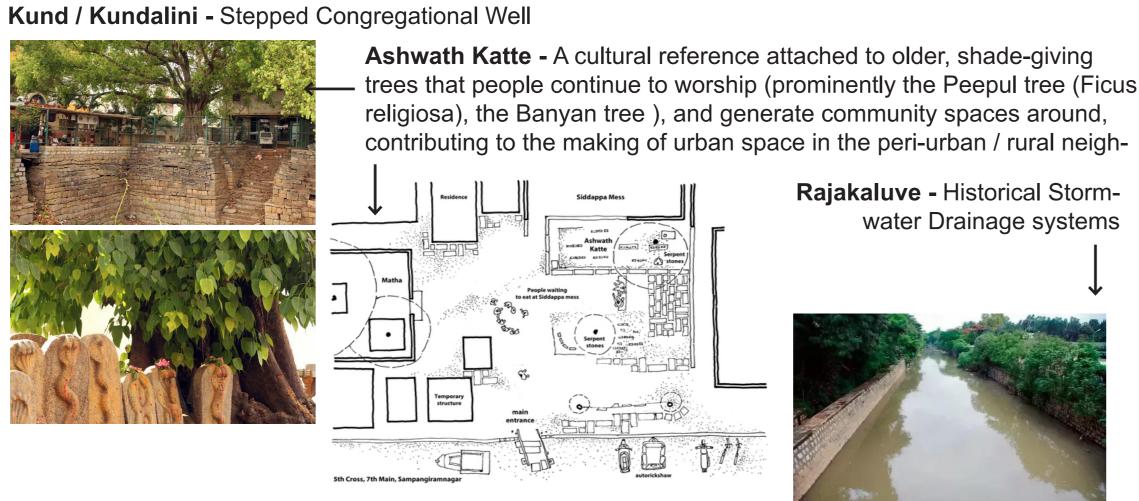


## A Strong Regional Lingual & Visual Urban vocabulary -

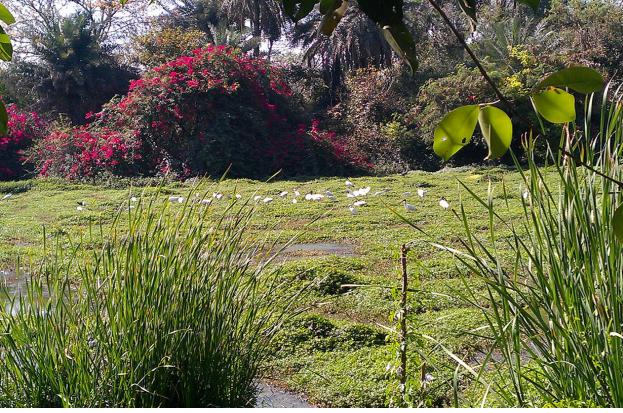
(in favour of Sustainable Community Participation)

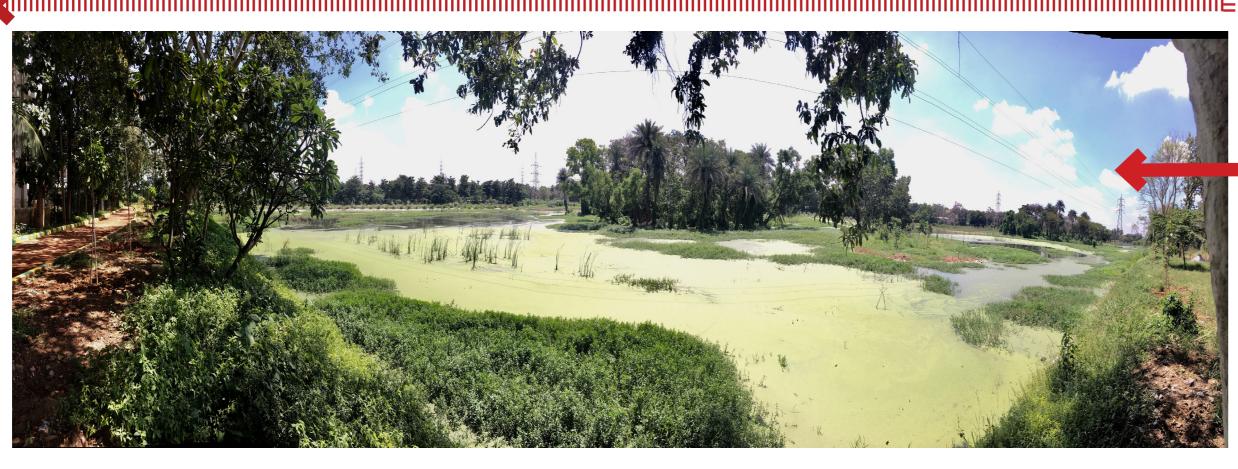
**Kere -** Lake

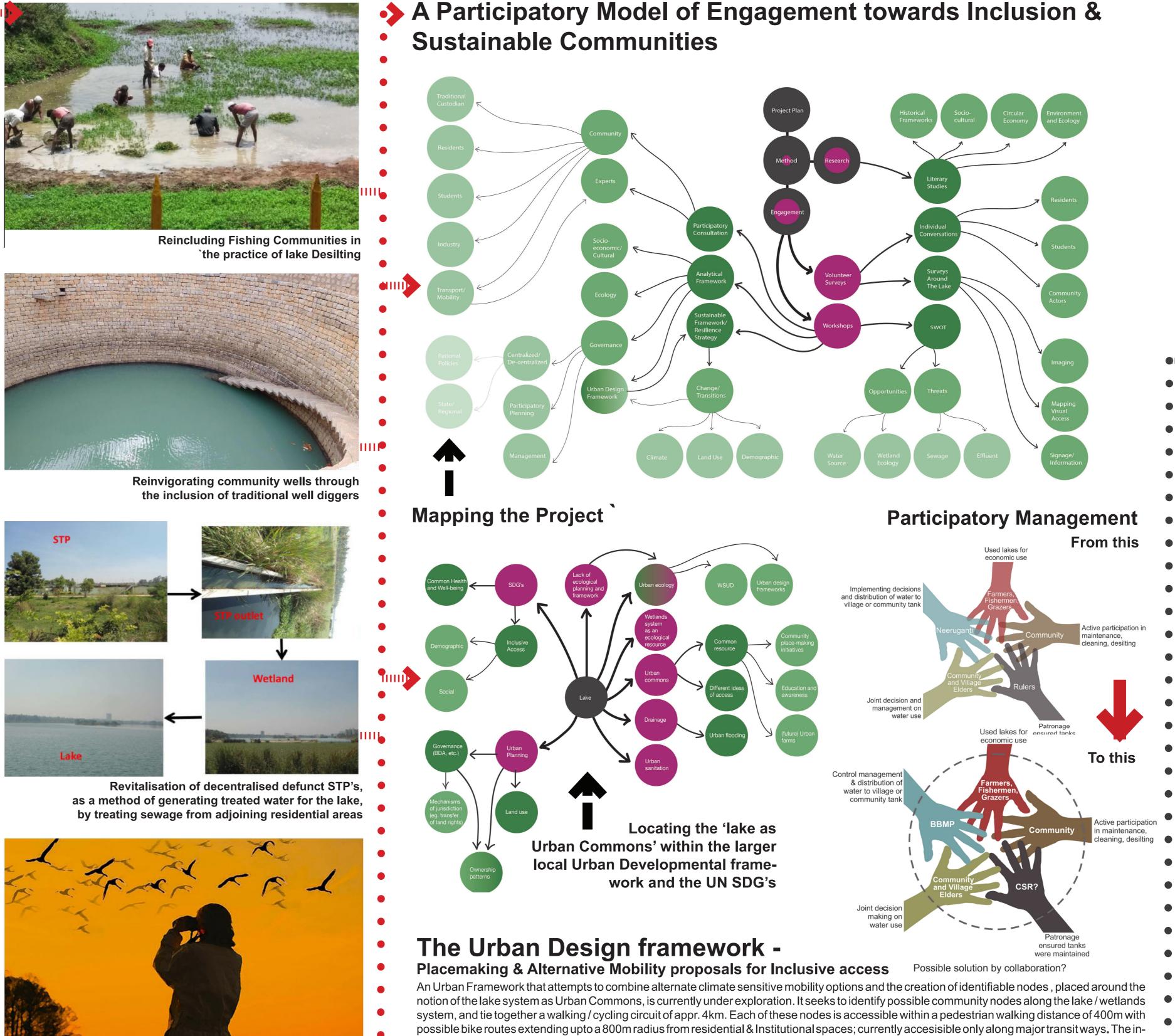
Gundathoppu - Afforested Area / Sacred Groves, serve as points for bird watching / bushwalking







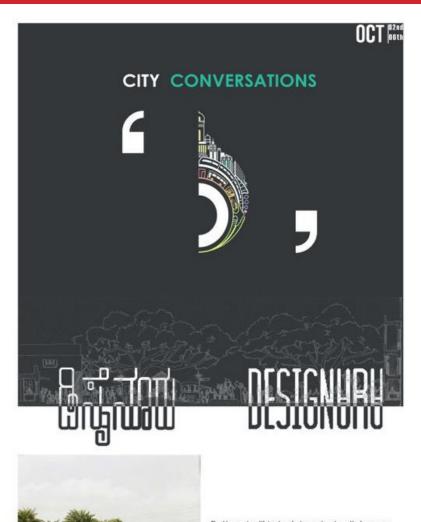




## An evolving process of Revitalisation - In progress

Strengthening Social and Community uses 'Sensibly'

The project has initiated conversations between various stakeholders including the traditional custodians of the lake lands - farming & fishing communities ( who apart from living off the lake, also desilted the lake traditionally ), grazing communities, communities who lived off these systems and created places of social confluence (local panchayats), the sacred groves and religious places of worship. An evolving process, the Lake has been partially rejuvenated through the efforts of local community groups, the YPLBCT (community lake trust) and now is a thriving bio-diversity space, with a notified bird sanctuary. The twin threats of Sewage flows into the lake and increasingly reduced rainfall periods are being addressed to some extent, by the installation of adequatey sized STP's that has ensured a constant supply of treated water for the lakes, in turn promoting avian and aquatic life and in turn a resurgence of bio-diversity. non-intrusive sustainable design approaches



Puttenahalli Lake. The workshop initated conversations on a range of issues connected to lake systems - management, sustainability mechanisms for urban living, mobility alternatives, ecology, bird conservation, health well being of resident communities and Social In-





















1 Puttenahalli Lake System

3 Yelahanka Satellite Township

Pedestrian / Bike Pathways

2 Attur Lake (Upstream)

--- Highways









tent is to use this circuit not only as alternative access across major residential zones but to also site & interconnect a series of community spaces such

as a wetlands edcation centre, etc, promoting reduced vehicular usage and healthy lifestyles amongst local residential & institutional communities













