

1. Country: Portugal
2. Date: 28 May 1993
3. Ref: 7PT006
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: Lagoa da Albufeira (Albufeira lagoon)
6. date of Ramsar designation: 08/05/1996
7. Geographical coordinates: 38° 30' N, 009° 10' W
8. General location: Regiao Lisboa e Vale do Tejo (Sesimbra, Lisboa)
9. Area:
10. Wetland type: E; J; M
11. Altitude: 68m (maximum); 0m (minimum)
12. Overview: Coastal lagoon on sandy soils. Intermittent communication to the ocean across a narrow sand dune system. Permanent freshwater inputs upstream from small creeks across alluvial plains used for agriculture.
13. Physical features: Natural wetland on sandy sediments originated by marine erosion or associated to old fluvial processes. Brackish water inside the lagoon with salinity values showing wide seasonal changes and basically related to rainfall and cycles of communication between the lagoon and sea. Climate temperate with strong Atlantic and Mediterranean influences.
14. Ecological features: Sand dunes with characteristic vegetation on the seafront, gradually merging into dry shrubby areas and pinewoods further inland and around the lagoon. A few freshwater creeks flow into the lagoon and provide good habitat for many marshland species. Reed beds (*Phragmites*) and reed mace (*Typha*) are characteristic elements of the natural vegetation there. Sandy soils are farmed in small plots where freshwater is available around the lagoon.
15. Land tenure/ownership of:
 - (a) site: Most of the wetland area is State-owned.
 - (b) surrounding area: Dry areas around the lagoon are owned by the State and by privates.
16. Conservation measures taken: The area has permanent wardens and a specific management plan was approved officially. The most valuable areas for conservation have been fenced off to avoid undue disturbance.
17. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented: The area shall soon become a Nature Reserve under National law and has been officially appointed for designation as

SPA under Article 4 of the EC Wild Birds Directive (79/409).

18. Current land use: principal human activities in:

(a) site: Intense recreational activities basically related to beach and seashore resorts on the seaward side of the lagoon; camping and leisure housing in the forested areas to the South of the lagoon; traditional fishing and shellfish production; traditional agriculture in small irrigated plots.

(b) surroundings/catchment: Housing (leisure resorts); farming and forestry; field sports.

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

(a) at the site: There are no obvious immediate threats to the site but some activities and development projects planned for nearby areas may eventually cause some damage to the wetland.

(b) in the surroundings/catchment: Mostly associated to touristic development projects and to increasing levels of human occupation in the area, with many visitors coming for recreation from Lisboa, Setúbal and other important urban centres nearby.

20. Hydrological and physical values: This wetland plays a major role to maintain the balance of water tables in the area and also contributes to regulate run-off losses of freshwater and topsoil under torrential conditions.

21. Social and cultural values: The lagoon is very important as a traditional source of fish and shellfish to nearby areas and there is a major social event associated to the opening of the lagoon to the sea in the Spring every year. The area is very important also as an amenity site for many thousand people living in the urban areas nearby (up to 3 000 000 people in the wide Lisboa/Setúbal area).

22. Noteworthy fauna: This wetland is an important stopover site for many migratory birds using the Eastern Atlantic flyway to Africa, with major concentrations of some aquatic species recorded for short periods in the Autumn. Terns and marshland passerines are specially noteworthy in the area.

23. Noteworthy flora:

24. Current scientific research and facilities: There are no research facilities available in the area, the closest being located at Lisboa and Caparica.

25. Current conservation education: There are a few basic facilities for visiting parties and school groups are very much encouraged to come and see the area.

26. Current recreation and tourism: The lagoon and nearby seashore are very much sought after by urban dwellers for recreation and sport activities. Most visitors to the area originate from Lisboa and Setúbal and visiting is most intense on weekend leaves and summer vacations. International interests in tourism are also established around the area.

27. Management authority: SNPRCN/Gab. Lagoa da Albufeira, R. Ferreira Lapa, 38 5º, 1000 Lisboa, Portugal. Tel: 351 1 316 05 20 / Fax: 351 1 52 31 03

28. Jurisdiction: State jurisdiction / Min. Environment

The area is also protected at local (municipal) level by the C. M. sesimbra.

29. Bibliographical references: Rufino 1992; SNPRCN 1986, 1992.

30. Reasons for inclusion: The area satisfies criteria 1a, 2b, 2c and 3b.

31. Map of site: enclosed.