

Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands

(RIS) – 2009-2012 version

BRATUL BORCEA

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

WWF – Programul Dunare Carpati Romania
Ioan Caragea street, no. 26, Corp A, sector 1, cod 010537
Tel: 004 021 317 49 96; fax: 004 021 317 49 97
<http://romania.panda.org/cmunteanu@wwfdcp.ro>
Bucuresti
ROMANIA

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Designation date

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Site Reference Number

2. Date this sheet was completed/updated:

08.02.2012

3. Country:

ROMANIA

4. Name of the Ramsar site:

BORCEA ARM (Local Name: Bratul Borcea)

5. Designation of new Ramsar site or update of existing site:

This RIS is for (tick one box only):

- a) Designation of a new Ramsar site ; or
b) Updated information on an existing Ramsar site

6. For RIS updates only, changes to the site since its designation or earlier update:**a) Site boundary and area**

The Ramsar site boundary and site area are unchanged:

or

If the site boundary has changed:

- i) the boundary has been delineated more accurately ; or
ii) the boundary has been extended ; or
iii) the boundary has been restricted**

and/or

If the site area has changed:

- i) the area has been measured more accurately ; or
ii) the area has been extended ; or
iii) the area has been reduced**

** **Important note:** If the boundary and/or area of the designated site is being restricted/reduced, the Contracting Party should have followed the procedures established by the Conference of the Parties in

the Annex to COP9 Resolution IX.6 and provided a report in line with paragraph 28 of that Annex, prior to the submission of an updated RIS.

b) Describe briefly any major changes to the ecological character of the Ramsar site, including in the application of the Criteria, since the previous RIS for the site:

7. Map of site:

a) A map of the site, with clearly delineated boundaries, is included as:

i) a **hard copy** (required for inclusion of site in the Ramsar List): yes ;

ii) an **electronic format** (e.g. a JPEG or ArcView image) yes ;

b) Describe briefly the type of boundary delineation applied:

The site is situated along the Borcea arm of Danube river. In the north east and east is bordered by the Dichiseni, Unirea, Borcea, Buliga, Fetesti, Facaieni localities and the national road DN3B. In the south, the limits are represented by the dyke of Calarasi Raul islands, middle of Raul Arm, the dyke of Ialomita island and limits of agricultural fields on Ialomita Island.

8. Geographical coordinates (latitude/longitude, in degrees and minutes):

44°17'12" N, 27°40'3" E

9. General location:

The site is located in the S-E part of Romania, in Calarasi and Ialomita counties. The site is situated on the territory of several villages: Bordusani, Stelnica, Unirea, Borcea, Dichiseni, Jegalia, Roseti etc. The nearest large town is Calarasi (about 70,000 inhabitants), 5 km West of the site.

10. Elevation: (in metres: average and/or maximum & minimum)

The average elevation is 11 m above the sea.

The minimum altitude is 0 m.

The maximum altitude is 64 m.

11. Area: (in hectares)

21529 ha

Wetland area: 3,345 ha

12. General overview of the site:

The Bratul Borcea site is a part of the Danube meadow. Actually, in this sector, the meadow of the Danube has the largest width, because is splitting in 2 branches which used to enclose big lakes in the past: Ialomita and Braila Lakes. The site is situated on the route of an important migration corridor, so it is important as a breeding and resting place for some rare and very rare birds species. The landscape is specific to the meadows, with lakes between the sand dunes, marshes, fishponds, islands, acacias and poplars, canals and drainage channels etc, so the appropriate conditions for the existence of a great biodiversity. The vegetation is composed by aquatic macrophytes (*Phragmites*, *Typha sp. etc*), poplars and oaks forests, shrub etc. The fauna is specific to the wetlands, with amphibians (*Bombina bombina*, *Hyla arborea* etc), reptiles (*Emys orbicularis*) and other species. The site was designed as a special protection area in 2007 for the protection of 30 birds species listed in the Annex I of the Birds Directive. Inside the site, there is a protected area declared as nature reserve in 2004: Padurea Canton Hatis, for the conservation of venerable exemplars of *Quercus pedunculiflora*.

13. Ramsar Criteria:



14. Justification for the application of each Criterion listed in 13 above:

Criterion 2:

The site supports the following species of the Bird Directive Annex I:

Scientific name	Common name	Breeding (pairs)	Winter (individuals)	Migrants (individuals)
<i>Accipiter brevipes</i>	Levant Sparrowhawk	2		
<i>Acrocephalus melanopogon</i>	Moustached Warbler	120-150		
<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	Common Kingfisher	80-100		
<i>Ardea purpurea</i> (Bonn)	Purple Heron	90-100		
<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>	Squacco Heron	90-100		
<i>Aythya nyroca</i> (Bonn)	Ferruginous Duck	100-120		300-400
<i>Branta ruficollis</i> (EN, IUCN, Bonn)	Red-breasted Goose		4500-7000	
<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>	Whiskered Tern			400-600
<i>Chlidonias niger</i> (Bonn)	Black Tern			400
<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	Marsh Harrier		28-48	
<i>Ciconia ciconia</i> (Bonn)	White Stork	64-77		4000-7000
<i>Ciconia nigra</i> (Bonn)	Black Stork	9-12		
<i>Coracias garrulus</i> (Bonn)	Roller	70-80		
<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	Little Egret	320-340		
<i>Falco vespertinus</i>	Red-footed Falcon	18-21		
<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i> (Bonn)	White-tailed Eagle	1-2		17
<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	Black-winged Stilt			24
<i>Ixobrychus minutus</i> (Bonn)	Little Bittern	40-50		
<i>Larus minutus</i>	Little Gull			400
<i>Milvus migrans</i>	Black Kite	3-4		
<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	(Black-crowned) Night Heron	470-520		
<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	Osprey	1		20

(Bonn)				
<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i> (Bonn)	Great White Pelican			50-150
<i>Phalacrocorax pygmeus</i> (Bonn)	Pygmy Cormorant		240	300
<i>Platalea leucorodia</i> (Bonn)	Spoonbill	144-160		
<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i> (Bonn)	Glossy Ibis	120-130		230-400
<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	Pied Avocet			8
<i>Sterna albifrons</i> (Bonn)	Little Tern			400
<i>Sterna hirundo</i> (Bonn)	Common Tern			1000-2000
<i>Tringa glareola</i>	Wood Sandpiper			80

The data presented above was collected between 2000 and 2010, referenced from the following bibliography:

1. H.G. 971/2011 – Hotarare de Guvern pentru modificarea si completarea H.G. nr. 1284/2007 privind declararea ariilor de protectie speciala avifaunistica ca parte integranta a retelei ecologice europene Natura 2000 in Romania;
2. Papp, T., Fantana, C., - editors (2008) – Important Bird Areas in Romania – published in cooperation by the Romanian Ornithological Society and Association “Milvus Group”;
3. “Romanian Ornithological Society” database;

The site additionally supports a number of species protected in Europe, including species listed in ***the EU Habitat Directive***:

Amphibians: *Bombina bombina* (An. II, IV), *Hyla arborea* (IV).

Reptiles: *Emys orbicularis* (An II, IV)

Criterion 4:

Being located on a major migratory route, Brațul Borcea territory represents an important area for resting and feeding of rare bird species.

The site is important for breeding populations of the following species: *Accipiter brevipes*, *Acrocephalus melanopogon*, *Alcedo atthis*, *Ardea purpurea*, *Ardeola ralloides*, *Aythya nyroca*, *Ciconia ciconia*, *Ciconia nigra*, *Coracias garrulus*, *Egretta garzetta*, *Falco vespertinus*, *Haliaeetus albicilla*, *Ixobrychus minutus*, *Milvus migrans*, *Nycticorax nycticorax*, *Pandion haliaetus*, *Platalea leucorodia* and *Plegadis falcinellus*.

During migration, the site is important for the following species: *Aythya nyroca*, *Ciconia ciconia*, *Haliaeetus albicilla*, *Pandion haliaetus*, *Phalacrocorax pygmeus*, *Plegadis falcinellus* and *Sterna albifrons*.

The site is highly important for waterfowl's habitat, sheltering sedentary wild birds on one hand, as well as northern population that rest during migration periods.

Please see justification of criterion 2 for the list of bird species.

Criterion 5:

Brațul Borcea site represents an important staging area for most of migratory species on their way from Russia to Mediterranean and Africa. During migration in spring and autumn 20,000 – 26,000 birds can be recorded.

In winter the number of *Anser albifrons* roosting on the lake varied from 13,000 up to 30,000 individuals. The Red-breasted Goose (*Branta ruficollis*) gathers in number of approximately 4500 to 7000 individuals.

The data presented above was collected between 2000 and 2008, referenced from the following bibliography:

1. H.G. 971/2011 – Hotarare de Guvern pentru modificarea si completarea H.G. nr. 1284/2007 privind declararea ariilor de protectie speciala avifaunistica ca parte integranta a retelei ecologice europene Natura 2000 in Romania;
2. Papp, T., Fantana, C., - editors (2008) – Important Bird Areas in Romania – published in cooperation by the Romanian Ornithological Society and Association “Milvus Group”;
3. “Romanian Ornithological Society” database;

Criterion 6:

During winter, a large number of the Red-breasted geese (*Branta ruficollis*) are resting and feeding on the mentioned site. Between 4500 up to 7000 individuals can be encountered on the present site, which represents over 1 % of the entire world population. In winter the number of *Anser albifrons* roosting on the lake varied from 8000 up to 9000 individuals.

The data presented above was collected between 2000 and 2008, referenced from the following bibliography:

1. H.G. 971/2011 – Hotarare de Guvern pentru modificarea si completarea H.G. nr. 1284/2007 privind declararea ariilor de protectie speciala avifaunistica ca parte integranta a retelei ecologice europene Natura 2000 in Romania;
2. Papp, T., Fantana, C., - editors (2008) – Important Bird Areas in Romania – published in cooperation by the Romanian Ornithological Society and Association “Milvus Group”;
3. “Romanian Ornithological Society” database;

15. Biogeography

a) biogeographic region:

- 1) Europe: Steppic
- 2) World: West Palearctic

b) biogeographic regionalisation scheme (include reference citation):

- 1) Habitat Directive 92/43/EEC (1992)
 - 2) Udvardy, 1975
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16. Physical features of the site:

Geology and geomorphology:

The site Bratul Borcea is situated in the SW part of the Romanian Plain and it represents a part of the Danube meadow in the Calarasi-Braila sector (this sector is called Sectorul Baltilor – Lakes Sector, because the Danube is splitting in 2 branches and big lakes used to form between them before the embanking of the river). The 2 branches are Borcea and Old Danube. The basement is represented by the Moesian Platform, composed by crystalline schists and its situated around 1300 m depth (below sea level). Above the basement, a thick layer of sediments was deposited by the Danube in the former lake which used to cover the Romanian Plain thousands of years ago. These sediments are represented by sand, gravels, clay, marls, but also by loess etc. The newest sediments date back from Holocene period.

The Danube is the main factor which shapes the geomorphology of this sector, but the wind has also an important role. The relief inside the site is represented by sand banks, sand dunes, islands, depressions covered temporarily by lakes etc. The altitudes vary from 0 meters near the river to 64 m on the Danube terraces.

Soil type and chemistry range:

The soils belong to the chernozems class, but on small areas the azonal soils, with high degree of humidity, are specific (alluvial soils and the hidrisoils, in the Romanian system of soil classification).

Origins:

The site has a natural origin and it was influenced in time by the Danube floods, but it was also affected by the human intervention.

Hydrology:

The hydrology is assured by Danube branch Borcea which has 110 km length and a medium width of 350 m. In the floodplain, underground water is situated at 0 – 2 m depth in the lower area and at 2 – 5m depth in the higher ones.

Water quality:

The water quality is relatively good.

Water area: 3096 ha

Wetland Area: 3.817 ha

Climate:

The depth of the phreatic waters is 15-30 meters. The climate is temperate-continental, with annual temperature values of over 11°C in Calarasi. The coldest month is January, with an average temperature of -2° C and the warmest month is July when the temperature reaches 23° C. The rainfall average is around 500 mm per year and the dominant winds are from West direction, because of the orientation of the Danube Valley. Some local winds, Baltaretul and Suhoveiul are specific to this area.

17. Physical features of the catchment area:

Geology and geomorphology:

The catchment area is represented by Baragan Plain, the east subdivision of the Romanian Plain. The basement is represented by the Moesian Platform, composed by crystalline schists and situated around 1300 m depth. Above the basement, a thick layer of sediments was deposited by the Danube in the former lake which used to cover the Romanian Plain thousands of years ago. These sediments are represented by sand, gravels, clay, marls, but also by loess etc. The newest sediments date back from Holocen period. The existence of the loess is the main cause for the existence of a particular geomorphology: small depression created by the process of settling called *crovuri*, *gavane* and *padine*. Sometimes, these depressions are covered by lakes. The area was created by the Danube during Quaternary period (Danube terraces) and the maximum altitude is around 90 m.

Soil type and chemistry range:

The soils belong to the chernozems class; on small areas, some salinization processes appear.

Land use:

In the catchment, most of the land is arable land, followed by aquatic (river courses), broad leaved forest and built land.

Climate:

The climate is temperate-continental, with some aridity influences, from the eastern part of the European continent. The annual temperature value is 11°C in Calarasi. The coldest month is January, with an average temperature of -2°C and the warmest month is July when the temperature reaches 23°C. During the summer, the number of days with daily temperature of over 35°C is high (40-50). The rainfall average is around 500 mm per year and the dominant winds are from West and North direction. Some local winds, Crivatul, Baltaretul and Suhoveiul are specific to this area.

18. Hydrological values:

The site has an important role in reducing the effects of the Danube flood.

19. Wetland Types**a) presence:**

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:

M + 9 - Permanent rivers and Canals and drainage channels – 14.6%

Tp+Ts – Permanent freshwater marshes and Seasonal freshwater marshes – 1.1%

O + P – Permanent freshwater lakes and Seasonal freshwater lakes – 0.75%

20. General ecological features:

Near the bank of the river the vegetation layer is represented by typical marsh grasses like *Echinochloa crus-gallis*, *Bidens tripartite*, *B. frondosa*, *Chenopodium polyspermum*, *Polygonum hydropiper*. The freshwater lakes are dominated by *Potamogeton lucens*, *P. perfoliatus*, *P. gramineus*, *Elodea Canadensis*, *Myriophyllum spicatum* and *Ceratophyllum demersus*. Aquatic macrophytes (*Phragmites*, *Typha sp. etc*) are also present in the area. The forests include poplars and oaks forests, shrub etc. The fauna is specific to the wetlands, with amphibians (*Bombina bombina*, *Hyla arborea* etc), reptiles (*Emys orbicularis*) and other species.

The site was designed as a Special Protection Area (SPA) in 2007 for the protection of 30 bird species listed in the Annex I of the Birds Directive. Inside the site, there is a protected area declared as Nature Reserve in 2004: Padurea Canton Hatis, for the conservation of venerable exemplars of *Quercus pedunculiflora*.

21. Noteworthy flora:

N/A

22. Noteworthy fauna:

N/A

23. Social and cultural values:

a) Describe if the site has any general social and/or 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:

In Bordusani there is the historical and archeological site, Popina Bordusani with important unique characteristics, to the archaeological testimonies belonging to one of the most ancient Prehistoric settlements from Ialomița County, dated 7000 years ago.

Coslogeni village, near Calarasi city, is hosting an abbey where an old cross (mentioned around 1738), considered wonder working is kept. Many believers visit the place.

b) Is the site considered of international importance for holding, in addition to relevant ecological values, examples of significant cultural values, whether material or non-material, linked to its origin, conservation and/or ecological functioning?

If Yes, tick the box and describe this importance under one or more of the following categories:

- i) sites which provide a model of wetland wise use, demonstrating the application of traditional knowledge and methods of management and use that maintain the ecological character of the wetland:
- ii) sites which have exceptional cultural traditions or records of former civilizations that have influenced the ecological character of the wetland:
- iii) sites where the ecological character of the wetland depends on the interaction with local communities or indigenous peoples:
- iv) sites where relevant non-material values such as sacred sites are present and their existence is strongly linked with the maintenance of the ecological character of the wetland:

24. Land tenure/ownership:

a) **within the Ramsar site:** 100 % of the lands are public property.

b) **in the surrounding area:** most of the land in the surrounding area is private.

25. Current land (including water) use:

a) **within the Ramsar site:** Most of the human activities are related with agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

b) **in the surroundings/catchment:** in the catchment, most of the human activities are referring to agriculture, forestry and fishing.

26. 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:** hunting, poaching, grazing.

b) **in the surrounding area:** grazing, draining, use of fertilizers, poaching.

27. Conservation measures taken:

a) List national and/or international category and legal status of protected areas, including boundary relationships with the Ramsar site:

In particular, if the site is partly or wholly a World Heritage Site and/or a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, please give the names of the site under these designations.

The site was designed as a special protection area ROSPA 0012 and it also covers parts of ROSCI0319 and ROSCI0278. Inside the site, there is a protected area declared as nature reserve in 2004: Padurea Canton Hatis.

b) If appropriate, list the IUCN (1994) protected areas category/ies which apply to the site (tick the box or boxes as appropriate):

Ia ; Ib ; II ; III ; IV ; V ; VI

In 2003, Padurea Canton Hatis has been declared reservation for the conservation of vulnerable exemplars of *Quercus pedunculiflora* (6.4 ha) by the County Council Ialomita in the County Decision 174/23.05.2003. The area became natural reserve under H.G. 2151/2004 (category IV IUCN).

In 2007, 13097 ha along the Borcea Danube arm, near Calarasi city have been declared as SPA under Birds Directive – Bratul Borcea (ROSPA0012) in H.G. 1284/2007.

Later, in 2011, 5810 ha along the Borcea Danube arm near Bordusani, have been declared as SCI under Habitats Directive – Bordusani Borcea (ROSCI0278) in O.M. 2387/2011 and ROSCI0319 Mlastina de la Fetesti. The RAMSAR site is including these Natura 2000 sites.

c) Does an officially approved management plan exist; and is it being implemented?:

The SPA - Bratul Borcea (ROSPA0012) has been given in custody in 2010 to Unesco ProNatura association and it has a regulation and a management plan not approved yet by the Ministry of Environment and Forests.

The SCI - Bordusani Borcea (ROSCI0278) has been recently declared and does not have a custodian.

d) Describe any other current management practices:

28. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:

A management plan has been developed but is not approved yet by the Ministry of Environment and Forests.

29. Current scientific research and facilities:

N/A

30. Current communications, education and public awareness (CEPA) activities related to or benefiting the site:

N/A

31. Current recreation and tourism:

The site is visited for fishing, archaeological site and for the cross of Coslogeni abbey but overall the tourism is not very well developed.

32. Jurisdiction:

Ministry of Environment and Forests
B-dul.Libertatii nr.12, sector 5, Bucuresti

33. Management authority:

Clubul ecologic UNESCO Pro Natura
Emilian Burdusel
Calea Plevnei nr. 61, Bucuresti
Tel/Fax: 0040 21 3152542;
Email: office@pronatura.ro

34. Bibliographical references:

1. BirdLife International, 2001, Important Bird Areas and potential Ramsar sites in Europe, BirdLife International, Wageningen, The Netherlands;
2. Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds, "Bird Directive";
3. H.G. 971/2011 – Hotarare de Guvern pentru modificarea si completarea H.G. nr. 1284/2007 privind declararea arilor de protectie speciala avifaunistica ca parte integranta a retelei ecologice europene Natura 2000 in Romania;
4. International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN);
5. Lars Svensson, Killian Mullarney, Dan Zetterstrom, 2010 – "Collins Bird Guide 2nd Edition";
6. Monografia Municipiului Calarasi, observatii proprii, Regiunea inundabila a Dunarii – 1910 Grigore Antipa;
7. Munteanu, D., (coord.), 2004 – Arii de importanta avifaunistica din Romania – Documentatii. Societatea Ornitologica Romana;
8. OM 2387/2011 pentru modificarea Ordinului ministrului mediului si dezvoltarii durabile nr. 1964/2007 privind instituirea regimului de arie naturala protejata a siturilor de importanta comunitara, ca parte integranta a retelei ecologice europene Natura 2000 in Romania ;
9. OUG 57/2007 – Ordonanta de urgenta privind regimul arilor naturale protejate, conservarea habitatelor naturale, a florei si faunei salbatice;
10. Papp, T., Fantana, C., - editors (2008) – Important Bird Areas in Romania – published in cooperation by the Romanian Ornithological Society and Association "Milvus Group";
11. "Romanian Ornithological Society" database;

**Please return to: Ramsar Convention Bureau, Rue Mauverney 28, CH-1196 Gland, Switzerland
Telephone: +41 22 999 0170 o Fax: +41 22 999 0169 o e-mail: ramsar@ramsar.org**