

Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS) – 2006 version

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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:

Dr. Reinhold Turk,
Amt der Steiermärkischen Landesregierung,
Fachabteilung 13C, Fachstelle Naturschutz,
Karmeliterplatz 2, 8010 Graz,
Austria.
Tel. 0043-316-877-3707
Fax. 0043-316-877-4295
Email: reinhold.turk@stmk.gv.at

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Designation date

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Site Reference Number

2. Date this sheet was completed/updated:

13 July 2006

3. Country:

Austria

4. Name of the Ramsar site:

The precise name of the designated site in one of the three official languages (English, French or Spanish) of the Convention. Alternative names, including in local language(s), should be given in parentheses after the precise name.

Pürgschachen Moor

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
- ii) 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:

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.

8. Geographical coordinates (latitude/longitude, in degrees and minutes):

Provide the coordinates of the approximate centre of the site and/or the limits of the site. If the site is composed of more than one separate area, provide coordinates for each of these areas.

Latitude: 47° 34' 50" N Longitude: 14° 20' 40" E

9. General location:

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

Province Styria, district Liezen, approximately 7,5km East of the district capital Liezen
(population:6900)

10. Elevation: (in metres: average and/or maximum & minimum)

The entire area lies at an altitude of approximately 632m above sea level

11. Area: (in hectares)

62 hectares

12. General overview of the site:

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

Raised peat bog surrounded by developing flat bogland, damp meadows, patches of conifers.
Situated in the flood plain of the River Enns, it serves as a good example of the once extensive ancient peatlands of the inneralpine valleys.

13. Ramsar Criteria:

Tick the box under 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). All Criteria which apply should be ticked.

1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5 • 6 • 7 • 8 • 9

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 site is one of the best surviving examples of the once extensive peatlands of the inneralpine valleys.

That includes the following Habitat types listed in Annex I of the EC Habitat Directive:

- 3160 - Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds
- 6410 - *Molinia* meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (*Molinion caeruleae*)
- 6430 - Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels
- 6510 - Lowland hay meadows (*Alopecurus pratensis*, *Sanguisorba*)
- 7110 - Active raised bogs
- 7120 - Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration
- 7140 - Transition mires and quaking bogs
- 7230 - Alkaline fens
- 91D0 - Bog woodland
- 91E0 - Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion*, *Alnion incanae*, *Salicion albae*)
- 91F0 - Riparian mixed forests of *Quercus robur*, *Ulmus laevis* and *Ulmus minor*, *Fraxinus excelsior* or *Fraxinus angustifolia*, along the great rivers (*Ulmion minoris*)

Criterion 2: The site is home to a range of rare and endangered species with special habitat requirements as present in peat bogs and associated wetlands.

Plants: National Red list:

- Andromeda polifolia
- Betula nana
- Betula pubescens
- Bolboschoenus maritimus
- Calla palustris
- Carex diandra
- Carex hostiana
- Carex lasiocarpa
- Carex limosa
- Carex tomentosa
- Catabrosa aquatica
- Cicuta virosa
- Clubiona diversa
- Drosera anglica

Drosera rotundifolia
Drosera x obovata
Eleocharis acicularis
Eleocharis uniglumis
Eriophorum vaginatum
Hammarbya palludosa
Herminium monorchis
Hippuris vulgaris
Iris sibirica
Ledum palustre
Rhynchospora alba
Scheuchzeri palustris
Senecio paludosus
Sphagnum cuspidatum
Sphagnum fuscum
Sphagnum magellanicum
Sphagnum rubellum
Sphagnum tenellum
Sphagnum squarrosum
Sphagnum warnsdorfii
Vaccinium oxycoccus

Invertebrates: National Red List

Arctosa cinerea
Clubonia diversa
Episinus angulatus
Kaestneria dorsalis
Larinioides patagiatus
Philodromus buxi
Pityohyphantes phrygianus
Salticus cingulatus
Sesia melanocephala
Synanthemon scoliaeformis
Theridion boesenbergi

Criterion 3: Many species depending on peatlands habitats have become rare due to loss of habitat. In the alpine region raised peat bogs have become very rare ecosystems mainly caused by melioration, afforestation and peat extraction making them very significant for the survival of specialised species thereby maintaining the biological diversity of the alpine biogeographic region.

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:

alpine

b) biogeographic regionalisation scheme (include reference citation):

regionalisation scheme according to the NATURA 2000 network (EU)

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.

During the past 10.000 years the Pürgschachen Moor developed out of postglacial lake. Through a slow process of sedimentation layers of peat were laid down to reach a current average depth of 6m. Pollen analysis reveals that the early vegetation was dominated by sedges and rushes. The older, deeper layers of peat show remnants of *Myrica gale*, now extinct in Austria. The upper layers of peat are predominantly created by *Sphagnum* moss. The central raised peat bog area is surrounded by flatter bogland and damp meadows interspersed with small clusters of conifers. The peripheral areas are influenced by human interference such as melioration, afforestation and peat extraction.

The site receives its water supply from 3 different sources:

- a) High precipitation and a damp climate provide a regular atmospheric water supply
- b) The central area is fed by ground water
- c) Where the river Enns draws close to the site, the peripheral areas are regularly flooded.

17. Physical features of the catchment area:

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

The site is situated in a long inneralpine valley stretching from West to East, between 1,2 km and 1,5 km wide. The characteristic feature of the valley is the river Enns which in the past formed wide meanders over the whole width of the valley, winding around the numerous bogs that had formed from postglacial lakes. The valley floor is filled with diluvial sediments. A massive river regulation project in the late 19th century cut through most of the meanders leaving a great number of oxbow lakes, many of which have since dried out, were filled in or are used as fish ponds. Some parts of the old river bed have been turned into extensively managed meadows, providing refuges for rare and endangered species. Large areas of previous wetlands however, have been drained and turned into nutrient-rich grassland or fields for growing grain and maize.

The climate is typical for inneralpine valleys with an average air temperature of 6,7°C, an average rainfall of 1.114mm and 79 days of snow cover.

18. Hydrological values:

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

The site serves as water storage and flood plain.

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.

Peatbog, alpine damp meadow (U, Va)

20. General ecological features:

Provide further description, as appropriate, of the main habitats, vegetation types, plant and animal communities present in the Ramsar site, and the ecosystem services of the site and the benefits derived from them.

The site is an ombrogenic raised peatbog with *Pinus mugo*, mainly fed by precipitation. It contains three main plant communities: *Pino mugo-Sphagnetum magellanicum*, *Sphagnetum magellanicum* and *Caricetum limosae*, clearly reflecting the habitat conditions.

21. Noteworthy flora:

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 14. 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.*

The site harbours a great number of specialised (dependant on acidic soil) as well as nationally endangered species and because of the different stages of development species diversity is high. Some species are at the edge of their biogeographic distribution.

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.*

The site is home to a great number of tyrphobiontic and tyrphophilic insect species, in particular members of Lepidoptera, Coleoptera, Hymenoptera and Diptera.

On and around the site over 160 bird species have been recorded, 84 of which are breeding. The vast majority of these bird species however, do not directly inhabit the Ramsar site itself, but are spread over a larger area of the inneralpine valley of the River Enns, in which the Ramsar site is embedded. Some species are at the edge of their biogeographic distribution.

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:

The site is important for conservation, education and scientific research, in particular pollen analysis, which revealed that the older, deeper layers of peat show remnants of *Myrica gale*, now extinct in Austria.

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 ownership

b) in the surrounding area:
private ownership

25. Current land (including water) use:

a) within the Ramsar site:

The central area is not used, some peripheral areas are used as hay meadows, some small pockets of woodland.

b) in the surroundings/catchment:

The immediate surroundings are used as hay meadows.

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:

The site is surrounded by a number of drainage ditches which over the years have caused some peripheral areas to become dryer and has encouraged the advance of *Pinus mugo* into more central parts of the peatbog.

b) in the surrounding area:

none

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.

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?:

A management plan for the reversal of the effects of past drainage activities is in operation.

A management plan for the Natura 2000 site including the Ramsar site is in place.

d) Describe any other current management practices:

The site lies within a designated Natura 2000 site which in turn is part of a protected landscape. The site is also classified as a biogenetic reserve under the terms of the Council of Europe.

A large conifer plantation has been removed and bog is slowly being restored.

28. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:

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

A wider management plan for the implementation of Natura 2000 is in place taking the wetland character of the site into consideration. Being part of the Natura 2000 site the Ramsar site has full legal protection under national legislation

29. Current scientific research and facilities:

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

In 2002 a project to monitor breeding birds, butterflies, and plants as well as the hydrological development of the site was carried out, the results are to be published shortly.

The outcome of the study will serve to achieve a more accurate zoning for the management of the site.

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.

The establishment of a nature trail around the site including an observation tower is underway.

A museum for the site is planned serving also as an education centre, in particular for school parties.

31. Current recreation and tourism:

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

No particular recreation or tourism activities.

32. Jurisdiction:

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

Amt der Stmk. Landesregierung, Fachabteilung 13C, (Dept. of Nature Conservation)

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.

1. Dr. Gerolf Forster,

Amt der Stmk. Landesregierung,

Fachabteilung 13C - Naturschutz (Dept. of Nature Conservation)

Karmeliterplatz 2, A-8010 Graz,

Austria.

Tel.: 0043-3168773153,

e-mail: gerolf.forster@stmk.gv.at

2. Dieter Weissensteiner,

Moorschutzverein Pürgschachen,

A-8904 Ardning 13,

Austria.

Tel.: 0043-361230722

e-mail: moorschutzverein.ardning@aon.at

34. Bibliographical references:

Scientific/technical references only. If biogeographic regionalisation scheme applied (see 15 above), list full reference citation for the scheme.

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

Telephone: +41 22 999 0170 • Fax: +41 22 999 0169 • e-mail: ramsar@ramsar.org