

Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands

Translation of official information by Charles Akin

1. **Date this sheet was completed/updated:** ~November 1990~

2. **Country:** PANAMA

3. **Name of wetland:** Golfo de Montijo

4. **Geographical coordinates:**

7°35'17"N - 7°55'32"N
81°06'04"W - 81°58'50"W

5. **Altitude:** between -20 and +100 metres

6. **Area:** 80,765 hectares

7. **Overview:** This area is in the transitional zone between marine and terrestrial ecosystems with a wide variety of landscapes which are the habitat for wild fauna and flora. These coastal ecosystems include woodlands, mangroves, swamps, marshes, grasslands, savannas and secondary vegetation.

8. **Wetland type:** ~ E F G I L M Tp Ts 3 ~

9. **Ramsar criteria:** 2a 2c 3a

10. **Map of site included?** Please tick **yes** -or- **no**

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

~no information available~

12. **Justification of the criteria selected under point 9, on previous page:** ~no information available~

13. **General location:**

Located in the southern part of Veraguas province, this area also includes part of the sea in the districts of Montijo, Río de Jesús, Santiago and Soná.

14. **Physical features:**

Included in the aquatic environment are estuaries and deltas, beaches, mud and sand flats, mangroves, rapidly flowing rivers, seasonally flooded grasslands, and irrigated fields and rice patties.

15. Hydrological values:

The annual average precipitation is between 2,000 and 3,200 mm and in L.R. Holdridge's classification of life zones it is an area of humid tropical forest. The annual average temperature is 27°C and the annual average precipitation is 3,000 mm.

16. Ecological features:

17. Noteworthy flora:

The area around the gulf is populated with white mangrove (*Laguncularia racemosa*), red mangrove (*Rhizophora mangle*), mangle piñuelo (*Pelliciera rhizophorae*), mangle bastoncillo (*Conocarpus erectus*) and black mangrove (*Avicennia nitida*).

18. Noteworthy fauna:

The main fish resources are: *pargo de seda* (*Lutianus jordani*), *pargo de la mancha* (*Lutianus guttatus*), *pargo amarillo* (*Lutianus chrysurus*) and *sierra* (*Scomberomorus* spp.) as well as *langosta* (*Panulirus* spp.) and *camarón blanco* (*Panaeus stylirostris*).

This area is an important habitat for waterfowl and serves as a stop-over, wintering and nesting area for native waterfowl including the pelican *Pelecanus occidentalis*, *Fregata magnificens*, *Egretta caerulea*, *Bubulcus ibis*, *Butorides striatus*, *Tinamus mayor*, *Dendrocygna autumnalis*, *Heterocnus mexicanus* and *Jacana spinosa*.

In addition, other mammals are found such as the otter (*Lutra longicaudis*); a spider, the (*Ateles geoffroyi*); a sloth, (*Bradypus variegatus*) and the following reptiles: crocodile (*Crocodylus acutus*), a small alligator (*Caiman crocodilus fuscus*) and aquatic turtles of the genera *Kinosternom* and *Trachemys*.

19. Social and cultural values:

20. Land tenure/ownership of:

Most of the land along the coast is government property, but without legal status.

21. Current land use:

22. Factors (past, present or potential) adversely affecting the site's ecological character, including changes in land use and development projects:

The cutting of mangroves, contamination by fungicides and pesticides and hunting are the most serious threats to this area.

23. **Conservation measures taken:**

24. **Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:**

25. **Current scientific research and facilities:**

26. **Current conservation education:**

27. **Current recreation and tourism:**

28. **Jurisdiction:**

29. **Management authority:**

30. **Bibliographical references:**