



# Ramsar Sites Information Service

## Annotated List of Wetlands of International Importance

# Pakistan

**19 Ramsar Site(s) covering 1,343,807 ha**

### **Astola Island**

Site number: 1,063 | Country: Pakistan | Administrative region: Balochistan Province

Area: 5,000 ha | Coordinates: 25°07'N 63°52'E | Designation dates: 10-05-2001

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Astola (Haft Talar) Island. 10/05/01. Balochistan. 5,000 ha. 25°07'N 063°52'E. An uninhabited island about six km in length, some 25 km south of the desert coast of Balochistan. It is the only significant offshore island along the north coast of the Arabian Sea, and as such maintains the genetic and ecological diversity of the area. The endangered Green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) and possibly the Hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) nest on the beach at the foot of cliffs, and it is a very important area for endemic reptiles such as the viper *Echis carinatus astoli*. The island is said to have an aura of mystery and is venerated by Hindus; there are architectural remains of an ancient temple to the Hindu goddess Kali Devi, as well as a prayer yard constructed for a Muslim saint associated with oceans. It serves as a base for fishermen between September and May, but is unfrequented during the period of rough seas and high tides. Feral cats originally introduced by fishermen to control the endemic rodent population pose an increasing threat to birds' nesting and breeding sites. Reprint of the RIS. Ramsar site no. 1063. Most recent RIS information: 2001.

### **Chashma Barrage**

Site number: 816 | Country: Pakistan | Administrative region: Punjab Province

Area: 34,099 ha | Coordinates: 32°25'N 71°22'E | Designation dates: 22-03-1996

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Chashma Barrage. 22/03/96; Punjab; 34,099 ha; 32°25'N 071°22'E. Wildlife Sanctuary. A storage reservoir on the Indus River supporting various aquatic plants. Up to 200,000 waterbirds of numerous species use the site for staging and wintering. An especially important staging area in spring and autumn for cranes. Over 50 species of birds, some of which are globally endangered, use the site for breeding. The site is used as storage for irrigation water, electricity generation, livestock grazing, reed harvesting, and fishing. Planned dam construction upstream would affect the water regime, limiting the site's use for water storage. Ramsar site no. 816.

## Deh Akro-II Desert Wetland Complex

Site number: 1,283 | Country: Pakistan | Administrative region: Sindh Province

Area: 20,500 ha | Coordinates: 26°50'N 68°20'E | Designation dates: 05-11-2002

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Deh Akro-II Desert Wetland Complex. 05/11/02; Sindh; 20,500 ha; 26°50'N 068°20'E. Wildlife Sanctuary. A complex of four major habitats, desert, wetland, marsh, and agricultural, 330km northeast of Karachi, representing an example of a natural inland wetland ecosystem comprising 36 lakes and unique desert habitat, which supports a variety of rare and endangered wildlife species. Based in a typical stable sand desert covered with 5m-10m dunes lying in an east-west orientation, the flat-bottomed valleys between them contain lakes, mostly brackish but five freshwater, recharged by seepage from the Nara and Jamrau irrigation canals and by rainwater. The complex plays host to a considerable number of fauna that are rare (e.g., Desert cat *Felis libyca*, Darter *Anhinga melanogaster pennant*, Garganey *Anas querquedula*, Black Ibis *Pseudibis papillosa*) and endangered (e.g., Marsh crocodile *Crocodylus palustris*, Hog deer *Axis porcinus*, White-eyed pochard *Anthya nyroca*), and it supports many indigenous fish species - though commercial fishing is prohibited, subsistence fishing by local people is permitted. Water scarcity during a current long dry spell is considered to be a threat. WWF-Pakistan assisted in preparations for the designation of the site. Ramsar site no. 1283. Most recent RIS information: 2001.

## Drigh Lake

Site number: 100 | Country: Pakistan | Administrative region: Sindh Province

Area: 164 ha | Coordinates: 27°34'N 68°06'E | Designation dates: 23-07-1976

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Drigh Lake. 23/07/76; Sindh; 164 ha; 27°34'N 068°06'E. Wildlife Sanctuary. A small, slightly brackish lake with extensive reed marshes and rich aquatic vegetation situated in the Indus floodplain. An important breeding and wintering area for a wide variety of waterbirds, regularly supporting over 20,000 birds, mostly Anatidae (ducks, geese, swans, etc.), but including 5,000 roosting Black-crowned Night Heron. The surrounding plains are cultivated for rice production. Ramsar site no. 100.

## Haleji Lake

Site number: 101 | Country: Pakistan | Administrative region: Sindh Province

Area: 1,704 ha | Coordinates: 24°47'N 67°46'E | Designation dates: 23-07-1976

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Haleji Lake. 23/07/76; Sindh; 1,704 ha; 24°47'N 067°46'E. Wildlife Sanctuary. An artificial freshwater lake with fluctuating water levels, fringed by brackish seepage lagoons and supporting abundant aquatic vegetation. One of the most important breeding, staging and wintering areas for waterbirds in southern Pakistan, supporting between 50,000 and 100,000 birds annually, including Dalmatian Pelican, European Wigeon and Black Coot. Thousands of Black-crowned Night Heron roost in the area. Ramsar site no. 101.

## Hub Dam

Site number: 1,064 | Country: Pakistan | Administrative region: Sindh and Balochistan

Area: 27,000 ha | Coordinates: 25°15'N 67°07'E | Designation dates: 10-05-2001

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Hub (Hab) Dam. 10/05/01. Sindh, Balochistan. 27,000 ha. 25°15'N 067°07'E. A large water storage reservoir constructed in 1981 on the Hub River on the arid plains north of Karachi. The reservoir supplies water for irrigation in Lasbella District and domestic and drinking water for the city of Karachi. It is an important staging and wintering area for an appreciable number of waterbirds and contains a variety of fish species which increase in abundance during periods of high water. The Mahseer (*Tor putitora*), an indigenous riverine fish found in the Hub River, grows up to 2m in length and provides for excellent angling. Recent consecutive years of low summer rainfall have reduced the water level. WWF launched a wetland visitors' centre on World Wetlands Day 1999. Ramsar site no. 1064. Most recent RIS information: 2001.

## Indus Delta

Site number: 1,284 | Country: Pakistan | Administrative region: Sindh Province  
Area: 472,800 ha | Coordinates: 24°06'N 67°42'E | Designation dates: 05-11-2002

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Indus Delta. 05/11/02; Sindh; ~472,800 ha; 24°06'N 067°42'E. Includes wildlife sanctuaries. The fifth largest delta in the world, formed under largely arid climatic conditions and characterized by high river discharge, moderate tides, and evidently the highest wave energy of any river in the world. The fan-shaped delta consists of creeks, estuaries, mud, sand, salt flats, mangrove habitat, marshes, sea bays, and straits and rocky shores. Its 129,000 ha. of mangrove, mostly *Avicenna marina*, comprises 97% of the total mangrove area in the country and is said to be the 7th largest mangrove forest in the world. A large number of species are supported, of birds (including the threatened Dalmatian pelican), of fish and shrimps, and of dolphins (Plumbeous dolphin, Finless porpoise, and Bottlenose dolphin), humpback whale, and reptiles. The area is rich in archaeological and religious heritage. Some 40 settlements in the area, with about one million people, find livelihoods largely from fishing. Ramsar site no. 1284. Most recent RIS information: 2001.

## Indus Dolphin Reserve

Site number: 1,065 | Country: Pakistan | Administrative region: Sindh  
Area: 125,000 ha | Coordinates: 28°01'N 69°15'E | Designation dates: 10-05-2001

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Indus Dolphin Reserve. 10/05/01; Sindh; 125,000 ha; 28°01'N, 069°15'E. A 170 km stretch of the River Indus between the Sukkar and Guddu barrages, providing a home for the 500 remaining individuals of the formerly common Indus dolphin *Platanista minor* (or *P. indi*), a blind cetacean endemic to this river. Originally sea creatures, the Indus dolphins adapted to river life as the Indian subcontinent rose. The site is considered essential for the survival of this CITES Appendix I and IUCN Red List species endemic to Pakistan. The area is also home to the historical Sadhu bella Hindu shrine and Satinjo Astan Muslim graveyard. Ramsar site no. 1065. Most recent RIS information: 2001.

## Jiwani Coastal Wetland

Site number: 1,066 | Country: Pakistan | Administrative region: Balochistan  
Area: 4,600 ha | Coordinates: 25°05'N 61°48'E | Designation dates: 10-05-2001

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Jiwani Coastal Wetland. 10/05/01; Balochistan; 4,600 ha; 25°05'N 061°48'E. Located along Gawater Bay around the delta of the Dasht River, a very significant area of mangrove forests extending westward to the Iranian frontier, contiguous with Iran's Govater Bay and Hur-e-Bahu Ramsar site. The site is a particularly important nesting ground for endangered Olive Ridley and Green turtles, especially at four moderately wide and gently sloping sandy beaches in the eastern part of the site. Fishing is the most important human activity, practiced by clans that have migrated from Iran and from farther east in Pakistan as well as descendants of traders and soldiers from North and East Africa and the Gulf. Provincial plans to grant fishing concessions to a US industrial fishing firm and offshore drilling rights to a foreign oil company are viewed with concern by conservation authorities. Ramsar site no. 1066. Most recent RIS information: 2001.

## Jubho Lagoon

Site number: 1,067 | Country: Pakistan | Administrative region: Sindh Province  
Area: 706 ha | Coordinates: 24°20'N 68°40'E | Designation dates: 10-05-2001

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Jubho Lagoon. 10/05/01; Sindh; 706 ha; 24°20'N 068°40'E. A large shallow brackish lagoon with associated mudflats and marshes, important for wintering waterbirds (particularly Greater and Lesser Flamingos and Dalmatian Pelicans) and for commercial fisheries. The site is privately owned by local inhabitants, who practice fishing and livestock grazing. WWF launched a wetland visitors' centre on World Wetlands Day 1999. Ramsar site no. 1067. Most recent RIS information: 2001.

## Kinjhar Lake

Site number: 99 | Country: Pakistan | Administrative region: Sindh Province

Area: 13,468 ha | Coordinates: 24°56'N 68°03'E | Designation dates: 23-07-1976

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Kinjhar (Kalri) Lake. 23/07/76; Sindh; 13,468 ha; 24°56'N 068°03'E. Wildlife Sanctuary. The largest freshwater lake in Pakistan, supporting extensive reedbeds and rich submerged and floating vegetation. An internationally important area for breeding, staging and wintering waterbirds, supporting as many as 140,000 birds, including European Wigeon, Black Coot and Common Pochard. The lake is a major source of drinking water for Karachi and supports an important fishery. Ramsar site no. 99.

## Miani Hor

Site number: 1,068 | Country: Pakistan | Administrative region: Balochistan Province

Area: 55,000 ha | Coordinates: 25°24'N 66°06'E | Designation dates: 10-05-2001

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Miani Hor. 10/05/01. Balochistan. 55,000 ha. 25°24'N 066°06'E. A large shallow sea bay and estuarine system with several low-lying islands and extensive mangrove swamps and intertidal mud flats, separated from the adjacent Sonmiani Bay in the Arabian Sea by a broad peninsula of sand dunes. The site is the only area of Pakistan's coast where three species of mangroves (*Avicennia marina*, *Rhizophora mucronata*, and *Ceriops tagal*) occur naturally. The Hor receives freshwater input from a number of seasonal streams rising in the hills of eastern Balochistan to the north. The site is important for large concentrations of waterbirds. Smaller fish, shrimp, and crabs are abundant and are both consumed locally and brought to market. The area is archaeologically interesting: Balakot, 16 km to the northeast, was once home to a thriving civilization which flourished around 2000 BC. Domestic waste disposal and accumulated solid waste debris (plastic bags and bottles, etc.) are growing problems. Both IUCN-Pakistan and WWF-Pakistan are very active in the region, in collaboration with local communities, and WWF launched a wetland visitors' centre on World Wetlands Day 1999. Ramsar site no. 1068. Most recent RIS information: 2001.

## Nurri Lagoon

Site number: 1,069 | Country: Pakistan | Administrative region: Sindh Province

Area: 2,540 ha | Coordinates: 24°30'N 68°47'E | Designation dates: 10-05-2001

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Nurri Lagoon. 10/05/01. Sindh. 2,540 ha. 24°30'N 068°47'E. A very shallow brackish lagoon with barren mudflats on the northern side. The site has consistently recorded very large concentrations of migratory waterbirds on a seasonal basis. Salinity and sedimentation are increasing due to the intrusion of the sea in this area. The privately-owned land provides livelihood to about 3,000-4,000 people in surrounding villages, chiefly through fisheries. Invasive species, such as *Typha* and occasionally *Tamarix*, are seen to be hindering the growth and diversity of native flora, and population pressures, including accelerating agricultural and industrial pollution, offer challenges. Ramsar site no. 1069. Most recent RIS information: 2001.

## Ormara Turtle Beaches

Site number: 1,070 | Country: Pakistan | Administrative region: Balochistan Province

Area: 2,400 ha | Coordinates: 25°13'N 64°28'E | Designation dates: 10-05-2001

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Ormara Turtle Beaches. 10/05/01. Balochistan. 2,400 ha. 25°13'N 064°28'E. A sandy beach extending about 10 km along the shores of the Arabian Sea. The site supports a considerable number of marine turtles, particularly the endangered Olive Ridley and Green turtles and possibly the Hawksbill turtle as well. Because the area falls in the subduction zone of the Indian Ocean tectonic plate moving northward, clusters of mud volcanos have developed along the shore, where gas-charged water escapes to the surface. The vegetation is composed of salt-tolerant and arid area plants which grow in very harsh, freshwater-scarce conditions. Migratory waterbirds visit the site but not in significant numbers. Subsistence and commercial fishing is the primary economic, social, and cultural activity of the local communities, and drying of fish is an important source of employment. Accumulations of plastic debris along the coast cause significant problems, as does the capture of turtles for export. Ramsar site no. 1070. Most recent RIS information: 2001.

## Runn of Kutch

Site number: 1,285 | Country: Pakistan | Administrative region: Sindh Province  
Area: 566,375 ha | Coordinates: 24°23'N 70°05'E | Designation dates: 05-11-2002

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Runn of Kutch. 05/11/02; Sindh; 566,375 ha; 24°23'N 70°05'E. Wildlife Sanctuary. Part of the great Thar desert and comprising stabilized sand dunes, some more than 170m in height, with broad inter-dunal valleys of alluvial soil, integral with the large Rann of Kutch across the frontier with India, which includes permanent saline marshes, coastal brackish lagoons, tidal mudflats, and estuarine habitats. The site supports many locally and globally threatened species, including the Great Indian bustard (*Choriotis nigricaps*), Houbara bustard (*Chlamydotis undulata*), Sarus crane (*Grus antigone*), and hyena (*Hyaena hyaena*) and supports more than 1% of the biogeographical population of flamingos *Phoenicopterus ruber* and *P. minor*. Some 500,000 agro-pastoralists live in 330 villages/hamlets in the site area, and rich archaeological remains include three giant temples dating from 1375-1449. Scarcity of water remains the potential threat to the ecosystem. WWF-Pakistan and Sindh authorities have carried out work with GEF funding and a management plan is in preparation. Ramsar site no. 1285. Most recent RIS information: 2001.

## Tanda Dam

Site number: 98 | Country: Pakistan | Administrative region: North West Frontier Province  
Area: 405 ha | Coordinates: 33°35'N 71°22'E | Designation dates: 23-07-1976

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Tanda Dam. 23/07/76; North West Frontier Province; 405 ha; 33°35'N 71°22'E. Wildlife Reserve. A small water-storage reservoir supporting irrigated agriculture and a small fishery. The site is a wintering area for Anatidae (ducks, geese, swans, etc.) and serves as a staging area for various waterbirds. Bird numbers seldom exceed 500 in mid-winter and 2,000 during migration periods. Ramsar site no. 98.

## Taunsa Barrage

Site number: 817 | Country: Pakistan | Administrative region: Punjab Province  
Area: 6,756 ha | Coordinates: 30°42'N 70°50'E | Designation dates: 22-03-1996

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Taunsa Barrage. 22/03/96; Punjab; 6,576 ha; 30°42'N 70°50'E. Wildlife Sanctuary. A large reservoir on the Indus River, constructed for irrigation purposes. Vegetation includes riverine forest and numerous species of aquatic plants. A very important wintering area for waterfowl, notably Anatidae (ducks, geese, swans, etc.) which breed in the area, and a staging area for some species of cranes and shorebirds. Human activities include commercial fishing, irrigation, reed harvesting, recreation, and in adjacent areas agriculture, livestock grazing, and forestry. Ramsar site no. 817.

## Thanedar Wala Game Reserve

Site number: 97 | Country: Pakistan | Administrative region: North West Frontier Province  
Area: 4,047 ha | Coordinates: 32°37'N 71°05'E | Designation dates: 23-07-1976

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Thanedar Wala. 23/07/76; North West Frontier Province; 4,047 ha; 32°37'N 71°05'E. Game Reserve. A stretch of the Kurram River and associated floodplain, consisting of braided river channels and seasonally flooded islands. Reeds and sedges occur, along with extensive thickets of *Tamarix*. An important route for migratory birds, the site supports small numbers of various species of breeding and wintering waterbirds. Hunting is the main human activity. Ramsar site no. 97.

## Uchhali Complex

Site number: 818 | Country: Pakistan | Administrative region: Punjab Province

Area: 1,243 ha | Coordinates: 32°37'N 72°00'E | Designation dates: 22-03-1996

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Uchhali Complex (including Khabbaki, Uchhali and Jahlar Lakes). 22/03/96; Punjab; 1,243 ha; 32°37'N 072°00'E. Game Reserve; Wildlife Sanctuary. Three separate brackish to saline lakes of fluctuating levels, surrounded by agricultural fields, located in the heart of the Salt Range. An important wintering area for the rare or vulnerable White-headed Duck, Ferruginous Duck, Greylag Goose, and flamingos. Villagers depend on the wetland for their domestic water supply. Human activities include fishing, livestock grazing, recreation, and illegal hunting. Ramsar site no. 818. Most recent RIS information: 1996.