The Republic of Korea has designated Dongcheon Estuary as its newest Wetland of International Importance (Ramsar Site no.2269). Located in the south-eastern part of Suncheon City, the Estuary supports vital wintering and stopover habitats for 237 species of birds, of which at least 13 are globally threatened including the critically endangered spoon-billed sandpiper (*Eurynorhynchus pygmeus*), endangered black-faced spoonbill (*Platalea minor*), and far-eastern curlew (*Numenius madagascariensis*).

The Site acts as a transition zone between river and marine environments that provide habitat for 848 species of wild flora and fauna, and a rich aquatic biodiversity due to its varying salinity and nutrients and organic detritus in its sediment.

Reed and rice fields along both sides of Dongcheon River provide habitats for a wide range of wild mammals, aquatic insects and amphibians. The rice fields are key for migrating waterbirds such as hooded cranes (*Grus monacha*), and serve as one of the largest wintering grounds for white-naped cranes (*Grus vipio*).