



Annotated List of Wetlands of International Importance

Uzbekistan

5 Ramsar Site(s) covering 739,115 ha

Aydar-Arnasay Lakes system

Site number: 1,841 | Country: Uzbekistan | Administrative region: Dzhizak and Navoi Territory

Area: 527,100 ha | Coordinates: 40°46'59"N 67°46'E | Designation dates: 20-10-2008

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Aydar Arnasay Lakes System. 20/10/08; Dzhizak, Navoi; 527,100 ha; 40°47'N 067°46'E. Ornithological zakaznik (protected area). The largest reservoir of Uzbekistan, consisting of freshwater lakes situated in the middle stream of the Syrdarya river and on the irrigated massif of Golodnaya steppe and Kyzylum desert. The site is located at the crossroads of the Afro-Eurasian and Central Asian flyways and a centre for migrating and wintering waterbirds, with more than 100 species noted. It provides habitat to threatened species like White-headed Duck Savka (*Oxyura leucocephala*), Sociable Lapwing (*Chettusia gregaria*), Dalmatian Pelican (*Pelecanus crispus*), Red-breasted Goose (*Rufibrenta ruficollis*), Lesser White-fronted Goose (*Anser erythropus*), and Pallas Sea-eagle (*Haliaeetus leucoryphus*) and provides an important source of food and a spawning ground for various species of fish. The main vegetations are reed communities used by local people, saltwort and tamarisk. An action plan for maintaining the stability of ecological conditions, 2008-2015, is in place. Ramsar site no. 1841. Most recent RIS information: 2008.

Lake Dengizkul

Site number: 1,108 | Country: Uzbekistan | Administrative region: Bukhara Region

Area: 31,300 ha | Coordinates: 39°07'N 64°10'E | Designation dates: 08-10-2001

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Lake Dengizkul. 08/10/01; Bukhara; 31,300ha; 39°07'N 064°10'E. The largest saline wastewater closed water body in the SW part of the Kysylum desert, with typical ecological conditions of natural lakes situated in the deserts of Central Asia. The lake, dried up by the mid-1950s because of overuse for irrigation, has been refilled since 1966 and is very important for maintaining a biodiversity of wetland-dependent species in a largely arid region. It is of crucial importance for migrating and wintering waterfowl, as it is situated on the route of bird migrations from Western Siberia and Kazakhstan to Indo-Pakistani wintering grounds. Lake Dengizkul is also the habitat of many vulnerable and endangered species, especially as it supports more than 1% population of the endangered White-headed Duck (*Oxyura leucocephala* Scop.). Commercial mining of gas in the vicinity of and on Lake Dengizkul is the main human activity, and this enabled the provision of the population with fuel and thus preserved trees and shrubs, which are important components of the desert ecosystem. However, excessive inflow of drainage water significantly influenced the water level in the lake and the floods have destroyed some habitats recently. Ramsar Site No. 1108. Most recent RIS information: 2003.

Lake Julturbas

Site number: 2,541 | Country: Uzbekistan | Administrative region: Muynak district of the Republic of Karakalpakstan in the Republic of Uzbekistan

Area: 64,715 ha | Coordinates: 43°30'48"N 59°46'48"E | Designation dates: 08-08-2022

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The Site was once part of a bay of the Aral Sea, the fourth-largest lake in the world until around 1960, along with the nearby Sudochoye Lake System, which is also a Wetland of International Importance ([Site no. 2522](#)). Since the severe reduction in the Aral Sea's area, the Site has become an important stopover for many birds migrating along the Central Asian and African-Eurasian Flyways. It supports about 25,000 waterbirds annually, and 1% of the regional populations of at least seven bird species including ferruginous duck (*Aythya nyroca*), red-crested pochard (*Netta rufina*) and white-headed duck (*Oxyura leucocephala*). There are 15 species of fish, and five of them are endemic to the Aral Sea region, including two critically endangered species, the dwarf sturgeon (*Pseudoscaphirhynchus hermanni*) and the Amu Darya sturgeon (*Pseudoscaphirhynchus kaufmanni*). There are also some terrestrial animals living around the periphery of the lake, such as the vulnerable goitered gazelle (*Gazella subgutturosa*). Activities such as cattle grazing, reed harvesting, fishing and hunting are allowed for the local communities. A "State Hunting Farm" and a "State Forest Community" have been established to promote wise use of the wetland's resources and sustainable tourism in the Site.

Sudochoye lake system

Site number: 2,522 | Country: Uzbekistan | Administrative region: Muynak District, Republic of Karakalpakstan (Uzbekistan)

Area: 84,000 ha | Coordinates: 43°29'13"N 58°30'50"E | Designation dates: 30-05-2022

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Sudochoye lake system was once a bay of the Aral Sea, which was the fourth-largest lake in the world around 1960. It became separate as the Sea's water level decreased; the water level of the Site is maintained by the Amudarya River and irrigation canals. The biodiversity is similar to that of the southern part of the Aral Sea and features dense reedbeds, shrubs, salt marshes and saxaul (*Haloxylon ammodendron*) plantations. Some nationally threatened animals are found, such as the Asiatic caracal (*Caracal caracal schmitzi*), goitered gazelle (*Gazella subgutturosa*) and bulatmai barbel (*Luciobarbus capito*). The Site is an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA) and serves as a stopover and breeding area for birds migrating along the Central Asian flyway. The numbers of greylag goose (*Anser anser*), mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*) and mute swan (*Cygnus olor*) exceed 1% of their biogeographical populations. National and international tourists visit to explore the Site's historical connection to the Aral Sea and observe the remnants of the settlement of Urga. Local communities use it for fishing and harvest reeds for livestock fodder and building materials. Extreme weather conditions such as drought are among the major threats facing the Site.

Tudakul and Kuymazar Water Reservoirs

Site number: 2,433 | Country: Uzbekistan | Administrative region: Kyzyl-Tepa District of Navoi Province

Area: 32,000 ha | Coordinates: 39°50'51"N 64°49'33"E | Designation dates: 19-08-2020

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Located in the Navoi region in the south-western Kyzylkum Desert, these two reservoirs serve as water storage in the arid "desert and xeric shrubland" biogeographic region of Central Asia. Kuymazar Reservoir is the main source of drinking water for Bukhara, the fifth largest city in Uzbekistan, and for the nearby town of Kogan. Its water is lower in salinity than that in the neighbouring Tudakul Reservoir, which is used for aquaculture and agriculture. This large wetland, which has a total area of almost 32,000 hectares, serves as an important stopover point for migrating birds along the Central Asian Flyway, with the average annual number exceeding 40,000 during the last five years in which counts have taken place. Some 229 bird species have been recorded, including the endangered white-headed duck (*Oxyura leucocephala*) of which more than 1% of the biogeographical population winters in the site. Among the threatened non-avian species found are the vulnerable goitered gazelle (*Gazella subgutturosa*) and the critically endangered Amu Darya shovelnose sturgeon (*Pseudoscaphirhynchus kaufmanni*).