

Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands

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

1. Date this sheet was completed/updated: 5 July 1998

2. Country: Ukraine

3. Name of wetland: *Sasyk Lake*

4. Geographical coordinates: 45°40'N 29°41' E

5. Altitude (average and/or max. & min.) 1-3 m

6. Area: (in hectares) 21,000 ha

7. Overview: (general summary, in two or three sentences, of the wetland's principal characteristics)

Sasyk Lake is a freshed reservoir near the Danube Delta and the Black Sea. The wetland site is important for migrating, breeding and moulting birds. About 25000 pairs of wetland birds make their nests there. Seasonal conglomerations of birds are up to 100 000 individuals.

8. Wetland Type (please circle the applicable codes for wetland types as listed in Annex I if 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: **K**

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

1a • 1b • 1c • 1d | 2a • 2b • 2c • 2d | 3a • 3b • 3c | 4a • 4b

Please specify the most significant criterion applicable to the site: **3a, 2a**

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

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

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12. Justification of the criteria selected under point 9 (please refer to Annex 11 in the *Explanatory Note and Guidelines* document)

2(a). One can find large conglomerations of threatened species - *Pelecanus onocrotalus* and *Branta ruficollis*.

2(c). On this territory there are places of nest of many bird species of wetland complex.

3(a). About 25000 pairs of wetland birds make their nest. Seasonal conglomerations of birds are about 100 000 individuals.

3(b). On this territory regularly one can find large numbers of such species as snipes, ducks and geese, which can be an indicators of quality of wetland environment

13. General location: (include the nearest large town and its administrative region)

Sasyk Lake is situated near the Tatarbunary Town - centre of Rayon (administrative district) in Odeska Oblast of Ukraine, closed to Ramsar wetland sites 'Kyliyske Mouth' and 'Shagany-Alibei-Burnas Lakes System'.

14. Physical features: (e.g. geology, geomorphology; origins - natural or artificial; hydrology; soil type; water quality; water depth water permanence; fluctuations in water level; tidal variations; catchment area; downstream area* climate)

Sasyk Lake is a former (to 1978) Sasyk Liman (brackish lagoon) - estuary of rivers of Kogylnik and Sarata. Shores, except the upper and lower reaches, are abrupt. In upper goes freshening of basin and formation of sites of a floodplain type. Pliocen - Quaternary terrace. Mineralization of water - 0,7-3,0 g/l. The salts NaCl, MgCl₂, MgSO₄ prevail. The catchment area is 5363 square km; volume of a reservoir is 530 million of cubic m; the area of a water surface is 215 square km; length is 35 km; maximum width is 11 km; average depth is 2,5 m; the maximum depth is 3.3 m.

1950-1978 change of levels of water in Sasyk Liman practically is corresponded to the change of water's levels in the Black Sea. In June 1978, this reservoir was separated from the sea by a dam and Sasyk reservoir (or lake) was created. Its water regime is mainly adjusted by artificial receipt of fresh water from the Danube.

15. Hydrological values: (groundwater recharge, flood control, sediment trapping, shoreline stabilization etc.)

The Sasyk Lake is an freshed reservoir (of Sasyk Liman) and is connected with the Danube River by canal 'Danube-Sasyk' through which flood fresh waters come. Periodically pumping of water to the sea is carries out. Such water-change allows to maintain small level of water mineralization, to prevent influence of salt deposits at the bottom of the lake and yielding to the northern part of the reservoir mineral water (up to 6,0 g/l) through falling low-water Kogylnyk and Sarata Rivers.

16. Ecological features: (main habitats and vegetation types)

The emerged vegetation (mainly *Phragmites australis*, *Bolboschoenus maritimus*, *Typha angustifolia*) and the submerged plant communities (*Potamogeton pectinatus*, *P.perfoliatus*, *Myriophyllum spicatum*, *Ruppia spiralis*) occupy the fifth part of the lake's surface mainly in the northern part and along shores.

Main breeding sites: thickets of a reed, salt meadows in upper and lower of the lake, accumulative islands. Total amount of a nesting ornithocomplex - about 10 000 pairs. Main places of seasonal conglomerations - shallow waters of upper and aquatic surface in a seaside part of the lake, their numbers - up to 100 000 individuals.

17. Noteworthy flora: (indicating, e.g., which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc.)

There are species from the Red Data Book of Ukraine: *Eremogone caphalotes*, *Orchis palustris*, *Salvinia natans* (relic) and *Trapa natans* (relic).

18. Noteworthy fauna: (indicating, e.g., which species are unique, rare, endangered, abundant or biogeographically important; include count data, etc.)

During different seasons, the rare bird species of Ukraine and Europe occur in Sasyk: *Charadrius alexandrinus* (6 breeding pairs), *Glareola pratincola* (60 breeding pairs), *Pelecanus onocrotalus* (about 2 000 individuals), *Phalacrocorax pygmeus* (20 individuals).

By now hydrobiological situation in Sasyk has changed: marine ichthyofauna was replaced by freshwater fauna, the efficiency of fish production in the water body has sharply increased (to 70 kg/ha per year). The ichthyo-fauna of the liman is represented by 47 species of fish, relating to 12 families (*Acipenseridae*, *Clupeidae*, *Cyprinidae*, *Esocidae*, *Cobitidae*, *Siluridae*, *Atherinidae*, *Gasterosteidae*, *Percidae*, *Gobiidae*, *Syngnathidae*, *Pleuronectidae*). From dominant species of fish, *Carassius gibelio*, *Abramis brama*, *Cyprinus carpio*, *Lucioperca lucioperca* and *Perca fluviatilis* breed the most successfully.

19. Social and Cultural Values: (e.g. fisheries production, forestry, religious importance, archaeological site etc.)

The Sasyk Lake is important for ecological education, recreation and scientific research. It is traditional place of fishing for the local population.

20. Land tenure/ownership of:

(a) site: State and collective ownership

(b) surrounding area: State, collective and private ownership

21. Current land use:

(a) site: There is some limited and controlled exploitation of natural resources at the site - hunting, fish-breeding and fishing, grazing of sheep, recreation and balneology, taking away water for irrigation etc.).

(b) surroundings/catchment area: the same and traditional farming, including grape-making, cultivation of rice, irrigation etc.

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

(a) at the site: The given water body is artificial freshed by submission of water from Danube. The first period of reduction of salinity of water was directed on decreasing of mineralisation average from 18-20 up to 1,5-2 g/l. Now the mineralisation of water decreases periodically in average up to 0.9-1.3 g/l. All changes in structure of flora and fauna of the wetland, will be connected with condition of water's salinity in this site. Now disturbance with recreation and commercial fishing activities are the main unfavorable human influences for waterfowl. Mass moving of exotic fish as *Hypophthalmichthys molitrix* and *Ctenopharyngodon idella* is a unfavorable factor for native species of Pisces in this lake.

(b) around the site: Now there is the transformation of a mouth complex in this site in connection with various volume of water flows of Kogilnyk and Sarata Rivers, running into Sasyk Lake. The floodplain complex is displaced to the right shore. Structure of half-shipped vegetation varies, the biocoenoses undergo regular successions.

23. Conservation measures taken: (national category and legal status of protected areas - including any boundary changes which have been made: management practices; whether an officially approved management plan exists and whether it has been implemented)

24. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented: (e.g. management plan in preparation; officially proposed as a protected area etc.)

It is foreseen to be included during expansion of the Dunaiskyi (Danube) Biosphere Reserve.

25. Current Scientific research and facilities: (e.g. details of current projects; existence of field station etc.)

Long-term scientific researches in the wetland are carried out by the scientists from research institutes of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine and Mechnikov State University of Odesa and Dunaiskyi Biosphere Reserve.

26. Current conservation education: (e.g. visitors centre, hides, information booklet, facilities for school visits etc.)

There is nature protecting education within the framework of the program of a comprehensive school. There is distribution of the information booklets, posters etc. There are lectures and publications of the experts of nature protecting and scientific establishments for the local population.

27. Current recreation and tourism: (state if wetland is used for recreation/tourism; indicate type and frequency/intensity)

Tourism and the recreative measures are advanced poorly. There is not enough appropriate infrastructure. The development of recreative directions in near future will not be provided.

28. Jurisdiction: (territorial e.g. state/region and functional e.g. Dept of Agriculture / Dept. of Environment etc.)

Territorial: local Soviets of the Deputies.

Functional jurisdiction: regional administrative authorities of different sectors: State Committee of Forestry (forest use and hunting), Ministry of Agricultural Industry Complexes of Ukraine (farming), State Committee of Fishery (fishing), State Committee of Water Resources (water using) etc.

29. Management authority: (name and address of local body directly responsible for managing the wetland)

Land and Resource Users (organizations and institutions and citizens) and local authorities are executive bodies for environment protection. State Department of Ecological Safety in Odeska Oblast (Director: Inesa D. Loeva. Address: 83 Sverdlov Str., 270 107 Odesa, UKRAINE. Tel./Fax: +380 482 25-13-22. E-mail: <postmaster@eco14.FreeNet.Kiev.UA>) carries out state control for this protection.

30. Bibliographical references: (scientific/technical only)

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