

# Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands

Categories approved by Recommendation 4.7 of the Conference of the Contracting Parties.

NOTE: It is important that you read the accompanying *Explanatory Note and Guidelines* document before completing this form.

**1. Date this sheet was completed/updated:**

02 .04. 93

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Designation date

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Site Reference Number

**2. Country:**

GUINEA

**3. Name of wetland:** ILE ALKATRAZ

**4. Geographical coordinates:** 10° 38' N, 15° 23' W

**5. Altitude:** (average and/or max. & min.) 8m at high tide - intertidal zone:

<3.6m (low tide)

**6. Area:** (in hectares) 1ha

**7. Overview:** (general summary, in two or three sentences, of the wetland's principal characteristics)

Ile Alkatraz lies next to L'Ile du Naufrage in shallow, permanent seas. Countless brown booby and royal tern nest on the island.

**8. Wetland Type** (please circle the applicable codes for wetland types as listed in Annex I of the *Explanatory Note and Guidelines* document.)

Coastal and marine wetland:

**9. Ramsar Criteria:** (please circle the applicable criteria; see point 12, next page.)

1a . 1b . 1c . 1d | 2a . 2b . 2c . 2d | 3a . 3b . 3c | 4a . 4b

**Please specify the most significant criterion applicable to the site:**

**10. Map of site included?** Please tick *yes*  -or- *no*

Marine chart: USSR 34406-G 1981, 1:100,000 attached

(Please refer to the *Explanatory Note and Guidelines* document for information regarding desirable map traits).

**11. Name and address of the compiler of this form:**

Abdel Kader BANGOURA

Division Protection de la Nature DNE

Ministère des Ressources Naturelles, des Energies et de l'Environnement

BP 4665 (P)

Telex 22 350 Mine Geo G. E Conakry -Guinea

*Please provide additional information on each of the following categories by attaching*

**extra pages (please limit extra pages to no more than 10):**

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**12. Justification of the criteria selected under point 9, on previous page.** (Please refer to Annex II in the *Explanatory Note and Guidelines* document).

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**13. General location:** (include the nearest large town and its administrative region)  
Kamsar Sous-prefecture, BOKE Prefecture

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**14. Physical features:** (e.g. geology, geomorphology; origins - natural or artificial; hydrology; soil type; water quality; water depth water permanence; fluctuations in water level; tidal variations; catchment area; downstream area; climate) Ile Alkatraz is a lateritic rock on the continental sill of the Atlantic, covered by a layer of approximately 3m of guano which has accumulated over a very long period. In the recent past (40-60 years ago) guano was dug in the dry season, which explains why deposits now vary in depth.

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**15. Hydrological values:** (groundwater recharge, flood control, sediment trapping, shoreline stabilisation etc) No information

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**16. Ecological features:** (main habitats and vegetation types) Ile Alkatraz and its suite, Ile du Naufrage, include dryland, intertidal and submarine habitats.

- Ile Alkatraz, which is bare of vegetation, is a dry, guano-covered plateau where over 3,000 pairs of *Sula leucogaster* nest, forming the largest nesting site for the species in Western Africa. Nothing is yet known about the intertidal and submarine habitats.
  - Ile du Naufrage is a resting place and nesting site for thousands of terns (black tern *Chlidonias nigra*, royal, Caspian, common, sandwich and least tern).
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**17. Noteworthy flora:** (indicating, e.g., which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc) unknown

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**18. Noteworthy fauna:** (indicating, e.g., which species are unique, rare, endangered, abundant or biogeographically important; include count data, etc.)

Alkatraz: nesting colonies of over 3,000 brown booby, breeding all year round.  
marine wildlife as yet unknown, although there are dolphin, manatee, shark and giant turtle.  
Naufrage: resting place at high tide for thousands of terns. Most terns reported in the dry season (January onwards) are royal tern which may be nesting. Other wildlife similar to Alkatraz.

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**19. Social and cultural values:** (e.g. fisheries production, forestry, religious importance, archaeological site etc.)

Local people consider Alkatraz to be a place of mystery, of spirits and ghosts where the birds peck out the eyes of visitors.

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**20. Land tenure/ownership of:** (a) site :State owned (b) surrounding area: State owned

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**21. Current land use:**

(a) site: clandestine industrial fishing by foreign fishing vessels from Ghana, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Senegal, Gambia.

(b) surroundings/catchment: identical situation around Naufrage

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**22. Factors (past, present or potential) adversely affecting the site's ecological character, including changes in land use and development projects:**

(a) at the site: Guano exploitation on Alkatraz clearly had a considerable adverse impact on the brown booby breeding population. In the 30s a team of about 25 people maintained an annual presence there between December and May. The bird population today seems to have completely re-established itself, thus providing a good example of how a bird species can recover once human activity on site has ceased, although C.B.G expatriates in Kamsar do flock to the site every weekend.

(b) around the site: The sealanes to Kamsar harbour pass a few dozen kilometres to the south of the two islands. There is therefore a risk of oil pollution when vessels discharge ballast. Every year, the DNE receives reports of oil slicks covering the whole of the coastal area.

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**23. Conservation measures taken:** (national category and legal status of protected areas - including any boundary changes which have been made; management practices; whether an officially approved management plan exists and whether it has been implemented)

Ile Alkatraz, like all other reserves on the Ramsar list, is the subject of a classification decree. It is juridically classified as having sanctuary status.

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**24. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:** (e.g. management plan in preparation; officially proposed as a protected area etc.)

Alkatraz is entirely covered by nesting bird guano (*Sula leucogaster* and terns) and can thus not be landed on. A visit by boat (without landing) is however possible provided that the vessel and crew are suitably qualified for sea trips. The Ramsar site at the mouth of the Rio Kapatchez could serve as a base for monitoring operations.

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**25. Current scientific research and facilities:** (e.g. details of current projects; existence of field station etc.) None except for documentation: De Chételat (1938) and CIPO/ WIWO/DNE mission.

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**26. Current conservation education:** (e.g. visitors centre, hides, information booklet, facilities for school visits etc.) The site could be suitable for educational field trips to study seabirds and their migration patterns and breeding cycles, and the threats from industrial fishing and marine pollution (oil slicks).

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**27. Current recreation and tourism:** (state if wetland is used for recreation/tourism; indicate type and frequency/intensity) Apart from the points in the previous section, no possibilities for tourism-oriented development can be foreseen.

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**28. Jurisdiction:** (territorial e.g. state/region and functional e.g. Dept of Agriculture/Dept. of Environment etc.)

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**29. Management authority:** (name and address of local body directly responsible for managing the wetland)

Direction Nationale de l'Environnement

Direction Nationale des Forêts et Chasse

BP 3118

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**30. Bibliographical references:** (scientific/technical only)

Altenberg W et J van der Kamp. 1989. Etude ornithologique préliminaire de la zone humide côtière de Guinée. Joint report of WIWO and ICBP. WIWO report 23, Zeist and ICBP study report 30, Cambridge

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Please return to: **Ramsar Convention Bureau, Rue Mauverney 28, CH-1196 GLAND, Switzerland**

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