

Ramsar Information Sheet

Published on 15 May 2019 Update version, previously published on : 1 January 2002

Denmark (Greenland)

Aqajarua, Qaamassoq and Sullorsuaq



Designation date 27 January 1988

Site number 38°

Coordinates 69°40'42"N 52°04'50"W

Area 26 440,00 ha

https://rsis.ramsar.org/ris/381 Created by RSIS V.1.6 on - 20 July 2020

Color codes

Fields back-shaded in light blue relate to data and information required only for RIS updates.

Note that some fields concerning aspects of Part 3, the Ecological Character Description of the RIS (tinted in purple), are not expected to be completed as part of a standard RIS, but are included for completeness so as to provide the requested consistency between the RIS and the format of a 'full' Ecological Character Description, as adopted in Resolution X.15 (2008). If a Contracting Party does have information available that is relevant to these fields (for example from a national format Ecological Character Description) it may, if it wishes to, include information in these additional fields.

1 - Summary

Summary

The area consists of a large U-shaped valley (Sullorsuaq), a coastal foreland (Qaamassoq), a shallow marine bay (Aqajarua) and a delta with tidal mudflats. In the valley and on the foreland there are rivers, lakes, ponds and marshes. There are homeothermic springs along northern side of valley, although many are above the 200 m contour, i.e. outside the Ramsar-site.

The site is an important breeding, staging and moulting area for waterbirds. International important numbers (> 1% of world population) of Greenland White-fronted Goose (Anser albifrons flavirostris) occur in the area. The bay is an important fishing and hunting area for people from nearby towns.

2 - Data & location

2.1 - Formal data

2.1	1.1	-	Name	and	ado	Iress	of	the	com	piler	of	this	RIS
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Compiler 1

Name	David Boertmann
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2.1.2 - Period of collection of data and information used to compile the RIS

From year 1990

To year 2015

2.1.3 - Name of the Ramsar Site

Official name (in English, French or Spanish)

Aqajarua, Qaamassoq and Sullorsuaq

Unofficial name (optional)

Mudderbugten, Flakkerhuk and Kvandalen

2.1.4 - Changes to the boundaries and area of the Site since its designation or earlier update

(Update) A Changes to Site boundary Yes No ○
^(Update) The boundary has been delineated more accurately ✓
(Update) The boundary has been extended
^(Update) The boundary has been restricted □
(Update) B. Changes to Site area the area has increased
^(Update) The Site area has been calculated more accurately ✓
^(Update) The Site has been delineated more accurately ✓
(Update) The Site area has increased because of a boundary extension
(Update) The Site area has decreased because of a boundary restriction

2.1.5 - Changes to the ecological character of the Site

(Update) 6b i. Has the ecological character of the Ramsar Site (including applicable Criteria) changed since the previous RIS?

2.2 - Site location

2.2.1 - Defining the Site boundaries

b) Digital map/image

<1 file(s) uploaded>

Former maps 0

Boundaries description

The boundaries inland follow primarily the 200 m contour line. In the marine parts (except the bay), the boundary is approx. 1,3 km from the coast.

2.2.2 - General location

a) In which large administrative region does the site lie?	Kommune Qeqertalik
b) What is the nearest town or population	Ilulissat 51 km. Qegertarsuag 73 km. Qasigiannguit 88 km and Aasiaat 97 km all by boat

2.2.3 - For wetlands on national boundaries only

a) Does the wetland extend onto the territory of one or more other countries?

b) Is the site adjacent to another designated Ramsar Site on the territory of another Contracting Party? Yes O No \odot

2.2.4 - Area of the Site

Official area, in hectares (ha): 26440

Area, in hectares (ha) as calculated from GIS boundaries $\begin{tabular}{ll} \bf 27107.76 \\ \hline \end{tabular}$

2.2.5 - Biogeography

Biogeographic regions

Regionalisation scheme(s)	Biogeographic region
Other scheme (provide name below)	Low Arctic oceanic/continental
WWF Terrestrial Ecoregions	Kalaallit Nunaat low Arctic tundra

Other biogeographic regionalisation scheme

Low Arctic oceanic/continental according to Bay 1997.

3 - Why is the Site important?

3.1 - Ramsar Criteria and their justification

☑ Criterion 1: Representative, rare or unique natural or near-natural wetland types

Other reason

The extensive freshwater wetlands are rare in West Greenland, and the combination with a shallow marine bay and lagoons is unique. There are moreover a number of homeothermic springs along the northern boundary.

- ☑ Criterion 2 : Rare species and threatened ecological communities
- ☑ Criterion 3 : Biological diversity

The region has a very high diversity of vascular plants and waterbirds. More than 130 species of vascular plants were recorded during a field study in 2015 (Wegeberg et al. 2016). Internationally important numbers of Greenland White-fronted Geese use the site as a moulting area in July-August (468-637 birds in 2001), there are also many breeding White-fronted Geese (34 pairs in 2001). In 2015, 317 moulting birds were counted (1.7% of total population). The white-fronted goose breeding in Greenland constitutes a separate and endemic subspecies (flavirostris), which is nationally red-listed as Endangered (EN). King eiders stage and moult in the area (1575 birds in 2001), but the numbers have been decreasing over the recent decades.

- ☑ Criterion 4 : Support during critical life cycle stage or in adverse conditions
- ☑ Criterion 6 : >1% waterbird population

3.2 - Plant species whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

O.Z I lank opoc	12 Thank opening whose processes to the international importance of the old											
Scientific name	Common name	Criterion 2	Criterion 3	Criterion 4	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendix I	Other status	Justification				
Corallorhiza trifida			/				rare					

More than 130 species of vascular plants were recorded during a field study in 2015 (Wegeberg et al. 2016). Three Greenland endemics occur in the site: Antennaria affinis, Antennaria intermedia and Potentilla ranunculus.

3.3 - Animal species whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

Phylum	Scientific name	Common name	Species qualifies under criterion 2 4 6 9	Species contributes under criterion 3 5 7 8	Pop. Size	Period of pop. Est.	% occurrence 1)	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendix I	CMS Appendix I	Other Status	Justification
Birds												
CHORDATA/ AVES	Anas platyrhynchos conboschas										endemic subspecies	breeder
CHORDATA/ AVES		Greenland White- fronted Goose			319	2015	1.7				Endangered (EN) on national red list. Endemic subspecies	breeding and moulting
CHORDATA/ AVES	Branta canadensis	Canada Goose			317	2015		LC				breeding and moulting birds
CHORDATA/ AVES		Oldsquaw; Long- tailed Duck						W				breeder
CHORDATA/ AVES	Gavia stellata	Red-throated Loon; Red- throated Diver			12	2001		LC				breeder
CHORDATA/ AVES		Red-necked Phalarope			48	2001		LC				breeder
CHORDATA/ AVES	Somateria spectabilis	King Eider			1500	2001		LC				moulting
CHORDATA/ AVES	Stercorarius Iongicaudus	Long-tailed Skua			2	2001		LC			rare breeder in West Greenland	breeder
CHORDATA/ AVES	Stercorarius parasiticus	Arctic Skua						LC				breeder
CHORDATA/ AVES	Sterna paradisaea	Arctic Tern		2 000				LC			NT on national red list	breeder
Fish, Mollusc	and Crustacea											
CHORDATA/ ACTINOPTERYGI	Salvelinus alpinus							LC				spawn in river

¹⁾ Percentage of the total biogeographic population at the site

Internationally important numbers of Greenland White-fronted Geese use the site as a moulting area in July-August (468-637 birds in 2001), there are also many breeding White-fronted Geese (34 pairs in 2001). In 2015, 317 moulting birds were counted (1.7% of total population). The white-fronted goose breeding in Greenland constitutes a separate and endemic subspecies (flavirostris), which is nationally red-listed as Endangered (EN).

King eiders stage and moult in the area (1575 birds in 2001), but the numbers have been decreasing over the recent decades.

3.4 - Ecological communities whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

<no data available>

4 - What is the Site like? (Ecological character description)

4.1 - Ecological character

There are extensive marshlands at the many ponds and small lakes in the valley and on the foreland. The river mouth is a wide delta with mud and sand flats exposed at low tide, and with salt marshes in the higher parts. At the coast of Qaamassoq there are barrier beaches, lagoons and salt marshes. In the drier parts, there are dwarf scrub heaths and fell fields. The vegetation on the low dunes and on the backside of the coastal barrier is very sparse, with scattered stands of a.o. Elymus, Honckenya, and Mertensia. On the lower parts of the salt marshes Puccinellia phryganodes, Carex subspathacea, C. ursina and Juncus articus are dominating often forming dense cover. In the higher parts of the salt marshes Carex rariflora becomes frequent. Carex stans is the most prominent Carex species in the marshes where it forms dense stands. Where the marshes become dry, they transform into grassland mainly with Carex bigelowii.

The vegetation in the valley of Sullorsuaq is dominated by dwarf scrub heath, mainly rather dry with Betula, Empetrum and lichens. Here and there, it is more hummocky and moist with Salix (at places up to 1 m tall) and mosses. In the valley floor Salix is dominant in the dryer areas on gravel banks and dried out riverbeds. Mosses and herbs such as Polygonum viviparum and Bartsia are numerous in these open Salix scrubs. In the marshes Carex stans and Eriohorum triste and E. scheuchzeri are dominating and often forming dense stands.

At some of the lakes, thick turf walls "palsas" have build up.

4.2 - What wetland type(s) are in the site?

Marine or coastal wetlands

Marine of Coastal Wellands	Walfile of Coastal Wellands									
Wetland types (code and name)	Local name	Ranking of extent (1: greatest - 4: least)	Area (ha) of wetland type	Justification of Criterion 1						
A: Permanent shallow marine waters		1		Representative						
G: Intertidal mud, sand or salt flats		3		Representative						
H: Intertidal marshes		4		Rare						
J: Coastal brackish / saline lagoons		2		Rare						

Inland wetlands

Inland wetlands								
Wetland types (code and name)	Local name	Ranking of extent (1: greatest - 4: least)	Area (ha) of wetland type	Justification of Criterion 1				
Fresh water > Flowing water >> Mt Permanent rivers/ streams/ creeks		1		Representative				
Fresh water > Lakes and pools >> O: Permanent freshwater lakes		3		Representative				
Fresh water > Lakes and pools >> Tp: Permanent freshwater marshes/ pools		2		Representative				
Fresh, saline, brackish or alkaline water > Geothermal >> Zg: Geothermal wetlands		4		Unique				

Other non-wetland habita

Otto Hon World Habitat						
Other non-wetland habitats within the site	Area (ha) if known					
Dwarf scrub heath, dunes, fell fields, abrasion flats						

4.3 - Biological components

4.3.1 - Plant species

Other noteworthy plant species

Other Hoteworthy plant species								
Scientific name	Common name	Position in range / endemism / other						
Platanthera hyperborea		rare						

4.3.2 - Animal species

Other noteworthy animal species

Phylum	Scientific name	Common name	Pop. size	Period of pop. est.	%occurrence	Position in range /endemism/other
ARTHROPODA/INSECTA	Clossiana chariclea					common
ARTHROPODAINSECTA		Northern Clouded Yellow;Greenland Sulphur;Hecla Orange				common
ARTHROPODAINSECTA	Gynaephora groenlandica					here and there in the area
CHORDATA/AVES	Lagopus muta	Rock Ptarmigan	8	2001		

Optional text box to provide further information

The gastropod Lymnaea vahlii Möller (not in the pop-up list above) is common in the lakes.

4.4 - Physical components

4.4.1 - Climate

Climatic region	Subregion
E: Polar climate with extremely cold winters and summers	ET: Tundra (Polar tundra, no true summer)

The climate types in the summer.	ne above field	do not apply	to this part of Greer	land. The summers are not extremely cold and there is in fact a true
4.4.2 - Geomorphic set	tina			
•				
a) Minimum elevation al	bove sea level (in metres)	0		
a) Maximum elevation al	bove sea level (in metres)	200		
		Entire	eriver basin	
			friver basin	
			friver basin 🗹	
		•	friver basin 🗹	
			river basin	
			river basin	
		NOUI	Coastal	
Please name the river basin	n or basins. If the s	site lies in a sul	o-basin, please also nam	e the larger river basin. For a coastal/marine site, please name the sea or ocean.
River basin: Sullorsua	q/Kvandalen.	Sea/ocean:	Disko Bay	
.4.3 - Soil				
	(I lada	ate) o	Mneral	0. 0. 0
	(Ориа	Changes at) Increase O Decrease O Unknown ⊚
			Organic	
	(Upda) Increase O Decrease O Unknown ⊚
			information 🗹	
Are soil types subject to condition	change as a resu ons (e.g., increase	ult of changing h ed salinity or ac	nydrological yes O No ©	
Please provide further inform	mation on the soil	(optional)		
no information				
4.4.4 - Water regime				
Vater permanence				
Presence?	Changes at RI	S update		
Usually permanent water present				
Source of water that maintain	s character of the	site		
Presence?	Predominant wa	ater source	Changes at RIS update	
Water inputs from rainfall / snowfall			No change	
Marine water			No change	
Vater destination				
Presence?	Changes at RI			
Marine	No chan	ige		
tability of water regime				
Presence?	Changes at RI	S update		
Water levels fluctuating (including tidal)	No chan	ige		
Please add any comments	on the water regin	ne and its deter	minants (if relevant) Use	this box to explain sites with complex hydrology.
The predominant water				
4.4.5 - Sediment regim	۵			
_		dimente s ===	on the site □	
Signifi	cant erosion of se			Jacobs C Dosesson C Halanur (A)
) Increase O Decrease O Unknown ⊚
Significant accretion of				
			<u> </u>) Increase O Decrease O Unknown ⊚
Significant transportatio				
	(Upda	ate) Changes at	RIS update No change C) Increase ○ Decrease ○ Unknown ●

Sediment regime is highly variable, either seasonally or inter-annually $\hfill\Box$

	(I Indata) a		
	_	lo change O Increase O Decrease O Unknown	
	Sediment regime unknown		
Please provide further information on se	diment (optional):		
no information			
1.4.6 - Water pH			
	Acid (pH<5.5)]	
	(Update) Changes at RIS update	lo change O Increase O Decrease O Unknown	
	Circumneutral (pH: 5.5-7.4)	3	
	(Update) Changes at RIS update N	lo change O Increase O Decrease O Unknown	
	Akaline (pH>7.4)		
		lo change O Increase O Decrease O Unknown	
	Unknown		
	O.M. Comme		
1.4.7 - Water salinity			
	Fresh (<0.5 g/l)		
	, , ,	lo change O Increase O Decrease O Unknown	
	orackish)/Mixosaline (0.5-30 g/l)	_	
,	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	- lo change ◯ Increase ◯ Decrease ◯ Unknown ⊚	
	Euhaline/Eusaline (30-40 g/l)	_	
	(0 /	- lo change O Increase O Decrease O Unknown ⊚	
	perhaline/Hypersaline (>40 g/l)	_	
•		lo change O Increase O Decrease O Unknown	
	Changes at Ki3 update in	no diange O indease O Decrease O Oriki lowi i O	
	Links and E	7	
(EQQ)	Unknown &	2	
(ECD) Dissolved gases in water	Unknown 6	2	
(ECD) Dissolved gases in water no information	Unknown 6	2	
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no information		2	
no information	utrients in water		
no information 1.4.8 - Dissolved or suspended n	utrients in water Eutrophic ປົ		
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1.4.8 - Dissolved or suspended not suspended	utrients in water Eutrophic [(Update) Changes at RIS update M Mesotrophic [(Update) Changes at RIS update M Oligotrophic [(Update) Changes at RIS update M Dystrophic [(Update) Changes at RIS update M Unknown [(Update) Changes at RIS u	Io change O Increase O Decrease O Unknown Io Site	

4.5 - Ecosystem services

4.5.1 - Ecosystem services/benefits

Provisioning Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance	
Food for humans	Sustenance for humans (e.g., fish, molluscs, grains)	Medium	

Cultural Services

Caltara Scrivces					
	Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance		
	Recreation and tourism	Recreational hunting and fishing	Low		

Supporting Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Biodiversity	Supports a variety of all life forms including plants, animals and microorganizms, the genes they contain, and the ecosystems of which they form a part	High

Other ecosystem service(s) not included above	9:					
The bay is a hunting area for local people (seabirds and seals) and Arctic char is fished with gill nets along the coasts. There are probably archaeological sites within this Ramsar site (cf. The National Museum of Greenland).						
Within the site:	10s					
Outside the site:	10s					
Have studies or assessments been made of ecosystem services prov	the economic valuation of yes O No O Unknown O ided by this Ramsar Site?					
4.5.2 - Social and cultural values						
i) the site provides a model of wetland wis application of traditional knowledge and met use that maintain the ecological	nods of management and \square					
ii) the site has exceptional cultural trad civilizations that have influenced the ecological						
iii) the ecological character of the wetland with local communiti	depends on its interaction es or indigenous peoples					
iv) relevant non-material values such as sac their existence is strongly linked with the main	•					

<no data available>

4.6 - Ecological processes

<no data available>

5 - How is the Site managed? (Conservation and management)

5.1 - Land tenure and responsibilities (Managers)

5.1.1 - Land tenure/ownership

Pub			

Category	Within the Ramsar Site	In the surrounding area	
Public land (unspecified)	✓	✓	

5.1.2 - Management authority

Please list the local office / offices of any agency or organization responsible for managing the site:	Pinngortitamut Avatangiisinullu Naalakkersuisoqarfik Departementet for Natur og Miljø Ministry of Nature and Environment
Provide the name and title of the person or people with responsibility for the wetland:	Karen Motzfeldt, Head of Department for Nature, Climate and Research
	Pinngortitamut Avatangiisinullu Naalakkersuisoqarfik Departementet for Natur og Miljø Ministry of Nature and Environment Postboks 1015 3900 Nuuk
E-mail address:	pan@nanoq.gl

5.2 - Ecological character threats and responses (Management)

5.2.1 - Factors (actual or likely) adversely affecting the Site's ecological character

Biological resource use

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Fishing and harvesting aquatic resources	Low impact	Low impact	/	No change	2	No change

5.2.2 - Legal conservation status

National legal designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
Areas important to wildlife (Anon. 2000)		https://www.govmin.gl/images/sto ries/minerals/rules_for_fieldwor k.pdf	whole
Ramsar site	Aqajarua (Mudderbugten), Qaamassoq (Flakkerhuk) and Sullorsuaq (Kvandalen)	http://lovgivning.gl/lov?rid={15 CBC689- E3AD-470D-B32A-947A250D70 62}	whole

Non-statutory designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
Important Bird Area	GL025 Aqarajua- Siullorsuaq	http://datazone.birdlife.org/sit e/factsheet/69	whole

523-	IUCN	protected	areas	categories	(2008)

la Strict Nature Reserve □
lb Wilderness Area: protected area managed mainly for wilderness protection
II National Park: protected area managed mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation
III Natural Monument: protected area managed mainly for conservation of specific natural features
IV Habitat/Species Management Area: protected area managed mainly for conservation through management intervention

V Protected Landscape/Seascape: protected area managed mainly for landscape/seascape conservation and recreation

M Managed Resource Protected Area: protected area managed mainly for the sustainable use of natural ecosystems

5.2.4 - Key conservation measures

Legal protection

Measures	Status
Legal protection	Implemented

Human Activities

Measures	Status
Fisheries management/regulation	Implemented

Other:

Sailing and low level flying is regulated in and above the site.

Greenland Government Order no. 12 of June 1st on protection of the internationally designated wetlands in Greenland and protection of certain waterfowl.

5.2.5 - Management planning

Is there a site-specific management plan for the site? No

Has a management effectiveness assessment been undertaken for the site? Yes O No ●

If the site is a formal transboundary site as indicated in section Data and location > Site location, are there shared management planning Yes O No opposesses with another Contracting Party?

5.2.6 - Planning for restoration

Is there a site-specific restoration plan? No need identified

5.2.7 - Monitoring implemented or proposed

Monitoring	Status
Animal community	Proposed

Monitoring proposed by Egevang & Boertmann 2001a (See Egevang & Boertmann 2001a, 2001b).

6 - Additional material

6.1 - Additional reports and documents

6.1.1 - Bibliographical references

Anonymous 2000. Rules for fieldwork and reporting regarding mineral resources (excluding hydrocarbons) in Greenland. - Government of Greenland, Bureau of Minerals and Petroleum.

Bay, C. 1997. Floristic division and vegetation zonation of Greenland in relevance to a circumpolar arctic vegetation map: 27-31. In: Proceedings of the second circumpolar arctic vegetation mapping workshop, Arendal, Norway, 19.-24. May 1996. Walker, S. & A.C. Lillie, eds.). - Occasional Paper No. 52, 1997. Institute of Arctic and Alpine Research, University of Colorado.

Boertmann, D. & Petersen, I.K. 2016. Aerial surveys of geese, seaducks and other wildlife in the Disko Bay area, West Greenland, July 2015. – DCE Technical Report, 78, 25 pp.

Egevang, C. & Boertmann, D. 2001a. The Greenland Ramsar Sites, a status report. – National Environmental Research Institute (NERI), Technical Report No. 346, 96 pp.

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6.1.2 - Additional reports and documents

i. taxonomic lists of plant and animal species occurring in the site (see section 4.3)

ii. a detailed Ecological Character Description (ECD) (in a national format)

iii. a description of the site in a national or regional wetland inventory

iv. relevant Article 3.2 reports

<no file available>

v. site management plan

vi. other published literature

<3 file(s) uploaded>

6.1.3 - Photograph(s) of the Site

Please provide at least one photograph of the site:



The outer reaches of the Sullorsuaq valley and the shallow bay. (*David Boertmann, 15-08-2015*)



The bay seen from south and a coastal lagoon in front. (David Boertmann, 14-08-2015)



The dunes of Qamassoq, with coastal lagoon to the right. (David Boertmann, 14-08-2015)



The tidal mudflats in the bay. (David Boertmann, 14-08-2015)



Aqajarua/Mudderbugt seen form south. (David Boertmann, 4-07-2001



Salt marsh of Qaamassoo/Flakkerhuk. (David Boertmann, 03-07



Coastal lagoon on south Aqajarua/Mudderbigten. (David Boertmann, 04-07-



The central part of Sullorsuag/Kvandalen. (David Boertmann, 04-07



Tall Salix-scrub in Sullorsuaq/Kvandalen (David Boertmann, 04-07 2001)

6.1.4 - Designation letter and related data

Designation letter

Date of Designation 1988-01-27