

Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands

Categories approved by Recommendation 4.7 of the Conference of the Contracting Parties

1. Date this sheet was completed/updated: 5 July 1998

2. Country: Ukraine

3. Name of wetland: Eastern Syvash

This site as part of site 'Sivash Bay' was in the Ramsar List when Ukraine was part of the USSR.

4. Geographical coordinates: 45°40' N35°00'E

5. Altitude (average and/or max. & min.) 0.1 to 1.5 m

6. Area: (in hectares) 165,000 ha

7. Overview: (general summary, in two or three sentences, of the wetland's principal characteristics)

Eastern (or Skhidnyi) Syvash as a part of big coastal lagoon Syvash (or Syvashi) near the Azov Sea is a shallow, saltwater bay with an indented rocky shoreline and numerous spits and islets, and a large numbers of saline lowlands and peninsulas.

The islands within lagoon provide important nesting area for birds. The site is also of great importance for wintering waterfowl, with numbers of individuals reaching up to hundred of thousand (about 2,000,000 individuals).

8. Wetland Type (please circle the applicable codes for wetland types as listed in Annex I if the *Explanatory Note and Guidelines* document)

marine-coastal: A • B • C • D • E • F • G • H • I • J • K

inland: L • M • N • O • P • Q • R • Sp • Ss • Tp • Ts

• U • Va • Vt • W • Xf • Xp • Y • Zg • Zk

man-made: 1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5 • 6 • 7 • 8 • 9

Please now rank these wetland types by listing them from the most to the least dominant: J, H, Sp, Ss

9. Ramsar Criteria: (please circle the applicable criteria; see point 12)

1a • 1b • 1c • 1d | 2a • 2b • 2c • 2d | 3a • 3b • 3c | 4a • 4b

Please specify the most significant criterion applicable to the site: 3a, 1d

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

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

Dr. Volodymyr P. Stoilovskyi, Dmytro A. Kivganov. Biological Faculty of the Mechnykov State University of Odesa, 2, Shampanskyi Prov., 270058 Odesa, UKRAINE. Tel/Fax 380 4824 954-32. E-mail <sterna@kivdma.tm.odessa.ua>

Under support of the Central Board of National Nature Parks and Reserve Affairs (Director: Mykola P. Stetsenko), Ministry for Environmental Protection and Nuclear Safety of Ukraine / 1, Timiriazevska Street, Central Botanical Garden, Kyiv, 252014, UKRAINE. Tel/Fax 380 44- 295 26 47. E-mail <parks@parks.FreeNet.Kiev.UA>

12. Justification of the criteria selected under point 9, (please refer to Annex 11 in the *Explanatory Note and Guidelines* document)

1d: Syvash Bay is an extremely large lagoon, brackish on the eastern side (like the Azov Sea or the Sea of Azov) and hypersaline on the western side, with spits, islands, salt lowlands and peninsulas along a rocky limestone coast, unique to the region and, because of its large size, even unique in Europe.

2c: The Eastern Syvash has special value for waterfowl as a wintering stage, especially for hundred of thousand of waders.

3a: The Eastern Syvash supports more than 2,000,000 waders and many other species of waterfowl in seasonal conglomerations during a year. It is certain that the site regularly supports far over 20,000 waterfowl.

Other possible criteria the site might meet is 2a (site hosts rare, vulnerable or endangered species; criterion might be met for *Branta ruficollis*, *Otis tarda*, *Tetrax tetrax*, *Falco naumani*, *Numenius tenuirostris* and/or *Haliaeetus albicilla*) and 3c (site hosts over 1% of population; criterion might be met for *Branta ruficollis*, *Limicola falcinellus* and several unspecified waders).

13. General location: (include the nearest large town and its administrative region)

Syvash Bay is situated partly in the Genicheskyi Rayon (administrative district) of the Khersonska Oblast, and partly in the Leninskyi, Dzhankoiskiyi, Nyzniegorskyi, Sovietskyi and Kirovskyi Rayons of the Crimean Autonomic Republic (Crimean Peninsula).

Syvash Bay is cut off from the Azov Sea by the 100 km long Arabatskaya Strilka Peninsula. It is connected with the Azov Sea by a strait near the town of Genichesk. Eastern Syvash is divided from Central Syvash by Chongar Peninsula. It includes Koyanly islands.

14. Physical features: (e.g. geology, geomorphology; origins - natural or artificial; hydrology; soil type; water quality; water depth water permanence; fluctuations in water level; tidal variations; catchment area; downstream area* climate)

Eastern Syvash is a part of big coastal lagoon Syvash (one of the largest lagoon systems in Europe) with brackish water (near the Azov Sea). It is non-tidal. The coastal line of the bay is strongly cut up by numerous spits, peninsulas and islands. The site is almost completely cut off from the Azov Sea by a low peninsula.

The water level fluctuates according to the meteorological conditions and the extent of evaporation during hot weather. Strong winds are exposing or inundating large areas. When the shallows are exposed in summer by prevailing winds, they become subject to intense evaporation, followed by wind erosion. A dam at Chongar Peninsula regulates the water from the Sea of Azov that is allowed into Central and Western Syvash.

The non-tidal shallow lagoons all around Syvash Bay differ from tidal estuaries in their thermal regime: they warm up quickly in spring due to their shallowness. The average water depth in the entire bay is about 1 m.

15. Hydrological values: (groundwater recharge, flood control, sediment trapping, shoreline stabilization etc.)

In some sites there are large localities of dropping fresh water drains and there is a gradual freshening of surrounded sites and change of prevailing vegetation.

16. Ecological features: (main habitats and vegetation types)

The brackish to saline lagoons of the Sevash Bay have a vegetation that is restricted to salt-tolerant species only. One of the few species that can be found is *Artemia salina*. The generally flat and windswept coastal area is covered with halophytic grasses. The lagoons are fringed by extensive areas of steppe. The high salinity of the water confines the aquatic flora and fauna to salt tolerant species. Their high productivity under the existing eutrophic conditions forms a valuable source of food for birds.

On the top areas and slopes of the hills of the large islands, wormwood *Artemisia* - sheep's fescue *Festuca* steppe vegetation with xerophytic undershrub and turf grasses is found. On the small islands secondary vegetation is formed as a result of the activity of colonial birds and small rodents.

17. Noteworthy flora: (indicating, e.g., which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc.)

The vegetation, represented in wetland, is submitted by 250 species, concerning to Psammophytes complex (*Argusia sibirica*, *Artemisia compressis*, *Calamagrostis epigeios*, *Leymus sabulosus*), Meadow's complex (*Artemisia pontiaca*, *Bolboschoenus maritimus*, *Juncus gerardii*, *Juncus maritimus*, *Triglochin bessarabicum*, *Puccinellia distans*, *Triglochin maritimum*), Galophytes complex (*Camphorosma monspliciaca*, *Halimione pedunculata*, *Halimione verrucifera*, *Halocnemum strobilaceum*, *Limonium gmelinii*, *Limonium suffruticosum*, *Salicornia europaea*, *Salsola soda*), Grass-marshy's complex (*Phragmites australis*, *Scirpus lacustris*, *Scirpus tabernaemontanii*, *Typha laxmanii*), Water's complex (*Ruppia maritima*, *Zostera marina*, *Zostera noetii*).

18. Noteworthy fauna: (indicating, e.g., which species are unique, rare, endangered, abundant or biogeographically important; include count data, etc.)

This wetland has great importance to nesting, moulting and for migrating birds. Numerous ducks (Anatidae) and waders (Charadriiformes) migrate through the area, including shelduck *Tadorna tadorna* and ruff *Philomachus pugnax*. There are nesting waterfowl of 20 species including shelduck, greater black-backed sandwich tern *Sterna sandvicensis*, little tern *S. albifrons* and Caspian tern *S. caspia*. Other nesting waterfowl are black-crowned night heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*, squacco heron *Ardeola ralloides*, little egret *Egretta garzetta*, great egret *E. alba*, purple heron *Ardea purpurea*, glossy ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*, demoiselle crane *Anthropoides virgo*, pied avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*, great black-headed gull *Larus ichthyaeus*, Mediterranean gull *L. melanocephalus*, slender-billed gull *L. genet*, herring gull *L. argentatus*, gull-billed tern *Gelochelidon nilotica*, red-breasted goose *Branta ruficollis*, slender-billed curlew *Numenius tenuirostris* and broad-billed sandpiper *Limicola falcinellus*. Breeding raptors include white-tailed eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*, great bustard *Gas tarda*, little bustard *Tetrax tetrax* and lesser kestrel *Falco naumanni*.

Syvash Bay is one of the primary moulting sites for mute swan *Cygnis olor* (3,000-4,000) and for shelduck (2,000-3,000) within the territory of the former USSR. The bay is also an important staging post for waterfowl, especially in spring, for ducks (predominantly tufted duck *Aythya fuligula*, common pochard *A. fennel*, shelduck and mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*) and coot *Fulica atra*, and hundred of thousand of waders, predominantly ruff, curlew sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*, dunlin *C. alpina*, redshank *Tringa tetanus* and dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*. The total number of nesting avifauna at the Eastern Syvash Bay is up to 80,000 pairs.

19. Social and Cultural Values: (e.g. fisheries production, forestry, religious importance, archaeological site etc.)

The site is used for recreational fishing, and some investigations are currently being.

20. Land tenure/ownership of:

(a) site: State and collective ownership

(b) surrounding area: State, collective and private ownership

21. Current land use:

(a) site: There is some limited and controlled exploitation of natural resources at the site - fishing, recreation, hunting etc.).

(b) surroundings/catchment area: the same and traditional farming, including grazing of sheep, grape-making, irrigation etc.

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

(a) at the site: Threats to the site are from tourism, pollution of waste water from agriculture and chemical factories, salinization, increased commercial and recreational fisheries, resettlement and more intensive agricultural development. A reduction of sea water inflow of the Azov Sea into Syvash Bay can result in a water level drop and an increasing salinity. Again it is difficult to say how strongly those factors will affect the site, since its exact location is not determined.

(b) around the site: Pollution from coasts bays by drainage waters, which contain chemicals, used in an agriculture. Degradation of some natural vegetation caused of overgrassing of sheep.

23. Conservation measures taken: (national category and legal status of protected areas - including any boundary changes which have been made: management practices; whether an officially approved management plan exists and whether it has been implemented)

About 10% of the Ramsar site enters into the Azovo-Syvashkyi National Nature Park and is protected. On other areas of wetland site land and resource users carry out protection. Using of natural resources is limited and controlled.

24. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented: (e.g. management plan in preparation; officially proposed as a protected area etc.)

The creation of the Regional Landscape Park 'Kalynivskiy' and 'Syvaskiy National Nature Park in the Crimean Autonomic Republic has been proposed.

25. Current Scientific research and facilities: (e.g. details of current projects; existence of field station etc.)

On the territory of wetland the investigations on the Programs "MAR-Ukraine", "Wetland", IBA territories, Program of Research of Biodiversity in Azov-Black Sea Region were carried out by the Azov-Black-Sea Ornithological Station. Investigations of migrations waders and others waterbirds nowadays will be regularly carried out.

The Azov-Black-Sea Ornithological Station also keeps substantial information on breeding birds in their database. Scientific research on various subjects is carried out continually by the Institute of Zoology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Melitopol Pedagogical Institute.

26. Current conservation education: (e.g. visitors centre, hides, information booklet, facilities for school visits etc.)

There are no special educational programs at present, but there is nature protection training provided within the framework of a comprehensive school. Lectures are held by experts and scientists for the basic groups of land users (like farmers, fishermen, hunters and industry workers).

27. Current recreation and tourism: (state if wetland is used for recreation/tourism; indicate type and frequency/intensity)

There is some tourism in the Syvash Bay, but no details about the actual Ramsar site are available.

28. Jurisdiction: (territorial e.g. state/region and functional e.g. Dept. of Agriculture / Dept. of Environment etc.)

Territorial: local Soviets of the Deputies.

Functional jurisdiction: on protected area of the Azovo-Syvaskiy National Nature Park - of the State Committee of Forestry of Ukraine, on other areas - of different sectors: Ministry of Agricultural Industry Complexes of Ukraine (farming), State Committee of Forestry (forests), State Committee of Water Resources (water using) etc.

29. Management authority: (name and address of local body directly responsible for managing the wetland)

Administration of the Azovo-Syvaskiy National Nature Park (Director: Volodymyr I. Zubkov. Address: 54 Petrovskiy Str., 326610 Genichesk, Khersonska Oblast, UKRAINE. Tel.: +380 5534 221-09) on protected area of this Park and Land and Resource Users (organizations and institutions and citizens) on the last area and local authorities are executive bodies for environmental protection. Administration of the Azovo-Syvaskiy National Nature Park and the State Department of Ecological Safety in Khersonska Oblast (Director: Vyacheslav I. Lutskin. Address: 47 Ushakov Str., 325000 Kherson, UKRAINE. Tel./Fax: +380 5522 631 -95. E-mail: <eco21@eco21.FreeNet.Kiev.UA>) and the Republic Committee of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources of the Crimean Autonomic Republic (Director: Yevgen S. Popovchuk. Address: 198 Kechkemetska Str., 333022 Simpheropol, UKRAINE. Tel./Fax: +380 652 25 54 09. E-mail: <eco25@eco25.FreeNet.Kiev.UA>) carry out state control for protection on subordinated territories.

30. Bibliographical references: (scientific/technical only)

Anon. (1980). National Report of the USSR for the *Conference on the Conservation of Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat, Cagliari, Italy, 24-29 November 1980*.

Carp, E. (1980). *A Directory of Western Palearctic Wetlands*. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland.

Gorlov, P., Kinda, V. and Grinchenko, A. (1994). *The Results of Aerial Surveys of Birds in Swash Creek and Lebiazhi Isles*. Life of Birds 1994-2: 8.

IUCN (1987). *A Directory of Wetlands of International Importance*. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, UK. 460 pp.

Lansdown, R.V. (ed.) (1996). A Preliminary Inventory of Wetlands in the Black Sea Coastal Regions of Moldova, Ukraine, Russia and Georgia. Unpublished Report by Wetlands International for TACIS under contract number WW.93.05/03.01.BO15.

Please return to: Ramsar Convention Bureau, Rue Mauverney 28, CH-1196 GLAND, Switzerland

Telephone:+41229990170 Fax:+41229990169 e-mail: ramsar@hq.iucn.org