Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands

As approved by Rec C.4.7. of the Conference of the Contracting Parties Montreux, Switzerland-July 1990

1.Country LATVIA 2 Date: November, 1995 3. Ref: 3L\/002

4. Name of wetland: Lake Kanieris

5. Ramsar Criteria

2a The territory supports an appreciable assemblage of rare, vulnerable or endangered species or subspecies Of plants and birds at breeding (about 700 species of vascular plants~ 135 breeding bird species) and appreciable numbers of moulting waterfowl

2b The area is of special value for maintaining the genetic and ecological diversity of a region because of the quality and peculiarities of its flora and fauna

3b The territory regularly supports substantial numbers of individuals from particular groups of waterfowl indicative of wetland values, both productivity and diversity

6. Wetland type: Coastal wetland: E, H, 0,

7.Date of Ramsar designation: 5th April, 1995

8. Geographical coordinates: 57°02'N 23°28'E

9. Altitude: 2-3 m above sea level

10. Area: ca 1,200 ha.

11. General location Sw coast of Riga Gulf within boundaries of Tukums region; 5 km NW from the Jurmala town.

12. Overview: A shallow (up to 1,5 m deep) coastal freshwater lake the level of which was lowered at the beginning of 20th century and re-established in 1964. Several natural islands, two of them covered with broad-leaved forest, and 5 artificial islands created for waterfowl nesting. Rich in emergent vegetation surrounded mainly by forests. River Slocene falls into the lake in the West

13. Physical features: Lies in Piejuras (Maritime) lowland. Depth of quaternary level is 7-20 m There is mainly open dolomite rocks on the bottom covered with dense layer of sapropel. Lake Kanieris is of natural origin and belongs to relict coastal lakes. The water level was lowered at the beginning of the century by digging canal connecting lake to the sea. In 1964 sluice was erected on canal and a dam was built on E. coast and level restored. Presently max depth is 2.1 m, average 0.6 m. Level fluctuations are regulated by sluice + 0.1 m Catchment area is 357 km² The lake is eutrophic. Average temperature in January –4,6 °C in July +16,7°C. Winters are mild. Ice cover forms in about 15th November, disappears 9th April. Average ice density is 15-25 cm

14. Ecological features: Shallow very overgrown freshwater coastal lake submerged

vegetation 50%, total overgrowing 80%. There are 7 natural islands and 5 artificial ones, built before water level restoration. Largest islands and some peninsulas on East coast are covered by Aegopodiosa type forest Raft islands are formed by Phragmites, Typha, Scirpus. There are rich growth of Cladium mariscus Bottom of open water areas is covered by Chara spp. algae. On the West coast where river Slocene enters the lake there is transition fen vegetation. This part is covered by Carex, Salk, small Betula trees and Alnus glutinosa. Swamp (Birch and Black Alder) forests are growing in the valley of River Slocene

15. Land tenure/ ownership of:
(a) site: Private lake according to civil law of 1937. Owned by State Hunting Enterprise.
(b) surrounding area: Mainly forests of State Forest Fund, Private agricultural lands on East coast of the lake

16. Conservation measures taken: Part of the lake has status of ornithological reserve since 1977. There is permanently (98 ha) and seasonally (759 ha) protected zones. Management activities include removing of bushes from artificial islands erected for waterfowl. Valley of River Slocene is protected as Complex Nature Reserve.

17. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented: Lake Kanieris is recognised as one of the most important coastal wetlands in Latvia and designated as an internationally significant nature conservation area by HELCOM, IUCN, WWF, and BirdLife International. There is prepared conception for new national park establishment in surroundings of resort town Kemeri, including Lake Kanieris Lake Kanieris lies also in territory selected for Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan elaboration (within frame of HELCOM).

18. Current land use: principal human activities in:
(a) site: licensed commercial fishing, angling, hunting,
(b) surroundings/catchment: forestry extensive agriculture

19. Disturbances/ threats, including changes in landuse and major development projects
(a) site:
1) Water pollution from Tukums town which has not sewage water treatment and discharge to etc River Slocene,
2) Illegal fishing due to unemployment in local municipality It causes serious disturbance to breeding birds,
3) Overgrowing of some parts of the lake. Overgrowing of artificial islands with bushes and becoming not suitable for breeding birds. Disappearing of Chara algae due to pollution
4) There is quite popular opinion in nearest villages that restoration of water level caused problems for surrounding areas
(b) in the surroundings/catchment: Urbanisation of neighbouring villages: Lapmezciems Anticiems. More intensive use of private agricultural lands on East coast of the lake There are even sawmills erected close to the lake's coast.

20. Hydrological and physical values: Dike and sluice system built on Kanieris ensure flood control. At the same time it ensures that level fluctuations are small + O.lm and maintains optimal conditions for breeding birds. Lake Kanieris is functioning as sediment trap of waters

discharged to River

21. Social and cultural values: The lake is one of the most important hunting and angling areas in a wide surroundings. It is Special State hunting area with particular importance for waterfowl hunting. There is special station on the East coast of the lake hiring boats and controlling angling activities. Limited fishing by nets is allowed to locals. Annual average catch is 5 tons.

22. Noteworthy fauna
One of the richest bird lakes in Latvia, with nesting Podiceps cristatas (tens of pairs), P. grisegena (ca 100 pairs), Botaurus stellaris (up to 10) pairs), Ixobrychus minutus (several pairs), Ciconia nigra (1 pair), Cygnus olor (50 pairs), Anser anser (some pairs), Anas crecca (up to 10 pairs), A. platyrhynchos (up to 150 pairs), A. strepera (up to 20 pairs), A. querquedula (up to 10 pairs), A. clypeata (up to 10 pairs,), Aythya ferina (ca 100 pairs), A. fuligula (ca 50 pairs}, Circus aeruginosus (several pairs), Hailaetus albicilla (1 pair), Grus grus, Crex crex, Porzana porzana (several pairs), P. parva (several pairs irs Fulica atra (ca 700 pairs), Philomachus pygnax (up to 10 pairs), Larus rudibundus (5,500 pairs), Sterna hirundo (40 pairs), Bubo bubo (1 pair), Ficedula parva. The area supports about 2,000 moulting ducks. An important passage site for ducks and swans with up to 250 Cygnus cygnus in spring, There are 16 freshwater fish species, rich mollusc and dragonfly fauna.

23. Noteworthy flora:
Rare and threatened plant species include : Allium schoenoprasum Allium ursinum, Carex buxbaumii, Carex scandinavica, Ceratophyllum submersum, Cladium mariscus, Dactylorhiza incarnata, Dentaria bulbifera, Lemna gibba, Liparis loeselii lii, Naj as marina Schoenus ferrugineus.

24. Current scientific research and facilities: Avifaunistical and floristic data since 1920-ies. Quantitative data about birds before re-establishing the water level in 1964 and after up to now. Floristic data according to squares lxl km. There is no special field station.

25. Current conservation education: Birdwatching possibilities on lake Kanieris are advertised by information center in Kemeri town. There is good possibilities for birdwatching due to dam along the East coast. There is also special observation tower built near angling and hunting station

26. Current recreation and tourism: Main type of recreation on Lake Kanieris is sports angling. Lake Kanieris is included in touristic routes for planned Kemeri National Park Up to now there arc small number of foreign bird watcher groups from local schools.

27. Management authority: State Forest Service. State Hunting Fnterprise

28. Jurisdiction: Territorial: Lapmezciems municipality Tukums Region. Functional Ministry of Agriculture, State Forest Service, State Hunting Enterprise.

29. Bilographical references:

l Grosse, A. 1942. Zur Vogelwelt des Kanjersees und seiner Umgebung. - Korrespondenzblatt des Naturforscher-Vereins zu Riga, Bd 64, Posen, pp. 78-100
2. Viksne, J. 1967. The breeding birds of the Lake Kanieris (In Latvian, with English and Russian summaries)// Zoologijas muzeja raksti~ 1. Riga, pp 45-59
3. Viksne, J. 1991. Results of restoration of water level on Lake Kanieris, Latvia. // In. Wetland Management and Restoration. Proc. Workshop, Sweden 1990, Swedish Environmental Protection Agency Report, pp. 123-127.

30. Name and address of compiler

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31. Mapardee
Sec attachod map.
The scale is 1:50000.