

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:

20.8.98

For office use only.

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Designation date

Site Reference Number

2. Country:

Italy

3. Name of wetland:

Le Cesine

4. Geographical coordinates:

40° 20' N – 18° 21' E

5. Altitude: (average and/or max. & min.). : 0 m

6. Area: (in hectares) 620 ha

7. Overview:

 (general summary, in two or three sentences, of the wetland's principal characteristics)

last of the wide swamps that once spread along the Apulia coast, between Brindisi and Otranto. Behind the sand dunes there are two ponds, where the rain waters flow, and that are 2 m deep: they are separated by the sea thanks to a sand bar. The salinity is highly variable and decreases towards the inland. The drained areas have been colonized by the mediterranean bush and evergreen trees.

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: a)J; b)E; c)3; d)Ts.

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: 1a

10. Map of the site included? Yes

IGMI 204 II SE-II SO 214 I NE

11. **Name and address of the Compiler:** dr. Paolo Macedone, via Bresadola 54, 00171 Roma.

12. **Justification of the criteria selected under point 9:** The site is of international importance because of its outstanding role in ecological system, since it is the last one remained of a large coastal lagoons and ponds system in that area. It supports a good number of rare species of plants and waterfowls (see points 17 and 18).

13. **General location:** LECCE (REGIONE PUGLIA), Municipality of Vernole.

14. **Physical features:** Retrodunal basin with brackish water, modified by drain works. The sand bar is very thin and the sea water can easily pass over it.

15. **Hydrological values:** Maximum water depth: 1.5 m. No water flow, except some sea water in occasion of storms. The seasonal ponds are fed by the ground water only. The water is normally present between October and May. Temperature of water: 10-28 °C. Salinity: 0.3-1.5 ‰ in rainy winters; it increases in dry periods. No chemical pollution. Limited organic pollution, produced by animals.

16. **Ecological features:** Sand dunes, marshes, coastal ponds, pinewoods, evergreen bush. The vegetation is characterized by species typical of sand and/or saline habitats. (see point 17).

17. **Noteworthy flora.** On saline habitats: *Salsola kali*, *Cakile maritima*, *Convolvulus soldanella*, *Plantago maritima*, *Statice minuta*, *Inula crithmoides*, *Crithmum maritimum*, *Limonium vulgare*; on sandy habitats: Rare species *Agrropyron junceum*, *Ammophila arenaria*, *Eryngium maritimum*, *Echinophora spinosa*, *Pancreatium maritimum*, *Matthiola sinuata*, *Juniperus phoenicea*, *Orchis palustris*, *Ophrys arachnites*, *Ipomea sagitata*. Along the ponds: *Phragmites australis*, *Arundo donax*, *Typha latifolia*, *Cladium mariscus*, *Iris pseudacorus*. The bush and the wood: *Myrtus communis*, *Pistacia lentiscus*, *Juniperus spp.*, *Phyllirea latifolia*, *Ph. angustifolia*, *Olea europea*, *Erica manipuliflora* (rare), *Rosmarinus officianalis*, *Rhamnus alaternus*, *Cistus spp.*, *Quercus ilex*, *Quercus coccifera*, *Q. vallonea*; *Pinus halepensis*, *P. pinaster*, *P. pinea*, *Eucalyptus spp.* (introduced).

18. **Noteworthy fauna.** Fishes: *Anguilla anguilla*, *Mugil cephalus*, *Liza spp.*, *Dicentrarchus labrax*. Waterfowls: *Tachybaptus ruficollis* (nesting), *Podiceps nigricollis*, *Phalacrocorax carbo*, *Ph. aristotelis*, *Botaurus stellaris*, *Egretta garzetta*, *Ardea cinerea*, *Casmerodius albus*, *Ardeola ralloides*, *Nycticorax nycticorax*, *Plegadis falcinellus*, *Ciconia ciconia*, *Platalea leucorhodia*, *Phoenicopterus ruber* (rare), *Anser albifrons* (occasional), *Anas platyrhynchos*, *Anas strepera*, *A. penelope*, *A. crecca*, *A. querquedula*, *A. acuta*, *A. clypeata*, *Tadorna tadorna*, *Netta rufina*, *Aythya filigula*, *A. farina*, *Fulica atra*, *Grus grus*, *Circus aeruginosus*, *Pandion haliaetus*, *Himantopus himantopus*, *Haematopus ostralegus*, *Arenaria interpres*, *Tringa totanus*, *Tringa erythropus*, *T. nebularia*, *Calidris spp.*

19. **Social and Cultural values:** education and research. Surroundings areas are cultivated in summer.

20. **Land tenure/ownership:** Property of ERSAP (Regional Body for Farming Development In Apulia); some areas are private. Management is under WWF Italy, for a part of the Ramsar site.

21. **Current land use:** a) conservation; b) farming

22. **Factors adversely affecting the site's ecological character:** the ponds are going to be covered with dirt, due to a reduced freshwater flow and to the artificial closure of some outlets to the sea. The reduced water level induce, in summer, an increasing in the temperature of water, and consequent death of plants, which slow decomposition makes the bottom muddy and poor of oxygen (death of fishes).

23. **Conservation measures taken:** Ramsar site (D.M. 9.5.77); Natural Reserve (D.M. 13.8.80); Oasis of Regional protection since 1978.

24. **Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:** accurate study for hydrological assessment. Restoration of a physical barrier between the sea and the ponds (once realized by the dunes). Modification of the drainage canal net (the area is now fed by rains only , since the ground water is exhausting). Feeding the seasonal ponds, now invaded by a thick vegetation. Forestry amelioration.

25. **Current scientific reasearch and facilities:** waterfowls census survey and ringing. Research on micromammals through the analysis of owl pellets.

26. **Current conservation education:** birdwatching hides, survey towers, booklets, visitor Centre, old farmhouse used for education.

27. **Current recreation and tourism:** education, summer camps.

28. **Jurisdiction:** Regione PUGLIA

29. **Management authority:** WWF Italy, Via Garigliano 57,00198 Roma

30. **Bibliographical references:**

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