



Ramsar Sites Information Service

Annotated List of Wetlands of International Importance

Chile

16 Ramsar Site(s) covering 363,927 ha

Bahía Lomas

Site number: 1,430 | Country: Chile | Administrative region: Región de Magallanes y Antártica Chilena

Area: 58,946 ha | Coordinates: 52°37'59"S 69°10'W | Designation dates: 06-12-2004

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Bahía Lomas. 06/12/04; Región de Magallanes y Antártica Chilena, 58,946 ha; 52°38'S 069°10'W. Located in northern Tierra del Fuego Island, Ramsar's second southernmost site lies on the border with Argentina and faces the Magellan Strait. It features the largest intertidal flats in Chile, fronting a 69 km long beach and several salt marshes. The bay is renowned for its high concentrations of migratory shorebirds from October to March, with records of more than 41,000 Red Knots *Calidris canutus*, over 88% of the population in the Americas; 4,500 Hudsonian Godwits *Limosa haemastica*, 23% of the global population; 12,000 White-rumped Sandpipers *Calidris fuscicollis*, 3% of global population, as well as near threatened species such as the Magellanic Plover *Pluvianellus socialis* and the Chilean Flamingo *Phoenicopterus chilensis*. Precipitation is scarce and vegetation is typical of the Patagonian steppe, dominated by the grasses *Festuca pallescens* and *F. gracillima*. Large cetaceans have frequently stranded in the flats, with 21 species recorded. Human population is very scarce and sheep grazing is the main activity, as well as oil extraction from two platforms within the flats. The impact of pollution from oil spills from large vessels as well as from the platforms is a concern, but fortunately there is large recirculation of water thanks to the prevailing currents. Ramsar site no. 1430. Most recent RIS information: 2004.

Carlos Anwandter Sanctuary

Site number: 222 | Country: Chile | Administrative region: Valdivia

Area: 4,877 ha | Coordinates: 39°40'59"S 73°11'W | Designation dates: 27-07-1981

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Carlos Anwandter Sanctuary. 27/07/81; Región X; 4,877 ha; 39°41'S 073°11'W. Nature and Scientific Research Sanctuary. An estuarine area of the lower Río Cruces, its tributaries and riparian zone of emergent marshes, grassland and islands, subject to tectonic subsidence. The site supports numerous waterbirds, including two endangered species, and provides nesting areas for a stable population of 3,000 individuals of the vulnerable *Cygnus melanocoryphus*. Human activities include livestock grazing, tourism, and use of the river for transportation. Ramsar site no. 222. [photos] Most recent RIS information: 1998.

Complejo Lacustre Laguna del Negro Francisco y Laguna Santa Rosa

Site number: 877 | Country: Chile | Administrative region: Atacama

Area: 62,460 ha | Coordinates: 27°27'S 69°13'W | Designation dates: 02-12-1996

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Complejo Lacustre Laguna del Negro Francisco y Laguna Santa Rosa. 02/12/96; Región III; 62,460 ha; 27°17'S 069°08'W. National Park. The Ramsar Site includes the area surrounding two brackish water lagoons united by the Pantanillo-Cienaga Redonda biological corridor. The site acts as an important regulator of the biotic and abiotic elements forming the ecological web of this Andean ecosystem by supporting species such as the Andean gull (*Larus serranus*) and the Vicuña (*Vicugna vicugna*) catalogued as vulnerable under Chilean policy, as well as at least 1% of the total population of the Andean Flamingo (*Phoenicoparrus andinus*), James's Flamingo (*Phoenicoparrus jamesi*) and the Horned Coot (*Fulica cornuta*). There are vestiges of pre-Hispanic occupation in the surrounding area, as well as human activities which include water extraction for mining activities and tourism. The Ramsar Site has a management plan for the areas included in the Nevado Tres Cruces National Park. Ramsar Site no. 877. Most recent RIS information: 2011.

Humedal del río Limarí, desde Salala hasta su desembocadura

Site number: 2,424 | Country: Chile | Administrative region: Región de Coquimbo

Area: 527 ha | Coordinates: 30°42'48"S 71°37'21"W | Designation dates: 21-07-2020

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The site is part of a network of coastal wetlands in northern Chile, which includes estuarine and shallow marine waters, the site is important for its high biodiversity, as it supports more than 130 animal and plant species. It provides habitat for endemic species including 32 plants such as the copao (*Eulychnia acida*) and 16 animals, including the flathead mullet (*Mugil cephalus*), the spotted false monitor (*Callopistes maculatus*), the coruro (*Spalacopus cyanus*) and the Atacama toad (*Rhinella atacamensis*), a species classified as vulnerable according to the IUCN Red List. The site is of singular ecological value as a breeding, refuge and feeding habitat for a significant number of native and migratory birds. It is also a source of food and water for the surrounding communities. However, it has suffered the pressures of deforestation, erosion, and the discharge of waste and chemical contaminants.

Humedal el Yali

Site number: 878 | Country: Chile | Administrative region: Region V

Area: 520 ha | Coordinates: 33°50'S 71°38'W | Designation dates: 02-12-1996

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Humedal el Yali. 02/12/96; Región V; 520 ha; 33°50'S 071°38'W. National Reserve. The most important wetlands in central and northern Chile due to their richness in species and abundance of aquatic birdlife. The site provides important feeding, nesting and refuge areas for numerous species of migratory birds. A total of 115 species of birds (including threatened, vulnerable or rare species), representing approximately 25% of all birdlife found in Chile, frequent the site. The area consists of the El Yali marsh, several brackish lakes, and two artificial saltmarshes. Meadow vegetation predominates. Over-extraction of salt draws water off the marsh and the lagoon. Surrounding areas are subject to increasing urbanization. Ramsar site no. 878. Most recent RIS information: 1996.

Humedales Costeros de la Bahía Tongoy

Site number: 2,361 | Country: Chile | Administrative region: Coquimbo

Area: 259 ha | Coordinates: 30°17'48"S 71°32'34"W | Designation dates: 21-11-2018

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Bahía de Tongoy is located within the biodiversity hotspot of the Mediterranean region of central Chile. It comprises three coastal wetlands – Salinas Chica, Salinas Grande and Pachingo – as well as dune and plains ecosystems. At the regional level, the Site is part of a series of wetlands in arid areas that serve as a refuge and feeding site for more than 46 locally and internationally threatened species, including the Atacama toad (*Rhinella atacamensis*), as well as numerous migratory birds from both north and south. The Site provides important ecosystem services for nearby human communities; in addition to providing water for agriculture and goat livestock, it is supporting the early development of ecological tourism.

Humedales de Monkul

Site number: 2,423 | Country: Chile | Administrative region: Región de La Araucanía
Area: 1,380 ha | Coordinates: 38°41'36"S 73°23'51"W | Designation dates: 22-05-2020
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

An estuary system consisting of coastal lagoons, tall grass marshland and riparian grasslands. The site holds about 171 plant species including endemic and vulnerable species, such as the willow-leaf podocarp (*Podocarpus salignus*). At least 134 animal species including about 80 species of waterbirds and 13 migratory species are present. Endangered species include the marine otter (*Lontra felina*). The site is an essential source of livelihoods for the Mapuche indigenous communities that have inhabited the area since pre-Columbian times and use the site for fishing and hunting. Among the main threats are the canalization of the wetland for the expansion of livestock farming, and the change in land use as a consequence of increasing agricultural and forestry activity.

Las Salinas de Huentelauquén (LSH)

Site number: 2,237 | Country: Chile | Administrative region: Coquimbo
Area: 2,772 ha | Coordinates: 31°34'35"S 71°33'24"W | Designation dates: 02-02-2015
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

This Ramsar Site includes the last section of the Choapa River and its extensive estuarine lagoon. Its diverse coastal ecosystems such as beaches, flats, sand dunes, and streams support a great biodiversity. Among the species that use the Site are 148 species of birds, 10 of reptiles, 14 of mammals, 4 of amphibians, and 133 plant species. Some of these are threatened or endangered such as the marine otter (*Lontra felina*), the Chilean toad (*Calyptocephalella gayi*) and *Eriosyce chilensis*. The Site also receives 28 species of migratory birds that use it for feeding, resting or wintering. Resident bird species also use it as an area for post-reproductive aggregation. Fish and crustaceans which support the local economy, such as *Mugil cephalus* and the endemic river shrimp *Cryphiops caementarius*, reproduce at the Site. The threats to the Site include the introduction of common carp (*Cyprinus carpio*), an invasive species, and the use of increasingly technical agricultural processes that include the unregulated use of pesticides. Other threats include mining and climate change.

Parque Andino Juncal

Site number: 1,909 | Country: Chile | Administrative region: Region V Valparaíso
Area: 13,796 ha | Coordinates: 32°55'S 70°03'W | Designation dates: 22-05-2010
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Parque Andino Juncal. 22/05/10; Valparaíso; 13,796 ha; 32 55'S 070 03'W. This High Andean site is located in Chile's central zone on the Andes mountain range between 2500 and above 5000 m altitude. It comprises a hydric network counting rivers, streams, glaciers, Andean vegas, and underground springs. The area has extreme climatologic conditions characterized by intense cold, snow, drought and high radiation. These environmental conditions confer the site high ecological value because it supports an important group of fauna and flora including endemic species such as the small-tailed snake (*Tachymenis chilensis*) as well as endangered species such as the matuasto (*Phymaturus flagellifer*), a large number of migratory birds and higher vertebrates. The ecosystem in the Ramsar Site Juncal Andean Park is representative of the Mediterranean shrubland region; unique in South America and considered an endangered ecosystem by World Bank and WWF. Among its main threats are: extensive livestock rearing, mining and industrial development. The Juncal Andean Park lies within the Mineral Cordillera private area, where its main land uses are recreation, education and scientific research. Ramsar site no. 1909. Most recent RIS information: 2010.

Salar de aguas Calientes IV

Site number: 1,870 | Country: Chile | Administrative region: Antofagasta

Area: 15,529 ha | Coordinates: 24°58'59"S 68°37'59"W | Designation dates: 14-08-2009

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Salar de Aguas Calientes IV. 14/08/09; Región de Antofagasta; 15,529 ha; 24°59'S 068°17'38"W. This High Andean site (3,665m a.s.l.) is located in the deserted area of the Central Dry Puna of northern Chile. The saline lakes (salt pans) and azonal vegetation (meadows and bofedales) wetlands caused by groundwater upwelling sustain a rich and abundant wildlife. Similarly to the neighboring Ramsar site Salar de Pujsa, this wetland is an staging area (feeding and roosting) for interhemispheric migratory birds, such as sandpipers (*Calidris bairdii*, *C. melanotos*, *C. himantopus*, *Catoptrophorus semipalmatus*), yellowlegs (*Tringa melanoleuca*, *T. flavipes*), and Wilson's Phalarope (*Steganopus tricolor*). Furthermore, the three high Andean flamingo species (Andean, Chilean and James's), Darwin's Rhea (*Pterocnemia pennata*), Andean Goose (*Chloephaga melanoptera*), and Puna Tinamou (*Tinamotis pentlandii*), as well as the mammals short-tailed chinchilla (*Chinchilla brevicaudata*) and vicuña (*Vicugna vicugna*), are present in the area. Currently there are mining concessions for salt extraction, which implies a conservation threat, either directly due to salt extraction from the surface or indirectly due to groundwater extraction. Ramsar site no. 1870. Most recent RIS information: 2009.

Salar del Huasco

Site number: 874 | Country: Chile | Administrative region: Tarapaca

Area: 6,000 ha | Coordinates: 20°18'S 68°49'59"W | Designation dates: 02-12-1996

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Salar del Huasco. 02/12/96; Región I; 6,000 ha; 20°18'S 068°50'W. Seasonal, brackish lagoons and sparsely vegetated saltmarsh. Surrounding areas consist of five High Andean, sub-desert steppe vegetation types. An important group of flamingos is present at the site. Human activities include small-scale ranching and mining in the surrounding area. The saltmarsh is a source of rites and myths in the Aymara culture. A plan for groundwater extraction to supply the city of Iquique is pending. Ramsar site no. 874. Most recent RIS information: 1996.

Salar de Pujsa

Site number: 1,871 | Country: Chile | Administrative region: Antofagasta

Area: 17,397 ha | Coordinates: 23°10'59"S 67°31'59"W | Designation dates: 14-08-2009

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Salar de Pujsa. 14/08/09; Región de Antofagasta; 17,397 Ha; 23°11'S 067°32'W. Reserva Nacional Los Flamencos. This High Andean site (4,530m a.s.l.) is comparable to an oasis in the desert although it is located in the deserted area of the Central Dry Puna of northern Chile, groundwater flows to the surface naturally, which allows the formation of saline lakes (salt pans) and azonal vegetation (meadows and bofedales) that sustain the regional wildlife. The site constitutes one of the most important wetlands for the conservation of high Andean flamingos (Andean, Chilean and James's), which are relatively abundant in the site (more than 1% of the global population, in all cases). It is also a staging area (feeding and roosting) for interhemispheric migratory birds, such as sandpipers, yellowlegs, and Wilson's Phalarope. In addition, the site stands out by the presence of large groups of austral vicuña (*Vicugna vicugna*), which graze in the meadows around the lake. The native communities Toconao and Talabre use the meadows and bofedales for grazing livestock (lamas and alpacas) and harvesting medicinal plants. Recently these communities, supported by the public sector, have started to take part in tourism activities in order to increase traditional household incomes. The Salar de Pujsa lies within the Atacama site, one of the 14 priority sites of the Wetland Network of Importance for Conservation of High-Andes Flamingos in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile and Peru. Part of the Ramsar site is protected under the National Reserve Los Flamencos. Ramsar site no. 1871. Most recent RIS information: 2009.

Salar de Surire

Site number: 873 | Country: Chile | Administrative region: Tarapaca

Area: 15,858 ha | Coordinates: 18°51'S 69°00'W | Designation dates: 02-12-1996

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Salar de Surire. 02/12/96; Región I; 15,858 ha; 18°51'S 069°00'W. A saltmarsh and saline lakes subject to seasonal fluctuations set in the High Andean steppe. Vegetation is determined primarily by the relief and the water availability. Numerous non-metallic minerals (calcium and boric salts) are found around the saltmarsh. One of the four most important places in Chile for nesting flamingos. The site supports various high altitude species of flora and fauna which are endangered or rare. Human activities include livestock grazing, borax mining, and tourism. Ramsar site no. 873. Most recent RIS information: 1996.

Salar de Tara

Site number: 875 | Country: Chile | Administrative region: Antofagasta

Area: 96,439 ha | Coordinates: 22°55'59"S 67°15'W | Designation dates: 02-12-1996

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Salar de Tara. 02/12/96; Antofagasta Region; 96.439,6 ha; 22° 56' S and 67° 15' W. This High Andean site encompasses a brackish lagoon that has maintains itself with the superficial waters that flow from the high mountains and volcanoes that surround it. This water body is important as nesting grounds for at least two flamingo species including *Phoenicoparrus jamesi* and *Phoenicopterus chilensis* and is habitat to many other waterfowl species, resident and migratory, such as the mammal species *Vicugna vicugna* and *Lagidium viscacia*. Among the land uses are the conservation of natural resources, as well as tourism and the use of the surrounding grounds by the communities for grazing and collection of medicinal plants. The area is partially included in Los Flamencos National Reserve, which has a Participative Management Plan in place, and is included in the National System of Protected Areas of the State. Salar de Tara falls under the IV Management Category of the IUCN (Habitat/Species Management Area). Last information: 2010.

Santuario de la Naturaleza Laguna Conchalí

Site number: 1,374 | Country: Chile | Administrative region: Región IV

Area: 34 ha | Coordinates: 31°52'59"S 71°30'W | Designation dates: 02-02-2004

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Santuario de la Naturaleza Laguna Conchalí. 02/02/04; Región IV; 34 ha; 31°53'S 071°30'W. Nature Sanctuary, Private Reserve. A brackish coastal lagoon representative of wetlands in central Chile, where the wildlife of the Atacama-Sechura Desert and Chilean Matorral ecoregions meet, a key staging area for migratory birds along the central Chilean coast. A creek feeds freshwater to the lagoon, and during periods of high rainfall, the barrier island is flooded and the lagoon becomes an estuary. Saltmarshes are mainly composed of coastal salt grass (*Distichlis spicata*), alkali seaheath (*Frankenia salina*), and *Sarcocornia peruviana*. There are coastal dunes, coastal shrub-steppe vegetation, and coastal Mediterranean shrub, the latter of high conservation priority. The Coscoroba Swan *Coscoroba coscoroba*, White-faced Ibis *Plegadis chihi*, endemic Chilean Mockingbird *Mimus thenca*, and Tropicbird *Liolaemus zapallarensis* are noteworthy species of the site. Five endemic fish species are found, including *Odontesthes brevianalis* and *Mugil* sp. The Pelambres copper mining company purchased the area in 1997, and the site was cleaned, fenced and is undergoing a restoration process. Footpaths, observatories and information panels have been placed to attract ecotourism and carry out environmental education. The mining port nearby has a contingency plan in place to avoid impacts on the site and there are no major threats currently affecting the area. The University of Chile is carrying out a monitoring and management plan. Ramsar Site no. 1374. Most recent RIS information: 2004.

Sistema Hidrológico de Soncor del Salar de Atacama

Site number: 876 | Country: Chile | Administrative region: Antofagasta

Area: 67,133 ha | Coordinates: 23°18'S 68°10'W | Designation dates: 02-12-1996

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Sistema Hidrológico de Soncor del Salar de Atacama. 02/12/96; Antofagasta Region; 67,133 ha; 23° 18' S, 68° 10' W. Located in the catchment area of Salar de Atacama, this site is characteristic for presenting a crust of different types of salts, mainly chlorides and sulphates. There is also a hydrological system conformed by a series of superficial channels and lagoons, that together constitute a perfect habitat for waterfowl, many of which are endangered such as the three High Andean flamingo species *Phoenicopterus chilensis*, *Phoenicoparrus jamesi* y *Phoenicoparrus andinus*. This last species is found in the Barros Negros, Chxas and Puilar Lagoons of this site, being their most important reproductive center in the World. These lagoons also represent an important area for resting for inter-hemispheric waterfowl in their migration, such as the species *Calidris bairdii*, *Steganopus tricolor*, among others. Sistema Hidrológico de Soncor is located in the National Reserve Los Flamencos, and the main land use focuses in the conservation of natural resources, the public use and recreation in natural spaces. Among the negative impacts that affect this area are the following: uncontrolled tourism, use of underground water for the production of non-metallic mining activities, and the extraction of flamingo eggs. The site is included in the Participative Management Plan of the National Reserve Los Flamencos, and falls under the Management Category IV of IUCN (Habitat/Species Management Area). Last update: 2010.