



# Ramsar Sites Information Service

## Annotated List of Wetlands of International Importance

# Nicaragua

9 Ramsar Site(s) covering 406,852 ha

### **Cayos Miskitos y Franja Costera Inmediata**

Site number: 1,135 | Country: Nicaragua | Administrative region: Atlántico Norte  
Area: 85,000 ha | Coordinates: 14°22'59"N 82°46'W | Designation dates: 08-11-2001  
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Cayos Miskitos y Franja Costera Inmediata. 08/11/01; Atlántico Norte; 85,000 ha; 14°23'N 082°46'W. Marine Biological Reserve. Offshore Caribbean island and shoals and adjacent mainland coastal areas 12km to the west, comprising an impressive array of wetland types, principally frequently-flooded areas dominated by shrubs, riverine systems in which are found gallery forests, and estuaries bordered by mangrove forests in near-natural state. At the Cayos Miskitos Reserve, there is one of the largest extensions of sea grass in the Caribbean, intermingled with coral reefs, areas which support several rare and endangered species, including the Green Turtle (*Chelonia mydas*), Hawksbill Turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*), the Caribbean manatee (*Trichechus manatus*), the "Tucuxi" freshwater dolphin *Sotalia fluviatilis*, and caiman crocodile (*Crocodylus fuscus*). The Association of Indigenous Women of the Costa Atlántica recently initiated a promising ecotourism project. Ramsar site no. 1135. Most recent RIS information: 2001.

### **Deltas del Estero Real y Llanos de Apacunca**

Site number: 1,136 | Country: Nicaragua | Administrative region: Chinandega  
Area: 81,700 ha | Coordinates: 12°52'59"N 87°13'W | Designation dates: 08-11-2001  
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Deltas del Estero Real y Llanos de Apacunca. 08/11/01; Chinandega; 81,700 ha; 12°53'N 087°13'W. Natural Reserve. An estuarine ecosystem that is part of the large mangrove systems of the Golfo de Fonseca shared with El Salvador and Honduras, marked by semi-intensive and extensive shrimp cultivation, fishing, and agriculture. Within the site some 35 species of fauna have been identified, and part of the site was declared a Reserve for Genetic Resources in 1996 in order to preserve a species of wild maize (*Zea luxurians* or *nicaraguensis*) that is endemic to Nicaragua and found only in this area. The original diversity of the site has suffered from human impacts such as agrochemical and organic waste, sedimentation, deforestation, and excessive hunting. Ramsar site no. 1136. Most recent RIS information: 2001.

## Lago de Apanás-Asturias

Site number: 1,137 | Country: Nicaragua | Administrative region: Depart. Jinotega  
Area: 5,415 ha | Coordinates: 13°09'59"N 85°58'W | Designation dates: 08-11-2001  
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Lago de Apanás-Asturias. 08/11/01; Jinotega; 5,415 ha; 13°10'N 085°58'W. An artificial lake or reservoir formed by two electricity-producing barrages of the Río Tuma in the mountainous north of the country, characterized by seasonally flooded agricultural land, water storage areas, and canals for transport and drainage. The endangered Perro de Agua "water dog" (Plata Otter, *Lutra longicaudis*) is supported, and the site is also important for a number of aquatic birds and for fish, a number of which have high economic value in the area. The site has high potential for ecotourism because of its migratory birds and artisanal fishing practices, and recreational and educational potentials are high as well. Ramsar site no. 1137. Most recent RIS information: 2001.

## Los Guatuzos

Site number: 915 | Country: Nicaragua | Administrative region: Río San Juan  
Area: 43,750 ha | Coordinates: 11°00'N 84°52'W | Designation dates: 30-07-1997  
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Los Guatuzos. 30/07/97; 43,750 ha; 11°00'N 084°52'W. Lakes and ponds subject to seasonal flooding, set in alluvial depressions with surrounding woodlands. There are also areas that are normally dry where the water table is several centimetres below the surface. The interaction of unique environmental factors has given rise to rich populations of flora and fauna both indigenous and migratory. 326 bird species, of which 77 species are migratory, 32 mammal and 10 reptile species are supported. There are several species of birdlife threatened with extinction. Ramsar site no. 915. Most recent RIS information: 2001.

## Refugio de Vida Silvestre Río San Juan

Site number: 1,138 | Country: Nicaragua | Administrative region: Río San Juan, Atlántico Sur  
Area: 43,000 ha | Coordinates: 10°56'N 83°40'W | Designation dates: 08-11-2001  
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Refugio de Vida Silvestre Río San Juan. 08/11/01; Río San Juan, Atlántico Sur; 43,000 ha; ca. 10°56'N 083°40'W. Wildlife Refuge, Biosphere Reserve. A long, slender, convoluted site that follows the course of the Río San Juan, which flows from Lake Nicaragua at 32m altitude along the Costa Rican frontier 200km to the city of San Juan del Norte on the Caribbean coast, and includes the coastline to the north as well, part of the Biosphere Reserve Indio Maiz, forming one of the two most extensive biological nuclei of the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor. The site comprises an array of wetland types, including estuary and shallow marine waters, coastal freshwater lagoon, and intertidal marsh, as well as permanent lakes, rivers, and pools, inter alia. Nearly all of the Ramsar Criteria are met, and four species of turtles, as well as the manatee *Trichechus manatus*, are supported. Ramsar site no. 1138. Most recent RIS information: 2001.

## Sistema de Humedales de la Bahía de Bluefields

Site number: 1,139 | Country: Nicaragua | Administrative region: Atlántico Sur  
Area: 86,501 ha | Coordinates: 11°54'59"N 83°45'W | Designation dates: 08-11-2001  
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Sistema de Humedales de la Bahía de Bluefields. 08/11/01; Atlántico Sur; 86,501 ha; 11°55'N 083°45'W. Added to the Montreux Record, 15/01/07. Comprising a diversity of ecosystems from saline to freshwater, encompassing the "bay", which is in fact a coastal lagoon associated with the Río Escondido. The intertidal forested areas and mangroves form habitat and biological corridors for endangered larger animals, such as the jaguar (*Panthera onca*), Central American Tapir or "Danta" (*Tapirus bairdii*), the howling monkey *Alouatta fusca*, and ocelot *Leopardus pardalis*. The system is regenerating despite the devastation of Hurricane Joan in 1988. The site is extremely important for the artisanal fishing which forms the economic and cultural base of the ethnic groups in the area. Problems associated with population growth and pollution pose threats, though several communities have organized a group of communal park-wardens. Subject of a Ramsar Advisory Mission in December 2005 and added to the Montreux Record on 15/01/07. Ramsar site no. 1139. [Signs] Most recent RIS information: 2001.

## Sistema de Humedales de San Miguelito

Site number: 1,140 | Country: Nicaragua | Administrative region: Río San Juan  
Area: 43,475 ha | Coordinates: 11°24'59"N 84°51'W | Designation dates: 08-11-2001

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Sistema de Humedales de San Miguelito. 08/11/01; Río San Juan; 43,475 ha; 11°25'N 084°51'W. Situated along the southeast coast of Lago Cocibolca (Lake Nicaragua, the largest lake in Central America), the site maintains a rich biological diversity, supporting a large number of species of birds, fish, reptiles and mammals. It also performs essential functions in the prevention of natural disasters, in purifying and recycling the water of the lake, and in regulating local climate. Ramsar site no. 1140. Most recent RIS information: 2001.

## Sistema Lacustre Playitas-Moyúa-Tecomapa

Site number: 1,980 | Country: Nicaragua | Administrative region: Matagalpa  
Area: 1,161 ha | Coordinates: 12°35'47"N 86°02'48"W | Designation dates: 29-06-2011

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Sistema Lacustre Playitas-Moyúa-Tecomapa. 29/06/11; Matagalpa; 1,161 ha; 12°35'47"N 086°02'48"W. Comprises a permanent lake and two seasonal freshwater lakes, intermittent rivers, swamps, and the flooded agricultural lands that surround them. The site is among the 10 most important wetlands in Nicaragua due to its hydrological importance as the only surface water reservoir in one of the driest areas of the country, which also ensures its biological importance as it supports a diversity of mammals, reptiles, fish, and birds. Migratory species include the blue-winged teal (*Anas discors*), which uses the site as a rest area, endangered species according to IUCN Red List as *lignum-vitae* (*Guaiacum sanctum*), and fish species representative of the region. In addition, the site supports important activities for the population such as fisheries and agriculture. Among the main factors which could adversely affect the site's ecological character are the extraction of water for livestock and agriculture, overfishing, and poaching, among others. The site has a management and development plan approved in 2006. Ramsar Site no. 1980. Most recent RIS information: 2011.

## Sistema Lagunar de Tisma

Site number: 1,141 | Country: Nicaragua | Administrative region: Mun. de Tipitapa, Granada, Tisma  
Area: 16,850 ha | Coordinates: 12°03'59"N 85°56'W | Designation dates: 08-11-2001

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Sistema Lagunar de Tisma. 08/11/01; Managua, Granada; 16,850 ha; 12°04'N 085°56'W. A number of small lake, marsh, and river shore ecosystems associated with the northwest shores of Lake Nicaragua. The sites supplies water for cattle grazing, rice cultivation, and irrigation of pastures, recharges groundwater and assists in flood control, retains sediments and contaminants, and supports a number of species of migratory birds. Inhabitants of the site benefit by meat and fish and derive fiber materials for the fabrication of handkerchiefs, mats, fans, and other handicrafts. Rice cultivation and resulting alterations of water level and agrochemical effects have a direct impact upon the site. The Audobon Society Nicaragua and the IUCN Mesoamerica Office assisted in preparation of the designation and in the ongoing development of a management plan, with support from the government. Most recent RIS information: 2001.