

Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands

Categories approved by 4.7 of the Conference of the Contracting Parties

1. Date this sheet was completed \ updated

June 1998

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2. Country: Mongolia

Valley of Lakes

3. Name of wetland: Lakes of Gobi Valley (Boon Tsagaan Nuur, Taatsiin Tsagaan Nuur, Adgiin Tsagaan Nuur, and Orog Nuur).

4. Geographical coordinates:

Boon Tsagaan Nuur	45° 35' N, 99° 10' E
Taatsiin Tsagaan Nuur	45° 03' N, 100° 45' E
Adgiin Tsagaan Nuur	45° 32' N, 100° 00' E
Orog Nuur	45° 03' N, 100° 45' E

5. Altitude:

Boon Tsagaan Nuur	1,131 m
Taatsiin Tsagaan Nuur	1,220 m
Adgiin Tsagaan Nuur	1,100 m
Orog Nuur	1,235 m

4 units

6. Area:

Boon Tsagaan Nuur	Maximum 28,000 ha
Taatsiin Tsagaan Nuur	2,400 ha
Adgiin Tsagaan Nuur	2,200 ha
Orog Nuur	13,000 ha

7. Overview: A chain of large and small saline lakes lies at the foot of the Gobi-Altai in the broad inter-montane depression between the Khangai and Gobi-Altai ranges. They are shallow, with a saucer-shaped depth profile, and vary considerably size both seasonally and from year to year. Some may dry out completely in certain years. They all receive their inflow from rivers which rise in the Khangai Mountains, and no permanent inflow comes from the Gobi-Altai. The principal lakes are the Boon Tsagaan Nuur, Taatsiin Tsagaan Nuur, Adgiin Tsagaan Nuur, Orog Nuur. As the lakes shrinks in summer, it leaves areas of salt marsh, especially to the east of the lake. The fish fauna includes species of *Oreoluciscus* and *Thymallus brevirostris* endemic to the western Mongolia.

8. Wetland Type: Inland: (Q), (Sp)

9. Ramsar Criteria: (1b), (2a), (2d), (3b).

10. Map of the including included? Yes

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

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12. Justification of the criteria selected under point 9, on previous page.

13. General location: Boon Tsagaan Nuur is located in the Gobi Valley, 135 km SSW of Bayan-Khongor and 285 km WSW of Arvayheer, Bayan-Khongor Province.

Taatsiin Tsagaan Nuur is located in the Gobi Valley of Lakes at the Baga Bogd Massif of the Gobi-Altai, 160 km southwest of Arvayheer, Over-Khangai Province.

Adgiin Tsagaan Nuur is located in the Gobi Valley of Lakes, about 60 km east of Boon Tsagaan Nuur and 125 km south of Bayan-Khongor, Bayan-Khongor Province.

Orog Nuur is located at the foot of the Ikhe Bogd Uul massif, in the Gobi Valley of Lakes, 125 km south of Jargalan, Bayan-Khongor Province.

14. Physical features:

14.1. Geology and geomorphology: This site is including steppe, desert steppe and lake in the Gobi Valley.

14.2. Hydrology:	Boon Tsagaan	Taatsiin Tsagaan	Adgiin Tsagaan	Orog nuur
Catchment area km ²	33.5	-	-	-
Water surface area km ²	227.6	-	-	-
Length km	24	-	-	50
Width: Average km	1.0	1,2	-	-
Max km	19.0	-	-	10
Depth: Average m	9.5	1,5	-	-
Max m	16.0	-	-	-
Volume of water km ³	2.39	0,02	-	-
Average temperature °C	14.5	15.9	-	-
Mineralization mg\l	4.0	5.0	-	-
Transparency m	1	0.2	-	-

14.3. Soils: Brown desert steppe, sandy ground, and (with carbonaceous)

14.4. Climate: Extreme continental climate. The average annual rainfall around the lake is about 100-150 mm, whilst in the mountains to the south, it is 150-200 mm. The area receives most rainfall in summer, the rain often being accompanied by very violent west and northwest winds. The general climate for the whole of the Gobi Valley of lakes can be illustrated by the parameters record at Dalanzadgad, a town at 43° 35' N, 104° 28' E 9 (altitude 1,486m). Here, the average annual rainfall is 125 mm, the average January temperature -16.6°C, and the average July temperature + 21.2°C.

15. Hydrological values: A large saline lake with a saucer-shaped depth profile and a maximum depth of from 10 m; the most westerly of the Gobi Valley Lakes lying in the broad inter-montane depression between the Khangai and Gobi-Altai mountains, at the foot of the Khara-Argalalntu ridge of the Gobi-Altai. During glacial times, the neighboring Adgiyn Tasgaan Nuur. The shores are mainly sandy and exposed, and the surrounding area is semi-desert. The main inflow comes from the Khangai mountains

via the Baydrag River, which enters the lake at the northeast corner. The lake varies considerably in size, reaching its maximum area in spring due to the inflow of melt water from the Khangai Mountains. As it shrinks, it leaves behind areas of freshwater pools, marshes, salt marshes and salt pans. Due to its exposed situation, the lake is very well mixed, any stratification being only temporary. The conductivity is 4,000-6,000 $\mu\text{S/cm}$. The surface water temperature reaches about 20°C in August. The lake freezes in December, and probably thaws in April; the ice cover may be up to 80 cm thick.

16. Ecological features: -

17. Noteworthy flora: There are patches of flooded grass and freshwater marsh around the mouth of the Baydrag River, at the northeast corner of the lake. As the lake shrinks in summer, it leaves areas of salt marsh, especially to the east of the lake. Species of *Potamogeton* are present in the lake, although not near the due to the exposed conditions. The surrounding area is dominated by xerophytic and halophytic vegetation, with *Saxaul Halox ammodendron* being common.

18. Noteworthy fauna: The zooplankton is rich in rotifers; a massive development of the zooplankton takes place in July and August, and an average biomass of 2,1 gm per cubic metre has been recorded (Dulma, 1979). The fish fauna includes species of *Oreoleuciscus* and *Thymallus brevirostris* endemic to western Mongolia. Lakes of Gobi Valley are known to be an important staging for migratory waterfowl, particularly Anatidae and shorebirds, but few details are available. It has been suggested that this might be a breeding area for the rare Relict Gull *Larus relictus*.

Orog Nuur is very important staging area for migratory waterfowl, particularly Anatidae and shorebirds, and supports breeding populations of a variety of species including *Pelecanus crispus*, *Phalacrocorax carbo*, *Ardea cinerea*, *Tadorna ferruginea*, *T. tadorna*, *Anas poecilorhyncha*, *Recurvirostra avosetta*, *Charadrius alexandrinus*, *Limosa limosa*, *Tringa totanus*, *Gelochelidon nilotica* and *Sterna hirudo*. Kitson (1980) observed 20 pairs of the rare Relict Gull *Larus relictus*, along with *L. ichthyaetus*, *L. ridibundus* and *L. argentatus*, in the late April and early May 1977, and suggested that *relictus* might occasionally breed at the lake.

19. Social and cultural values: The freshwater and saline marshes provide important grazing land for domestic livestock in an otherwise arid region.

20. Land tenure/ownership: State ownership

21. Current land use: Fishing, grazing by horses, goats, sheep and cattle in the freshwater marshes, and grazing by camels in the more arid areas.

22. Factors: Overgrazing and degradation.

23. Conservation measures taken: None

24. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented: None

25. Current scientific research and facilities: Very little research and basic limnological data have gathered, and some research has been carried out on the palaeolimnology of the lake and geomorphology of the surrounding area.

26. Current conservation education: None

27. Current research and tourism: None.

28. Jurisdiction: Boon Tsagaan Nuur:

Territorial: Administration of Baatsagaan Sum of Bayan-Khongor Province.

Functional: MNE of Mongolia and Environmental Protection Agency, Government Building-3, Baga Toiruu-44, Ulaanbaatar-11, Tel: 976 1 326617 , Fax: 976 1 328620, E-mail: epa@magicnet.mn

Taatsiin Tsagaan Nuur:

Territorial: Administration of Baruun Bayan Ulaan Sum of Over-Khangai Province.

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Adgiin Tsagaan Nuur:

Territorial: Administration of Baatsagaan Sum Bayan-Khongor Province.

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Orog nuur:

Territorial: Administration of Bogd Sum of Bayan-Khongor Province.

Functional: MNE of Mongolia and Environmental Protection Agency, Government Building-3, Baga Toiruu-44, Ulaanbaatar-11, Tel: 976 1 326617 , Fax: 976 1 328620, E-mail: epa@magicnet.mn

29. Management authority: Management of the Ramsar site is provided by the of Baatsagaan and Bogd Sums of Bayan-Khongor Province, Baruun Bayan Ulaan Sum of Over-Khangai Province.

30. Bibliographical references:

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