



# Ramsar Sites Information Service

## Annotated List of Wetlands of International Importance

# Bhutan

3 Ramsar Site(s) covering 1,225 ha

### Bumdeling

Site number: 2,032 | Country: Bhutan | Administrative region: Tashiyangtse Dzongkhag District  
Area: 141.5 ha | Coordinates: 27°40'23"N 91°26'29"E | Designation dates: 05-07-2012

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Bumdeling. 07/05/12; Tashiyangtse Dzongkhag; 142 ha; 27°40'23"N 091°26'29"E. Wildlife Sanctuary. One of the glacial valleys northeastern Bhutan, it was a rice-producing floodplain until a series of floods washed away the paddy fields and left it fallow with sandy soil. It is home to at least 74 bird species, including the vulnerable Black-necked Cranes (*Grus nigricollis*) that migrate from the Tibetan plateau each year to winter at the site. Other endangered species recorded at the site include the Snow Leopard (*Panthera unica*), Tiger (*Panthera tigris*), Asiatic Wild Dog (*Cuon alpinus primaevus*) and Himalayan Musk Deer (*Moschus leucogaster*). Located at 1,900 to 2,000 meters above sea level, the fairly isolated valley is at a much lower altitude than other crane wintering areas in Bhutan and is comparatively warmer with a warm-broad leaf forest dominating the area. Alder (*Alnus nepalensis*), Maple (*Acer* sp.) and Birch (*Betula* sp.), found in and around the wetland, are used for making traditional household items and represent the main source of income for some communities in the area. The river Kholong Chhu and its three tributaries flow through the wetland; while the tributaries provide the local communities with a source of water for irrigation and drinking, the main river will be the site of a hydropower project 35km south of the wetland, which will not impact on the site itself. Ramsar Site no. 2032. Most recent RIS information: 2012.

### Gangtey-Phobji

Site number: 2,264 | Country: Bhutan | Administrative region: Wangdue Phodrang District; within Phobji and Gangtey geogs/blocks

Area: 970 ha | Coordinates: 27°26'46"N 90°11'08"E | Designation dates: 02-05-2014

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Gangtey-Phobji Ramsar Site lies in a wide glacial valley that spreads across the central highlands of Bhutan. Streams in the valley drain through open grasslands to the Nakeychhu, Khewangchhu and other small annual and perennial streams. Most of the areas along the streams are marshy, covered by grass, bamboo, and several species of shrub and herbs including thick sphagnum moss. They support rich ecosystems, and provide prime winter habitat for up to 300 globally vulnerable black-necked crane (*Grus nigricollis*), and other globally threatened species such as the endangered red panda (*Ailurus fulgens*) and tiger (*Panthera tigris*), and the vulnerable sambar (*Cervus unicolor*). The valley is an important water source for drinking and irrigated agriculture for the 44 villages in the valley as well as the villages downstream. The Gangtey-Phobji area is a popular tourism destination with the number of tourists increasing each year. A traditional festival is organized to welcome the arrival of the black-necked cranes in October, and the roosting cranes heighten the breathtaking scenery and help to promote nature-based tourism. Projects to promote community-based tourism have been implemented, aiming at building local people's capacity and developing tourism products and activities such as home-stays, local guides, cultural programmes, and campsites.

## Khotokha

Site number: 2,033 | Country: Bhutan | Administrative region: Wangdue Dzongkhag District

Area: 113.5 ha | Coordinates: 27°25'54"N 89°59'33"E | Designation dates: 07-05-2012

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Khotokha. 07/05/12; Wangdue Dzongkhag; 114 ha; 27°25'55"N 89°59'33"E. Located west of the Black Mountain range, Khotokha wetland is one of the sources for the tributaries of the Puna Tsang Chhu river. The water seeping out of the marshes form small gully streams that accumulate and flow south, providing drinking water and irrigation water for potato farms, the main cash crop of the area. The subalpine shrub marsh, consisting of peat bogs and fens, is one of the last remaining places in Bhutan where summer-winter migrations of farmers are practiced. The site provides one of the main wintering sites in the biogeographic region for the vulnerable Black-necked Crane (*Grus nigricollis*) and is also home to other endangered species such as the Himalayan Musk Deer (*Moschus leucogaster*) and the Asiatic Wild Dog (*Cuon alpinus primaevus*). The cranes winter at the site due to the good roosting ground in the marshes and feeding ground in the farmlands. The local inhabitants live in harmony with the migratory birds, considering them sacred and a sign of good harvest. However, the number of cranes has been dwindling over the years. Logging activities surrounding the wetland are leading to noise pollution and increased sedimentation of the rivers. Ramsar Site no. 2033. Most recent RIS information: 2012.