

## Explanatory Notes for the WCASN 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, 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.

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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 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 **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.

**9b. Justification of the WCASN 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, 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.

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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) >.

- 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; peatswamp 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 25-27 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.