

## Ramsar Information Sheet

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

15.03.1992

25.07.1997

**2. Country:**

Hungary

County : Békés

Districts: Biharugra, Geszt, Zsadány villages

**3. Name of wetland:**

Biharugra Fishponds

**4. Geographical co-ordinates:**

46°58N - 21°32 E

**5. Altitude:**

80-90 m

**6. Area:**

2791 ha

**7. Overview**

Biharugra Fishponds consist of intensively used lakes at the eastern boundary of Hungary near the neighbouring Rumania. The lake system with the characteristic steppe vegetation and the fragmented forests provide suitable breeding, feeding and staging are for plenty of endangered, protected species.

**8. Wetland type:**

1

**9. Ramsar Criteria:**

2a

3a

**10. Map of site included:**

yes

**11. Name and address of compiler:**

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**12. Justification of criteria selected under point 9:**

Biharugra Fishponds play an important role in providing suitable habitat for resting and feeding of many waterfowl and waders during the migration. Beside the importance of resting and feeding this fishpond system is an important breeding place for many endangered species, especially waterfowls.

**13. General location:**

Békéscsaba is the nearest large town 50 km far from the site with approximately 100.000 inhabitants

**14. Physical features:**

Topography: Biharugra Fishpond site is situated on the floodplain of river Sebes Körös. Rivers of Körös, Sebes-Körös have primarily influenced the topography. Differences between elevation do not exceed a few meters.

Climate: The climate is humid continental with dry summers and very cold winters. Biharagra fishponds are situated on the Hungarian Great Plain therefore the precipitation is less than the Hungarian average and the temperature is higher than average. Annual mean temperature is between 10-11 degree C, annual precipitation is 550-600 mm.

Geology and geomorphology: The massive rock formation of Great Plain from the Paleozoic era can be found 3000-4000 m beneath the present surface. Although these mountain ranges had existed till the Miocene epoch from that time the Carpathian Basin started to sink. Parallel with sinking marine and later riverine sediment has been deposited on the surface. At the present state the quaternary gravel, sand and clay predominate on the surface.

Soils: Biharagra Fishpond site has a few typical soils. Characteristic soils are floodplain, meadow and saline soils depending on the local circumstances.

#### **15. Hydrological values:**

In the years on 1909-1911 interval the swampy area of Biharagra were surrounded by embankment. Between 1960 and 1963 the other part of the fishpond system (at Begécs) were established by draining and filling up the nearest swampy places. Biharagra Fishponds are connected to the river Sebes-Körös with a canal which is the main water supply for the fishpond system.

#### **16. Ecological features:**

Habitats:

- artificial lakes
- steppes (and dry meadows)
- wet meadows
- forests

The most characteristic vegetation types (associations) are as follows:

*Calamagrostri-Salicetum cinereae*  
*Caricetum elatae*  
*Scirpo-Phragmitetum*  
*Lemno-Utricularietum*  
*Hydrochari-Strationetum*  
*Molinetum coeruleae*  
*Peucedano-Asteretum sedifolii*  
*Salvio-Festucetum rupicolae*  
*Agrostio-Alopecuretum pratensis*  
*Achilleo-Festucetum pseudovinae*

#### **17. Noteworthy flora:**

*Cephalanthera longiflora*  
*Clematis integrifolia*  
*Colchicum autumnale*  
*Dactylorhiza incarnata*  
*Iris spuria*  
*Iris sibirica*  
*Inula helenium*  
*Plantago schwarzenbergiana*  
*Phlomis tuberosa*  
*Orchis morio*  
*O. laxiflora* ssp. *Elegans*  
*O. laxiflora* ssp. *Palustris*  
*Srtatoides aloides*  
*Salvia pratensis*  
*S. simonkaiana*  
*Posa rubigiosa*  
*Wolffia arrhiza*

## **18. Noteworthy fauna:**

### The most important bird species

Podiceps ruficollis  
P. nigricollis  
P. cristatus  
Egretta alba  
Egretta alba  
E. garzetta  
Ardea cinerea  
A. purpurea  
Nycticorax nycticorax  
Botaurus stellaris  
Ardeola ralloides  
Ixobrychus minutus  
Ciconia ciconia  
Platalea leucorodia  
Anas platyrhynchos  
Aythya nyroca  
A. ferina  
Anas querquedula  
A. clypeata  
Circus aeruginosus  
Accipiter gentilis  
Falco subbuteo  
F. vespertinus  
Rallus asquaticus  
Fulica atra  
Vanellus vanellus  
Tringa totanus  
Limosa limosa  
Gallinagi gallinago  
Sterna hirundo  
Recurvirostra avosetta  
Asio otus  
Asio flammeus  
Strix aluco  
Athene noctua  
Coracias garrulus  
Upupa epops  
Picus viridis  
Lanius collurio  
Lanius minor  
Locustella luscinioides  
Acrocephalus arundinaceus  
Acrocephalus scirpeus  
Acrocephalus shoenobaenus  
Acrocephalus palustris  
Saxicola torquata  
Oenanthe oenanthe  
Luscinia svecica  
Panurus biarmicus  
Remiz pendulinus  
Oriolus oriolus

### Important fish species

Misgurnus fossilis  
Umbra crameri

### Important amphibian species

Triturus vulgaris  
Triturus cristatus  
Hyla arborea  
Rana esculenta  
Rana ridibunda  
Bombina bombina  
Bufo viridis  
Pelobates fuscus

### Important mammalian species

Lutra lutra  
Mustella nivalis  
Mustella erminea  
Mustella putorius  
Erinaceus europaeus

#### **19. Social and cultural values:**

One of the most important historical value is a “kunhalom”, which is an elevated hill probably used for burial purposes eleven hundred years ago.  
Several archeological finds (e.g. potsherd) came up at Begécs from the lakes.

#### **20. Land tenure/ownership of:**

- a. site : the ownership of the site was formerly possessed by a state agricultural cooperative (Hidashát Állami Gazdaság). The land tenure is currently changing, the Hungarian Ornithological and Nature Conservation Society has bought land in the nature reserve.
- b. surrounding area: the surrounding area is owned by cooperatives, local municipalities and state companies.

#### **21. Current land use/principal human activities:**

- a. at the site: Intensive fishery activity is characteristic. There is also cattle and sheep breeding on the meadows between the lakes. Besides these activities, farming on the arable land. The Délalföldi State Forestry has planted poplar and oak forests (50 hectares). Hunting and the hunting rights are possessed and practised by the Délalföld State Forestry.
- b. at the surroundings and catchment area: there are mainly pastures and arable land. On the catchment area there are various land use especially in Rumania. The water quality is primarily determined on the Rumanian side.

#### **22. Factors adversely affecting the site’s ecological character, including changes in land use and development projects:**

- a. at the site: Hunting by the Délalföldi State Forestry, and there is a threat of poaching as well
- b. around the site: chemical input to the ecosystem is one of the main threat. Herbicides and pesticides from agricultural planes. Water pollution from the river Sebes-Körös is also an important factor.

#### **23. Conservation measures taken:**

The territory of Biharugra Fishponds became protected on 31 March 1990. It was declared as the Biharugra Landscape Protection Area. From that time there was no detailed management plan only temporary management regulations.

#### **24. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:**

Developing a detailed management plan, and designation of the site for the List of Wetlands of International Importance

#### **25. Current scientific and research facilities:**

The Natural History Department of Museum Munkácsy Mihály at Békéscsaba carries out botanical surveys and the local group of the Hungarian Ornithological and Nature Conservation Society observes the fauna of the site.

**26. Current conservation education:**

The local group of the Hungarian Ornithological and Nature Conservation Society organises birdwatching and bird ringing camps between July and August yearly.

**27. Current recreation and tourism:**

The volume of the tourism is not noteworthy

**28. Jurisdiction:**

Directorate of Körös-Maros National Park under the supervisory of the Authority for Nature Conservation of the Ministry for Environment and Regional Policy.

**29. Management authority:**

Partly private, state and NGO (Hungarian Ornithological and Nature Conservation Society)

**30. Bibliographical references:**