Ramsar Information Sheet

Published on 19 November 2021

Japan

Izumi Wintering Habitat of Cranes

Designation date	18 November 2021
Site number	2462
Coordinates	32°06'18"N 130°16'49"E
Area	478,00 ha

Color codes

Fields back-shaded in light blue relate to data and information required only for RIS updates.

Note that some fields concerning aspects of Part 3, the Ecological Character Description of the RIS (tinted in purple), are not expected to be completed as part of a standard RIS, but are included for completeness so as to provide the requested consistency between the RIS and the format of a 'full' Ecological Character Description, as adopted in Resolution X.15 (2008). If a Contracting Party does have information available that is relevant to these fields (for example from a national format Ecological Character Description) it may, if it wishes to, include information in these additional fields.

1 - Summary

Summary

Izumi Wintering Habitat of Cranes is located at the end of Izumi Alluvial Fan, where three rivers, the Takaono, the Noda and the Euchi converge. This area is characterized by reclaimed land -- mainly rice paddies created in the estuary area after 1945 --- together with open water at the estuaries and sandbars that appear during low tides.
Izumi Wintering Habitat of Cranes is known as an internationally important wintering site for endangered crane species, including almost all of the population of Hooded Crane (Grus monacha) and about half of the population of White-naped Crane (Grus vipio). This area is one of the best bird-watching sites in Japan, with about 300 species of wild birds of the 650 confirmed in the country.

Cranes used to be observed in various parts of Japan, particularly in the west, until the middle of the 19th century. However, the population fell dramatically due to over hunting between 1868 and 1912 and the reduction in wetland habitats following the Second World War. Local residents in Izumi have been steadily involved in conservation activities since, to help restore the population.

To facilitate crane conservation, the local government established the Council for Crane Conservation Measures of Kagoshima Prefecture in the mid-1950s, followed by the establishment of the Kagoshima Crane Conservancy. Local junior high school students have been conducting crane count surveys since 1960, continuing to this day for 62 years. The area was designated as national special natural monument in 1952, and no-hunting zone was expanded in 1962. A special protection zone of Izumi-Takaono National Wildlife Protection Area was designated in 1987, and expanded further in 2021.

This site has been restored to become one of the world's most famous wintering grounds for cranes, but the wetland also supports local livelihoods and culture. Fertile rice paddies surround the area of Izumi Wintering Habitat of Cranes, and the surrounding sea shores function as sites for sea food production, such as Asakusa-nori seaweed at the tidal flats around the mouth of the Takaono River and Green tiger prawn fisheries take place in Yatsushiro Sea.
As a wetland that balances co-existence of humans with wildbird conservation, Izumi Wintering Habitat of Cranes, can serve as a model case study for wetland conservation in human habitats.

2 - Data & location

2.1 - Formal data

2.1.1 - Name and address of the compiler of this RIS

Responsible compiler

Institution/agency: Kyushu Regional Environmental Office, Ministry of the Environment of Japan

Postal address: Kumamoto District Government Building B (4F),
2-10-1 Kasuga, Nishi-ku, Kumamoto City, Kumamoto Prefecture, Japan

National Ramsar Administrative Authority

Institution/agency: Wildlife Division, Nature Conservation Bureau, Ministry of the Environment

Postal address: 1-2-2 Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo Japan

2.1.2 - Period of collection of data and information used to compile the RIS

From year: 2008

To year: 2019

2.1.3 - Name of the Ramsar Site

Official name (in English, French or Spanish): Izumi Wintering Habitat of Cranes

2.2 - Site location

2.2.1 - Defining the Site boundaries

b) Digital map/image
<1 file(s) uploaded>

Former maps: 0

Boundaries description

The site, located in Japan, shares the same inland boundaries as the Special Wildlife Protection Area and the Wildlife Protection Area along the river (the latter boundary was extended on 12 January 2021 by the Ministry of the Environment of Japan).

2.2.2 - General location

a) In which large administrative region does the site lie? Izumi City / Kagoshima Prefecture / Kyushu and Okinawa region of Japan

b) What is the nearest town or population centre? Izumi City is located in the northwestern part of Kagoshima Prefecture (population of approximately 50,000). Kagoshima City (population of 590,000) and Yatsushiro City (population of 120,000) are both within 50 km radius.

2.2.3 - For wetlands on national boundaries only

a) Does the wetland extend onto the territory of one or more other countries? Yes ○ No ◉

b) Is the site adjacent to another designated Ramsar Site on the territory of another Contracting Party? Yes ○ No ◉

2.2.4 - Area of the Site

Official area, in hectares (ha): 478

Area, in hectares (ha) as calculated from GIS boundaries: 478.289

2.2.5 - Biogeography

Biogeographic regions

Regionalisation scheme(s)	Biogeographic region
Udvardy's Biogeographical Provinces	Mixed Forest

3 - Why is the Site important?

3.1 - Ramsar Criteria and their justification

<no data available>

☑ Criterion 2 : Rare species and threatened ecological communities

☑ Criterion 4 : Support during critical life cycle stage or in adverse conditions

☑ Criterion 5 : >20,000 waterbirds

Overall waterbird numbers	37,343
Start year	2015
Source of data:	Bird census data (Crane count, Duck count) of the Izumi City Crane Museum 'Crane Park Izumi' (5-year average: 33,617-43,518 birds)

☑ Criterion 6 : >1% waterbird population

3.2 - Plant species whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

<no data available>

3.3 - Animal species whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

Phylum	Scientific name	Species qualifies under criterion				Species contributes under criterion				Pop. Size	Period of pop. Est.	% occurrence 1)	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendix I	CMS Appendix I	Other Status	Justification
		2	4	6	9	3	5	7	8								
Birds																	
CHORDATA / AVES	*Aix galericulata*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	143	2008-2019		LC	☐	☐		Criterion 5 : Pop'n size : 2015-28 2016-71 2017-147 2018-364 2019-106
CHORDATA / AVES	*Anas acuta*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	8747	2015-2019		LC	☐	☐		Criterion5 : Pop'n size : 2015-9,258 2016-13,063 2017-6,214 2018-6,230 2019-8,970
CHORDATA / AVES	*Anas clypeata*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	67	2015-2019			☐	☐		Criterion 5 : Pop'n size : 2015-57 2016-34 2017-86 2018-68 2019-88
CHORDATA / AVES	*Anas crecca*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	1252	2015-2019		LC	☐	☐		Criterion 5 : Pop'n size : 2015-1,388 2016-1,232 2017-1,368 2018-1,658 2019-616
CHORDATA / AVES	*Anas falcata*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	241	2015-2019			☐	☐		Criterion 5 : Pop'n size : 2015-173 2016-96 2017-409 2018-302 2019-227
CHORDATA / AVES	*Anas formosa*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	10	2015-2019			☐	☐	National Red List (2020): VU	Criterion 5 : Pop'n size : 2015-19 2016-7 2017-8 2018-8 2019-9
CHORDATA / AVES	*Anas penelope*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	4278	2015-2019			☐	☐		Criterion5 : Pop'n size : 2015-5,176 2016-5,976 2017-3,989 2018-3,110 2019-3,137

Phylum	Scientific name	Species qualifies under criterion				Species contributes under criterion				Pop. Size	Period of pop. Est.	% occurrence 1)	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendix I	CMS Appendix I	Other Status	Justification
		2	4	6	9	3	5	7	8								
CHORDATA / AVES	*Anas platyrhynchos*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	3101	2015-2019		LC	☐	☐		Criterion5 : Pop'n size : 2015-2,185 2016-4,939 2017-4,590 2018-2,556 2019-1,236
CHORDATA / AVES	*Anas poecilorhyncha*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	2464	2015-2019		LC	☐	☐		Criterion 5 : Pop'n size : 2015-1,258 2016-2,724 2017-4,246 2018-2,350 2019-1,743
CHORDATA / AVES	*Anas strepera*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	97	2015-2019			☐	☐		Criterion 5 : Pop'n size : 2015-108 2016-53 2017-182 2018-55 2019-86
CHORDATA / AVES	*Aythya ferina*	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	64	2015-2019		VU	☐	☐		Criterion 5 : Pop'n size : 2015-36 2016-28 2017-63 2018-101 2019-92
CHORDATA / AVES	*Aythya fuligula*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	27	2015-2019		LC	☐	☐		Criterion 5 : Pop'n size : 2015-44 2016-18 2017-18 2018-19 2019-36
CHORDATA / AVES	*Grus canadensis*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	8	2008-2019		LC	☐	☐		Criterion 5 : Pop'n size : 2008-12 2009-9 2010-7 2011-3 2012-12 2013-4 2014-6 2015-8 2016-7 2017-7 2018-7 2019-9
CHORDATA / AVES	*Grus grus*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	7	2008-2019		LC	☐	☐	National Red List (2020): DD	Criterion 5 : Pop'n size : 2008-5 2009-5 2010-9 2011-6 2012-7 2013-5 2014-8 2015-5 2016-13 2017-9 2018-10 2019-4
CHORDATA / AVES	*Grus monacha*	☑	☑	☑	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	12222	2008-2019	106	VU	☑	☑	National Red List 2020 : VU	Criterion 4 : a key wintering site in the non-breeding season. Criterion 6 : Population namez : C China (non-bre) and Korea, Japan (non-bre) (1%=120) 2008-10,383 2009-10,468 2010-11,953 2011-10,034 2012-10,441 2013-10,748 2014-13,472 2015-13,978 2016-11,617 2017-14,907 2018-13,696 2019-14,967
CHORDATA / AVES	*Grus vipio*	☑	☑	☑	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	3013	2008-2019	55	VU	☑	☐	National Red List 2020: VU	Criterion 4 : a key wintering site in the non-breeding season, Criterion 6 : Population name : China (non-bre) and Korea (non-bre) (1%=55), 2008-3,010 2009-3,142 2010-1,176 2011-3,198 2012-3,539 2013-3,500 2014-3,700 2015-3,300 2016-3,613 2017-2,561 2018-3,057 2019-2,356
CHORDATA / AVES	*Tadorna tadorna*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	17	2015-2019		LC	☐	☐	National Red List (2020): VU	Criterion 5 : Pop'n size : 2015-29 2016-22 2017-11 2018-14 2019-9

1) Percentage of the total biogeographic population at the site

Migratory birds such as the Hooded Cranes and the White-naped Cranes require wetland habitats that can accommodate to each of its development stage, from breeding, wintering, to migratory stopovers. However, a decline in wetland areas is increasingly threatening the livelihoods of these birds.

Due to ongoing conservation efforts by the local community, Izumi Wintering Habitat of Cranes has become a key wintering ground for cranes --- bringing almost the entire Hooded Crane population and about 50% of the White-naped Crane population each year.

3.4 - Ecological communities whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

<no data available>

4 - What is the Site like? (Ecological character description)

4.1 - Ecological character

Izumi Wintering Habitat of Cranes is located at the end of Izumi Alluvial Fan, where three rivers, the Takaono River, the Noda River and the Euchi River, converge. The alluvial fan consists of reclaimed lands that are mainly rice paddies, open waters at the estuaries, and sandbars that appear at low tides.
The Izumi area (now called Izumi-Kantaku) was reclaimed since the 17th century, with the reclamation accelerating after the Second World War to increase food production, developing into agricultural property that now spans over 1,500 hectares. As such, Izumi Kantaku is an artificial wetland that was developed from the reclamation projects creating rice paddies, but they developed into suitable wetland habitats for many living creatures, including cranes, over the period.
Although wetland habitats in many parts of Japan have steadily diminished since the 1970s due to urban development projects, Izumi Wintering Habitat of Cranes continues to serve as important habitats for waterbirds, thanks to legal measures taken to prohibit conversion of rice fields for other uses. Furthermore, the local government has taken steps to create sustained wetland habitats for cranes as roosting sites during the key winter months, by filling rice paddies with water after rice harvest. As a result of these measures, the Izumi area now supports more than 20,000 waterbirds from about 300 bird species, including those that are endangered.
Izumi Wintering Habitat of Cranes and the surrounding areas (including coastal areas) are important in supporting local communities' livelihoods and culture. The area supports agriculture such as rice, vegetables, seaweed farming and fisheries, as well as tourism and educational activities that include bird (crane) watching.

4.2 - What wetland type(s) are in the site?

Marine or coastal wetlands

Wetland types (code and name)	Local name	Ranking of extent (1: greatest - 4: least)	Area (ha) of wetland type	Justification of Criterion 1
F: Estuarine waters	Takaono River Area	2	25	

Human-made wetlands

Wetland types (code and name)	Local name	Ranking of extent (1: greatest - 4: least)	Area (ha) of wetland type
4: Seasonally flooded agricultural land	N & S sides of the Izumi-kantaku Rice-paddies E-area, E & W sides of the Izumi-kantaku Rice-paddies W-area, and Arasaki	1	453

(ECD) Habitat connectivity	Izumi Wintering Habitat of Cranes consists of rice paddy areas between or adjacent to the Euchi River and the Takaono River, and the river area of the Takaono River Estuary.

4.3 - Biological components

4.3.1 - Plant species

Other noteworthy plant species

Phylum	Scientific name	Position in range / endemism / other
TRACHEOPHYTA/MAGNOLIOPSIDA	*Artemisia fukudo*	In Japan, southern Kyushu is the southern limit of the population's distribution. Most of this population is extinct.
TRACHEOPHYTA/LILIOPSIDA	*Sparganium fallax*	In Japan, southern Kyushu is the southern limit of the population's distribution, but there are very few habitats reported.
TRACHEOPHYTA/MAGNOLIOPSIDA	*Tripolium pannonicum*	In Japan, southern part of Kyushu is the southern limit of the population's distribution. Some habitats have been destroyed due to coastal development.

4.3.2 - Animal species

<no data available>

4.4 - Physical components

4.4.1 - Climate

Climatic region	Subregion
C: Moist Mid-Latitude climate with mild winters	Cfa: Humid subtropical (Mild with no dry season, hot summer)

4.4.2 - Geomorphic setting

a) Minimum elevation above sea level (in metres): -2

a) Maximum elevation above sea level (in metres): 10

- Entire river basin ☐
- Upper part of river basin ☐
- Middle part of river basin ☐
- Lower part of river basin ☑
- More than one river basin ☑
- Not in river basin ☐
- Coastal ☑

Please name the river basin or basins. If the site lies in a sub-basin, please also name the larger river basin. For a coastal/marine site, please name the sea or ocean.

Izumi Wintering Habitat of Cranes is located in the coastal area of Yatsushiro Sea, at the end of Izumi Alluvial Fan, receiving waters from the Takaono, Noda, and Euchi rivers. The two main catchment areas are the Takaono River System which includes the Takaono River and the Noda River, and the Euchi River System.

4.4.3 - Soil

- Mineral ☐
- Organic ☑
- No available information ☐

Are soil types subject to change as a result of changing hydrological conditions (e.g., increased salinity or acidification)? Yes ○ No ◉

Please provide further information on the soil (optional)

The soil is mainly composed of reduced coarse-grained gley soil.

4.4.4 - Water regime

Water permanence

Presence?	
Usually seasonal, ephemeral or intermittent water present	No change

Source of water that maintains character of the site

Presence?	Predominant water source	
Water inputs from surface water	☐	No change
Water inputs from groundwater	☐	No change

Water destination

Presence?	
Marine	No change

Stability of water regime

Presence?	
Water levels fluctuating (including tidal)	No change

Please add any comments on the water regime and its determinants (if relevant). Use this box to explain sites with complex hydrology:

Izumi-kantaku Rice-paddies is irrigated using the surface water of the Takaono and Noda rivers and spring water, but since these rivers have low flow rates, water is introduced from the Komenotsu River (adjacent to the east area of the Takaono River basin), resulting in a complex water allocation system. The River Area of the Takaono River in the designated site is strongly affected by tides, due to its location at the estuarine basin.

(ECD) Connectivity of surface waters and of groundwater	Izumi Wintering Habitat of Cranes is located at the end of the alluvial fan. In an alluvial fan that is mainly composed of sand and gravel layers, rivers flow underground and reappear as spring waters at the fan edge.

4.4.5 - Sediment regime

- Significant erosion of sediments occurs on the site ☐
- Significant accretion or deposition of sediments occurs on the site ☑
- Significant transportation of sediments occurs on or through the site ☐

Sediment regime is highly variable, either seasonally or inter-annually ☐

Sediment regime unknown ☐

Please provide further information on sediment (optional):

Yatsushiro Sea that faces Izumi Wintering Habitat of Cranes is a wide and shallow intertidal area and has large tidal ranges at river mouths. The fluctuating tides cause rapid deposition of riverine sediments by alluvial action, leading to delta sandbar development. The delta near the Takaono River estuary is used by many migratory waterbirds as a place for feeding and resting, providing important ecological functions for many organisms. On the other hand, the narrowing of river cross sectional areas increases the risk of flood damage to surrounding areas, which calls for regular maintenance, such as dredging, in a manner that does not compromise the ecological significance of the area.

4.4.6 - Water pH

Acid (pH<5.5) ☐

Circumneutral (pH: 5.5-7.4) ☑

Alkaline (pH>7.4) ☑

Unknown ☐

Please provide further information on pH (optional):

The irrigation water in the reclaimed land is neutral because it is taken from non-tidal zones and springs. Water taken from the River Area of the Takaono River, which is located in the tidal zone, is slightly alkaline.

4.4.7 - Water salinity

Fresh (<0.5 g/l) ☑

Mixohaline (brackish)/Mixosaline (0.5-30 g/l) ☑

Euhaline/Eusaline (30-40 g/l) ☐

Hyperhaline/Hypersaline (>40 g/l) ☐

Unknown ☐

Please provide further information on salinity (optional):

The water in the Izumi-Kantakuchi is fresh water, irrigated for agricultural purposes.

The River Area of the Takaono River is located in a intertidal zone where seawater mixes with fresh water, producing brackish water.

4.4.8 - Dissolved or suspended nutrients in water

Eutrophic ☐

Mesotrophic ☑

Oligotrophic ☐

Dystrophic ☐

Unknown ☐

Please provide further information on dissolved or suspended nutrients (optional):

Takaono and Euchi Rivers draw water from the Site. R. Takano's total nitrogen and phosphorus levels have been recorded at 2.43 mg/L and 0.185 mg/L (at Tenjin Flood Gate; located within the registered range of R. Takano), while R. Euchi's total nitrogen and phosphorus levels were 1.90 mg/L and 0.175 mg/L (at Kyu-Shimazu Flood Gate; located at the most downstream point of R. Euchi). Both are average measurements from the public water quality tests conducted between 2014 and 2019. Water quality measurements are taken at the two rivers. The BOD levels were 0.6mg/L for R. Takaono, and 2.8 mg/L for R. Euchi (average values of public water quality measurements taken between 2014 and 2019, at both Gates.

The southern part of Yatsushiro Sea (where these rivers flow into), recorded total nitrogen and total phosphorus levels of 0.14 mg/L and 0.017 mg/L, respectively recorded a COD level of 1.5 mg/l (average values from 7 environmental standard points, taken 2014-2018).

(ECD) Dissolved organic carbon	As stated above.

4.4.9 - Features of the surrounding area which may affect the Site

Please describe whether, and if so how, the landscape and ecological characteristics in the area surrounding the Ramsar Site differ from the site itself: i) broadly similar ○ ii) significantly different ◉

Surrounding area has greater urbanisation or development ☑

Surrounding area has higher human population density ☑

Surrounding area has more intensive agricultural use ☐

Surrounding area has significantly different land cover or habitat types ☐

Please describe other ways in which the surrounding area is different:

Izumi Wintering Habitat of Cranes faces Yatsushiro Sea in the north and surrounded by hills with forests in the west. In the east and southern parts of the site are agricultural land, scattered with villages.

The national highway No. 3 runs across the southern side of Izumi Wintering Habitat of Cranes from east to west. There is pronounced residential development south of this highway, with Izumi City located within a 5 km distance from the site south-east.

Although habitats for cranes and humans are adjacent to each other in Izumi Wintering Habitat of Cranes, the environment at the site of the wintering ground is adequately protected by law.

4.5 - Ecosystem services

4.5.1 - Ecosystem services/benefits

Provisioning Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Food for humans	Sustenance for humans (e.g., fish, molluscs, grains)	High

Regulating Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Maintenance of hydrological regimes	Storage and delivery of water as part of water supply systems for agriculture and industry	Medium
Hazard reduction	Flood control, flood storage	High

Cultural Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Recreation and tourism	Nature observation and nature-based tourism	High
Spiritual and inspirational	Spiritual and religious values	High
Spiritual and inspirational	Contemporary cultural significance, including for arts and creative inspiration, and including existence values	High
Scientific and educational	Educational activities and opportunities	High
Scientific and educational	Important knowledge systems, importance for research (scientific reference area or site)	High
Scientific and educational	Long-term monitoring site	High

Supporting Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Biodiversity	Supports a variety of all life forms including plants, animals and microorganizms, the genes they contain, and the ecosystems of which they form a part	High

Other ecosystem service(s) not included above:

Secondary services that add economic benefits:
One of the methods to ensure the coexistence of humans and cranes in Izumi Wintering Habitat of Cranes area is to reduce the use of pesticides and other chemicals in agriculture.
In 2017, producers, agricultural cooperative, the Ministry of the Environment, and prefectural and city governments established the Izumi Crane Rice Promotion Council, which certifies locally produced rice that meets certain environmental criteria and standards. The aim is to support environmentally friendly farming and build brand equity for such products that comply with these standards such as reduced use of pesticides ('Tsurumachi' branded rice is expected to command a premium value in the market by meeting these standards).

Within the site: Approx. 6,000

Outside the site: Approx. 700,000

Have studies or assessments been made of the economic valuation of ecosystem services provided by this Ramsar Site? Yes ○ No ○ Unknown ◉

4.5.2 - Social and cultural values

i) the site provides a model of wetland wise use, demonstrating the application of traditional knowledge and methods of management and use that maintain the ecological character of the wetland ☑

Description if applicable

Various efforts have been made to strike a balance between agricultural productivity and coexistence with endangered species like cranes. 'Early harvest rice' is grown in the Wildlife Protection Area and the Izumi-kantaku Rice-paddies East-area, so that after the first harvesting, the second harvest can be grown purely to feed the cranes and other wild birds. Such early harvest rice can also be grown using much less chemicals, allowing farmers to sell the produce at a premium price. Some farmers are considering establishing a new rice brand, separate from the existing 'Tsurumachi' rice brand, to enhance value added.

ii) the site has exceptional cultural traditions or records of former civilizations that have influenced the ecological character of the wetland ☐

iii) the ecological character of the wetland depends on its interaction with local communities or indigenous peoples ☐

iv) relevant non-material values such as sacred sites are present and their existence is strongly linked with the maintenance of the ecological character of the wetland ☐

4.6 - Ecological processes

<no data available>

5 - How is the Site managed? (Conservation and management)

5.1 - Land tenure and responsibilities (Managers)

5.1.1 - Land tenure/ownership

Public ownership

Category	Within the Ramsar Site	In the surrounding area
Other public ownership	☑	☑
Local authority, municipality, (sub)district, etc.	☑	☑
National/Federal government	☐	☑

Private ownership

Category	Within the Ramsar Site	In the surrounding area
Other types of private/individual owner(s)	☑	☑

Provide further information on the land tenure / ownership regime (optional):

Izumi Wintering Habitat of Cranes consists of 25 hectares of public water area and 453 hectares of private land area.

Regulated area under the jurisdiction of: Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (River Area designated by the Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism), Ministry of the Environment (Special Protection Zone of the National Wildlife Protection Area), Agency for Cultural Affairs (Designated area of the National Special Natural Monument, Cranes and their destinations in Kagoshima Prefecture, designated by the Ministry of Education, Culture Sports, Science and Technology, based on the Act on Protection of Cultural Properties.

5.1.2 - Management authority

Please list the local office / offices of any agency or organization responsible for managing the site:

Kyushu Regional Environmental Office, Ministry of the Environment of Japan

Provide the name and/or title of the person or people with responsibility for the wetland:

Mitsuyuki Okamoto, Director, Kyushu Regional Environmental Office, Ministry of the Environment of Japan

Postal address:

Kumamoto District Government Building B (4F),
2-10-1 Kasuga, Nishi-ku, Kumamoto City, Kumamoto Prefecture 860-0047 Japan

E-mail address:

reo-kyushu@env.go.jp

5.2 - Ecological character threats and responses (Management)

5.2.1 - Factors (actual or likely) adversely affecting the Site's ecological character

Water regulation

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	In the surrounding area
Drainage	Low impact	Medium impact	☑	☑

Agriculture and aquaculture

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	In the surrounding area
Livestock farming and ranching	Medium impact	unknown impact	☐	☑
Marine and freshwater aquaculture	Medium impact	Medium impact	☐	☑
Annual and perennial non-timber crops	Medium impact	Medium impact	☑	☑

Human intrusions and disturbance

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	In the surrounding area
Recreational and tourism activities	Low impact	Low impact	☑	☑

Please describe any other threats (optional):

Izumi Wintering Habitat of Cranes is known as an internationally important wintering site for endangered crane species, including almost all of the population of Hooded Cranes and about 50% of White-naped Cranes. Since more than 10,000 cranes live in highly dense conditions during the wintering season, there is a concern that an outbreak of diseases could possibly trigger extinction of these species. Indeed, some cranes at Izumi Wintering Habitat of Cranes have been found infected with highly pathogenic avian influenza in 2010, 2014, and 2016, indicating the possibility of a mass outbreak impacting the entire population. Fortunately, no such scale of an outbreak has occurred, although the risk remains high.
Aiming to minimize such risks, the Ministry of the Environment, Kagoshima Prefecture, Izumi City, and local farmers are seeking to disperse the population by reducing the amount of feeding that was done in an effort to support the crane population adjacent to human habitats. The plan is to continuously monitor how cranes respond to these modifications, in order to establish additional wintering grounds for the birds.

5.2.2 - Legal conservation status

National legal designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
National Special Natural Monument	Cranes and their destinations in Kagoshima Prefecture	https://kunishitei.bunka.go.jp/heritage/detail/401/2973	partly
National Wildlife Protection Area	Izumi - Takaono National Wildlife Protection Area		partly
National Wildlife Protection Area	Izumi - Takaono Special Protection Zone		whole
Second-class river	Takaono River Area	http://www.pref.kagoshima.jp/ah07/infra/kasen-sabo/kasenseibi/documents/51198_20180820151307-1.pdf	partly

Non-statutory designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
Other non-statutory designation	Wetlands of high importance from the viewpoint of biodiversity: Izumi kantakuchi	http://www.env.go.jp/nature/important_wetland/wetland/w538.html	partly

5.2.3 - IUCN protected areas categories (2008)

- Ia Strict Nature Reserve ☐
- Ib Wilderness Area: protected area managed mainly for wilderness protection ☐
- II National Park: protected area managed mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation ☐
- III Natural Monument: protected area managed mainly for conservation of specific natural features ☑
- IV Habitat/Species Management Area: protected area managed mainly for conservation through management intervention ☑
- V Protected Landscape/Seascape: protected area managed mainly for landscape/seascape conservation and recreation ☐
- VI Managed Resource Protected Area: protected area managed mainly for the sustainable use of natural ecosystems ☐

5.2.4 - Key conservation measures

Legal protection

Measures	Status
Legal protection	Implemented

Habitat

Measures	Status
Catchment management initiatives/controls	Implemented
Land conversion controls	Implemented

Species

Measures	Status
Threatened/rare species management programmes	Implemented

Human Activities

Measures	Status
Regulation/management of recreational activities	Implemented
Harvest controls/poaching enforcement	Implemented
Research	Implemented
Communication, education, and participation and awareness activities	Implemented

Other:

During the wintering season of cranes, many tourists and bird watchers visit the site but they sometimes obstruct local farming. Furthermore, unrestricted visitors in the water-birds habitat can harm wetland conservation and efforts to limit exposures to Highly Pathological Avian Influenza.
For these reasons, the Ministry of the Environment, together with local stakeholders, have been trialing visitor-entry restrictions to the area for several days over winter when many cranes migrate to the area. This was part of an effort to strengthen epidemic prevention. During the days when public access is restricted, tourists can only enter the area through guided bus tours or rented hybrid cars, in order to reduce the impact on the environment. Crane guides certified by Izumi City including local elementary and junior high school students are on board as tour guides.
To support efforts to conserve wetlands and prevent epidemic outbreaks, the municipality plans to introduce a donation-based entrance fee system for visitors entering the wetlands. These funds are to further strengthen epidemic prevention and wetland conservation measures.

5.2.5 - Management planning

Is there a site-specific management plan for the site? Yes

Has a management effectiveness assessment been undertaken for the site? Yes ◉ No ○

If the site is a formal transboundary site as indicated in section Data and location > Site location, are there shared management planning processes with another Contracting Party? Yes ○ No ◉

Please indicate if a Ramsar centre, other educational or visitor facility, or an educational or visitor programme is associated with the site:

The Izumi City Crane Museum ‘Crane Park Izumi’ opened in 1995, and it collects, stores and displays information on the natural environment surrounding Izumi, providing visitors a place to learn about the site and gather some information. It also functions as a center for research and information exchange on cranes.
Between 2018 and 2019, the Crane Park Izumi held 86 lectures and classes on the theme of wetlands, gathering 4,100 participants. It also held five special exhibitions over the period, which drew approximately 10,000 visitors. The center has also drawn researchers from overseas, including visitors from international organizations.
The Crane Observation Center is a facility adjacent to Izumi Wintering Habitat of Cranes built for crane observation. It displays panels exhibiting ecology of cranes and photographs of various wild birds in the area. Local elementary and junior high school students volunteer as Crane Guides for the center.

URL of site-related webpage (if relevant): https://www.city.kagoshima-izumi.lg.jp/cranepark/

5.2.6 - Planning for restoration

Is there a site-specific restoration plan? No need identified

5.2.7 - Monitoring implemented or proposed

Monitoring	Status
Birds	Implemented
Water quality	Implemented

To reduce the risk of introducing Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza viruses into Izumi Wintering Habitat of Cranes (where more than 20,000 water birds migrate every year), Izumi City is implementing the following measures:
- Daily crane patrol by the Kagoshima Crane Conservancy to monitor cranes during the wintering period for early detection of suspected cases of bird flu.
- Virus tests on all crane carcasses between October and March, in addition to weekly water quality survey on roosting areas by Kagoshima University.
- Promoting awareness on the Ministry of the Environment’s Technical Manual on Wild Bird Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza toward local stakeholders.
- Strengthened monitoring system upon an outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenzas, in collaboration with the Ministry of the Environment, Kagoshima Prefecture, Izumi City and other relevant organizations.

6 - Additional material

6.1 - Additional reports and documents

6.1.1 - Bibliographical references

- Management Plans for Izumi-Takaono National Wildlife Protection Area and its Special Protection Zone (2021)
- Ministry of the Environment, Government of Japan, Red List 2020 (2020)
- Kyushu Regional Environmental Office, Ministry of the Environment, Report on the Survey of the Nationally Designated Izumi/Takaono Wildlife Protection Area (2019)
- Kagoshima Prefecture, Takaono River System River Maintenance Basic Policy (2018)
- Izumi City, Izumi Statistics (2018)
- Crane Park Izumi of the Izumi City Crane Museum, Report of Bird Census in Izumi Tidal Flats and its Surrounding Area【Crane, Duck】(2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018)
- Kagoshima Prefecture, Water Quality Measurement Results for Public Water Areas (2014-2018)
- Kagoshima Prefecture, Kagoshima Prefecture Red Data Book 2016: Endangered and Threatened Wild Fauna and Flora of Kagoshima Prefecture (Plants volume), revised edition (2016)
- Ministry of the Environment, Government of Japan, Red Data Book 2014: Threatened Wildlife of Japan (2014)
-Takaono Town, Journal of Local History of Takaono (2005)
- Izumi City, Local History of Izumi, upper and lower volumes, Izumi City (2004)
- Izumi Coastal Conservation Office of Kyushu Regional Agricultural Administration Office, Journal of Izumi Coastal Conservation Project (2000)
- Izumi City Board of Education, The River, Life, and History of Izumi (1991)
- Izumi Hirano Agricultural Irrigation Office of Kyushu Regional Agricultural Administration Office, Journal of Izumi Hirano Construction (1978)

6.1.2 - Additional reports and documents

i. taxonomic lists of plant and animal species occurring in the site (see section 4.3)
<no file available>

ii. a detailed Ecological Character Description (ECD) (in a national format)
<no file available>

iii. a description of the site in a national or regional wetland inventory
<no file available>

iv. relevant Article 3.2 reports
<no file available>

v. site management plan
<no file available>

vi. other published literature
<no file available>

<no data available>

6.1.3 - Photograph(s) of the Site

Please provide at least one photograph of the site:

Hooded Cranes foraging in front of Mt. Yahazu, located in the northeastern part of Izumi Plain. (*Izumi City, 2020*)

The Takaono River estuary: Tidal flats with sand and mud deposits are inhabited by many organisms, including birds. (*Izumi City, 2020*)

Paddy fields in winter across the Izumi Plain: Many cranes forage during the day, and at night, they roost in groups in paddy fields filled with water for their roosting ground. (*Izumi City, 2020*)

6.1.4 - Designation letter and related data

Designation letter
<1 file(s) uploaded>

Date of Designation: 2021-11-18