Annotated List of Wetlands of International Importance

Croatia

5 Ramsar Site(s) covering 93,590 ha

Crna Mlaka Fishponds
Site number: 582 | Country: Croatia | Administrative region: Zagreb County
Area: 756 ha | Coordinates: 45°36'45"N 15°43'59"E | Designation dates: 02-11-1992
View Site details in RIS5

Crna Mlaka (Crna Mlaka Fishponds). 18/01/93; Zagreb County; 756 ha; 45°36'40"N 015°44'09"E. Ornithological Reserve, National Ecological Network. An extensive carp fishponds area that represents an important breeding, feeding and staging/stopper site for a number of wetland species, especially birds. The site comprises the alluvial wetland along the lower part of the Kupa River and its tributaries and is surrounded by one of the largest complexes of alluvial oak forests in Europe. The fishponds with their water surface, extensive marsh vegetation, and rich food resources represent important site for migratory and breeding waterbirds such as the Ferruginous Duck Aythya nyroca together with other waterbirds. Crna Mlaka supports up to 15-20,000 birds during the fall migration. The Otter Lutra lutra and the Beaver Castor fiber also inhabit the fishponds. The site plays an important role in flood retention and control. Factors threatening the ecological character of the wetland include fish production activities and lack of effective water management. Within the site hunting is forbidden and forestry is restricted. Human activities in the ornithological reserve include fish production, recreational fishing and ecotourism. Ramsar Site no. 582. Most recent RIS information: 2012.

Lonjsko Polje Nature Park
Site number: 584 | Country: Croatia | Administrative region: Sisačko-moslavačka & Brodsko-posavska Counties
Area: 51,218 ha | Coordinates: 45°21'36"N 16°49'01"E | Designation dates: 02-11-1992
View Site details in RIS5

The Lonjsko Polje Nature Park follows a floodplain along the Sava River, which runs south-eastwards towards the border with Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is mainly composed of alluvial forests, but also wet meadows and pastures. This combination of habitats and their regular flooding and high groundwater levels provide the conditions for rich biodiversity. The 250 bird species found in the Park represent more than two-thirds of all those in Croatia. 138 species use the wetland for breeding, such as the white stork Ciconia ciconia and the Eurasian spoonbill Platalea leucorodia. The river ecosystem is also crucial to several fish species, providing refuge and spawning grounds to threatened species including the Danube salmon Hucho hucho, the leather carp Cyprinus carpio and the European mudminnow Umbra krameri. The wetland is of cultural as well as ecological importance, being sustained by traditional farming and other practices. The main threats include drainage and invasive alien species. The management plan is due to be updated for the 2019-2029 period.

Nature Park Kopacki rit
Site number: 583 | Country: Croatia | Administrative region: Osječko-baranjska
Area: 23,126.3 ha | Coordinates: 45°38'44"N 18°52'28"E | Designation dates: 02-11-1992
View Site details in RIS5

Kopacki rit is an inland delta situated at the confluence of the Danube and Drava rivers, adjacent to the border with Serbia. The Site features lakes, marshes, wet grasslands, reed beds, riverine forests, numerous channels, oxbow lakes and fishponds. It is subject to spring flooding, which creates dynamic ecosystems that support a highly diverse flora and fauna. Over 522 vascular plants, 300 birds, 55 mammals, 53 fish, 12 amphibians and 12 reptile species are found in the Site. Of these, several are internationally threatened, such as the eastern imperial eagle, the common pochard, the saker falcon and the leather carp. Kopacki rit is also an important source of food and nursery grounds for the Danube fish stocks, as it is the most significant spawning ground in the central and upper Danube area. The Site is also important for flood control and water purification, as groundwater sources in the area are used for drinking water. Drainage, logging, pollution from surrounding fields, fishing and hunting are some of the main threats.
The Neretva River Delta
Site number: 585 | Country: Croatia | Administrative region: Dubrovnik-Neretva County
Area: 12,742 ha | Coordinates: 43°01'31"N 17°33'31"E | Designation dates: 02-11-1992
View Site details in RSIS

The Neretva is the largest river of the eastern Adriatic watershed, and its final section stretches through Croatian territory, forming an extensive delta with large reedbeds, lakes, wet meadows, lagoons, sandbanks, sandy tidal flats and saltmarshes. The Site is notable in its biogeographic region for its wealth of species: it hosts 618 vascular plants, 53 mammals, 313 birds, 22 reptiles, 11 amphibians, 35 freshwater fish of which 18 are endemic, 29 dragonflies and 234 butterfly species. The Delta is an important migration stopover on the Black Sea/Mediterranean Flyway for waders, terns and gulls such as the Eurasian spoonbill Platalea leucorodia, the Kentish plover Charadrius alexandrinus and the black-winged stilt Himantopus himantopus. The Delta plays a very important role in flood control and sediment trapping. Besides the traditional agricultural landscape, there are large complexes of intensively managed farms with tangerine plantations and vegetable greenhouses. The Delta is also rich in cultural heritage and historical sites. Threats relate to issues of water management and agriculture, such as eutrophication, fertilizer pollution, land reclamation and habitat fragmentation.

Vransko Lake
Site number: 2,109 | Country: Croatia | Administrative region: Zadar & Šibenik-Knin counties
Area: 5,748 ha | Coordinates: 43°53'45"N 15°34'49"E | Designation dates: 02-02-2013
View Site details in RSIS

Vransko Lake is the only brackish natural lake on the coast of Croatia. It is situated in a shallow karst bed and separated from the Adriatic Sea by a narrow karst ridge. Significant seasonal variations in water level and salinity, due to the intrusion of sea water through the permeable karst, have created conditions for the development of very specific habitats. The shallowest north-west part of the Site features reedbeds, flood plain and seasonally flooded arable land; the hills lining the eastern shore are covered with typical Mediterranean scrubland, while the lower western coast is more rocky. Some of these areas are included in the EU Natura 2000 list of protected habitats. The Site is a nesting, wintering and resting area for many threatened waterbirds such as common pochard, spotted crake and Baillon's crake. The Site also provides habitat to the critically endangered European eel. During the rainy season, the marshy areas regulate floods, while the reedbeds purify the waters of fertilizers carried into the lake through melioration canals, threatening its eutrophication. Notable threats to the Site, such as reed burning, illegal fishing and hunting, have been significantly mitigated since the establishment of the protected area, and continue to be addressed through local education and implementation of the management plan.