

Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS) – 2006 version

Available for download from http://www.ramsar.org/ris/key_ris_index.htm.

Categories approved by Recommendation 4.7 (1990), as amended by Resolution VIII.13 of the 8th Conference of the Contracting Parties (2002) and Resolutions IX.1 Annex B, IX.6, IX.21 and IX. 22 of the 9th Conference of the Contracting Parties (2005).

Notes for compilers:

1. The RIS should be completed in accordance with the attached *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines for completing the Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands*. Compilers are strongly advised to read this guidance before filling in the RIS.
2. Further information and guidance in support of Ramsar site designations are provided in the *Strategic Framework for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance* (Ramsar Wise Use Handbook 7, 2nd edition, as amended by COP9 Resolution IX.1 Annex B). A 3rd edition of the Handbook, incorporating these amendments, is in preparation and will be available in 2006.
3. Once completed, the RIS (and accompanying map(s)) should be submitted to the Ramsar Secretariat. Compilers should provide an electronic (MS Word) copy of the RIS and, where possible, digital copies of all maps.

1. Name and address of the compiler of this form:

Jerkovich Gergely, Körös-Maros National Park Directorate
Hungary, H-5541 Szarvas, P.O. Box 72.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY.

DD MM YY

--	--	--

Designation date

--	--	--	--	--	--

Site Reference Number

2. Date this sheet was completed/updated:

09 February 2007

3. Country:

Hungary

4. Name of the Ramsar site:

The precise name of the designated site in one of the three official languages (English, French or Spanish) of the Convention. Alternative names, including in local language(s), should be given in parentheses after the precise name.

Biharugra Fishponds

5. Designation of new Ramsar site or update of existing site:

This RIS is for (tick one box only):

- a) Designation of a new Ramsar site ; or
b) Updated information on an existing Ramsar site

6. For RIS updates only, changes to the site since its designation or earlier update:

a) Site boundary and area

The Ramsar site boundary and site area are unchanged:

or

If the site boundary has changed:

- i) the boundary has been delineated more accurately ; or
ii) the boundary has been extended ; or
iii) the boundary has been restricted**

and/or

If the site area has changed:

- i) the area has been measured more accurately ; or
- ii) the area has been extended ; or
- iii) the area has been reduced**

The area size on the RIS follows the officially (nationally) designated site size (which is based on the land registration data). Unfortunately the map submitted previously was rather sketchy and the outlines did not follow precisely the land parcel boundaries. So only the map was improved and the area size did not change.

** Important note: If the boundary and/or area of the designated site is being restricted/reduced, the Contracting Party should have followed the procedures established by the Conference of the Parties in the Annex to COP9 Resolution IX.6 and provided a report in line with paragraph 28 of that Annex, prior to the submission of an updated RIS.

b) Describe briefly any major changes to the ecological character of the Ramsar site, including in the application of the Criteria, since the previous RIS for the site:

No major change has occurred since. Criterion 6 also applied on recent census data.

7. Map of site:

Refer to Annex III of the *Explanatory Note and Guidelines*, for detailed guidance on provision of suitable maps, including digital maps.

a) A map of the site, with clearly delineated boundaries, is included as:

- i) a hard copy (required for inclusion of site in the Ramsar List): ;
- ii) an electronic format (e.g. a JPEG or ArcView image) ;
- iii) a GIS file providing geo-referenced site boundary vectors and attribute tables ;

b) Describe briefly the type of boundary delineation applied:

e.g. the boundary is the same as an existing protected area (nature reserve, national park etc.), or follows a catchment boundary, or follows a geopolitical boundary such as a local government jurisdiction, follows physical boundaries such as roads, follows the shoreline of a waterbody, etc.

physical boundaries as shown on the map

8. Geographical coordinates (latitude/longitude, in degrees and minutes):

Provide the coordinates of the approximate centre of the site and/or the limits of the site. If the site is composed of more than one separate area, provide coordinates for each of these areas.

46°58N, 21°32E

9. General location:

Include in which part of the country and which large administrative region(s) the site lies and the location of the nearest large town.

County: Békés, near the Romanian and Hungarian border, Districts: Biharugra, Geszt, Zsadány villages, 50 kms from Békéscsaba (the nearest large town with 100.000 inhabitants)

10. Elevation: (in metres: average and/or maximum & minimum)

80-90 m above the Baltic Sea level

11. Area: (in hectares)

2791 ha

12. General overview of the site:

Provide a short paragraph giving a summary description of the principal ecological characteristics and importance of the wetland.

Biharugra Fishponds consists 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 place for plenty of endangered, protected species. The water level of the fishponds is controlled. Ancient marshes are connected to the fishponds which are also an elemental part of the Ramsar site. The area is the most important wintering place of the White-tailed Eagle in Tiszántúl (The Eastern part of Hungary). Two marshes, the Ugrai-rét and the Sző-rét are the biggest and most remarkable within the site.

13. Ramsar Criteria:

Tick the box under each Criterion applied to the designation of the Ramsar site. See Annex II of the *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines* for the Criteria and guidelines for their application (adopted by Resolution VII.11). All Criteria which apply should be ticked.

1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5 • 6 • 7 8 • 9

14. Justification for the application of each Criterion listed in 13 above:

Provide justification for each Criterion in turn, clearly identifying to which Criterion the justification applies (see Annex II for guidance on acceptable forms of justification).

Criterion 2. The site supports the following threatened species:

Cirsium brachycephalum – Annex II Habitats Directive

Dactylorhiza incarnata EU- CITES B (II)

Orchis morio EU-CITES BII;

Orchis laxiflora ssp. palustris EU-CITES BII;

Orchis laxiflora ssp. elegans EU-CITES BII;

Misgurnus fossilis Appendix III Bern Convention + Annex II Habitats Directive

Umbra krameri VU IUCN Red list + 92/43/EGK directive Annex II + Berne Convention Annex II

Triturus vulgaris Appendix III Bern Convention

Triturus dobrogicus NT IUCN Red list + Annex II Habitats Directive

Pelobates fuscus Appendix II Bern Convention + Annex IV Habitats Directive

Bufo viridis Appendix II Bern Convention

Bombina bombina Appendix II Bern Convention + Annex II and IV Habitats Directive

Rana ridibunda Appendix III Bern Convention + Annex V Habitats Directive

Rana esculenta Appendix III Bern Convention + Annex V Habitats Directive

Hyla arborea Appendix II Bern Convention + Annex IV Habitats Directive

Podiceps ruficollis LC IUCN Red list

Podiceps nigricollis LC IUCN Red list

Podiceps cristatus LC IUCN Red list

Egretta alba Annex I Birds Directive

Egretta garzetta LC IUCN Red list + Annex I Birds Directive

Ardea purpurea LC IUCN Red list + Annex I Birds Directive

Ardea cinerea LC IUCN Red list

Nycticorax nycticorax LC IUCN Red list + Annex I Birds Directive

Botaurus stellaris LC IUCN Red list + Annex I Birds Directive

Ardeola ralloides LC IUCN Red list + Annex I Birds Directive

Ixobrychus minutus LC IUCN Red list + Annex I Birds Directive

Ciconia ciconia LC IUCN Red list + Annex I Birds Directive

Platalea leucorodia LC IUCN Red list + Annex I Birds Directive

Anas platyrhynchos LC IUCN Red list

Aythya nyroca NT IUCN Red list + Annex I Birds Directive

Aythya ferina LC IUCN Red list
 Anas querquedula LC IUCN Red list
 Anas clypeata LC IUCN Red list
 Circus aeruginosus LC IUCN Red list + Annex I Birds Directive
 Accipiter gentilis LC IUCN Red list + Annex I Birds Directive
 Falco subbuteo LC IUCN Red list
 Falco vespertinus LC IUCN Red list
 Fulica atra LC IUCN Red list
 Rallus aquaticus LC IUCN Red list
 Vanellus vanellus LC IUCN Red list
 Tringa totanus LC IUCN Red list
 Limosa limosa LC IUCN Red list
 Gallinago gallinago LC IUCN Red list
 Sterna hirundo LC IUCN Red list + Annex I Birds Directive
 Recurvirostra avosetta LC IUCN Red list + Annex I Birds Directive
 Asio otus LC IUCN Red list
 Asio flammeus LC IUCN Red list + Annex I Birds Directive
 Strix aluco LC IUCN Red list
 Athene noctua LC IUCN Red list
 Coracias garrulus LC IUCN Red list + Annex I Birds Directive
 Upupa epops LC IUCN Red list
 Picus viridis LC IUCN Red list
 Lanius collurio LC IUCN Red list + Annex I Birds Directive
 Lanius minor LC IUCN Red list + Annex I Birds Directive
 Locustella luscinioides LC IUCN Red list
 Acrocephalus arundinaceus LC IUCN Red list
 Acrocephalus scirpaceus LC IUCN Red list
 Acrocephalus schoenobaenus LC IUCN Red list
 Acrocephalus palustris LC IUCN Red list
 Saxicola torquata LC IUCN Red list
 Oenanthe oenanthe LC IUCN Red list
 Luscinia svecica LC IUCN Red list + Annex I Birds Directive
 Panurus biarmicus LC IUCN Red list
 Remiz pendulinus LC IUCN Red list
 Oriolus oriolus LC IUCN Red list

Myotis dasycneme Appendix II Bern Conv. and App. II Bonn Conv. + Annex II and IV Habitats Directive
Myotis daubentonii Appendix II Bern Convention, Appendix II Bonn Convention, Annex IV Habitats Directive

Lutra lutra EU – CITES A (I), Appendix II Bern Convention, Annex II and IV Habitats Directive

Mustela eversmannii Appendix II Bern Convention + Annex II and IV Habitats Directive

Mustela erminea Appendix III Bern Convention

Spermophilus citellus Appendix II Bern Convention + Annex II and IV Habitats Directive

Criterion 3. The site includes the second largest Hungarian fishpond-system, surrounded by meadows, characteristic salt grasslands, fragmented forests and arable lands. The former marshland, called Kis-Sárrét has changed during the early 1900s after draining and filling up the swampy areas. The site connects closely to the fishponds of Cséfa and the Forest of Radvány situated at the other side of the border, in Romania. It is an important breeding and migration stopover site for many bird species, including the globally endangered *Anser erythropus*. It holds a large heron colony, and on passage thousands of waterfowl occur here. In the last few years the ponds and neighbouring forests have become one of the most important wintering area of *Haliaeetus albicilla* in Hungary.

The site still maintains plant communities typical of the region (but in most other places already devastated), such as *Achilleo-Festucetum pseudovinae* and *Artemisio-Festucetum pseudovinae* on

pastures, Agrostio-Beckmannietum in shallow, wet depressions, and Agrostio-Alopecuretum pratensis in temporarily wet meadows. Marshes hold Bolboschoenetum maritimi and Caricetum acutiformis ripariae communities, which are important for orchid species such as Orchis morio and Orchis laxiflora ssp. elegans. The fishponds are largely covered by reedbeds (Scirpo-Phragmitetum) Older, shallow ponds hold valuable communities, such as Lemno-Utricularietum and Trapetum natensis.

Criterion 4. Biharugra Fishponds play an important role in providing suitable habitat for resting and feeding of many waterfowl and waders during migration. Beside the importance of resting and feeding this fishpond system is an important breeding place for many endangered species, especially waterfowl. The maximum number (in one nesting or migrating season) of a few nesting or migrating bird species are as follows:

Phalacrocorax carbo	130 (migrating)
Egretta alba	800 (migrating), 110 pairs (nesting)
Platalea leucorodia	800 (migrating), 80 pairs (nesting)
Anser anser	100 pairs (nesting)
Anser albifrons	22.000 (migrating)
Anas crecca	8.000 (migrating)
Anas platyrhynchos	45.000 (migrating)
Anas strepera	700 (migrating)
Anas penelope	600 (migrating)
Aythya ferina	600 (migrating)
Aythya nyroca	770 (migrating), 100 pairs (nesting)
Haliaeetus albicilla	35 (wintering)
Philomachus pugnax	4.000 (migrating)
Tringa erythropus	4.000 (migrating)
Larus ridibundus	12.000 (migrating), 500 pairs (nesting)
Chlidonias hybridus	600 pairs (nesting)

Criterion 5. The site regularly supports more than 20,000 waterbirds: Anas platyrhynchos 45.000 (migrating), Anser albifrons 22.000 (migrating), Anas crecca 8.000 (migrating), Larus ridibundus 12.000 (migrating), 500 pairs (nesting) and others (see criterion 4).

Waterbird census for 2004/2005, Biharugra and Begécs fishponds

Table 22/a: Fishponds at Biharugra

species	Aug	Sept	Okt	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April
GAV STE	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
TAC RUF	52	54	12	21	4	0	0	0	50
POD CRI	214	137	111	37	11	1	0	6	132
POD GRI	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
POD NIG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	26
PHA CAR	235	199	194	230	230	360	0	15	56
PHA PYG	6	150	10	40	0	0	0	0	0
ARD CIN	75	65	25	45	15	60	2	22	15
EGR ALB	80	45	30	75	30	75	5	14	26
CYG OLO	13	0	7	5	5	5	0	2	14
ANA PEN	0	12	25	130	20	40	0	60	36
ANA STR	12	105	60	70	105	10	0	0	16
ANA CRE	130	840	350	1010	1550	6500	0	130	55
ANA PLA	1700	4830	3150	6390	10470	18000	1750	180	180
ANA ACU	0	18	12	0	2	0	0	0	0
ANA QUE	23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	35
ANA CLY	65	240	350	280	70	10	0	30	24

NET RUF	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
AYT FER	135	54	480	750	140	25	65	130	110
AYT NYR	115	89	50	0	0	0	0	0	42
AYT FUL	8	0	21	26	12	0	0	12	4
BUC CLA	0	0	0	0	25	20	0	32	0
MER ALB	0	0	0	0	16	15	0	18	0
MER MER	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
HAL ALB	4	4	2	3	0	3	5	3	2
FUL ATR	1250	2410	1950	1120	140	100	15	90	365
Total number of individuals	4117	9252	6840	10232	12848	25224	1842	744	1191
Total number of species	17	16	19	16	20	15	6	15	20

Table 22/b: Fishponds at Begécs

Species	Aug	Sept	Okt	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April
TAC RUF	70	60	14	9	6	0	0	0	58
POD CRI	350	202	145	86	10	1	0	12	141
POD NIG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	55
PHA CAR	650	1310	945	960	160	150	0	24	355
PHA PYG	0	0	0	13	0	0	0	0	1
ARD CIN	70	180	70	335	100	15	10	25	25
EGR ALB	110	210	73	560	320	20	3	28	40
CYG OLO	9	12	13	7	2	2	0	2	0
TAD TAD	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
ANA PEN	0	25	290	360	30	80	1	115	60
ANA STR	16	370	225	370	60	25	0	14	35
ANA CRE	60	840	1350	1600	150	800	1	310	120
ANA PLA	6500	14420	13520	12360	14550	27500	13920	5950	235
ANA ACU	0	30	10	0	4	20	2	4	12
ANA QUE	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	48
ANA CLY	110	420	1080	2290	250	30	6	110	45
AYT FER	95	285	610	390	270	110	16	360	215
AYT NYR	110	435	520	110	2	0	2	0	350
AYT FUL	20	8	24	15	53	18	0	50	15
AYT MAR	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	9
CLA HYE	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0
BUC CLA	0	0	0	0	40	95	4	100	2
MER ALB	0	0	0	0	72	90	4	60	0
HAL ALB	0	0	1	2	8	15	8	10	4
FUL ATR	1650	1270	1520	910	250	320	375	590	400
Total number of individuals	9835	20077	20410	20377	16346	29293	14352	7764	2226
Total number of species	15	16	17	17	22	18	13	17	22
Total numbers of geese for the site, 2004/2005									
Anser fabalis	0	0	0	18	15	25	0	0	0

Anser albifrons	0	0	18	7200	12600	16000	3362	2150	1
Anser erythropus	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
Anser anser	1670	1700	1450	1300	1100	1960	21	480	54
Branta ruficollis	0	0	0	4	6	1	0	0	0

Criterion 6.

The site supports:

22.000 migrating *Anser albifrons* (1% = 250 individuals)

45.000 migrating *Anas platyrhynchos* (1% = 10.000 ind.)

4.000 migrating *Tringa erythropus* (1% = 1000 ind.)

15. Biogeography (required when Criteria 1 and/or 3 and /or certain applications of Criterion 2 are applied to the designation):

Name the relevant biogeographic region that includes the Ramsar site, and identify the biogeographic regionalisation system that has been applied.

a) biogeographic region:

Pannonic region

b) biogeographic regionalisation scheme (include reference citation):

European Commission DG Environment webpage

Bern Convention/ EU Habitats Directive

16. Physical features of the site:

Describe, as appropriate, the geology, geomorphology; origins - natural or artificial; hydrology; soil type; water quality; water depth, water permanence; fluctuations in water level; tidal variations; downstream area; general climate, etc.

Topography: Biharugra Fishpond site is situated on the floodplain of the 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. Biharugra 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 degrees C, annual precipitation is 550-600 mm.

17. Physical features of the catchment area:

Describe the surface area, general geology and geomorphological features, general soil types, and climate (including climate type).

The site is located on the Hungarian Great Plain, and is characterised by a flat topography. The massive rock formation of the Great Plain is from the Paleozoic era. It can be found 3,000-4,000 m below the present surface. The rock started sinking in the Miocene, and parallel with sinking, marine and later riverine sediments started to deposit on the surface. At present, Quaternary gravel, sand and clay predominate at the surface, which results in floodplain, meadow and saline soils. The rivers Körös provide an important ecological corridor to the Bihar Mountains.

18. Hydrological values:

Describe the functions and values of the wetland in groundwater recharge, flood control, sediment trapping, shoreline stabilization, etc.

In the years of 1909-1911 the marshy area of Biharugra were surrounded by embankment. Between 1960 and 1963 the other part of the fishpond system (at Begécs) was established by draining and filling up the

nearest marshy places. Biharugra Fishponds are connected to the river Sebes-Körös with a canal that is the main water supply for the fishpond system.

19. Wetland Types

a) presence:

Circle or underline the applicable codes for the wetland types of the Ramsar "Classification System for Wetland Type" present in the Ramsar site. Descriptions of each wetland type code are provided in Annex I of the *Explanatory Notes & Guidelines*.

Marine/coastal: A • B • C • D • E • F • G • H • I • J • K • Zk(a)

Inland: L • M • N • O • P • Q • R • Sp • Ss • Tp • Ts • U • Va •
Vt • W • Xf • Xp • Y • Zg • Zk(b)

Human-made: 1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5 • 6 • 7 • 8 • 9 • Zk(c)

b) dominance:

List the wetland types identified in a) above in order of their dominance (by area) in the Ramsar site, starting with the wetland type with the largest area.

- I. 1
- II. Ts
- III. W
- IV. 9.

20. General ecological features:

Provide further description, as appropriate, of the main habitats, vegetation types, plant and animal communities present in the Ramsar site, and the ecosystem services of the site and the benefits derived from them.

Habitats:

- artificial fish ponds
- reedbeds
- wet meadows
- steppes and dry meadows
- woods

The Biharugra fishpond system belongs entirely to the floral province known as *Crisicum*. The floral province is subdivided into five smaller units, and this Ramsar site belongs to the area of the River Körös. In general, this unit is the richest botanically, holding relict species of loess steppes as well as valuable species of bogs and woodlands.

The pastures have the typical communities of pastures formed on solonetz soils east of the River Tisza. They are mostly covered by *Achilleo-Festucetum pseudovinae* and *Artemisio-Festucetum pseudovinae*. Salt berms and salt barrens can hardly be found, except for the Csillaglaposi pasture at Geszt, where the soil is strongly alkaline and berms have formed. Wet, strongly alkaline depressions are covered with *Agrostio-Beckmannietum*. Temporarily flooded areas hold mostly *Agrostio-Alopecuretum pratensis*. Slightly more elevated patches are covered by *Salvio-Festucetum rupicolae* typical of loess soils (Sző meadow). This community has mostly common species, such as *Verbascum phoeniceum*, *Salvia pratensis*, *S. nemorosa*, *S. austriaca*, *Filipendula vulgaris*, etc. Its more intensively grazed, more degraded variety, *Cynodonti-Poetum angustifoliae*, is also found at several places. Rare loess-indicative plants include *Phlomis tuberosa* in the Csillaglaposi pasture. Deeper-lying marshes are overgrown by alkaline marsh vegetation: *Bolboschoenetum maritimi*, *Caricetum acutiformis-ripariae*. The main botanical value of the Csillaglaposi pasture is the tens of thousands of *Orchis morio*. The extensive tussocky meadows along Begécsi ponds hold a few *Orchis laxiflora ssp. palustris*. The Ugrai meadow is mostly covered by reedbeds (*Scirpo-Phragmitetum*) but several typical marsh communities also occur in less deep areas, such as *Glycerietum maximae*, *Bolboschoenetum maritimi* and *Caricetum acutiformis-ripariae*. The meadow is dotted with willow bogs *Calamagrostio-Salicetum cinereae*. The Sző meadow is

dominated by reedmace beds (*Typhetum latifoliae*) and temporarily flooded vegetation. Permanently flooded areas hold valuable floating vegetation: *Lemno-Utricularietum*. The Ugrai meadow also has an extensive water soldier community *Hydrochari-Stratiotetum*.

The two parts of the fish pond system can also be distinguished by their vegetation. The Biharugrai ponds extend over 800 ha, and their construction began in 1909. Since then, it has been mostly overgrown by reedbeds (*Scirpo-Phragmitetum*), while the dykes and shallows have arborescent vegetation, too (*Salix sp.*, *Populus sp.*, *Alnus sp.*). The 1200 ha block of the Begécs fishponds were originally operated as a water reservoir and were only turned into fishponds in 1962. There are less reeds here and more open water surface, the ponds are also deeper. In some ponds, reedmace beds are also expanding. In older, shallower ponds, floating vegetation communities have developed: *Lemno-Utricularietum*, *Trapaetum natansis*.

21. Noteworthy flora:

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 14, Justification for the application of the Criteria) indicating, e.g., which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc. *Do not include here taxonomic lists of species present – these may be supplied as supplementary information to the RIS.*

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

- Calamagrosti-Salicetum cinereae
- Caricetum elatae
- Scirpo-Phragmitetum
- Lemno-Utricularietum
- Hydrochari-Stratiotetum
- Molinetum coeruleae
- Peucedano-Asteretum rupicolae
- Salvio-Festucetum rupicolae
- Agrostio-Alopecuretum pratensis
- Achilleo-Festucetum pseudovinae

The most characteristic species are as follows:

- 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
- Stratiotes aloides
- Salvia pratensis
- S. simonkaiana
- Rosa rubiginosa
- Wolffia arrhiza

22. Noteworthy fauna:

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 12. Justification for the application of the Criteria) indicating, e.g., which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc., including count data. *Do not include here taxonomic lists of species present – these may be supplied as supplementary information to the RIS.*

International designations – if any – can be found under section 12.

The most important bird species are also listed in section 12.

Important fish species are as follows:

Misgurnus fossilis
Umbra krameri

Important amphibian species:

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

Important mammalian species:

Lutra lutra Mustela nivalis
Mustela erminea
Mustela putorius
Erinaceus europaeus
Myotis daubentoni

23. Social and cultural values:

a) Describe if the site has any general social and/or cultural values e.g., fisheries production, forestry, religious importance, archaeological sites, social relations with the wetland, etc. Distinguish between historical/archaeological/religious significance and current socio-economic values:

One of the most important historical value of the site is a “kunhalom”, an elevated hill that was probably used for burial purposes by Magyars eleven hundred years ago.
Several archaeological finds (e.g. potsherds) came up at Begécs from the lakes.

b) Is the site considered of international importance for holding, in addition to relevant ecological values, examples of significant cultural values, whether material or non-material, linked to its origin, conservation and/or ecological functioning?

No.

If Yes, tick the box and describe this importance under one or more of the following categories:

- i) sites which provide a model of wetland wise use, demonstrating the application of traditional knowledge and methods of management and use that maintain the ecological character of the wetland:
- ii) sites which have exceptional cultural traditions or records of former civilizations that have influenced the ecological character of the wetland:
- iii) sites where the ecological character of the wetland depends on the interaction with local communities or indigenous peoples:
- iv) sites where relevant non-material values such as sacred sites are present and their existence is strongly linked with the maintenance of the ecological character of the wetland:

24. Land tenure/ownership:

a) within the Ramsar 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 a proportion of the nature reserve.

The distribution of land ownership are follows: State owned (86%), Private (9%), cooperatives and local government (5%)

b) in the surrounding area:

It is owned by cooperatives, local municipalities and state companies.

25. Current land (including water) use:

a) within the Ramsar site:

Intensive fishery activity is characteristic. There are also cattle and sheep herds on the meadows between the lakes. Besides these activities, farming is done on arable lands. The State Forestry of Southern Great Plain has planted poplar and oak forests (50 hectares). Hunting rights are possessed and practised by the State Forestry of Southern Great Plain. The site is designated as a special hunting area deserved for the purposes of nature protection.

The distribution of land use are follows: Ploughland (2%), Grassland (15%), Forest (4%), Fishponds (61%), Reedbeds (18%)

b) in the surroundings/catchment:

There are mainly pastures and arable land. On the catchment area various land use techniques can be found, especially in Romania. The water quality is primarily determined by the Romanian side of the whole wetland system.

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

a) within the Ramsar site:

Spreading of reeds supplants other habitat types in some areas within the site. Fish production needs to be harmonised with conservation interests. The fish farm wants to hunt or scare off Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax carbo*), but this activity also disturbs protected bird species.

b) in the surrounding area:

The Cséffai-halastavak (fishponds of Cséffa) on the Romanian side of the border are not protected though that wetland serves as an elemental part of the whole wetland system. The Romanian side is not protected and wildfowl that move between the two wetlands are subject to free hunting in Romania. Inflow of chemicals is one of the main threatening factors. Herbicides and pesticides come are dropped by agricultural aeroplanes. Water pollution from the river Sebes-Körös is also an important factor.

27. Conservation measures taken:

a) List national and/or international category and legal status of protected areas, including boundary relationships with the Ramsar site:

In particular, if the site is partly or wholly a World Heritage Site and/or a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, please give the names of the site under these designations.

The territory of Biharugra Fishponds became protected on 31 March 1990. It was declared as the Biharugra Landscape Protection Area. Since 1996, it is a part of the Körös-Maros National Park.

b) If appropriate, list the IUCN (1994) protected areas category/ies which apply to the site (tick the box or boxes as appropriate):

Ia ; Ib ; II ; III ; IV ; V ; VI

c) Does an officially approved management plan exist; and is it being implemented?:

No. No management plan has been made yet, only management regulations are used.

d) Describe any other current management practices:

Clearing of the bushes on Sző-rét, Ugrai-rét (freshwater marshes). A habitat reconstruction plan has just been realized in Ugrai-rét. (Water is now restrained). Hunting with lead shots is no longer permitted since August 2005.

28. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:

e.g. management plan in preparation; official proposal as a legally protected area, etc.

Developing a detailed management plan

The hunting regulations have to be re-considered. The ploughlands around the Ugrai-rét and Sző-rét should be bought for the state to ensure their protection as a buffer zone.

29. Current scientific research and facilities:

e.g., details of current research projects, including biodiversity monitoring; existence of a field research station, etc.

The Department of Natural History at the Munkácsy Mihály Museum (Békéscsaba) carries out botanical surveys and the local group of the Hungarian Ornithological and Nature Conservation Society makes observations on the fauna. Detailed zoological research has to be carried out in Ugrai-rét and Sző-rét.

30. Current communications, education and public awareness (CEPA) activities related to or benefiting the site:

e.g. visitors' centre, observation hides and nature trails, information booklets, facilities for school visits, etc.

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

31. Current recreation and tourism:

State if the wetland is used for recreation/tourism; indicate type(s) and their frequency/intensity.

The volume of tourism is not noteworthy.

There is a new nature trail next to the Begécs fishponds.

32. Jurisdiction:

Include territorial, e.g. state/region, and functional/sectoral, e.g. Dept of Agriculture/Dept. of Environment, etc.

The Körös-vidéki Authority for Environmental Protection, Nature Conservation and Water Management is the first instant authority of the Ministry for Environment and Water.

33. Management authority:

Provide the name and address of the local office(s) of the agency(ies) or organisation(s) directly responsible for managing the wetland. Wherever possible provide also the title and/or name of the person or persons in this office with responsibility for the wetland.

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

Körös-Maros National Park Directorate is responsible for nature conservation management.

Körös-Maros National Park Directorate

H-5541 Szarvas, P.O.Box 72., Anna-liget, Hungary

Tel.: +36 66 313 855, Fax: +36 66 311 658

Janos.greksza@kmnp.hu

34. Bibliographical references:

Scientific/technical references only. If biogeographic regionalisation scheme applied (see 15 above), list full reference citation for the scheme.

Huszár, M. (1985) A Körösvidékről. / Gyula. 1823-as kiadás alapján /

Marosi S. - Somogyi S. /szerk./ (1990.): Magyarország kistájainak katasztere - MTA Földrajztudományi Kutatóintézet, Budapest

Marosi S. - Szilárd J. /szerk./ (1969.): A tiszai Alföld - Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, 381 p.

Nagy, L.(1958): A volt bihari sárrét jelenlegi madárvilága / Aquila /

Nagy,Sz & Könczey. R. szerk. (1995): Természetvédelem a halastavakon / IUCN Budapest /

Kern, R.(1995): Éves jelentés a biharugrai halastavakról / Bíbic /

Müller, G.(1988): Geszt környékének és madárvilágának változása /Vésztfő. Sárréti Írások

Please return to: **Ramsar Convention Secretariat, Rue Mauverney 28, CH-1196 Gland, Switzerland**
Telephone: +41 22 999 0170 • Fax: +41 22 999 0169 • e-mail: ramsar@ramsar.org