

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:

Hotokenuma

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):

40°49'15"N, 141°22'45"E

7. General location:

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

Aomori Prefecture/ Tohoku region

It is located in the northern part of Misawa-cho (population: c. 44,000, area: c. 120 sq. km), approximately 50 km east of Aomori City (capital of Aomori Prefecture, population: c. 320,000, area: c. 825 sq. km).

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

max. 10 m

min. 0 m

9. Area: (in hectares) **222 ha**

10. Overview:

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

Hotokenuma is located on the Pacific side of Shimokita-Hanto peninsula. It is a low moor dominated by *Phragmites communis* (common reed). It is a breeding site and habitat for many wild birds including endangered species *Locustella pryeri* (Japanese marsh warbler).

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 2: *Locustella pryeri* (Japanese marsh warbler) [endangered species (EN)*1 and vulnerable species (VU)*2] live in the site. *Locustella pryeri* (Japanese marsh warbler) is only seen in some parts of China and Japan in the world.

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

*2 IUCN Red List of Threatened Animals (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: quaternary alluvial loam layer, sand and sandstone

Geomorphology: a dammed lake (the pond in the wetland)

Soil type: mainly low peat soil, partly coarse-grained gley soil in the northern part

Origins: Human-made (reclaimed land). The site had been a dammed lake before reclamation. Burning of dead grass is conducted every spring.

Hydrology: being fed by spring water

Water quality: mostly cation (Na, Ca, Mg) and others are anion (Cl, So4)

Water level fluctuation: None

Water depth: a reclaimed inland-sea lake. 0.8 m on average, 1.4 m at maximum

Climate: Cold climate and foggy in summer, and little snow and fine weather in winter. Annual precipitation: 999 mm, annual mean temperature: 9.9 degrees Celsius, fluctuation of mean temperature in each month: -1.4-+22.1 degrees Celsius (average of Misawa from 1979 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).

No surface water flow into Hotokenuma. Water is supplied by spring water, penetration of underground water during the irrigating period, etc.

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.

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.

The site is a low moor mainly dominated by *Phragmites communis* (common reed) community, but six other plant communities such as *Phragmites communis* - *Carex thunbergii* community are observed.

It is a breeding site and habitat for many wild birds including endangered species such as *Locustella pryeri* (Japanese marsh warbler), *Emberiza yessoensis* (Japanese reed bunting), and *Ixobrychus eurhythmus* (Schrenck's bittern). It is also an important staging area for migratory birds like water birds.

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.*

Utricularia minor (lesser bladderwort) [vulnerable species (VU)*1]
Scutellaria yezoensis [endangered species (EN)*1]
Utricularia australis (yellow bladderwort) [vulnerable species (VU)*1]
Zannichellia palustris var. *indica* (hornwort) [vulnerable species (VU)*1]
Monochoria korsakowii (mizuaoi) [vulnerable species (VU)*1]
Lemna trisulca (ivy-leaved duckweed) [endangered species (EN)*1]
Sparganium erectum (simplestem bur-reed) [near threatened species (NT)*1]
Habenaria sagittifera [vulnerable species (VU)*1]
Cynanchum paniculatum (swallowwort root) [vulnerable species (VU)*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.*

[Birds]

- Locustella pryeri* (Japanese marsh warbler) [endangered species (EN)*1, vulnerable species (VU)*2, Domestic Endangered Species*3]
Emberiza yessoensis (Japanese reed bunting) [vulnerable species (VU)*1, near threatened species (NT)*2]
Ixobrychus eurhythmus (Schrenck's bittern) [endangered species (EN)*1]
Anser fabalis serrinostris (Bean goose) [endangered species (EN)*1]
Accipiter gentiles (Goshawk) [endangered species (EN)*1]
Circus spilonotus (Eastern marsh harrier) [endangered species (EN)*1]
Falco peregrinus japonensis (Peregrine falcon) [endangered species (EN)*1]
Grus vipio Pallas (White-naped crane) [endangered species (EN)*1]
Grus japonensis (Japanese crane) [vulnerable species (VU)*1, endangered species (EN)*2, Domestic Endangered Species*3]
Coturnicops noveboracensis (Swinhoe's yellow rail) [endangered species (EN)*1]

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

*2 IUCN Red List of Threatened Animals (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.

Hotokenuma is a place for agriculture. The wetland is maintained by the spring water primarily for agricultural use, burning of dead plants and pumped up water.

22. Land tenure/ownership:

(a) within the Ramsar site:

City-owned land (Misawa City): 185 ha

Private land: 37 ha

(b) in the surrounding area:

Private land

23. Current land (including water) use:

(a) within the Ramsar site:

Spring water is pumped up for rice cultivation.

(b) in the surroundings/catchment:

secondary grassland, rice paddies

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:

[Current]

Spring water is pumped up for rice cultivation.

[Future]

A part of Misawa City Basic plan on Environmental Education Farm has been frozen since 2005. Misawa City considers that if the plan comes into force again, it is possible to develop a farm without disturbing the environment and ecosystem of special protection area of wildlife protection area by using a construction method that fully considers ecosystem including wildlife.

(b) in the surrounding area:

None

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: 222 ha (Wildlife Protection and Appropriate Hunting Law) * From November 1, 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]

National Survey on the Natural Environment (Ministry of the Environment)

Survey on favorable environment of Japanese Marsh Warbler (*Locustella pryeri*), the symbol of marsh in the northern province (Hotokenuma survey on marsh dependant organisms)

Report of basic survey on environment of Hotokenuma, in fiscal 2003 (Ministry of the Environment)

Report of basic survey on environment of Hotokenuma, in fiscal 2004 (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.

Nature observation programs have been conducted seven times by a nature conservation group, and about 350 people have participated in total.

29. Current recreation and tourism:

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

Nature observation program as a school event was once requested and it was conducted with 160 participants. Also, the Japanese marsh warbler observation tours were planned and conducted by a travel agency in the past.

30. Jurisdiction:

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

[Territorial]

Misawa city (City-owned land)

[Functional]

Ministry of the Environment (National Wildlife Protection Area)

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.

- Research Group on Habitat of Japanese Marsh Warbler, 1992 "Survey on preferable environment of Japanese Marsh Warbler, the symbol of marsh in the northern provinces (Research on marsh dependant organisms in Hotokenuma)" Toyota Foundation: the 6th Contest of Citizen's Research Work
- 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"
- Nature Conservation Bureau, Ministry of the Environment, 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
- Environment Agency of Japan 2000 "Threatened Wildlife of Japan -Red Data Book 2nd ed. - Volume 9, Bryophytes, Algae, Lichens, Fungi"
- The IUCN Species Survival Commission "IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2004"

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