



Ramsar Information Sheet

Published on 13 August 2015

Update version, previously published on : 1 January 1998

Ghana

Songor Ramsar Site



Designation date	14 August 1992
Site number	566
Coordinates	05°45'N 00°30'E
Area	51 133,33 ha

Color codes

Fields back-shaded in light blue relate to data and information required only for RIS updates.

Note that some fields concerning aspects of Part 3, the Ecological Character Description of the RIS (tinted in purple), are not expected to be completed as part of a standard RIS, but are included for completeness so as to provide the requested consistency between the RIS and the format of a ' full ' Ecological Character Description, as adopted in Resolution X.15 (2008). If a Contracting Party does have information available that is relevant to these fields (for example from a national format Ecological Character Description) it may, if it wishes to, include information in these additional fields.

1 - Summary

Summary The site lies on the western portion of the Volta River estuary with catchment area of about 510 km². It comprises a brackish water lagoon with extensive mud flats and a broad sandy beach in the south and flood plains with degraded mangrove and coastal savannah vegetation to the east and north. The lagoon is generally shallow – deepest part measures less than 2m with open water of about 115 km² behind a narrow coastal sand dune bar and has no direct outlet to the sea. The site also supports lagoon and marine fisheries, farming and commercial salt production, which serve as important and a major industrial employer from the communities. The vast floodplain provides fertile soils for arable farming and cattle grazing. Reed cutting and mat making are also major local occupation for women. In recent times, tourism in particular to turtle watch is growing along the beaches of the site.

2 - Data & location

2.1 - Formal data

2.1.1 - Name and address of the compiler of this RIS

Name

Institution/agency

Postal address

E-mail

Phone

Fax

2.1.2 - Period of collection of data and information used to compile the RIS

From year

To year

2.1.3 - Name of the Ramsar Site

Official name (in English, French or Spanish)

Unofficial name (optional)

2.2 - Site location

2.2.1 - Defining the Site boundaries

b) Digital map/image

<1 file(s) uploaded>

Boundaries description (optional)

The Site boundary was delineated, surveyed, pillared and map out as a new nature (wetland) conservation area in fulfillment of Ghana ' s commitment to the ratification of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. The southern boundary follows the shoreline of the sea (Gulf of Guinea). The western and northern boundaries follow existing roads whiles the eastern follows the river Volta.

2.2.2 - General location

a) In which large administrative region does the site lie?

b) What is the nearest town or population centre?

2.2.3 - For wetlands on national boundaries only

a) Does the wetland extend onto the territory of one or more other countries? Yes No

b) Is the site adjacent to another designated Ramsar Site on the territory of another Contracting Party? Yes No

2.2.4 - Area of the Site

Official area, in hectares (ha):

Area, in hectares (ha) as calculated from GIS boundaries

2.2.5 - Biogeography

Biogeographic regions







Regionalisation scheme(s)	Biogeographic region
Other scheme (provide name below)	Afro-tropical

3 - Why is the Site important?


















3.1 - Ramsar Criteria and their justification

- Criterion 6 : >1% waterbird population





3.2 - Plant species whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

Scientific name	Common name	Criterion 2	Criterion 3	Criterion 4	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendix I	Other status	Justification
Adansonia digitata 		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		
Avicennia africana 		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		
Borassus aethiopum 		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		
Ceiba pentandra 		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		
Mangifera foetida 		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		
Rhizophora racemosa 		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		

3.3 - Animal species whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

Phylum	Scientific name	Common name	Species qualifies under criterion				Species contributes under criterion				Pop. Size	Period of pop. Est.	% occurrence	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendix I	CMS Appendix I	Other Status	Justification
			2	4	6	9	3	5	7	8								
CHORDATA / AVES	 <i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	Curlew Sandpiper	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6900	2012	1.53	LC 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ref. Birdlife International data Zone		
CHORDATA / AVES	 <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	Common Ringed Plover	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3000	2012	1.5	LC 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
CHORDATA / AVES	 <i>Chlidonias niger</i>	Black Tern	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	18100	2012	9.05	LC 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
CHORDATA / AVES	 <i>Egretta garzetta</i>	Little Egret	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4500	2012	1.28	LC 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
CHORDATA / AVES	 <i>Egretta gularis</i>	Western Reef Heron	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1000	2012	1	LC 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
CHORDATA / AVES	 <i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	Black-winged Stilt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4400		4.4	LC 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
CHORDATA / AVES	 <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	Pied Avocet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3750	2012	5.35	LC 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
CHORDATA / AVES	 <i>Thalasseus maximus</i>	Royal Tern	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2600	2012	5.2	LC 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
CHORDATA / AVES	 <i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>	Sandwich Tern	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5100	2012	3.4	LC 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			

RIS for Site no. 566, Songor Ramsar Site, Ghana

Phylum	Scientific name	Common name	Species qualifies under criterion				Species contributes under criterion				Pop. Size	Period of pop. Est.	% occurrence	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendix I	CMS Appendix I	Other Status	Justification
			2	4	6	9	3	5	7	8								
CHORDATA / AVES	 <i>Tringa erythropus</i>	Spotted Redshank	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	10100	2012	8.41	LC 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
CHORDATA / AVES	 <i>Tringa nebularia</i>	Common Greenshank	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5100	2012	1.64	LC 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			

The most popular birds species in the Songor Ramsar site are the Spotted Redshank (*Tringa erythropus*), Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*), Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*), Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*), Sanderling (*Calidris alba*), Avocet (*Recurvirostra* sp) and the Black-Winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*) which represent more than 1% of a biogeographic population of the congregatory waterbird species in the region.

3.4 - Ecological communities whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

<no data available>

Name of ecological community	Community qualifies under Criterion 2?	Description	Justification
Vegetation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Characterized by saline marshes, mud and salt flats, mangroves, water logged grassland and riverine woodland	
Species	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rich in nutrients, it contains Amphipods and Gastropods. Oligochaetes and Polychaetes are also abundant in the mud. Bird species including migratory and resident species. Turtles and reptiles species are also found in the site.	

4 - What is the Site like? (Ecological character description)

4.1 - Ecological character

The wetland is associated with the Volta River estuary and comprises a brackish water lagoon with extensive mudflats and islands, a narrow sandy beach in the south and extensive flood plains with degraded mangroves and coastal savannah vegetation. The lagoon is shallow and closed. Five main vegetation types can be described within the site. They are: saline marshes in the mud and salt flats; waterlogged grassland; scattered thickets of shrubs, climbers and small trees on higher ground; riverine woodland along the streams; and stunted mangroves along lagoon margins. The vegetation composition is made up of *Paspalum vaginatum*, *Cyperus articulatus*, *Sesuvium portulacastrum* and *Elocharis mutata* that dominate the floodplains. The catchment areas are dominated by *Adropogon guyanus*, *Heteropogon contortus* and *Azadirachta indica* (neem tree)

4.2 - What wetland type(s) are in the site?

Marine or coastal wetlands

Wetland types (code and name)	Local name	Ranking of extent (1: greatest - 4: least)	Area (ha) of wetland type	Justification of Criterion 1
A: Permanent shallow marine waters		0		
E: Sand, shingle or pebble shores		0		
F: Estuarine waters		0		
G: Intertidal mud, sand or salt flats		0		
H: Intertidal marshes		0		
I: Intertidal forested wetlands				
J: Coastal brackish / saline lagoons		1		

Inland wetlands

Wetland types (code and name)	Local name	Ranking of extent (1: greatest - 4: least)	Area (ha) of wetland type	Justification of Criterion 1
N: Seasonal/ intermittent/ irregular rivers/ streams/ creeks		0		
Ss: Seasonal/ intermittent saline/ brackish/ alkaline marshes/ pools				
Tp: Permanent freshwater marshes/ pools				
Ts: Seasonal/ intermittent freshwater marshes/ pools on inorganic soils				

Human-made wetlands

Wetland types (code and name)	Local name	Ranking of extent (1: greatest - 4: least)	Area (ha) of wetland type	Justification of Criterion 1
3: Irrigated land				
4: Seasonally flooded agricultural land		0		
5: Salt exploitation sites				
9: Canals and drainage channels or ditches		0		

4.3 - Biological components

4.3.1 - Plant species

Other noteworthy plant species

Scientific name	Common name	Position in range / endemism / other
<i>Azadirachta indica</i>		
<i>Cyperus articulatus</i>		
<i>Paspalum dissectum</i>		
<i>Sesuvium portulacastrum</i>		

4.3.2 - Animal species

Other noteworthy animal species

Phylum	Scientific name	Common name	Pop. size	Period of pop. est.	% occurrence	Position in range /endemism/other
CHORDATA/REPTILIA	<i>Chelonia mydas</i>	green turtle				
CHORDATA/REPTILIA	<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>	leatherback				
CHORDATA/REPTILIA	<i>Lepidochelys kempii</i>	ridley turtle				

4.4 - Physical components

4.4.1 - Climate

Climatic region	Subregion
A: Tropical humid climate	Aw: Tropical savanna (Winter dry season)

4.4.2 - Geomorphic setting

a) Minimum elevation above sea level (in metres)

a) Maximum elevation above sea level (in metres)

Lower part of river basin

Coastal

4.4.3 - Soil

No available information

Are soil types subject to change as a result of changing hydrological conditions (e.g., increased salinity or acidification)? Yes No

4.4.4 - Water regime

Water permanence

Presence?	Changes at RIS update
Usually permanent water present	
Usually seasonal, ephemeral or intermittent water present	

Source of water that maintains character of the site

Presence?	Predominant water source	Changes at RIS update
Water inputs from rainfall	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change
Water inputs from surface water	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change

Water destination

Presence?	Changes at RIS update
Marine	No change

Stability of water regime

Presence?	Changes at RIS update
Water levels fluctuating (including tidal)	No change

4.4.5 - Sediment regime

Sediment regime unknown

Water temperature 23-33°C

4.4.6 - Water pH

Circumneutral (pH: 5.5-7.4)

4.4.7 - Water salinity

Fresh (<0.5 g/l)

Mixohaline (brackish)/Mixosaline (0 .5-30 g/l)

4.4.8 - Dissolved or suspended nutrients in water

Unknown

4.4.9 - Features of the surrounding area which may affect the Site

Please describe whether, and if so how, the landscape and ecological characteristics in the area surrounding the Ramsar i) broadly similar ii) significantly different
Site differ from the site itself:

Surrounding area has greater urbanisation or development

Surrounding area has higher human population density

Surrounding area has more intensive agricultural use

Surrounding area has significantly different land cover or habitat types

4.5 - Ecosystem services

4.5.1 - Ecosystem services/benefits

Provisioning Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Wetland non-food products	Fuel wood/fibre	
Wetland non-food products	Timber	

Regulating Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Pollution control and detoxification	Water purification/waste treatment or dilution	
Hazard reduction	Flood control, flood storage	
Hazard reduction	Coastal shoreline and river bank stabilization and storm protection	

Cultural Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Recreation and tourism	Recreational hunting and fishing	
Recreation and tourism	Picnics, outings, touring	
Spiritual and inspirational	Spiritual and religious values	
Scientific and educational	Important knowledge systems, importance for research (scientific reference area or site)	
Scientific and educational	Educational activities and opportunities	

Supporting Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Soil formation	Sediment retention	Medium

Within the site: 523,180

Have studies or assessments been made of the economic valuation of ecosystem services provided by this Ramsar Site? Yes No Unknown

4.5.2 - Social and cultural values

<no data available>

4.6 - Ecological processes

<no data available>

5 - How is the Site managed? (Conservation and management)

5.1 - Land tenure and responsibilities (Managers)

5.1.1 - Land tenure/ownership

Public ownership

Category	Within the Ramsar Site	In the surrounding area
Local authority, municipality, (sub)district, etc.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Private ownership

Category	Within the Ramsar Site	In the surrounding area
Other types of private/individual owner(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Other

Category	Within the Ramsar Site	In the surrounding area
Commoners/customary rights	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

5.1.2 - Management authority

Please list the local office / offices of any agency or organization responsible for managing the site:

1. Traditional Land Owners (Ada traditional Council)
2. Wildlife Division (Forestry Commission)
3. Dangme East Municipal Assembly

Provide the name and title of the person or people with responsibility for the wetland:

Nana Koffi Adu-Nsiah (Chief Executive Director)

Postal address: c/o Wildlife Division, Accra

E-mail address: adunsiah@yahoo.com

5.2 - Ecological character threats and responses (Management)

5.2.1 - Factors (actual or likely) adversely affecting the Site ' s ecological character

Human settlements (non agricultural)

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	In the surrounding area
Housing and urban areas			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tourism and recreation areas		Medium impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Water regulation

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	In the surrounding area
Drainage			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Agriculture and aquaculture

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	In the surrounding area
Livestock farming and ranching			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Marine and freshwater aquaculture	Medium impact		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Biological resource use

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	In the surrounding area
Logging and wood harvesting			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fishing and harvesting aquatic resources			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Human intrusions and disturbance

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	In the surrounding area
Recreational and tourism activities		Low impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Natural system modifications

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	In the surrounding area
Dams and water management/use			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Vegetation clearance/ land conversion	Medium impact		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Pollution

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	In the surrounding area
Household sewage, urban waste water	Medium impact		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Agricultural and forestry effluents			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Garbage and solid waste	Medium impact		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

5.2.2 - Legal conservation status

Global legal designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
UNESCO Biosphere Reserve	Songhor Biosphere Reserve		whole

Non-statutory designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
Important Bird Area	Songor Ramsar Site		whole

5.2.3 - IUCN protected areas categories (2008)

IV Habitat/Species Management Area: protected area managed mainly for conservation through management intervention

5.2.4 - Key conservation measures

Legal protection

Measures	Status
Legal protection	Implemented

Habitat

Measures	Status
Re-vegetation	Implemented
Catchment management initiatives/controls	Implemented

Species

Measures	Status
Threatened/rare species management programmes	Implemented

Human Activities

Measures	Status
Communication, education, and participation and awareness activities	Implemented
Research	Implemented
Regulation/management of recreational activities	Implemented

5.2.5 - Management planning

Is there a site-specific management plan for the site? Yes

Has a management effectiveness assessment been undertaken for the site? Yes No

If the site is a formal transboundary site as indicated in section Data and location > Site location, are there shared management planning processes with another Contracting Party? Yes No

Please indicate if a Ramsar centre, other educational or visitor facility, or an educational or visitor programme is associated with the site:

No

5.2.6 - Planning for restoration

Is there a site-specific restoration plan? Please select a value

5.2.7 - Monitoring implemented or proposed

Monitoring	Status
Animal species (please specify)	Implemented

Monitoring of sea turtles

6 - Additional material

6.1 - Additional reports and documents

6.1.1 - Bibliographical references

- Agyepong, G. T., Awadzi, T. W. & Abbiw, D. K. (1993). Songor Lagoon Salt Project: Environmental Impact Study, soils, flora and land-use. Final Report. Dept. of Geography and Resource Development, University of Ghana, Legon. 23pp.
- Carr, T. & Campbell, C. L. (1995). A Management Strategy for Marine Turtle Conservation in Ghana. CWMP/Wildlife Department.
- Dangme East District Assembly, (1994). Medium Term Management Plan. A report prepared for the DEDA, pp. 9-23.
- Dickson, Y. A., (1998). Draft Management Plan for the Songor Ramsar Site, Ada-Foah. A report submitted at the International Course on Wetland management, Institute for Inland Wetland Management and Waste Water Treatment, RIZA, The Netherlands.
- Ntiamoa-Baidu, Y. & Gordon, C., (1991). Coastal Wetlands Management Plans: Ghana. Report to World Bank, Department of Zoology, University of Ghana, Legon, Accra., Ghana.
- Ofori-Danson, P. K., Entsua-Mensah, M. & Biney, C. A., (1999). Monitoring of Fisheries in five coastal lagoon Ramsar Sites in Ghana. A report prepared for the Department of Wildlife, Government of Ghana. Ghana Coastal Wetlands Management Project. 116pp.
- Ofori-Danson P. K. (1999). Songor Ramsar Site. Management Plan, CWMP, Wildlife Department.
- Piersma, T. & Ntiamoa-Baidu, Y. (1995). Waterbird Ecology and the Management of Coastal Wetlands. Ghana Coastal Wetlands Management Project. Netherland Institute for Sea Research (NOIZ)/Ghana Wildlife Society Report. No.6.
- Wildlife Department, (1971). Wildlife Conservation Regulations. In: Consolidated Wildlife Laws of Ghana, 1998. Pp.36.
- World Bank (1997) Towards an Integrated Coastal Management Strategy for Ghana. World Bank, Washington & Environmental Protection Agency, Accra. 137pp.

6.1.2 - Additional reports and documents

- i. taxonomic lists of plant and animal species occurring in the site (see section 4.3)
<no file available>
- ii. a detailed Ecological Character Description (ECD) (in a national format)
<no file available>
- iii. a description of the site in a national or regional wetland inventory
<no file available>
- iv. relevant Article 3.2 reports
<no file available>
- v. site management plan
<2 file(s) uploaded>
- vi. other published literature
<no file available>

6.1.3 - Photograph(s) of the Site

Please provide at least one photograph of the site:



Eco tourism on site (Wildlife Division (Forestry Commission), 06-04-2013)



Birds (Wildlife Division (Forestry Commission), 21-11-2014)



Restored mangrove site (Wildlife Division (Forestry Commission), 26-09-2011)



Leatherback turtle (Wildlife Division (Forestry Commission), 11-11-2013)

6.1.4 - Designation letter and related data

Designation letter

<no file available>

Date of Designation 1992-08-14