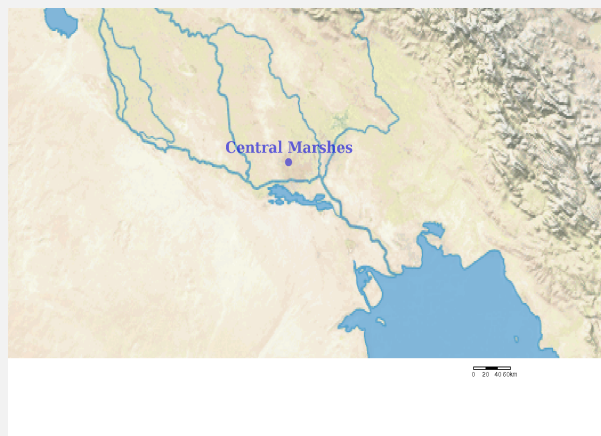




Ramsar Information Sheet

Published on 24 September 2015

Iraq Central Marshes



Designation date: 7 April 2014
Ramsar ID: 2241
Coordinates: 31°10'34"N 46°59'E
Official area (ha): 219 700,00
Number of zones: 2

Color codes

Fields back-shaded in light blue relate to data and information required only for RIS updates.

Note that some fields concerning aspects of Part 3, the Ecological Character Description of the RIS (tinted in purple), are not expected to be completed as part of a standard RIS, but are included for completeness so as to provide the requested consistency between the RIS and the format of a 'full' Ecological Character Description, as adopted in Resolution X.15 (2008). If a Contracting Party does have information available that is relevant to these fields (for example from a national format Ecological Character Description) it may, if it wishes to, include information in these additional fields.

1 - Summary

Summary (This field is limited to 2500 characters)

The Central Marshes form part of the larger Mesopotamian Marsh complex in southern Iraq and represent one of the last remnant component of a rare example of what was once an extensive freshwater marshland in the Tigris Euphrates alluvial salt marsh biogeographic region. This vast permanent and seasonal, fresh to brackish wetland forms part of the largest area of this wetland type not only in the Middle East but also in Western Eurasia.

Central Marshes perform a regionally important role in storage and control of the water flowing from the Euphrates-Tigris system upstream and tidal flow downstream, thus minimizing the impacts from floods.

Also, the Site is of international importance as a staging and wintering area for a number of waterfowls such as the globally endangered Basrah reed warbler (*Acrocephalus griseldis*) and the globally vulnerable Marbled duck (*Marmaronetta angustirostris*), and migrating birds of prey, e.g. Greater spotted eagle between their breeding grounds in Western Siberia and their winter quarters in eastern and southern Africa.

The marshes in southern Iraq, before the drainage, were entirely populated by the Marsh Arabs, who used to build their floating islands and reed houses in the marshes, developing entire villages linked by a network of main and minor channels. Thus, in addition to providing a number of provisioning and regulating ecosystem services the marshes are of extraordinary historical and cultural values. However, these services were either disrupted or degraded due to the extensive draining projects that took place for a number of reasons such as land reclamation, war and revenge. As a result of a program to dry out the marshes that was implemented in the early 1990s, the marshes shrank and by as early as 2002 occupied only 14% of their original size (1970s).

2 - Data & location

2.1 - Formal data

2.1.1 - Name and address of the compiler of this RIS

Name Moaiad Majid Jassim

Institution/agency Center for Restoration of Iraqi Marshlands and Wetlands (CRIMW)

Postal address *(This field is limited to 254 characters)*

Al Tayaran Square
Nedhal Street
Baghdad
Iraq

E-mail crimbag2004@mowr.gov.iq

Phone 009647709442588

2.1.2 - Period of collection of data and information used to compile the RIS

From year 1997

To year 2014

2.1.3 - Name of the Ramsar Site

Official name (in English, French or Spanish) Central Marshes

2.2 - Site location

2.2.1 - Defining the Site boundaries

b) Digital map/image

<1 file(s) uploaded>

Boundaries description (optional) *(This field is limited to 2500 characters)*

The boundaries of the site represent the administrative area under the Authority of the Ministry of Water Resources, Center for the Restoration of the Iraqi Marshlands and Wetlands (CRIMW) and is the area that can be subject to re-flooding in order to restore to, as far as possible, the original status of the wetland as in the 1970's, and in accordance with the recent developments and land use changes. The boundaries on the map represent the minimum, maximum and present (December 2013) wetland extensions that have been reported. These boundaries have also been derived from the analysis of Landsat satellite images (2000-2014).

The borders along the northern, eastern and southern edges follow the courses of ditches, canals and rivers, thereby excluding on the southern end the villages and urban areas that remain outside the wetland border. On the western side the border follows more natural features, taking into account the possible future floodable area.

2.2.2 - General location

a) In which large administrative region does the site lie?

Shared between three Governorates - Maysan, Thi-Qar and Basrah

b) What is the nearest town or population centre?

Chibayish is the closest, and Nasiriya is the larger city closest to the site.

2.2.3 - For wetlands on national boundaries only

a) Does the wetland extend onto the territory of one or more other countries? Yes No

b) Is the site adjacent to another designated Ramsar Site on the territory of another Contracting Party? Yes No

2.2.4 - Area of the Site

Official area, in hectares (ha): 219700

Area, in hectares (ha) as calculated from GIS boundaries 220462.23

2.2.5 - Biogeography

Biogeographic regions

Regionalisation scheme(s)	Biogeographic region
WWF Terrestrial Ecoregions	Tigris Euphrates alluvial salt marsh

3 - Why is the Site important?

3.1 - Ramsar Criteria and their justification

- Criterion 1: Representative, rare or unique natural or near-natural wetland types

Hydrological services provided *(This field is limited to 3000 characters)*

Central Marshes perform a regionally important role in minimizing the impacts from floods by storing and controlling the water flowing from the Euphrates-Tigris system upstream and tidal flow downstream. For more info please see the Attachment IQ_lit1508.docx under Additional reports and documents.

Other reasons *(This field is limited to 3000 characters)*













Central Marshes form part of the larger Mesopotamian Marsh complex in southern Iraq, and represent one of the last remnant components of a rare example of what was once an extensive freshwater marshland in the Tigris-Euphrates alluvial salt marsh biogeographic region. This vast permanent and seasonal, and fresh to brackish wetlands form part of the largest area of this wetland type not only in the Middle East but also in Western Eurasia.

- Criterion 2 : Rare species and threatened ecological communities
- Criterion 4 : Support during critical life cycle stage or in adverse conditions
- Criterion 6 : >1% waterbird population

3.2 - Plant species whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

<no data available>

3.3 - Animal species whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

Phylum	Scientific name	Common name	Species qualifies under criterion				Species contributes under criterion				Pop. Size	Period of pop. Est.	% occurrence	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendix I	CMS Appendix I	Other Status	Justification
			2	4	6	9	3	5	7	8								
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Acrocephalus griseldis</i> 	Basra Reed Warbler	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				EN 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Aquila clanga</i> 	Greater Spotted Eagle	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				VU 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Criterion 4: Staging and wintering area	
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Aquila heliaca</i> 	Eastern Imperial Eagle	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				VU 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
CHORDATA / MAMMALIA	<i>Lutrogale perspicillata</i> 	Smooth-coated Otter	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				VU 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Marmaronetta angustirostris</i> 	Marbled Duck	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5621	2005-2010	11.24	VU 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Criterion 4: Staging and wintering area Criterion 6: 1% threshold in South-west Asia is 480. Population size: 1800 in 2005, 3064 in 2009, 12000 in 2010.	
CHORDATA / REPTILIA	<i>Rafetus euphraticus</i> 	Euphrates Soft-shelled Turtle	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				EN 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

3.4 - Ecological communities whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

<no data available>

4 - What is the Site like? (Ecological character description)

4.1 - Ecological character

(This field is limited to 2500 characters)

The wetland area of Central Marshes is fed both by the Tigris from the north and by the Euphrates from the south. The right hand distributaries of the Tigris end up in the Central Marshes region, providing the marshes with water throughout the year, and in particular during flood seasons. The outflow of all of the distributaries discharging from the right bank of the Tigris north of Qalat Saleh District is captured through a canal located along the northern boundary of Central Marshes.

The Euphrates has several ways that connect the river with Central Marshes; various secondary branches exist and are able to connect Central Marshes to the Euphrates under the Nassiryia- Chibaiysh-Qurnah road via a number of bridges, culverts and breaches along the north embankment of the Euphrates River. These connections act like inflow or outflow points for the marshes depending on hydrological conditions.

Central Marshes are characterized by the presence of brackish water. Typical marsh vegetation comprising dense or sparse reed beds, typha communities, and floating and rooted macrophytes dominates over the area. Vegetation distribution varies across the marshes depending on water depth. The majority of plants found in Central Marshes are common in Iraq. All the species registered in surveys are globally common, no endemic species have been observed at the Site.

Central marshes are crucial for both resident and migrant waterbirds and passerines. They host threatened waterbird species such as globally endangered Basrah reed warbler, and high numbers of wintering waterfowls such as globally vulnerable Marbled duck. The marshes also support considerable numbers of other waterfowl species that are either endemic or of conservation concern, including the Iraqi subspecies of the Little grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis iraqensis*).

Presence of the above mentioned rare and threatened species depends primarily on presence of water bodies (as waterfowls are concerned) and on marsh vegetation; therefore these species have not been registered (or are found in consistently reduced numbers) where the marshes have been turned temporarily or permanently into dry soil by persistent water shortage.

For more info please see the Attachment IQ_lit1508.docx under Additional reports and documents.

4.2 - What wetland type(s) are in the site?

Inland wetlands

Wetland types (code and name)	Local name	Ranking of extent (1: greatest - 4: least)	Area (ha) of wetland type	Justification of Criterion 1
M: Permanent rivers/ streams/ creeks		3		Rare
Q: Permanent saline/ brackish/ alkaline lakes		4		Rare
R: Seasonal/ intermittent saline/ brackish/ alkaline lakes and flats		4		Rare
Sp: Permanent saline/ brackish/ alkaline marshes/ pools		1		Rare
Ss: Seasonal/ intermittent saline/ brackish/ alkaline marshes/ pools		1		Rare

Human-made wetlands

Wetland types (code and name)	Local name	Ranking of extent (1: greatest - 4: least)	Area (ha) of wetland type	Justification of Criterion 1
3: Irrigated land		2		
9: Canals and drainage channels or ditches		3		

4.3 - Biological components

4.3.1 - Plant species

Other noteworthy plant species

Scientific name	Common name	Position in range / endemism / other
<i>Ceratophyllum demersum</i>		
<i>Cyperus papyrus</i>		
<i>Hydrilla verticillata</i>		
<i>Nymphoides peltata</i>	Entire marshwort	
<i>Persicaria amphibia</i>		
<i>Phragmites australis</i>		
<i>Potamogeton illinoensis</i>		
<i>Salsola imbricata</i>		
<i>Salvinia auriculata</i>		
<i>Schoenoplectus litoralis</i>		
<i>Stuckenia pectinata</i>	sago pondweed	
<i>Suaeda vermiculata</i>		
<i>Typha domingensis</i>		

4.3.2 - Animal species

Other noteworthy animal species

Phylum	Scientific name	Common name	Pop. size	Period of pop. est.	% occurrence	Position in range /endemism/other
CHORDATA/ACTINOPTERYGII	Alburnus mossulensis					Endemic
CHORDATA/AVES	Ardea cinerea	Gray Heron				
CHORDATA/AVES	Ardea purpurea	Purple Heron				
CHORDATA/ACTINOPTERYGII	Carasobarbus luteus					Endemic
CHORDATA/AVES	Charadrius alexandrinus	Kentish Plover				
CHORDATA/AVES	Charadrius dubius	Little Ringed Plover				
CHORDATA/AVES	Egretta garzetta	Little Egret				
CHORDATA/AVES	Larus armenicus	Armenian Gull				
CHORDATA/ACTINOPTERYGII	Liza abu	Abu mullet				
CHORDATA/ACTINOPTERYGII	Mastacembelus mastacembelus					
CHORDATA/AVES	Nycticorax nycticorax	Black-crowned Night Heron				
CHORDATA/AVES	Pelecanus onocrotalus	Great White Pelican				
CHORDATA/ACTINOPTERYGII	Silurus triostegus					Endemic

4.4 - Physical components

4.4.1 - Climate

Climatic region	Subregion
B: Dry climate	BWh: Subtropical desert (Low-latitude desert)

(This field is limited to 1000 characters)

The climate type of the catchment area is the same as that of the larger Mesopotamian marshlands in southern Iraq which are, in turn, part of the major Tigris-Euphrates river system in the region encompassing a number of riparian countries namely, Turkey, Syria, Iraq and Iran.

Average annual rainfall is in the order of 130 mm/year. Average annual air temperatures ranges from 13°C to 36 °C during the year. Average annual humidity is about 40%. Annual evapotranspiration rate is in the order of 2,900 mm/year.

4.4.2 - Geomorphic setting

a) Minimum elevation above sea level (in metres)

2

a) Maximum elevation above sea level (in metres)

26

Lower part of river basin

Please name the river basin or basins. If the site lies in a sub-basin, please also name the larger river basin. For a coastal/marine site, please name the sea or ocean.

(This field is limited to 1000 characters)

The site lies in the Mesopotamian Plains and falls in the Tigris-Euphrates river basin (Mesopotamian Lower Basin).

4.4.3 - Soil

Organic

Are soil types subject to change as a result of changing hydrological conditions (e.g., increased salinity or acidification)? Yes No

Please provide further information on the soil (optional) *(This field is limited to 1000 characters)*

Marsh soils are hydromorphic, developed on fluvial sediments, mostly clay or silty clay, highly calcareous and contain some gypsum, and underlie both temporary and permanent marshlands. Soil salinity varies. The upper layers seem to form an "organic" cover of about 30 cm thick formed by the decaying reed vegetation.

4.4.4 - Water regime

Water permanence

Presence?
Usually permanent water present
Usually seasonal, ephemeral or intermittent water present

Source of water that maintains character of the site

Presence?	Predominant water source
Water inputs from rainfall	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water inputs from surface water	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water inputs from groundwater	<input type="checkbox"/>

Water destination

Presence?
Feeds groundwater

Stability of water regime

Presence?
Water levels fluctuating (including tidal)

Please add any comments on the water regime and its determinants (if relevant). Use this box to explain sites with complex hydrology: *(This field is limited to 1000 characters)*

Hydrogeology: Geological factors determine the geometry, porosity and permeability of aquifers and aquitards. Lithological variations and structural geological conditions control hydrogeological environment affecting groundwater flow and accumulation. The annual water level fluctuation is caused by the changes in precipitation; but, the water table often intersects the surface. Salinity levels vary depending on the water levels and evaporation rates, and the chemical composition also varies in the shallow zone. Groundwater composition is also influenced by seepage from surface watercourses and reservoirs and is relatively fresh. Under this shallow fresh water lies highly mineralized salt water with salinities of many tens of g/L. The salinity values are within a range of 5000 to > 50000 mg/l. Minimum water level is 0.4 masl; and maximum is >1.9 masl.

4.4.5 - Sediment regime

Sediment regime unknown

4.4.6 - Water pH

Alkaline (pH>7.4)

4.4.7 - Water salinity

Fresh (<0.5 g/l)

Mixohaline (brackish)/Mixosaline (0.5-30 g/l)

Please provide further information on salinity (optional): *(This field is limited to 1000 characters)*

Dissolved solids are transported by both ground and surface water. After humid seasons, when groundwater level is high (especially in irrigated areas without adequate drainage) surface water is often present in depressions. High evaporation subsequently increases the salinity in the shallow waters and soils in the marshlands. The chemical composition of ground water within the Mesopotamian Plain varies especially in the shallow zone.

In Central Marshes, the groundwater composition is also influenced by seepage from surface watercourses and reservoirs and is relatively fresh. Under this shallow fresh water lies highly mineralized salt water with salinities of many tens of g/L. In particular, for the unconfined aquifers the salinity's values in most part of Central Marsh is medium-high and the values are mostly within a range of 5000 to > 50,000 mg/l, or from water seldom used for irrigation (5000-10,000 mg/l) to unusable water (10,000-50,000 mg/l) and brine (> 50,000 mg/l).

4.4.8 - Dissolved or suspended nutrients in water

Unknown

4.4.9 - Features of the surrounding area which may affect the Site

Please describe whether, and if so how, the landscape and ecological characteristics in the area surrounding the Ramsar Site differ from the site itself: i) broadly similar ii) significantly different

4.5 - Ecosystem services

4.5.1 - Ecosystem services/benefits

Provisioning Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Food for humans	Sustenance for humans (e.g., fish, molluscs, grains)	High
Fresh water	Drinking water for humans and/or livestock	Medium
Wetland non-food products	Fuel wood/fibre	Medium
Biochemical products	Extraction of material from biota	Medium
Genetic materials	Genes for tolerance to certain conditions (e.g., salinity)	Medium

Regulating Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Maintenance of hydrological regimes	Groundwater recharge and discharge	High
Maintenance of hydrological regimes	Storage and delivery of water as part of water supply systems for agriculture and industry	Medium
Erosion protection	Soil, sediment and nutrient retention	Medium
Pollution control and detoxification	Water purification/waste treatment or dilution	Medium
Climate regulation	Regulation of greenhouse gases, temperature, precipitation and other climactic processes	Medium
Hazard reduction	Flood control, flood storage	Medium
Hazard reduction	Coastal shoreline and river bank stabilization and storm protection	Medium

Cultural Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Recreation and tourism	Recreational hunting and fishing	Medium
Recreation and tourism	Water sports and activities	Medium
Recreation and tourism	Nature observation and nature-based tourism	Medium
Spiritual and inspirational	Cultural heritage (historical and archaeological)	High
Spiritual and inspirational	Aesthetic and sense of place values	Medium
Scientific and educational	Educational activities and opportunities	Medium
Scientific and educational	Important knowledge systems, importance for research (scientific reference area or site)	Medium

Supporting Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Soil formation	Sediment retention	Medium
Nutrient cycling	Storage, recycling, processing and acquisition of nutrients	Medium

Other ecosystem service(s) not included above: *(This field is limited to 1000 characters)*

For more information please see the Attachment IQ_lit1508.docx under Additional reports and documents.

Have studies or assessments been made of the economic valuation of ecosystem services provided by this Ramsar Site? Yes No Unknown

4.5.2 - Social and cultural values

i) the site provides a model of wetland wise use, demonstrating the application of traditional knowledge and methods of management and use that maintain the ecological character of the wetland

Description if applicable *(This field is limited to 2500 characters)*

The marshes in southern Iraq, before the drainage, were entirely populated by the Marsh Arabs, who used to build their floating islands and reed houses inside the marshes, developing entire villages linked by a network of main and minor channels.

As described by W. Thesiger in his book "The Marsh Arabs": It is a large village in the heart of the Marshes where the reeds for mudhif came from At Qabáb. You will see how the Madan live; nothing but buffaloes, reeds and water. You can only go about in a canoe. There is no dry ground anywhere. "

At present, the inhabited villages are located along the edges of the re-flooded areas, mostly along the Euphrates River, but also on the northern and western edges of the marshland. The typical features that characterize the Madan culture and villages are the numerous channels with well-maintained mud banks that enter the Central Marshes. The Madan people moved around using the mashufhs, traditional boats. The mashhufhs enable women, young people and those who do not possess other means of transport to travel around. Herds of water buffaloes travel up to 10 kilometers from the villages. With their day by day walking they contribute to maintaining the minor channels free from vegetation over-growth.

Grass and reed are harvested daily to regulate the growth of reeds preserving ponds and lakes that are used for fishing and populated by waterfowls. For these reasons the presence of the Marsh Arabs in this area is a wonderful example of wetland wise use and application of traditional knowledge practices to maintain the ecological character of the wetland.

ii) the site has exceptional cultural traditions or records of former civilizations that have influenced the ecological character of the wetland

Description if applicable *(This field is limited to 2500 characters)*

The region is characterized by its proximity to many ancient civilizations, some of which are still visible in the local population's cultural customs and traditions as well as in daily lives.

iii) the ecological character of the wetland depends on its interaction with local communities or indigenous peoples

Description if applicable *(This field is limited to 2500 characters)*

Central Marshes are used historically by locals for reed harvesting, fishing and buffalo rearing. These activities thus can be considered as a form of local management and a way in which the ecological character of the marshlands are shaped by human presence and use thereby ensuring local livelihoods and the sustainability of the off takes.

4.6 - Ecological processes

<no data available>

5 - How is the Site managed? (Conservation and management)

5.1 - Land tenure and responsibilities (Managers)

5.1.1 - Land tenure/ownership

Public ownership

Category	Within the Ramsar Site	In the surrounding area
Public land (unspecified)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Private ownership

Category	Within the Ramsar Site	In the surrounding area
Other types of private/individual owner(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other

Category	Within the Ramsar Site	In the surrounding area
No information available	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Provide further information on the land tenure / ownership regime (optional): *(This field is limited to 1000 characters)*

Within the Ramsar Site:

There are lands that were previously controlled by local communities but this customary rights system was disrupted by the displacement of local people in 1990s. Some of these people have returned but ongoing land tenure conflicts exist between local communities. The general rule is that flooded areas are for common use. The area thus is dominated by lands that traditionally were under private control. Some lands are owned by the government. Up-to-date data on land tenure in this area is not available requiring a regional census.

The conflicts and displacement of people caused by oil concessions have to be taken into account.

In the surrounding area:

The area is predominantly agricultural. Part of the area is oil field that is well protected by dykes. The government is working to determine the ownership of land that was public or private.

5.1.2 - Management authority

Please list the local office / offices of any agency or organization responsible for managing the site: *(This field is limited to 1000 characters)*

Center for Restoration of Iraqi Marshlands and Wetlands (CRIMW); Ministry of Water Resources.

Provide the name and title of the person or people with responsibility for the wetland:

Ms. Sameerah Al Shabeeb

Postal address: *(This field is limited to 254 characters)*

Ms. Sameerah Al Shabeeb
 Center for Restoration of Iraqi Marshlands and Wetlands (CRIMW)
 Ministry of Water Resource
 Al Tayaran Square
 Nedhal Street
 Baghdad
 Iraq

E-mail address: abed.samira2004@gmail.com

5.2 - Ecological character threats and responses (Management)

5.2.1 - Factors (actual or likely) adversely affecting the Site's ecological character

Water regulation

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	In the surrounding area
Drainage	High impact		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Biological resource use

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	In the surrounding area
Hunting and collecting terrestrial animals	Medium impact		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gathering terrestrial plants	Medium impact		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fishing and harvesting aquatic resources	Medium impact		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Pollution

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	In the surrounding area
Industrial and military effluents	High impact		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agricultural and forestry effluents	High impact		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please describe any other threats (optional): *(This field is limited to 2500 characters)*

For more information please see the Attachment IQ_lit1508.docx under Additional reports and documents.

5.2.2 - Legal conservation status

National legal designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
National Park	MesopotomiaMarshlandNationalPark		partly

5.2.3 - IUCN protected areas categories (2008)

Ib Wilderness Area: protected area managed mainly for wilderness protection

5.2.4 - Key conservation measures

Legal protection

Measures	Status
Legal protection	Implemented

Other: *(This field is limited to 2500 characters)*

The most recent and comprehensive inventory on biodiversity of Iraq is the Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) Project – the result of widespread and comprehensive surveys conducted from 2005 to 2010 in the framework of the New Eden Project

(Ministry of Environment (MoE) and Nature Iraq (NI), with support from the Italian Ministry of Environment, Land & Sea).

The goal of the KBA programme was to identify the areas of outstanding global or regional importance in terms of their biodiversity and to provide a foundation for developing a protected area network in Iraq.

The KBA surveys began in southern Iraq in the winter of 2005 and were extended to Kurdistan, northern Iraq, in 2007, and to Central and Western Iraq in 2009. Over 220 individual survey sites throughout Iraq's governorates (except for Nineva) were visited, often over several years, with a particular focus on wetland and marshland environment. The surveys covered birds, other fauna and plants/habitats and threats.

The Central Marshes, being at the core of the once huge complex of Iraqi southern marshlands, have been one of the top sites to be surveyed in the framework of the KBA project.

5.2.5 - Management planning

Is there a site-specific management plan for the site? In preparation

Has a management effectiveness assessment been undertaken for the site? Yes No

If the site is a formal transboundary site as indicated in section Data and location > Site location, are there shared management planning processes with another Contracting Party? Yes No

Please indicate if a Ramsar centre, other educational or visitor facility, or an educational or visitor programme is associated with the site: *(This field is limited to 1000 characters)*

The Central Marshes have been declared a National Park by the Iraqi Ministers' Council as of July 2013, with the name of "Mesopotamia Marshland National Park". The boundaries of the National Park partly overlap with the CRIMW administrative area, as shown in the Attachment IQ_lit1507.docx under Additional reports and documents. No management plan is presently in place though a draft management plan was prepared in 2010. However due to the recent issuance of the National Regulation on Protected Areas (February 2014) the management plan needs to be reviewed.

5.2.6 - Planning for restoration

Is there a site-specific restoration plan? Yes, there is a plan

5.2.7 - Monitoring implemented or proposed

6 - Additional material

6.1 - Additional reports and documents

6.1.1 - Bibliographical references

(This field is limited to 2500 characters)

Coad, Brian W., 2010, "Freshwater fish of Iraq", Pensoft Series Faunistica No 93, Pensoft Publisher.

Evans I., 1994, Important Bird Areas of the Middle East, BirdLife International, Cambridge, United Kingdom.

Garstecki, T & Amr, Z, 2011, Biodiversity and Ecosystem Management in the Iraqi Marshlands: Screening Study on Potential World Heritage Nomination, International Union for Conservation of Nature.

Iraqi Marshlands - Integrated UNAMI – UNCT White Paper, 2011.

Ministry of Environment, 2010, Iraqi fourth national report to the Convention of Biological Diversity.

Nature Iraq, Draft Inventory of KBA sites, available at <http://www.natureiraq.org/draft-inventory-of-sites.html>.

New Eden master plan for integrated water resources management in the marshlands area – Volume I – Book 4 – Marshlands, September 2006, Iraqi Ministries of Environment, Water Resources, Municipalities and Public Works.

New Eden master plan for integrated water resources management in the marshlands area – Volume II – Book 5 – Modeling, September 2006, Iraqi Ministries of Environment, Water Resources, Municipalities and Public Works.

Saad Z. Jassim and Jeremy C. Goff, 2006, The Geology of Iraq, published by Dolin, Prague and Moravian Museum, Brno.

Scott D., 1995, A Directory of Wetlands in the Middle East, International Waterfowl and Wetlands Research Bureau, Slimbridge, United Kingdom.

Thesiger W., 2007, "The Marsh Arabs", Penguin Classics Publisher.

World Wildlife Fund, 2006, WildFinder: Information about Ecoregions, available at <http://worldwildlife.org/science/wildfinder/>.

6.1.2 - Additional reports and documents

i. taxonomic lists of plant and animal species occurring in the site (see section 4.3)

<no file available>

ii. a detailed Ecological Character Description (ECD) (in a national format)

<no file available>

iii. a description of the site in a national or regional wetland inventory

<no file available>

iv. relevant Article 3.2 reports

<no file available>

v. site management plan

<no file available>

vi. other published literature

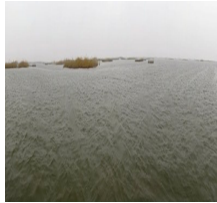
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6.1.3 - Photograph(s) of the Site

Please provide at least one photograph of the site:



Abu Zirig Marsh/Central Marsh/ Al-Nasiryah (*CRIMW*, 10-04-2014)



AL-Baghdadiya/ Central marsh/ Al-Nasiryah (*CRIMW*, 10-04-2014)

6.1.4 - Designation letter and related data

Designation letter

<1 file(s) uploaded>

Date of Designation