



Melekeok State Protected Areas | PAN Site Lake Ngardok Nature Reserve

January 2016 | Fact Sheet

Micronesia's Largest Natural Lake

Lake Ngardok is the largest natural lake in all of Micronesia. The lake, wetlands, and upland forest provide habitat for plants, wildlife, and birds, some of which are found only in Palau. These include the Palau fruit dove, *biib* (*Ptilinopus pelewensis*), Micronesian pigeon, *belochel* (*Ducula oceanic*), Palau fantail, *melimdelebdeb* (*Rhipidura lepida*), gray duck, *debar* (*Anas supercilliosa*), Palau flycatcher, *charmelaichull* (*Myiagra erythroptera*), and the Palau fruit bat, *olik* (*Pteropus Pelewensis*). The lake and the wet marshes surrounding it are home to the endangered crocodile, *ius* (*Crocodylus porosus*), and it is an important breeding area for them. The Ngerdorch River serves as travel route for crocodiles from the lake to the sea.

Ngardok Nature Reserve

Ngardok Nature Reserve was established by Melekeok State Government in 1997 in order to protect the freshwater resources of the lake. The Reserve is 1500 acres (6 km² or 2 mi²) and is approximately 18% of the land area of the state of Melekeok. The Reserve boundaries follow the ridges around the watershed which contains the lake, wetlands, freshwater streams, swamp forest, palm forest and savannah habitats. In 2002, Lake Ngardok became the first site in Micronesia to be listed as a Wetland of International importance under the Ramsar Convention. The goal of this international convention is to protect representative types of wetland habitats around the world.

Protecting the Water Supply of Palau's Capitol

Ngardok Nature Reserve was established to protect the watershed from degradation, because the integrity of the forests are critical to preserving the water quality in the lake. The Ngardok watershed consists of approximately 1,000 acres of land above the lake. Every drop of rain that falls in the area either evaporates from the forest, percolates into the groundwater, or makes its way to the lake. It then drains into the Ngerdorch River and flows through Ngchesar State and to the sea. As long as the forest in the watershed is healthy, the watershed will provide clean and plentiful water to the villages of Melekeok and Ngchesar. During times of drought, the lake can serve as a natural reserve source of water. With the national capitol in Melekeok, water is an especially valuable resource.



Credits: US Forest Service, Lake Ngardok Nature Reserve Board, Melekeok State Government, Palau Conservation Society, and the Bureau of Agriculture (Forestry Office).

Visitors are welcome to tour the lake. Guided tours are conducted from Monday-Friday between 9 am—5 pm. Weekend and Holiday tours can be arranged by contacting cell no. 775-4552 or Melekeok State Governor's Office at tel. (680) 654-2967/1066 during government business hours.

For more information, email Palau Protected Areas Network Fund at info@palaupanfund.org or visit www.palaupanfund.org



Other information can be obtained from the following partner agencies:
Palau Conservation Society at tel. (680) 488-3991
Belau National Museum, National Program for Monitoring Forest and Coastal Birds
at tel. (680) 488-3841
Bureau of Agriculture, Forestry Office at tel. (680) 488-1049

