

Annotated List of Wetlands of International Importance

14 Ramsar Site(s) covering 7,534,289 ha

Gueltas et Oasis de l'Aïr

Site number: 1501 | Country: Niger | Administrative region: Agadez

Area: 4,924,100 ha | Coordinates: 19°10'35"N 09°04'02"E | Designation dates: 16-09-2005

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site is a complex of permanent and temporary streams, oases and marshes at the centre of Niger's part of the Sahara Desert, which hosts a number of endangered species such as the vulnerable cheetah, Barbary sheep and Dorcas gazelle, as well as the critically endangered addax (*Addax nasomaculatus*). 290 species of flowering plants and 150 bird species have been counted at the Site, including permanent residents and Palearctic migrants. They include grey heron (*Ardea cinerea*), dark chanting goshawk (*Melierax metabates*), Egyptian vulture (*Neophron percnopterus*), spotted eagle-owl (*Bubo africanus*) and white stork (*Ciconia ciconia*). The wetlands play an important role in flood control, while the vegetation acts as a sediment trap. The Site is archaeologically and culturally valuable due to the remains of old cities such as the abandoned Tuareg town of Assodé, Neolithic engravings showing animals such as giraffes, elephants which have become locally extinct, and objects such as arrows, pottery and shells which are a reminder of the camel caravans that used to pass through. Desertification, combined with anthropogenic pressures, is changing the area's ecology and consequently its ability to support both animal and human populations.

Dallol Maouri

Site number: 1381 | Country: Niger | Administrative region: Gaya

Area: 317,520 ha | Coordinates: 12°15'41"N 03°33'53"E | Designation dates: 26-04-2004

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

A former north-south tributary of the River Niger along the south-western frontier with Nigeria, the Site is now a complex of permanent saline/alkaline pools and seasonal streams and creeks, with an exceptional complex of vegetation including the Palmyra palm *Borassus aethiopum* and African doum palm *Hyphaene thebaica*. The permanent or migratory bird species found include squacco heron (*Ardeola ralloides*), western cattle egret (*Bubulcus ibis*), little egret (*Egretta garzetta*) and grey heron (*Ardea cinerea*). The nine ethnic groups in the area make their livings by rainy-season agriculture and market gardening, salt extraction, fishing, forestry and grazing. The potential for sustainable tourism is high, and a local research programme financed by Switzerland is studying the potential for sustainable livelihoods. As elsewhere in the region, the effects of desertification are the most worrying threats.

Dallol Bosso

Site number: 1382 | Country: Niger | Administrative region: Dosso

Area: 892,122 ha | Coordinates: 13°19'28"N 02°56'07"E | Designation dates: 26-04-2004

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

A system of seasonal watercourses and permanent pools in a long-inactive branch of the River Niger, associated with a 775-kilometre depression running southward from Mali. Sandy soils and a near-surface aquifer contribute to the agricultural importance of the area and enable the only viable West African giraffe population. The Site also supports numerous fish species at different stages of their life cycles; certain species migrate towards the River Niger during the winter season, enriching the biodiversity there. Chief human uses of the area include irrigation agriculture, livestock, forestry, fishing and the extraction of the salt-like natron. The area boasts dense woody vegetation characterized by *Parinari macrophylla*, *Hyphaene thebaica* and *Acacia albida*. The effects of desertification in the region give cause for concern, including uncertain rains, sand encroachment, and inadequate groundwater recharge, and overgrazing and soil impoverishment through over-cultivation are seen as potential threats. The area is adjacent to Park National du W and is part of the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve of that name.

La Mare de Tabalak

Site number: 1494 | Country: Niger | Administrative region: Tahoua

Area: 107,100 ha | Coordinates: 15°01'36"N 05°49'14"E | Designation dates: 16-09-2005

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

One of the most significant ponds in Niger, with a rich diversity of plants and animals, the Site is a refuge for migratory and sedentary waterbirds, particularly ducks and waders. It hosts an average of 14% of the biogeographic population of the Egyptian goose (*Alopochen aegyptiacus*). Some nationally-rare species such as the crowned crane (*Balearica pavonina*) are regularly observed. The wetland also helps in flood control and in recharging groundwater. It is relatively new as a permanent water body – its creation followed the rupture of the upstream Kori d'Ibaga dam in the 1970s. The village of Tabalak was settled by people who moved in to work on the construction of the “uranium route”. No special conservation measures are in place, but small projects have been undertaken to increase the social benefits arising from the Site, such as the introduction of fish and the construction of dykes to hold more water for agriculture.

Zone humide du moyen Niger

Site number: 1073 | Country: Niger | Administrative region: Falmey

Area: 52,180 ha | Coordinates: 12°07'43"N 03°11'07"E | Designation dates: 17-06-2001

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Part of a wetland shared with Benin and Nigeria, the Site comprises the left bank of the River Niger and its floodplains with their permanent and seasonal ponds and watercourses. Its regionally unique habitat supports waterbirds and fish, in particular several fish species that have disappeared elsewhere along the River. It provides habitat for thousands of water birds during the low water period. Inundation occurs over four or five months, from rains in August through to the arrival of floods from upstream in November, and the Site thus plays a key role in the hydrological cycle of the region. The tough herbaceous plant *Anthephora nigritana* is found, but the vegetation is dominated by *Echinochloa stagnina*; this grass provides local communities with pasture for their livestock, which they raise in addition to their traditional pursuits of diversified agriculture and fishing. Though the land is state-owned, the inhabitants have age-old rights of use. Tourism is beginning in the area, and no-hunting mechanisms have been instituted to encourage birdwatching. A regional management plan for parks and reserves was being developed as of 2018 by Benin, Burkina Faso, and Niger.

Complexe Kokorou-Namga

Site number: 1071 | Country: Niger | Administrative region: Tillabéri

Area: 66,829 ha | Coordinates: 14°10'04"N 00°57'E | Designation dates: 17-06-2001

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Part of a wetland shared with Burkina Faso and Mali, the Site comprises four permanent and semi-permanent marshes and pools in a former tributary of the River Niger. Internationally important for a number of reasons, it is particularly valued for its support to waterbirds, with nearly 50,000 representatives of 56 species counted in 2000. The complex is home to endangered species such as the black-crowned crane (*Balearica pavonina*), the common moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*) and the western swampphen (*Porphyrio porphyrio*). Three ethnic groups inhabit the region, which are largely Muslim but with a richness which includes veneration of a serpent considered to be a protective spirit for Kokorou and the people living there. Deforestation and overgrazing, as well as desertification, are considered to be threats. The Site has been included as a demonstration project under the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) funded by GEF.

La Mare de Dan Doutchi

Site number: 1492 | Country: Niger | Administrative region: Tahoua

Area: 38,250 ha | Coordinates: 14°19'54"N 04°40'56"E | Designation dates: 16-09-2005

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

A permanent pond that, with its surrounding vegetation, is characteristic of the climatic transition zone between the Sahel and the Sahara. Plant diversity is relatively high for both grass and woody species; the area is also an important wintering site for Afrotropical and Palearctic migratory birds, of which 40 species have been counted. The main human activity is fishing, which provides both an important protein source and substantial revenue to the local people. Unsustainable agricultural and fishing methods and overgrazing threaten the ecological balance. The vegetation on the basin is very scarce. The soils are fragile, not very fertile and extremely sensitive to erosion. A management plan is being developed which will consider the needs of the local people and seek their participation.

La Mare de Lassouri

Site number: 1493 | Country: Niger | Administrative region: Zinder

Area: 34,000 ha | Coordinates: 14°04'12"N 09°34'43"E | Designation dates: 16-09-2005

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

A semi-permanent wetland, part of Lake Chad's catchment, which during the dry season separates into a string of shallow ponds with good water quality. The area has dense woody vegetation which is rarely found in the Sahel, characterized by *Acacia nilotica*, *Acacia albida* and *Mitragyna inermis*. It is an important refuge for waterbirds and regularly hosts an average of 23,000 birds, with especially significant proportions of white-faced whistling duck *Dendrocygna viduata* and comb duck *Sarkidiornis melanotos* in addition to egrets, terns, ducks, herons, sandpipers and harriers. The Site supports small-scale cultivation of vegetables and cereals as well as fishing (mainly of *Clarias angularia* and *Protopterus annectens*), and provides pasture for both local livestock and that of nomadic pastoralists. The area is threatened by overgrazing, illegal logging and sand deposition caused by water and wind erosion. The main scientific activity is related to bird counts under OMPO's (*Oiseaux Migrateurs du Paléarctique Occidental* - Migratory Birds of the Western Palearctic) Western Africa programme.

Oasis du Kawar

Site number: 1495 | Country: Niger | Administrative region: Agadez

Area: 339,220 ha | Coordinates: 19°21'36"N 12°52'08"E | Designation dates: 16-09-2005

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site, a complex of oases between two deserts – the Erg du Ténéré to the west and the Erg de Bilma to the south and east – lies along the ancient trans-Saharan desert route linking Algeria and Libya with Lake Chad. It is one of the last remaining areas in Niger where different varieties of productive and prized date palms (*Phoenix dactylifera*) can be found. It is a refuge for a range of mammals including the Cape hare *Lepus Capensis*, the golden jackal *Canis aureus*, the vulnerable Dorcas gazelle *Gazella dorcas* and the Barbary sheep *Ammotragus lervia*. This biological diversity is potentially threatened by oil exploration and the phenomenon of climate change. The oasis is essential for the local population, which practices subsistence agriculture in small fields around the oases, growing vegetables and fruit which contribute to families' income. They also harvest dates, which are exchanged for cereals, and salt from small salt pans found in the area. Sand deposition and soil salinization are the main threats: windbreaks are seen as the solution to reduce sand deposition, and there are plans to restore degraded palm plantations and improve agricultural techniques to reduce damage to the environment. Local NGOs and technicians have worked to raise awareness of these threats.

Lac Tchad

Site number: 1072 | Country: Niger | Administrative region: Diffa

Area: 338,550 ha | Coordinates: 14°01'05"N 13°18'24"E | Designation dates: 17-06-2001

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site covers the Nigerien part of Lake Chad, which is shared with Cameroon, Chad, and Nigeria. Though much reduced in recent years, the Lake is still the fourth largest in Africa after Lakes Victoria, Tanganyika, and Nyassa, and apparently the third largest endorheic lake in the world (after the Aral and Caspian Seas). The shallow lake is fed principally by the rivers which flow from the different countries and to a lesser extent (10%) by rainwater. The Nigerien portion is extremely biodiverse, with many migratory birds but also 120 species of fish. The rich bird life includes the Northern pintail (*Anas acuta*), garganey (*Anas querquedula*), gull-billed tern (*Gelochelidon nilotica*), reed cormorant (*Microcarbo africanus*), ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*) and marabou stork (*Leptoptilos crumenifer*). In this arid or semi-arid environment, the supply of water depends upon the rainfall across the wider catchment, which fluctuates and has generally not been favourable in recent years. Fish catches have declined significantly in recent decades despite very recent positive trends. Traditional nomadic livestock practices could contribute to desertification and require improved management.

Zone Humide du Moyen Niger II

Site number: 1383 | Country: Niger | Administrative region: Dosso

Area: 38,555 ha | Coordinates: 11°49'13"N 03°30'56"E | Designation dates: 26-04-2004

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

A 25-kilometre stretch of the River Niger along the border with Benin in the south-west of the country, with associated floodplains and pools. The area is extremely important for the presence of hippo grass *Echinochloa stagnina*, a quality forage plant, and the grass *Anthephora nigritana*, which provide habitat for thousands of water birds as well as pasturage. The Site also hosts threatened species including the African manatee (*Trichechus senegalensis*) and the hippopotamus, and the permanent pools provide refuge for several fish species that have disappeared elsewhere along the River. The hydrological regime is characterized by a period of flooding of four or five months, beginning in August with local torrential rains and again in November with floods coming down from upstream. Rich alluvial soils provide agricultural livelihoods; however unsustainable agricultural practices, as well as invasions of *Typha australis*, are potential threats. The land is largely state-owned but local communities enjoy long-standing usage rights.

Lac de Guidimouni

Site number: 2450 | Country: Niger | Administrative region: ZINDER

Area: 338 ha | Coordinates: 13°42'05"N 09°31'53"E | Designation dates: 18-12-2019

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Lake Guidimouni is located in the rural commune of Damagaram-Takaya in the Zinder Region, which receives low and unreliable annual rainfall. It is a permanent lake as it lies in a significant depression that is continuously filled by groundwater sources as well as surface water. The Lake is surrounded by trees and shrubs, dominated by date palm *Phoenix dactylifera* and trees including *Acacia nilotica*, *Faidherbia albida* and *Balanites aegyptiaca*. The water body, however, is dominated by the invasive herbaceous plant *Typha domingensis*. Prominent among the Lake's fauna are migratory and sedentary waterbirds such as the white stork *Ciconia ciconia*, the grey heron *Ardea cinerea*, the western cattle egret *Bubulcus ibis* and the little egret *Egretta garzetta*. Reptiles such as *Crocodylus niloticus* and the rock monitor *Varanus albigularis*, and the near-threatened patas monkey *Erythrocebus patas*, are also present. Over-exploitation of resources by the local communities, and variability in precipitation and temperature patterns across the Sahel region, are the main threats to the Lake's water quality and biodiversity.

Lac de Madarounfa

Site number: 2451 | Country: Niger | Administrative region: Région de Maradi

Area: 524 ha | Coordinates: 13°18'53"N 07°08'28"E | Designation dates: 18-12-2019

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Lake Madarounfa is the largest wetland in Maradi Region, with an estimated area that fluctuates seasonally and reaches up to 800 hectares during flood periods. The Lake's plant life is dominated by trees including *Adansonia digitata* (the baobab), *Prosopis africana* and *Lannea microcarpa*. Notable animal species include birds such as African jacana *Actophilornis africanus*, African sacred ibis *Threskiornis aethiopicus* and European roller *Coracias garrulus garrulus*. The Nile monitor *Varanus niloticus* and fish including the vulnerable *Tilapia busumana* are also present. Lake Madarounfa is a prominent tourist and religious site; the wetland includes "the tombs of the 99 saints" which attract Muslim pilgrims from Niger, northern Nigeria, Senegal and Mali. The Lake is co-managed by the Department for the Environment, the Division of Madarounfa and the local communities.

Parc national du W

Site number: 355 | Country: Niger | Administrative region: Tillabéri

Area: 385,000 ha | Coordinates: 12°39'44"N 02°34'59"E | Designation dates: 30-04-1987

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The "W" National Park is located on the River Niger in the Sudanian savanna biogeographical region; its vegetation also includes annual grasses and gallery forest. It makes up a part of the transboundary Biosphere Reserve shared with Benin and Burkina Faso, and is adjacent to the Ramsar Site of the same name in Burkina Faso. There is a rich bird life, including numerous species of wintering migratory *Anatidae* (ducks, geese and swans), storks and *Ardeidae* (herons and bitterns). More than 360 bird species have been recorded, including the Arabian bustard (*Ardeotis arabs*), the spur-winged goose (*Plectropterus gambensis*), the African fish eagle (*Haliaeetus vocifer*), the bateleur (*Terathopius ecaudatus*), the Abyssinian ground hornbill (*Bucorvus abyssinicus*), the white stork (*Ciconia ciconia*) and the hamerkop (*Scopus umbretta*). An important number of elephants, buffaloes, lions and antelope are supported as well as an economically valuable fishery. The River Niger is also a critically important source of water for domestic consumption and irrigation.