

Wetlands designated, pursuant to Article 2 (4) of the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat, by Ireland, to be included in the list of Wetlands of International Importance, established under the terms of the Convention

The Wexford Wildfowl Reserve, at the North Slob, Co. Wexford, shown outlined in red on the attached map, is hereby designated by Ireland for inclusion in the List of Wetlands of International Importance under Article 2.4 of the Convention. This wetland forms both a polderland agri-ecosystem and a habitat of international importance for a number of species of waterfowl which are of scientific interest.

The Wexford Wildfowl Reserve comprises 110 hectares of land and water and was established as a statutory nature reserve under Section 1 of the Wildlife Act, 1976, by the Minister for Fisheries and Forestry on 3 June 1981. The Reserve is owned jointly by the Minister and the Irish Wildbird Conservancy, which is a voluntary non-Governmental Organisation. The Minister owns an undivided  $\frac{3}{4}$  share in the Reserve and the Conservancy owns the remaining undivided  $\frac{1}{4}$  share. The Reserve is managed by the Department of Fisheries and Forestry.

The North Slob is the World's most important wintering ground for Greenland White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons flavirostris*). As many as 6,000 of these geese can be seen there during the winter months. The Greenland White-fronted Goose is listed in Annex 1 of the European Council Directive number 79/409/EEC of 2 April, 1979, on the conservation of wildbirds as a subspecies whose habitat requires special protective measures. Management of the Reserve which includes the growing of special crops, is primarily in the interest of the geese.

Other species occurring on the Wexford Wildfowl Reserve include: Bewick's Swans (*Cygnus bewickii*), Greylag Geese (*Anser anser*), Brent Geese (*Branta bernicla*), Barnacle Geese (*Branta leucopsis*), Pink-footed Geese (*Anser brachyrhynchus*), Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis*), wader species and a large variety of duck such as Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*) Teal (*Anas crecca*), Pintail (*Anas acuta*), Gadwall (*Anas strepera*), Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*), Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*), Scaup (*Aythya marila*), Wigeon (*Anas penelope*) and Tufted Duck (*Anas fuligula*).