



Two new Ramsar sites in the Americas

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Lago Titicaca (Sector Boliviano)



The Bureau is delighted to report that Bolivia has designated its portion of Lago Titicaca and its

associated catchment as its second Ramsar site, with Laguna Colorada (1990). The site, to be named Lago Titicaca (Sector Boliviano), covers about 800,000 hectares at altitudes of 3809-4200 meters (12,500-13,780 feet) above sea level and includes an "incredible mixture of freshwater permanent lakes, rivers, associated marshes and *bofedales* (high Andean peatlands)". It meets a number of Ramsar Criteria, but especially Criterion 2d on endemic species; several endemic fish species of the Genus *Orestias* (which includes several rare species, two threatened, and one that has become extinct) are present, as well as a number of bird and invertebrate species endemic to the High Andes, including the Short-Winged Grebe (*Rollandia microptera*) which is endemic to the Titicaca watershed. The Ururo groups have lived in the area for centuries, harvesting the enormous totora (*Schoenoplectus tatora*), an emergent reed, with which they build boats, whilst living on floating islands. The population density is relatively high, and development pressure from nearby La Paz presents a concern. The main economic activities include agriculture and ranching, as well as both local community and commercial fishing; small scale tourism is becoming increasingly relevant.

The Bolivian authorities are continuing their cooperation with those of Peru with a view to developing joint conservation efforts for the whole catchment and enlarging the area included within the Lago Titicaca (Peruvian Sector) Ramsar site.

The addition of this large designation for the Ramsar List brings the surface area covered by the Convention's 934 sites to 69,860,031 hectares.

Bolinas Lagoon, California, USA



The United States has designated the 445-hectare Bolinas Lagoon in Marin County, California, less

than 20 kilometers up the coast from San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge. Managed by the Marin County Open Space District, this tidal embayment provides an important coastal environment that is unparalleled along the northern California coast. Open water, mudflat, and marsh provide productive and diverse habitats for marine fishes, waterbirds, and marine mammals, and it is also part of a much larger protected natural habitat complex in the region. The geographical location along the Pacific Flyway makes the Lagoon an ideal staging ground and stopover site for migratory birds, and the temperate climate provides wintering habitat for a wide array of waterfowl and shorebirds. Bolinas Lagoon is listed under Criteria 1b on representativeness, 3a on waterfowl, and 4b on importance for fish. The area supports a number of recreational uses, including the use of manually-powered watercraft.

With the addition to the List of Sand Lake in South Dakota, the total area covered by the USA's 17 Ramsar sites comes to 1,172,835 hectares.

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