

Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS)

Categories approved by Recommendation 4.7, as amended by Resolution VIII.13 of the Conference of the Contracting Parties.

Note 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. Once completed, the RIS (and accompanying map(s)) should be submitted to the Ramsar Bureau. Compilers are strongly urged to provide an electronic (MS Word) copy of the RIS and, where possible, digital copies of maps.

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

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Designation date

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Site Reference Number

2. Date this sheet was completed/updated:

24 October, 2005

3. Country:

JAPAN

4. Name of the Ramsar site:

Furen-ko and Shunkuni-tai

5. Map of site included:

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

a) **hard copy** (required for inclusion of site in the Ramsar List): *yes* -or- *no*

b) **digital (electronic) format** (optional): *yes* -or- *no*

6. Geographical coordinates (latitude/longitude):

145°21' 20" E, 43°17' 50" N

7. General location:

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

Nemuro / Hokkaido region

It is located in both Nemuro city (population: c. 33,000, area: c. 413 sq. km) and Betsukai-cho (population: c. 17,000, area: c. 1,320 sq. km), approximately 320 kms east of Sapporo City (the capital of Hokkaido Prefecture, population: c. 1.82 million, area: c. 1,121 sq. km).

8. Elevation: (average and/or max. & min.)

+ 1 m

9. Area: (in hectares) **6,139 ha**

10. Overview:

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

Furen-ko and Shunkuni-tai is located in the eastern part of Hokkaido. Furen-ko is a brackish lake connected to Nemuro-wan bay, and large tidal flats and *Zostera* seagrass beds are developed. Shunkuni-tai is a sand bar that separates Furen-ko from Nemuro bay. *Picea glehnii* (Japanese spruce) forest and *Rosa rugosa* (Japanese rose) communities are developed on the sand spit. The forest, grassland, salt marsh and tidal flats forming a lagoon are favourable habitats for wild birds. It is one of the important staging area for migratory birds in Japan.

11. Ramsar Criteria:

Circle or underline 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).

1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5 • 6 • 7 • 8

12. Justification for the application of each Criterion listed in 11. 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 1: It is a representative wetland of low moors, brackish lake and seagrass/seaweed beds of Japan.

Criterion 2: Globally and nationally endangered species, *Grus japonensis* (Japanese Crane) [vulnerable species (VU)*1, endangered species (EN)*2, Domestic Endangered species*3] and *Eurynorhynchus pygmaeus* (Spoon-billed Sandpiper) [endangered species (EN)*1, vulnerable species (VU)*2] inhabit in the site.

Note: *1 Red List of Threatened Wildlife of Japan. Ministry of the Environment

*2 IUCN Red List of Threatened Species (2004)

*3 Designated under the Law for Conservation of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (Species Conservation Law)

Criterion 3: Rich natural environment is distributed in the site, such as *Picea glehnii* (Japanese spruce) forest and large community of *Rosa rugosa* (Japanese rose) formed on the sand-dune, salt marsh showing catagenesis, tidal flats and seagrass beds formed in the lagoon and so on. The site features high biodiversity of plants, birds, benthos and fish species.

Criterion 5: The site regularly supports maximum 55,000 Anatidae species during migration season.

Criterion 6: 400-1,900 (1-4.75%) of *Heteroscelus brevipes* (Grey-tailed Tattler), 20-40 (2.5-5%) of *Grus japonensis* (Japanese Crane), 10,331 (17.218%) of *Cygnus Cygnus* (Whooper Swan), 1,800 (3.27%) of *Anser fabalis* (Bean Goose), 2,000 (40%) of *Branta bernicla* (Brent Goose), 8,673 (1.15%) of *Anas Penelope Linnaeus* (Wigeon), 11,442 (1.53%) of *Anas acuta Linnaeus* (Pintail), 19,076 (6.36%) of *Aythya marila* (Scaup) and 1,517 (2.02%) of *Bucephala clangula* (Goldeneye) visited the site and the site regularly supports over 1% of the East Asian region population.

Note: *1 Red List of Threatened Wildlife of Japan. Ministry of the Environment

*2 IUCN Red List of Threatened Species (2004)

13. 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:

Japan

b) biogeographic regionalisation scheme (include reference citation):

Japan is recognized as single biogeographic region, because Japan is an island country which has unique and rich biota with many endemic species.

14. 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.

Geology: volcanic loam, volcanic ash, Mashu pyroclastic deposit-pumic fall deposit and volcanic ash

Geomorphology: an inland-sea lake

Soil type: peat soil

Origins: Natural.

Hydrology: 13 inflow streams. Water flows out to the sea from the lake mouth.

Water quality: brackish water; oligotrophic lake; pH8.3(8.2 ~ 8.3)(1991), DO 7.5(5.3 ~ 9.1)ppm(1991), alkalinity 1.439(1.073 ~ 1.788)meq/L(1991), COD 4.8(4.0 ~ 4.8)ppm(1991), T-N 0.55(0.55 ~ 0.56)ppm(1991), T-P 0.051(0.021 ~ 0.079)ppm(1991), salinity 17.42(5.71 ~ 28.08)‰(1991), Chl-a 2.29(1.05 ~ 2.94)µg/L(1991), SS 4ppm(1990), NH₄-N 0.26ppm(1990), NO₂-N <0.005ppm(1990), NO₃-N <0.005ppm(1990), PO₄-P 0.042ppm(1990)

Water depth: 1.0 m on average, 11.0 m at maximum

Water level fluctuation: None

Climate: Cool climate and sea fog frequently appears in summer, cold with strong wind in winter. Annual precipitation: 1,030 mm, annual mean temperature: 6.1 degrees Celsius, fluctuation of mean temperature in each month: -4.7-+17.3 degrees Celsius (average of Nemuro from 1971 to 2000)

15. Physical features of the catchment area:

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

Surface area: 1,054.83 sq.km

General geology and geomorphological features: The catchment consist of the main stream Furen-gawa which flows between Bekkai-cho and Nemuro City, and small and medium-sized rivers that flow in to Furen-gawa including Anebetu-gawa in Hamanaka-cho.

General soil types: Mashu pyroclastic deposit-pumic fall deposit and volcanic ash, Tosyunbetsu formation - pumic sand and gravel, taffaceous sand, siltstone with coal, Furen-ko formation-silt, sand and gravel

General land use: forests, pasture, urban area

Climate: Cool climate and sea fog frequently appears in summer, cold with strong wind in winter. Annual precipitation: 1,030 mm, annual mean temperature: 6.1 degrees Celsius, fluctuation of mean temperature in each month: -4.7-+17.3 degrees Celsius (average of Nemuro from 1971 to 2000)

16. Hydrological values:

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

17. 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.

Q, E, H, B, G, U

18. General ecological features:

Provide further description, as appropriate, of the main habitats, vegetation types, plant and animal communities present in the Ramsar site.

Large tidal flats and *Zostera* seagrass beds extend within the site. *Zostera marina* and *Z. japonica* grow in the entire lake. Salt marsh vegetation which is mainly composed by *Triglochin maritimum* community and *Carex subspathacea* community can be seen in the marshland of the lake. The vegetation of the freshwater marsh is formed by *Scirpus tabernaemontani* community, *Typha latifolia* (cattail) community, *Phragmites communis* (reed) - *Calamagrostis stricta* community, *Phragmites communis* (reed) - *Carex lyngbyei* community, *Alnus japonica* (Japanese alder) - *Fraxinus mandshurica v. japonica* forest and *Picea glehnii* (Japanese spruce) forest.

It is an important spawning area and habitat for herring and salmon. Also, *Ruditapes philippinarum* (Short-neck clam) lives in the site. The site is an important staging site in spring and fall for many migratory waterfowls including Shorebirds, wild ducks, swans and geese. Also, more than 25% of Japanese population of *Grus japonensis* (Japanese Crane) is breeding in the site.

19. Noteworthy flora:

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. *Do not include here taxonomic lists of species present – these may be supplied as supplementary information to the RIS.*

Triglochin maritimum [vulnerable species (VU)*1]

Carex subspathacea [critically endangered species (CR)*1]

Note: *1 Red List of Threatened Wildlife of Japan. Ministry of the Environment

20. 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.*

Eurynorhynchus pygmeus (Spoon-billed Sandpiper) [endangered species (EN)*1, vulnerable species (VU)*2]

Himantopus himantopus himantopus (Black-winged Stilt) [endangered species (EN)*1]

Tringa totanus ussuriensis (Redshank) [vulnerable species (VU)*1]

Numenius madagascariensis (Far Eastern Curlew) [vulnerable species (VU)*1]

Anser fabalis serrirostris (Bean Goose) [vulnerable species (VU)*1]

Grus japonensis (Japanes Crane) [vulnerable species (VU)*1, endangered species (EN)*2, Domestic Endangered Species*3]

Note: *1 Red List of Threatened Wildlife of Japan. Ministry of the Environment

*2 IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2004

*3 Designated under the Law for Conservation of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (Species Conservation Law)

21. Social and 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.

Harvesting of clams

Fishery and aquaculture (*Hypomesus pretiosus japonicus*, *Eleginus gracilis*, righteyed flounders, herrings..etc.)

Attractive landscapes

22. Land tenure/ownership:

(a) within the Ramsar site:

Publicly-owned water body: national land 5,202 ha

Syunkunitai(Special protected area):national land 492ha

City-owned land (Nemuro city) 273ha

Private land 172 ha

(b) in the surrounding area:

National land, prefectural land, town-owned land, private land

23. Current land (including water) use:

(a) within the Ramsar site:

No resident, fishery rights are obtained, tourism, nature observation

(b) in the surroundings/catchment:

Natural forests, secondary forests, planted forests, cropland, meadow, urban area, reclaimed land

24. 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:

There is a concern of eutrophication due to inflow of domestic wastewater, factory disposal, and animal manure.

(b) in the surrounding area:

25. Conservation measures taken:

List national category and legal status of protected areas, including boundary relationships with the Ramsar site; management practices; whether an officially approved management plan exists and whether it is being implemented.

Special Protection Area of National Wildlife Protection Area: hectares (Wildlife Protection and Appropriate Hunting Law) 6,139ha * From November 1st 2005

Capture of wildlife is in principle prohibited in the area. It is required to obtain permission from the Minister of the Environment when installation of artificial structure, reclamation of the water body and tree felling.

26. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:

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

None

27. Current scientific research and facilities:

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

[Scientific research]

Population Census Survey of Anatidae (Ministry of the Environment)

Population Census Survey of Shorebirds (Ministry of the Environment)

Survey and improvement project of wintering site of Geese in Hokkaido and Tohoku region, 2001
(Ministry of the Environment)
Population Census Survey of *Grus japonensis* (Japanese Crane) (Ministry of the Environment)

[Facilities established for research]: None

28. Current conservation education:

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

Shunkunitai Wild Bird Sanctuary Nature Center- about 10,000 visitors visit the nature center annually.
NGO and other organizations are carrying out nature interpretation programs such as bird watching.

29. Current recreation and tourism:

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

Hiking, many tourists come to watch birds.

30. Jurisdiction:

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

[Territorial]

Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport, River Bureau (publicly-owned water body)

[Functional]

Ministry of the Environment (National Wildlife Protection Area)

Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport, River Bureau (publicly-owned water body)

31. 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

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32. Bibliographical references:

scientific/technical references only. If biogeographic regionalisation scheme applied (see 13 above), list full reference citation for the scheme.

- Wildlife Division, Nature Conservation Bureau, Ministry of the Environment 2002 "Report on Survey and improvement project of wintering site of Geese in Hokkaido and Tohoku region, 2001"
- Wildlife Division, Nature Conservation Bureau, Ministry of the Environment 2002-2003 "Reports on Population Census Survey of Shorebirds"
- Wildlife Division, Nature Conservation Bureau, Ministry of the Environment 2004 "Result of the 2nd Population Census Survey of Japanese Crane *Grus japonensis*, 2003"
- Simon Delany et al. 2002 "Waterbird Population Estimates 3rd Edition" Wetlands International
- Environment Agency 1993 "The Fourth National Surveys on the Natural Environment Report on Lake and Marsh Survey"

- Environment Agency 1995 “The Fifth National Survey on the Natural Environment Report on Wetland Survey”
 - Ministry of the Environment Nature Conservation Bureau 2002 “500 Important Wetlands in Japan”
 - Ministry of the Environment 2002 “Threatened Wildlife of Japan –Red Data Book 2nd ed.- Volume 2, Aves”
 - Environment Agency of Japan 2000 “Threatened Wildlife of Japan -Red Data Book 2nd ed. - Volume 8, Vascular Plants
 - The IUCN Species Survival Commission "IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2004"
 - The Ornithological Society of Japan 2000 “Check-list of Japanese Birds Sixth Revised Edition”
 - Japan Wildlife Research Center "Checklist of Species of Wildlife of Japan"
 - Ichthyological Society of Japan “DICTIONARY OF JAPANESE FISH NAMES AND THEIR FOREIGN EQUIVALENTS”
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