

Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS)

Categories approved by Recommendation 4.7, as amended by Resolution VIII.13 of the Conference of the Contracting Parties.

Note for compilers:

1. The RIS should be completed in accordance with the attached *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines for completing the Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands*. Compilers are strongly advised to read this guidance before filling in the RIS.
2. Once completed, the RIS (and accompanying map(s)) should be submitted to the Ramsar Bureau. Compilers are strongly urged to provide an electronic (MS Word) copy of the RIS and, where possible, digital copies of maps.

1. Name and address of the compiler of this form:

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Designation date

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Site Reference Number

2. Date this sheet was completed/updated:

24 October , 2005

3. Country:

Japan

4. Name of the Ramsar site:

Yakushima Nagata-hama

5. Map of site included:

Refer to Annex III of the *Explanatory Note and Guidelines*, for detailed guidance on provision of suitable maps.

a) **hard copy** (required for inclusion of site in the Ramsar List): *yes* -or- *no*

b) **digital (electronic) format** (optional): *yes* -or- *no*

6. Geographical coordinates (latitude/longitude):

30°24'N, 130°25'E

7. General location:

Include in which part of the country and which large administrative region(s), and the location of the nearest large town.

It is located at the north-western part of Yakushima Island, 70 km south of Sada-misaki cape that is the southern tip of Osumi peninsula, Kagoshima Prefecture.

8. Elevation: (average and/or max. & min.)
below 10 m

9. Area: (in hectares) 10 ha

10. Overview:

Provide a short paragraph giving a summary description of the principal ecological characteristics and importance of the wetland.

Yakushima Nagata-hama is a sand shore located in the north-western part of Yakushima Island. While the island is almost entirely surrounded by sea cliffs, this site is the longest sand beach in the island. The beach is separated into two parts. The one is 1 km length beach sweeping south from the mouth of Nagata-gawa River. The other one is 2 km length beach on the other side of the river mouth. These beaches are the most densely used spawning grounds for *Caretta caretta* (Loggerhead turtle) in the northern Pacific Ocean.

11. Ramsar Criteria:

Circle or underline each Criterion applied to the designation of the Ramsar site. See Annex II of the *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines* for the Criteria and guidelines for their application (adopted by Resolution VII.11).

1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5 • 6 • 7 • 8

12. Justification for the application of each Criterion listed in 11. above:

Provide justification for each Criterion in turn, clearly identifying to which Criterion the justification applies (see Annex II for guidance on acceptable forms of justification).

Criterion 4: The beach is the largest spawning ground for *Caretta caretta* in northern Pacific Ocean and therefore, it is the indispensable area to the life cycle of this species.

13. Biogeography (required when Criteria 1 and/or 3 and /or certain applications of Criterion 2 are applied to the designation):

Name the relevant biogeographic region that includes the Ramsar site, and identify the biogeographic regionalisation system that has been applied.

a) biogeographic region:

Japan

b) biogeographic regionalisation scheme (include reference citation):

Japan is recognized as single biogeographic region, because Japan is an island country which has unique and rich biota with many endemic species.

14. Physical features of the site:

Describe, as appropriate, the geology, geomorphology; origins - natural or artificial; hydrology; soil type; water quality; water depth, water permanence; fluctuations in water level; tidal variations; downstream area; general climate, etc.

Geology: terrace sedimentary layer

Geomorphology: coastal area of a conical shaped island that has a range of high mountains with more than 1000 m elevation.

Soil type: rough sand of weathered granite

Origins: Natural

Water level fluctuation: Fluctuation caused by sea tide.

Climate: Mild weather throughout the year, neither frost nor freeze. Annual precipitation: 4,359 mm, annual mean temperature: 19.2 degrees Celsius, fluctuation of mean temperature in each month: +11.4-+26.9 degrees Celsius (average of Yakushima 1971-2000)

15. Physical features of the catchment area:

Describe the surface area, general geology and geomorphological features, general soil types, general land use, and climate (including climate type).

No catchment

16. Hydrological values: Describe the functions and values of the wetland in groundwater recharge, flood control, sediment trapping, shoreline stabilization, etc.

17. Wetland Types**a) presence:**

Circle or underline the applicable codes for the wetland types of the Ramsar "Classification System for Wetland Type" present in the Ramsar site. Descriptions of each wetland type code are provided in Annex I of the *Explanatory Notes & Guidelines*.

Marine/coastal: A • B • C • D • E • F • G • H • I • J • K • Zk(a)

Inland: L • M • N • O • P • Q • R • Sp • Ss • Tp • Ts • U • Va •
Vt • W • Xf • Xp • Y • Zg • Zk(b)

Human-made: 1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5 • 6 • 7 • 8 • 9 • Zk(c)

b) dominance:

List the wetland types identified in a) above in order of their dominance (by area) in the Ramsar site, starting with the wetland type with the largest area.

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18. General ecological features:

Provide further description, as appropriate, of the main habitats, vegetation types, plant and animal communities present in the Ramsar site.

Caretta caretta (loggerhead turtle) and *Chelonia mydas* (green turtle) visit to spawn on the coarse sandy beach made of weathered granite. Crustaceans such as *Coenobita purpureus* (land hermit crab) and *Ocyrode cordimana* (common ghost crab), and coastal vegetation such as *Vitex rotundifolia* (Beach vitex) are observed the site.

19. Noteworthy flora:

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 12. Justification for the application of the Criteria) indicating, e.g., which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc. *Do not include here taxonomic lists of species present – these may be supplied as supplementary information to the RIS.*

None

20. Noteworthy fauna:

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 12. Justification for the application of the Criteria) indicating, e.g., which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc., including count data. *Do not include here taxonomic lists of species present – these may be supplied as supplementary information to the RIS.*

Caretta caretta (loggerhead turtle) [vulnerable species (VU)*1, endangered species (EN)*2]

Chelonia mydas (green turtle) [vulnerable species (VU)*1, endangered species (EN)*2]

Note: *1 Red List of Threatened Wildlife of Japan. Ministry of the Environment

*2 IUCN Red List of Threatened Animals (2004)

21. Social and cultural values:

e.g., fisheries production, forestry, religious importance, archaeological sites, social relations with the wetland, etc. Distinguish between historical/archaeological/religious significance and current socio-economic values.

22. Land tenure/ownership:

(a) within the Ramsar site:

National land (Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport): 2 ha

Town-owned land (Kamiyaku-cho): 8 ha

(b) in the surrounding area:

Prefectural road, private land

23. Current land (including water) use:

(a) within the Ramsar site:
Sandy beach, windbreak and conservation forests

(b) in the surroundings/catchment:
Roads, open space, secondary forests

24. Factors (past, present or potential) adversely affecting the site's ecological character, including changes in land (including water) use and development projects:

Sand movement caused by strong wind blowing from northwest in winter and southwest in spring.

(a) within the Ramsar site:
Waves caused by typhoon and strong winds from northwest push the sand out to Nagata-gawa River. Periodic rehabilitation is conducted in spring.
Traffic of people, headlight of the vehicles, light from the nearby buildings, etc. may affect the turtles' landing on the beach.

(b) in the surrounding area:

25. Conservation measures taken:

List national category and legal status of protected areas, including boundary relationships with the Ramsar site; management practices; whether an officially approved management plan exists and whether it is being implemented.

Special zone of National park: 10 ha (The Natural Parks Law)

*From February 19, 2002

In the special zone, such activities as erecting structures, felling trees, mining minerals, and reclamation require permission from the Minister of the Environment.

Kirishima-Yaku National Park Yakushima Island area management plan (February 2002) is implemented.

26. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:

e.g. management plan in preparation; official proposal as a legally protected area, etc.

None

27. Current scientific research and facilities:

e.g., details of current research projects, including biodiversity monitoring; existence of a field research station, etc.

Scientific research:

National Survey on the Natural Environment (Ministry of the Environment)

Facilities established for research: None

28. Current conservation education:

e.g. visitors' centre, observation hides and nature trails, information booklets, facilities for school visits, etc.

Yakushima Umigame-kan (Sea turtle Center)

29. Current recreation and tourism:

State if the wetland is used for recreation/tourism; indicate type(s) and their frequency/intensity.

Bathing and turtle observation: Receives approximately 7,000 visitors from April to August.

30. Jurisdiction:

Include territorial, e.g. state/region, and functional/sectoral, e.g. Dept of Agriculture/Dept. of Environment, etc.

[Territorial]

Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport (National land)

Kamiyaku-cho (Town-owned land)

[Functional]

Ministry of the Environment (National park)

31. Management authority:

Provide the name and address of the local office(s) of the agency(ies) or organisation(s) directly responsible for managing the wetland. Wherever possible provide also the title and/or name of the person or persons in this office with responsibility for the wetland

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32. Bibliographical references:

scientific/technical references only. If biogeographic regionalisation scheme applied (see 13 above), list full reference citation for the scheme.

- Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation Bureau 2002 “500 Important Wetlands in Japan”
 - Ministry of the Environment 2003 “Report of study on development of management policy for conservation of turtle nesting site at Nagata Inakahama / Maehama Kirishima-Yaku National Park Yakushima Island area”
 - "Report on turtle landing and nesting in Yakushima, 2004" (Inakahama, Maehama and Yotsusehama)
 - Environment Agency 2000 “Threatened Wildlife of Japan –Red Data Book 2nd ed.-Volume3, Reptilia/ Amphibia
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