28. Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands

Categories approved by Recommendation 4.7 of the Conference of the Contracting Parties.

NOTE: It is important that you read the accompanying *Explanatory Note and Guidelines* document before completing this form.

1. Date this sheet was completed/updated:
September 1997

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DD MM YY

Designation date

Site Reference Number

2. Country: Russian Federation

3. Name of wetland: Mshinskaya wetland system

4. Geographical coordinates: 58°51'-59°15'N, 30°01'-30°28'E

5. Altitude: min 60 m, max 82 m a.s.l.

6. Area: 75,100 ha

7. Overview: The Mshinskaya wetland system includes patterned bogs, nine large lakes (over 40 ha), over 100 small lakes and about 15 river heads. The site is important for migrating, breeding and moulting populations of waterbirds.

8. Wetland Type (please circle the applicable codes for wetland types as listed in Annex I of the *Explanatory Note and Guidelines* document.)

marine-coastal: A · B · C · D · E · F · G · H · I · J · K

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

man-made: 1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5 · 6 · 7 · 8 · 9

Please now rank these wetland types by listing them from the most to the least dominant: U,Xp,O,M.

9. Ramsar Criteria: (please circle the applicable criteria; see point 12, next page.)

(1a) · (1b) · 1c · 1d ³ (2a) · 2b · 2c · 2d ³ (3a) · 3b · 3c ³ 4a · 4b

Please specify the most significant criterion applicable to the site: 1a

10. Map of site included? Please tick *yes* ✓ -or- *no*
(Please refer to the *Explanatory Note and Guidelines* document for information regarding desirable map traits).

11. Name and address of the compiler of this form: L.I.Volkov, G.A.Noskov: Biological Institute of Saint Petersburg University. 2 Oranienbaum Shosse, Stary Petergoff, S-Petersburg 198904, Russia.

12. Justification of the criteria selected under point 9, on previous page: 1a - the site provides a representative example of a large peatland system.

13. General location: In Leningrad Region, 16 km northeast of the town of Luga.

14. Physical features: The site is situated on the northwestern Russian platform. The basal complex is found at a depth of 600 m. The bedrocks are represented by the Devonian sandstones and marlstones. These are overlain by the Pleistocene lacustrine sediments, mainly boulder loams, to 100 m deep. The landscape is predominantly a flat, slightly dissected plain.

The climate is temperately-continental. The mean air temperatures are -8°C in January and +18°C in July. Annual precipitation is about 600 mm. The rivers are mainly fed by snow melt.

The soils are peat-gley, peat-podzolic and podzolic-gley.

15. Hydrological values: There are headwaters of over 15 rivers and streams at the site, including the Luga, Ordezh and Yashchera rivers. The wetlands of the area contain large reserves of fresh water.

16. Ecological features: The Mshinskaya wetland system comprises extensive raised bogs with pools and ridges, over 100 lakes and many rivers and streams. Seven lakes are from 40 to 1,900 ha in area. The vegetation is represented by forest communities of the southern taiga type.

17. Noteworthy flora: The native forest communities: spruce with broad-leaved trees (lime, maple, oak and ash) have been largely cut and replaced with birch, aspen and mixed forests. Along the shores of the lakes, reeds, sedges, wild calla *Calla palustris* and horsetails are found. The Canada rice *Zizania aquatica*, which was introduced in the 1930s, now occupies many lakes. Large areas are covered by oligotrophic bogs. Forested bogs with pine are widespread.

18. Noteworthy fauna: The wetland provides breeding habitats for waterbirds, including rare and threatened species, as well as staging areas for migrating geese, dabbling and diving ducks and swans. The importance of the site for different groups of waterbirds is described below.

Divers: Black-throated diver *Gavia arctica* is a common passage migrant, with several hundreds of birds passing through the area in spring and in autumn. Isolated pairs breed at the small lakes. Red-throated diver *G. stellata* occurs on migration in small amounts.

Grebes: Hundreds of great-crested grebe *Podiceps cristatus* use the site as a staging area during migrations. The breeding population numbers about 100 birds.

Swans: Whooper swan *Cygnus cygnus* and Bewick's swan *C. columbianus bewickii* occur during migrations in spring (1,000-2,000 individuals) and in autumn (up to 1,000 birds have been registered at once).

Geese occur only during migrations and include bean goose *Anser fabalis*, white-fronted goose *A. albifrons*, lesser white-fronted goose *A. erythropus* and greylag goose *A. anser*. The total population, migrating in spring, is between 10,000 and 15,000 individuals. In autumn, the numbers of migrants are much higher: up to 7,000 geese can be counted daily in October.

Dabbling ducks: This is the most plentiful group of passage migrants both in spring and in autumn. The dominant species are mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*, common teal *A. crecca* and Eurasian wigeon *A. penelope*. Breeding species include northern shoveler *A. clypeata*, northern pintail *A. acuta* and Eurasian wigeon *A. penelope*. *Anas platyrhynchos* and *A. crecca* breed in small amounts.

Diving ducks: A total of 15 species have been registered, the most numerous are tufted duck *Aythya fuligula*, greater scaup *A. marila*, long-tailed duck *Clangula hyemalis* and common goldeneye

Bucephala clangula (thousands of individuals). Black scoter *Melanitta nigra*, velvet scoter *M. fusca*, pochard *A. ferina*, goosander *Mergus merganser* and red-breasted merganser *M. serrator*. Breeding species include tufted duck *Aythya fuligula*, pochard *A. ferina* and common goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*.

The summer migration of ducks is well pronounced.

Cranes: Hundreds of cranes *Grus grus* have been recorded during migration periods. About 100 pairs breed at the bogs.

Coot *Fulica atra* occurs during the autumn migration (to 1,000 birds) and breeding (100 pairs) seasons.

The Mshinskaya wetland system provides important habitats for many threatened species: 36 animal species, including 33 species of birds, entered in the Russian Red Data Book (RRB) and the Red Data Book of the Baltic Region, occur at the site. These are listed below, with breeding bird species marked with an asterisk. The threatened species categories are given in brackets, following the Red Data Book of the Baltic Region: 0= extinct; 1= endangered; 2= vulnerable; 3= rare; 4= indeterminate (required attention):

Birds

*Gavia arctica** (1)
Gavia stellata (0)
Podiceps ruficollis (1)
Podiceps griseigena (2)
Podiceps nigricollis (1)
*Botaurus stellaris** (2)
Ciconia ciconia (2)
Cygnus bewickii (RRB)
Anser anser (2)
Anser erythropus (RRB)
Branta leucopsis (RRB)
Anas strepera (2)
*A. clypeata** (3)
*A. penelope** (2)
*A. acuta** (4)
Melanitta fusca (2)
Megrus albellus (1)
*M. serrator** (3)
Aquila chrysaetus (RRB)
Aquila clanga (1)
*Pandion haliaetus** (RRB)
*Haliaeetus albicilla** (RRB)
*Falco subbuteo** (3)
*Crex crex** (4)
*Rallus aquaticus** (2)
*Porzana porzana** (2)
*Gallinago media** (2)
*Tringa totanus** (3)
*Numenius arquata** (2)
N. phaeopus (2)
*Sterna albifrons** (2)
*Asio flammeus** (2)
*Bubo bubo** (2)

Other fauna

Anguis fragilis (4)
Lacerta agilis (1)
Mustela lutreola (2)

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19. Social and cultural values: The area provides favourable conditions for recreation and has good potential for development of eco-tourism.

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20. Land tenure/ownership: 95% of the land is state owned.

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21. Current land use: Forest cutting takes place in winter. Agricultural lands cover 5-6% of the area and are located at the edges of the site. The major activities include recreation and collection of berries.

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22. Factors (past, present or potential) adversely affecting the site's ecological character, including changes in land use and development projects: Recreational pressure is very high and exceeds the carrying capacity of the natural complexes. It is necessary to introduce limitations on visiting

the area. Illegal hunting and fishing also pose major threats to the site.

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23. Conservation measures taken: The site includes the Mshinskoye Boloto Nature Reserve (federal 'zakaznik') and the Northern Mshinskoye Boloto Nature Reserve (local 'zakaznik').

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24. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented: The following recommendations have been made:

- To extend the status of federal zakaznik to the whole site;
- To forbid the cutting of forests in the area;
- To increase the staff of rangers to 13-15 persons.

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25. Current scientific research and facilities: No information

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26. Current conservation education: No information

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27. Current recreation and tourism: The site is used for outdoor recreation by many people living in the adjacent highly populated areas and in Saint Petersburg City. The recreational pressure is very high.

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28. Jurisdiction:

Territorial: Government of Leningrad Region (67 Suvorovsky Prospect, Saint Petersburg 193311, Russia).

Functional: State Committee of the Russian Federation for Environmental Protection (4/6 Bolshaya Gruzinskaya Street, Moscow 123812, Russia).

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29. Management authority: Regional Hunting Management Office (3 Smolny Street, Saint Petersburg 193311, Russia).

Ministry of Environment, Government of Leningrad Region (67 Suvorovsky Pr., Saint Petersburg 193311, Russia).

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30. Bibliographical references: Red Data Book of the Baltic Region (1993); Red Data Book of the USSR (1984).
