

Ramsar Information Sheet

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1. Date this sheet was completed:

30 May, 1996

2. Country:

Georgia

3. Name of wetland:

Wetlands of Central Kolkheta

4. Geographical co-ordinates:

42 degrees 12 minutes north, 41 degrees 42 minutes east

Located on both sides of the Rioni river mouth in the central part of the Black Sea eastern coast.

5. Altitude:

0,2-5,5 metres above sea level ; average -1,2 meter above sea level

6. Area:

33 710 hectares

7. Overview

The territory is distinguished by high capacity of peat, high humidity, wealth of relict and endemic species of flora and fauna, rivers and lakes with abundant water.

8. Wetland type:

Type A - Shallow marine waters

Type E - Sand shores

Type J - Coastal brackish/saline lagoons

Type L - Deltas

Type M - Rivers/streams/creeks: permanent

Type O - Freshwater lakes : permanent

Type Tp - Freshwater marshes : permanent

Type Ts - Freshwater marshes : seasonal

Type U - Peatlands (peat bogs, swamps, fens)

Type W - Shrub-dominated wetlands

Type Xf - Freshwater, tree-dominated wetlands

Type Xp - Forested peatlands

Type 9 - Canals

9. Ramsar Criteria:

1(a) (b) (c) (d)

2(a) (b) (c) (d)

3(a)

10. Map of site included:

yes

11. Name and address of contact:

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Department of Biodiversity Protection (Ramsar Convention National Focal Point Unit)

Ministry of Environment of Georgia

68a Kostava Street

380015 Tbilishi

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12. Justification of criteria selected under point 9:

13. General location:

Guria and Samegrelo Regions of Georgia; nearest town - Poti

14. Physical features:

The territory is a seaside alluvial plain, risen in Quaternary, constructed by marine, riverine and lake-wetland clays and sands, minor and transit rivers, peat wetlands and lake, hydromorphic and alluvial-hydromorphic soils. Water level in wetlands -0,2-0,7 m; in lakes -0,5-3,0 m; in rivers -1-1,2 m. Water is hydrocarbonic (Contains Cl, Na, Mg, Ca). The territory is an area of discharge of surface and underground waters brought down from mountains and hills. The long standing average water consumption of the biggest river Rioni is 399 m³/sec. Climate is humid subtropical. The total annual precipitation averages 1500-1700 mm per year. The average temperature of long standing is +14°C, minimum temperatures are -13 to -17°C, maximum is +41°C.

15. Hydrological values:

Horizons of underground waters are constantly recharged. They have high levels (0,5 - 1,5 m above surface). Underground waters take part in feeding of wetlands, lakes and rivers. In wetland areas, coasts of rivers are dammed by flood contrary ground dams. Extremal synoptic data are monitored by meteorostations. Wetlands soften destructive effect of floods. The sea coast of Poti is washed out. On the other territory, the sea coast is sustainable.

16. Ecological features:

Marine sand-gravel coastal vegetation (*Pancreatum maritimum*, *Verbascum gnaphaloides*), grass-spangnum bogs (*Spagnum* spp), bogs with *Juncus* spp and *Carex* spp (with dominant of *Carex* spp, *Juncus* spp, *Juncus feersii* and *Juncus effusus*), marshes with *Phragmites australis* and *Typha latifolia*, shrub-grass bogs (*Alnus barbata*), swampy alder forests (absolute dominant is *Alnus barbata*), moist alder forests (*Quercus meretino*) moist hornbeamalder forests (*Rhododendron ponticum*), etc.

17. Noteworthy flora:

Among the endemic species should be noted *Trapa colchica*, spread along canals, lakes and other reservoirs, bays of rivers and stagnant water places. *Hibiscus ponticus* is rare endem, spread in peat wetlands. *Osmunda regalis* and *Drosera rotundifolia* are rare too. They are spreaded in peat wetlands. *Numphar luteum* is spread in stagnant waters.

18. Noteworthy fauna:

Among the nesting birds of international importance should be noted : *Haliaetos albicilla*, *Pandion haliaetus*, etc. Wintering birds - *Anas strepera*, *Cygnus cygnus*, *Aythya ferna*, *Aythya marila*, *Bucephala clangula*, *Pelecanus crispus*, etc. Mammals of international importance are : *Lutra lutra*, *Tursiops truncatus*, *Delphinus delpis*, *Phocoena phocoena*, etc. Among the fishes *Acipenser sturio* should be noted. It's important as an area for rest of migratory waterbirds (*Ciconiiformes*, *Anceriformes*, *charadriiformes*, etc.) (See Annex I)

19. Social and cultural values:

Small scale fishing, small scale deforestation. On the territory are discovered and researched archaeological monuments of the Bronze and Antique periods (*Kulevi*, *Simagre*, *Zurga*, *Ureki*, *Dikha-Gudzuba*, etc.)

20. Land tenure/ownership of:

- (a) site : State property
- (b) surrounding area : State, private and cooperative property

21. Current land use/principal human activities:

- (a) site : nature protection (*Kolkheti reserve*)
small scale pastoral agriculture (cattle), mowing, forestry, small-scale fishing.
- (b) surroundings/catchment: grain (maize) and bean (haricot, soya) crops, citric plants, pastoral agriculture (cattle), mowing, sand mining, horticulture, market-gardening.

22. Factors adversely affecting the site's ecological character, including changes in land use and

development projects:

- (a) at the site: extraction of peat, deforestation, illegal hunting and fishing.
- (b) in the surroundings/catchment :drainage of mires, extraction of peat, deforestation, illegal hunting and fishing.

23. Conservation measures taken:

Kolkheti State Reserve (500 hectares) established in 1947.

24. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:

Guideline on Management of Protected Wetland Areas of Kolkheti (Tbilisi, 1995)

25. Current scientific and research facilities:

Guideline on Management of Protected Wetland Areas of Kolkheti (Tbilisi, 1995); Scientific researches for correction of General Scheme of the Black Sea Coast Protection; Complex research of Paliastomi Lake.

26. Current conservation education:

Booklet of International Seminar held in Tskaltubo, 1978

27. Current recreation and tourism:

Tourism, connected with low intensity sea coast.

28. Jurisdiction:

State (Ministry of Agriculture)

29. Management authority:

Ministry of Environment Protection of Georgia

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30. Bibliographical references:

Guideline on Management of Protected Wetland Areas of Kolkheti (Tbilisi, 1995);

Kolkheti lowland. Natural conditions in social-economic aspect (1989);

Janelidze Ch. - Paleogeography of Georgia in Holocene (1980);

Abkhazava I. - Lakes of Georgia (Tbilisi, 1975).