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.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY.

DD MM YY

Designation date Site Reference Number

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1. Date this sheet was completed/updated:
May 2002

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2. Country:
Denmark (Greenland)

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3. Name of wetland:
Qinnquata Marra and Kuussuaq.
International No. 382
National No. 2

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4. Geographical coordinates:
69°56' N, 54°14' W

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5. Altitude: (min. & max.) 0-100 m **6. Area:** 6.480 hectares

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7. Overview: (general summary, in two or three sentences, of the wetland's principal characteristics)
Terrestrial/marine habitat area: 72/28%
The lower parts of two broad glacial valleys, both with braiding rivers. The rivers reach the fjord in a common delta with large mudflats exposed at low tides. In the valleys there are wetlands of small pools and extensive moss-sedge marshes. The coasts - other than the delta - are low and rocky with narrow sedimentary beaches.
Today the single most important moulting area for King eiders in Greenland. More than 2% of the Greenland White-fronted goose population has been recorded during the summer at this site.

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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:
Approximate ranking: G A M Tp Vt D

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

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**

Please specify the most significant criterion applicable to the site:
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10. Map of site included? Please tick *yes* X **-or- *no***
(Please refer to the *Explanatory Note and Guidelines* document for information regarding desirable map traits).
As print and Word file on CD-rom.

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11. Name and address of the compiler of this form:
Inge Thaulow, Ministry of Environment and Nature, Greenland Homerule Government, P.O. Box 1614, DK-3900 Nuuk, Greenland. Ph.: + 299 34 67 18, fax + 299 32 52 86, e-mail: inth@gh.gl

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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)**.**

1. For the shallow marine fjord and river delta.
4. For the moulting White-fronted geese (*Anser albifrons flavirostris)* and moulting King eiders (*Somateria spectabilis*)
6. For the number of White-fronted geese (*Anser albifrons flavirostris*) utilising the area –up to 395 specimens which constitutes 1,3% of the Greenland/Irland/UK population.

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13. General location: (include the nearest large town and its administrative region)
The site is located on the northwestern side of Disco Island in Disco Bay in a non-populated area. It is located at the bottom of the fjord Kangersooq (Nordfjord) that is facing the open sea.

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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 located within the low arctic climatic zone with continuous perma frost. The site is within the plant belt termed “mid-arctic oceanic”. The average tidal amplitude is c. 4.1 meters.
The Ramsar site consists of the head of a fjord and two valleys, adjoining in a common mouth. The Tertiary basalt mountains surrounding the valleys and the fjord reach altitudes up to 1256 m asl. The valley sides are mainly extensive talus areas and below these less steep areas with solifluction soil. The Ramsar site only covers the lower part (below 200 m asl.) of the valley sides.
The depth in the middle of the fjord is about 85 m at the Ramsar site border. Futher inside the fjord the water gradually becomes lower until a steep rise just in front of the extensive mudflats exposed during low tide (the tidal amplitude is about 2 m). Both valleys are u-shaped glacial valleys with braiding melt water rivers in the floor. Only few rivers join the main river in the valley floor. Many

small streams with clear water, often from homeothermic springs run down the valley sides.

The common river delta is delimited from the sea by low barrier islands and spits form the mainland. In the northern part of the site, five pingos (mud volcanoes) are located (Egevang & Boertmann 2001b).

15. Hydrological values: (groundwater recharge, flood control, sediment trapping, shoreline stabilisation etc)
No information available.

16. Ecological features: (main habitats and vegetation types)
The delta consists of extensive mudflats, which become covered by seawater during spring hide tide. Further up the valleys extensive marshes and many ponds are found along the riverbed. The vegetation on the valley sides exposed towards south, south-west and south-east are dominated by dense dwarf scrub heath, usually rather moist and in some places with hummocks. Species like *Betula, Salix, Vaccinium, Cassiope, Dryas* and *Ledum* are common. More active solifluction soils have and open and low vegetation also with *Tofieldia, Pedicularis* ssp. and *Pyrola*. The salt marsh areas have *Puccinellia phryganodes, Carex ursine* and *C. rariflora, Mertensia, Honckenya* and *Koenigia*.
In the marshes along the riverbed *Carex stans* and the two species of *Eriophorum* predominated, and the marshes transform gradually into a more grassland like flora with decreasing moisture. Along streams on the valley sides' small marshes may occur, also with species like *Saxifraga aizodes*. On the higher gravel and mud banks of the riverbeds, low and open *Salix* scrubs are found (Egevang & Boertmann 2001b).

17. Noteworthy flora: (indicating, e.g., which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc)
None

18. Noteworthy fauna: (indicating, e.g., which species are unique, rare, endangered, abundant or biogeographically important; include count data, etc.)
A significant number of the White-fronted geese (*Anser albifrons flavirostris*) population use the site as a moulting area (395 birds in 2001). The waters close to, and within the site (Kangersooq) are today the single most important moulting area for King eider (*S. spectabilis)* in Greenland. Compare to other parts of Greenland the site holds many breeding pairs of the Canada goose (*Brante Canadensis*) (110 breeding pairs in 2001) and Brent goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*) (156 breeding pairs in 1995) (Egevang & Boertmann 2001b).

19. Social and cultural values: (e.g. fisheries production, forestry, religious importance, archaeological site etc.)
Three house ruins of unknown age are located close to the eastern border (inside the Ramsar site) of the site on the northern coast of Kangersooq. The site is located quite remote to human settlements. However, some hunting takes place. Scallop fishing takes place at the mouth of Kangersooq.

20. Land tenure/ownership of: (a) site (b) surrounding area
a and b: Territorial ownership. No privately owned land.

21. Current land use: (a) site (b) surroundings/catchment
a and b: As described in point 19.

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) past:
There has neither been any human induced changes' adversely affecting the physical structure of the site nor of the surroundings of the site. So the ecological potential of the site is expected to be preserved. Changes in the composition of the bird species using the site, might have been caused by factors affecting the birds in the whole of their distribution areas.
(a) and (b) present:
The same traditional activities as in the past, but this site is rather remote with low human interference.
(a) and (b) potential: There are no planned activities which will change the physical structure of the site or the surroundings of the site. Any future activities will be regulated. See point 23 and 24.

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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 site has been designated an "Area important to wildlife" (eiders* and other seaducks on the marine parts and geese** on the terrestrial parts) by the Bureau of Minerals and Petroleum. In general the regulation apply only to activities in relation to mineral exploration. Fixed-wing aircrafts flying more than 500 m above the ground is not regulated.
*In areas designated for eiders and other seaducks all activities need approval in the period 1 Aug. – 30 Sep. (except from some single helicopter flights and navigation with motorised vessels with a maximum speed of 10 knots).
**In areas designated for staging, breeding and moulting geese all activities need approval in the periods 1-20 May, 15-31 May and 15 June – 10 Aug. (except from some single helicopter flights and navigation with motorised vessels with a maximum speed of 10 knots) (Egevang & Boertmann 2001a, Anonymous 2000).
No management plans exists.

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24. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented: (e.g. management plans in preparation; officially proposed as a protected area etc.)
No management plan in preparation. However, within a 2-4 year time frame specific conservation measures of this Ramsar area could be expected following a new Nature protection act planned to enter into force in 2002.The National Environmental Research Institute (NERI) recommends that a monitoring programme is urgently necessary with a 3-5 years interval at this site. In addition, NERI concludes that there is a "high demand of management" due to potential conflict with human activities at a medium level at this Ramsar site (Egevang & Boertmann 2001a).

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25. Current scientific research and facilities: (e.g. details of current projects; existence of field station etc.)
NERI has published a status report for this an all other Ramsar areas in Greenland. A field study was done during the summer 2001.

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26. Current conservation education: (e.g. visitors centre, hides, information booklet, facilities for school visits etc.)
None.

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27. Current recreation and tourism: (state if wetland is used for recreation/tourism; indicate type and frequency/intensity)
No tourism activities.

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28. Jurisdiction: (territorial e.g. state/region and functional e.g. Dept of Agriculture/Dept. of Environment etc.)
The Greenland Home Rule Government. Ministry of Environment and Nature.

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29. Management authority: (name and address of local body directly responsible for managing the wetland)
Ministry of Environment and Nature, Greenland Homerule Government, P.O. Box 1614, DK-3900 Nuuk, Greenland. Ph.: + 299 34 67 01, fax + 299 32 52 86

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30. Bibliographical references: (scientific/technical only)

Danish Report 1996 on the Ramsar Convention, Denmark and Greenland.
Ministry of Environment and Energy, The National Forest and Nature Agency

Ramsar Areas in Greenland.
Department of Environment and Nature, Greenland. Unpublished report 1998.

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

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

Egevang, C. & Boertmann, D. 2001b. The Ramsar sites of Disko, West Greenland. A survey in July 2001. National Environmental Research Institute (NERI), Denmark. NERI Technical Report No. 368, 68 pp.
