

RAMSAR SITE INFORMATION SHEET

1. Source: Service de Protection des Ressources Naturelles; Direction Generale des Forets et de la Chasse; Ministere de Developpement rural et de l'Agriculture; B.P. 71; Bissau; Guinea Bissau

2. Date: 1 March 1990

3. Name of site: Lagoa de Cufada (Lake Cufada)

4. Country: Guinea Bissau
5. Reference number: 1GW001

6. Date of Ramsar designation: ..14-05-1990...

7. Geographical coordinates: Lagoa de Cufada: 11 43'N, 15 02'W; limits of Ramsar Site: Fulacunda 11 46'N, 15 09'W; Uana Porto 11 51'N, 15 04'W; Canture 11 47'N, 14 49'W; Buba Tombo 11 39'N, 15 01'W.

8. Location: On the south bank of the Rio Corubal 65 km ESE of Bissau, in Fulacunda and Buba Sectors, Quinara Region. The site is bounded to the north by the Rio Corubal, to the west by the road from Uana Porto to Fulacunda, to the south by the road from Fulacunda to Buba Tombo, and to the east by the road from Buba Tombo to Canture and the Rio Corubal.

National Mapping System: Guine Portuguesa 1:50,000 Series
Norte C28 - XXI 4b (Empada), XXI 4d (Fulacunda),
- XXII 3a (Xitole), XXII 3c (Xime).

9. Area: 39,098.... hectares

10. Altitude: Lagoa de Cufada and the floodplain wetlands are about 4 metres above sea level; the maximum elevation in the Ramsar Site is about 30 metres above sea level.

11. Overview: The site includes Lagoa de Cufada, a shallow, permanent, freshwater lake with abundant aquatic vegetation and extensive fringing marshes, two smaller freshwater lakes, Lagoa Bionra (permanent) and Lagoa Bedasse (seasonal), a large area of seasonally flooded marshes and grassland extending from these lakes to the Rio Corubal, about 14 km of the south bank of the Rio Corubal with its narrow fringe of mangroves and extensive intertidal mudflats, and adjacent areas of savannah, dry forest and patches of sub-humid forest. Lagoa de Cufada is one of the few significant freshwater lakes in this region of West Africa; it remains in relatively pristine condition, and is situated in a forested area noted

for its diverse fauna and flora. The lake supports a small fishery, and is an important breeding area and dry season refuge for a wide variety of waterfowl, mainly Afrotropical species. The mangroves and mudflats along the shore of the Rio Corubal support the typical estuarine fauna of this region, and are of some importance for migrant herons, shorebirds and terns.

12. Physical features: Lagoa de Cufada (.413.5... ha) is a natural, eutrophic, freshwater lake situated in a shallow depression on the floodplain of the Rio Corubal. During the dry season, most of the lake is less than 1.5 metres deep. The lake receives its water from local run-off during the rainy season, and drains north through a short channel (the Rio de Ancamba) into the Rio Corubal. Almost the whole of the catchment area lies within the Ramsar Site. Lagoa Bionra (...32.5... ha) and Lagoa Bedasse (.18.7... ha) lie in two smaller depressions to the west. The former remains wet throughout the year, but the latter dries out during the dry season. Both lakes drain northeast via the Rio Bionra into the Rio Corubal. There are large areas of seasonally flooded marshes and grasslands extending from all three lakes along their respective outflow streams to the Rio Corubal. A portion of the floodplain along the south side of the Rio Corubal has been converted to rice paddies and is cultivated during the rainy season. The Rio Corubal is fringed by a narrow belt of mangrove forest (about 10-30 metres wide), which extends for a few hundred metres along the lower courses of the Rio Bionra and Rio de Ancamba. The Rio Corubal is 2.0-2.5 km wide at this point and subject to wide tidal and seasonal fluctuations in water level (the mean tidal range near Bissau is between 5 and 7 metres). Extensive mudflats are exposed at low tide, and these are currently accreting and being invaded by mangroves. The wetlands are situated in a region of laterite soils. No information is available on the physico-chemical characteristics of the lakes or river.

The total area of wetland habitat within the Ramsar Site at the height of the wet season is approximately 9,950.. ha.

The climate is tropical and characterized by a long dry season (NE trade winds) from November to April or May and a pronounced wet season (southwest monsoon) from May to October. The average annual rainfall is reported to be over 2,000 mm. The mean annual temperature is about 26 deg C; the mean in the coolest months (December and January) being about 22 deg C, and that in the hottest (April and May) about 28 deg C.

3. Ecological features: No detailed botanical surveys have been carried out. Lagoa de Cufada supports an abundant growth of submerged and floating aquatic vegetation, notably *Nymphaea* sp which covers much of the surface of the shallower portions of the lake. The mangrove vegetation along the shore of the Rio Corubal is dominated by *Avicennia africana*. Other wetland habitats include permanent freshwater marshes,