



Ramsar Sites Information Service

Annotated List of Wetlands of International Importance

Liberia

5 Ramsar Site(s) covering 95,879 ha

Gbedin Wetlands

Site number: 1,628 | Country: Liberia | Administrative region: Nimba county

Area: 25 ha | Coordinates: 07°16'N 08°48'W | Designation dates: 24-08-2006

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Gbedin Wetlands. 24/08/06; Nimba; 25 ha; 07°16'N 008°48'W. Situated in the north of Liberia, the area is largely a swamp, also including a man-made wetland with irrigation system that includes channels, ditches, dams and drainages. The paddy fields provide a good feeding ground for many bird species including Palaearctic and Nearctic migrants as well as resident breeders such as the Plover *Charadrius dubius*, Bar-Godwit *Limosa lapponica* and the Forbes' Plover *C. forbesi*. The endemic otter shrew *Micropotamogale lamottei* also occurs in the area. The suitability of the swamp for rice cultivation prompted the government in 1960 to solicit technical assistance to introduce modern agricultural methods to local rice farmers in order to discourage shifting cultivation. The project, the Gbedin Swamp Rice Project, has employed a large number of local people, especially up to the onset of the civil war in 1990. The site is currently used for subsistence farming (rice), hunting and fishing, while the surroundings are used for logging and mining, as well as multiple crop farming. The use of fertilizers and pesticides are potential threats. In November 2005 elementary students were asked by the Ramsar CEPA focal point to depict the wise use concept through arts. Ramsar site no. 1628. Most recent RIS information: 2006.

Kpatawee Wetlands

Site number: 1,629 | Country: Liberia | Administrative region: Bong county

Area: 835 ha | Coordinates: 07°07'N 09°37'59"W | Designation dates: 24-08-2006

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Kpatawee Wetlands. 24/08/06; Bong; 835 ha; 07°07'N 009°38'W. Kpatawee waterfall falls within the rainforest zone of Liberia, as a branch of the St. John River, one of the six major rivers in the country. While the river erodes the valley in its upper sections, it accumulates sand and gravel downstream, leaving patches of bare land along its course, which provide wintering grounds for large numbers of common Sandpipers and Palaearctic migrant species such as Little Ringed Plover and Greenshanks. The endangered Three-cusped Pangolin and Water Chevrotain occur at the site, too. The villagers value this area as a picnic ground, for hosting meetings, workshops and retreats, but the area and its resources are also used for palm wine production, hunting, fishing, basket making, bathing and other domestic uses. Within the site, the governments of Liberia and China undertook the Kpatawee Rice Project with the objective of introducing new rice farming methods to farmers, to discourage shifting cultivation. Threats to the site include the potential development of a hydropower scheme. The site is an ideal nature reserve and tourist attraction but has not officially been recognized for this purpose. Ramsar site no. 1629. Most recent RIS information: 2006.

Lake Piso

Site number: 1,306 | Country: Liberia | Administrative region: Gawulu-Tombe district

Area: 76,091 ha | Coordinates: 06°45'N 11°13'W | Designation dates: 02-07-2003

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Lake Piso. 02/07/03; Singe, Robertsport, Grand Cape Mount; 76,091 ha; 06°45'N 011°13'W. Nature Conservation Unit. An open coastal lagoon near Robertsport to the west of Monrovia, the largest such inlet on the Liberian coast, surrounded by forested hillsides (including one of the rarest tropical rainforests in the region) and fed by a number of creeks and rivers; these latter drain a series of swamps above the lagoon, the lower ones of which are tidal and support mangroves. Other mangrove swamps occur behind the dune ridge on the west side of the lake mouth and at other creek mouths. A series of small lakes with swampy margins occurs on the sandy forested spit that separates the lake from the sea. Some 38 communities, totaling about 7000 people, depend upon Piso for transportation, commercial and non-commercial fishing, and sand for construction, and farm-to-market infrastructure was well-developed prior to the civil crisis of the past decade. The site is important both as a nursery and spawning ground for fish and sea turtles and as feeding and roosting places for large numbers of shore and sea birds. Mammals such as antelopes, duikers, monkeys, bushbucks, and a few crocodiles are also found in the area. Ramsar site no. 1306. Most recent RIS information: 2007.

Marshall Wetlands

Site number: 1,630 | Country: Liberia | Administrative region: Margibi county

Area: 12,168 ha | Coordinates: 06°07'59"N 10°22'W | Designation dates: 24-08-2006

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Marshall Wetlands. 24/08/06; Margibi; 12,168 ha; 06°08'N 010°22'W. Comprising three small rivers, the area has sandy and rocky shores, and further inland is a population of secondary forests and savannah woodland. The wetland is chiefly a mangrove type with mature trees reaching up to 30m. In addition to the Red Colobus monkey, a number of bird species listed by the CMS appear in the area, such as the Glossy Ibis, Lesser Kestrel and Common Pratincole. The site provides control against flooding and underground water recharge and is a sediment trap. The very large stands of mangroves, fish population and wildlife are valuable resources for inhabitants in the area. The three rivers are navigable and are used for transport from one village to another. The uncontrolled harvesting of the mangrove forest and dynamiting of fish by local people are serious threats to the ecological character of the site, as is pollution from a rubber company upstream. In addition, the presence of *Chromolaena odorata*, an invasive alien species which provides host to harmful agricultural insects such as the variegated grasshopper *Zonocerus variegatus*, is a serious problem for farmers. Research on chimpanzees for human vaccines against hepatitis A, B and C is also being carried out at the site, with the animals released on islets in the mangroves afterwards. Ramsar site no. 1630. Most recent RIS information: 2006.

Mesurado Wetlands

Site number: 1,631 | Country: Liberia | Administrative region: Montserrado county

Area: 6,760 ha | Coordinates: 06°18'N 10°45'W | Designation dates: 24-08-2006

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Mesurado Wetlands. 24/08/06; Montserrado; 6,760 ha; 06°18'N 010°45'W. Located in the capital city Monrovia and Montserrado County (the largest administrative region of the country with 1 million people), the site is important for the protection of three mangrove species (*Rhizophora harrisonii*, *R. mangle* and *Avicennia africana*), which are threatened by intense charcoal burning and fuel wood collection. It provides a favourable habitat and feeding ground for several species of birds including the African spoonbill *Platalea alba*, Common Pratincole *Glareola nuchaltis* and Curlew *Numenius arquata*. It also hosts the vulnerable African dwarf crocodile, the Nile crocodile and the African sharp-nosed crocodile and plays an important role in shoreline stabilization and sediment trapping. The site is currently used for fuel wood collection, as a dumping site, for car washing, and fishing, with fish and crustaceans sold to the population of Monrovia. An additional threat comes from unregulated fishing, as well as from pollution from the industries around the site, including an oil refinery and paint factories. No management plan currently exists, but there are plans to put it under a protected area management network once it has been successfully designated as a Ramsar site. Ramsar site no. 1631. Most recent RIS information: 2006.

