

## INFORMATION SHEET ON RAMSAR WETLANDS

**1.- Country**

Spain

**2.- Date:**

14.May.1992

**3.- Ref.:** 7ES013

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

Direccion General de Conservacion del Medio Natural  
Servicio de Espacios Naturales

**5.- Name of wetlands:**

Parc Natural de l'Albufera

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

28.May 1990

**7.- Geographical coordinates:**

39°19'N; 0°20'W.

**8.- General location:**

Valencia province, 15 km south to Valencia City

**9.- Area:**

21.120 Has.

**10.- Wetland type:**

E, K, Y, J, M, S, 3.

**11.- Altitude:**

Average: 3 m.Range between 0 and 60 m.

**12.- Overview:**

This is a coastal lake, fed by different strams, torrents and irrigation channels, and fringed by small bogs obtained from the lake to be cultivated mainly with rice.An emergent shoal isolates the lake from the sea.That bank is colonised by vegetal communities consisting of littoral maquis and crowned by **\*\*pino carrasco\*\***.The river Turia limits the shoal in the North, and the Serra de les Rabosses in the South.

**13.- Physical features:**

**GEOLOGY:** The bottoms are aged in Holocene and consist predominantly of sandy brown muds, flooding slimes of fluvial origin and lagoon black muds.The shoal consists of non consolidated Holocenic sands.

**GEOMORPHOLOGY:** The origin of the bank is realted to river Turia fluvial materials suppy, and the further spread by a drifting stream.When the bay become closed by this shoal, it was formed a coastal lake where natural siltation processes, were greatly

increased by human influence. The bogs generated in this way, now are ricefields. Some cretacic reliefs still remain, but are very scarce.

**HYDROLOGY:** The bogs and the lagoon are composing a hydric unit whose balance is estimated in 911 Hm<sup>3</sup>/year. The average deep is 1 m. The average volume hold by the lake is 21'5 Hm<sup>3</sup>, ranging between 17'2 and 40'5 Hm<sup>3</sup>. The levels are artificially managed, in relation to ricefield requirements. Water quality is, in general terms, deficient, since is the vehicle of industrial and urban wastes.

**SOILS:** "arenosoles albicos", "solochaks gelicos", "gleysoles calcareos" and "fluvisoles gleycos".

**CLIMATE:** Average rain: 450mm. Average temperatures between 10<sup>0</sup> C and 25<sup>0</sup> C.

#### **14.- Ecological features:**

The main habitats in the Park are: dunar formations colonised by littoral maquis and dunar-plants; inter-dunar deeper areas with salt-tolerant plants; lagoon; canals and irrigation channels with hydrophilic plant communities; and finally small scrub areas with ligneous vegetation.

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

a) site: The Devesa del Saler (sited in the bank) with 800 Has and the lagoon with 2.000 Has. are Public Properties and belong to Valencia Council. The remaining territory is owned by particulars.

b) surrounding area: Private

#### **16.- Conservation measures taken:**

The area is declared Natural Park by the Decree 89/1986, dated on 8 July, enacted by the Regional Government (Generalitat Valenciana)

The Special Protection Plan for Albufera Natural Park, regulating uses and activities, was passed on 1.10.1990.

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

The Special Protection Plan states a wide planning of activities to be developed in the Park, including regeneration projects in degraded areas, as well as an integral sanitary restoration plan, that at present has been partially executed.

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

a) site: The main activities are: agriculture, tourism and fishing.

b) surrounding/catchment:

Services, industrial developments and agriculture.

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

The problems affecting the site, are related to three main issues:

1) transformations and siltation in the ricefields.

2) land occupations to be built illegally or for incompatible uses.

3) inputs of chemicals used in the ricefields.

b) in the surrounding/catchment:

Industries located in the basin and surrounding villages, pour their wastes in it.

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

There are two different wet environments: the lake and the bogs. The lake has three artificial outputs to the sea, that are controlled by gates. At present the bogs corresponds to the ricefields and reaches nearly 14.000 Has. There is a second watertable, small sized, in the south of the Park: Bassa de Sant Llorenç.

The northern beach of the Park (Pinedo), shows some erosion problems, since the breakwaters built in the Valencia Harbour are creating disturbances in the natural drifting streams.

The main hydrological values in the Park are the "ullals" or natural freshwater springs, located both in the lake and in the contact line between bogs and orchards. Some relictic populations of species disappearing from the lake, are still found here, and so these sites are considered as genetic reserves.

It is appropriate to underline the importance of ricefields as depurative systems of waters flowing to the lake, since they work as a great sedimentation basin to a major part of water flows.

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

Fishing exploitation of the lake is an ancient activity, since its three Fishermen Communities (El Palmar, Silla and Catarroja), were established in the XIII century.

Touristically considered, the most suitable resources are beaches, fishing and landscape.

## **22.- Noteworthy fauna:**

The high density and abundance of vertebrate and invertebrate species is very noticeable in the Park. Additionally, the area owe a great part of its importance to the high number of endemic species that may be found here: decapods as *Dugastella valentina* and *Palaemonetes zariquieyi* as well as Ciprinodontidae fishes as *Valencia hispanica* (samaruc) and *Aphanius iberus* (fartet).

However, its basic importance is given by birds: more than 250 species stay occasionally or regularly in the area and up to 90 breed currently here. Wintering concentrations of Anatidae are quite noticeable: red crested pochards (*Netta rufina*), northern shoveler (*Anas clypeata*) and mallards (*Anas platyrhynchos*). Special mention must be made to the herons group: *Ardea cinerea*, *Ardea purpurea*, *Bubulcus ibis*, *Egretta garzetta*, *Nycticorax nycticorax*, *Ixobrychus minutus* and *Ardeola ralloides* breed regularly in the Park.

## **22.- Noteworthy flora:**

DUNAR VEGETATION: In incipient and mobile dunes the communities *Salsolo-cakiletum aegyptiacae* and *Agropyretum mediterraneum*. In semi-fixed dunes, *Crucianelletum maritimae*. In fixed dunes is common the \*jaguarzal\* *Teucrio-Halimietum halimifoli* and pluristratified and dense scrub with \*aladierno\* (*Rhamnus alaternus*), \*lentisco\* (*Pistacia lentiscus*), \*palmito\* (*Chamaerops humilis*), \*madreselva\* (*Lonicera implexa*), \*zarzaparrilla\* (*Smilax*

*aspera*), etc. In more mature stages pines (\*carrasco, piñonero y rodeno\*) are dominating and use to share the habitat with \*espino negro (*Rhamnus oleoidis*), \*mirtos\* (*Myrtus comunis*) and \*falso aladierno\* (*Phyllirea angustifolia*).

**SALT-TOLERANT VEGETATION:** in deeper wet salty depressions, are common *Salicornia ramosissima* and *Suaeda maritima* as well as *Arthrocnemum spp.*, *Limonium douforei*, rushes and grasslands.

**HYDROPHYLLIC VEGETATION:** Is basically formed by submerged, amphibians, floating and "boggy" (\*palustre\*) communities, with *Lemna spp.*, *Ricciocarpon natans* and *Riccia fluitans*. In "ullals" must be undelined *Myriophyllum verticillatum*, *Ceratophyllum demersum*, *Potamogeton crispus* and *Nymphaea alba*. In the ricefields *Ranunculus aquatilis* is quite noticeable. In the banks of the lake, as well as in inner small island of vegetation, are reedbeds, bulrushes and pond rush; in higher sites there is great fen sedge (*Cladium mariscus*).

#### **24.- Current scientific research and activities:**

Between the most important scientific researches are: studies on marshy vegetation; studies on shorebirds (larolimicolas) and herons; Projects on extinct species reintroduction: purple gallinule and marbled teal, as well as the fartet and samaruc (Ciprinodontidae fishes). Besides, breeding and wintering censuses.

#### **25.- Current conservation education:**

At present is in service an Information and Interpretation Centre at Racó de l'Olla, available to all visitors, but with a special interest to scholars. There is here a permanent exhibition and itineraries with monitors are organised here as well.

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

There is a private service of boats which allow to visitors to make some tours in authorised areas. Beaches and Devesa forest are used as recreational areas, especially by neighbouring residents, with high intensity during weekends and summertime.

#### **27.- Mangement authority:**

Conselleria de Medio Ambiente  
Dirección General del Medio Natural

#### **28.- Jurisdiction:**

Regional Government: GENERALITAT VALENCIANA

#### **29.- Bibliographical references:**

Plan Especial de Protección del Parque Natural de la Albufera (1990).

Generalitat Valenciana (1991). Atlas ornitológico de la Comunidad Valenciana.

E.O.A.- S.E.O. (1991). Anuario ornitológico. Estación Ornitológica de la Albufera.

Generalitat Valenciana (1990). Medi Natural. Centro de Protección y Estudio del Medio Natural.

**30.- Reasons for inclusion:**  
1A, 2A, 2C, 2D, 3A, 3C.

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