



# El Salvador's third Ramsar site

18 January 2006

El Salvador



The government of El Salvador has designated its third Wetland of International Importance, as of 22 November 2005: Embalse Cerrón Grande (60,698 hectares, 14° 03' N 89° 04' W) in Chalatenango, San Salvador, Cuscatlán and Cabañas departments is an artificial water reservoir that constitutes the largest freshwater body in the country. According to the summary by Ramsar's Adrián Ruiz-Carvajal (and his Spanish translation below), the reservoir provides relevant environmental products and services such as fisheries production and hydropower generation, water filtration and flood control. The site serves as a place of refuge, breeding and resting ground for several thousand waterbirds, both resident and migratory, and hosts the largest duck populations in the country. Apart from having the largest freshwater fish diversity in El Salvador, it hosts 12 of the 14 native fish species known in the country. Other threatened species in the site include paca (*Agouti paca*), cougar (*Puma concolor*), ocelot (*Leopardus pardalis*) and the Red Brocket Deer (*Mazama americana*). Water pollution and eutrophication, deforestation, erosion, and the presence of water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*) constitute the greatest threats to the wetland. Ramsar site no. 1592.

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