

# **Ramsar Site**

## **1. General Information**

### **1.1. Location and boundaries**

In September 1995, the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay area was listed as a Wetland of International Importance under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention). The Ramsar Site is located in the Northwest New Territories of Hong Kong. It occupies the southern part of Inner Deep Bay, which itself forms the apex of Deep Bay.

The northern boundary of the Ramsar Site is formed chiefly by the channel of the Shenzhen River, projected to the western tip of the Tsim Bei Tsui peninsula; from here the boundary follows the peninsula east to the promontory, then southwards and inland to include the ponds at Mong Tseng Wai. The border proceeds southwest skirting the Tin Shui Wai new town and then curves westwards, crossing the Shan Pui River near the Yuen Long sewage treatment works, to a point about 500 m south of Tai Sang Wai. After angling shortly to the northeast, the boundary continues in a northwesterly arc edging the Fairview Park estate to Pak Hok Chau. Thereafter, the boundary trends generally to the northeast, encompassing Tam Kon Chau, to Lin Barn Tsuen. Thereafter the boundary trends generally northwards and west along a channel draining into the Shenzhen River.

### **1.2. Site description**

#### **1.2.1. Land status / tenure**

- Government land = 1451.3 ha
- Private land = 100.0 ha

#### **1.2.2. Existing land use**

The site has been maintained and enhanced by intensive conservation management of the *Gei Wais* within the Mai Po Marshes Nature Reserve, carried out on behalf of the Government by the World Wide Fund for Nature Hong Kong since 1983.

Another main use of the Ramsar Site is fish ponds. Fish ponds are aquatic habitats, normally independent of the catchment hydrology, created for the commercial production of fish. The ecology of the fish ponds, and the use made of them by birds for feeding, is profoundly and directly affected by the fish production systems.

#### **1.2.3. Existing statutory plan coverage**

A large proportion of the site, including the Mai Po Marshes Nature Reserve, the adjoining mangrove and mudflat, has been designated as a Restricted Area under Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170). Other areas are mostly zoned “Conservation Area” and “Site of Special Scientific Interest” on Outline Zoning Plans S/YL-LFS/7; S/YL-MP/6; S/YL-NSW/8; S/YL-ST/8 and S/TSW/12.

## 2. Evaluation

Assessment Criteria (Weighting)	Comments	Score	Weighted score
1. Naturalness (15%)	● The major habitat of the site, i.e. the mangrove and mudflat are largely natural. However, the fish pond and <i>Gei Wai</i> are man-made features.	2	0.30
2. Habitat diversity (15%)	● The site comprises four major habitat types, mudflat, mangrove stand, <i>Gei Wai</i> / reed bed, and fish pond.	3	0.45
3. Non-recreatability (10%)	● The combination of the large mudflat area, mangrove stand, fish ponds and <i>Gei Wai</i> is unique in Hong Kong. Given its complex habitat types and ecological functions, it is unlikely that the entire Ramsar Site could be recreated.	3	0.30
4. Species diversity & richness (30%)	● Supports high diversity (>50%) of birds—about 300 bird species (>60%) and moderate diversity (20% < diversity ≤ 50%) of three taxa groups : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 16 mammal species (31%)</li> <li>■ 9 amphibian species (39%)</li> <li>■ 35 dragonfly species (32%)</li> </ul>	3	0.90
5. Species rarity / endemism (30%)	● Supports the extremely rare Black-faced Spoonbill <i>Platylea minor</i> .	3	0.90
		Total:	2.85