



Ramsar Information Sheet

Update version, previously published on 1 January 1970

Zimbabwe Driefontein Grasslands



Designation date: 3 May 2013
Ramsar ID: 2104
Coordinates: 19°15'39"S 30°46'38"E
Official area (ha): 201 194,00
Number of zones: 1

Color codes

Fields back-shaded in light blue relate to data and information required only for RIS updates.

Note that some fields concerning aspects of Part 3, the Ecological Character Description of the RIS (tinted in purple), are not expected to be completed as part of a standard RIS, but are included for completeness so as to provide the requested consistency between the RIS and the format of a ' full ' Ecological Character Description, as adopted in Resolution X.15 (2008). If a Contracting Party does have information available that is relevant to these fields (for example from a national format Ecological Character Description) it may, if it wishes to, include information in these additional fields.

1 - Summary

Summary (This field is limited to 2500 characters)

The Driefontein Grasslands, situated in the gently undulating Central Plateau region of Central Zimbabwe, are in an arid low-rainfall area. The soils are sandy and fast-draining except where water runs into shallow clay-lined depressions called vleis which support dense reed beds. The area is used for commercial farming and many dams are constructed along the streams and rivers to capture water for livestock. These dams, vleis and natural pans form a system of wetlands that are important for the avifauna in the site.

2 - Data & location

2.1 - Formal data

2.1.1 - Name and address of the compiler of this RIS

Name Mrs D. M. Chasi, Director General

Institution/agency Environmental Management Agency

Postal address (This field is limited to 254 characters)

Management Agency, Makombe complex Block 1
Corner Harare street/Chitepo avenue
Harare Zimbabwe

E-mail ema@ema.co.zw

Phone +2634705671-3

2.1.2 - Period of collection of data and information used to compile the RIS

From year 1981

To year 2014

2.1.3 - Name of the Ramsar Site

Official name (in English, French or Spanish) Driefontein Grasslands

2.1.4 - Changes to the boundaries and area of the Site since its designation or earlier update

(Update) A. Changes to Site boundary Yes No

(Update) B. Changes to Site area No change to area

2.1.5 - Changes to the ecological character of the Site

(Update) 6b i. Has the ecological character of the Ramsar Site (including applicable Criteria) changed since the previous RIS? Not evaluated

2.2 - Site location

2.2.1 - Defining the Site boundaries

b) Digital map/image

<2 file(s) uploaded>

Boundaries description (optional) (This field is limited to 2500 characters)

The Driefontein Grasslands is surrounded by the town of Chivhu to the north, the town of Mvuma to the west and the mining centre of Felixburg to the south-east forming what is known as the Chivhu-Felixburg-Mvuma triangle. The wetlands fall in three districts namely Chikomba, Chirumhanzu and Gutu. The area is situated in central Zimbabwe, east of the geographical centre of the country.

2.2.2 - General location

a) In which large administrative region does the site lie? Masvingo, Midlands, Mashonaland East Provinces

b) What is the nearest town or population centre? Gutu, Chivu

2.2.3 - For wetlands on national boundaries only

a) Does the wetland extend onto the territory of one or more other countries? Yes No

b) Is the site adjacent to another designated Ramsar Site on the territory of another Contracting Party? Yes No

2.2.4 - Area of the Site

Official area, in hectares (ha): 201194

Area, in hectares (ha) as calculated from GIS boundaries 199760.56

2.2.5 - Biogeography

Biogeographic regions

Regionalisation scheme(s)	Biogeographic region
Other scheme (provide name below)	Zambezi biome

Other biogeographic regionalisation scheme (This field is limited to 2500 characters)

The Zambezi biome covers the great majority of the Zambezi basin, around 95%, and comprises woodland, grassland, swamp and lakes. The climate is strongly seasonal with marked dry season. Zambezi Biome (Chenje 2000)

3 - Why is the Site important?











3.1 - Ramsar Criteria and their justification

- Criterion 2 : Rare species and threatened ecological communities

3.2 - Plant species whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

<no data available>

3.3 - Animal species whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

Phylum	Scientific name	Common name	Species qualifies under criterion				Species contributes under criterion				Pop. Size	Period of pop. Est.	% occurrence	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendix I	CMS Appendix I	Other Status	Justification
			2	4	6	9	3	5	7	8								
CHORDATA / AVES	 <i>Balearica regulorum</i>	Grey Crowned Crane	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				EN 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
CHORDATA / AVES	 <i>Bugeranus carunculatus</i>	Wattled Crane	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				VU 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
CHORDATA / AVES	 <i>Circus ranivorus</i>	African Marsh Harrier	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	LC	
CHORDATA / AVES	 <i>Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis</i>	Saddle-billed Stork	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	LC	
CHORDATA / AVES	 <i>Sagittarius serpentarius</i>	Secretarybird	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				VU 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

(This field is limited to 2500 characters)

The site is the remaining stronghold of about 85% of the total population of the globally threatened Wattled Crane (*Bugeranus carunculatus*) and the endangered Grey Crowned Crane (*Balearica regulorum*). It also has significant numbers of the globally threatened Secretary Bird (*Sagittarius serpentarius*). The area is an important habitat for wetland birds such as the Saddle-billed Stork (*Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis*), African Marsh Harrier (*Circus ranivorus*), March Owl and several species of ducks.

3.4 - Ecological communities whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

<no data available>

Name of ecological community	Community qualifies under Criterion 2?	Description	Justification
Habitat	<input type="checkbox"/>	The site is an important bird area. Most of the landscape is under natural highveld grassland, dominated by the thatching grass <i>Hyparrhenia</i> species, scattered patches of miombo woodland and streams.	
Species	<input type="checkbox"/>	The grasslands support a significant population of Crane species, eagles, ducks, waterbirds and other wildlife animals which breeds and feeds in the site.	

4 - What is the Site like? (Ecological character description)

4.1 - Ecological character

(This field is limited to 2500 characters)

The Driefontein Grasslands is an important area designated for the conservation of birds especially the globally threatened wattled crane. Most of the landscape is under natural highveld grassland, dominated by the thatching grass *Hyparrhenia* species. Soaks, seeps and depressions collect water and form many vleis in the area, due to the flat terrain. The major rivers in the centre of the site are Nyororo and Shashe, and there are many streams and scattered patches of miombo woodland. Most of the wetlands in the area are in the form of dams, constructed mainly for watering livestock. Farmers use the wetlands for maize and horticultural production. The wetland is important for the breeding of crane species, ducks and other waterbirds. It provides the main sources of water for the rivers that originate from this central watershed, supporting a significant number of people and biodiversity downstream.

4.2 - What wetland type(s) are in the site?

Inland wetlands

Wetland types (code and name)	Local name	Ranking of extent (1: greatest - 4: least)	Area (ha) of wetland type	Justification of Criterion 1
U: Permanent Non-forested peatlands		0		

Human-made wetlands

Wetland types (code and name)	Local name	Ranking of extent (1: greatest - 4: least)	Area (ha) of wetland type	Justification of Criterion 1
6: Water storage areas/Reservoirs		0		

Other non-wetland habitat

Other non-wetland habitats within the site	Area (ha) if known
Non-forested peatlands, shrub, open bogs, swamps, fens	

4.3 - Biological components

4.3.1 - Plant species

Other noteworthy plant species

Scientific name	Common name	Position in range / endemism / other
<i>Cyrtanthus contractus</i>	Fire Lily	
<i>Eulophia cucullata</i>	Orchid	

4.3.2 - Animal species

Other noteworthy animal species

Phylum	Scientific name	Common name	Pop. size	Period of pop. est.	% occurrence	Position in range /endemism/other
CHORDATA/MAMMALIA	<i>Aepyceros melampus</i>	impala				
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Ardeotis kori</i>	Kori Bustard				
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Circaetus pectoralis</i>	Black-chested Snake Eagle				
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Haliaeetus vocifer</i>	African Fish Eagle				
CHORDATA/MAMMALIA	<i>Kobus ellipsiprymnus</i>	waterbuck				
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Terathopius ecaudatus</i>	Bateleur				

4.4 - Physical components

4.4.1 - Climate

Climatic region	Subregion
A: Tropical humid climate	Aw: Tropical savanna (Winter dry season)

4.4.2 - Geomorphic setting

a) Minimum elevation above sea level (in metres)

a) Maximum elevation above sea level (in metres)

Lower part of river basin

4.4.3 - Soil

No available information

Are soil types subject to change as a result of changing hydrological conditions (e.g., increased salinity or acidification)? Yes No

4.4.4 - Water regime

Water permanence

Presence?	Changes at RIS update
Usually permanent water present	No change

Source of water that maintains character of the site

Presence?	Predominant water source	Changes at RIS update
Water inputs from surface water	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change
Water inputs from groundwater	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change

Water destination

Presence?	Changes at RIS update
Feeds groundwater	No change
To downstream catchment	No change

Stability of water regime

Presence?	Changes at RIS update
Water levels largely stable	No change

4.4.5 - Sediment regime

Sediment regime unknown

4.4.6 - Water pH

Unknown

4.4.7 - Water salinity

Unknown

4.4.8 - Dissolved or suspended nutrients in water

Unknown

4.4.9 - Features of the surrounding area which may affect the Site

Please describe whether, and if so how, the landscape and ecological characteristics in the area surrounding the Ramsar Site differ from the site itself: i) broadly similar ii) significantly different

4.5 - Ecosystem services

4.5.1 - Ecosystem services/benefits

Provisioning Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Food for humans	Sustenance for humans (e.g., fish, molluscs, grains)	Medium
Fresh water	Drinking water for humans and/or livestock	Medium
Wetland non-food products	Livestock fodder	Medium

Regulating Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Maintenance of hydrological regimes	Storage and delivery of water as part of water supply systems for agriculture and industry	Medium
Erosion protection	Soil, sediment and nutrient retention	Medium

Supporting Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Biodiversity	Supports a variety of all life forms including plants, animals and microorganisms, the genes they contain, and the ecosystems of which they form a part	Medium
Nutrient cycling	Storage, recycling, processing and acquisition of nutrients	Medium

Within the site: 20000

Outside the site: 30000

Have studies or assessments been made of the economic valuation of ecosystem services provided by this Ramsar Site? Yes No Unknown

4.5.2 - Social and cultural values

- i) the site provides a model of wetland wise use, demonstrating the application of traditional knowledge and methods of management and use that maintain the ecological character of the wetland

Description if applicable (This field is limited to 2500 characters)

One natural perennial pan, Widgeon Pan, is considered sacred by locals and traditional rituals are performed there occasionally. Locals associate the recent drying up of the pan to desecration of this place by new settlers who are not observing the traditional norms of the area.

4.6 - Ecological processes

<no data available>

5 - How is the Site managed? (Conservation and management)

5.1 - Land tenure and responsibilities (Managers)

5.1.1 - Land tenure/ownership

Public ownership

Category	Within the Ramsar Site	In the surrounding area
National/Federal government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Private ownership

Category	Within the Ramsar Site	In the surrounding area
Other types of private/individual owner(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Provide further information on the land tenure / ownership regime (optional): (This field is limited to 1000 characters)

The area is mainly inhabited by smallholder farmers who practice subsistence crop production. Most of the communities live in villages averaging 50 families each, and have individual crop land with communal grazing land.

5.1.2 - Management authority

Please list the local office / offices of any agency or organization responsible for managing the site: (This field is limited to 1000 characters)

Gutu, Chikomba , Chirumanzu Rural District Councils

Provide the name and title of the person or people with responsibility for the wetland:

Mr Alexander Mutembwa, Area manager

Postal address: (This field is limited to 254 characters)

Gutu Rural District Council
P. Bag 908
Gutu

E-mail address: mutembwaalexander@gmail.com

5.2 - Ecological character threats and responses (Management)

5.2.1 - Factors (actual or likely) adversely affecting the Site ' s ecological character

Human settlements (non agricultural)

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Housing and urban areas	Medium impact		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change

Water regulation

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Drainage		Medium impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change

Agriculture and aquaculture

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Annual and perennial non-timber crops		Medium impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change
Livestock farming and ranching	Medium impact		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change

Biological resource use

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Hunting and collecting terrestrial animals	Medium impact		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change

Natural system modifications

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Fire and fire suppression	Medium impact		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change
Vegetation clearance/ land conversion	Medium impact		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change

Pollution

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Household sewage, urban waste water	Medium impact		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change
Agricultural and forestry effluents	Medium impact		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change

Climate change and severe weather

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Habitat shifting and alteration	Medium impact		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change

5.2.2 - Legal conservation status

Non-statutory designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
Important Bird Area	Driefonteingrasslands(ZW017)		whole

5.2.3 - IUCN protected areas categories (2008)

IV Habitat/Species Management Area: protected area managed mainly for conservation through management intervention

5.2.4 - Key conservation measures

Habitat

Measures	Status
Catchment management initiatives/controls	Partially implemented

Species

Measures	Status
Threatened/rare species management programmes	Implemented

Human Activities

Measures	Status
Communication, education, and participation and awareness activities	Implemented
Research	Implemented

Other: (This field is limited to 2500 characters)

Currently, there is no national and/or international category or legal status protecting the site. However some species of birds like cranes and bustards are protected by the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Act (1975)

5.2.5 - Management planning

Is there a site-specific management plan for the site? No

Has a management effectiveness assessment been undertaken for the site? Yes No

If the site is a formal transboundary site as indicated in section Data and location > Site location, are there shared management planning processes with another Contracting Party? Yes No

Please indicate if a Ramsar centre, other educational or visitor facility, or an educational or visitor programme is associated with the site: (This field is limited to 1000 characters)

BirdLife Zimbabwe produces a bird awareness newsletter quarterly and has information on the Driefontein Grasslands. The BirdLife Zimbabwe newsletter, the Babbler and journal the Honeyguide have featured articles on work done in this site.

5.2.6 - Planning for restoration

Is there a site-specific restoration plan? No need identified

5.2.7 - Monitoring implemented or proposed

Monitoring	Status
Birds	Implemented

(This field is limited to 2500 characters)

Conservation action plan for Wattled & Grey Crowned Cranes in Zimbabwe with a particular focus on the Driefontein Grasslands was developed in July 2010. There has been research on the influence of land use on the distribution and habitat use of Cranes in the area.

6 - Additional material

6.1 - Additional reports and documents

6.1.1 - Bibliographical references

(This field is limited to 2500 characters)

BirdLife International (2014) Important Bird Areas factsheet: Driefontein grasslands. Downloaded from <http://www.birdlife.org> on 21/10/2014

BirdLife International 2012. *Bugeranus carunculatus*. In: IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Version 2012.1. Accessed on 05 September 2012. www.iucnredlist.org

BirdLife Zimbabwe (2011). Important Bird Areas in Zimbabwe: National Status and Trends Report 2010.

Childes, S.L., and Mundy, P.J. 2001. Important Bird Areas in Africa and Associated Islands-Zimbabwe. In Fishpool, L.D.C and Evans, M.I (eds). Important Bird Areas in Africa and associated Islands: Priority sites for conservation. First edition. Nature Bureau, United Kingdom. Pages 1025-1042.

Chirara, C. 2011. The status of the Wattled Crane *Bugeranus carunculatus* in the Driefontein Grasslands of Zimbabwe. *Journal of BirdLife Zimbabwe, Honeyguide* 57: 10-14.

Chirara, C. 2004. Community involvement in Wattled Crane Conservation in the Driefontein Grasslands. *Journal of BirdLife Zimbabwe, Honeyguide* 50 (2):

Konrad, P.M. 1981. Status and ecology of Wattled Crane in Africa. Pages 220-237: In Lewis, J.C and Masatomi, H (Eds) 1981. Crane Research Around the World. International Crane Foundation, Baraboo, Wisconsin, USA.

Maozeka, F. 2000. Update on cranes and an overview of the work of the Zimbabwe Crane Working Group (ZCWG) in Zimbabwe. Proceedings of the 12th South African Crane Working Group Workshop.

Meine, C. D., and Archibald, G.W. (Eds.), 1996. The cranes: - Status Survey and Conservation Action Plan. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland, and Cambridge, U.K., 294pp, Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center, accessed on 22nd November 2006 at <http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/birds/cranes/index.htm>

Mundy, P.J., Maozeka, F., and Couto, J.T. 2001. An update on the status of Wattled Cranes in Zimbabwe. *Journal of BirdLife Zimbabwe, Honeyguide* 47(2): pg 129-134.

6.1.2 - Additional reports and documents

i. taxonomic lists of plant and animal species occurring in the site (see section 4.3)

<no file available>

ii. a detailed Ecological Character Description (ECD) (in a national format)

<1 file(s) uploaded>

iii. a description of the site in a national or regional wetland inventory

<no file available>

iv. relevant Article 3.2 reports

<no file available>

v. site management plan

<no file available>

vi. other published literature

<1 file(s) uploaded>

6.1.3 - Photograph(s) of the Site

Please provide at least one photograph of the site:



Globally threatened wattled cranes in Driefontein grasslands (WWF, 20-06-2012)

6.1.4 - Designation letter and related data

Designation letter

<1 file(s) uploaded>

Date of Designation 2013-05-03