Ramsar Sites Information Service

Annotated List of Wetlands of International Importance

Cuba

6 Ramsar Site(s) covering **1,188,411 ha**

Buenavista

Site number: 1,233 | Country: Cuba | Administrative region: Villa Clara,Sancti Spiritus
Area: 313,500 ha | Coordinates: 22°27'N 78°48'59"W | Designation dates: 18-11-2002
View Site details in RSIS

Buenavista. 18/11/02. Villa Clara, Sancti Spiritus. 313,500 ha. 22°27'N, 078°49'W. National Park, Protected Area, UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. Located in Cuba's central region, Buenavista is made up of various coastal and continental wetland types, including extensive beaches and dune systems, coastal lagoons, mangroves and karst. The karstic mound formations in Buenavista Bay are unique within the Cuban archipelago. The site boasts important flora and fauna, as well as areas of high archeological, speleological, and cultural value. Currently, there are no human settlements within the wetland, which is protected under different conservation schemes, but various economic activities take place in the area, among them commercial and sports fishing, forestry, cattle farming and tourism. Conservation efforts are centered on regulating these activities, as well as on improving management capacity of the site. Ramsar site no. 1233. Most recent RIS information: 2002.

Ciénaga de Lanier y Sur de la Isla de la Juventud

Site number: 1,234 | Country: Cuba | Administrative region: Isla de la Juventud
Area: 126,200 ha | Coordinates: 21°36'N 82°48'W | Designation dates: 18-11-2002
View Site details in RSIS

Ciénaga de Lanier y Sur de la Isla de la Juventud. 18/11/02. Isla de la Juventud. 126,200 ha. 21°36'N, 082°48'W. Managed Resource Protected Area (IUCN Category VI). Occupies the southern part of the Isla de la Juventud, including the Ciénaga de Lanier marshland. The site, located in the second largest island of the Cuban archipelago includes diverse biotopes, among them semi-deciduous forests, reef lagoons, marine grasslands, mangroves and peatlands. Within the Caribbean, the site is a truly unique mosaic of ecosystems - amongst them a karstic plain connected to the island's southern coast. This subterranean drainage system yields clear waters that favor the formation of coral reefs. A number of threatened species are present in the site, including green turtles (Chelonia mydas), loggerheads (Caretta caretta), and American crocodiles (Crocodylus acutus). The region possesses a high number of endemic plant species, and constitutes an important nesting site for various chelonian, amphibian, crustacean and fish species. The main threats to the site include forest fires, the future increase of tourism activities in the area, and the possible effects of climate change. Ramsar site no. 1234. Most recent RIS information: 2002.

Ciénaga de Zapata

Site number: 1,062 | Country: Cuba | Administrative region: Matanzas province
Area: 452,000 ha | Coordinates: 22°19'59"N 81°21'59"W | Designation dates: 12-04-2001
View Site details in RSIS

Ciénaga de Zapata. 12/04/01; Matanzas; 452,000 ha; 22°20'N 81°22'W. UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, national park. The largest and best-preserved wetland in the Caribbean, the site is outstanding for the diversity of its bird species, especially migratory birds, and for the presence of threatened endemic species. Part of a large karst watershed, the site includes a very large variety of wetland types, including subterranean karst hydrological systems. The enormous resources of its rivers, lakes, marshes and pools, swamp forests, intertidal flats and estuarine waters, as well as a number of humanmade wetland types, are vitally important for the human communities both within the site and in its vicinity within the site, some 19 communities, with a total of about 10,000 persons, make their livelihood chiefly by forestry, tourism, and fishing. The site has extraordinary cultural values for Cuban and Caribbean heritage, because of its important archaeological sites of ancient pre-agricultural communities as well as the customs and traditions of the present population and their traditional use of natural resources. Ramsar site no. 1062. Most recent RIS information: 2001.

Gran Humedal del Norte de Ciego de Ávila

Site number: 1,235 | Country: Cuba | Administrative region: Ciego de Avila
Area: 226,875 ha | Coordinates: 22°19'N 78°28'59"W | Designation dates: 18-11-2002
View Site details in RSIS

Gran Humedal del Norte de Ciego de Ávila. 18/11/02. Ciego de Ávila. 226,875 ha. 22°19'N, 078°29'W. Six Protected Areas within site. Occupies the northern part of the Ciego de Ávila province, spanning most of its coast, its immediate maritime zone, and adjacent islets. This wetland includes two unique coastal water reservoirs, Lagunas de la Leche and La Redonda, which feed the area's subterranean basins. The main vegetation types around the lagoons include marsh forests, marsh grasslands, and mangroves. The site is inhabited by large waterbird populations of greater flamingos (Phoenicopterus ruber) and double-crested cormorants (Phalacrocorax auritus), as well as other more rare species such as darters (Anhinga anhinga) and West Indian whistling ducks (Dendrocygna arborea). The site's rich marine platform provides abundant fishing resources, while its scenic beauty has made it the country's third largest tourism area. Ramsar site no. 1235. Most recent RIS information: 2002.

Humedal Delta del Cauto

Site number: 1,236 | Country: Cuba | Administrative region: Granma,Las Tunas
Area: 47,836 ha | Coordinates: 20°33'59"N 77°12'W | Designation dates: 18-11-2002
View Site details in RSIS

Humedal Delta del Cauto. 18/11/02. Granma, Las Tunas. 47,836 ha. 20°34'N, 077°12'W. Two Protected Areas within site. The largest delta in Cuba and one of the most important in the Caribbean, the Humedal Delta del Cauto is an intricate system of estuaries, lagoons, marshes and swamps of singular beauty. Its inaccessibility and difficulty of transit have kept anthropic effects to a minimum at the site. The local flora includes some of the best preserved mangrove populations (four species) in Cuba, as well as several species of Copernicia. Several vulnerable and endangered animal species inhabit the site, among them the endemic Cuban parakeet (Aratinga euops), Cuban tree-duck (Dendrocygna arborea) and Birama anole (Anolis birama). This wetland is also considered a major contributor to the productiveness (fisheries) of the Gulf of Guacanayabo, where the Río Cauto flows out to the sea. Ramsar site no. 1236. Most recent RIS information: 2002.

Humedal Río Máximo-Cagüey

Site number: 1,237 | Country: Cuba | Administrative region: Camagüey Province
Area: 22,000 ha | Coordinates: 21°42'59"N 77°27'W | Designation dates: 18-11-2002
View Site details in RSIS

Humedal Río Máximo-Cagüey. 18/11/02. Camagüey. 22,000 ha. 21°43'N, 077°27'W. Protected Area. An extremely fragile marine-coastal ecosystem undergoing salinization, this wetland is located at the mouth of the rivers Máximo and Cagüey, and includes a number of keys located in the shallow surroundings. The area is the largest nesting site for flamingos (Phoenicopterus ruber ruber) in all the Caribbean and the Antilles, and it's also a refuge for other migratory birds from North, Central and South America. Large populations of American crocodile (Crocodylus acutus) and Caribbean manatee (Trichechus manatus manatus), both vulnerable species, inhabit the site. The dominant vegetation types in the area include mono-dominant and mixed mangrove forests, microphyllic and swamp evergreen forests, and Conocarpus erectrus and Bucida spp. evergreen forests. Adverse factors affecting the site are related to human activities in the catchment area, including upstream deviations of the water supply and pollution from agricultural residual waters. Ramsar site no. 1237. Most recent RIS information: 2002.