

# Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS)

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

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**1. Date this sheet was completed/updated:**

13/4/2001

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY.**

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Designation date

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Site Reference Number

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**2. Country:**

the People's Republic of China

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**3. Name of wetland:**

Eerduosi National Nature Reserve

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**4. Geographical coordinates:** 39°48'N 109°35'E

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**5. Elevation:** (average and/or max. & min.) 1440m**6. Area:** 7,680 ha

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**7. Overview:** (general summary, in two or three sentences, of the wetland's principal characteristics)

The site is in typical Euro-Asian grassland and Asian desert with high ecological fragility—mainly covering the habitats of *Salicaceae psammophyla* and brackish land for *Suaeda glauca*, *S. microstachya*. The Nature Reserve has been keeping on nature conservation in order to save endangered Relic gull (*Larus relictus*)—while actively developing scientific research and promoting the spread of scientific knowledge.

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**8. Wetland Type** (please circle the applicable codes for wetland types; in the present document)

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)

Please now rank these wetland types by listing them from the most to the least dominant:

Q • 2 • O • Sp • Ss • 1 • 3

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**9. Ramsar Criteria:** (please circle the applicable Criteria; the *Criteria for Identifying Wetlands of International Importance* are reprinted beginning on page 11 of this document.)

1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5 • 6 • 7 • 8

Please specify the most significant criterion applicable to the site: 2

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**10. Map of site included? Please tick *yes* ✓**

(Please refer to the *Explanatory Note and Guidelines* document for information regarding desirable map traits).

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**11. Name and address of the compiler of this form:**

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**Please provide additional information on each of the following categories by attaching extra pages (please limit extra pages to no more than 10):**

**12. Justification of the criteria selected under point 9, on previous page.** (Please refer to the *Criteria for Identifying Wetlands of International Importance* appended to this document)

**Criterion1:** The Site contains unique wetland type which are vital habitats of vulnerable Relic gull(*Larus Relictus*) in the world. Surrounded by large area of desert and semi-arid grassland, the site appears geologically rare in water supply and ecosystem for wildlife living here.

**Criterion2:** The Site supports the vulnerable species of Relic gull(*Larus relictus*) population in the world

**Criterion3:** The Site supports Relic gull(*Larus relictus*) population and other species water bird which are particularly important to maintain the biodiversity of the bioregion.

**Criterion5:** The site supports about 15,000 breeding Relic gull(*Larus relictus*) every May and 30,000 of migratory birds including Whooper Swan (*Cygnus cygnus*)

**Criterion 6:** In the Site the population of regularly staging Relic gull(*Larus relictus*) account for 60% of the world quantity.

( According to *China National Wetlands Conservation Action Plan and Science Report of the NR*)

**13. General location:** (include the nearest large town and its administrative region)

The site is located 50 km west of Dong Sheng City, and 40km away from the headquarter of Yi Jinhuoluo County in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region.

**14. Physical features:** (e.g., geology, geomorphology; origins - natural or artificial; hydrology; soil type; water quality; water depth, water permanence; fluctuations in water level; tidal variations; catchment area; downstream area; climate)

**Geology and geomorphology:** Geology structure of the site is relatively simple and belongs to Archeozoic Rock system. The site is located in a waving area of Eerdousi

Plateau, becoming lower from northeast to southwest. The apex of the site is the Bayanaobao Peak of 1520m. In turn, the lowest area goes to the basin of Tao-A Lake with the altitude of 1360m. The central section of the Nature Reserve remains flat with little fluctuation and 80% of area ranging from 1367 to 1412 m.

**Climate :**The site is in the Temperate Continental Climate Zone. Due to the influence of the Northwest Air Circumfluence and the Cold Air in the Polar Region, Climate features warm in spring and summer, cool in autumn and chill in winter, while the shifts of seasons are quiet clear with longer winter and short summer.

**Sunlight:** The site is very rich in sunlight with 3,200 hours annually and the annual sunlight rate is over 70%.

**Air Temperature:** The average annual air temperature keeps 5.2°C or so with the maximum of 21.3°C in July and Minimum of 12.9°C in December and the annual accumulations of temperature above 10°C is 2580.3°C.

**Land Temperature and Frost Period :** The annual land temperature of the site is 8.1°C and the period when land is frozen always lasts 7 months. Over many years, the frostless period was 116 days in average.

**Precipitation and Evaporation:** The precipitation of the site concentrates on July and August, accounting for 65% of a year. The average annual precipitation remains 325.8mm, however, the evaporation reaches as high as 2501mm, particularly focusing on spring and summer.

**Soil Type:** the upper rock is mainly sedimentary rock, on which there are mantle rock of marlite, muddy-sandy rock, sandstone and rubble. So the soil within the site could be classified as astanozem, cultivated meadow drab soil and aeolian sandy soil.

**Water Quality:** the water in the lakes tends to be alkaline with PH 8.4-8.6. At common water level, the water covers 10 km<sup>2</sup> with 2.5m in average depth and the maximum depth of being 9m. Tao-A Lake, supplied by some springs, is the only one permanent lake, but the area of water changes from time to time due to various water quantity of supply.

**15. Hydrological values:** (groundwater recharge, flood control, sediment trapping, shoreline stabilization, etc.)

The Site mainly comprises Tao-A Lake, Hou Jia Lake and Su Jia Qizi Lake and among them Tao-A Lake is the biggest one in shape of camel. They play important roles to supply the water source for local groundwater recharge. When rainy season come, some seasonal rivers such as Zha Rigeguo, Wu Ertu, Huo Yewusu, Gen Pigu and Meng Jiahe will inflow into and maintain the quality and quantity of the water in the lake. Due to the increasing desertification in surrounding areas, large amounts of sediment with the flood could be trapped by the wetlands, reducing threats towards the communities in the catchment.

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**16. Ecological features:** (main habitats and vegetation types)

**Wildlife resources:** The site supports a typical desert and semi-desert ecosystem with large numbers of lakes and isles, being distributed by grassland and meadow anywhere. The advantageous geological location and unique ecosystem provide numerous migratory birds with important habitats for staging and breeding. Except for Relic gull (*Larus relictus*), the record show other 83 species of water bird living here and they are all migratory bird, of which 18 species breeding here, 12 species being summer migratory bird. The main species in the site are Brown-headed gull (*Larus brunnicapillus*), Swan goose (*Anser cygnoides*), Common cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*), Whooper Swan (*Cygnus Cygnus*) and Ruddy shelduck (*Tadorna ferruginea*)

**Vegetation Resources:** The site locates in the transition area of Eerduosi Plateau from typical highland to desertified grassland with scarcity of plants but dominated by sandy plants. The grassland is mainly covered by *Echinochloa caudate*, *Juncellus limosus*, *A. ordosica*, *Thymus*, *Cleistogenes songorica*, *Artemisia frigida* ect. On sandy soil there are *Artemisia ordosica*, *Caragand intermedia* living as major vegetation group. Some plants such as *Elaebnus angustifolia*, *A. sphaerocephala* act as pioneering species on quicksand land and type peculiar to mudflat is like *Acnatherum splendens*, *Suaeda microphylla*, Spike Willow focus on brackish bottom. In water there are major distribution of aquatic plants such as Potamogeton maackianus, *Typha laxmannii*, reed (*Phragmites australis*). Additionally there are some areas covered by artificial forest

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**17. Noteworthy flora:** (indicating, e.g., which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc.)

The site locates in transitional areas from typical high grassland to desertified grassland. So vegetation here are rare due to arid condition and desertification. Some sandy plants like *S. psammophylla* and *Tamaricaceae* peculiar to desert are two predominant of the structure of the ecological community.

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**18. Noteworthy fauna:** (indicating, e.g., which species are unique, rare, endangered, abundant or biogeographically important; include count data, etc.)

The main body of the site is composed of Middle Asia grassland and desert, belonging to the Palaearctic realm, Middle Asia sub- realm Mongolia and Xinjiang Chang region, West Desert sub-region on the division of zoogeographical areas and being west part of Eerduosi desert grassland. Major wildlife comprises some 15,000 Relic gull (*Larus relictus*), 5,000 swans, 35 White spoonbills, 2000 Ruddy shelducks (*Tadorna ferruginea*) and 20 Demoiselle cranes. In 1987, Relic gull (*Larus relictus*), a national first class protected bird, was found by the scientific research team, and later in 1990 the largest breeding population of Relic gull (*Larus relictus*) by now was uncovered in the core island of the lake. There were over 7,000 Relic gull (*Larus relictus*) by 1998 and more than 65% the population staging here regularly. The number of the nests reach 3,600, supporting over 90% of the breeding bird.

**(Master Planning of Eerduosi National Nature Reserve)**

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**19. Social and cultural values:** (e.g., fisheries production, forestry, religious importance, archaeological site, etc.)

Within the site there are 16 villages supporting a population of 6,400 and people there vitally rely on agriculture, forestry and stock raising for living. On 3,400 arable land, crops like maize, millet, potato, buckwheat and sunflower are grown by local communities. There are 62,400 animals stocks worth of 12.16 millions RNB. In addition, Tao-A Lake is an important area of the fishery farm under the Agriculture Department. Some local communities also built several restoration sites for entertainment.

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**20. Land tenure/ownership of:** (a) site (b) surrounding area

Local government has the ownership of the site including surrounding area, but the right of management and use go to the Authority of the nature reserve.

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**21. Current land use:** (a) site (b) surroundings/catchment

In general the rate of land utilization is quiet low. Being salty or brackish water in the wetlands, there is no crop growing within the site. People in around area makes a life in a relative backward way and their agriculture, forestry and fishery are underdeveloped.

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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:** (a) at the site (b) around the site

Being closely adjacent to Maowusu Desert and Kubuqi Desert, the threatened adverse factors are desertification and soil erosion. At the same time, the increasing use of groundwater also is resulting in the decrease in wetland area.

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**23. Conservation measures taken:** (national category and legal status of protected areas - including any boundary changes which have been made: management practices; whether an officially approved management plan exists and whether it has been implemented)

The local government and forestry sector have been launching public education and awareness campaigns since Relic gull (*Larus relictus*) was found in 1990. Every year while take the opportunity of Bird Week from 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup>, May, relevant specialists are invited to make lecture for local communities. The local government has made regulations to forbid hunting and also set up many interpretation signs. The land use and exploration in surrounding area is strictly under the control of the holistic land use planning. The Wetland Nature Reserve was established in 1998 and in 2000 became a national one. The Management Plan is ongoing for ratifying.

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**24. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:** (e.g., management plan in preparation; officially proposed as a protected area, etc.)

The site is in urgent need to improve desertified area around the wetlands by planting vegetations to prevent the surrounding area from further desertification. Because the site covers two counties, the legal regulations on transboundary water management is still a difficulty for the Management Authority. In the connect, the local government will facilitate the coordination of management.

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**25. Current scientific research and facilities:** (e.g., details of current projects; existence of field station, etc.)

Current scientific research: Research on the conservation and management of the Nature Reserve, sponsored by China Wildlife Conservation Association. However, the facilities are quiet simple.

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**26. Current conservation education:** (e.g., visitors centre, hides, info booklet, facilities for school visits, etc.)

The Nature Reserve has been launching educational campaign for local students on conservation of nature and wildlife annually. For these purpose, a watching-bird hourse was set up and some brief brochures was already made, but all facilities are poor because of money shortage.

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**27. Current recreation and tourism:** (state if wetland is used for recreation/tourism; indicate type and frequency/intensity)

At present there are no any recreation facilities and tourism activities in the site. And these will be carried out soon according to the Plan.

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**28. Jurisdiction:** (territorial, e.g. state/region, and functional, e.g. Dept of Agriculture/Dept. of Environment, etc.)

Territorially, the Nature Reserve is shared by both Dong Sheng and Yi Jin Huoluo county and functionally it is under the supervision of the Forestry Bureau, Yi Kezhaomeng, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region.

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**29. Management authority:** (name and address of local body directly responsible for managing the wetland)

The Management Bureau of Eerduosi Nature Reserve

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**30. Bibliographical references:** (scientific/technical only)

1. Management Plan of Eerduosi Nature Reserve, Management Bureau of the NR, 1993.
2. Science Report of Eerduosi *Larus Relitus* Nature Reserve, Management Bureau of the NR, 1995.

3. Neimenggu Eerduosi *Larus Relitus* National Nature Reserve Master plan, Academy of Forestry Inventory and Planning 2001.

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