

Information Sheet on Ramsour 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

1. Date this sheet was completed/updated:

May 2002

2. Country:

Denmark (Greenland)

3. Name of wetland:

Naternaq (Lersletten)

International No. 385

National No. 5

4. Geographical coordinates:

68°24'N, 51°46'W

5. Altitude: (min. & max.) 0-450 m

6. Area: 184.010 hectares

7. Overview:

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

Terrestrial/marine habitat area: 84/16%

A unique landscape made up of open plains on recently exposed marine sediments with "islands" of bedrock. Many rivers and streams intersect the site. There are numerous small and shallow lakes where the majority have turbid water.

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 H D M O Vt Tp

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:

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).

As print and Word file on CD-rom.

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

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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 many wetlands in this extensive lowland area
4. For the moulting and breeding White-fronted geese (*Anser albifrons flavirostris*)
6. The most important area for Greenland White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons flavirostris*) with appr. 9-20% of World population of this endemic subspecies (2588 birds in 1992, approx. 6000 birds in 1998).

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

The site is located on the southernmost edge of the Disco Bay. The Disco Bay is in Greenlandic terms highly populated were c. 20% of the population is concentrated. The larger towns Asiaat and Qasigiannuit are close to this Ramsar site.

Divided between the municipalities of Kangaatsiaq and Qasigiannuit.

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. A unique landscape of open plains on recently exposed marine sediments (8,000 - 10,000 years ago) in addition to "islands" of bedrock rising above the plain. A fjord area, Tasiusarsuaq, intersect the site from southeast (Egevang & Boertmann 2001).

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

No information available.

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

The site shows a high diversity of plants. Marshes and fens are found at lakes and along rivers and streams. The vegetation is dominated by sedges (mainly *Carex stans*), common cotton grass (*Eriophorum angustifolium*), and mats of mosses (*Sphagnum* ssp., *Aulacomnium turgidum*). The

drier areas are mainly fell fields here and there with dwarf scrub heaths made up by dwarf birch (*Betula nana*), Arctic blueberry (*Vaccinium uliginosum*) and locally northern willow (*Salix glauca*) (Egevang & Boertmann 2001).

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.)

The most important area for moulting Greenland White-fronted geese (*Anser albifrons flavirostris*). Due to Greenlandic conditions the site holds many breeding pairs of the Common eider (*Somateria mollissima*) (174 pairs in 1997), Canada goose (*Branta Canadensis*) (6 pairs in 1995), White-fronted goose (*Anser albifrons flavirostris*) (34 pairs in 1995) and Great cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) (54 ind. - 1 colony in 1995). Several other species of waterbirds occurs in this site.

Musk oxen (*Ovibos moschatus*) have been introduced to this part of Greenland and small numbers are frequently recorded within the site. Caribou (*Rangifer tarandus*) occurs, although in small numbers (Egevang & Boertmann 2001).

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

The northern and western coast is used as hunting and fishing areas. There are some camping and hiking in the area. Some vacation huts are located in the area.

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 of 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, but might also have been caused by traditional hunting activities at the site. It is known that the breeding common eider in the inner, most undisturbed part of the site has, like most other places in Greenland, been subject to a major decline compared to counts in the early 1950'ies.

(a) and (b) present:

The same as in the past including traditional activities in the area (hunting, eggging, hiking and campsites).

(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.

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 fjord Tasiussarsuaq in the eastern part is designated as a breeding bird reserve where sailing

and activities on-shore is prohibited in the main breeding season from 1 May to 31 August, and it is prohibited to come closer than 500 meters. This protection covers only a fraction (c.4%) of the Ramsar site. This protection does not cover the breeding and moulting areas of the White-fronted geese (Egevang & Boertmann 2001, Anonymous 2001).

The seabird breeding colonies* are designated as "Areas important to wildlife" 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 an area within 200 m from the colony, activities need approval in the period 1 June- 15 Sept. However navigating does not need any approval. Staying in the colony is not permitted (Egevang & Boertmann 2001, Anonymous 2000).

No management plans exists.

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 necessary with a 8-10 years interval at this site. In addition, NERI concludes that demand of management is at a mid-level since potential conflict with human activities is assessed as at a medium level (Egevang & Boertmann, 2001).

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

NERI has in 2001 published a status report for this an all other Ramsar areas in Greenland. The breeding Common eiders were assessed in 1997.

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

None.

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

Hunting and fishing area. Still insignificant tourism activities.

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.

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

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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

Frich, A., Christensen, K.D. & Falk, K. 1997: Ederfugletællinger i Kangaatsiaq og Avanersuaq 1997. Teknisk Rapport nr. 10. Pinngortitalerriffik, Grønlands Naturinstitut.

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.

Anonymous 2001. Hjemmestyrets bekendtgørelse nr. 38 af 6. december 2001 om beskyttelse af Fugle. Grønlands Hjemmestyre.

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

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