

## INFORMATION SHEET ON RAMSAR WETLANDS

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**4.- Name and address of the compiler:**

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**5.- Name of wetland:**

Lagunas de Villafafila

**6.- Date of Ramsar designation:**

8 May 1990

**7.- Geographical coordinates;**

5<sup>0</sup> 37' W 41<sup>0</sup> 50' N

**8.- General location:**

Northern Zamora province, Municipalities of Villafafila, Revellinos and Villarrin de Campos.

**9.- Area:**

2.854 Has.

**10.- Wetland type:**

R and Q

**11.- Altitude:**

Average 680 m above sea level. Range between 678m and 685 m.

**12.- Overview:**

The lagunar complex is set amongst gently inclined hills (tesos). They reach as a whole roughly 500 Has. and are flooded with markedly saline, and usually seasonal waters.

**13.- Physical features:**

Climate is mediterranean semi-arid continental. Average rainfall slightly more than 400 mm/year. Absolute minimum temperature is -15<sup>0</sup> C and the maximum registered one is 45<sup>0</sup> C.

River Salado lies at the centre of the endorreic basin and inter-connects the three main lagoons: Laguna de Barillos, Laguna Grande and Laguna de Salinas.

Groundwater resources are quite important and are saline below 695 m altitude.

Villafafila Lagoons show saline, steppe and seasonal characters. They are located in a generally flat area, with very slight slopes and with wide horizons.

The lagoon area is basically formed by amounts of scarcely consolidated plastic materials through a relatively recent sedimentary process.

**14.- Ecological features:**

These lagoons are covered by emergent vegetation belonging to the gen. *Scirpus* (*S. maritimus*, *S. pungens*), with small beds of *Typha angustifolia*.

Some saline grasslands surround the lagoons, with *Aeluropus littoralis*, *Suaeda vera*, etc. The remaining surfaces are unirrigated cereals and lucerne crops.

**15.- Land tenure/ownership:**

a) site: 1.667 Has. (58 %) are private properties  
1.029 Has. (36 %) belong to the Councils.  
15 Has. (0'6 %) is owned by the Regional Government

b) surrounding area:

**16.- Conservation measures taken:**

Hunting activity is greatly restricted, since the whole site is in a National Hunting Reserve. Besides, almost all of the lagoons are under the protection of a Hunting Refuge, where hunting is forbidden.

A dried-up lagoon has recently been restored.

**17.- Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:**

It has been initially proposed as a Nature Reserve, in the Regional Government Law on Natural Areas (30. April. 1991).

**18.- Current land use: principal human activities in:**

a) site: Occasionally shepherds may take the livestock to the lagoons. The banks are either heavily grazed, or cultivated with cereals.

b) surrounding/catchment:

Most of the area is covered by unirrigated cereal and lucerne crops.

**19.- Disturbances/threats, including changes in land use and major development projects:**

a) at the site:

Increasing sedimentation.

Strong increases of the wintering populations of gen. *Anser*, cause vegetation belonging to gen. *Scirpus* to become rarer.

b) in the surrounding/catchment:

Modern agricultural techniques, which implies the use of all products and machinery available for these purposes.

**20.- Hydrological and physical values:**

Current or over-exploitation of groundwater resources, is not possible, because of the saline quality of both lagoons and aquifer.

Sedimentation is very rapid because of the lack of soil-preserving vegetation cover in the catchment.

**21.- Social and cultural values:**

The area is being promoted for tourism.  
Some scientific research is being carried out.  
There are a number of archaeological sites in the surrounding areas.

**22.- Noteworthy fauna:**

The key natural value of the area is its birds. Mammals, reptiles and amphibians are relatively significant.

WINTERING SPECIES (January 1991 census):

*Anser anser* (23.560), *Anas platyrhynchos* (3.065), *Anas clypeata* (211), *Anas crecca* (211), etc.

BREEDING SPECIES (1991):

*Falco naumanni* (60 pairs), *Himantopus himantopus* (370 birds), *Recurvirostra avosetta* (65 birds), *Anas platyrhynchos* (1.670 birds), etc.

**23.- Noteworthy flora:**

The areas' steppe character, salinity and seasonality, allow both atlantic and typically mediterranean climate species to occur.

Some species have been listed: *Scirpus pungens* (syn. *S. littoralis*), *Scirpus maritimus*, *Aeluropus littoralis*, *Suaeda vera*, *Atriplex hastata*, *Spergularia marina*, *Vulpia sciceroides*, *Salicornia europaea*, *Salsola soda*, etc.

**24.- Current scientific research and facilities:**

The following are being carried out at present:

- Radio-tracking monitoring studies in *Otis tarda* and *Lepus capensis*.
  - Competition between *Otis tarda* and *Anser anser*.
- Available facilities are almost absent.

**25.- Current conservation education:**

Some observatories are being built at present as well as animal rehabilitation centres and a Park, with domesticated fauna.

**26.- Current recreation and tourism:**

Some facilities considered essential to a organised tourism, are being built at present.

**27.- Management authority:**

Servicio de Medio Ambiente  
c/ Prado Tuero s/n, planta 14  
49071 ZAMORA.

**28.- Jurisdiction:**

FAUNA: Comunidad Autonoma de Castilla - Leon. Servicio de Medio Ambiente.  
WATER: Confederacion Hidrografica del Duero.  
LAND OWNERSHIP: Municipalities. Councils.

**29.- Bibliographical references:**

ALONSO, C. y M. MOREY (1985). Distribucion de la vegetacion en relacion con gradientes de encharcamiento. Est. Central Ecol. : 1-37.  
RODRIGUEZ, M. y J. ALBERTI (1991). El ansar campestre y el ansar comun en Castilla Leon. Ed.: Junta de Castilla Leon.

ENA, V. y L.J. ALBERTO (1977). Avifauna 1975 - 77 no passeriforme de Villafafila (Zamora). Reproduccion, poblacion y ecologia. Ardeola 24: 70-93.

**30.- Reasons for inclusion:**

It gives shelter regularly up to 20.000 wintering waterbirds (1991).

1. 23.560 *Anser anser*, by 7.000 *Anas platyrhynchos*, 400 *Himantopus himantopus*, etc.

**31.- Map of the site:**

O.K.