

Ramsar Information Sheet

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- 1. Date this sheet was completed:** September 1997
- 2. Country:** Mongolia
- 3. Name of wetland:** Mongol Daguur (Mongolian Dauria)
- 4. Geographical co-ordinates:** 49°28'05 - 49°56'50"N
114°31'19 - 115°42'00"E
- 5. Altitude:** average 636 m.a.s.l., max. 821.2 m; min. 596.8 m
- 6. Area:** approx. 210,000 ha, of which 28,000 ha Strictly Protected Area

7. Overview:

The site belongs with the unique combination of vast and natural arid steppes and large wetlands, to the biologically interesting and ecologically important places. The larger northern part is composed of rolling steppes and wetlands on the south shore of the Tari Lake, whereas the southern part encompasses a strip of the Udz river and its marshy wetlands with a high density of nesting white-napped cranes. Five other species of cranes are regularly encountered in the area, including the threatened hooded and Siberian cranes. Out of the 226 bird species recorded, other endangered species include whooper swans, relict gull, mandarin duck and great bustard.

- 8. Wetland type:** Inland wetland: M L Tp Q R O Sp Ss Ts W

- 9. Ramsar Criteria:** 1a, 2a, 3a, 2c, 2b, 1c, 2d, 3b, 3c

- 10. Map of site included:** Yes

11. Name and address of compiler:

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12. Justification of criteria selected under point 9:

no information available

13. General location:

Eastern Mongolia, Province Dornod, close to the state border of Mongolia/Russia, 200 km north of Choibalsan city, 2 km west of the settlement Ereenzav and 10 km east of the settlement Dashbalbar.

14. Physical features:

14.1 Geology and geomorphology:

The site, including rivers, steppe and lakes, is located in the Uldz river basin. The basin has been formed by tectonic and volcanic activity. The highest point in the steppe is 821.2 m a.s.l., the lowest point at the lake Tari is 596.8 m a.s.l.

14.2 Hydrology:

The mean annual water discharge of the Uldz is 7.43 m³ per second, with a minimum of 0.34 m³/sec in 1982, and a maximum of 34.3 m³/sec in 1988. The hydrological regime of the lakes is characterised by cyclical changes in inundation.

14.3 Soils

The major soil types are the chestnut, meadow-chestnut, meadow, meadow-marshy, saltmarshy and sandy ground.

14.4 Climate

The area has a continental climate with dry cold winters and warm relatively wet summers. The mean air temperatures vary from -26°C in January to +19°C in July. The warm period, when the temperature is above zero, lasts for 150 to 160 days. The lakes freeze over in the period between late October and mid May. Annual precipitation varies from 150-350 mm (mean 290 mm), of which 80% falls between July and the end of August.

15. Hydrological values:

The area is a closed water system without outflow and therefore important for groundwater recharge in the region. The two largest lakes of Dauria, Tari Lake and Khokh Lake are supplied only by the Uldz river.

16. Ecological features:

There are two major types of ecosystems in the area: aquatic and terrestrial steppe ecosystems.

Aquatic plant communities:

- Forb grass (*Agropyron*, *Hordeum*, *Poa*) meadows on meadow stratified soils, locally in combination with *Salix osier*-shrubs; *Poa-Carex duriudcula* and *Leymus-Carex duriuscula* meadows on saline soddy steppified soils in combination with halophytic forb-sedge meadows on swampy clay mucky-gely soils.
- Sedge-halophytic (*Puccinella*, *Hordeum*) grass meadows on saline meadow soils, *Iris-Carex duriuscula* meadows on saline soddy soils, *Puccinella-Achnatherium* and *Suaeda-Achnatherium* meadows on meadow solonchacks and saline meadow-chestnut soils with participation of *Trisetum-Carex* meadows, locally with *Phragmites*, halophytic forb-grass, *Puccinella Achnatherium* meadows on saline meadow-chestnut soils.
- *Phragmites*, *Eleocharis-Phragmites* communities on meadow-swampy soils in combination with a) *Blysmus-Carex* communities on saline swampy clay-mucky gley soils and forb-*Puccinella* communities with *Achnatherium* on saline meadow soils; b) *Eleocharis-Juncus* communities on swampy-peaty soils, *Leymus* communities with *Limonium* and *Achnatherium*, locally with shrubs on saline meadow soils; c) *Phragmites*, *Carex-Phragmites* communities, locally on peaty gley soils.

The steppe ecosystem plant communities:

- Petrophytic, hemipetrophytic rich forb-sedge-grass steppes on mountain chernozem in combination with steppe meadows on meadow-chernozem soils
- Petrophytic, hemipetrophytic rich forb-grass, *Filifolium sibiricum* and shrub (*Armeniaca sibirica*), steppes on mountain chernozems
- Forb-bunchgrass and rhizome grass steppes (*Stipa*, *Leymus*, *Festuca*, *Carex*) with shrubs (*Caragana* spp.) on dark chestnut soils, locally with inclusions of chernozems
- Hemipetrophytic and hemipsammophytic *Filifolium*, *Stipa steppes*, *Caragana* communities on dark chestnut loamy sandy and stony soils

17. Noteworthy flora:

To date, over 300 plant species have been found here including several endemic to the region, which only occur in this part of the world. East Mongolian dominant species are *Caragana microphylla*, *C. stenophylla*, *Leymus chinensis*, *Stipa krylovii*, *Filifolium sibiricum*, *Polygonum divaricatum*, *Iris ichtoma*, *Hemerovollis minor*, *Clematis hemapetola*, *Stipa baicalensis*, *Helictotrichon schellianum*, and along the southern bank of Uldz river are found East Mongolian and Daurian representative species like *Stipa baicalensis*, *S. krylovii*, *Leymus chinensis*, *Bupleurus scorzonifolium*, *Galium verum*, *Astragalus melilotoides*. Over 100 plant species including *Glycyrrhiza uralensis* and *Thermopsis lanceolata* are used for traditional medicines and the majority of them are rare ones. There are many

Daurian endemic species among them like *Caragana spinosa*, *Sophora* spp., *Hypericum* spp., *Iris* spp., *Paeonia albiflora*, etc. which are being threatened.

18. Noteworthy fauna:

The fauna of the Mongol Daguur area consists of the elements of different biogeographical zones such as taiga, broad-leaved forest and steppe. There is a certain lack of data for many groups of animals. So far 260 bird species, 39 mammal species, 3 reptile species, 2 amphibian species and 7 fish species have been registered. There are 260 bird species belonging to 16 orders, 42 families, and 123 genera of which 33 settled species, 227 migrating species, 137 breeding species, 71 transit species, 23 species happen to be found and 19 species (breeding doubtful) may be found in summer, 9 species are staying in winter. 17 bird species have been included in the International Red Book and the Red Book of Mongolia.

The Ramsar site provides important habitats for such rare species as white-napped crane *Grus vipio*, hooded crane *G. monachus*, Siberian crane *G. leucogeranus*, relict gull *Larus relictus*, swan goose *Cygnopsis cygnoides*, Asiatic dowitcher *Limnodromus semipalmatus* and the great bustard *Otis tarda*. The site is an important staging area for migratory waterbirds including 2,000 geese (*Anser anser*, *Anser fabalis serrirostris* and *Anser fabalis middendorfi*), 4,000 shelducks (*Tadorna ferruginea* and *Tadorna tadorna*), 20,000 ducks (*Anas platyrhynchos*, *Anas poecilorhyncha*, *Anas crecca*, *Anas formosa*, *Anas falcata*, *Anas strepera*, *Anas penelope*, *Anas acuta*, *Anas clypeata* and *Aythya ferina*), 7,000 coots (*Fulica atra*), 5,000 cranes (*Grus grus*, *Grus vipio*, *Grus monachus* and *Anthropoides virgo*) and over 10,000 gulls (*Larus ridibundus*, *Larus cachinnans*, etc.).

Many waders, such as plovers *Pluvialis squatarola*, *P. fulva*, *Charadrius dubius*, *C. alexandrinus* (10,000), Sandpipers *Tringa ochropus*, *T. stagnatilis*, *T. glareola*, *Actitis hypoleucos*, *Calidris ferruginea*, (10,000), Stints *Calidris minuta*, *C. ruficollis*, *C. temminckii* (6,000), Snipes *Gallinago gallinago*, *G. stenura*, Curlews *Numenius minutus*, *N. arquata* and *N. madagascariensis* also migrate through the area.

A number of rare and endangered waterbird species, including white-naped crane *Grus vipio* (10-15 pairs), swan goose *Anser cygnoides* (100-500 pairs), Whooper swan *Cygnus cygnus* (15-30 pairs), black stork *Ciconia nigra* (1-3 pairs), Asiatic dowitcher *Limnodromus semipalmatus* (5-50 pairs), breed in Mongol Daguur. Breeding colonies of cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* (50-500 pairs), grey heron *Ardea cinerea* (60-300 pairs), herring gull *Larus cachinnans* (50-500 pairs), terns *Sterna hirundo* (100-400 pairs), *Chlydonias leucopterus* and *C. nigra* (50-500 pairs) in the lakes Galut, Bus, Doroo and Tari.

Among the other rare species breeding on the lake are steppe eagle *Aquila rapax* (4-10 pairs), eagle owl *Bubo bubo* (3-6 pairs), rock sparrow *Pyrgilauda davidiana*, etc.

Such raptors as marsh harrier *Circus aeruginosus* (15-20 pairs), upland buzzard *Buteo hemilasius* (15-30 pairs) and saker falcon *Falco cherrug* (3-6 pairs) are common.

The Mongol Daguur Ramsar site includes 39 species of mammals belonging to 6 orders, 16 families and 29 genera. In population density they can be classified into 25 species - common, 6 species - rare, 8 species - very rare, respectively. These have been entered species hedgehog *Erinaceus dauuricus* and Pallas's cat *Felis manul*. Appendix 2.

19. Social and cultural values:

Animal husbandry is vital for the people living around the wetlands. There are a few sacred places in this area. Fishery is not practised.

20. Land tenure/ownership of:

State ownership.

21. Current land use/principal human activities:

The major form of land-use has always been semi-nomadic animal-husbandry. At the site about 60 families are living with 230 persons. The total number of livestock is up to 10 thousand animals. Since 1970, 20,000 ha of land was used for crop production, of which only 20-200 ha was used between 1993 and 1997. Irrigation schemes play a minor role in agriculture. There is one human settlement with 2400 inhabitants on the Ramsar site border.

22. Factors adversely affecting the site's ecological character, including changes in land use and development projects:

Adversely affecting factors are:

- man made steppe fire during dry periods
 - overgrazing and degradation due to some dry summers
- There is still insufficient information on the impact of various anthropogenic threats to the ecosystem.

23. Conservation measures taken:

The site includes the 103,000 ha Mongol Daguur Strictly Protected Area and their Buffer zone, established in 1992. The Mongol Daguur Strictly Protected Area constitutes a part of the Daurian International Protected Area, which also includes the Daursky Nature Reserve (Russia) and the Dalai Lake Nature Reserve (China), established in 1994. The Strictly Protected Area has been designated as Crane Network Site of East Asia. In the framework of GTZ (German Aid Agency) - Biodiversity Project "management and Conservation of Protected Areas in Eastern Mongolian Steppe" a management plan for the site will be developed. Management of the Ramsar site is provided by the Protected Area Administration of Eastern Mongolia. Three rangers of the administration are working on the site.

24. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:

Extension of protected area is proposed by WWF and has been submitted to the appropriate government authorities, and this proposal has not yet received official government endorsement. Crane habitat management activities (e.g. increase in agricultural area) are proposed but not implemented due to lack of finance.

25. Current scientific and research facilities:

Mongolian-Russian joint expeditions are regularly carried out since 1991 by researchers of both Protected Areas.

26. Current conservation education:

An information and awareness centre is planned in Ereenzav.

27. Current recreation and tourism:

Recreational and touristic pressure is very low.

28. Jurisdiction:

Territorial: Administration of Chuluun Khoroot and Dashbalbar Sum of Province Dornod.
Functional: Nature and Environment Protection Agency of the Ministry for Nature and the Environment
Governmental House Nr. 3, Baga Toiruu 44, Ulaanbaatar 11. Tel. 976-1-326617, Fax 976-1-328620
E-mail Baigyam@magicnet.mn

29. Management authority:

Management of the Ramsar site is provided by the Protected Areas Administration of Eastern Mongolia PO Box 401, Choibalsan, 070000, Mongolia.
Tel.976-61-1237; tel/fax: 976-61-2228; e-mail mondaur@magicnet.mn

30. Bibliographical references:

References 1 & 2 are in Russian writing

3. Mongolia's Wildlife Heritage (1996). Mongolian Ministry for Nature and Environment, UNDP/GEF, WWF, Avery Press in Hong Kong.
4. Ecosystems of Mongolia 1:1,000,000. The map is published with the assistance of UNEP. Russian-Mongolian complex biological expedition.
5. Biodiversity conservation action plan for Mongolia (1996). The Ministry for Nature and Environment, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, 127: -.
6. National Atlas. (1990). MPR's Academy of Science and Academy of Science, USSR, Ulaanbaatar and Moscow.

7. Recommendation of suitable protected area network, WWF Project Office, Ulaanbaatar, 1995.

Appendices

- Appendix 1: List of fish species, and abundance in Eastern Mongolia and Ramsar site “Mongol Daguur”
- Appendix 2: List of amphibians and reptile species of Eastern Mongolia and Ramsar site “Mongol Daguur”
- Appendix 3: List of mammal species and their status in Eastern Mongolia and Ramsar site “Mongol Daguur”
- Appendix 4: List of bird species, their sojourning tips and abundance in Eastern Mongolia and Ramsar site “Mongol Daguur”