



# CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES

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SIXTH MEETING OF THE SIGNATORIES TO  
THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
CONCERNING CONSERVATION MEASURES  
FOR THE SIBERIAN CRANE (*Grus leucogeranus*)  
Almaty, Kazakhstan, 15-19 May 2007  
Agenda Item 8.3

## **SITE NOMINATION GUIDELINES FOR THE WESTERN/CENTRAL ASIAN SITE NETWORK FOR THE SIBERIAN CRANE AND OTHER WATERBIRDS**

*(Note by the Secretariat)*

1. The Fifth Meeting of Signatories to the CMS Siberian Crane Memorandum of Understanding (Moscow, April 2004) agreed on the need to establish a network of sites critical for Siberian Cranes of the Western and Central populations to promote protection of key wetlands and coordination among the Range States in the Western/Central Asian Flyways. It also agreed with a proposal to introduce the site network concept into the next version of the respective MoU Conservation Plans.
2. The Meeting to Endorse the Proposed Western/Central Asian Site Network for the Siberian Cranes (and other waterbirds), New Delhi, 13 June 2005, agreed on criteria and qualifiers to select sites for the network, the information required to nominate sites, and procedures to nominate, review and approve sites for inclusion. A Site Network Review Working Group and a WCASN-SC Committee were established on that occasion. A report of the meeting is available as UNEP/CMS/SC-6/Inf/9.
3. The attached Guidelines to Prepare Site Nomination Documentation were developed by the International Crane Foundation, in consultation with the CMS Secretariat and Wetlands International, to assist management bodies in providing details on sites proposed for inclusion in the WCASN-SC. They are available in English and Russian languages.
4. By letter dated 26 January 2007, all Siberian Crane Range States were requested by the CMS Secretariat to consider nominating one or more sites to be included in the international site network, following the procedures summarised in the Guidelines. To facilitate this process, representatives from the countries participating in the 2005 New Delhi meeting already identified a number of sites in their respective countries for possible inclusion in the network. A preliminary list of priority sites was included in the Guidelines.
5. The status of nominations is described in document UNEP/CMS/SC-6/8/Add.1. The first round of site nominations will be presented to the WCASN Committee for approval during the Sixth Meeting of Siberian Crane MoU Signatories.

**Actions requested:**

The meeting is invited to:

- Endorse the WCASN-SC site list and the plans for nominations during the coming triennium; and
- Encourage those Range States that have not done so to officially nominate their sites, using the WCASN-SC Site Network Guidelines, as soon as possible after the MoU meeting, in consultation with the Siberian Crane Flyway Coordinator.



# Western/Central Asian Site Network for the Siberian Crane and Other Waterbirds

## Guidelines to Prepare Site Nomination Documentation

Version: 25 January 2007

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# **1. THE WESTERN/CENTRAL ASIAN SITE NETWORK FOR THE SIBERIAN CRANE AND OTHER WATERBIRDS (WCASN-SC)**

## **1.1. Introduction**

The Siberian Crane (*Grus leucogeranus*) is a critically endangered species that is dependent upon the existence of large open areas of shallow wetland habitats along its migration routes. Three routes are currently known - a West Asian flyway that leads from breeding grounds in Western Siberia around the western shore of the Caspian Sea to the Caspian Lowlands of northern Iran; a Central Asian flyway connecting Western Siberian breeding grounds to the wintering site in northern India; and an East Asian flyway leading from Yakutia to the central Yangtze floodplain lakes in China.

The flyways and habitats used by the Siberian Crane are shared with many other species of migratory waterbirds, including at least 32 globally threatened waterbird species, and thus have significance far beyond conservation of the Siberian Crane alone.

The establishment of a Siberian Crane site network would be of critical importance for Siberian Cranes and would also benefit other cranes and waterbirds. Such a network would be the first step towards developing a more comprehensive site network for migratory waterbirds under a wider framework proposed within the Central Asian Flyway (CAF) Initiative under the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS). The main aim would be to start the Siberian Crane site network development process quickly, while the more extensive CAF framework consultations continue. The proposed Siberian Crane site network would eventually be integrated within the wider waterbird site network under CAF. Consequently its characteristics would need to be compatible with the CAF's aim.

## **1.2. Summary**

The UNEP/GEF Siberian Crane Wetland Project (SCWP) has a stated goal to develop flyway site networks with nomination procedures for sites harmonized with other site network schemes. Wetlands International is currently working with CMS on an initiative to seek the official endorsement of the Central Asian Flyway Action Plan to Conserve Migratory Waterbirds and their Habitats which was finalized in New Delhi by the Range States in June 2005 (New Delhi). The CAF Action Plan includes a provision to establish a site network for migratory waterbirds in the Central Asian Flyway.

At the "Waterbirds Around the World" Meeting (Edinburgh, April 2004), side events were held to discuss steps needed to develop these two related initiatives. Joint discussions focused on exploring the best mechanisms to link these initiatives, identifying frameworks for cooperation and applying lessons learned from the successful North East Asia Crane Site Network (NEACSN) established under the Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Strategy.

Efforts for the conservation and recovery of the Siberian Crane gained momentum in recent years through the CMS *Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for*

*the Siberian Crane* (MoU). The MoU involves the Siberian Crane's 11 Range States and provides the basis to develop and implement flyway level conservation plans for the Western, Central and Eastern populations of the Siberian Crane.

The Fifth Meeting of Range States to the CMS Siberian Crane MoU (Moscow, April 2004) agreed on the need to establish a network of sites critical for the Siberian Cranes of the Western and Central populations to promote protection of key wetlands and coordination among the Range States in the Western/Central Asian flyways. It also agreed with a proposal to introduce the site network concept into the next version of the respective MoU Conservation Plans.

The preliminary conclusions of an Inter-sessional Working Group established by the Fifth Meeting of Range States were presented to the GEF SCWP's Third Project Steering Committee Meeting (SCM3) in December 2004 in Iran. The process, title, objectives, site selection criteria, scope of activities to be conducted under the network, and opportunities for interaction and exchange were discussed throughout the course of the SCM3.

The SCM3 participants recommended that the site network be called the Western/Central Asian Site Network for the Siberian Crane and Other Waterbirds or WCASN-SC.

The Meeting to Endorse the Proposed Western/Central Asian Site Network for the Siberian Cranes (and other waterbirds) (New Delhi, 13 June 2005) agreed on criteria and qualifiers for selection of sites for the network, the information (datasheet) required for site nominations, and procedures to nominate, review and approve sites.

It was agreed that the vetting of nominations would be conducted by a Site Nomination Review Working Group, composed of one representative from the breeding range (Russian Federation), two representatives (rotating) from the staging areas (Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan initially), two representatives from the wintering range (Islamic Republic of Iran and India), as well as BirdLife International, Wetlands International and the International Crane Foundation. This Working Group has been operating on an interim basis, pending the development and approval of its Terms of Reference by the Sixth Meeting of Siberian Crane MoU Signatories in May 2007. The Working Group is to make recommendations to a WCASN-SC Committee for approval.

The final proposal for the site network will be attached as an addendum to the MoU's Conservation Plans for the Western and Central populations.

### **1.3. Goal of the WCASN-SC**

To ensure the long-term conservation of the Siberian Crane and other migratory waterbirds along the Western and Central Asian Flyways through recognition and appropriate management of a network of internationally important sites.

#### 1.4. Principles of the WCASN-SC

The initiative to establish a Siberian Crane site network under the CMS MoU will focus attention on:

- Sites important for the conservation, recovery and reintroduction of the Siberian Crane;
- Sites which are also important for other migratory cranes and waterbirds; and
- The importance of involving local people in conservation efforts at the sites.

#### 1.5. Activities under the WCASN-SC

The 2005 New Delhi Meeting to Endorse the Proposed WCASN-SC agreed joint activities which would be conducted within the framework of the network as follows:

- Providing monitoring and management of the sites;
- Facilitating staff exchange programme;
- Participating in education and public awareness activities in the WCASN-SC;
- Maintaining a regional Siberian Crane database;
- Providing training workshops for site managers and experts;
- Participating in communication and information exchange between site management bodies, researchers, and other relevant agencies in the network and other global networks; and
- Fundraising.

These activities will be integrated into the respective existing Conservation Plans under the CMS Siberian Crane MoU.

#### 1.6. Criterion and Qualifiers for Site Selection<sup>1</sup>

For site selection, attention will be focused on sites important for the conservation, recovery and reintroduction of the Siberian Crane, including sites that are also important for other migratory cranes and waterbirds. Please see the Site Information Sheet (Annex 1) and Explanatory Notes (Annex 2) for details.

**Criterion 1** and its four temporal sub-criteria are designed to ensure that governments will select sites based on their current and past importance for Siberian Cranes.

The **Qualifiers** give an indication of the *additional importance* for other cranes and waterbirds of sites that have been selected primarily because of their importance for Siberian Cranes. They are also important to promote the future integration of the WCASN-SC into the larger proposed waterbird site network for the Central Asia Flyway under the CMS *Central Asian Flyway Action Plan for the Conservation of Migratory Waterbirds and their Habitats*.

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<sup>1</sup> As agreed by the Meeting to Endorse the Proposed Western/Central Asian Site Network for Siberian Cranes (and other waterbirds) (New Delhi, 2005), with minor editorial revisions.

The criteria and qualifiers are adapted from selected criteria to nominate Wetlands of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention. Guidance for applying the Ramsar criteria can be found in the Convention's document: Ramsar Convention Handbook #7: Designating Ramsar Sites<sup>2</sup>

## 1.7. Site Information Sheet

The 2005 New Delhi Meeting to Endorse the Proposed WCASN-SC discussed the information needed to nominate a site. The meeting agreed to a list 15 categories of information needed as part of the nomination procedure. However, during the process to develop these guidelines, the list of information categories was revised to reflect the last updated version of the Ramsar Information Sheet. The revised list now encompasses all comments from the meeting participants and the additional updates. This information is reflected in the **Site Information Sheet** (see Annex 1).

The Site Information Sheet standardizes the information needed for the site nomination procedure. Site management bodies will submit the Site Information Sheet along with a **Site Map** and provide the required details on a proposed site, without regard to whether:

- a. The site is currently listed as a national, provincial or local nature protection area or internationally important area (under the Ramsar Convention, World Heritage Convention, etc.); or
- b. Constant monitoring of birds is being undertaken at the site.

## 1.8. Preliminary List of Priority Sites

Range States representatives to the Meeting to Endorse the Proposed WCASN-SC suggested a preliminary list of priority sites<sup>3</sup> for possible inclusion in the network, including eight sites covered by the UNEP/GEF Siberian Crane Wetlands Project. The respective States were encouraged to formally nominate these sites once the site nomination package of documents had been finalized and distributed.

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<sup>2</sup> Ramsar Convention Secretariat 2004. Ramsar handbooks for the wise use of wetlands. 2nd Edition. Ramsar Convention Secretariat, Gland, Switzerland. Can be downloaded free from [www.ramsar.org](http://www.ramsar.org).

<sup>3</sup> The original preliminary list included two sites from Mongolia (Khuiten-Kurkh, and Gun Galuut and Ayagin Lakes), however it was clarified that the proposed Mongolian sites were outside the geographic remit of the network and that the populations in question fit completely into the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Site Network.



**Russian Federation**

1. Kunovat River Basin
2. Konda and Alymla Rivers Basin
3. Belozersky Wildlife Refuge
4. Agrakhansky Wildlife Refuge

**Kazakhstan**

1. Naurzum Lake System
2. Zharsor & Urkash Lakes
3. Kulykol Lake
4. Tontegir & Zhanshura Lakes
5. Ural River Delta

**Azerbaijan**

1. Shirvan National Park
2. Kyzyl-Aghach Nature Reserve

**Iran**

1. Fereydoon Kenar Damgah
2. Bujagh National Park

**Turkmenistan**

1. Kelif
2. Durnaly

**Uzbekistan**

1. Termez

**Afghanistan**

1. Ab-i-Estada
2. Dashte-Nawar

**Pakistan**

No site nominations received

**India**

1. Keoladeo

## 2. PROCEDURE FOR LISTING SITES<sup>4</sup>

The primary basis for a site's nomination to join the WCASN-SC is the site's importance for Siberian Cranes. By nominating a site, the relevant site management body pledges to incorporate the conservation of Siberian Cranes, other waterbirds and their wetland habitats into management goals for the site in line with the aims of this site network.

In order to nominate a site to join the WCASN-SC, a **Site Information Sheet** must be completed (see Annex 1). A detailed description and a **Site Map** of the boundaries of the wetland or wetlands should be provided with the Site Information Sheet. The Siberian Crane Flyway Coordinator, whose contact details are found below, can assist with completion of the Site Information Sheet.

The relevant site management body should send a **Nomination Letter** proposing the nomination to the national government agency responsible for administering the implementation of the CMS MoU on the Siberian Crane for endorsement. This will help to ensure that there is local support for the proposal. A sample Nomination Letter is given in **Annex 3**. Site nominations may originate from local site management bodies, including private landowners, however these entities are encouraged to send a letter proposing the nomination to the responsible national government agency for endorsement and final submission.

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<sup>4</sup> This procedure is based on that used for nominations of sites to the site networks under the former Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Strategy.

The responsible national government agency should then send the Site Information Sheet and Site Map together with an appropriate **Letter of Endorsement** to the CMS Secretariat in Bonn, Germany. A sample Endorsement Letter is given in **Annex 4**.

The **Site Network Review Working Group**, serviced by the Siberian Crane Flyway Coordinator, will undertake a technical review of the nomination. The Working Group may seek additional information from the site management body if required. The Siberian Crane Flyway Coordinator will provide a report containing the Working Group's recommendations to the CMS Secretariat.

The Secretariat will then seek final approval of the nomination from the **WCASN-SC Committee**, comprising representatives of the Siberian Crane MoU Signatories from the Western/Central Asian flyways. Once approved by the WCASN-SC Committee, through its Chair, the site will be announced on the CMS website. Communications will normally be conducted by email.

A **Site Certificate**, co-signed by the CMS Executive Secretary and the Chair of the WCASN Committee, will be provided to the site management body. Such agencies are encouraged to then conduct a **Dedication Ceremony** at the new network site. Where possible, a member of the WCASN-SC Committee will attend the ceremony to help promote the importance of the site locally.

**Contact details for the Siberian Crane Flyway Coordinator:**

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ICF/CMS Siberian Crane Flyway Coordinator  
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### 3. REFERENCES

1. Anonymous 1996. Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Strategy: 1996-2000. Wetlands International – Asia Pacific, Kuala Lumpur and International Waterfowl and Wetlands Research Bureau, Japan Committee, Tokyo.
2. Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Committee 2001. Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Strategy: 2001-2005. Wetlands International-Asia Pacific. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. 67pp. < [www.wetlands.org/publication.aspx?ID=f45b0a90-3ffe-42f8-9b63-c86da73c23e7](http://www.wetlands.org/publication.aspx?ID=f45b0a90-3ffe-42f8-9b63-c86da73c23e7) >.
3. IUCN (1994). Guidelines for Protected Area Management Categories. CNPPA with the assistance of WCMC. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, UK. x + 261pp. < [www.unep-wcmc.org/protected\\_areas/categories/eng/index.html](http://www.unep-wcmc.org/protected_areas/categories/eng/index.html) >.
4. Ramsar Convention Bureau, 1997. *The Ramsar Convention Manual: a Guide to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran 1971)*. 2nd Edition. Ramsar Convention Bureau, Gland, Switzerland.

5. Ramsar Convention Secretariat 2004. Ramsar handbooks for the wise use of wetlands. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Ramsar Convention Secretariat, Gland, Switzerland. Can be downloaded free from < [www.ramsar.org](http://www.ramsar.org) >.
6. Report on the Fifth Meeting of Signatory States to the CMS Siberian Crane Memorandum of Understanding (Moscow, April 2004). < [www.cms.int/species/siberian\\_crane/sib\\_meetings.htm](http://www.cms.int/species/siberian_crane/sib_meetings.htm) >.
7. Report on the Meeting to Endorse the Proposed Western/Central Asian Site Network for the Siberian Cranes (and other waterbirds) New Delhi, India, 13 June 2005. < [www.cms.int/species/siberian\\_crane/sib\\_meetings.htm](http://www.cms.int/species/siberian_crane/sib_meetings.htm) >.
8. The Central Asian Flyway Action Plan to Conserve Migratory Waterbirds and their Habitats can be downloaded from the CMS website. < [www.cms.int/bodies/meetings/regional/caf/caf\\_meeting\\_report.htm](http://www.cms.int/bodies/meetings/regional/caf/caf_meeting_report.htm) >.

ANNEX 1

**SITE INFORMATION SHEET FOR THE WCASN-SC**

The relevant site management body intending to nominate a site to be included in the Western/Central Asian Site Network for the Siberian Crane and Other Waterbirds (WCASN-SC) established under the CMS Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the Siberian Crane (*Grus leucogeranus*) is requested to complete a **Site Information Sheet** and submit a **Site Map**. Guidance to fill in the form is provided in the document entitled “Explanatory Notes For the SCASN-SC Site Information Sheet” which is Annex 2 to the Guidelines document.

This information sheet may be used:

- (a) For an existing Ramsar Site (*if so, please update the entries in the existing Ramsar Information Sheet here on this form, and provide additional information in Questions 9 & 13*); or
- (b) For a site that is not listed under the Ramsar Convention (*please complete all the entries in the Site Information Sheet form*).

The Site Information Sheet has been divided into two parts. **It is essential to provide all of the basic information requested in Part 1, comprising Sections 1-13.** Part 2 seeks additional information. It is strongly encouraged that that *both* parts be completed as fully as possible.

The completed Site Information Sheet, Site Map and supplementary information with an **Endorsement Letter** (see Annex 4 of the document “Guidelines to Prepare Site Nomination Documentation”) should be submitted to the CMS Secretariat:

The Executive Secretary  
UNEP/CMS Secretariat  
United Nations Campus  
Hermann-Ehlers-Str. 10  
53113 Bonn, Germany

Tel. (+49 228) 815 2401  
Fax. (+49 228) 815 2449  
E-mail: secretariat@cms.int

\* \* \* \* \*

**PART 1:**

1. Date of submission
2. Country

3. Name of site
4. Geographical coordinates
5. Altitude
6. Area
7. Outline map of site (specify digital or hardcopy of map format)
8. Overview
- 9a. WCASN-SC criterion and qualifiers
- A. **CRITERION 1: Site's Importance for Siberian Cranes**

***Temporal Sub-criteria for the Siberian Crane:*** A site must meet one of the following sub-criteria (listed in order of importance). Please tick only ONE of the following boxes:

- Sub-criterion 1.1:** Siberian Crane(s) were recorded at the site at least five times during the last 10 years. This should not include records within the same season or repeated sightings of the same individual birds.
  - Sub-criterion 1.2:** The site has held one or more Siberian Cranes during the last 50 years, but there are less than five records during the 10 last years.
  - Sub-criterion 1.3:** The site is historical habitat of the Siberian Crane, but there are less than five records during the last 50 years.
  - Sub-criterion 1.4:** There are no records of Siberian Crane at a site, but it is considered to contain appropriate habitat for the species (wide expanses of shallow water containing appropriate food resources, and with low levels of disturbance) and it is suitable for release and reintroduction projects (e.g., safety of the site is secured, a management regime is in place, etc.).
- B. **QUALIFIER 1: Site's importance for other crane species**

- Please tick this box if the site meets the following qualification:

The site is important for other crane species when it is known to support a total of 25 or more migratory cranes (which can be of more than one species) at any stage of their life cycle (e.g., breeding, migration stop-over (staging), non-breeding birds (wintering), etc.).

C. **QUALIFIER 2:** Site's importance for other waterbird species

Please tick ANY of the following boxes that apply:

- Sub-qualifier 2.1:** The site regularly supports 20,000 or more migratory waterbirds during migration periods.
- Sub-qualifier 2.2:** The site regularly supports 5,000 or more migratory waterbirds or 0.25% of a migratory waterbird population on a single count during a single migration period.
- Sub-qualifier 2.3:** The site regularly supports 1% of the individuals in a population of one species or subspecies of migratory waterbird.
- Sub-qualifier 2.4:** The site supports migratory waterbird species at a critical stage in their life cycles, or provides refuge during adverse conditions.

9b. Justification of the WCASN-SC criterion and qualifiers (summary of the Siberian Crane records)

10. Wetland types (see explanatory notes for codes)

11. Jurisdiction

12. Management authority

13. Name and address of compiler

**PART 2:** (Please limit this part to a maximum of 10 pages)

14. General Location

15. Physical features of site

16. Physical features of catchment area

17. Hydrological values

18. Ecological features

19. Noteworthy flora

20. Noteworthy fauna
21. Social and cultural values
22. Land tenure/ownership
23. Current and potential site usage
24. Factors (past, present or potential) adversely affecting the site's ecological character, including changes in land (including water) use and development projects
25. Conservation measures taken (*the lack of any current protection status/regime does not disqualify a site for consideration for inclusion in the Network if it meets listed criteria for Siberian Crane*)
26. Conservation measures proposed, but not implemented yet
27. Current scientific research and monitoring (*although the presence of constant monitoring is not a requirement for nominating a site for inclusion in the Network*)
28. Current conservation communication, education and public awareness
29. Current recreation and tourism
30. Bibliographical references

## EXPLANATORY NOTES FOR THE WCASN-SC SITE INFORMATION SHEET

The relevant site management body intending to nominate a site to be included in the Western/Central Asian Site Network for the Siberian Crane and Other Waterbirds is requested to complete a **Site Information Sheet** and submit a **Site Map**. The Site Information Sheet will provide the basic information describing the site and detail how the site meets the site network's criteria.

The Site Information Sheet is based on the Ramsar Information Sheet.

Please note that not all Ramsar sites would necessary qualify for inclusion in the WCASN-SC, and not all network sites would necessary satisfy all of the Ramsar criteria for listing under that convention.

All information provided and communications should be in the English language in view of the international nature of this site network.

An electronic copy of the Site Information Sheet is available as **Annex 1** of this document ("Guidelines to Prepare Site Nomination Documentation"). The ICF/CMS Siberian Crane Flyway Coordinator is available to assist with completion of the Site Information Sheet.

\* \* \* \* \*

The following explanatory notes relate to the various sections on the Site Information Sheet.

### **PART 1:**

1. **Date of submission:** The date on which this Site Information Sheet was completed.
2. **Country:** The name of the country.
3. **Name of site:** The name of the site (alternative names should be given in brackets).
4. **Geographical coordinates:** The geographical coordinates (latitude and longitude) of the approximate centre of the site, expressed in degrees and minutes. If the site consists of two or more discrete units, the coordinates of the centres of each of these units should be given.
5. **Altitude:** The average and/or minimum and maximum elevation of the site in metres above mean sea level.
6. **Area:** The area of the site to be included in the network, in hectares.



**7. Outline map of site:** (specify digital or hardcopy of map format): The most detailed and up-to-date map of the site available should be appended to the Site Information Sheet. Indicate whether or not a map accompanies the Sheet.

The "ideal" site map will clearly show the area boundaries of the site, scale, latitude, longitude and compass bearing, administrative boundaries (e.g., province, district, etc.), and display basic topographical information, the distribution of the main site habitat types and notable hydrological features. It will also show major landmarks (towns, roads, etc.). Indications of land use activities are especially useful.

The optimum scale for a map depends on the actual area of the site depicted. Generally the map should have a 1:25,000 or 1:50,000 scale for areas up to 10,000 ha; 1:100,000 scale for larger areas up to 100,000 ha; 1:250,000 for areas exceeding 100,000 ha. In simplest terms, the site should be depicted in some detail. For moderate to larger sites, it is often difficult to show detail on an A4 sheet at the desired scale, so generally a sheet larger than this is more appropriate. While an original map is not absolutely necessary, a very clear image is highly desirable. A map exhibiting the above attributes will be easier to scan for computerisation.

**8. Overview:** A brief summary of the site (limited to not more than two sentences), mentioning principal physical and ecological functions, and its importance for migratory shorebirds.

**9a. WCASN-SC criterion and qualifiers:** Please indicate the basis for the nomination of this site in terms of the criteria and qualifiers for the site network.

**A. CRITERION 1: Site's importance for Siberian Cranes**

This criterion is based on the site's importance for the Siberian Crane. This is the key species targeted under the CMS Memorandum of Understanding on the Siberian Crane.

There are four supporting temporal sub-criteria listed under Criterion 1. Under the temporal sub-criteria a site's protection status can vary during the year based on which time of the year the area is used by Siberian Cranes (i.e., seasonal protection regimes). This is especially important for Central Asian wetlands that have unstable and variable water conditions.

**Criterion 1 for the Siberian Crane:** The site currently holds or historically held Siberian Cranes and meets the Ramsar 1% Criteria for the Siberian Crane.

**Temporal Sub-criteria for the Siberian Crane: A site must meet one of the following temporal sub-criteria (listed in order of importance):**

**Sub-criterion 1.1:** Siberian Crane(s) were recorded at the site at least five times during the last 10 years. This should not include records within the same season or repeated sightings of the same individual birds.

**Sub-criterion 1.2:** The site has held one or more Siberian Cranes during the last 50 years, but there are less than five records during the 10 last years.

**Sub-criterion 1.3:** The site is historical habitat of the Siberian Crane, but there are less than five records during the last 50 years.

**Sub-criterion 1.4:** There are no records of Siberian Crane at a site, but it is considered to contain appropriate habitat for the species (wide expanses of shallow water containing appropriate food resources, and with low levels of disturbance) and it is suitable for release and reintroduction projects (e.g., safety of the site is secured, a management regime is in place, etc.).

Sites that are covered by **temporal sub-criteria 1.1 and 1.2** should be included in the WCASN-SC **on a priority basis** to ensure that the sites currently used by the species are being conserved.

For sites covered by **temporal sub-criteria 1.3 and 1.4**, preference should be given to sites that indicate the additional importance under the **Qualifiers for other crane and waterbird species**, listed below.

***B. QUALIFIER 1: Site's importance for other crane species***

Qualifier 1 concerns a site's importance for other crane species. The site is important for other crane species when it is known to support a total of 25 or more migratory cranes (which can be of more than one species) at any stage of their life cycle (e.g., breeding, migration stop-over (staging), non-breeding birds (wintering), etc.).

***C. QUALIFIER 2: Site's importance for other waterbird species<sup>1</sup>***

Qualifier 2 concerns a site's importance for other waterbird species. It is composed of four sub-qualifiers:

**Sub-qualifier 2.1:** A site should be considered internationally important if it regularly supports 20,000 or more migratory waterbirds during migration periods.

**Sub-qualifier 2.2:** A site should be considered internationally important if it regularly supports 5,000 or more migratory waterbirds or 0.25% of a migratory waterbird population on a single count during a single migration period.

**Sub-qualifier 2.3:** A site should be considered internationally important if it regularly supports 1% of the individuals in a population of one species or subspecies of migratory waterbird.

**Sub-qualifier 2.4:** A site should be considered internationally important if it supports migratory waterbird species at a critical stage in their life cycles, or provides refuge during adverse conditions.

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<sup>1</sup> A full list of the migratory waterbird species and their populations in Central Asian region can be found in Table 2 of the *Central Asian Flyway Action Plan for the Conservation of Migratory Waterbirds and their Habitats*, which can be downloaded from the CMS Website: < [http://www.cms.int/bodies/meetings/regional/caf/caf\\_meeting\\_report.htm](http://www.cms.int/bodies/meetings/regional/caf/caf_meeting_report.htm) >.

**9b. Justification of the WCASN-SC criterion and qualifiers:** Please provide a summary of the Siberian Crane and other waterbird records that demonstrate that the site meets the criterion and qualifiers of the WCASN-SC, referring specifically to each item in turn.

**10. Wetland Type:** Please first specify the position of the site as a marine or coastal wetland and/or an inland wetland. Also note if the site includes or is a human-made wetland. Identify using codes all of the wetland habitat types which are present within the site (see below).

### **Marine/Coastal**

- A** Permanent shallow marine waters in most cases less than six metres deep at low tide; includes sea bays and straits.
- B** Marine subtidal aquatic beds; includes kelp beds, sea-grass beds, tropical marine meadows.
- C** Coral reefs.
- D** Rocky marine shores; includes rocky offshore islands, sea cliffs.
- E** Sand, shingle or pebble shores; includes sand bars, spits and sandy islets; includes dune systems and humid dune slacks.
- F** Estuarine waters; permanent water of estuaries and estuarine systems of deltas.
- G** Intertidal mud, sand or salt flats.
- H** Intertidal marshes; includes salt marshes, salt meadows, saltings, raised salt marshes; includes tidal brackish and freshwater marshes.
- I** Intertidal forested wetlands; includes mangrove swamps, nipah swamps and tidal freshwater swamp forests.
- J** Coastal brackish/saline lagoons; brackish to saline lagoons with at least one relatively narrow connection to the sea.
- K** Coastal freshwater lagoons; includes freshwater delta lagoons.
- Zk(a)** Subterranean karst and cave hydrological systems, marine/coastal.

### **Inland Wetlands**

- L** Permanent inland deltas.
- M** Permanent rivers/streams/creeks; includes waterfalls.
- N** Seasonal/intermittent/irregular rivers/streams/creeks.
- O** Permanent freshwater lakes (over 8 ha); includes large oxbow lakes.
- P** Seasonal/intermittent freshwater lakes (over 8 ha); includes floodplain lakes.
- Q** Permanent saline/brackish/alkaline lakes.
- R** Seasonal/intermittent saline/brackish/alkaline lakes and flats.
- Sp** Permanent saline/brackish/alkaline marshes/pools.
- Ss** Seasonal/intermittent saline/brackish/alkaline marshes/pools.
- Tp** Permanent freshwater marshes/pools; ponds (below 8 ha), marshes and swamps on inorganic
- Ts** Seasonal/intermittent freshwater marshes/pools on inorganic soils; includes sloughs, potholes, seasonally flooded meadows, sedge marshes.
- U** Non-forested peatlands; includes shrub or open bogs, swamps, fens.
- Va** Alpine wetlands; includes alpine meadows, temporary waters from snowmelt.

- Vt** Tundra wetlands; includes tundra pools, temporary waters from snowmelt.
- W** Shrub-dominated wetlands; shrub swamps, shrub-dominated freshwater marshes, shrub carr, alder thicket on inorganic soils.
- Xf** Freshwater, tree-dominated wetlands; includes freshwater swamp forests, seasonally flooded forests, wooded swamps on inorganic soils.
- Xp** Forested peatlands; peat swamp forests.
- Y** Freshwater springs; oases.
- Zg** Geothermal wetlands.
- Zk(b)** Subterranean karst and cave hydrological systems, inland.

**NOTE:** “floodplain” is a broad term used to refer to one or more wetland types, which may include examples from the R, Ss, Ts, W, Xf, Xp, or other wetland types. Some examples of floodplain wetlands are seasonally inundated grassland (including natural wet meadows), shrublands, woodlands and forests. Floodplain wetlands are not listed as a specific wetland type herein.

#### **Human-made wetlands**

- 1** Aquaculture (e.g., fish/shrimp) ponds.
  - 2** Ponds; includes farm ponds, stock ponds, small tanks; (generally below 8 ha).
  - 3** Irrigated land; includes irrigation channels and rice fields.
  - 4** Seasonally flooded agricultural land (including intensively managed or grazed wet meadow or pasture).
  - 5** Salt exploitation sites; salt pans, salines, etc.
  - 6** Water storage areas; reservoirs/barrages/dams/impoundments (generally over 8 ha).
  - 7** Excavations; gravel/brick/clay pits; borrow pits, mining pools.
  - 8** Wastewater treatment areas; sewage farms, settling ponds, oxidation basins, etc.
  - 9** Canals and drainage channels, ditches.
- Zk(c)** Subterranean karst and cave hydrological systems, human-made.

**11. Jurisdiction:** The name of the government authority with: (a) territorial jurisdiction over the site, e.g., state, region or municipality, etc.; and the name of the authority with (b) functional jurisdiction for conservation purposes, e.g., Department of Environment, Department of Fisheries, etc.

**12. Management authority:** The name, address and contact details of the body responsible for the direct local conservation and management of the site.

**13. Name and address of compiler:** The full name, address and organization of the person who compiled the Information Sheet, together with any telephone, fax and e-mail numbers.

#### **PART 2:**

**14. General location:** A description of the general location of the site. This should include the site's distance (in a straight line) and compass bearing from the nearest "provincial", "district" or other significant administrative centre, town or city. The population of the listed centre and its administrative region should also be stated.

**15. Physical features of site:** A short description of the principal physical characteristics of the site, covering the following points where relevant:

- geology and geomorphology;
- origins (natural or artificial);
- hydrology (including seasonal water balance, inflow and outflow);
- soil type and chemistry;
- water quality (physico-chemical characteristics);
- depth, fluctuations and permanence of water;
- tidal variations;
- catchment area;
- downstream area (especially in the case of wetlands that are important in flood control);
- climate (only the most significant climatic features, e.g., annual rainfall and average; temperature range, distinct seasons, and any other major factors affecting the wetland).

**16. Physical features of catchment area: A short description of the principal characteristics of the catchment area, covering the following points where relevant:**

- surface area;
- general geology and geomorphological features;
- general soil types; and
- climate (including characterization of climate type).

**17. Hydrological values:** A description of the principal hydrological values of the site, e.g., its role in the recharge and discharge of groundwater, flood control, sediment trapping, prevention of coastal erosion, and maintenance of water quality.

**18. Ecological features:** A description of the main habitats and vegetation types, listing the dominant plant communities and species, and describing any zonation, seasonal variations and long-term changes. Mention plant species that have been introduced (accidentally or on purpose) and species which are invasive. Include a brief note on the native natural plant communities in adjacent areas, as well as the present plant communities (including cultivation) if different from the native vegetation. Information on food chains should be included in this section.

**19. Noteworthy flora:** Information on any plant species or communities for which the site is particularly important (e.g., endemic species, threatened species or particularly good examples of native plant communities). Be sure to state why each species listed is noteworthy.

**20. Noteworthy fauna:** A general account of the noteworthy fauna of the site, with details of population sizes whenever possible. Particular emphasis should be given to endemic and threatened species, economically important species and species occurring in internationally significant numbers. Be sure to identify why each species listed is noteworthy. Lists of species and/or census data should not be quoted in full as part of the Site Information Sheet, but should be appended to this form when available.

**21. Social and cultural values:** An account (more detail can be given in sections 23-29 below) of the principal social values (e.g., tourism, outdoor recreation, education and scientific research, agricultural production, grazing, water supply, fisheries production) and cultural values (e.g., historical associations and religious significance). Whenever possible, indicate which of these values are consistent with the maintenance of natural wetland processes and ecological

character, and which values are derived from non-sustainable exploitation or which result in detrimental ecological changes.

**22. Land tenure/ownership:** Details of ownership of the site and ownership of surrounding areas (e.g., state, provincial, private, etc.). Explain terms that have a special meaning in the country or region concerned.

**23. Current and potential land use:** Principal human activities in (a) the site itself, and, (b) in the surroundings and catchment. Give information on the human population in the area, with a description of the principal human activities and main forms of land use at the site, e.g., water supply for domestic and industrial use, irrigation, agriculture, livestock grazing, forestry, fishing, aquaculture and hunting. Some indication of the relative importance of each form of land use should be given whenever possible. In section (b), summarize land use in the catchment that might have a direct bearing on the site, and land use in any downstream areas likely to be affected by the site.

**24. Factors (past, present or potential) adversely affecting the site's ecological character, including changes in land (including water) use and development projects:** The human and natural factors affecting the ecological character of the site, from both within and around the site (including the greater catchment, if relevant). These may include new or changing activities/uses, major development projects, etc., which have had, are having, or may have a detrimental effect on the natural ecological character of the wetland. For all adverse and change factors reported, supply measurable/quantifiable information (when such data exist), as well as information on the scale, extent and trend of the change factor and its impact: this information should provide a basis for monitoring of ecological character of the site.

It is important to specify both the agent (cause) for the change (e.g., diversion of water, drainage, reclamation, pollution, over-grazing, excessive human disturbance, or excessive hunting and fishing, etc.) and the resulting change and its impact (e.g., siltation, erosion, fish mortality, change in vegetation structure, habitat fragmentation, disturbed reproduction of species, physical or ecological change due to climate change, etc.). It is also important to differentiate between factors coming from within the site itself and those factors emanating from outside the site, but which are having or may have an impact on the site. One should also distinguish between existing and potential adverse factors.

When reporting on pollution, special notice should be taken of toxic chemical pollutants and their sources. These should include industrial and agricultural-based chemical effluents and other emissions.

Natural events, including episodic catastrophes (e.g., an earthquake or volcanic eruption) or natural vegetative succession which have had, are having, or are likely to have an impact on the ecological character of the site should be detailed, in order to facilitate monitoring.

Provide information on the history of introductions (accidental or deliberate) of invasive and/or alien species identified in sections 19 (Noteworthy flora) and 20 (Noteworthy fauna) and the impacts of any invasions.

**25. Conservation measures taken:** Provide details in the following areas, if appropriate.

(a) Mention any nationally relevant protected area status, international conservation designations (in addition to Ramsar site status) and, in the case of transboundary wetlands, bilateral or multilateral conservation measures which pertain to all or part of the site. If a protected area or

reserve has been established, give the date of its establishment and size. If only a part of the wetland is included within a protected area, the area of wetland habitat that is protected should be noted.

International designations may include sites listed under the World Heritage Convention, Man and Biosphere Reserve Network, other site conservation networks, etc.

(b) If appropriate, list the IUCN (1994) protected areas management category/ies which apply to the site. These are as follows:

Category	Definition
<b>Ia Strict Nature Reserve:</b> protected area managed mainly for science	Area of land and/or sea possessing some outstanding or representative ecosystems, geological or physiological features and/or species, available primarily for scientific research and/or environmental monitoring.
<b>Ib Wilderness Area:</b> protected area managed mainly for wilderness protection	Large area of unmodified or slightly modified land, and/or sea, retaining its natural character and influence, without permanent or significant habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural condition.
<b>II National Park:</b> protected area managed mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation	Natural area of land and/or sea, designated to (a) protect the ecological integrity of one or more ecosystems for present and future generations, (b) exclude exploitation or occupation inimical to the purposes of designation of the area and (c) provide a foundation for spiritual, scientific, educational, recreational and visitor opportunities, all of which must be environmentally and culturally compatible.
<b>III Natural Monument:</b> protected area managed mainly for conservation of specific natural features	Area containing one, or more, specific natural or natural/cultural feature which is of outstanding or unique value because of its inherent rarity, representative or aesthetic qualities or cultural significance.
<b>IV Habitat/Species Management Area:</b> protected area managed mainly for conservation through management intervention	Area of land and/or sea subject to active intervention for management purposes so as to ensure the maintenance of habitats and/or to meet the requirements of specific species.
<b>V Protected Landscape/Seascape:</b> protected area managed mainly for landscape/seascape conservation and recreation	Area of land, with coast and sea as appropriate, where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant aesthetic, ecological and/or cultural value, and often with high biological diversity. Safeguarding the integrity of this traditional interaction is vital to the protection,

	maintenance and evolution of such an area.
<b>VI Managed Resource Protected Area:</b> protected area managed mainly for the sustainable use of natural ecosystems	Area containing predominantly unmodified natural systems, managed to ensure long term protection and maintenance of biological diversity, while providing at the same time a sustainable flow of natural products and services to meet community needs.

IUCN defines a "protected area" as: "An area of land and/or sea especially dedicated to the protection and maintenance of biological diversity, and of natural and associated cultural resources, and managed through legal or other effective means".

(c) Describe here the management planning process for the site, including any management plan, if this has been developed and is being implemented, including whether it has been officially approved. Cite the management plan document(s) in section 30 (Bibliographic references), and whenever possible provide a copy of the management plan as supplementary information to the Site Information Sheet.

(d) Also describe any other conservation measures taken at the site, such as restrictions on development, management practices beneficial to wildlife, closures of hunting, etc.

Include information here on any monitoring schemes and survey methods in place at the site. Describe any application at the site of the *Ramsar Conceptual Framework for the wise use of wetlands and the maintenance of their ecological character* (Resolution IX.1 Annex A), or any other instance of the application of the Convention's guidance as compiled in the Ramsar 'toolkit' of Wise Use Handbooks ("wise use", i.e., sustainable use, is a central concept of the Ramsar Convention).

If the site is listed as a Ramsar site, mention if the site is included on, or has been removed from, the Montreux Record and provide details of any Ramsar Advisory Missions that have been undertaken to the site.

Any application of integrated basin-scale/catchment management planning, or integrated coastal/marine zone management planning, involving or affecting the site should be noted. Provide a brief assessment of the effectiveness of protected area legislation or status of any protected areas whenever possible. Involvement of local communities and indigenous people in the participatory management of the site should also be described, in the context of the Ramsar guidelines on this process (Resolution VII.8).

**26. Conservation measures proposed, but not implemented yet:** Provide details of any conservation measures that have been proposed, or are in preparation, for the site, including any proposals for legislation, protection and management. Summarize the history of any long-standing proposals which have not yet been implemented, and differentiate between those proposals which have already been officially submitted to the appropriate government authorities and those which have not as yet received formal endorsement, e.g., recommendations in published reports and resolutions from specialist meetings. Also mention any management plan that is in preparation but has not yet been completed, approved or implemented.



**27. Current scientific research and monitoring** (*although the presence of constant monitoring is not a requirement for nominating a site for inclusion in the Network*): Details of any current scientific research and information on any special facilities for research.

**28. Current communication, education, and public awareness activities:** Details any existing programmes, activities and facilities for communication, education and public awareness, including training, and comments on the educational potential of the site.

**29. Current recreation and tourism:** Details of the present use of the site for recreation and tourism, with details of existing or planned facilities. Please state the annual number of tourists. Indicate if tourism is seasonal, and of what type.

**30. Bibliographical references:** A list of key references relevant to the Siberian Crane records and the site, including management plans, major scientific reports, and bibliographies. When a large body of published material is available on the site, only the most important references need be cited, with priority being given to recent literature containing extensive bibliographies. Reprints or copies of the most important literature should be appended whenever possible. Provide web-sites of references where available.

**ANNEX 3**

**SAMPLE NOMINATION LETTER**

**PURPOSE:** To guide Nominating Authorities (such as site management bodies) to develop a nomination letter to nominate a site to the Western/Central Asian Site Network for the Siberian Crane and Other Waterbirds.

**SENDER:** Site management body or provincial agency.

**ADDRESSED TO:** National Agency responsible for administering the implementation of the CMS MoU concerning Conservation Measures for the Siberian Crane (and copied to the National Agency responsible for protected area management, if this is a different agency or department).

To:

The Director,

Division of ...

Department of ...

Address

Reference number <insert number>

Date <insert date>

**Dear Sir/Madam,**

Under the framework of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the Siberian Crane, a Western/Central Asian Site Network for the Siberian Crane and Other Waterbirds is being developed. This site network will contribute to the conservation of the Siberian Crane, other waterbirds and their wetland habitats.

As the site management body responsible for <insert name of site(s)>, it is my pleasure to propose the nomination of <insert name of site(s)> to join the Western/Central Asian Site Network for the Siberian Crane and Other Waterbirds.

According to the attached Site Information Sheet(s) and Site Map(s), the site(s) meets the criteria for inclusion in the site network as follows:

<List sub-criteria and qualifiers as applicable>

Nominating the site(s) represents a significant and cost-effective step towards our national biodiversity conservation objectives and we look forward to participating in the cooperative conservation activities of the site network.

I would be very grateful if you could endorse this nomination and then transmit a letter of endorsement, together with the Site Information Sheet(s) and Site Map(s), for consideration by the Secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species. On behalf of the site managers, I look forward to the successful nomination and participation in the Western/Central Asian Site Network for the Siberian Crane and Other Waterbirds.

Yours sincerely,

<insert name>

<insert position, organization>

<insert contact details>

**Enclosed: Site Information Sheet and Site Map**

## SAMPLE ENDORSEMENT LETTER

**PURPOSE:** To guide National Agencies to develop a letter to endorse the nomination of a site to the Western/Central Asia Site Network for the Siberian Crane and Other Waterbirds for submission to the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) Secretariat.

**SENDER:** National Agency responsible for administering the implementation of the CMS MoU concerning Conservation Measures for the Siberian Crane.

**ADDRESSED TO:** The CMS Executive Secretary with a copy to the Siberian Crane Flyway Coordinator.

To:  
The Executive Secretary  
UNEP/CMS Secretariat  
United Nations Premises  
Hermann-Ehlers-Str. 10  
53113 Bonn, Germany

Tel. (+49 228) 815 2401  
Fax. (+49 228) 815 2449  
E-mail: [secretariat@cms.int](mailto:secretariat@cms.int)

Reference number <insert number>  
<Insert date>

Dear Sir,

**Re: Endorsement of the nomination of a new site in <insert country name> for inclusion in the Western/Central Asian Site Network for the Siberian Crane and Other Waterbirds**

<Insert country name> recognizes the importance of conserving the Siberian Crane and other waterbirds and their wetland habitats and wishes to participate in the Western/Central Asian Site Network for the Siberian Crane and Other Waterbirds established under the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the Siberian Crane. It is my sincere pleasure to endorse the nomination of <insert name(s) of site(s)> to join this site network in order to further the aim of conserving the Siberian Crane, other waterbirds and their wetland habitats.

According to the attached Site Information Sheet(s) and Site Map(s), the site(s) meet(s) the criteria for inclusion in the site network as follows:

<List sub-criteria and qualifiers as applicable>

I look forward to the CMS Secretariat confirming that the site(s) will be included in the Western/Central Asian Site Network for the Siberian Crane and Other Waterbirds.

Yours sincerely,

<Insert name>

<Insert position>

<Insert agency>

**Enclosed: Site Information Sheet and Site Map**

cc: Dr. Elena Ilyashenko, Siberian Crane Flyway Coordinator (eilyashenko@savingcranes.org)