



What is Ramsar?

What is the Ramsar Convention?

In 1971, the Ramsar Convention produced a treaty between 168 nations to:

- 1) Designate sites as wetlands of international importance,
- 2) Encourage wise and sustainable use of wetlands within a party's territory, and
- 3) Engage in international cooperation between parties.

As signatories, the United States and Canada have designated 38 and 37 sites as of 2015, respectively.

Who Can Nominate a Site?

Any local government, community, private organization, or landowner can nominate a site. A Federal government can also nominate sites such as National Parks, forests, or wildlife refuges. The site must meet basic requirements for nomination and at least one of the nine criteria for inclusion as designated by the Convention. All of the landowners and stakeholders of the nomination must agree to its inclusion on the Ramsar List. More information about the nomination and designation process can be found online at <http://www.fws.gov/international/pdf/factsheet-ramsar-site-nomination-and-designation.pdf>

What are "Transboundary Ramsar Sites"?

Parties may designate sites as "Transboundary Ramsar Sites" or ecologically coherent wetlands extending across national borders. Such sites require authorities on both sides to formally agree on management. The Secretariat acknowledges cooperation, but still recognizes distinct legal status for all sites.

What are the Benefits of a Ramsar Designation?

- Increased funding opportunities, publicity and prestige for designated sites
- Increased tourism and investment for the region
- Support for wise use of the site and surrounding area
- Further scientific studies for the included land/water
- Maintain the ecological character of the site

Are any Regulatory Obligations Imposed by a Ramsar Designation?

No. The designation can be considered an honorary endorsement of the ecological significance of the site. The Ramsar Convention is voluntary and non-regulatory. There are no punitive sanctions for violations of or defaulting upon treaty commitments.

Where Can I Get More Information?

For more information, visit the official Secretariat site at www.ramsar.org, and official national sites at U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service- International Affairs (<http://www.fws.gov/international/>) and the Canadian Wildlife Service (<http://www.ec.gc.ca/nature/>).