

Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS) – 2009-2012 version

Available for download from http://www.ramsar.org/ris/key_ris_index.htm.

Categories approved by Recommendation 4.7 (1990), as amended by Resolution VIII.13 of the 8th Conference of the Contracting Parties (2002) and Resolutions IX.1 Annex B, IX.6, IX.21 and IX.22 of the 9th Conference of the Contracting Parties (2005).

Notes for compilers:

1. The RIS should be completed in accordance with the attached *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines for completing the Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands*. Compilers are strongly advised to read this guidance before filling in the RIS.
2. Further information and guidance in support of Ramsar site designations are provided in the *Strategic Framework for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance* (Ramsar Wise Use Handbook 7, 2nd edition, as amended by COP9 Resolution IX.1 Annex B). A 3rd edition of the Handbook, incorporating these amendments, is in preparation and will be available in 2006.
3. Once completed, the RIS (and accompanying map(s)) should be submitted to the Ramsar Secretariat. Compilers should provide an electronic (MS Word) copy of the RIS and, where possible, digital copies of all maps.

1. Name and address of the compiler of this form:

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Designation date

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Site Reference Number

2. Date this sheet was completed/updated:

August 2012

3. Country:

Norway

4. Name of the Ramsar site:

Harøya Wetlands System: Malesanden & Huse
(International No. 806, National No. 19)

5. Designation of new Ramsar site or update of existing site:

This RIS is for (tick one box only):

- a) Designation of a new Ramsar site ☐; or
b) Updated information on an existing Ramsar site ☒

6. For RIS updates only, changes to the site since its designation or earlier update:

a) Site boundary and area

The Ramsar site boundary and site area are unchanged: ☒

or

If the site boundary has changed:

- i) the boundary has been delineated more accurately ☐; or
i) the boundary has been extended ☐; or

iii) the boundary has been restricted** ☐

and/or

If the site area has changed:

i) the area has been measured more accurately ☐; or

ii) the area has been extended ☐; or

iii) the area has been reduced** ☐

** Important note: If the boundary and/or area of the designated site is being restricted/reduced, the Contracting Party should have followed the procedures established by the Conference of the Parties in the Annex to COP9 Resolution IX.6 and provided a report in line with paragraph 28 of that Annex, prior to the submission of an updated RIS.

b) Describe briefly any major changes to the ecological character of the Ramsar site, including in the application of the Criteria, since the previous RIS for the site:

None

7. Map of site:

Refer to Annex III of the *Explanatory Note and Guidelines*, for detailed guidance on provision of suitable maps, including digital maps.

a) A map of the site, with clearly delineated boundaries, is included as:

i) a hard copy (required for inclusion of site in the Ramsar List): ☒;

ii) an electronic format (e.g. a JPEG or ArcView image) ☒;

iii) a GIS file providing geo-referenced site boundary vectors and attribute tables ☐;

b) Describe briefly the type of boundary delineation applied:

e.g. the boundary is the same as an existing protected area (nature reserve, national park etc.), or follows a catchment boundary, or follows a geopolitical boundary such as a local government jurisdiction, follows physical boundaries such as roads, follows the shoreline of a waterbody, etc.

The boundary is the same as to the Malesanden and Huse Bird Sanctuary.

8. Geographical coordinates (latitude/longitude):

62° 45'N 06° 29'E

9. General location:

Include in which part of the country and which large administrative region(s), and the location of the nearest large town.

Malesanden and Huse are situated on the east side of Harøya in Sandøy municipality in the county of Møre og Romsdal, 36 km north-east of Ålesund and 33 km west of Molde.

10. Elevation: (average and/or max. & min.)

0 – 15 m.a.s.l.

11. Area: (in hectares)

66.5 ha, of which 53.3 is sea

12. General overview of the site:

Provide a short paragraph giving a summary description of the principal ecological characteristics and importance of the wetland.

Malesanden and Huse are situated on the east side of Harøya, south of the town of Steinshamn. Malesanden is mainly a wide sandy beach with sand dunes and dune heath. Offshore are shallow waters exposed to the open sea. A few regionally rare plant species occur, and the area is of importance as both as a breeding, staging and wintering site for, among others, waders, ducks and gulls.

At Huse there are a few flat and fertile saltmarshes, coastal marsh and some sandy beaches, with shallow water offshore. Part of the area is grazed by cattle. Several demanding, rare and threatened wetland birds have been recorded breeding here. The area is also an important staging and wintering site for waders and wildfowl.

13. Ramsar Criteria:

Circle or underline each Criterion applied to the designation of the Ramsar site. See Annex II of the *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines* for the Criteria and guidelines for their application (adopted by Resolution VII.11).

1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5 • 6 • 7 • 8

14. Justification for the application of each Criterion listed in 13. above:

Provide justification for each Criterion in turn, clearly identifying to which Criterion the justification applies (see Annex II for guidance on acceptable forms of justification).

Criterion 1. The shallow waters and saltmarshes are representative for the region. Malesanden is little influenced by man, whereas parts of the meadows at Huse are still in a good traditional state (used for grazing), something which increases the value as a reference site.

Criterion 2. Several red listed bird species use the site. Among them we find Black-legged Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla* (EN, Ann. III Berne Convention), Common guillemot *Uria aalge* (CR, Ann. III Berne Conv.), Bean Goose *Anser fabalis* (VU, Ann. III Berne Conv.), Black Guillemot *Cepphus grylle* (VU, Annex III Berne Convention), Greater Scaup *Aythya marila* (VU, Ann. III Berne Conv.). Red list categories are given according to the national red list 2010. Also see point 22 for further details.

Criterion 4. Malesanden and Huse have a great diversity in different seashore habitats. This makes it to an important site for breeding waterbirds, especially for waders who have its most important breeding site on the island here. The site has large area with tidal zone and shallow water, these parts of the sites has a large value for migrating and wintering birds. See also point 22.

15. Biogeography (required when Criteria 1 and/or 3 and /or certain applications of Criterion 2 are applied to the designation):

Name the relevant biogeographic region that includes the Ramsar site, and identify the biogeographic regionalisation system that has been applied.

a) biogeographic region:

1. Southern boreal vegetation zone, highly oceanic section (Sb – O3).
2. Atlantic

b) biogeographic regionalisation scheme (include reference citation):

1. Zonal division showing the variation in vegetation from south to north and from the lowlands to the mountains, and sectional graduation showing the variation between the coast and inland (In: Moen, A. 1998. Nasjonalatlas for Norge; vegetasjon. Statens kartverk, Hønefoss).
2. EU Habitat directive 92/43/EEC

16. Physical features of the site:

Describe, as appropriate, the geology, geomorphology; origins - natural or artificial; hydrology; soil type; water quality; water depth, water permanence; fluctuations in water level; tidal variations; downstream area; general climate, etc.

Geology	The bedrock at Malesanden is composed of autochthonous or almost autochthonous gneiss from primitive times, deformed and metamorphosed during the Caledonian mountain chain folding. Huse is composed of amphibolites of metamorphosed surface bedrocks from the Proterozoic and/or Cambrian period. Quartergeologically Huse has marine deposits and some peat and mire in the north.
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Geomorphology	Huse and Malesanden are part a large flat coastal landscape formed by rising landmass.
Substrate / soil type	There is a lot of peat, some raw humus and some boggy soil at Malesanden. The tidal areas are varied with silt, clay, sand, gravel, stone and rock.
Water depth / fluctuations	Large areas of coastal shallows. The variation between high and low tides measured at Ålesund averages annually 123 cm.
Climate	The area has a very oceanic climate with mild winters and relatively cool summers. Annual precipitation is 1000 – 1500 mm.

17. Physical features of the catchment area:

Describe the surface area, general geology and geomorphological features, general soil types, general land use, and climate (including climate type).

The site lies on the east side of Harøya and is part of a flat coastal landscape formed by rising landmass. There are large mires west of Malesanden, and large areas of shallow coastal waters towards the east. Huse is sited by scattered buildings with traditional farming in the west and south and with shallow coastal waters in the east.

18. Hydrological values:

Describe the functions and values of the wetland in groundwater recharge, flood control, sediment trapping, shoreline stabilization, etc.

The dunes at Malesanden have a dynamic and natural fluctuation of sand, although overgrowing and planting of sitka spruce may have affected this a little.

19. Wetland Types

a) presence:

Circle or underline the applicable codes for the wetland types of the Ramsar “Classification System for Wetland Type” present in the Ramsar site. Descriptions of each wetland type code are provided in Annex I of the *Explanatory Notes & Guidelines*.

Marine/coastal: A • B • C • D • E • F • G • H • I • J • K • Zk(a)

Inland: L • M • N • O • P • Q • R • Sp • Ss • Tp • Ts • U • Va •
Vt • W • Xf • Xp • Y • Zg • Zk(b)

Human-made: 1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5 • 6 • 7 • 8 • 9 • Zk(c)

b) dominance:

List the wetland types identified in a) above in order of their dominance (by area) in the Ramsar site, starting with the wetland type with the largest area.

A, G, H, E, U

20. General ecological features:

Provide further description, as appropriate, of the main habitats, vegetation types, plant and animal communities present in the Ramsar site.

Mire and peat dominate Malesanden, although there is also some saltmarsh, seaweed communities, coastal marsh and sand dunes with shifting sand. At Huse there is little land area within the site, yet there are large seaweed communities and some saltmarsh (in particular in the north), as well as brackish communities. The tidal areas are large and varied with a mixture of stone blocks, stone, gravel, sand, clay, silt and sandy beaches. The bird protection area is of greatest importance for staging and wintering waders, divers, grebes, gulls, cormorants and ducks, and also for breeding waders and passerines.

21. Noteworthy flora:

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 12. Justification for the application of the Criteria) indicating, e.g., which species/communities are unique, rare,

endangered or biogeographically important, etc. *Do not include here taxonomic lists of species present – these may be supplied as supplementary information to the RIS.*

Several regionally rare and somewhat threatened species are found in the area including *Aira praecox*, *Luzula campestris*, *Carex arenaria*, *Ranunculus sceleratus*, and the responsibility species *Senecio aquaticus*.

22. Noteworthy fauna:

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 12. Justification for the application of the Criteria) indicating, e.g., which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc., including count data. *Do not include here taxonomic lists of species present – these may be supplied as supplementary information to the RIS.*

Mammals:

Both Otter *Lutra lutra* (VU, Ann. II Berne Conv.) and Harbour Seal *Phoca vitulina* (VU, Ann. III Berne Conv.) probably utilise the area for feeding.

Birds:

In the case of breeding birds, the main interest is for race of dunlin *Calidris alpina schinzii* which is classed as endangered, although the situation is unclear at both sites. The endangered subspecies species of yellow wagtail *Motacilla flava flava* has previously bred at Huse, although the current status is uncertain, with no recent sightings.

There are also important concentrations of passage and wintering birds. There are counts of up to 1000 Common Eider *Somateria mollissima* and 900 Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca* in the area, although there is reason to believe that most of these were counted within the wildlife preservation area rather than within the bird protection area. Both Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena* and divers a *Gavia ssp.* are regular and at times numerous during winter. In addition a number of waders overwinter, including Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*. There may at times be large numbers of passage birds, in particular at Huse, although there is little count data available.

The Norwegian Red List is used (2010).

23. Social and cultural values:

a) Describe if the site has any general social and/or cultural values e.g., fisheries production, forestry, religious importance, archaeological sites, social relations with the wetland, etc. Distinguish between historical/archaeological/religious significance and current socio-economic values:

No

b) Is the site considered of international importance for holding, in addition to relevant ecological values, examples of significant cultural values, whether material or non-material, linked to its origin, conservation and/or ecological functioning?

If Yes, tick the box ☐ and describe this importance under one or more of the following categories:

- i) sites which provide 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:
- ii) sites which have exceptional cultural traditions or records of former civilizations that have influenced the ecological character of the wetland:
- iii) sites where the ecological character of the wetland depends on the interaction with local communities or indigenous peoples:
- iv) sites where 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:

24. Land tenure/ownership:

- (a) within the Ramsar site: Private
(b) in the surrounding area: Private

25. Current land (including water) use:

- (a) within the Ramsar site:

The protected area is used for walking, bathing, hobby fishing, birdwatching as well as a little grazing in the north (Huse). There is one holiday cabin (Malesanden) and a few boathouses (Huse).

- (b) in the surroundings/catchment:

There are scattered buildings in the north with traditional (intensive) agriculture with grass production and grazing.

26. Factors (past, present or potential) adversely affecting the site's ecological character, including changes in land (including water) use and development projects:

- (a) within the Ramsar site:

A shelter belt extends along the whole of Malesanden, and this ought to be removed to recreate an open saltmarsh and mire landscape. There are also some planted forest areas at Huse which should be removed. There is some refuse (machinery and plastic) in this area.

- (b) in the surrounding area:

Traditional agriculture may have ceased farthest south at Huse, and this may result in overgrowing.

27. Conservation measures taken:

- a)** List national and/or international category and legal status of protected areas, including boundary relationships with the Ramsar site:

In particular, if the site is partly or wholly a World Heritage Site and/or a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, please give the names of the site under these designations.

Harøya Wetland System received protection on 27th May 1988, and Huse and Malesanden were included as two bird protection areas. Outside this area is a large wildlife preservation area, which is not included in the Ramsar site.

- b)** If appropriate, list the IUCN (1994) protected areas category/ies which apply to the site (tick the box or boxes as appropriate):

Ia ☐; Ib ☐; II ☐; III ☐; IV ☒; V ☐; VI ☐

- c)** Does an officially approved management plan exist; and is it being implemented?:

Yes (2010)

- d)** Describe any other current management practices:

None

28. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:

e.g. management plan in preparation; official proposal as a legally protected area, etc.

29. Current scientific research and facilities:

e.g., details of current research projects, including biodiversity monitoring; existence of a field research station, etc.

None are known

30. Current communications, education and public awareness (CEPA) activities related to or benefiting the site:

e.g. visitors' centre, observation hides and nature trails, information booklets, facilities for school visits, etc.

An information booklet is produced by the management authorities, comprising all the Ramsar sites in Møre and Romsdal county. A bird observation tower is situated beside Huse.

31. Current recreation and tourism:

State if the wetland is used for recreation/tourism; indicate type(s) and their frequency/intensity.

The area is visited by birdwatchers, in particular by members of the Møre og Romsdal branch of the Norwegian Ornithological Society (NOF)

32. Jurisdiction:

Include territorial, e.g. state/region, and functional/sectoral, e.g. Dept of Agriculture/Dept. of Environment, etc.

Norwegian Directorate for Nature Management (DN), Tungasletta 2, 7485 Trondheim
Ph +47 73580500
Fax +47 73580501
Email: postmottak@dirnat.no

33. Management authority:

Provide the name and address of the local office(s) of the agency(ies) or organisation(s) directly responsible for managing the wetland. Wherever possible provide also the title and/or name of the person or persons in this office with responsibility for the wetland.

The site is managed by the County Governor of Møre og Romsdal, which is under the instruction of DN.
Address: County Governor of Møre og Romsdal, Fylkeshusa, 6404 Molde, Norway. Phone +47 71258443. E-mail: postmottak@fmmr.no

34. Bibliographical references:

scientific/technical references only. If biogeographic regionalisation scheme applied (see 13 above), list full reference citation for the scheme.

Kålås, J.A., Viken, Å., Henriksen, S. and Skjelseth, S. (eds.). 2010. The 2010 Norwegian Red-list for Species. Norwegian Biodiversity Information centre, Norway.

Botanical and management plans:

Holten, J. I., Frisvoll, A. A. & Aune, E. I. 1986. Havstrand i Møre og Romsdal. Lokalitetsbeskrivelser. Økoforsk rapport 1986:3B. (In Norwegian – descriptions of coastal sites in Møre og Romsdal).

Jordal, J. B. 2005. Kartlegging av naturtyper i Sandøy kommune. Ressurssenteret i Tingvoll, rapport nr. 1-2005. 73 s. (In Norwegian – on mapping of vegetation types in Sandøy municipality).

Birds:

Folkestad, A. O. 1978. Fylkesvis oversikt over ornitologisk viktige våtmarksområder i Norge. Møre og Romsdal. Miljøverndepartementet juni 1978. (In Norwegian – on important wetlands in Møre og Romsdal).

Fylkesmannen i Møre og Romsdal, Miljøvernavdelinga 1982. Utkast til verneplan for våtmarksområde i Møre og Romsdal. Fylkesmannen i Møre og Romsdal, Miljøvernavdelinga. 224 s. (In Norwegian – draft management plan for wetlands in Møre og Romsdal).

Please return to: **Ramsar Convention Bureau, Rue Mauverney 28, CH-1196 Gland, Switzerland**
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