

Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands

1. Country: Japan

2. Date:

3. Ref: 2JP010

4. Name and address of compiler:

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5. Name of wetlands: Sakata

6. Date of Ramsar designation: 28/03/1996

7. Geographical coordinates: 37°49'N 138°53'E

8. General location: In the southwest of Niigata City, Niigata Prefecture

9. Area: 76ha

10. Wetland type: 0

11. Altitude: 5m a.s.l.

12. Overview:

The site is composed of two large and small lakes, on the sunken place of sand dunes, has no river flowing into and is maintained by spring water.

13. Physical features:

Geology and geomorphology - surrounded by dunes and the surface soil is sand. Origins: natural; Hydrology: water balance; settle estimated spring water: 12,000m³/day. Soil type and chemistry: surrounding - sandy; sediment - sand and clay. Water quality: eutrophic lake; water temperature 5~27°C; transparency: 8~80cm; pH: 6.6~9.5; COD: 2.9~63mg/l; SS: 1mg/l~260mg/l; DO 3.3~19.7mg/l; T-N: 0.8~21mg/l; T-P: 0.02~0.75mg/l. Depth: permanence - 1.5m; fluctuations - +/-0.5~1m. Tidal variations: silted deposition; North west of the lakes is two metres (max.). South east of the lakes is sandy. Catchment area: surrounding dunes are; 360ha (estimated). Climate: temperate monsoon climate.

14. Ecological features:

The large variety and number of birds are observed at Sakata, and it is a famous wintering site of many kinds of anatidae such as Bewick's Swan, whooper swans, bean goose, white-fronted goose. Hydrophytes is growing thick on the surface of the water.

15. Land tenure/ownership of:

National Government-owned land: 43.6ha

City-owned land: 25.2ha

Private land: 7.2ha

16. Conservation measures taken:

National Wildlife Protection Area. Class III Special Zone of the Sado Yahiko Yoneyama Quasi National Park. Urban Park Area. In this area, capturing birds and mammals, construction, modification of land, mining and reclamation etc. are prohibited in principle.

17. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:

To secure spring water, dredge corroded dirt in the lake, and prevent reeds entering to the lake.

18. Current land use:

In this area, there is Sakata Wildlife Observatory for observing nature, bird-watching and etc. All area is designated as the Urban Park Area and is planned to be the park for observation of natural ecosystem. Fisheries and cultivation are operated in small scale and farms and pine woods remain in surroundings.

19. Disturbances/threats, including changes in land use and major development projects:

No possible changes in land use. The decline of ground water level due to pumping up for agriculture. The decline of ground water level and shifting sand due to decrease of woods and change of geographical features accompanied with modification land of sand dune around.

Conservation measure taken:

20. Hydrological and physical values: None.

21. Social and cultural values:

Sakata has been famous as the wintering sites of swans since early times. So there had been designated as the first Eternal Hunting Prohibition Area in Japan since 1901, and have been designated as the Natural Wildlife Protection Area since 1981.

22. Noteworthy fauna:

Bewick's swan, whooper swans, bean goose.

23. Noteworthy flora:

The community of *Euryale ferox*.

24. Current scientific research and facilities:

There is Sakata Observatory, where they are making investigation on wildlife.

25. Current conservation education:

They hold parties for birdwatching and deepening awareness of nature and serve leaflets for interpreting nature.

26. Current recreation and tourism:

Birdwatching and nature conservation education are carried out.

27. Management authority:

Nature Conservation Bureau, Environment Agency, Japan

28. Jurisdiction:

Territorial conservation jurisdiction: Niigata City. Functional conservation jurisdiction: Nature Conservation Bureau, Environment Agency, Japan; River Bureau, Ministry of Construction, Japan; City Bureau, Ministry of Construction, Japan.

29. Bibliographical references:

1991. Nature. History of Niigata city, Material 12.

30. Reasons for inclusion: 3a, 3b, 3c