

# 35. Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands

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

NOTE: It is important that you read the accompanying *Explanatory Note and Guidelines* document before completing this form.

1. Date this sheet was completed/updated:  
September 1997

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Designation date

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Site Reference Number

2. Country: Russian Federation

3. Name of wetland: Gorbita Delta

4. Geographical coordinates: 73°00'N, 94°55'E

5. Altitude: 6-80 m a.s.l.

6. Area: c. 75,000 ha

7. Overview: The site incorporates the lower valley of a lowland river with an adjacent complex of mires, lakes and terrestrial tundra habitats. These habitats support breeding and moulting populations of waterbirds, in particular white-fronted goose *Anser albifrons*, bean goose *A. fabalis* and red-breasted goose *Branta ruficollis*.

8. Wetland Type (please circle the applicable codes for wetland types as listed in Annex I of the *Explanatory Note and Guidelines* document.)

marine-coastal: A . B . C . D . E . F . G . H . I . J . K

inland: L .  M .  N .  O . P . Q . R . Sp . Ss .  Tp .  Ts  
U . Va .  Vt . W . Xf . Xp . Y . Zg . Zk

man-made: 1 . 2 . 3 . 4 . 5 . 6 . 7 . 8 . 9

Please now rank these wetland types by listing them from the most to the least dominant: Vt, Tp, O, Ts, M, N.

9. Ramsar Criteria: (please circle the applicable criteria; see point 12, next page.)

1a .  1b . 1c . 1d .  2a . 2b . 2c . 2d . 3 .  3a . 3b . 3c . 3d . 4a . 4b

Please specify the most significant criterion applicable to the site: 3a

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

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

11. Name and address of the compiler of this form: V.G.Krivenko, I.O.Kostin

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**12. Justification of the criteria selected under point 9, on previous page:** 3a - the wetlands support large populations of waterfowl (See Section 18).

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**13. General location:** In Taimyr (Dolgano-Nenets) Autonomous Area, 400 km northeast of the city of Norilsk, 250 km northwest of the village of Khatanga. The site embraces the lower portion of the Gorbita valley (about 80 km long), from the confluence of the Gorbita and the Bolshaya Volchya Rivers to the confluence of the Gorbita and the Verkhnyaya Rivers.

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**14. Physical features:** The valley of the Gorbita River is relatively narrow. The river is 1-6 m deep and is fed mainly by snow melt. It freezes over in late September, and the ice breaks up in June. The spring flood is quite high.

The site is situated on the Taimyr lowland, surrounded by the Byrranga Mountains and the northern escarp of the Middle-Siberian tableland. The lowland is composed of the Mesozoic deposits, overlain by Quaternary marine and glacial clays and loams. Landforms, developed under the influence of permafrost, such as the frost mounds and polygonal soils, are characteristic of the relief.

The area has a severe, continental climate. Cloudy and foggy days are frequent, as well as late frosts in summer. Anticyclone conditions with low air temperatures are typical for the winter. The mean annual air temperature, recorded at the nearest meteorological station of 'Lake Taimyr', is +14.5°C, with an absolute minimum of -56°C recorded in January, and a maximum of +24°C in July. Annual precipitation is 283 mm, the average number of windy days is 83, snow cover is 45 cm deep (26-63 cm).

Soils are predominantly tundra-soddy and tundra-gley.

The wetlands in the area are natural and have never been subjected to human impact.

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**15. Hydrological values:** The Gorbita River provides the water supply for a large area on Taimyr. Erosion processes and transmission of mineral and organic substances support the food chains in the tundra ecosystems.

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**16. Ecological features:** The site includes a portion of the Gorbita valley about 80 km long. The river bed is 30-70 m wide, with sandy shoals and low banks. At some places, where the river flows between mounds, the banks are steep. There are many lakes in the lower course of the river, ranging in area from several hectares to several hundreds of hectares, and from 0.5 m to 3 m deep. The largest lakes are fringed with *Arctophila rufa*. The shallow lakes are rich in plankton. The floodplain is surrounded by the hummocky tundra with patches of meadows and brushes of *Eriophorum* sp. and polygonal mires. The lowland is dissected by many small rivers and streams flowing into the Gorbita. Willows *Salix* sp. and *Betula exilis* occur along the river. Mosses and lichens are very diverse and occur in the grass, sedge and shrub communities and on the stone-fields.

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**17. Noteworthy flora:** The flora of the area is represented by the following common species of vascular plants: *Equisetum arvense*, *Poa angustifolia*, *P.arctica*, *Deschampsia arctica*, *Hierochloe alpina*, *Carex stans*, *Eriophorum vaginatum*, *Salix polaris*, *S.glauca*, *S.lanata*, *Betula exilis*, *Rumex arcticus*, *Polygonum bistorta*, *Oxyria digyna*, *Melandrium apetalum*, *Minuarctia arctica*, *Stellaria ciliatisepala*, *Ranunculus lapponica*, *R.affinis*, *Caltha arctica*, *Papaver lapponicum*, *Cardamine pratensis*, *Parrya nudicaulis*, *Saxifraga cernua*, *S.hirculus*, *S.punctata*, *Comarum palustre*, *Potentilla hyparctica*, *Novosiversia glacialis*, *Astragalus umbellatus*, *A.subpolaris*, *Oxytropis Middendorffii*, *O.nigrescens*, *Epilobium dauricum*, *E.palustre*, *Cassiope tetragona*, *Ledum decumbens*, *Polemonium boreale*, *Myosotis asiatica*, *Pedicularis hirsula*, *P.sudetica*, *P.lapponica*, *Senecio arctica*, *S.atropurpurensis* and *S.tundrae*.

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**18. Noteworthy fauna:**Birds

The Gorbita valley is one of the most important breeding areas of geese on the Taimyr Peninsula. According to the 1978-1979 counts carried out in the Lower Gorbita area, the breeding population of white-fronted goose *Anser albifrons* and bean goose *A. fabalis* comprises 1,500-2,000 pairs. A great number of geese concentrate at the site for moulting. For late July-early August, the total number of geese is estimated at 30,000-40,000 birds; 65.5% of these are accounted for *Anser albifrons* and 34.5% for *A. fabalis* (Krivenko, Ivanov & Kostin, 1984). There are two breeding colonies of red-breasted goose *Branta ruficollis* with a total of 10-15 pairs. Breeding white-billed diver *Gavia adamsi* (1-2 pairs), peregrine falcon *Falco peregrinus* (1-2 pairs) and rough-legged buzzard *Buteo lagopus* (1 pair) have been registered. Red-throated diver *Gavia stellata*, black-throated diver *G. arctica*, long-tailed duck *Clangula hyemalis* and ptarmigan *Lagopus mutus* are numerous breeding species. Other bird species include *Lagopus lagopus*, *Pluvialis squatarola*, *P.dominica*, *P.apricaria*, *Charadrius hiaticula*, *Phalaropus lobatus*, *Ph.fulicarius*, *Arenaria interpres*, *Philomachus pugnax*, *Calidris minuta*, *C.ruficollis*, *C.temmincki*, *C.ferruginea*, *C.alpina*, *Limosa lapponica*, *Stercorarius pomarinus*, *S.parasiticus*, *S.longicaudus*, *Larus argentatus*, *L.hyperboreus*, *Sterna paradisaea*, *Nyctea scandiaca*, *A.cervinus*, *Motacilla citreola*, *M.alba*, *Luscinia svecica* and *Calcarius lapponicus*.

Three species of birds are listed in the Russian Red Data Book. These are white-billed diver *Gavia adamsi* (1-2 pairs), red-breasted goose *Branta ruficollis* (10-15 pairs) and peregrine falcon *Falco peregrinus* (1-2 pairs).

Mammals

The mammal fauna is not rich and includes the following species: *Alopex lagopus*, *Rangifer tarandus*, *Lemmus sibiricus*, *Dicrostonyx torquatus*, *Lepus timidus*, *Mustela erminea*, *M. nivalis*, *Microtus middendorfi*, *Sorex tundrensis* and *Canis lupus*.

**19. Social and cultural values:** The area has no human population and offers a rare opportunity to conserve an intact wetland complex large enough to allow natural hydrological and ecological processes to occur. The site has a palaeontological importance: a number of remains of the Late Pleistocene mammals (*Mammuthus primigenius*, *Ovibos moschatus*, etc.) and the Holocene wooden plants have been found in the permafrost.

**20. Land tenure/ownership:** State owned.

**21. Current land use:** Trapping for Arctic fox *Alopex lagopus* in winter and fishing in summer were carried out until the mid-1980s.

**22. Factors (past, present or potential) adversely affecting the site's ecological character, including changes in land use and development projects:** None

**23. Conservation measures taken:** The area has no protection status.

**24. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:** It has been proposed to designate the site as a buffer zone of the Taimyr Strict Nature Reserve ('zapovednik'). This will allow to conduct regular monitoring of the wetland ecosystems in the area.

**25. Current scientific research and facilities:** Aerial and ground surveys were carried out in the area only in 1978 and 1979 (Krivenko, Ivanov & Azarov, 1983; Krivenko, Ivanov & Kostin, 1984). The site can be reached only by air, and further fieldwork requires additional funding.

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**26. Current conservation education:** None

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**27. Current recreation and tourism:** None

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**28. Jurisdiction:**

Territorial: Administration of Taimyr (Dolgano-Nenets) Autonomous Area (35 Sovetskaya Street, Dudinka, Taimyr AO 663210, Russia).

Functional: State Committee of the Russian Federation for Environmental Protection (4/6 Bolshaya Gruzinskaya Street, Moscow 123812, Russia).

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**29. Management authority:** Regional Committee for Environmental Protection (29 Lenin Street, Dudinka, Taimyr AO 663210, Russia).

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**30. Bibliographical references:** Krivenko, Ivanov & Azarov (1983); Krivenko, Ivanov & Kostin (1984).

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