

# Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands

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

NOTE: It is important that you read the accompanying *Explanatory Note and Guidelines* document before completing this form.

**1. Date this sheet was completed/updated:**

26.10.98

For office use only.

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02/08/79

7IT026

Designation date

Site Reference Number

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**2. Country:**

Italy

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**3. Name of wetland:**

Margherita di Savoia Salt Pan

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**4. Geographical coordinates:**

41° 24' North; 16° 04' East

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**5. Altitude:** (average and/or max. & min.) 0 ma.s.l.

**6. Area:** (in hectares) 3,871 ha

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

The area is a lagoon from which salt is extracted and is in direct contact with the sea through inlet channels. It represents the transformed remains of the old Lake Salpi. Alma Dannata, the northern part, has deeper pools and less salty water and is therefore is the more attractive habitat for birdlife. The state-owned area of Alma Dannata is no longer under concession to the Agroittica Salpi (agrofiseries) enterprise.

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**8. Wetland Type:** (please circle the applicable codes for wetland types as listed in Annex I of the *Explanatory Note and Guidelines* document)

**marine-coastal:** A - B - C - D - E - F - G - H - I - J - K

**inland:** L - M - N - O - P - Q - R - Sp - Ss - Tp  
Ts - U - Va - Vt - W - Xf - Xp - Y - Zg - Zk

**man-made:** 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9

Please now rank these wetland types by listing them from the most to the least dominant:

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

1a - 1b - 1c - 1d / 2a - 2b - 2c - 2d / 3a - 3b - 3c / 4a - 4b

Please specify the most significant criterion applicable to the site:

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

(Please refer to the *Explanatory Note and Guidelines* document for information regarding desirable map traits)

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

Dr. Marco Panella, Via Carducci 5, Rome.

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**Please provide additional information on each of the following categories by attaching extra pages (please limit extra pages to no more than 10):**

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**12. Justification of the criteria selected under point 9, on previous page.** (Please refer to Annex II in the *Explanatory Note and Guidelines* document)

The area is of international importance with the criteria of 1% of the population of the following species: shelldrake, widgeon, avocet (criteria 3c) and with the criteria of 20,000 birds (criteria 3a). There is an average of 30,000 birds wintering in the area.

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

The area is located 40km from Foggia (the chief town of the Province) and about 20km from the towns of Manfredonia to the north and Barletta to the south.

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

The salt pan is connected to the Adriatic Sea via three channels and it lies on alluvial soils formally covered by natural lagoons (Lake Salpi).

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

It is a man-made area, the characteristics of which (water levels, salinity) are changed almost entirely by artificial means.

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

The vegetation in the area is found along the banks of the salt pan and in some pools which are not currently used for salt production. There are solely halophile associations (*Thero-Salicornietea*).

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

The flora is that of a hypersaline environment. Three species included in the Italian list of protected species ("Lista Rossa delle Specie di Piante Italiane") have been noted: *Althenia filiformis* (Fam. *Zannichelliaceae*) - a Mediterranean species found in coastal salt marshes, which is now present in only one site in Tuscany and in a few sites in Puglia and Sicily and is threatened by changes to its habitat; *Limonium avei* (Fam. *Plumbaginaceae*) - a species found in lagoons and coastal marshes, it is a rare species with a fragmentary distribution and it is present in a few sites in Liguria, Puglia and on the main Italian islands; *Limonium bellidifolium* (Fam. *Plumbaginaceae*) - typical of low coastlines on dry, salty soils, it has become rare due to the decay of the coastlines and the intense tourist activities on the beaches.

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

In addition to the international importance of the area, the national importance is confirmed by the fact that the area is home to 1% of the national wintering population of 21 species of waterbirds.

A new colony of flamingoes has been present since 1996 (currently more than 200 pairs). It is home to the largest colonies in Italy of Avocets, Stilt Plovers, Kentish Plovers, *Larus*, Tern, Little Tern. The breeding of particularly rare species (especially for Southern Italy) has been noted, including sheldrake, *Sterna sandvicensis*, sea swallow, redshank and pratincole.

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**19. Social and cultural values:** (e.g. fisheries production, forestry, religious importance, archaeological site etc.)

The town of Salpi dates back as far as 8<sup>th</sup> Century B.C and the salt pan was already being exploited in ancient Roman times . The salt extraction activities today represent an important source of employment for the area.

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**20. Land tenure/ownership of:** (a) site (b) surrounding area

State-owned.

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**21. Current land use:** (a) site (b) surroundings/catchment

Salt extraction industry.

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

- Poaching within the area.
- Intensive hunting on the outskirts (especially in the nearby freshwater areas) which is visited by the birdlife resident in the salt pan.
- Presence of stray dogs in the breeding sites of the waterbirds.
- Increasing presence of herring gulls.
- Unforeseen variations to the waterlevel within the salt pan.

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

Special services to control poaching.

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

- Removal of stretches of embankments to ensure that certain areas are inaccessible to dogs.
- Reshaping of some islands which are suitable as breeding sites so that they are not affected by fluctuations in the water level of the salt pan.
- Banning of hunting in the nearby areas which are most important for the fauna.
- Burying some power lines which constitute a danger for birds.
- Development of educational and information structures.

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

Wintering, migration and breeding census.

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

Guided school visits.

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

None.

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

a) Autonomous Administration of State Monopolies – Ministry of Finance.

b) ex-State Authority for National Forests – Ministry for Agricultural Policies.

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

Office for Administration of National Forests in the Gargano Area - ex-State Authority for National Forests – Ministry for Agricultural Policies - 71030 (FG).

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

- Albanese G., Baccetti N., Magnani A., Serra L., Zenatello M., 1997 – “*A new colony of Greater Flamingo in Apulia*” – *Alauda* 65
- Tinarelli R., Serra L., Magnani A., 1995 – “*Nuovi dati sugli uccelli acquatici nidificanti nella Salina di Margherita di Savoia*” (New data on the breeding water-birds of the Margherita di Savoia salt bed) – *Atti VII Conv. Ital. Orn., Suppl. Ric. Biol. Selvaggina*, XXII
- Zenatello M., Serra L., Magnani A., Albanese G., 1994 – “*Salina di Margherita di Savoia: situazione Caradriformi nidificanti 1994*” (Situation of nesting Caradriformi breeding in the Margherita di Savoia salt bed – 1994) – *Riv. Ital. Orn.* 64.
- Conti F., Manzi A., Pedrotti F., 1992 – “*Libro Rosso delle Piante d’Italia*” (List of protected flora in Italy) – WWF e Società Botanica Italiana.
- Meschi E., Frugis S., 1993 – “*Atlante degli uccelli nidificanti*” (Atlas of breeding birds).
- Serra L., Magnani A., Dall’Antonia P., Baccetti N., 1997 – “*Risultati dei censimenti degli uccelli acquatici svernanti in Italia*” (Census of wintering water-birds in Italy) – *Biol. Cons. Fauna* 101.

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