

# 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:**

29-01-1997

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY**

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23	06	75

Designation date

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Site Reference Number

**2. Country:**

Islamic Republic of Iran

**3. Name of wetland:** Shur Gol, Yadegarlu and Dorgeh Sangi Lakes

**4. Geographical coordinates:** 37°00'N 45°30'E

**5. Altitude:** (average and/or max. & min.) 1290 m

**6. Area:** 2500 ha (SG 2000; Y 350; DS 150)

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

The site is composed of three physically separated units, each of which includes one of the lakes (Shur Gol, Yadegarlu and Dorgeh Sangi, respectively) and their associated seasonally flooded marshlands. Shur Gol is brackish to saline and the adjoining marshes usually flood in autumn or winter. However, being within a closed drainage basin, they rarely dry out completely, even during summer. Yadegarlu is a much smaller, freshwater lake with abundant submergent flora and adjoining marshes. It varies considerably in size and may become almost dry in summer. Dorgeh Sangi is the smallest of the lakes and contains shallow, eutrophic fresh water. Its size varies greatly according to seasonal rainfall. All three lakes freeze over to some degree in winter. The area is important for breeding and passage water birds; nesting species include *Marmonetta angustirostris*.

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

**marine-coastal:** A . B . C . D . E . F . G . H . I . J . K

**inland:** L . M . N . O . P . Q . R . Sp . Ss . Tp . Ts  
. U . Va . Vt . W . Xf . Xp . Y . Zg . Zk

**man-made:** 1 . 2 . 3 . 4 . 5 . 6 . 7 . 8 . 9

Please now rank these wetland types by listing them from the most to the least dominant: P R Ts Ss N

**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: 2a

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

(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:**

**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).

2a: Shur Gol, Yadegarlu and Sangi lakes provide habitat for at least five threatened species of birds: *Marmaronetta angustirostris*, *Aythya nyroca* and *Oxyura leucocephala* breed in the wetland, and *Anser erythropus* and *Otis tarda* occur on passage.

2b: The wetland supports a high diversity of wetland fauna and flora, and constitutes important feeding habitat for *Pelecanus onocrotalus* and other species from the internationally important breeding colonies at nearby Lake Uromiyeh.

3a: The wetlands regularly hold more than 20,000 waterfowl during seasonal migrations and in winter.

3c: The wetlands also regularly hold over 1% of the regional Middle East populations of eight species of waterfowl.

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**13. General location:** (include the nearest large town and its administrative region)

The site is in the Province of Azarbaijan-e-Gharbi in north-west Iran, 35 km north-west of Mahabad.

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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)

The Shur Gol and associated Hassanlu Marshes consist of a shallow, brackish to salty lake and marshland. The maximum water depth is 1 meter, the average is variable. The bottom of Shur Gol is muddy or silted. The surrounding country includes wheat cultivation on the rolling hills and plains to the north and more intensive agriculture to the south. This section of the wetland freezes in winter, but rarely completely.

Yadegarlu is a smaller, shallow freshwater lake with peripheral marshes. It's size fluctuates, and it's depth too, although it is never over 1 meter deep. In winter it freezes over.

Dorgeh Sangi is the smallest component of the wetland. It is a shallow freshwater lake and marsh. Because of drought it can be reduced to a third of it's maximum size in late summer. Over winter the lake is usually almost completely frozen. The bottom is muddy.

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**15. Hydrological values:** (groundwater recharge, flood control, sediment trapping, shoreline stabilisation etc)

The Shur Gol is formed by a shallow lake and marshes. Like Yadegarlu lake it is fed by a combination of rainfall, runoff from surrounding grounds, seepage, springs and small streams. Flooding occurs in autumn and winter, but the drainage basin is virtually closed and the complex dries out completely only in very dry years.

Yadegarlu is a shallow lake with marshes, that fluctuates greatly in size. In summer it almost dries out. It receives water in the same ways as Shur Gol.

Dorgeh Sangi is the smallest lake. It is fed by small springs in the south, seepages, rainfall and run-off. Its size varies considerably and sometimes it overflows to the west, where there are a few villages and patches of cultivation.

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**16. Ecological features:** (main habitats and vegetation types)

Shur Gol is a eutrophic lake. There are extensive stands of sedge *Carex* spp., particularly in the south-west and north-east, a mixture of grasses and abundant underwater vegetation. It is important as a nesting place for ducks (Anatidae), and there's a large variety of other waterfowl visiting the area on migration. Small numbers of Anatidae stay there in winter.

Yadegarlu is also a eutrophic lake. The marshlands around it support a vegetation of grasses and sedges (Cyperaceae), and abundant underwater growth although it almost dries out in late summer. Generally

conditions are excellent for breeding waterfowl. During migration various waders (Limicolae) visit the area, and in winter several kinds of ducks are present.

Dorgeh Sangi is eutrophic like the other lakes, but there is surprisingly little vegetation, mainly grasses and sedges. There is some underwater vegetation and also bare mud when the water level is low. In spring and autumn conditions are excellent for waterfowl. The lake is visited by several kinds of waterfowl, both for nesting and for migration. When not frozen over winter it supports large numbers of Anatidae and sometimes Bewick swans.

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**17. Noteworthy flora:** (indicating, e.g., which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc)

There is no information available except the abundancy of *Carex* spp., Cyperaceae and some undefined underwater vegetation.

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

In Shur Gol ruddy shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea* and marbled teal *Anas angustirostris* nest, and also various waders Limicolae and Sterninae. *Anas* and *Aythya* spp. among the ducks and coot *Fulica atra* are the most numerous of the waterfowl visiting the area on migration. Small numbers of Anatidae, including smew *Mergus albellus* winter in Shur Gol.

Yadegarlu supports some breeding waterfowl, including great crested grebe *Podiceps cristatus*, white stork *Ciconia ciconia*, some ducks and coot *Fulica atra*, and Limicolae. On migration greylag goose *Anser anser*, *Anas* spp. *Fulica atra* and various Limicolae visit the area. In winter small numbers of *Anas* and *Aythya* spp. *Mergus albellus* and, occasionally, Bewick swans *Cygnus colombianus bewickii* stay at the lake when it's not frozen.

At Dorgeh Sangi nesting species include black-necked grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*, and *Fulica atra*. The lake and marsh are also of great value to a good variety of migrating waterfowl, notably *Anas* spp. and Limicolae. In winter sometimes Bewick swans are present. A list with more detailed information of bird counts is attached.

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

no information available

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

(a) site: National Government

(b) surrounding area: no information available

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**21. Current land use:**

(a) site: The main road to Rezaulah passes through the wetland, and there are several settlements interspersed among the lakes. There is some grazing, reed-cutting and hunting.

(b) surroundings/catchment: wheat cultivation and agriculture around a few villages

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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: Over-grazing of lakeshore vegetation by domestic livestock, over-grazing of the aquatic vegetation and excessive wildfowl hunting are a recurring threat. Other threats are possible urbanisation, mainly due to expansion of the local population, and the possible conversion of marshes for agriculture.

(b) around the site: no information available

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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)

There are no other national or international designations besides Ramsar for this site. Yadegarlu was placed on the Montreux Record in 1990. There is no legal habitat protection, but the Department of the Environment exerts some control over hunting activities in the area.

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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.)

In 1976 Cornwallis proposed to establish wildlife refuges at Yadegarlu and Dorgeh Sangi.

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**25. Current scientific research and facilities:** (e.g. details of current projects; existence of field station etc.)

The Department of the Environment has undertaken some waterfowl surveys.

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**26. Current conservation education:** (e.g. visitors centre, hides, information booklet, facilities for school visits etc.)

no information available

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**27. Current recreation and tourism:** (state if wetland is used for recreation/tourism; indicate type and frequency/intensity)

no information available

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

Department of the Environment

PO Box 5181

15875 Teheran

Islamic Republic of Iran

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

Department of the Environment, address as mentioned above (28)

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

Carp, E. (1980). *A Directory of Western Palearctic Wetlands*. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland.

Evans, M.I. (1994). *Important Bird Areas in the Middle East*. Birdlife International, Cambridge, United Kingdom.

Mansoori, J. (1983). *National Report on Iran's Wetlands of International Importance as Habitat for Waterfowl*. Prepared for the Groningen Conference, Netherlands, in May 1984.

Scott, D.A. (1995). *A Directory of Wetlands in the Middle East*. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland and IWRB, Slimbridge, United Kingdom.

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

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**List of bird species including counting results  
Shur Gol, Yadegarlu and Dorgeh Sangi Lakes**

waterfowl:

- globally threatened

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<i>Anser erythropus</i>	40-60 br
<i>Marmaronetta angustirostris</i>	20-30 br
<i>Oxyura leucocephala</i>	breed
<i>Otis tarda</i>	6

- 1% or more of population

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<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>	1,000
<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	100-150 br
<i>Cygnus columbianus</i>	57 w
<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>	2,350 w
<i>Anas crecca</i>	2,500 w
<i>Anas querquedula</i>	1,370
<i>Anas clypeata</i>	5,500
<i>Aythya ferina</i>	484 w
<i>Fulica atra</i>	2,500
<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	1,500
<i>Recurvirostra avocetta</i>	500
<i>Glareola pratincola</i>	50-80 br
<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	breed
<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>	2,500 w
<i>Limosa limosa</i>	500
<i>Tringa totanus</i>	breed
<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>	350

other birds:

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<i>Halieetus albicilla</i>	3
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all counts individual birds

br = breeding

w = wintering

source: Evans, 1994