



Ramsar Sites Information Service

Annotated List of Wetlands of International Importance

Mozambique

2 Ramsar Site(s) covering 4,534,872 ha

Lake Niassa and its Coastal Zone

Site number: 1,964 | Country: Mozambique | Administrative region: District of Lichinga and of Lago Area: 1,363,700 ha | Coordinates: 12°30'S 34°51'E | Designation dates: 26-04-2011

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Lake Niassa and its Coastal Zone (Lago Niassa e Zona Costeira). 26/04/11; Niassa Province; 1,363,700 ha; 12°30'S 034°51'E. Mozambique's Lake Niassa is an important resource, part of Africa's third largest lake - the other two parts being in Malawi (where the lake is referred to as Lake Malawi) and in Tanzania (where it is known as Lake Nyasa). As one of the African Rift Valley great lakes, it is also part of the Miombo Woodlands ecoregion. This site has numerous unique features, from its boundaries that range from extensive plains in the South and steep sided mountains in the North, to the high levels of fish species that are endemic to the lake (90%) with more species continually being discovered. This site is also recognised for its support of threatened populations of leopard, sable antelope, and elephants amongst others. The Lake also lies within flyways of migratory birds that use the lake margins as staging areas between Africa and Europe. While the site is facing severe threats due to the overexploitation of the lake's resources, it is important in the sustenance of the surrounding populations' livelihoods through activities such as fishing, agriculture, animal rearing, hunting, trade and handicrafts. Lake Niassa has been officially declared a reserve by the Government of Mozambique, protecting the species and natural habitats of one of the largest and most bio-diverse, freshwater ecosystems in the world. This designation has been supported by WWF International Freshwater Programme, the Swiss Grant for Africa, and WWF-Mozambique. Ramsar Site no. 1964. Most recent RIS information: 2009.

Zambezi Delta

Site number: 1,391 | Country: Mozambique | Administrative region: Sofala / Zambezia Province Area: 3,171,172 ha | Coordinates: 17°59'32"S 36°00'10"E | Designation dates: 03-08-2004

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Characterized by a broad flat alluvial plain with vast mosaics of tropical grassland, palm, thicket, woodland, deep water swamp, and some of the most extensive mangrove communities on the East African coast, the Zambezi Delta is a unique wetland and one of the most diverse and productive river delta systems in the world. A recognized global biodiversity conservation hotspot, the Delta is home to a significant population of large mammals including the African buffalo, elephant, hippopotamus, lion and leopard, and a large concentration of waterbird species including white-backed and pink-backed pelicans, herons, flamingos, egrets, African fish eagles, storks, Caspian terns, wattled cranes and endangered grey crowned cranes. Bottlenose and humpback dolphins and a variety of marine and freshwater fish and shellfish species have also been recorded in the Site. In addition to the rich biodiversity values, the Site provides a wealth of ecosystem services which are vital to food security and socio-economic development in Mozambique. It also provides hydrological functions including coastal protection, flood control and carbon sequestration. The major threat to the Zambezi Delta is the construction of dams for hydroelectric power.