



Ramsar Sites Information Service

Annotated List of Wetlands of International Importance

Côte d'Ivoire

6 Ramsar Site(s) covering 127,344 ha

Complexe Sassandra-Dagbego

Site number: 1,581 | Country: Côte d'Ivoire | Administrative region: Bas-Sassandra
Area: 10,551 ha | Coordinates: 04°58'N 06°01'59"W | Designation dates: 18-10-2005
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Complexe Sassandra - Dagbego. 18/10/05; Bas-Sassandra; 10,551 ha; 004°58'N 006°02'W. Situated at the estuary of the Sassandra River, one of Côte d'Ivoire's biggest rivers, but also including some temporary estuaries, brackish marshes, freshwater swamp forests, alluvial forests, lagoons and mangroves. The site is rare in terms of the co-existence of the three mangrove types: *Rhizophora racemosa* (red mangrove), *Avicennia germinans* (white mangrove), and *Conocarpus erectus* (grey mangrove), which constitute the best-preserved stands in the country. The site hosts species ranging from primates to reptiles, tortoises and sea turtles, some of the great mammals, bats and more than 208 species of birds, especially waterfowl including herons and gulls. Fishing and tourism (aimed at beach and water sports, as well as at the historical colonial town of Sassandra) are the main activities, followed by livestock raising, wood collection and agriculture. The zone surrounding the site has a total population of 130,402 inhabitants. The main threats to the area include mammal and bird hunting, over-fishing and pollution from untreated waste from the urban areas. The Buyo dam upstream has also affected the water level in the wetland. Ramsar site no. 1581. Most recent RIS information: 2005.

Fresco

Site number: 1,582 | Country: Côte d'Ivoire | Administrative region: Sud-Bandama
Area: 15,507 ha | Coordinates: 05°07'N 05°36'W | Designation dates: 18-10-2005
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Fresco. 18/10/05; Sud-Bandama; 15,507 ha; 05°07'N 005°36'W. A coastal area demarcating the two different types of coastline in the country: west of Fresco the coastline is rocky, with cliffs alternating with beaches; east of the site, sandy beaches and dunes separate lagoons from the Atlantic, and the site includes both types of landscapes. It is an important nesting ground for turtle species like the loggerhead, leatherback, olive ridley and green turtles. It also hosts a number of endangered species like the manatee, forest and Nile crocodiles, the pygmy hippopotamus and several bird species. Some of these are migratory birds which have their nesting, feeding and/or resting grounds at the site: among them are *Phalacrocorax africanus*, *Ardea purpurea*, *Nycticorax nycticorax* and *Butiroides striatus*. The wetland maintains the area's hydrological balance by attenuating evaporation and recharging the groundwater level. On the social side, 15,000 people live around the wetland and local communities utilize 198 species of plants for alimentation, construction, firewood needs and other uses. Fishing, agriculture, shell collection, hunting and spiritual ceremonies also take place. Part of the site, at Port Gauthier, is a protected forest. An environmental education centre has been present since 2001. Ramsar site no. 1582. Most recent RIS information: 2005.

Grand Bassam

Site number: 1,583 | Country: Côte d'Ivoire | Administrative region: Sud-Comoé

Area: 40,210 ha | Coordinates: 05°21'N 03°46'W | Designation dates: 18-10-2005

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Grand Bassam. 18/10/05; Sud-Comoé; 40,210 ha; 05°21'N 003°46'W. A mosaic of ecosystems near the estuary of the Comoé River providing refuge for different, often endangered species: the mangroves are an important habitat for primates such as the chimpanzee, the lesser white-nosed monkey, and the sooty mangabey, as well as a spawning and nursery site for different mollusks, fish and crustaceans. Forests, swamps and coastal savannas act as a refuge for elephants, otters, reptiles, leopards and crocodiles in an otherwise developed area. Many birds, including *Anhinga rufa*, *Tigriornis leucolopha*, *Scotopelia peli* and *Ardea goliath*, use the area as a nesting and breeding ground. Although artisanal fishing is the main activity carried out, tourism is also noteworthy, as Grand Bassam was the country's old colonial capital. The area is thus very significant from a cultural and historical point of view, with the local handcrafts the most creative and renowned in the country. The main threat includes invasive plant species like water hyacinth and *Salvinia molesta*, while outside the site sand extraction, over-exploitation of natural resources, and the discovery of oil pose growing threats. A strategy for sustainable management is being planned by the National Wetlands Committee (CONARAMS), while village commissions are responsible for natural resources management. Ramsar site no. 1583. Most recent RIS information: 2005.

Iles Ehotilé-Essouman

Site number: 1,584 | Country: Côte d'Ivoire | Administrative region: Sud-Comoé

Area: 27,274 ha | Coordinates: 05°09'26"N 03°13'12"W | Designation dates: 18-10-2005

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The Ehotilé-Essouman Complex includes a group of nine islands situated in a lagoon separated from the sea by a string of sand dunes. The Site provides a spawning and nursery ground for a number of fish such as daisy stingray *Dasyatis margarita* and bonefish *Albula vulpes*, for oysters such as *Crassostrea gasar*, gastropods, prawns and crabs. African manatee *Trichechus senegalensis*, spotted-necked otter *Hydrictis maculicollis* and African clawless otter *Aonyx capensis* also benefit from the aquatic environment, while the Site hosts numerous waterbird species. It also plays an important role in recharging groundwater, stabilizing the shoreline, attenuating wave action, and regulating the exchange of nutrients between the sea and the lagoon. The Site has been a national park since 1974, after local communities banned activities other than tourism on the islands, and allowed fishing as a main activity in the rest of the area. The presence of underwater ancestral cemeteries gives cultural importance to the Site, and scientific and educational projects have taken place there. However, timber exploitation, overfishing, uncontrolled tourism and hunting of birds and bats present threats. A management plan is being implemented with local communities who contribute effectively to the conservation of the Site.

N'Ganda N'Ganda

Site number: 1,585 | Country: Côte d'Ivoire | Administrative region: Sud-Comoé

Area: 14,402 ha | Coordinates: 05°10'N 03°24'W | Designation dates: 18-10-2005

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N'Ganda N'Ganda. 18/10/05; Sud-Comoé; 14,402 ha; 05°10'N 003°24'W. A complex of relatively well-conserved forests, coastal savanna, mangroves and temporary and permanent pools. Numerous of the plant species present, such as *Uapaca paludosa*, *Raphia hookeri*, *Rhizophora racemosa* and *Mitragyna ciliata*, form important habitats for both terrestrial and aquatic species. Many birds like the Naked-faced and Hairy-breasted Barbets, the African grey parrot and the narrow-tailed starling, are granivorous or frugivorous and contribute to the dispersal and maintenance of several euphorb and other plant species in the area. The site plays an important role in the hydrological balance of the area, controlling floods, attenuating evaporation and recharging groundwater levels. The site is also significant from a cultural point of view as its inhabitants, the Ehotilé, believe that they are the children of the lagoon and that they originally lived at the bottom of the water and emerged out of curiosity about the terrestrial world. Local people collect many plants for medicinal and building purposes, hunt game meat, and fish in the site. The large-scale pineapple, oil-palm, rubber tree and coconut palm plantations outside the site pose one of the main threats due to pollution and habitat destruction. The National Wetlands Committee, together with the site managers, is working on the formulation of a management plan and conservation programme for the site. Ramsar site no. 1585. Most recent RIS information: 2005.

Parc National d'Azagny

Site number: 790 | Country: Côte d'Ivoire | Administrative region: Région des Grands Ponts

Area: 19,400 ha | Coordinates: 05°12'45"N 04°52'19"W | Designation dates: 27-02-1996

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Azagny National Park is a peninsula located one hundred kilometers west of Abidjan. It includes various habitats, with a low plateau consisting of coastal and lagoon forest ecosystems, savannah, swamp and mangroves. The Site has had protected status since 1960, to the benefit of several endangered, vulnerable, rare or endemic species including forest elephant *Loxodonta cyclotis*, dwarf crocodile *Osteolaemus tetraspis*, four turtle species and several primates, which occupy the park's islands. The diverse waterbirds include numerous migratory species and several heron species in large concentrations. The swampy depressions and mangroves are important spawning and nursery sites for fish, and play a role in flood control and sediment trapping. Within the Site, only tourism, research, education (there is a conservation education programme) and cultural and spiritual activities are allowed, while outside the Site subsistence and commercial farming (of coffee, cacao, rubber, oil palm and coconut palm), fishing, exploitation of wood for construction and energy are the main activities. Poaching, bush fires, and invasive species are the main threats. There is a management plan, which includes measures to monitor key bird and plant species.