Annotated List of Wetlands of International Importance

Panama

5 Ramsar Site(s) covering 220,737 ha

Bahía de Panamá
Site number: 1,319 | Country: Panama | Administrative region: Panamá
Area: 85,664.6 ha | Coordinates: 08°53'20"N 78°56'42"W | Designation dates: 20-10-2003

Panama has extended the boundaries of Bahía de Panamá (Panama Bay) from 49,919 hectares to 85,664 ha. It now includes a much greater area of estuaries, mangroves, forests, marshes, and freshwater lagoons. Panama Bay is one of the most critical migration sites in the western hemisphere with an estimated presence of between one and two million shorebirds. The Site provides habitat for 14% of the global population of the western sandpiper (*Calidris mauri*) with more than a million individuals, and over 30,000 semipalmated plover (*Charadrius semipalmatus*) representing 20% of its global population. The Bay is lined with mangrove forests where at least seven mangrove species are found, two of which are classified as vulnerable in the IUCN Red List: *Avicennia bicolor* and *Pelliciera rhizophorae* (tea mangrove). The different ecosystems provide refuge and habitat to globally threatened and nationally protected plant and animal species, including great curassow (*Crax rubra*), Geoffroy's spider monkey (*Ateles geoffroyi*), Baird's tapir (*Tapirella bairdii*), giant anteater (*Myrmecophaga tridactyla*) and *Annona spraguei*, a tree endemic to Panama which is classified as vulnerable. Panama Bay is also a Wildlife Refuge protected by national law. However, given its proximity to Panama City, it has suffered the pressures of urban development and deforestation has modified the structure and composition of its vegetation cover. Other threats are sewage discharge and uncontrolled fishing.

Golfo de Montijo
Site number: 510 | Country: Panama | Administrative region: Veraguas
Area: 80,765 ha | Coordinates: 07°45'N 081°07'W | Designation dates: 26-11-1990

Golfo de Montijo. 26/11/90; Veraguas; 80,765 ha; 07°45'N 081°07'W. An extensive complex of coastal wetlands, estuarine waters, beaches, several species of mangroves, marshes, seasonally flooded grassland, irrigated agricultural land, and rice fields. The area supports an important traditional fishery, numerous species of nesting and wintering waterbirds, various mammals and reptiles. Human activities include hunting and mangrove felling. Ramsar site no. 510. Most recent RIS information: 1990.
Humedal de Importancia Internacional Damani-Guariviara
Site number: 1,907 | Country: Panama | Administrative region: Ngöbe Buglé
Area: 24,089 ha | Coordinates: 08°55'59"N 81°43'59"W | Designation dates: 09-03-2010
View Site details in RSIS

Humedal de Importancia Internacional Damani-Guariviara. 09/03/10; Comarca Ngöbe Buglé; 24,089 ha; 08°56'N 081°44'W. National protected area. The Damani-Guariviara wetland lies within the Neotropical-Caribbean biogeographical region and includes coastal and inland wetlands such as beaches, marshes, salty and freshwater lagoons, rivers and mangroves. Because of its various habitats, the site has high biological value as it sustains an ample diversity of flora and fauna. The area is an important nesting site for turtles such as the critically endangered Carey (Eretmochelys imbricata) and it sustains species in CITES' appendices I and II and IUCN Red List such as Manatee (Trichechus manatus), Howling monkeys (Aloutta palliata), Harpy eagle (Harpia harpyja), Loggerhead turtle (Caretta caretta), and Green turtle (Chelonia mydas). The area also provides livelihoods for the nomad Ngobe y Buglé ethnic groups, among Panama's most ancient tribes, and it is considered to have high ethno- and eco-touristic potential. Among its main threats, the wetland faces deforestation, inappropriate agricultural practices, subsistence hunting, overexploitation of marine resources, mining, and pollution of its catchment. In response, a management plan has been proposed for the site. The site was designated a national protected area in 2004 under the category Wetland of International Importance. Ramsar site no. 1907. Most recent RIS information: 2010.

Punta Patiño
Site number: 630 | Country: Panama | Administrative region: Darién
Area: 13,805 ha | Coordinates: 08°18'N 78°14'W | Designation dates: 13-10-1993
View Site details in RSIS

Punta Patiño. 13/10/93; Darién; 13,805 ha; 08°18'N 078°14'W. Private Nature Reserve. A littoral plain subject to tidal flooding, consisting of three types of tropical coastal-marine habitat: beaches, reefs, and an estuarine system with mangroves and “albinas” (crusty salt formations at dessicated pools). Numerous migratory and resident seabirds, including a large number of Pelecanus spp. (during the rainy season) occupy the site. There are 19 endangered and protected species occurring, consisting of reptiles, birds and mammals. Human activities include commercial and subsistence fishing, tourism, an environmental education programme, and an agroforestry project. Ramsar site no. 630. Most recent RIS information: 1993.

San San - Pond Sak
Site number: 611 | Country: Panama | Administrative region: Bocas del Toro
Area: 16,413.5 ha | Coordinates: 09°30'N 82°30'W | Designation dates: 09-06-1993
View Site details in RSIS

San San-Pond Sak. 09/06/93; Bocas del Toro; 16,414 ha; 09°24'N 082°57'W. An aggregation of channels, shallow, brackish and freshwater lakes in the lower basin of two rivers. The site, bordering Costa Rica, includes coastal plains, bays, sand bars, and beaches. Vegetation consists of mangroves and peat bogs. The wetlands recharge aquifers which provide water for 56,000 inhabitants and irrigate banana plantations. The site provides important habitat for 133 species of birds, of which 36 are endangered; 55 species of mammals, 24 endangered; seven endangered reptiles of the 54 occurring; and 20 amphibian species. Human activities include ranching, timber harvesting, subsistence agriculture, pig raising, fishing, and hunting. Ramsar site no. 611. Most recent RIS information: 1993.