Ramsar Sites Information Service

Annotated List of Wetlands of International Importance

Greece

10 Ramsar Site(s) covering **163,501 ha**

Amvrakikos gulf

Site number: 61 | Country: Greece | Administrative region: Ipiros
Area: 23,649 ha | Coordinates: 39°06'N 20°55'E | Designation dates: 21-08-1975
View Site details in RSIS

Amvrakikos gulf. 21/08/75; Aitoloakarnania, Preveza, Arta; 23,649 ha; 39°06'N 020°55'E. Added to the Montreux Record, 4 July 1990. Special Protection Area EC Directive. A coastal inlet connected to the sea. The extensive delta of two rivers including freshwater marsh with the largest reedbeds in Greece, wet meadows and seasonally inundated land, lagoons, barrier spits, a major saltmarsh, and some of the most extensive tracts of riparian forest remaining in Greece. The area supports a rich reptile and amphibian fauna, is important for breeding, staging and wintering numerous species of waterbirds, and provides important feeding grounds for nesting raptors. Nesting species include globally threatened Pelecanus crispus. Human activities include traditional fishing, intensive fish farming, livestock grazing, and (illegal) housing construction. Placed on the Montreux Record in 1990 because numerous human activities have modified the water balance, and the demand for irrigation water has led to increasing salinity levels. Ramsar site no. 61. Most recent RIS information: 1998.

Artificial Lake Kerkini

Site number: 58 | Country: Greece | Administrative region: Kentriki Makedonia
Area: 10,996 ha | Coordinates: 41°13'N 23°07'59"E | Designation dates: 21-08-1975
View Site details in RSIS

Artificial lake Kerkini. 21/08/75; Serres; 10,996 ha; 41°13'N 023°08'E. Added to the Montreux Record, 4 July 1990, removed from the Record, 18 May 1999. Special Protection Area EC Directive; No Hunting Zone. Near the border between Greece, Bulgaria and the former Yugoslavia, an nutrient-rich, freshwater reservoir in an alluvial plain between mountain massifs, supporting extensive beds of floating vegetation and subject to wide variations in water level. The site includes mudflats, seasonally flooded forest, and sand banks, and supports the largest mixed nesting colony of waterbirds in Greece. Numerous species of waterbirds occur in winter and during spring and autumn migration periods, including several globally threatened or endangered species. Human activities include silviculture, fishing, intensive livestock grazing, irrigated agriculture, and illegal hunting and tree felling. The site has suffered changes in ecological character due to water management projects and increasing nutrient-enrichment. For these reasons it was placed on the Montreux Record in 1990. Ramsar site no. 58. Most recent RIS information: 1998.

Axios, Loudias, Aliakmon Delta

Site number: 59 | Country: Greece | Administrative region: Kentriki Makedonia
Area: 11,808 ha | Coordinates: 40°30'N 22°42'59"E | Designation dates: 21-08-1975
View Site details in RSIS

Axios, Loudias, Aliakmon delta. 21/08/75; Thessaloniki, Imanthia, Piera; 11,808 ha; 40°30'N 022°43'E. Added to the Montreux Record, 4 July 1990. Special Protection Area EC Directive; No Hunting Zone. An extensive river delta including brackish lagoons, saltmarshes, and large areas of mudflats. Vegetation consists of scrub, riparian forest, wet meadows, reedbeds, and halophytic communities. 30 freshwater fish species occur in the river. An extremely important area for nesting and migrating waterbirds. Various species of wild birds and Scolopacidae worthy of conservation or globally threatened occur at the site. Human activities include fishing, shellfish aquaculture, agriculture, livestock grazing, and sand extraction. Because dam and irrigation networks considerably altered river hydraulics and urban wastes and agricultural inputs end up in the delta, the site was placed on the Montreux Record in 1990. Ramsar site no. 59. Most recent RIS information: 1998.

Evros Delta

Site number: 54 | Country: Greece | Administrative region: Thraki
Area: 9,267 ha | Coordinates: 40°50'N 26°03'59"E | Designation dates: 21-08-1975
View Site details in RSIS

Evros delta. 21/08/75; Evros; 9,267 ha; 40°50'N 026°04'E. Added to the Montreux Record, 4 July 1990, removed from the Record, 18 May 1999. Special Protection Area EC Directive; Protected Area. Sharing the border with Turkey, the Evros River delta consists of brackish lagoons, freshwater marshes, lakes, and a coastal zone of saltmarshes and mudflats. Salt-resistant vegetation dominates, but patches of riparian forest remain. The delta is the most important wetland in Greece for wintering waterbirds, and supports various species of breeding and passage birds. Several birds, mammals and plants are rare or threatened species. The site is important for conservation education and provides a biological station, observation tower, and birdwatching center. Human activities include cattle grazing, commercial fishing, aquaculture and hunting. The surrounding area is used for intensive agriculture and livestock rearing. Because drainage works caused major hydrologic and land use changes resulting in low water levels, flooding and salt water intrusion, the site was placed on the Montreux Record in 1990. Ramsar site no. 54. Most recent RIS information: 1998.

Kotychi lagoons

Site number: 63 | Country: Greece | Administrative region: Dytiki Ellas
Area: 6,302 ha | Coordinates: 38°00'59"N 21°17'E | Designation dates: 21-08-1975
View Site details in RSIS

Kotychi lagoons. 21/08/75; Ileia; 6,302 ha; 38°01'N 021°17'E. Added to the Montreux Record, 4 July 1990. A large coastal lagoon of varying salinity, associated marshes separated from the sea by an extensive dune system, smaller lagoons and wet meadows. The system supports extensive reedbeds, salt-tolerant plants, and submerged aquatic plants. The coastal dunes are in excellent condition with well-developed vegetation. The site supports rich fish, reptile and amphibian faunas, and is also important for breeding, staging and wintering waterbirds. Human activities include traditional fishing, livestock grazing, cultivation and recreation. The surrounding areas are used for intensive agriculture. The site was placed on the Montreux Record in 1990 because of agricultural chemical inputs and grazing pressure. Ramsar site no. 63. Most recent RIS information: 1998.

Lake Mikri Prespa

Site number: 60 | Country: Greece | Administrative region: Dytiki Makedonia
Area: 5,078 ha | Coordinates: 40°45'59"N 21°04'59"E | Designation dates: 21-08-1975
View Site details in RSIS

Lake Mikri Prespa. 21/08/75; Florina; 5,078 ha; 40°46'N 021°05'E. Added to the Montreux Record, 4 July 1990, removed from the Record, 18 May 1999. Special Protection Area EC Directive; National Park, Site of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Two freshwater lakes, shared by Greece, Albania and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, occupying an enclosed mountain basin fed by seasonal streams. Vegetation consists of a rich aquatic flora of extensive reedbeds and wet meadows. Numerous fish species are present, including endemic species. A particularly important area for breeding, staging and wintering birds. Nesting species include pelicans, Pelecanus crispus (200 pairs); P. onocrotalus (70 pairs); and Phalacrocorax pygmeus (100 pairs), all globally threatened. Human activities include fishing, irrigation, tourism, livestock grazing, and conservation education. A field station and an information center are available. The site was placed on the Montreux Record in 1990 due to changes in ecological character caused by past drainage works, recent overgrazing, and loss of fish production. The Society for the Protection of Prespa was one of the winners of the Ramsar Wetland Conservation Award in 1999. Ramsar site no. 60. Most recent RIS information: 1998.

Lakes Volvi & Koronia

Site number: 57 | Country: Greece | Administrative region: Kentriki Makedonia
Area: 16,388 ha | Coordinates: 40°40'59"N 23°19'59"E | Designation dates: 21-08-1975
View Site details in RSIS

Lakes Volvi & Koronia. 21/08/75; Thessaloniki; 16,388 ha; 40°41'N 023°20'E. Added to the Montreux Record, 4 July 1990. Special Protection Area EC Directive, No Hunting Zone. Two freshwater lakes connected by a narrow channel, fringed by reedbeds, patches of woodland, and surrounded by arable land. The area supports endemic fish, nesting waterbirds, and large numbers of wintering birds including Anatidae (geese, ducks, swans, etc.). Several nationally rare or endangered aquatic plants occur. There are many settlements around the lakes and human activities include irrigation, agriculture, livestock grazing, fishing and hunting. Increasingly poor water quality due to a lack of sewage treatment and exacerbated by drought, agricultural run-off and effluent from industry and animal breeding farms caused nutrient-enrichment and led to the site's listing on the Montreux Record in 1990. Ramsar site no. 57. Most recent RIS information: 1998.

Lake Vistonis, Porto Lagos, Lake Ismaris & adjoining lagoons

Site number: 55 | Country: Greece | Administrative region: Thraki
Area: 24,396 ha | Coordinates: 41°03'N 25°11'E | Designation dates: 21-08-1975
View Site details in RSIS

Lake Vistonis, Porto Lagos, Lake Ismaris & adjoining lagoons. 21/08/75; Rodopi, Xanthi; 24,396 ha; 41°03'N 025°11'E. Added to the Montreux Record, 4 July 1990. Special Protection Area EC Directive; No Hunting Zone. Prior to December 1996, there were two separate Ramsar sites, Lake Vistonis and Lake Mitrou, which were merged to form the current site.The site includes a wetland complex, encompassing a coastal lake (Vistonis), the Porto Lagos saline lagoon, six shallow saltwater adjoining lagoons separated from the sea by a sandy beach, and a freshwater shallow lake (Ismaris). The coastal lagoons are fringed by saltmarsh, extensive mudflats, reedbeds and scrub, and freshwater marsh. The area is important for breeding birds, and large numbers of various species of waterbirds occur in winter, such as Pelecanus crispus and P. onocrotalus. Human activities include commercial fishing, livestock grazing, groundwater exploitation, recreation and hunting. High demand for irrigation water, associated changes in salinity, and agricultural, domestic and industrial run-off led to the sites listing on the Montreux Record in 1990. Ramsar site no. 55. Most recent RIS information: 1998.

Messolonghi lagoons

Site number: 62 | Country: Greece | Administrative region: Aitoloakarnania
Area: 33,687 ha | Coordinates: 38°20'N 21°15'E | Designation dates: 21-08-1975
View Site details in RSIS

Messolonghi lagoons. 21/08/75; Aitoloakarnania; 33,687 ha; 38°20'N 021°15'E. Added to the Montreux Record, 4 July 1990. Special Protection Area EC Directive; No Hunting Zone. An extensive complex of brackish coastal lagoons, mudflats, saltmarsh, freshwater marsh, reedbeds, dune systems and patches of riparian forest formed within the double delta of two rivers. The site is important for breeding, staging and wintering waterbirds and exhibits a considerable degree of endemism in plant and fish species. Wintering birds include large numbers of Anatidae (ducks, geese, swans, etc.), and the globally threatened Pelecanus crispus. Human activities include commercial salt extraction (80% of national production), fishing, fish farming, livestock grazing, agriculture, and illegal construction of resort housing. Various construction works led to soil deposition that changed the hydrology and geomorphology of the area. Intensive fishing techniques, cattle grazing, and illegal hunting cause problems. These issues led to the site's designation on the Montreux Record in 1990. Ramsar site no. 62. Most recent RIS information: 1998.

Nestos delta & adjoining lagoons

Site number: 56 | Country: Greece | Administrative region: Anatoliki Makedonia,Thraki
Area: 21,930 ha | Coordinates: 40°54'N 24°47'E | Designation dates: 21-08-1975
View Site details in RSIS

Nestos delta & adjoining lagoons. 21/08/75; Xanthi; 21,930 ha; 40°54'N 024°47'E. Added to the Montreux Record, 4 July 1990. Special Protection Area EC Directive; No Hunting Zone. An extensive delta complex, including saltmarshes, freshwater lakes supporting nationally rare plant species, coastal lagoons, a dune system, and the largest remaining area of riparian forest in Greece. The delta is the most important breeding site in Europe for about 40 pairs of plover and supports various species of nesting and up to 50,000 wintering birds, including four pairs of the globally threatened sea eagle Haliaetus albicilla. Land use within the site includes forestry, seasonal cultivation of the river bed, grazing, commercial fishing, and groundwater exploitation. Decreasing groundwater levels resulting from increasing irrigation demands and dam construction led to the 1990 designation of the site on the Montreux Record. Ramsar site no. 56. Most recent RIS information: 1998.