

Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands

1. **Date this sheet was completed/updated:** 17 February 1995

2. **Country:** PARAGUAY

3. **Name of wetland:** Parque Nacional Tinfunqué

4. **Geographical coordinates:**

26°30'S

57°33'W

5. **Altitude:** between 109 and 136 metres above sea level

6. **Area:** 280,000 hectares

7. **Overview:**

The park is an important reserve for the reproduction of wildlife and several species of fish that enter the area through the Río Pilcomayo to lay their eggs at certain times of the year. It is also on the flyway of a large variety of migratory birds.

8. **Wetland type:**

riparian and mangrove

9. **Ramsar criteria:**

General criteria based on plants and animals

Specific criteria based on aquatic birdlife

10. **Map of site included? Please tick yes -or- no**

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

Centro de Datos para la Conservación
Dirección de Parques Nacionales y Vida Silvestre
Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería

12. **Justification of the criteria selected under point 9, on previous page:**

13. **General location:**

This park is located in the Occidental region, in the department of Presidente Hayes, in the district of Villa Hayes, near the town of Pozo Colorado.

14. Physical features:

The park is on an alluvial plain closely related to the orogenesis of the Andes and to the erosional processes and fluvial sedimentation that have created the topography of this area. There are savannas composed of solonetz and gley soils, solods of heavy texture and imperfectly drained clays with sodic salts and water retained in the gley profile. The cliffs formed during upheavals are characterized by the formation of new vegetation. The river channels are former river beds and former meanders. These features are accompanied by gallery forests with moderately drained, fine-textured fluvisols formed by various types of loose sediments. The cambisols also have imperfect drainage and medium to heavy texture subject to salinization. Small hills are also important and act as barriers, and the former river beds have sandy and well drained regosols apt for agriculture because they have low or zero salinity and abundant nutrients. This area is formed by sediments from the Tertiary.

15. Hydrological values:

This area runs along the Paraguayan side of the Río Pilcomayo and covers an area that usually remains flooded during a large part of the year, but is now almost completely dry because of the deviation of the Río Pilcomayo. This situation is being reversed by the efforts to recover the upper basin of this river. The other side of the park is made up of large, dry lowlands covered with vegetation of Gramineae and shrubs.

This area is a reserve for the reproduction of many species of threatened wildlife (mandú, jacaré, turtles, and *yaguareté*). The topography of the Chaqueño lowlands was formed primarily by the main rivers that flow through the area: the Pilcomayo, Bermejo and Juramento. This area is influenced essentially by the past or recent flooding of the Río Pilcomayo.

A study of underground water in the Pilcomayo basin brings to light that the water is usually of poor quality. Data from wells in the central part of this area show that the water is brackish or saline, inadequate for human use or for agriculture. Nonetheless, water is often potable in former meanders and river beds. Owing to the scarcity of potable water, it is important to continue looking for sources of fresh water.

16. Ecological features:

This area is within the bio-geographical province of tropical dry deciduous forest (including the forest subject to monsoons) (Udvardy, 1975). It is the only representative sample of Bioma 12, the Río Pilcomayo flood plain. It is an excellent habitat for wetland wildlife and has a representative biodiversity of that bioma. While its size is excellent, its structure is deficient.

There are occasionally flooded edaphic fields with forested patches forming islands and gallery forests following the rivers and streams. There are large marshes and savannas of Caranda's palms.

17. Noteworthy flora:

The flora is characterized by the predominance of herbaceous savanna with a few Gramineae. The Caranda'y palm (*Copernicia australis*) is the most abundant wooded species. The characteristics of this area make this an important habitat for the species *Potamogeton striatus* that has reached a critical status in Paraguay. In some parts of the area, there are dense shrubs with cacti and bromeliads.

18. Noteworthy fauna:

The mammals found here are slightly different from those in other conservation units in the western region of the country. There are carpincho (*Hydrochoeris*), swamp deer (*Blastocercus dichotomus*), tatú guazú (*Priodontes giganteus*) and aguará guazú (*Chrysicyon brachyurus*). Birdlife is abundant, and there is a wide diversity of species such as jabirú (*Jabiru mycteria*), flamingo (*Phoenicopterus*), spoonbill (*Ajaja* spp.), chaja (*Chauna torqueta*) and ducks (*Chairina* spp. and *Anas* spp.).

19. Social and cultural values:

The park is located in a region where some of the most important battles were fought at the beginning of the Great Chaco War (1932-1935). The battles of Nanawa and Campo Vía, among others, were fought nearby.

20. Land tenure/ownership of:

At the present time, all of the land is private property. All of the surrounding area is also private property.

21. Current land use:

Extensive ranching takes place as well as forestry and illegal hunting, but most of the area is still in its natural state.

In the surrounding area, the main activity is ranching and the extraction of *quebracho colorado* (*Schinopsis balansae*).

22. Factors (past, present or potential) adversely affecting the site's ecological character, including changes in land use and development projects:

In both the national park and in the surrounding area, the most important impact has been the deviation of the Río Pilcomayo.

23. Conservation measures taken:

This area was declared a national park in May 1966. This covers the area between the Río Pilcomayo and Fortín Tinfunqué from Horqueta up to Salto Palmar.

24. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:

No management action has been taken in this area. Recent contact with landowners have been informal and non-systematic.

25. Current scientific research and facilities:

None

26. Current conservation education:

None

27. Current recreation and tourism:

This area is excellent for photographic safaris.

28. Jurisdiction:

Dirección de Parques Nacionales y Vida Silvestre
Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería

29. Management authority:

Dirección de Parques Nacionales y Vida Silvestre
Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería

30. Bibliographical references: