

Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands

As approved by Rec.4.7. of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, Montreux, Switzerland/July 1990

NOTE: please read the accompanying guidelines before attempting to complete this form. An example of a completed data sheet is also included.

Completed sheets should be returned to: T.A. Jones, Ramsar Database, IWRB, Slimbridge, Gloucester GL2 7BX, England

1. Country: Hungary 2. Date: 31.07.1992 3. Ref.: (office use only) 3HU012

4. Name and Address of compiler

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H-8400 Veszprém, Vár u. 31.

5. Name of wetland: LAKE-BALATON /seasonally designated!/
Balaton

6. Date of Ramsar designation: 11 April 1979

7. Geographical coordinates: 46° 62' - 47° 04' N, 17° 15' - 18° 10' E

8. General location: (e.g. administrative region and nearest large)

County Zala: Keszthely, County Veszprém: Balatonfüred, Balatonalmádi,

County Somogy: Fonyód, Balatonszázó, Balatonföldvár, Zamárdi, Siófok

9. Area: (in hectares) 59800

10. Wetland type: (see attached classification, also approved by Montreux Rec.C.4.7) O

11. Altitude: (average and/or maximum and minimum) min.: 103,4 m max.: 106 m over the Baltic Sea level

12. Overview: (general summary, in two or three sentences, of the wetlands principal characteristics)

The Balaton is the largest freshwater lake in Europe. It is one of the greatest areas for tourism in Europe. The most important vegetation type are reeds.

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

Lake Balaton lies in a tectonical depression. It is 22000 years old. Balaton uplands are belonging to the southern part of Bakony and Keszthely Mountains. Essentially they are tablelands, with hills rising to 450 m.

The brooks and rivulets are running towards Lake Balaton. Two typical volcanic areas are on the north shore of the Lake- Tihany Paninsula - jutting 5 km into the lake-, and the other is the Tapolca Basin - it is Crowned by 14 basalt hills. West of the Keszthely Mountains there is another special natural unit: Lake Héviz, it is the largest warm water lake in Europe. The average depth of Balaton is only 3,5 meters, only at the tip of Tihany peninsula its depth is 11 meters. Its temperature in summer is over 20 C and often reaches 25-27 C. With its calcium, magnesium and hydrocarbonate content the soft, mildly alkaline fresh water of the Lake can be considered as mineral water. The water of the lake is not as clear as that of the deep Alpine lakes. The water seems a little murky, because of the fine mud floating in it. Movements are caused by winds.

14. Ecological features: (main habitats and vegetation types) Reed

15. Land tenure/ownership of:

(a) site

state property

(b) surrounding area

Cooperative farms and private property

16. 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 plan exists and whether it has been implemented)

The area is freely accessible, its Ramsar designation is only seasonal.

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

Seasonal designation as Ramsar site.

18. Current land use: principal human activities in:

(a) site

- scraping of mud

- fishing

- bathing, water sports

- reed harvesting

(b) surroundings/catchment

- tourism
- agricultural activities

19. Disturbances/threats, including changes in land use and major development projects: (factors which may have a negative impact on the ecological character of the wetland)

(a) at the site

- scraping of mud
- unsuitable fishing in measure and quality

(b) in the surroundings/catchment

- mud placing
- an increased use of chemicals in agriculture
- dirty slop

20. Hydrological and physical values: (groundwater recharge, flood control, sediment trapping, shoreline stabilisation etc.)

The rate of eutrophication of the Lake Balaton is very high, because the concentration degree of different forms of phosphorus is very high too. The plants in the lake respond to the higher nutrient supply by increased biomass production.

21. Social and cultural values: (e.g. fisheries production, forestry, religious importance, archeological site etc.)

About 30 000 years ago prehistoric man lived here. Around the time of the birth of Our Lord the Romans appeared on the lake and built settlements. After Conquest around Lake Balaton Stephen /our first king/ organized three large administrative units: the counties of Veszprém, Somogy and Zala. In the 11 th Century the Benedictin Abbey of Zalavár and Tihany was founded. After the Mongol invasion of 1241-42 the building of castles was also begun on a large scale around Lake Balaton. It was also in the 13 th Century that the development of towns near the shore started /Keszthely, Sümeg, Tapolca/. In the 16 th Century the Turkish army had a navy station in Siófok. Tourism at the Lake Balaton started about 200 years ago. Now it is the greatest recreation area of Hungary.

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

During migration:

Anas platyrhynchos

- *A. clypeata*
- *A. penelope*
- *Aythya ferina*
- *A. fuligula*
- *A. marila*
- *Anser fabalis*
- *A. anser*
- *Bucephala clangula*
- *Cygnus olor*
- *Fulica atra*
- *Gavia arctica*
- *Melanitta fusca*
- *Mergus albellus*

23. Noteworthy flora: (e.g. unique, rare, endangered, or biogeographically important species/communities etc.)

Algae: Approximately 2000 species of algae have been identified in Lake Balaton.

Two-thirds of them inhabit the littoral and benthic zones.

Important species of algae: - *Cladophora glomerata* /green filamentous algae/

- *Bangia atropurpurea* /red algae/

Nitzschia vulgare

The two most common species of hair-weed in Lake Balaton are *Potamogeton perfoliatus* and *Myriophyllum spicatum*.

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

Pannon University of Agriculture: Reed, Fish, Amphibians, Reptiles

- Research Institute for Limnology of the Academy of Sciences Tihany, Fish, Mollusk, Water-microscopical living-creatures, Birds

- Eötvös University of Sciences, Birds

- Museum of Natural Sciences, Insects, Fish, Amphibians, Reptiles, Birds, Mammals

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

Freely accessible area. A lot of booklets can be found describing the area.

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

It is the greatest area for tourism in Hungary

27. **Management authority:** (name and address of body responsible for managing the wetland)

NATURE CONSERVATION AUTHORITY OF CENTRAL-TRANSDANUBIA

H-8200 Veszprém Vár u. 31.

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

See point 27.

The Directorate is the first instant authority of Ministry for Environment and Regional Policy. Local governments of surrounding settlements.

29. **Bibliographical references:** (scientific/technical only)

At the Directorate in Veszprém a lot.

30. **Reasons for inclusion:** (state which Ramsar criteria - as adopted by Rec.C4.15 of the Montreux Conference - are applicable)

1 /a/

2. /a/

3 /b/

31. **Map of site** (please enclose the most detailed and up-to-date map available - preferably at least 1:25,000 or 1:50,000)