

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:

Sarobetsu-genya

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):

northeast corner: 45°6'44"N, 141°42'1"E

southwest corner: 45°3'15"N, 141°42'33"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.

Soya, Teshio / Hokkaido region

It is located in Toyotomi-cho (population: c. 5,200, area: c.521 sq. km) and Horonobe-cho (population: c. 2,800, area: c.575 sq. km), about 225 km north of Sapporo City (population: c. 1.82million, area: c. 1,112 sq. km), the capital of Hokkaido Prefecture.

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

max. +7 m; min. +3 m

9. Area: (in hectares) 2,560ha

10. Overview:

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

Sarobetsu-genya is located in the northern part of Hokkaido Prefecture. It consists of high moor, intermediate moor, low moor and ponds developed on peat land. The site is characterized by well-developed high moor in a lowland plain. It is also one of the most important habitats of wild birds in Japan. Penke-numa and Panke-numa ponds are breeding sites for waterfowls and especially important stopovers for migratory birds in spring and fall.

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: Sarobetsu-genya is an extremely well-developed and large high moor among lowland moors in Japan

Criterion 3: Diverse species of wetland vegetation, aquatic plants, ducks and geese species, reptiles, freshwater fish, insects, benthos are found in the site and the entire wetland possesses rich biodiversity

Criterion 6: 2,700 (4.9%) of *Anser fabalis middendorffii* (Bean goose) and 1,196 (1.39%) of *Cygnus columbianus* (Tundra Swan) were recorded at Sarobetsu-genya. The site regularly supports over 1% of the East Asian populations of *Anser fabalis middendorffii* (550) and *Cygnus columbianus* (860).

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, geomorphology: A well-developed moor in lowland surrounded by mountains in the north and east, and by plateau and sand dunes in the west.

Soil type: peat soil, the layer depth is 3-7 m.

Origins: Natural. Plant residues that piled up in a lagoon became a peat layer, and eventually, the high-moor was formed with some ponds.

Hydrology: Sarobetsu-gawa flows around the perimeter of the moor. The moor is dotted with some ponds, and the braches of Sarobetsu-gawa run through the moor.

Water quality:

Panke-numa: pH7.3(1991), DO7.8(7.6-8.0)ppm(1991), EC3.75(2.36-4.05)ms/cm(1991), alkalinity 0.641(0.627-0.653)meq/L(1991), COD10.8(10.6-11.1)ppm(1991), T-N 0.42(0.36-0.47)ppm, T-

P0.049(0.042-0.056)ppm(1991), Chl-a5.33(3.76-6.80)µg/L(19), BOD1ppm(1982), SS 5ppm(1982), Cl⁻1159(806-1370)ppm(1991), NH₄-N 0.012ppm(1982), NO₂-N<0.003ppm(1982), NO₃-N<0.003ppm(1982), PO₄-P<0.003ppm(1982)

Penke-numa: pH7.2(1990), DO8.7ppm(1990), COD7.4ppm(1990), T-N 0.68ppm(1990), T-P 0.07ppm(1990), BOD1.5ppm(1990), SS 3ppm(1990), Cl⁻35ppm(1990), NH₄-N 0.13ppm(1990), NO₂-N 0.011ppm(1990), NO₃-N<0.005ppm(1990), PO₄-P 0.028ppm(1990)

Water level fluctuation: No fluctuation

Water depth: Panke-numa: 54.0 m at maximum, 23.9 m on average; Penke-numa: 39.4m at maximum, 14.0m on average.

Climate: Cool in summer and cold dry in winter. Annual precipitation: 1,087 mm, annual mean temperature: 5.9 degrees Celsius, fluctuation of mean temperature in each month: -6.8- +19.5 degrees Celsius (average of Toyotomi-area 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).

Surface area: 65,850 ha

General geology and geomorphological features: lowland surrounded by mountains in the north and east, and by plateau and sand dunes in the west.

General soil type: peat soil

General land utilization: Natural grassland, natural forest and secondary forest.

Climate: Cold climate in summertime, cold and dry in wintertime. Annual precipitation: 1,087 mm, annual mean temperature: 5.9 degrees Celsius, fluctuation of mean temperature in each month: -6.8- +19.5 degrees Celsius (average of Toyotomi-area from 1979 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.

U, O, M

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 vegetation of moor mainly consists of *Rubus chamaemorus* - *Sphagnum papillosum* community, *Moliniopsis japonica* - *Sphagnum papillosum* community, *Scheuchzeria palustris* - *Rhynchospora alba* community, *Drosera anglica* - *Sphagnum pulchrum* community, *Moliniopsis japonica* - *Carex middendorffii* community, *Phragmites australis* - *Calamagrostis langsdorffii* community and *Alnus japonica* forests.

Aquatic plants such as *Nuphar pumilum*, *Nymphaea tetragona var. erythrostromatica*, *Potamogeton natans*, *Brasenia schreberi*, and *Trapa bispinosa* are found in the lakes and ponds.

This site is an important stopover for migratory waterfowls such as Bean Goose *Anser fabalis serratirostris* and Tundra Swan *Cygnus columbianus*.

Many other species inhabit within the site: reptiles such as Viviparous lizard *Lacerta vivipara*, freshwater fish such as Japanese huchen *Hucho perryi*, and insects such as *Onthophagus gibbulus* and *Graphoderus zonatus*, benthos such as clam *Corbicula japonica*.

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.*

Nuphar pumilum [vulnerable species (VU)*1]

Pogonia japonica [vulnerable species (VU)*1]

Nuphar pumilum var. *ozeense* [vulnerable species (VU)*1]

Nymphaea tetragona var. *erythrostromatica* [vulnerable species (VU)*1]

Drosera anglica [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]

Haliaeetus albicilla albicilla (White-tailed Eagle) [endangered species (EN)*1, near threatened species (NT)*2, Domestic Endangered Species*3]

Accipiter gentilis fujiyama (Goshawk) [vulnerable species (VU)*1, Domestic Endangered Species*3]

Circus spilonotus spilonotus (Eastern Marsh Harrier) [vulnerable species (VU)*1]

Falco peregrinus japonensis (Peregrine Falcon) [vulnerable species (VU)*1, Domestic Endangered Species*3]

Anser fabalis middendorffii (Bean Goose) [near threatened species (NT)*1]

Emberiza aureola ornata (Yellow-breasted Bunting) [near threatened species (NT)*1]

[Fish]

Hucho perryi (Japanese huchen) [endangered species (EN)*1]

[Insect]

Aeschna subarctica [near threatened species (NT)*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.

- Utilized for agricultural water
- Attractive landscapes

22. Land tenure/ownership:

(a) within the Ramsar site:

- National land (Ministry of the Environment): 1,281 ha
- National land (Ministry of Finance): 149 ha
- Prefectural land (Hokkaido prefecture): 20 ha
- Town-owned land (Toyotomi-cho, Horonobe-cho) : 1,119 ha

(b) in the surrounding area:

National land, private land

23. Current land (including water) use:

(a) within the Ramsar site:

Utilized for agricultural water

(b) in the surroundings/catchment:

Natural grassland, natural forest and secondary forest

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:

Past

- invasion of bamboo grass
- decrease of inflow water
- invasion of introduced plants

(b) in the surrounding area:

Past: Agricultural land development in upper stream

Potential: Agricultural land development plan

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.

In September 1974, the area came under The Natural Parks Law and total 2,560 ha became the Special protection zone (1,970 ha) and special zone (590 ha) of the National park.

In the special zone, activities such as erecting structures, felling trees, mining minerals, and reclamation require permission from the Minister of the Environment. In the special protection zone, further activities such as planting trees and bamboos, grazing livestock, collecting and stocking products outside, firing, picking and catching plants and animals also require permission from the Minister of the Environment.

From November 1, 1992, it became a Special Protection Area of National Wildlife Protection Area covering 2,560 ha designated under the Wildlife Protection and Appropriate Hunting Law.

Capture of wildlife is in principle prohibited in the area. It is required to obtain permission from the Minister of the Environment for 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:

- Nature Restoration Project (Ministry of the Environment)
- National Survey on the Natural Environment (Ministry of the Environment)
- Survey and improvement project of wintering site of Geese in Hokkaido and Tohoku region, 2001 (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.

- Sarobetsu nature school (Toyotomi Visitor Center), nature trail
- Horonobe Visitor Center, nature trail

Also see following section 29.

29. Current recreation and tourism:

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

About 300,000 people in a year visit Sarobetsu nature school (Toyotomi Visitor Center) and walk along the 1 km-long loop nature trail. Another nature trail is established at Horonobe Visitor Center.

30. Jurisdiction:

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

Territorial:

- Ministry of the Environment (National land)
- Ministry of Finance (National land)
- Hokkaido (Prefectural land)
- Toyotomi-cho, Horonobe-cho (Town-owned land)

Functional:

Ministry of the Environment (National Wildlife Protection Area, National park)

Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport (river 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

Hokkaido Regional Environment Office,
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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.

Environment Agency 1992 Special Protection Area Designation Plan of Sarobetsu National Wildlife Protection Area

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 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.-Volume3, Reptilia/ Amphibia

Ministry of the Environment 2003 “Threatened Wildlife of Japan -Red Data Book 2nd ed.- Volume 4, Pisces-Brackish and Fresh Water Fishes”

Environment Agency 2000 “Threatened Wildlife of Japan -Red Data Book 2nd ed.- Volume 8, Vascular Plants”

Environment Agency of Japan 2000 “Red List of Japan, Invertebrate”

Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation Bureau 2002 “500 Important Wetlands in Japan”

Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation Bureau, Wildlife Division 2002 “Report on the Survey and improvement project of wintering site of Geese in Hokkaido and Tohoku region, 2001”

NACS-J/ WWF Japan 1996 “RED DATA BOOK of PLANT COMMUNITIES IN JAPAN”

Simon Delany et al. 2002 “Waterbird Population Estimates 3rd Edition” Wetland International

The Ornithological Society of Japan 2000 “Check-list of Japanese Birds Sixth Revised Edition”

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