

Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands

Categories approved by Recommendation 4.7 of the Conference of the Contracting Parties.

NOTE: It is important that you read the accompanying *Explanatory Note and Guidelines* document before completing this form.

1. Date this sheet was completed/updated:

21 May 1992

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Designation date

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Site Reference Number

2. Country:

Belgium

3. Name of wetland: Marais d'Harchies

4. Geographical coordinates: 50°28' N, 3°41' E

5. Altitude: (average and/or max. & min.)

17.5m

6. Area: (in hectares) 525 ha

7. Overview: (general summary, in two or three sentences, of the wetland's principal characteristics)

Assemblage of marshland, with water meadows and ponds produced by land subsidence surrounded by reed beds.

8. Wetland Type (please circle the applicable codes for wetland types as listed in Annex I of the *Explanatory Note and Guidelines* document.)

Type S

marine-coastal: A . B . C . D . E . F . G . H . I . J . K

inland: L . M . N . O . P . Q . R . Sp . Ss . Tp . Ts
. U . Va . Vt . W . Xf . Xp . Y . Zg . Zk

man-made: 1 . 2 . 3 . 4 . 5 . 6 . 7 . 8 . 9

Please now rank these wetland types by listing them from the most to the least dominant:

9. Ramsar Criteria: (please circle the applicable criteria; see point 12, next page.)

1a . **1b** . 1c . 1d | 2a . **2b** . 2c . 2d | 3a . **3b** . 3c | 4a . 4b

Please specify the most significant criterion applicable to the site:

10. Map of site included? Please tick *yes* -or- *no* cf. annex

(Please refer to the *Explanatory Note and Guidelines* document for information regarding desirable map traits).

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

Section 4 in French original

Please provide additional information on each of the following categories by attaching

extra pages (please limit extra pages to no more than 10):

12. Justification of the criteria selected under point 9, on previous page. (Please refer to Annex II in the *Explanatory Note and Guidelines* document).

13. General location: (include the nearest large town and its administrative region) Hainault Province, 25 km west of Mons

14. Physical features: (e.g. geology, geomorphology; origins - natural or artificial; hydrology; soil type; water quality; water depth water permanence; fluctuations in water level; tidal variations; catchment area; downstream area; climate)

Geology: Quaternary alluvial deposits on Landanian sand on a Cretaceous chalk base.

Geomorphology: alluvial floodplain of the Haine River modified by subsidence (mine workings).

Pedology: dry to moderately wet soils on loamy sand; slightly to moderately gleyed soils on sandy loam; soils on moderately to highly gleyed clays; soils on heavy, often highly gleyed clays.

Hydrology: input from rainfall and catchment run-off and from ground waters, partial outflow through outlets.

Water quality: meso- to eutrophic.

Depth of stretches of water: 1-2 m.

15. Hydrological values: (groundwater recharge, flood control, sediment trapping, shoreline stabilisation etc) none

16. Ecological features: (main habitats and vegetation types)

Open waters (ponds, disused canal), reed beds, fields, meadows, thickets, poplar groves, flat areas of mine spoil.

17. Noteworthy flora: (indicating, e.g., which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc)
Noteworthy assemblages of Lemnatea (...), of Potametea (...), reeds (...), sedge, etc --cf. French original section 23 for list of Latin names.

18. Noteworthy fauna: (indicating, e.g., which species are unique, rare, endangered, abundant or biogeographically important; include count data, etc.)

Birds, regularly nesting: *Podiceps cristatus*.....*Cettia cetti*;

Birds, occasionally nesting: *Podiceps nigricolis*.....*Locustella luscinioides*;

Birds, wintering or on passage: *Phalacrocorax carbo*.... *Remiz pendulinus*; see French original section 22 for full list

19. Social and cultural values: (e.g. fisheries production, forestry, religious importance, archaeological site etc.) none

20. Land tenure/ownership of:

(a) site: Walloon Region, Royal Institute of Natural Sciences, Belgian Nature and Bird reserves, Bernissart commune, Public Social Welfare Centre, Fabrique d'Eglise and various private holdings

(b) surrounding area: private holdings.

21. Current land use:

(a) site: 385 ha are protected land and properly managed to protect and preserve nature. The remaining 140 ha are intensively farmed land, mine waste and fishing pond.

(b) surroundings/catchment: intensively farmed private land.

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

- (a) at the site: hunting, motorcycle scrambling, intensive farming and livestock (on private lands).
(b) around the site: intensive farming and livestock, industrial site due to be reopened for a planned refuse dump, new roads.
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23. Conservation measures taken: (national category and legal status of protected areas - including any boundary changes which have been made: management practices; whether an officially approved management plan exists and whether it has been implemented)

The major part of the land comprised in the Ramsar site has protected status according to the Walloon Land Use and Town Planning Code. A management plan has been compiled for the whole area but is only effectively applied on lands which are under the control of public authorities or associations which support nature conservation goals.

24. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented: (e.g. management plan in preparation; officially proposed as a protected area etc.)

The Ramsar site is a part of core area in the Special Protection Area of the Haine Valley as designated by the executive body of the Walloon Region, in accordance with EC European Directive No. 79/409.

25. Current scientific research and facilities: (e.g. details of current projects; existence of field station etc.)

Research and information centre, equipped with laboratories.

26. Current conservation education: (e.g. visitors centre, hides, information booklet, facilities for school visits etc.)

Research and information centre with an exhibition hall showing the history and biodiversity of the site and research activities. Guided tours are organised on the site.

27. Current recreation and tourism: (state if wetland is used for recreation/tourism; indicate type and frequency/intensity)

Part of the protected area can be used for rambling.

28. Jurisdiction: (territorial e.g. state/region and functional e.g. Dept of Agriculture/Dept. of Environment etc.)

Ministère de la Région Wallonne

Direction Générale des Ressources naturelles et de l'Environnement

Division Nature et Forêts

29. Management authority: (name and address of local body directly responsible for managing the wetland)

For the protected area: Centre de Recherches et d'Informations sur la Conservation de la Nature

10 chemin des Préaux

7921 Harchies

and: Réserves Naturelles et Ornithologiques de Belgique asbl

Rue Royale Sainte-Marie, 105, 1030 Bruxelles

30. Bibliographical references: (scientific/technical only) cf annex

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

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