

1. Country: Portugal
2. Date: 28 May 1993
3. Ref: 7PT005
4. Name and address of compiler: A. M. Teixeira, SNPRCN / CEMPA, R. Filipe Folque, 46, 3º, 1000 LISBOA, Portugal. Tel: 351 1 352 30 18, Fax: 351 1 57 47 71
5. Name of wetland: Paúl do Boquilobo (Boquilobo marsh)
6. Date of Ramsar designation: 08/05/1996
7. Geographical coordinates: 39° 23' N, 008° 32' W
8. General location: Regiao Lisboa e Vale do Tejo / Golega (Santarém)
9. Area: 529 ha
10. Wetland type: N; S; T; 4
11. Altitude: 22m (maximum), 12m (minimum)
12. Overview: Freshwater marsh on the left bank of the Tejo river in the alluvial plains near Golega. The area is naturally innodated in winter by floods from the Tejo and part of it dries out subsequently, allowing for some cultivated areas.
13. Physical features: Natural wetland on alluvial plain. Hydrology and soil features modified extensively by man for many centuries to obtain rich cultivated areas and increased protection against flood erosion. Freshwater only, stagnant for most o the year. Virtually no tidal influences.
14. Ecological features: Freshwater marsh with characteristic aquatic vegetation in permanently innodated areas. Lines of *Populus*, *Salix* and other trees making up characteristic hedges around the wetland and offering also excellent cover for breeding birds and other fauna. Sunflower and other fast-growing annuals are the most characteristic crops grown on fertile sediments around the marsh. Water table is mechanically lowered in the Spring to allow larger areas of cultivation.
15. Land tenure/ownership of:
 - (a) site: The wetland now belongs to the SNPRCN who has bought it from ist former owner.
 - (b) surrounding area: Farmland in the adjoining areas is privately-owned.
16. Conservation measures taken: The area is a Nature Reserve under national law (Decreto-Lei nº 198/80 from 24 June) and was declared a SPA under Article 4 of the EC Wild Birds Directive (79/409). This wetland was also included in the UNESCO world network of Biosphere Reserves in 15.12.1981.
17. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented: Management plan now under way in order to get better control of fluctuations in the water table, agriculture in nearby areas

and to eradicate exotic invading plant species.

18. Current land use: principal human activities in:

(a) site: There are no significant economic activities.

(b) surroundings/catchment: The surrounding areas are much sought after by hunters; there is a well-developed agriculture in the most fertile alluvial soils; cattle-raising.

19. Disturbances/threats, including changes in land use and major development projects:

(a) at the site: The most obvious threat is the uncontrolled spread of the Water Hyacinth *Eichornia crassipes*, an invading aquatic plant now forming dense floating mats over extensive areas in the wetland.

(b) in the surroundings/catchment: Excessive water pumping for agriculture may cause problems to the area in dry years. Industrial wastes and sewage on the nearby Almonda river are a major threat and occasionally do affect the area. Illegal hunting may also become a problem.

20. Hydrological and physical values: the area is very important for the local regulation of the underground water table. May act also as a buffer zone contributing to increased protection of adjoining farmland areas against erosion caused by winter floods. This wetland has been for many years a most valuable sink for alluvial particles carried in by the Tejo river and has represented a symbol of great economic wealth to the area.

21. Social and cultural values: This is a most important site from an area well known from its strong traditions associated to farming techniques and culture developing there for many centuries.

22. Noteworthy fauna: The wetland is a very important wintering site for waterfowl in Portugal, with concentrations of *Anas acuta* eventually satisfying the 1% criteria in some years.

There is major heronry at this site (*Bubulus ibis* - ca. 1500 pairs, *Egretta garzetta* - ca. 240 pairs, *Nycticorax nycticorax* - ca. 90 pairs; all census figures from 1992) associated to a growing population of the Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*. Other noteworthy bird species include a breeding colony of *Chlidonias hybrida*, the Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* and the Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides*. the Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* is also recorded with increasing frequency in recent years.

23. Noteworthy flora:

24. Current scientific research and facilities: A major research project on marsh ecology will start soon on the site. There is a visitors centre with very basic research facilities in the area.

25. Current conservation education: There is a visitors centre with adequate information and educational facilities very close to the wetland. School groups are welcome and there are regular visits to the wetland.

26. Current recreation and tourism: Recreational and touristic use of the wetland are very much reduced and must be kept that way.

27. Management authority: SNPRCN / Reserva do Paúl do Boquilobo, Quinta do Paúl,

Riachos, 2350 Torres Novas, Portugal. Tel: 351 49 946 22 / Fax: 351 49 946 22

28. Jurisdiction: State jurisdiction / Min. Environment

29. Bibliographical references: Candeias 1981; Dias 1989; Segurado 1992; Grimmett & Jones 1989; Pereira 1989; Rufino 1992; SNPRCN 1992.

30. Reasons for inclusion: The area is very important under criteria 1a, 1c and 1d; also important under 2a, 2b and 2c; the wetland also qualifies under criteria 3b and 3c.

31. Map of site: enclosed