

# Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS)

*Categories approved by Recommendation 4.7, as amended by Resolution VIII.13 of the Conference of the Contracting Parties.*

## Note 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. Once completed, the RIS (and accompanying map(s)) should be submitted to the Ramsar Bureau. Compilers are strongly urged to provide an electronic (MS Word) copy of the RIS and, where possible, digital copies of maps.

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

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Designation date

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Site Reference Number

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### 2. Date this sheet was completed/updated:

22.04.2003

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### 3. Country:

Germany

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### 4. Name of the Ramsar site:

Aland-Elbe-Niederung und Elbaue Jerichow

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### 5. Map of site included: yes

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

a) **hard copy** (required for inclusion of site in the Ramsar List): *yes* X -or- *no*

b) **digital (electronic) format** (optional): *yes* X -or- *no*

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### 6. Geographical coordinates (latitude/longitude):

Aland-Elbe-Niederung:	centre	53° 00' N 11° 37' E
	southwest corner	53° 01' N 11° 34' E
	northeast corner	52° 57' N 11° 51' E
Elbaue Jerichow :	centre	52° 30' N 12° 00' E
	southwest corner	52° 24' N 11° 58' E
	northeast corner	52° 36' N 12° 01' E

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**7. General location:**

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

This Ramsar site is a Cluster reserve in the districts Stendal and Jerichower Land in the north of Sachsen-Anhalt. One part (Aland-Elbe-lowland) is on the border to Brandenburg in the south of the Elbe river S Wittenberge (21.000 inhabitants). The other part (Elbe river meadow Jerichow) is in the south of Tangermünde (10.000 inhabitants).

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

20 – 35 m above sea level

**9. Area:** (in hectares)

Total Area: **8605 ha**, therefrom  
4234 ha Aland-Elbe-lowland and  
4371 ha Elbe river meadow Jerichow

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**10. Overview:**

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

The wetland comprises large parts of the bottom land in the flooding zones of the Elbe river, consisting both Special Protection Areas (EU SPA) Aland-Elbe-lowland and Elbe river meadow Jerichow. It is part of the biosphere reserve “Flusslandschaft Elbe”. The area has an outstanding meaning as a breeding, resting and wintering place for grassland, wading and waterbirds.

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**11. 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).

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**12. Justification for the application of each Criterion listed in 11. 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).

To criterion 1:

This area (both lowlands) represents still a nature-related part of the Elbe floodplain. In spite of anthropogenic changes (embankments, hydrologic engineering of the Elbe, melioration of adjacent lowland areas) a dynamic floodplain development with regular floodings of the adjacent lowland areas occurs at a reduced level. The lowland areas are characterized by gley soil influenced by ground water (sediments, clay, sands, gravel, floodplain loam soil), in which partly fen soil is sprinkled.

To criterion 2:

This site is visited by birds included in IUCN Red List (*Aythya nyroca* [near threatened], *Haliaeetus albicilla* [near threatened], *Crex crex* [vulnerable]) and Bird Directive EC 79/4098 (*Botaurus stellaris*, *Ixobrychus minutus*, *Ciconia nigra*, *Ciconia ciconia*, *Cygnus cygnus*, *Cygnus bewickii*, *Branta leucopsis*, *Aythya nyroca*, *Mergus albellus*, *Haliaeetus albicilla*, *Pandion haliaetus*, *Porzana porzana*, *Crex crex*, *Grus grus*, *Pluvialis apricaria*, *Philomachus pugnax*, *Sterna hirundo*, *Chlidonias niger*, *Lanius collurio*).

To criterion 4:

This parts of the Elbe lowland has an outstanding meaning as a resting and sleeping place for water- and wading birds during their migration in autumn, winter and spring, especially for the migration of waterbirds. The most numerous species are *Cygnus cygnus* up to 1.300 exs., *Anser fabalis* up to 35.000 exs., *Anser albifrons* up to 30.000 exs., *Anas penelope* up to 6.000 exs., *Anas platyrhynchos* up to 8.000 exs., *Anas acuta* up to 2.500 exs., *Anas clypeata* up to 1.500 exs., *Grus grus* up to 5.000 exs., *Pluvialis apricaria* up to 6.000 exs., *Vanellus vanellus* up to 8.000 exs.

To criterion 5:

The Ramsar area shelters regularly clearly more than 20.000 waterbirds for an extended period of the year (mainly in spring, late summer, autumn and winter). Especially large resting groups are formed by following species: *Cygnus cygnus* up to 1.300 exs., *Cygnus bewickii* up to 900 exs., *Anser fabalis* up to 30.000 exs., *Anser albifrons* up to 25.000 exs., *Anas penelope* up to 6.000 exs., *Anas platyrhynchos* up to 8.000 exs., *Anas acuta* up to 2.000 exs., *Fulica atra* up to 1.500 exs., *Grus grus* up to 5.000 exs., *Vanellus vanellus* up to 8.000 exs. (see appendix 1).

To criterion 6:

The area accommodates at least 1 % of a biogeographic population of the following wading and waterbirds: *Cygnus bewickii*, *Cygnus cygnus*, *Anser fabalis*, *Anser albifrons*, *Grus grus* (see following table).

Species	Biogeographical population	1% Biogeogr. Pop.	% at site
<i>Cygnus bewickii</i>	North-west Europe	290	2.7
<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	North-west Europe	590	2
<i>Anser fabalis</i>	North-west Europe	1000	30
<i>Anser albifrons</i>	North-west Europe	10000	2.5
<i>Grus grus</i>	North-west Europe	750	6.6
<i>Anas acuta</i>	North-west Europe	600	1.6-4.1
<i>Anas clypeata</i>	North-west Europe	400	3.4
<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	North-west Europe	650	8.7

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**13. 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:**

Continental

**b) biogeographic regionalisation scheme** (include reference citation):

Major natural landscape units and biogeographic regions of Germany.  
Bundesamt für Naturschutz (BfN), Bonn 1994.  
Natur u. Landschaft, Jg. 69, H. 9

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**14. 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.

The area is a near-natural river valley water meadow of the Elbe river, the biggest river in Saxony-Anhalt. Undulating meadows with dunes, flood trenches, old river branches and pools on alluvial silty clay sediments lying on alluvial sand and gravel. A dynamic floodplain development with regular floodings of the adjacent lowland areas occurs at a reduced level. The lowland areas are characterized by gley soil influenced by ground water (sediments, clay, sands, gravel, floodplain loam soil), in which partly fen soil is sprinkled. The climate is characterized by the inner climate of the Elbe valley. The mean annual temperature is 8,5 °C. The mean precipitation is about 540 mm.

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**15. 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).

Not known.

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**16. Hydrological values:**

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

By anthropogenic changes (embankments, hydrologic engineering of the Elbe, melioration of adjacent lowland areas) the hydrology of this area was modified. A dynamic floodplain development with regular floodings of the adjacent lowland areas occurs at a reduced level. It is a prevention from flood damage in the surroundings by means of flooding zones and flooding facilities.

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**17. 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*.

**Inland:** M • O • P • Tp • Ts • U • W • Xf

**Human-made:** 4 • 9

**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.

M • 4 • Ts • U • P • Tp • W • Xf • O • 9

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**18. General ecological features:**

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

Besides the Elbe river with its tributaries and cut-off meanders characterize floodplain meadows the landscape. Wet and moist meadows of different types, among others meadows with *Phalaris arundinacea* and *Poa palustris* as well as flood swards alternate with drier places. Here and there floodplain meadows with *Cnidium dubium* occur. In any places we can find dense willow, alder groups and oak-forests as floodplain relicts. Isolated old *Salix alba* trees with enormous tree-tops exist also in the meadows. The bank of the Elbe is occupied by tree rows, mostly willows or poplars.

Concerning the [%] cover of the main habitat classes present in the area see appendix 2.

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**19. 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.*

The habitats of nature-related plant communities are affected by aperiodically appearing floodings and by the floodplain loam sedimentation. The region possesses an species-abundant vegetation with a lot of rare and endangered species. Most of the plantgeographically important species are river valley plants adapted to continental habitats (e. g. *Chaerophyllum bulbosum*, *Cucubalus baccifer*), which border their northwestern

distribution here. Nearly all of these plant species are endangered, because they are dependent on nature-related habitats with floodplain dynamics. Besides this some prominent representatives of the atlantic floral element can also be found, which occupy here far to the southeast shifted habitats (e. g. *Erica tetralix*, *Genista anglica*). Plant species worth being emphasized are: *Butomus umbellatus*, *Cnidium dubium*, *Euphorbia palustris*, *Gentiana pneumonanthe*, *Iris pseudacorus*, *Iris sibirica*, *Juncus atratus*, *Nuphar lutea*, *Salvinia natans*, *Senecio paludosus*, *Sium latifolium*, *Stratiotes aloides*, *Veronica beederifolia*.

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## 20. 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 importance for the fauna bases upon the occurrence of numerous wading and waterbirds. The area is important for breeding birds as well as for resting birds and migratory birds.

The following species use the area as a place for resting and wintering: *Ciconia nigra*, *Cygnus bewickii*, *Cygnus cygnus*, *Anser fabalis* (Subspecies *rossicus*), *Anser albifrons*, *Anser anser*, *Anas penelope*, *Anas acuta*, *Anas platyrhynchos*, *Mergus merganser*, *Mergus albellus*, *Haliaeetus albicilla*, *Pandion haliaetus*, *Fulica atra*, *Grus grus*, numerous wading birds (among others *Vanellus vanellus*, *Pluvialis apricaria*, *Numenius arquata*, *Limosa limosa*, *Gallinago gallinago*, *Philomachus pugnax*) (see appendix 1).

Among breeding birds are the following noteworthy: *Podiceps grisegena*, *Botaurus stellaris*, *Ixobrychus minutus*, *Ciconia ciconia*, *Anser anser*, *Tadorna tadorna*, *Anas strepera*, *Anas crecca*, *Anas acuta*, *Anas querquedula*, *Anas clypeata*, *Aythya nyroca*, *Haliaeetus albicilla*, *Crex crex*, *Haematopus ostralegus*, *Vanellus vanellus*, *Gallinago gallinago*, *Limosa limosa*, *Numenius arquata*, *Sterna hirundo*, *Chlidonias niger*, *Saxicola rubetra*, *Locustella luscinioides*, *Lanius collurio*, *Lanius excubitor* (see also appendix 1).

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## 21. Social and 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 area offers opportunities for research and education with respect to the conservation of nature. The use of the grassland is accomplished by mowing and grazing; the territorial waters mostly are used for fishing; hunting is carried out nearly area-wide. The touristic activities increase in this area.

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## 22. Land tenure/ownership:

(a) within the Ramsar site:

many parted areas, mainly cultivated by private owners and lessees; sometimes extensive use; the overwhelming number of the fields is private property

(b) in the surrounding area:

different owners: state property, private property, community property, BVVG

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## 23. Current land (including water) use:

(a) within the Ramsar site:

conservation of nature, protection of surroundings from floods, grassland use (mowing and grazing), to less extent agricultural use, freshwater fishery, forestry, hunting, recreation, shipping traffic, research and education

(b) in the surroundings/catchment:

conservation of nature, grassland and agricultural use, fishery, forestry, settlements, system of water distribution (ditches, hydraulic works, scooping, embankment system), recreation, shipping traffic, hunting

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**24. 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:

Insufficient measures for catchment and for improving the water resources of the territory, hunting (especially hunting for waterbirds), fishery, eutrophication of the waters and wetlands by land use (atmospheric input of substances, input by agriculture, input by waters), changes in the land use, growing recreation activities, using the Elbe as a main waterway.

The use of grassland and the fishery are not always performed in accordance with the nature. The same proves right for recreation, whereby interferences are increasingly called forth. In spite of existing guidelines and agreements problems arise regularly with the hunting, especially with the hunting for waterbirds.

(b) in the surrounding area:

Ideas for further water regulation activities, possible extension of the Elbe with negative influences on the Ramsar area, changes in the land use (especially its intensification), increasing recreation activities, eutrophication of the territory, hunting.

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**25. Conservation measures taken:**

List national category and legal status of protected areas, including boundary relationships with the Ramsar site; management practices; whether an officially approved management plan exists and whether it is being implemented.

Part of two landscape reserves „Untere Havel“, „Aland-Elbe Niederung“; included two EU-Bird conservation areas: „Aland-Elbe-Niederung“, „Elbaue Jerichow“; part of 3 FFH-areas: „Aland-Elbe-Niederung nördlich Seehausen“, „Elbaue Beuster-Wahrenberg“, „Elbaue zwischen Derben und Schönhausen“; part of several nature reserves: Garbe-Aland-Niederung, Elbaue Beuster-Wahrenberg, Schelldorfer See, Elsholzwiesen, Bucher Brack-Bölsdorfer Haken; part of the biosphere reserve „Flusslandschaft Elbe“. Subarea-related guidelines for water and extensive grassland uses exist. At present the extensive use of grasslands in accordance with the conserved nature is performed within the bounds of contracts (contracts for conserved nature), that, however, on strength of their voluntariness, the pretty short period of validity and uncertain financing no long-lasting protection provides.

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**26. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:**

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

Area-specific cultivation and development concept, that ensures an ecologically orientated, with the users balanced exploitation of the fields and measures for improving the hydrological situation.

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**27. Current scientific research and facilities:**

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

Only sparse avifaunistic and ecological monitoring, including waterbird monitoring by centre for waterbird research in Germany (ZWFD) and monitoring in EU SPA by Landesamt für Umweltschutz Sachsen-Anhalt/Staatliche Vogelschutzwarte.

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**28. Current conservation education:**

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

Development of several information centres by conservation organisations.

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### 29. Current recreation and tourism:

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

Taking into consideration the nature conservation aspect large parts of the area are not suited for tourism and, therefore, closed for such use. Guidelines are required for using fishing-rods. For directing visitors numerous paths and observation points were set up. The whole area is exposed to a growing recreation, whereby the interferences connected with it increase (e. g. by sports ships, sports aeroplanes, camping etc.). In summer and during the bird migration in spring and autumn is the area a popular destination for people interested in nature.

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### 30. Jurisdiction:

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

The government authority with territorial jurisdiction over the wetland:

Ministerium für Landwirtschaft und Umwelt des Landes Sachsen-Anhalt, Abteilung Naturschutz,  
Olvenstedter Str. 4, D - 39108 Magdeburg

The authority with functional jurisdiction for conservation purposes:

Regierungspräsidium Magdeburg, Obere Naturschutzbehörde, Olvenstedter Str. 1-2,  
D - 39108 Magdeburg

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### 31. 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.

Landkreis Stendal, Untere Naturschutzbehörde, Hospitalstr. 1-2, D - 39576 Stendal

Landkreis Jerichower Land, Untere Naturschutzbehörde, In der Alten Kaserne 4, D - 39281 Burg

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### 32. Bibliographical references:

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

Böhnert, W. u. L. Reichhoff (1983): Das Naturschutzgebiet „Bucher Brack und Bölsdorfer Haken“. Teil 2: Floristische Ergänzungen und Hinweise zur Nutzung des Gebietes. Naturschutzarb. Halle Magdeburg 20, 2, 37-40.

Böhnert, W. u. L. Reichhoff (1990): Das Naturschutzgebiet Bucher Brack und Bölsdorfer Haken, vegetationskundliche Inventarisierung als Grundlage für die Konkretisierung von Schutzziel und Behandlung. Arch. Naturschutz Landschaftsforsch. 30, 1, 13-44.

Dornbusch, G., Dornbusch, M. & P. Dornbusch (1996): Internationale Vogelschutzgebiete im Land Sachsen-Anhalt. Aland-Elbe-Niederung. Naturschutz im Land Sachsen-Anhalt 33, Sonderheft, 38-43.

Lippert, W. (1966): Der Schelldorfer See. Falke 13, 341-345.

Lippert, W. (1966): 5 Jahre Naturschutzgebiet Schelldorfer See. Naturschutz u. naturk. Heimatforsch. Halle Magdeburg 3, 2, 32-38.

Lippert, W. (1967, 1969, 1973, u. 1977): Ornithologisches Beobachtungsmaterial aus der Elbaue bei Tangermünde. Beitr. Vogelk. 13, 47-71; 14, 340-350; 19, 179-186 u. 23, 249-264.

Lippert, W. u. J. Loose (1972): Zur Vogelwelt des NSG „Schelldorfer See“ und zur Situation des Naturschutzes. Naturschutz u. naturk. Heimatforsch. Halle Magdeburg 9, 1/2, 50-64.

Lippert, W. u. K. Maaß (1980): Zur Ausbildung einer neuen Überwinterungstradition des Zwergschwans in der Elbniederung bei Tangermünde unter Berücksichtigung der Singschwan-Beobachtungen. Falke 27, 366-374.

Müller, H. (1971): Zum Vorkommen des Wachtelkönigs, *Crex crex* (L.), zwischen Fischbeck, Tangermünde und Schönhausen. Orn. Beitr. Elb-Havel-Winkel 3, 29.

Reichhoff, L. u. W. Böhnert (1981): Das Naturschutzgebiet „Bucher Brack und Bölsdorfer Haken“. Teil 1: Floristische Notizen. Naturschutzarb. Halle Magdeburg 18, 2, 43-47.

- Steinke, G. (1978): Die Vögel des NSG „Bucher Brack“, Kreis Genthin, Natursch. u. naturk. Heimatforsch. Halle Magdeburg 14, Beih., 98-100.
- Warthold, R. (1987): Die Feuchtgebietskonvention, ein internationales Projekt zum Schutz von Wasser- und Watvögeln. Naturschutzarb. Halle Magdeburg 24, 1, 13-24.
- Weinitschke, H. et al. (1983): Handbuch der Naturschutzgebiete Bd. 3, Leipzig, 20-21, 34-35 u. 124-126.

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## Appendix 1:

Review of breeding and resting birds in the RAMSAR-area „Aland-Elbe-Niederung und Elbaue Jerichow“ (selection) 1990 – 2001

<b>Species</b>	<b>Breeding pairs</b>	<b>Passage birds/Winter guests</b>
<i>Podiceps grisegena</i>	2 – 10	
<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	11 – 50	
<i>Egretta alba</i>	-	up to 5
<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>	5 – 10	
<i>Ixobrychus minutus</i>	0 – 3	
<i>Ciconia nigra</i>	-	up to 60
<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	40 – 50 (places)	up to 100
<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	-	1.100 – 1.300
<i>Cygnus bewickii</i>	-	700 – 900
<i>Anser fabalis</i>	-	25.000 – 35.000
<i>Anser albifrons</i>	-	20.000 – 30.000
<i>Anser anser</i>	100 – 150	500 – 1.000
<i>Branta leucopsis</i>	-	400 – 600
<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	15 – 20	
<i>Anas penelope</i>	-	6.000
<i>Anas strepera</i>	10	200
<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>		8.000
<i>Anas crecca</i>	5 – 10	900
<i>Anas querquedula</i>	10	250 – 500
<i>Anas acuta</i>	0 – 2	1.000 – 2.500
<i>Anas clypeata</i>	10 – 15	1.200 – 1.500
<i>Aythya nyroca</i>	0 – (1)	up to 9
<i>Mergus merganser</i>	-	600
<i>Mergus albellus</i>	-	100
<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>	2 – 3	10 – 20
<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	-	5 – 10
<i>Fulica atra</i>		1.000 – 1.500
<i>Porzana porzana</i>	5 – 10	
<i>Crex crex</i>	10 – 15	
<i>Grus grus</i>	2 – 5	up to 5.000
<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	5	
<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	-	up to 6.000
<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	40 - 60	5.000 – 8.000
<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>	-	up to 750
<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	20	500
<i>Limosa limosa</i>	10	up to 100
<i>Numenius arquata</i>	10 – 20	200 – 350
<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	6 – 12	
<i>Chlidonias niger</i>	50 – 75	up to 100
<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	60 – 80	

<i>Locustella luscinioides</i>	10 – 20	
<i>Lanius collurio</i>	40 – 100	
<i>Lanius excubitor</i>	5	

## Appendix 2:

## Review of habitat types occurring in the RAMSAR-area

According to data of the standard data form EU SPA „Aland-Elbe-Niederung“ and from EU SPA „Elbaue Jerichow“

<b>Habitat classes</b>	<b>[%] cover</b>
Fresh waters	15,5
Habitats of vegetation-less or -poor soil	1,5
Arable land	6,5
Mesophile grassland	43
Humid grasslands and floodplain habitats on mineral soil	22
Reed	6
Deciduous woodland (up to 30 % coniferous trees)	4,5
Large-area shrubbery/ forest-like habitats	1