

# 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:**

January 2002

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY.

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Designation date

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Site Reference Number

**2. Country:**

Denmark

**3. Name of wetland:** Nissum Fjord

International No. 143, National No. 4

**4. Geographical coordinates:** 56°21'N, 08°14' E

**5. Altitude:** (average and/or max. & min.) 0-2 m **6. Area:** (in hectares) 10,890 hectares

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

Nissum Fjord is a very eutrophic brackish lagoon with connection to the North Sea through a lock system. Salt marshes, reed swamps and meadows surround the area.

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

**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:

J, O, H, 4, E, F

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

1 · **2** · 3 · 4 · 5 · **6** · 7 · 8

Please specify the most significant criterion applicable to the site: 6

**10. Map of site included?** Please tick *yes*  -or- *no*  (Please refer to the *Explanatory Note and Guidelines* document for information regarding desirable map traits).

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

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**Please provide additional information on each of the following categories by attaching extra pages (please limit extra pages to no more than 10):**

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

**Criterion 2:** The site is an important breeding area for waterbirds, including species on the Danish red list e.g. *Botaurus stellaris*, *Anser querquedula*, *Anas acuta*, *Calidris alpina*, *Philomachus pugnax*, and *Sterna albifrons*.

**Criterion 6:** The site regularly supports more than 1% of the individuals in the populations of the following species:

Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta b. hrota*) 850 – 17% of the Svalbard/Denmark/UK population  
Pink-footed Goose (*Anser brachyrhynchus*) 5,000 – 16,2 % of the Svalbard/NW Europe population  
Grey Lag Goose (*Anser anser*) 4,000 – 2% of the NW Europe/SW Europe population  
Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*) 1,060 – 1,6% of the W Europe/W Med (breeding) population

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**13. General location:** (include the nearest large town and its administrative region)

The site is an inlet on the migratory route along the West Coast of Jutland with connection to the North Sea through a lock system. The site is situated 20-30 km west of Holstebro city, the county of Ringkøbing.

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**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)

The site is a shallow 76 km<sup>2</sup> estuary (mean depth 1.0 meter) connected to the North Sea through a sluice. Geomorphologically the estuary consists of 3 connected basins. The Storå river has its outfall in the inner basin, and therefore the 3 basins have a salinity gradient from the inner basin (0-4‰) to the outer basin (1-25‰). Since 1868, when the sluice was established, the water level and salinity have been controlled by man. The nutrient load from the catchment area has only partly decreased since the mid 1980s. The total phosphorus load has decreased about 50% since the mid 1980s due to improved wastewater treatment from household and industries. The total nitrogen load, that mainly derives from open land areas, does not show a statistical significant decrease compared to the level in the mid 1980s despite regional and national efforts to reduce the nitrogen load. Due to the high loads of nutrients the water quality is poor with a yearly average autotroph biomass up to 1,500 µg C/l in the inner basin and up to 700 µg C/l in the central basin. In the late 1980s the yearly average biomass was even higher, up to 2,500 µg C/l.

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**15. Hydrological values:** (groundwater recharge, flood control, sediment trapping, shoreline stabilisation etc)

No specific information.

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

The site is a shallow, brackish fjord including saltmarshes and reed swamps. The submerged vegetation varies considerably from the inner basin, where it is almost absent due to the poor water quality, to a relative good coverage in the outer basin with connection to the North Sea. The depth-limit has overall increased significantly from 0.7 meter in the mid 1980s to 1.0 meter in 2000, probably due to a decrease in the phosphorus load.

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**17. Noteworthy flora:** (indicating, e.g., which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc)

No specific information.

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

The site is a resting and feeding area for waterbirds:

Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*) 55

Whooper Swan (*Cygnus cygnus*) 119

Bewick's Swan (*Cygnus columbianus bewickii*) 101

Teal (*Anas crecca*) 2,770

Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*) 1,523

Wigeon (*Anas penelope*) 980

Pintail (*Anas acuta*) 290

Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*) 667

Goosander (*Mergus merganser*) 29

Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*) 15

Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*) 3,202

Curlew (*Numenius arquata*) 2,350

Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*) 2,050

Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*) 12,440

Breeding area for aquatic and salt marsh birds:

*Botaurus stellaris*, *Anas strepera*, *Anser querquedula*, *Anas acuta*, *Anas clypeata*, *Circus aeruginosus*, *Limosa limosa*, *Calidris alpina*, *Philomachus pugnax*, *Recurvirostra avosetta*, *Larus fuscus*, *Sterna sandvicensis*, *Sterna hirundo*, *Sterna paradisaea*, *Sterna albifrons*.

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**19. Social and cultural values:** (e.g. fisheries production, forestry, religious importance, archaeological site etc.)

No specific information.

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**20. Land tenure/ownership of:** (a) site (b) surrounding area

Territorial waters, private, the State represented by the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries.

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**21. Current land use:** (a) site (b) surroundings/catchment

(a) reed harvesting and cattle grazing (b) farmland

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**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 (b) around the site

(a) and (b) Eutrophication has reduced the number of birds of passage, one of the reasons is that a large part of the underwater vegetation has disappeared.

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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 whole area is designated EU Bird Protection site no. 38 and EU Habitat Protection area No. 58

Part of the Ramsar site (Bøvling Fjord) is a wildlife reserve No. 64.

Nature conservation: Bøvling Fjord and Krogshede Enge, about 1,060 ha in 1975.

Conservation of Bøvling Klit and Holmen in 1984 - 700 ha - led to restrictions on public access to salt marshes and limitations on agricultural use of grassland and marshes. These measures will gradually improve natural conditions for staging geese, ducks and breeding waders.

Regulated reed harvesting and cattle grazing in Felsted Kog (the south-eastern part of Nissum Fjord) have improved this area as a breeding site for dabbling ducks and waders.

On the marshes on the isthmus along the North Sea five big fences have been established for grazing cattle in order to improve the conditions for breeding and migrating waterbirds. These areas comprise private as well as state-owned areas.

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**24. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:** (e.g. management plans in preparation; officially

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proposed as a protected area etc.)

No specific information.

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

No specific information.

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

A brochure on the wildlife reserve.

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

No specific information.

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

Nature Conservation and administration of the Ramsar Convention and EU Bird and Habitat Directives:  
Ministry of Environment.

The legislation on Agriculture and Fisheries: Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries.

The Nature Conservation Scheme: Ringkjøbing County.

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

Ringkjøbing County

Østergade 41

Postboks 152

6950 Ringkøbing

Telefon: 96 75 30 00

Telefax: 96 75 30 80

Ulborg State Forest District

Ulborggård

Paradisvej 4

DK-6990 Ulborg

Tlf. 97 49 14 00

Fax 97 49 29 67

E-mail: d61@sns.dk

Klosterheden State Forest District

Sønderby

Gl. Landevej 35

Fabjerg

DK-7620 Lemvig

Telephone 97 81 00 33

Fax 97 82 02 40

E-mail: d60@sns.dk

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**30. Bibliographical references:** (scientific/technical only)

- Miljø- og Energiministeriet, Skov- og Naturstyrelsen 1996: EF-fuglebeskyttelsesområder og Ramsarområder. Kort og områdebeskrivelser, status 1995. [With an English summary]. 273 pp.
  - Miljø- og Energiministeriet, Skov- og Naturstyrelsen 1999: Birds of Danish SPAs – trends in occurrence. 119 pp.
  - Ministry of Environment and Energy, The National Forest and Nature Agency 1996: Danish Report 1996 on the Ramsar Convention, Denmark and Greenland. 105 pp. + 4 appendices.
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