Ramsar Sites Information Service

Annotated List of Wetlands of International Importance

Tunisia

42 Ramsar Site(s) covering **844,685 ha**

Ain Dahab

Site number: 1,696 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Siliana Governorate
Area: 560 ha | Coordinates: 35°52'59"N 09°28'E | Designation dates: 07-11-2007
View Site details in RSIS

Ain Dahab. 07/11/07; Siliana; 560 ha; 35°53'N 009°28'E. Located in central Tunisia, this wetland, whose name literally means "source of gold", originates in a karstic environment well-known for its underground hydrological formations, which in turn host an important population of bats (Pipistrellus sp) that has not yet been fully studied. The portion of the site above ground has the typical flora and fauna of central Tunisia, which is characterised by a rocky semi-arid landscape. The site is virtually intact, and extensive cattle grazing probably constitutes its main stressor. Ramsar site No. 1696. Most recent RIS information: 2007.

Bahiret el Bibane

Site number: 1,697 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Médenine Governorat
Area: 39,266 ha | Coordinates: 33°15'15"N 11°12'56"E | Designation dates: 07-11-2007
View Site details in RSIS

Bahiret el Bibane is a large lagoon of around 33 km by 10 km near the Libyan border, which is separated from the sea by two peninsulas (Solb el-Gharbi and Solb ech-Charki) which almost meet. The Site also covers the coastal waters outside the lagoon, the smaller Bahar Alouane lagoon, and two “sebkhets” or salt flats. The lagoon is an important nursery for fish which grow in the rich waters of the lagoon and then go out to sea; it is famous throughout Tunisia for its fish production. A large traditional fish barrier with traps allows the fish to enter the lagoon to grow and later to leave. At 3.5 km long this is the longest such barrier in the Mediterranean. Bahiret El Bibane is also an important breeding and wintering site for water birds. It hosts wigeon (Anas penelope), northern pintail (Anas acuta), northern shoveler (Anas clypeata), common crane (Grus grus), Eurasian curlew (Numenius arquata), several species of gull such as the Mediterranean gull (Ichthyaetus melanocephalus), little gull (Larus minutus) and black-headed gull (Larus ridibundus), as well as the Caspian tern (Sterna caspia).

Barrage de Sidi El Barrak

Site number: 2,017 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Bélja
Area: 2,734 ha | Coordinates: 37°00'41"N 09°01'18"E | Designation dates: 02-02-2012
View Site details in RSIS

Barrage de Sidi El Barrak. 02/02/12; Beja; 2,734 ha; 37°00'41"N 009°01'18"E. One of the most important dams and reservoirs in Tunisia for its use for irrigation, supply of potable water to the Tunis and Sfax areas and the Sahel, and amelioration of the quality of water of the Medjerda Cap Bon canal. The site, adjacent to the Mediterranean coast in the northwest, is rich in fish species, including the vulnerable Common Carp Cyprinus carpio, and mammals like the near-threatened otter Lutra lutra among others. The wetland produces over 100 tons of fish per year for commercial purposes, especially the Mediterranean sea bass and the zander. It is characterized by natural and artificial forests rich in both timber and non-timber forest products, and provides a source of livelihood for most of the local population who carry out agricultural practices as well as fishing around the area. It has just been connected to the national network of Tunisian waters through the Sejnanae dam. Ramsar Site no. 2017. Most recent RIS information: 2011.

Barrage de Sidi Saad

Site number: 2,018 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Kairouan
Area: 8,650 ha | Coordinates: 35°22'N 09°40'E | Designation dates: 02-02-2012
View Site details in RSIS

Barrage de Sidi Saad. 02/02/12; Kairouan; 8,650 ha; 35°22'N 009°40'E. A dam and reservoir that was created in 1981 to fight against floods of the river Zeroud and ensures a supply of potable water in the region of Kairouan. It is a breeding zone for several fish species and includes introduced freshwater fish like the carp Ctenopharingodron sp., zander Sander lucioperca, common roach Rutilus rutilus, rudd Scardinius erythrophtalmus and catfish Silurus glanis, as well as the introduced marine Mullet, and occasionally the semi-aquatic turtle Mauremys leprosa is observed on the site. It supports several species of waterbirds including herons, the coot Fulica atra, and Great Crested Grebe. The watershed is located in the Mediterranean Biome-North Africa and characterized by high relief hosting some tufted reeds and benthic fauna, dominated by phanerogram plants like the sago pondweed Potamogeton pectinatus. The site is state-owned but provides livelihoods through fishing and irrigated agriculture to people in the region, though over-exploitation of these resources is seen as a potential threat. Ramsar Site no 2018. Most recent RIS information: 2011.

Barrage Lebna

Site number: 1,698 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Nabeul Governorate
Area: 1,147 ha | Coordinates: 36°45'N 10°54'E | Designation dates: 07-11-2007
View Site details in RSIS

Barrage Lebna. 07/11/07; Nabeul; 1,147 ha; 36°45'N 010°54'E. Located in the extreme northeast of the country near Cap Bon, this lake is an artificial barrage isolated from the rest of the national dam system, effectively preventing any water exchange between this site and other nearby barrages. After its construction in 1987, it soon became a primary destination for tens of thousands of waterfowl migrating between Africa and Europe, some of them threatened, like the marbled teal (Marmaronetta angustirostris), the white-headed duck (Oxyura leucocephala) and the ferruginous duck (Aythya nyroca), among others. No major adverse effects have been reported for the site. Ramsar site No. 1698. Most recent RIS information: 2007.

Barrage Merguellil

Site number: 2,010 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Kairouan
Area: 714 ha | Coordinates: 35°33'56"N 09°44'18"E | Designation dates: 02-02-2012
View Site details in RSIS

Barrage Merguellil. 02/02/12; Kairouan; 714 ha; 35°33'57"N 009°44'19"E. A reservoir and dam equipped with water and soil conservation techniques intended to intensify and enhance agricultural production within the basin. It is home to diverse species at different critical stages of their life cycle, including the endangered White-headed Duck Oxyura leucocephala. There are several waterbird species including Ardea cinerea, Egretta garzetta, Marmaronetta angustirostris, Phalacrocorax carbo, and Sylvia melanocephala. Within the basin, Eucalyptus sp is the dominant plant in the forest flora. Human pressure through agricultural activities is a challenging situation in the area and has caused the degradation and erosion of watersheds. This results in water pollution and sediment accumulation which is seen as a persistent threat for the site. The dam is also known as the Barrage El Haouareb. Ramsar Site no. 2010. Most recent RIS information: 2011.

Barrage Mlaabi

Site number: 2,077 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Nabeul
Area: 98 ha | Coordinates: 36°49'44"N 10°59'07"E | Designation dates: 21-09-2012
View Site details in RSIS

Barrage Mlaabi. 21/09/2012; Nabeul; 98 ha; 36°49'44"N 010°59'07"E. A freshwater storage area on the Cap Bon peninsula constructed mainly for ground water recharge, serving today for irrigation of summer plants. It supports several populations of waterbirds migrating between African wintering grounds and Eurasian breeding grounds as well as North African endemic species including IUCN red-listed White-headed Duck (Oxyura leucocephala, up to 32 individuals) and Marbled Teal (Marmaronetta angustirostris). The main habitats are shallow lake waters that host aquatic plant species, principally dense populations of Ruppia cirrhosa and Zannichellia palustris. The main land use is agriculture (mainly cereal farming upstream, animal rearing on mountainsides, vegetable, fruits and tobacco cultivation downstream). Ramsar site no. 2077. Most recent RIS information 2012.

Barrage Oued El Hajar

Site number: 2,013 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Nabeul
Area: 254 ha | Coordinates: 36°49'59"N 11°01'59"E | Designation dates: 02-02-2012
View Site details in RSIS

Barrage Oued El Hajar. 02/02/12; Nabeul; 254 ha; 36°50'N 011°02'E. One of the most recent and biggest freshwater dams in a series recently constructed in Tunisia for agricultural purposes (mainly cereal farming upstream, animal rearing on hillsides, and vegetable and tobacco cultivation downstream). It contributes to flood control during long rainy seasons. The site is an important "migratory bottleneck" for migrating birds which pass across the Mediterranian Sea, and is also a nesting and wintering ground for several waterbirds, among which are endangered and vulnerable species like Oxyura leucocephala and Marmaronetta angustirostris. In spring, it provides a resting place for several species (not only waterbirds) which migrate to Africa in winter. It harbours more than 1% of the population of several important waterbird species including Arythya nyroca, Oxyura leucocephala and Phoenicopterus roseus. A major threat is the use of fertilizers in agricultural activities carried out around the site, which may in the long run lead to eutrophication. Ramsar Site no. 2013. Most recent RIS information: 2011.

Barrage Oued Ermal

Site number: 2,014 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Zaghouan
Area: 620 ha | Coordinates: 36°20'56"N 10°20'54"E | Designation dates: 02-02-2012
View Site details in RSIS

Barrage Oued Ermal. 02/02/12; Zaghouan; 620 ha; 36°20'56"N 010°20'55'E. A dam and reservoir that constitutes a vital area for several waterfowl at various critical stages of their life cycle. It is a nesting place for such waterbirds as Cattle Egret, Spoonbill, Eurasian Coot, Shoveler Ducks, Plover, Gadwall, Avocet, Black-winged Stilt, Northern Lapwing, Common Snipe, Marbled Duck, Marsh Harrier, Kingfisher, Water Pipit, Skylark, and Chiffchaff. The vegetation surrounding the site is dominated by Eucalyptus sp. The dam has a significant hydrological value as a source of irrigation for a large area immediately downstream in the plains of Bouficha. The area has important historical value due to the presence of the Roman monument "Temple des eaux". It is threatened by the rearing of animals, which increases soil erosion and causes the destruction of the natural vegetation as well as a decrease in the quantity of water and potentially the death of fish species. Ramsar Site no. 2014. Most recent RIS information: 2011.

Barrage Sidi Abdelmoneem

Site number: 2,016 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Nabeul
Area: 31 ha | Coordinates: 36°51'N 10°55'59"E | Designation dates: 02-02-2012
View Site details in RSIS

Barrage Sidi Abdelmoneem. 02/02/12; Nabeul; 31 ha; 36 51'31"N 010 56'00"E. An artificial wetland near the tip of the Cap Bon peninsula with isolated freshwater filling up in winter as a result of rainfall and runoffs from agricultural practices. The site provides nesting opportunities for many vulnerable waterfowl species like the White-headed Duck Oxyura leucocephala and Marbled Teal Marmaronetta angustirostris classified as endangered and vulnerable species in the IUCN Red List. Land use is characterized by agriculture (cereals, farming on the mountain slopes, and gardening), and the main hydrological value of the site is to provide water for irrigation and contribute to groundwater recharge. The main habitats include shallow waters that host plant species Ruppia sp and Zannichellia sp as well as the edges of the water bodies colonized by a dense population of Typha cattail or bulrush. Ramsar Site no. 2016. Most recent RIS information: 2011.

Chott Elguetar

Site number: 2,005 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Gafsa
Area: 7,400 ha | Coordinates: 34°17'25"N 08°54'48"E | Designation dates: 02-02-2012
View Site details in RSIS

Chott Elguetar. 02/02/12; Gafsa; 7,400 ha; 34°17'25"N 008°54'49"E. A seasonal intermittent saline lake (chott, or sebhka) at the northern limit of the Sahara, it is a natural wetland almost in its primary state, characterized by a combination of large shallow depressions irregularly flooded. Vegetation present includes halophytes adapted to long dry periods stretching to over 5,000 ha of the site. The diversity in the vegetation is determined by the presence of water in the sites which is also very important for increasing the water table level and providing a breeding ground for water birds. The site provides habitat for a good number of threatened species, including the Scimitar Oryx Oryx dammah, Addax Addax nasomaculatus, and Dama Gazelle Gazella dama, which are critically endangered, the gazelles Gazella leptoceros and Gazella cuvier which are endangered, and Gazella dorcas, which is vulnerable. It supports several mammals throughout their life cycles, and it is a nesting and wintering ground for many waterbirds. Traces of religious and industrial activity have been found which date back 40,000 years, as well as evidence of Neolithic and Berber cultures from an early time. Ramsar Site no. 2005. Most recent RIS information: 2011.

Chott El Jerid

Site number: 1,699 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Tozeur and Kebili Governorates
Area: 586,187 ha | Coordinates: 33°42'N 08°24'E | Designation dates: 07-11-2007
View Site details in RSIS

Chott El Jerid. 07/11/07; Tozeur, Kebili; 586,187 ha; 33°42'N 008°24'E. A vast saline depression located between the mountain range of Cherb to the north and the desert to the south, representing a characteristic wetland of the northern Sahara. Of special interest are the fossil water aquifers that nourish the oases around the site, and some economically interesting oil reservoirs. The site also hosts an important steppe fauna and flora and supports between 3,000 and 15,000 Mediterranean flamingos (Phoenicopterus ruber), or 3.5% of the individuals for this species in this biogeographical region. Climate change and overgrazing on the borders of the chott risk provoking a loss of vegetation cover and erosion. Ramsar site No. 1699. Most recent RIS information: 2007.

Complexe des zones humides de Barrage Ghdir El Goulla et Barrage El Mornaguia

Site number: 2,101 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Ariana
Area: 273 ha | Coordinates: 36°46'41"N 10°02'16"E | Designation dates: 02-02-2013
View Site details in RSIS

Complexe des zones humides de Barrage Ghdir El Goulla et Barrage El Mornaguia (Al Mornaguia). 02/02/2013; Ariana; 273 ha; 36°46'42"N 010°02'16"E. Important Bird Area (Part). Fresh water storage areas constructed for potable water supply and irrigation, providing nesting grounds for several waterbirds and a wintering ground for migrating species, including the Eurasian Wigeon (Anas Penelope), the IUCN red-listed Marbled Teal (Marmaronetta angustirostris) and White-Headed Duck (Oxyura leucocephala) - up to 73 individuals, representing 14 % of the species population in the West Palearctic biogeographic realm. Different fish species have been identified and the vegetation is essentially Juncus sp, Tamarix gallica and Phragmites australis. Ramsar site no. 2101. Most recent RIS information 2013.

Complexe des zones humides des Chott el Guetayate et Sebkhet Dhreia et Oueds Akarit, Rekhama et Meleh

Site number: 2,076 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Sfax, Gabès
Area: 4,845 ha | Coordinates: 34°06'59"N 10°01'46"E | Designation dates: 21-09-2012
View Site details in RSIS

Complexe des zones humides des Chott el Guetayate et Sebkhet Dhreia et Oueds Akarit, Rekhama et Meleh. 21/09/2012; Sfax, Gabès; 4,845 ha; 34°06'59"N 010°01'47"E. Intertidal marshes situated in an estuarine coastal environment including beaches and bluffs, crossed by several valleys extending to the Gulf of Gabes. The site supports several waterbird species including the Eurasian Curlew (Numenius arquata), Northern Shoveler (Anas clypeata) and Dunlin (Calidris alpina). Several fish species have been identified here, including migrating species such as the IUCN red-listed catadromous European Eel (Anguilla anguilla), estuarine fish species such as the South European toothcarp (Aphanius fasciatus), and marine bivalves. The diversity of habitats encourages the presence of a rich plant diversity including halophytes, perennials and annuals as well as dense tamarisk forests. Its main hydrological values include groundwater recharge, water retention and flood regulation. Main land uses include agriculture and fishing, and it is an important archaeological and cultural site with great historical value. Ramsar site no. 2076. Most recent RIS information 2012.

Complexe des zones humides de Sebkhet Oum Ez-Zessar et Sebkhet El Grine

Site number: 2,100 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Médenine
Area: 9,195 ha | Coordinates: 33°39'N 10°31'E | Designation dates: 02-02-2013
View Site details in RSIS

Complexe des zones humides de Sebkhet Oum Ez-Zessar et Sebkhet El Grine. 02/02/2013; Médenine; 9,195 ha; 33°39'N 010°31'E. Important Bird Area. Comprising permanent estuarine and shallow marine waters including intertidal marshes, the site supports several bird species including the Eurasian Spoonbill Platalea leucorodia, up to 360 individuals, representing 3% of the population of the West Palearctic biogeographic realm, and the Greater Flamingo (2,200 individuals). Estuarine fish species have been identified here, including the estuarine European Toothcarp (Aphanius fasciatus) and Thicklip Grey Mullet (Chelon labrosus). Several reptiles and mammals such as the Fennec Fox (Vulpes zerda), Shaw's Jird (Meriones shawi), and the Algerian Hedgehog (Erinaceus algirus) have been identified with dense vegetation consisting mainly of halophytes. The main hydrological function is groundwater recharge. The site is remarkable for its natural state with very little human exploitation; the main human activities include traditional fishing and grazing. Ramsar site no. 2100. Most recent RIS information: 2013.

Complexe Lac de Tunis

Site number: 2,096 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Tunis
Area: 2,243 ha | Coordinates: 36°49'N 10°13'59"E | Designation dates: 23-01-2013
View Site details in RSIS

Complexe Lac de Tunis. 23/01/2013; Tunis; 2,243 ha; 36°49 N 010°14 E. IBA. A coastal brackish lagoon surrounded by intertidal marshes, in close proximity to the city of Tunis. As a central wetland in the Gulf of Tunis, the site receives sea and inland water from surrounding salt flats. It is a good nesting ground for several waterbirds and wintering ground for migrating species such as the Great Crested Grebe (Podiceps cristatus) and the Northern Shoveler (Anas clypeata), as well as over 6% of the wintering population of Greater Flamingo (Phoenicopterus roseus) in the West Palearctic biogeographic realm. It has a seasonal algal cover and supports over 138 species of aquatic fauna. Mammalian fauna include rodents and several bat species, and it is an important source of food, spawning ground, and nursery for several fish species. The main human activity carried out is fishing, regulated following the protected status of the adjacent Chikly nature reserve. Ramsar site no. 2096. Most recent RIS information: 2013.

Djerba Bin El Ouedian

Site number: 1,700 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region:
Area: 12,082 ha | Coordinates: 33°40'N 10°55'E | Designation dates: 07-11-2007
View Site details in RSIS

Djerba Bin El Ouedian. 07/11/07; Medenine; 12,082 ha; 33°40'N 010°55'E. This site is composed of the southern part of the island of Djerba (514 Km2) and the Bin El Ouedian wetland centered on the Al Kantara causeway to the mainland. Djerba has seen a rapid increase in tourism in the past 40 years, carrying with it important human pressures, which include an excessive collection of shellfish, pollution and the removal of sand for local construction purposes. Bin El Ouedian, on the other hand, constitutes a rare portion of the island that has remained almost pristine until now. The influence of the Mediterranean tide, coupled with a characteristic marine hydrology, play a dominant role in the dynamics of this wetland, which supports a remarkable fauna of (shell)fish and waterbirds. The area also contains important archaeological sites such as the old fort of Bordj El Kastil and the Roman site of Méninx. Ramsar site No. 1700. Most recent RIS information: 2007.

Djerba Guellala

Site number: 1,701 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Médenine Governorate
Area: 2,285 ha | Coordinates: 33°42'N 10°43'59"E | Designation dates: 07-11-2007
View Site details in RSIS

Djerba Guellala. 07/11/07; Medenine; 2,285 ha; 33°42'N 010°44'E. Located on the island of Djerba, comprising the coastal areas along the southwest corner of the island facing the mainland at Jorf. The flora and fauna are characteristic of arid zones, and include among others the pink flamingo (Phoenicopterus (ruber) roseus) and the Eurasian spoonbill (Platalea leucorodia), which use the site during their migrations between Africa and Europe. Although the site remains almost intact, there is a small risk of pollution from the ships that use the Ajim ferry port. Ramsar site No. 1701. Most recent RIS information: 2007.

Djerba Ras Rmel

Site number: 1,702 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Medenine Governorate
Area: 1,856 ha | Coordinates: 33°52'N 10°54'E | Designation dates: 07-11-2007
View Site details in RSIS

Djerba Ras Rmel. 07/11/07; Medenine; 1,856 ha; 33°52'N 010°54'E. The third Ramsar site in Djerba, Ras Rmel ("sand cape") is a sand bar 10 km long located in the north of the island. The bar protects an area of lagoons east of Houmt Souk that is frequented by numerous migratory bird species including the spoonbill (Platalea leucorodia), plover (Charadrius alexandrinus) and the thick-knee (Burhinus oedicnemus). The site suffers from intense pressure from tourism, land pollution (plastic wastes), and the extraction of sand for construction. Ramsar site No. 1702. Most recent RIS information: 2007.

Garâa Sejenane

Site number: 2,447 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Gouvernorat de Bizerte
Area: 4,322 ha | Coordinates: 37°05'51"N 09°12'48"E | Designation dates: 02-02-2021
View Site details in RSIS

Garâa Sejenane is found at 110 metres above sea level in the Mogod mountains in the north-west of Tunisia. At 1,500 hectares, it is the largest natural freshwater wetland in the country. This once-permanent lake was drained in the late 1950s, leaving a depression five kilometres long and three wide with a mosaic of seasonal wetlands, pastureland, tobacco fields and market gardens. The drainage led to the extinction of globally and regionally important plant species but, despite the extent of human intervention, the Site retains exceptional conservation value with its great wealth of hydrophytes and other notable plants. There are several globally and regionally threatened species, such as the only population in the world of *Rumex tunetanus*, the world's largest population of the fern *Pilularia minuta*, which is endemic to the Mediterranean region, and the largest population in North Africa *of Elatine macropoda*. In addition, the Site is home to *Pleurodeles nebulosus*, a vulnerable amphibian which is endemic to Algeria and Tunisia. Garâa Sejenane is privately owned and collectively managed by the *Groupement de Développement Agricole* (GDA) representing the land owners, the municipality and the Delegation of Sejenane.

Garaet Sidi Mansour

Site number: 1,703 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Gafsa Governorate
Area: 2,426 ha | Coordinates: 34°13'59"N 09°28'59"E | Designation dates: 07-11-2007
View Site details in RSIS

Garaet Sidi Mansour. 07/11/07; Gafsa; 2,426 ha; 34°14'N 009°29'E. A large basin in mainland Tunisia, ecologically comparable to the Sebkhet Kelbia Ramsar site. This wetland, situated directly to the south of the Sebkhet Noual Ramsar site, collects the waters of the surrounding watersheds, but may remain dry for periods extending for several years. The eastern side is regularly cultivated, while the western end is more saline. When precipitation is high the site attracts an extremely rich avifauna, both during winter andduring the nesting season. The site has remained in a quasi-natural state, without any water storage infrastructure. Ramsar site No. 1703. Most recent RIS information: 2007.

Golfe de Boughrara

Site number: 2,008 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Djerba
Area: 12,880 ha | Coordinates: 33°28'N 10°45'E | Designation dates: 02-02-2012
View Site details in RSIS

Golfe de Boughrara.02/02/12; Medenine; 12,880 ha; 33°28'N 010°45"E. BirdLife IBA. A broad, semi-closed lagoon with a narrow connection to the sea around both sides of the Isle of Djerba; it receives water permanently from the Mediterranean as well as tidal currents from the Ajim Channel separating the mainland from Djerba in the west. The area is an exceptional site for terrestrial and marine biodiversity. It is considered to be increasingly vulnerable and fragile as a result of insufficient fresh water, shallow depth, limited water circulation, and intense evaporation as well as anthropogenic activities through indiscriminate fishing and the use of destructive fishing machines. The Posidonia Herbarium characterizing the vegetation cover favours the settlement of fish, bivalves and other species and also serves as a source of food for plankton and a breeding ground for fish species. It harbours diverse bird species during winter. Though it has been classified as an Important Bird Area (IBA), there are further potential threats to its sustainability such as organic waste disposal from animal rearing activities, phosphorus waste disposal from surrounding industries, waste water and solid wastes from the peripheries. Ramsar Site no. 2008. Most recent RIS information: 2011.

Ichkeul

Site number: 213 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Bizerte
Area: 12,600 ha | Coordinates: 37°09'59"N 09°39'59"E | Designation dates: 24-11-1980
View Site details in RSIS

Ichkeul. 24/11/80; Bizerte; 12,600 ha; 37°10'N 009°40'E. Added to the Montreux Record, 4 July 1990. Biosphere Reserve, World Heritage Site; National Park. An extensive, seasonally variable lake with associated marshes and varying salinity. Vegetation consists of reedbeds, scrub, and halophytic (salt tolerant) plants. The region is one of the most important in Tunisia for fresh water and in North Africa for several species of wintering waterbirds, whose numbers reach 90,000 or more and include globally threatened species. Human activities include fishing, with production reaching 200,000 kg per year, livestock grazing, and tourism. There is an ecomuseum and information centre at the site. The restriction of the water supply to the lake has caused the drying out of the marshes, a decline in the quality of bird habitat, higher salinity, and increased grazing, which further degrades the marsh vegetation. Designated as a Montreux Record site in 1990 because of possible changes to its ecological character resulting from dam construction on the inflowing oueds (rivers), outside the Ramsar site, for the purpose of supplying water for irrigation. Subject of Ramsar Advisory Missions in 1988, 1989, and 2000. Ramsar site no. 213. Most recent RIS information: 1992.

Iles Kerkennah ou L'archipel de Kerkennah

Site number: 2,012 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Sfax
Area: 15,000 ha | Coordinates: 34°47'25"N 11°14'53"E | Designation dates: 02-02-2012
View Site details in RSIS

Iles Kerkennah ou l'archipel de Kerkennah. 02/02/12; Sfax; 15,000 ha; 34°47'25'N 011°14'54"E. Réserve Naturelle. A flat archipelago of several islets and permanent shallow marine water at the northeastern end of the Kerkennah Islands. It is a significant wintering ground for migrating birds including waterbirds and shoreline bird species. The tufts of Neptune Grass, Posidonia oceanica, covering the area play an important role in maintaining biodiversity as they supply oxygen and shelter for many vertebrate and invertebrate species, including aquatic species such as fish, bivalves and gastropods among others. Marine fauna in the area are also represented by sponges and mollusks and several types of tortoise. The site and surroundings are an important fishing and agricultural area with a moderately developed tourism sector; artisanal fishing is best represented by a famous, local traditional method, called charfias, using arrays of traps built from palm leaves. Potential threats include the presence of large phosphate producing industries, but it is expected that the management plan, legal steps, and creation of a marine protected area will ameliorate the situation. Ramsar Site no. 2012. Most recent RIS information: 2011.

Iles Kneiss avec leurs zones intertidales

Site number: 1,704 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Sfax
Area: 22,027 ha | Coordinates: 34°22'N 10°19'59"E | Designation dates: 07-11-2007
View Site details in RSIS

Iles Kneiss avec leurs zones intertidales. 07/11/07; Sfax; 22,027 ha; 34°22'N 010°20'E . Located at the center of the Gulf of Gabès and noted for its remarkably high tidal variation of about 2m amplitude, a vast depression surrounded by marine subtidal aquatic beds, intertidal mud and sand flats, intertidal marshes and sandy shores. These islands, about 3.5km from the mainland, consist of 4 subislands which emerge from the sea at high tide but are surrounded by vast mud and sand flats at low tide. The dominant marine vegetation is Cymodocea nodosa. This site is the most important area for migratory waders in the Mediterranean zone, and over 330,000 waterbirds have been counted on this wetland. It is a breeding ground for the little Egret (Egretta garzetta), common Redshank (Tringa tetanus), Slender-billed Gull (Larus genei) and a wintering ground for the Spoonbill (Platalea leucorodia), the Greater Flamingo (Phoenicopterus ruber), etc. The shores of the islands hold a wide variety of shellfish which are exploited visiting population. The islands are not inhabited but are visited by humans for shell collection for exportation to Italy. Despite the introduction of collection licenses in 1988, overexploitation of shell remains a problem. Ramsar site No. 1704. Most recent RIS information: 2007.

Lac et tourbière de Mejen Ech Chitan

Site number: 1,705 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Bizerte Governorate
Area: 7 ha | Coordinates: 37°09'N 09°06'E | Designation dates: 07-11-2007
View Site details in RSIS

Lac et Tourbière de Mejen Ech Chitan. 07/11/07; Bizerte; 7 ha; 37°09'N 009°06'E; Nature Reserve. The lake and peatland of Mejen Ech Chitan are part of the "Chain of Mogods", a forested area extending along the northwest of the country near the sea. The Lake, also known as the "Lake of Water Lilies" for being the only site in Tunisia where this species is found, is an enclosed water body adjacent to the peatland. Peatlands are rare in North Africa, and their geological properties raise considerable interest, as the study of their pollen and spore traces makes it possible to reconstruct the evolution of the local vegetation, in this case providing information several thousand years into the past. The site is privately owned and in need of restoration. Ramsar site No. 1705. Most recent RIS information: 2007.

Lagune de Ghar el Melh et Delta de la Mejerda

Site number: 1,706 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Bizerte
Area: 10,168 ha | Coordinates: 37°06'N 10°10'59"E | Designation dates: 07-11-2007
View Site details in RSIS

Lagune de Ghar el Melh et Delta de la Mejerda. 07/11/07; Bizerte, Ariana; 10,168 ha; 37°06'N 010°11'E. An ancient sea bay now almost totally laden with sediments, this complex and dynamic wetland includes the delta of the most important river in the north of the country, a lagoon rich in fish species, and several secondary lagoons and floodplains. During the past 50 years the site has seen many changes, from water diversion for human uses to the building of a series of barrages to reduce the risk of floods. Migratory fish use the site for feeding, especially during the winter period before reaching the sea. Artisanal fishing is practised by the local population. Ramsar site No. 1706. Most recent RIS information: 2007.

Lagunes du Cap Bon oriental

Site number: 1,707 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Nabeul
Area: 504 ha | Coordinates: 36°33'N 10°51'E | Designation dates: 07-11-2007
View Site details in RSIS

Lagunes du Cap Bon oriental. 07/11/07; Nabeul; 504 ha; 36°33'N 010°51'E. Characterised by the almost continuous presence of wetlands along the coast, but isolated from the sea by a thin sand strip and beaches. Small portions are also occupied by small forest patches or used for agriculture. The variety of habitats and vegetation make the site ideal for several species of fauna, especially reptiles and waterfowl, several of which are threatened. For many years the site has suffered negative impacts as a result of its proximity to the surrounding urban areas, principally Korba. Ramsar site No. 1707. Most recent RIS information: 2007.

Les Gorges de Thelja

Site number: 2,009 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Gafsa
Area: 675 ha | Coordinates: 34°09'N 08°16'59"E | Designation dates: 02-02-2012
View Site details in RSIS

Les Gorges de Thelja. 02/02/12; Gafsa; 675 ha; 34°'23'37"N 008°20'36"E. Réserve Naturelle. A natural valley with deep ravine areas through which Thelja Wadi runs, mountainous and arid in the chain of the djebels of the Saharan Atlas (altitude 210-450 m). The valley extends through several kilometers along the very sinuous Thelja and is a landscape of unique tourist attraction in Tunisia, with its famous Red Lizard train journey from al-Mitlawi (Metlaoui) with renovated train cars from the phosphate mining. The site includes Golden Eagle Aquila chrysaetos as well as the lizard Uromastyx acanthinura, which has a high capacity to live in desert conditions. The site is potentially threatened by pollution as a result of the mining activities carried out upstream and constructions related to tourism, but it is part of a presidential programme created in 2009 to preserve the mountain, wadi, and gallery biotopes to reinforce the biological diversity, encourage ecological tourism, and support scientific research and tourism. Ramsar Site no. 2009. Most recent RIS information: 2011.

Les Tourbières de Dar Fatma

Site number: 1,708 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Jendouba
Area: 13 ha | Coordinates: 36°48'N 08°46'E | Designation dates: 07-11-2007
View Site details in RSIS

Les Tourbières de Dar Fatma. 07/11/07; Jendouba; 13 ha; 36°48'N 008°46'E. Located in the mountainous region of Kroumirie, these peatlands have a significant presence of oak trees of various species. The peatlands are located in the open areas and have sizes that vary between 2m and 8m in diameter and are among the best examples in North Africa. The site is of primary importance for hosting species of flora needed to maintain the local biodiversity and for understanding its evolution in the region. Overgrazing and agriculture have had a negative impact on the site. Ramsar site No. 1708. Most recent RIS information: 2007.

Marais d'eau douce Garaet Douza

Site number: 2,007 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Gafsa
Area: 1,400 ha | Coordinates: 34°28'N 08°28'59"E | Designation dates: 02-02-2012
View Site details in RSIS

Marais d'eau douce Garaet Douza. 02/02/12; Gafsa; 1,400 ha; 34 28'N 008 29'E. A seasonal freshwater marsh surrounded by a circle of mountains which give it a wonderful landscape. It is a good site for the promotion of Saharan ecotourism in the country, as it is a natural wetland that has not been adversely affected by agriculture and harbours a rich biodiversity of flora and fauna. The site is home to species dependent on pre-desert ecosystems, such as Cream-colored Courser Cursorius cursor or Black-bellied Sandgrouse Pteroclesorientalis. It is also a habitat of several species typical of the Mediterranean biome/North Africa, including the Greater Hoopoe-Lark Alaemon alaudipes and the Mourning Wheatear Oenanthe lugens. Rainwater is retained at the site in autumn and winter attracts waterbirds and provides the necessary conditions for wintering and nesting. Potentially adverse factors are mainly overgrazing and poaching. Ramsar Site no. 2007. Most recent RIS information: 2011.

Oued Dekouk

Site number: 2,011 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Tataouine
Area: 5,750 ha | Coordinates: 32°20'39"N 10°36'39"E | Designation dates: 02-02-2012
View Site details in RSIS

Oued Dekouk. 02/02/12; Tataouine; 5,750 hectares; 32°09'N 010°32'E. Réserve Naturelle. A rare permanent freshwater source in the Mediterranean biome favoring the presence of animal and plant species and sheltering the IUCN red-listed vulnerable Barbary Sheep Ammotragus lervia. The site hosts several other species of amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals at critical stages of their life cycles including reproduction; juvenile and lactation in mammals. The site is managed as a nature reserve by the state; it has important potential for ecotourism with its remarkable landscapes (wadis, scenic cliffs, and large dunes) and extensive, typical flora and fauna. Potential threats to the wetland include pollution (polluting industries located at close proximities) and the negative impacts of human activities on the site. Ramsar Site no. 2011. Most recent RIS information: 2011.

Réserve naturelle de Saddine

Site number: 2,220 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Gouvernorat du Kef
Area: 2,610 ha | Coordinates: 36°05'25"N 08°30'46"E | Designation dates: 02-02-2015
View Site details in RSIS

The Réserve Naturelle de Saddine is a nature reserve composed of forest areas, permanent rivers and seasonal streams. The Site is a biodiversity-rich zone with a dense forest vegetation cover of Aleppo pine (Pinus halepensis), conifers, oak (Quercus sp.), herbs, shrubs and other woody forest species. The steep relief and the permanent rivers provide a safe habitat and source of food for many raptor species including the booted eagle (Hieraaetus pennatus), short-toed snake-eagle (Circaetus gallicus), golden eagle (Aquila chrysaetos), Eurasian golden oriole (Oriolus oriolus) and the endangered Egyptian vulture (Neophron percnopterus). The forest ecosystem supports a diversity of wildlife species including the golden jackal (Canis aureus), striped hyena (Hyaena hyaena), wild boar (Sus scrofa), red fox (Vulpes vulpes) and over 15 reptile species such as the viperine snake (Natrix maura), Algerian psammodromus (Psammodromus algirus) and the Greek tortoise (Testudo graeca). Human activities in the Site include agriculture, beekeeping, livestock grazing and hiking, and there is an eco-museum dedicated to the reserve's natural history.

Salines de Monastir

Site number: 2,015 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Monastir
Area: 1,000 ha | Coordinates: 35°45'N 10°46'E | Designation dates: 02-02-2012
View Site details in RSIS

Salines de Monastir. 02/02/12; Monastir; 1,000 ha; 35°45'N 010°46'E. BirdLife IBA. A permanent wetland with variable salinity and nutrient value favoring the presence of scavenger fish species, comprising a saline coastal lagoon between the cities of Monastir and Sousse, connected to the sea by two relatively broad channels and bounded on the seaward side by the international airport . It is a natural salt marsh and a representative example of the rare Western Palearctic wetland type. The wetland is home to populations of fish and algae and important for biodiversity conservation as well as for wintering, nesting and permanently resident seabirds, and thus it is a natural waterbird refuge, especially for species such as Tadorna Tadorna, Himantopus Himantopus and Recurvirostra avocet, and supports the Yellow-legged Gull Larus cachinnans and the little tern Sterna albifrons. The site is a source of food (algae and organic matter) to fishes and plays a role in the retention and disposal of water during floods. It is threatened by pollution from several sources, including tourism, transport and industry. Ramsar Site no. 2015. Most recent RIS information: 2011.

Salines de Thyna

Site number: 1,709 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Sfax
Area: 3,343 ha | Coordinates: 34°39'N 10°43'E | Designation dates: 07-11-2007
View Site details in RSIS

Salines de Thyna. 07/11/07; Sfax; 3,343 ha; 34°39'N 010°43'E. Located within the 'Gulf of Gabès, one of only two Mediterranean zones under the influence of tidal fluctuations of up to 2m amplitude, consisting of salt pans, permanent shallow marine waters, and intertidal marshes. These remarkable physical conditions result in unique ecosystems such as natural salt flats, which are presently rare in Tunisia and serve as refuge and feeding grounds for sea birds such as the common Redshank (Tringa tetanus), Slender-billed Gull (Larus genei) and the little tern (Sterna albifrons), etc., during high tides. The boundaries of the seaward side of the Ramsar site go as deep as 5m below sea level. The marine zone is important for fishing and has Posidonia oceanica as the dominant marine vegetation. The salt pans are presently exploited by the Tunisian general salt company (COTUSAL), which prohibits public access, thus serving as a security strategy for fauna in the site. This is further reinforced by a hunting and grazing prohibition by the Ministry of Agriculture. Ramsar site No. 1709. Most recent RIS information: 2007.

Sebkhet Halk Elmanzel et Oued Essed

Site number: 2,006 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Sousse
Area: 1,450 ha | Coordinates: 35°59'22"N 10°30'10"E | Designation dates: 02-02-2012
View Site details in RSIS

Sebkhet Halk Elmanzel et Oued Essed. 02/02/12; Sousse; 1,450 ha; 35°59'23"N 010°30'10"E. BirdLife IBA. A coastal saline lagoon that is representative of an almost natural sebkha, a characteristic wetland type in the semi-arid region of the Tunisian Sahel. It contributes significantly in maintaining the biodiversity characteristics of its biogeographical region as it serves as a habitat for biologically important species such as the vulnerable Marbled Teal Marmaronetta angustirostris. It is a wintering and nesting ground for birds and also an important source of food and a spawning ground for fishes such as Mugil sp. and Lisa sp. The site also supports several animal species throughout their life cycles. Fishery activities and aquaculture are carried out by the people of the area to sustain livelihoods, and water from the lagoon is used for animal rearing nearby. Strategic measures of erosion control have been put in place through the planting of forest trees (particularly Acacias) around the lake. The main hydrological value of the wetland is the absorption of flood waters, which are sometimes violent, from the large tributary wadis. Ramsar Site no. 2006. Most recent RIS information: 2011.

Sebkhet Kelbia

Site number: 1,710 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Sousse Governorate
Area: 8,732 ha | Coordinates: 35°49'59"N 10°15'E | Designation dates: 07-11-2007
View Site details in RSIS

Sebkhet Kelbia. 07/11/07; Sousse; 8,732 ha; 35°50'N 010°15'E. Nature Reserve. Since the site is composed of a combination of private and public owned lands, the strategy to promote conservation in the short term has consisted in assigning priority to public lands. Together with Ichkeul, this wetland has historically been considered one of the two great continental wetland zones of the country, regularly hosting around 200,000 waterbirds. Dams were built in the past that brought about significant ecological changes. Restoration of the site, including some of the original water flows, is among the main management objectives. Ramsar site No. 1710. Most recent RIS information: 2007.

Sebkhet Noual

Site number: 1,711 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Sidi Bou Zid and Sfax Governorates
Area: 17,060 ha | Coordinates: 34°25'N 09°45'E | Designation dates: 11-07-2007
View Site details in RSIS

Sebkhet Noual. 07/11/07; Sidi Bou Zid, Sfax; 17,060 ha; 34°25'N 009°45' E. A vast saline depression that occasionally collects the rainwater runoff of the multiple creeks that form in the adjacent mountains. Precipitation is highly variable, and the lake can remain dry for several years. This steppe environment hosts large numbers of waterbirds such as the vulnerable houbara bustard (Chlamydotis undulata). It is a typical example of a vast Sub-Saharan saline lake surrounded by an acacia (Acacia raddiana) forest. Apart from climate variations, overgrazing has caused a loss of vegetation cover and increased erosion. Ramsar site No. 1711. Most recent RIS information: 2007.

Sebkhet Sejoumi

Site number: 1,712 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Tunis Governorate
Area: 2,979 ha | Coordinates: 36°45'30"N 10°09'05"E | Designation dates: 07-11-2007
View Site details in RSIS

Sebkhet Sejoumi is the furthest inland of the three “sebkhets” or seasonal salt flats around the city of Tunis, and the only one that has no natural outlet to the sea. This representative example of the sebkhet takes its name from the neighbouring village of Sejoumi. It is a very shallow closed basin, with an inflow of water from several small wadis, including wadi Gueriana. The lake is important for controlling the periodic wadi floods. The Site is a refuge for migrating and also hibernating birds. Being one of the northernmost sebkhets of the country, the Site retains some water throughout the year and so it is important for different populations of waterbirds in different seasons, and particularly in summer when other sebkhets are completely dry. Indeed, the concentration of more than 25,000 flamingos makes it one of the most important centres of North Africa of this species. It is also a refuge for the common shelduck (Tadorna tadorna) and the northern shoveler (Anas clypeata). The edges of the lake are used by some sheep and goat pastors. The increasing urbanization of the area could potentially pose a threat to the Site.

Sebkhet Sidi Elhani

Site number: 2,019 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Sousse
Area: 36,000 ha | Coordinates: 35°34'N 10°24'E | Designation dates: 02-02-2012
View Site details in RSIS

Sebkhet Sidi Elhani.02/02/12; Sousse, Mahdia; 36,000 ha; 35°34'N 010°24'E. BirdLife IBA. An extensive salt lake where the water is intermittent, characteristic of the Tunisian Sahel semi-arid, almost natural ecosystem that contributes to the maintenance of biological diversity of the Western Palearctic. Fed by several rivers (Wadis Chrita, Mansoura, and Om El Melah), the site hosts plant species such as Arthrocnemum sp., Salicornia sp. and Suaeda sp. and avian species such as Phoenicopterus roseus, Charadrius alexandrinus, Anas clypeata and Grus grus. As an Important Bird Area, the area is habitat for the crustacean Artemia salina which is of great interest as food for birds and some aquaculture species. The main hydrological value of the site is the absorption of sometimes violent floods from its large tributaries, and the watershed also captures a large quantity of sediment and plays an important role in recharging the groundwater and wells. The main economic activity around the lake is the animal rearing. Ramsar Site no. 2019. Most recent RIS information: 2011.

Sebkhet Soliman

Site number: 1,713 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Nabeul Governorate
Area: 880 ha | Coordinates: 36°43'30"N 10°29'07"E | Designation dates: 07-11-2007
View Site details in RSIS

The coastal plain of Soliman is located at the southern end of the Gulf of Tunis, between two mountains, Djebel Bou Kournine, which means “the mountain with two horns”, and Djebel Korbeus which descends almost directly into the sea. The Site is representative of the wider coastal plain in a near-natural state, and includes a lagoon, salt flats and dunes. It provides refuge to species whose original habitats have been lost, particularly as it is close to Tunis, the capital city, and other nearby wetlands have been lost. It is one of the few places in the area that retain water throughout the summer, and it is an important refuge for water birds, hosting breeding populations such as the marbled duck (Marmaronetta angustirostris), the white stork (Ciconia ciconia), the Mediterranean gull (Ichthyaetus melanocephalus), the Sandwich tern (Sterna sandvicensis) and the collared pratincole (Glareola pratincola). Sebkhet Soliman also contains a typical flora of wetlands dominated by halophyte plants of the Halocnemum and Arthrocnemum genera and Salicornia arabica L. The increasing urbanization of the area could potentially pose a threat to the Site.

Zones humides oasiennes de Kebili

Site number: 1,714 | Country: Tunisia | Administrative region: Nefzaoua
Area: 2,419 ha | Coordinates: 33°30'N 08°55'E | Designation dates: 07-11-2007
View Site details in RSIS

Zones Humides Oasiennes de Kebili. 07/11/07; Kebili; 2,419 ha; 33°30'N 008°55'E. The site is composed of many small wetlands that together form one unit, made up of depressions that border upon oases, sometimes formed by springs and used for irrigation. The water types vary from fresh to slightly salty, the latter often unsuitable for agriculture. The site is important for migratory birds that cross the Sahara, especially in spring (in summer they tend to fly over the Mediterranean). Although date plantations are vast and constantly expanding, the main threat to the site appears to be uncontrolled hunting, which causes the birds to move constantly from one site to another. Ramsar site No. 1714. Most recent RIS information: 2007.