



# Ramsar Information Sheet

Published on 20 October 2020

Update version, previously published on : 17 June 1997

## Estonia

### Vilsandi



Designation date	5 June 1997
Site number	913
Coordinates	58°22'43"N 21°52'38"E
Area	23 760,00 ha

## 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 site is a large wilderness area situated on the western coast of Saaremaa Island. Approximately 68% of the territory is formed by the sea speckled with 160 small islands and reefs. It also includes the Island of Vilsandi and the western coast of the Saaremaa Island (shallow bays, dunes, coastal lakes, coastal meadows, reed beds), the Harilaid Peninsula and Loonelaid islet. The wetland complex is important as a breeding area of seabirds and Grey Seals and wintering area of globally threatened Steller's Eider *Polysticta stelleri*.

## 2 - Data & location

### 2.1 - Formal data

#### 2.1.1 - Name and address of the compiler of this RIS

Responsible compiler

Institution/agency Postal address 

#### 2.1.2 - Period of collection of data and information used to compile the RIS

From year To year 

#### 2.1.3 - Name of the Ramsar Site

Official name (in English, French or Spanish) 

#### 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) B. Changes to Site area No change to area

(Update) For secretariat only: This update is an extension 

#### 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? No

## 2.2 - Site location

### 2.2.1 - Defining the Site boundaries

b) Digital map/image

&lt;1 file(s) uploaded&gt;

Former maps 

Boundaries description

### 2.2.2 - General location

a) In which large administrative region does the site lie? b) What is the nearest town or population centre? 

### 2.2.3 - For wetlands on national boundaries only

a) Does the wetland extend onto the territory of one or more other countries? Yes  No b) Is the site adjacent to another designated Ramsar Site on the territory of another Contracting Party? Yes  No 

### 2.2.4 - Area of the Site

Official area, in hectares (ha): Area, in hectares (ha) as calculated from GIS boundaries 

### 2.2.5 - Biogeography

Biogeographic regions

Regionalisation scheme(s)	Biogeographic region
EU biogeographic regionalization	Boreal

Other biogeographic regionalisation scheme

Baltic

### 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

Hydrological services provided	The site plays an important role in shoreline stabilization, sediment trapping, maintaining of water quality and supporting of food chains.
Other ecosystem services provided	Supporting services: biodiversity, soil formation, nutrient cycling and pollination. Cultural services: scientific and educational opportunities (long-term study site, monitoring), recreational and tourism opportunities, spiritual and inspirational values. Provisional services: fish, reeds and fibre; livestock fodder (coastal meadows).
Other reasons	The site is a good representative of mosaic coastal wetland complex (shallow marine waters, coastal brackish lagoons, reedbeds, and seasonally flooded coastal meadows) representative for the Boreal Biogeographical Region.

- Criterion 2 : Rare species and threatened ecological communities

- Criterion 3 : Biological diversity

Justification	It is of special value for maintaining the genetic and ecological diversity of a region because of the quality and peculiarities of its flora and fauna. It regularly supports substantial numbers of individuals from particular groups of waterfowl, indicative of wetland values, productivity or diversity.
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- Criterion 4 : Support during critical life cycle stage or in adverse conditions

- Criterion 5 : >20,000 waterbirds

Overall waterbird numbers	20,000
Start year	2013
Source of data:	state monitoring

- Criterion 6 : >1% waterbird population

- Criterion 8 : Fish spawning grounds, etc.

Justification	It is an important spawning ground for <i>Coregonus lavaretus</i> and <i>Leuciscus idus</i> .
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#### 3.2 - Plant species whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

Scientific name	Common name	Criterion 2	Criterion 3	Criterion 4	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendix I	Other status	Justification
<b>Plantae</b>								
<i>Cochlearia danica</i>	Danish Scurvy-grass	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	VU in Red List of Estonia	Rare for Estonia. Protected (II category)
<i>Cypripedium calceolus</i>	Lady's Slipper Orchid	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	Listed in the Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive	Protected (II category)
<i>Dactylorhiza russowii</i>	Narrow-leaved Marsh-orchid	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	VU in Red List of Estonia	Rare for Estonia. Protected (II category)
<i>Geranium lucidum</i>	Shining Geranium	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	VU in Red List of Estonia	Rare for Estonia. Protected (II category)
<i>Hedera helix</i>	Common Ivy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	EN in Red List of Estonia	Rare for Estonia. Protected (II category)
<i>Hydrocotyle vulgaris</i>	Marsh Pennywort	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	VU in Red Data Book of Estonia	Rare for Estonia. Protected (II category)
<i>Liparis loeselii</i>	Fen Orchid	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	VU in Red List of Estonia, listed in the Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive	Rare for Estonia. Protected (II category)
<i>Rhinanthus osiliensis</i>	Saaremaa Yellow Rattle	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	Listed in the Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive; VU in Red List of Estonia	Endemic species, growing only in some localities. Protected (II category)
<i>Sagina maritima</i>	Sea Pearlwort	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	VU in Red List of Estonia	Rare for Estonia. Protected (II category)
<i>Samolus valerandi</i>	Brookweed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	VU in Red List of Estonia	Rare for Estonia. Protected (II category)
<i>Schoenus nigricans</i>	Black Bog-rush	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	VU in Red List of Estonia	Rare for Estonia. Protected (II category)

Three species (*Liparis loeselii*, *Rhinanthus osiliensis* and *Cypripedium calceolus*) are listed in Annex II of EU habitats Directive. Many species are growing here on their northern or eastern habitat border and are rare in other parts of Estonia.

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

Phylum	Scientific name	Common name	Species qualifies under criterion				Species contributes under criterion				Pop. Size	Period of pop. Est.	% occurrence <sup>1)</sup>	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendix I	CMS Appendix I	Other Status	Justification
			2	4	6	9	3	5	7	8								
<b>Others</b>																		
CHORDATA/ AMPHIBIA	<i>Epidalea calamita</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Annex IV Habitats Directive		
CHORDATA/ MAMMALIA	<i>Halichoerus grypus</i>	Gray Seal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	400	2013-2017		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Annex II Habitats Directive	Criterion 4: one of the most important breeding areas in the Baltic	
<b>Fish, Mollusc and Crustacea</b>																		
CHORDATA/ ACTINOPTERYGII	<i>Coregonus lavaretus</i>	Baltic whitefish	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				VU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
CHORDATA/ ACTINOPTERYGII	<i>Leuciscus idus</i>	Golden orfe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
<b>Birds</b>																		
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	Ruddy Turnstone	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	10	2013-2017		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	EN in Red List of Estonia	breeding (10-15 pairs)	

Phylum	Scientific name	Common name	Species qualifies under criterion				Species contributes under criterion				Pop. Size	Period of pop. Est.	% occurrence 1)	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendix I	CMS Appendix I	Other Status	Justification
			2	4	6	9	3	5	7	8								
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Aythya marila</i>	Greater Scaup	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3100	2013-2017	1	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	CR in Estonian Red List of Estonia	Criterion 6: Biogeographical region: Northern Europe/Western Europe Criterion 2: CR status
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Branta leucopsis</i>	Barnacle Goose	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7700	2013-2017	1	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Annex I of EU Birds Directive	Criterion 6: Biogeographical region: Russia/Germany & Netherlands
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Bubo bubo</i>	Eurasian Eagle-Owl	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	2013-2017		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix I of EU Birds Directive	breeding (2 pairs)
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Calidris alpina schinzii</i>	Dunlin	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	2013-2017			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix I of EU Birds Directive; EN in Red List of Estonia	Breeding (3-7 pairs). Rare in Estonia
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	Western Marsh Harrier	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	2013-2017		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix I of EU Birds Directive	breeding (2-3 pairs)
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Crex crex</i>	Common Crane	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	20	2013-2017		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix I of EU Birds Directive	breeding (20-30) pairs
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Cygnus columbianus</i>	Tundra Swan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	30	2013-2017		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix I of EU Birds Directive; VU in Red List of Estonia	stop-over migration (30 ind)
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	Whooper Swan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	50	2013-2017		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix I of EU Birds Directive	stop-over migration (about 50 ind); breeding (1-2 pairs)
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Grus grus</i>	Common Crane	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	900	2013-2017	1	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix I of EU Birds Directive	Criterion 6: Biogeographical region: North-east & Central Europe/North Africa; also breeding (20-30 pairs)
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>	White-tailed Eagle	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	2013-2017		LC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Appendix I of EU Birds Directive	Breeding (4-7 pairs). One of the most important sites in Estonia for strongly protected species (I category)
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Hydrocoloeus minutus</i>	Little Gull	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	2013-2017		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	VU in Red List of Estonia	breeding (3-15 pairs)
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>	Caspian Tern	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	2013-2017		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix I of EU Birds Directive; VU in Red List of Estonia	breeding (3-6 pairs)
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Lanius collurio</i>	Red-backed Shrike	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	70	2013-2017		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix I of EU Birds Directive	breeding (70-80 pairs)
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	15	2013-2017		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	VU in Red List of Estonia	Breeding (15-30 pairs)
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Polysticta stelleri</i>	Steller's Eider	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2500	2013-2017	9	VU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	EN in Red List of Estonia	Criterion 6: Biogeographical region: Western Siberia/North-east Europe; wintering (2500 ind); stop-over migration
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Porzana porzana</i>	Spotted Crake	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	10	2013-2017		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix I of EU Birds Directive	breeding (5-15 pairs)
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	Pied Avocet	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	30	2013-2017		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix I of EU Birds Directive	breeding (30 pairs)
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	Common Tern	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	100	2013-2017		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix I of EU Birds Directive	breeding (100-200 pairs)
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>	Little Tern	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	10	2013-2017		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix I of EU Birds Directive	breeding (10-20 pairs)

1) Percentage of the total biogeographic population at the site

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

Name of ecological community	Community qualifies under Criterion 2?	Description	Justification
limestone pavements 8240*	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Annex I of the Habitats Directive
Sandbanks which are slightly covered by seawater 1110	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Annex I of the Habitats Directive
mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide 1140	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Annex I of the Habitats Directive
large shallow inlets and bays 1160	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Annex I of the Habitats Directive
reefs 1170	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Annex I of the Habitats Directive
annual vegetation of drift lines 1210	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Annex I of the Habitats Directive
perennial vegetation of stony banks 1220	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Annex I of the Habitats Directive
Salicornia and other annuals colonizing mud and sand 1310	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Annex I of the Habitats Directive
boreal Baltic islets and small islands 1620	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Annex I of the Habitats Directive
hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with bentic vegetation of Chara spp. 3140	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Annex I of the Habitats Directive
calcareous fens with Cladium mariscus and species of the Caricion davallianae 7210*	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Annex I of the Habitats Directive
alkaline fens 7230	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Annex I of the Habitats Directive
coastal lagoons 1150*	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Annex I of the Habitats Directive
Fennoscandian mineral-rich springs and spring-fens 7160	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Annex I of the Habitats Directive
boreal Baltic coastal meadows 1630*	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Annex I of the Habitats Directive

[Optional text box to provide further information](#)

Management planning and activities in protected sites are based on habitat types listed in Annex I of the Habitats Directive. 15 wetland habitat types have been described in Vilsandi site.



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

### 4.1 - Ecological character

Being a varied coastal landscape with an archipelago, the area consists of 32% of land and 68% of water. This is the richest area in small islands of Estonia. Main habitat types include shallow bays, coastal meadows, reed beds, sand dunes, brackish and freshwater relict lakes. Other inland habitats include forests (coniferous, sparse coniferous, mixed and deciduous), bushland, alvar-like lands, crops, bare fields, grasslands and pastures. Along the coast and islets, there are narrow strips of coastal meadows being under the direct influence of the sea water (total area approximately 705 hectares). These semi-natural communities need regular management (mowing or grazing) to survive. Of mire habitats, calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus* and species of the *Caricion davallianae* are characteristic.

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

#### Marine or coastal wetlands

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	11896	Representative
D: Rocky marine shores		0	71	Representative
E: Sand, shingle or pebble shores		4	272	Representative
H: Intertidal marshes		2	1754	Representative
J: Coastal brackish / saline lagoons		0	258	Representative

#### 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 >> M: Permanent rivers/ streams/ creeks		0		Representative
Fresh water > Marshes on inorganic soils >> Tp: Permanent freshwater marshes/ pools		0	52	Representative
Fresh water > Marshes on inorganic soils >> Ts: Seasonal/ intermittent freshwater marshes/ pools on inorganic soils		0	25	Representative
Fresh water > Marshes on peat soils >> U: Permanent Non-forested peatlands		0	13	Representative
Fresh water > Marshes on inorganic soils >> W: Shrub-dominated wetlands		3	803	
Fresh water > Marshes on inorganic soils >> Xf: Freshwater, tree-dominated wetlands		0	54	
Fresh water > Marshes on peat soils >> Xp: Permanent Forested peatlands		0	14	Representative

#### Human-made wetlands

Wetland types (code and name)	Local name	Ranking of extent (1: greatest - 4: least)	Area (ha) of wetland type
2: Ponds		0	
9: Canals and drainage channels or ditches		0	

#### Other non-wetland habitat

Other non-wetland habitats within the site	Area (ha) if known
Coniferous, mixed and deciduous forests, bushland, alvar-like lands, crops, bare fields, grasslands and pastures	

## 4.3 - Biological components

### 4.3.1 - Plant species

#### Other noteworthy plant species

Scientific name	Common name	Position in range / endemism / other
<i>Cephalanthera longifolia</i>	Narrow-leaved Helleborine	rare for Estonia
<i>Cephalanthera rubra</i>	Red Helleborine	rare for Estonia
<i>Cladium mariscus</i>	Saw-sedge	rare for Estonia
<i>Herminium monorchis</i>	Musk Orchid	rare for Estonia
<i>Orchis mascula</i>	Early-purple Orchid	rare for Estonia
<i>Orchis militaris</i>	Military Orchid	rare for Estonia
<i>Pinguicula alpina</i>	Alpine Butterwort	rare for Estonia
<i>Suaeda maritima</i>	Herbaceous Seepweed	rare for Estonia

Optional text box to provide further information

Maritime climate, thin limey soils, mixed habitat pattern and various modes of dissemination are all contributing factors to species-rich vegetation. About one third of the 520 vascular plant species recorded here are rare and protected in Estonia. These include species of coastal meadows (*Schoenus nigricans*, *Suaeda maritima*, *Artemisia maritima*, *Carex extensa*, *Spergularia media*, *Sagina maritima*), species connected to coasts (*Eryngium maritimum*, *Cochlearia danica*, *Asplenium ruta-muraria*, *Lathyrus maritimus*), species of mire habitats (*Cladium mariscus*, endemic *Rhinanthus rumelicus* subsp. *osiliensis*, *Dactylorhiza cruenta*, *Dactylorhiza russowii*, *Pinguicula alpina*, *Liparis loeselii*), species of shores (*Hydrocotyle vulgaris*, *Samolus valerandi*, *Berula erecta*).

Additionally several orchid species such as *Cypripedium calceolus*, *Cephalanthera longifolia*, *C. rubra*, *Callorhiza trifida*, *Herminium monorchis*, *Orchis mascula*, *Orchis morio* and *Orchis militaris* can be mentioned.

#### 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
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Anas clypeata</i>	Northern Shoveler	30	2013-2017		breeding
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Anas crecca</i>	Green-winged Teal; Eurasian Teal	10	2013-2017		breeding
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Mallard	100	2013-2017		breeding
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Anas strepera</i>	Gadwall	40	2013-2017		breeding
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Anser anser</i>	Greylag Goose	2000	2013-2017		stop-over migration
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	Tufted Duck	50	2013-2017		breeding
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>	Common Goldeneye	3000	2013-2017		wintering
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>	Oldsquaw; Long-tailed Duck	330	2013-2017		stop-over migration
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	Mute Swan	3500	2013-2017		stop-over migration
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Larus canus</i>	Mew Gull	300	2013-2017		breeding
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Limosa limosa</i>	Black-tailed Godwit	3	2013-2017		breeding
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Melanitta fusca</i>	White-winged Scoter; Velvet Scoter	3	2013-2017		breeding
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>	Black Scoter	240	2013-2017		stop-over migration
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Mergus merganser</i>	Common Merganser	1800	2013-2017		stop-over migration
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Mergus serrator</i>	Red-breasted Merganser	250	2013-2017		stop-over migration
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>	Common eEder	2000	2013-2017		breeding
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>	Arctic Tern	100	2013-2017		breeding
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	Common Shelduck	20	2013-2017		breeding
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	Common Redshank	90	2013-2017		breeding
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	Northern Lapwing	60	2013-2017		breeding

Optional text box to provide further information

In total, 247 species of bird have been recorded, 114 species of that are breeding birds. Numerous bare small islets are the home for 7000 to 8000 pairs of seabirds, the seagulls and terns are especially abundant. Many birds stop on spring and autumn migration to rest and feed here, among them thousands of Barnacle geese. The most numerous winterers are the Steller's Eiders. Four to six pairs of White-tailed Eagles nest but around twenty birds gather to feed here in the winter. Breeding species of small islets and coastal areas include: *Cygnus olor*, *Anser anser*, *Branta leucopsis*, *Anas crecca*, *Anas platyrhynchos*, *Aythya marila*, *Somateria mollissima*, *Mergus merganser*, *Mergus serrator*, *Recurvirostra avosetta*, *Arenaria interpres* (Vilsandi is one of the top breeding areas in Estonia), *Limosa limosa*, *Sterna hirundo*, *Sterna paradisaea*, *Sterna caspia*, *Sternula albifrons*, etc. Stopover migration: *Cygnus olor*, *Anser anser*, *Branta leucopsis*, *Somateria mollissima*, *Grus grus*, *Cygnus cygnus*, *Aythya marila*. Wintering: *Cygnus olor*, *Polysticta stelleri*, *Bucephala clangula*. The Grey Seal *Halichoerus grypus* is abundant in these waters (about 400 ind) and uses the small islands for breeding (this is one of the most significant breeding areas in the Baltic). Highly endangered and nationally strongly protected (I category) amphibian – the Natterjack Toad *Bufo calamita* (listed in Annex IV, Habitats Directive) is recorded.

#### 4.4 - Physical components

##### 4.4.1 - Climate

Climatic region	Subregion
D: Moist Mid-Latitude climate with cold winters	Dfb: Humid continental (Humid with severe winter, no dry season, warm summer)

The climate being directly influenced by the Baltic Proper is most maritime in Estonia and characterized by a relatively high average annual air temperature (5.8°C), but a rather cool summer and mild winter. The lowest average temperature (-3.5°C) occurs in February, the highest in July (+16°C). The site belongs to the driest areas in Estonia with total annual precipitation amounting to c. 620 mm. When the rest of Estonia can be covered with snow for 120 days a year on average, the corresponding figure here is 93. The average wind speed is relatively high (6.0 meters per second) and storms occur for 40 days every year.

##### 4.4.2 - Geomorphic setting

a) Minimum elevation above sea level (in metres)

a) Maximum elevation above sea level (in metres)

Entire river basin

Upper part of river basin

Middle part of river basin

Lower part of river basin

More than one river basin

Not in river basin

Coastal

Please name the river basin or basins. If the site lies in a sub-basin, please also name the larger river basin. For a coastal/marine site, please name the sea or ocean.

Baltic sea

##### 4.4.3 - Soil

Mineral

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change  Increase  Decrease  Unknown

Organic

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change  Increase  Decrease  Unknown

No available information

Are soil types subject to change as a result of changing hydrological conditions (e.g., increased salinity or acidification)? Yes  No

Please provide further information on the soil (optional)

Main soil types are gravelly soils, limestone rendzina, various podzols.

##### 4.4.4 - Water regime

###### Water permanence

Presence?	Changes at RIS update
Usually permanent water present	

###### Source of water that maintains character of the site

Presence?	Predominant water source	Changes at RIS update
Marine water	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change
Water inputs from surface water	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change

###### Water destination

Presence?	Changes at RIS update
Marine	No change

Stability of water regime

Presence?	Changes at RIS update
Water levels largely stable	No change

4.4.5 - Sediment regime

Sediment regime unknown

4.4.6 - Water pH

Unknown

4.4.7 - Water salinity

Fresh (<0.5 g/l)

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change  Increase  Decrease  Unknown

Mxohaline (brackish)/Mxosaline (0.5-30 g/l)

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change  Increase  Decrease  Unknown

Euhaline/Eusaline (30-40 g/l)

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change  Increase  Decrease  Unknown

Unknown

4.4.8 - Dissolved or suspended nutrients in water

Unknown

4.4.9 - Features of the surrounding area which may affect the Site

Please describe whether, and if so how, the landscape and ecological characteristics in the area surrounding the Ramsar Site differ from the i) broadly similar  ii) significantly different  site itself:

Surrounding area has greater urbanisation or development

Surrounding area has higher human population density

Surrounding area has more intensive agricultural use

Surrounding area has significantly different land cover or habitat types

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)	Low
Wetland non-food products	Reeds and fibre	Medium
Wetland non-food products	Livestock fodder	Medium

Regulating Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Maintenance of hydrological regimes	Groundwater recharge and discharge	Medium
Erosion protection	Soil, sediment and nutrient retention	Medium
Hazard reduction	Coastal shoreline and river bank stabilization and storm protection	Low

Cultural Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Recreation and tourism	Recreational hunting and fishing	Low
Recreation and tourism	Nature observation and nature-based tourism	Medium
Recreation and tourism	Picnics, outings, touring	Medium
Spiritual and inspirational	Cultural heritage (historical and archaeological)	Medium
Spiritual and inspirational	Aesthetic and sense of place values	Medium
Scientific and educational	Educational activities and opportunities	Medium
Scientific and educational	Major scientific study site	Medium
Scientific and educational	Important knowledge systems, importance for research (scientific reference area or site)	Medium
Scientific and educational	Long-term monitoring site	High

Supporting Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Biodiversity	Supports a variety of all life forms including plants, animals and microorganisms, the genes they contain, and the ecosystems of which they form a part	High
Soil formation	Accumulation of organic matter	Medium
Soil formation	Sediment retention	Low
Nutrient cycling	Storage, recycling, processing and acquisition of nutrients	Medium
Pollination	Support for pollinators	Low

Within the site:

Outside the site:

Have studies or assessments been made of the economic valuation of ecosystem services provided by this Ramsar Site? Yes  No  Unknown

#### 4.5.2 - Social and cultural values

i) the site provides a model of wetland wise use, demonstrating the application of traditional knowledge and methods of management and use that maintain the ecological character of the wetland

ii) the site has exceptional cultural traditions or records of former civilizations that have influenced the ecological character of the wetland

iii) the ecological character of the wetland depends on its interaction with local communities or indigenous peoples

Description if applicable

**Coastal and other meadow management and maintenance in the national park depends on local farmers. Mowing and grazing is needed to maintain semi-natural habitats.**

iv) relevant non-material values such as sacred sites are present and their existence is strongly linked with the maintenance of the ecological character of the wetland

#### 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

##### Public ownership

Category	Within the Ramsar Site	In the surrounding area
National/Federal government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Local authority, municipality, (sub)district, etc.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

##### Private ownership

Category	Within the Ramsar Site	In the surrounding area
Other types of private/individual owner(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

#### 5.1.2 - Management authority

Please list the local office / offices of any agency or organization responsible for managing the site:

Environmental Board, Lääne region

Provide the name and/or title of the person or people with responsibility for the wetland:

Kadri Hänni, leading specialist of nature conservation

Postal address:

Roheline tee 64  
80010 Pärnu

E-mail address:

kadri.hanni@keskkonnaamet.ee

## 5.2 - Ecological character threats and responses (Management)

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

#### Transportation and service corridors

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Shipping lanes		unknown impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change

#### Human intrusions and disturbance

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Unspecified/others	Medium impact	Medium impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change
Recreational and tourism activities	Low impact	Low impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change

#### Pollution

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Industrial and military effluents	Medium impact	Medium impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change

Please describe any other threats (optional):

The main threat would be oil-spill from the passing ships. Human disturbance of birds during breeding time.

#### 5.2.2 - Legal conservation status

##### Global legal designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
UNESCO Biosphere Reserve	West Estonian Archipelago Biosphere Reserve		whole

##### Regional (international) legal designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
EU Natura 2000	Vilsandi, Tagamõisa		whole

##### National legal designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
National Park	Vilsandi National Park		whole

Non-statutory designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
Important Bird Area	Vilsandi archipelago		whole

5.2.3 - IUCN protected areas categories (2008)

- Ia Strict Nature Reserve
- Ib 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
- VI 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

Habitat

Measures	Status
Habitat manipulation/enhancement	Partially implemented

Species

Measures	Status
Threatened/rare species management programmes	Partially implemented

Human Activities

Measures	Status
Research	Implemented
Communication, education, and participation and awareness activities	Implemented
Fisheries management/regulation	Implemented

5.2.5 - Management planning

Is there a site-specific management plan for the site? Yes

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

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

Please indicate if a Ramsar centre, other educational or visitor facility, or an educational or visitor programme is associated with the site:

The national park visitor’s centre is located in Loona Manor house on Saaremaa Island. Visiting management is the responsibility of the State Forest Management Centre (RMK). Guided tours are organised.  
There is a biological station on Vilsandi Island with facilities for school visits, for students and for scientific workers.

5.2.6 - Planning for restoration

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

Further information

No need for special site-specific restoration plan. All restoration activities are included to the site management plan.

#### 5.2.7 - Monitoring implemented or proposed

Monitoring	Status
Animal community	Implemented
Animal species (please specify)	Implemented
Birds	Implemented
Plant community	Implemented
Plant species	Implemented

The main international projects are: International co-operative programme on integrated monitoring on air pollution effects - with a station since 1994, EMEP station; project group for moth monitoring in the Nordic countries since 1994. Local projects: in the frame of state monitoring 22 programs or subprograms are implemented. Different environmental parameters and aspects are monitored in 127 monitoring stations or monitoring points (incl long-term monitoring of the breeding, migrating and wintering waterfowl since 1910; monitoring of seals, beaver and otter, monitoring of coastal landscapes, etc.)



## 6 - Additional material

### 6.1 - Additional reports and documents

#### 6.1.1 - Bibliographical references

Kullapere, A. (ed.) 1983. Vilsandi - nature reserve in the western coast of Estonia. Tallinn, "Valgus", 100 p. (in Estonian, with English summaries).  
Geological excursion to the Saaremaa Island. Intern. Meeting. Tallinn, 1989.  
Flora and vegetation of Saaremaa Island. Estonian Academy of Science, Tartu, 1990.  
Leito, A. 1996. Bird watching localities in Estonia. Tartu, 36 p.  
Nisell, J. et al., 1995. Mapping of the Environment of Vilsandi National Park from satellite imagery. Uppsala.  
Pikner, T. 2008. Vilsandi rahvusparki olulised orhidee leiukohad (Orchids of the Vilsandi Island). Manuscript.

#### 6.1.2 - Additional reports and documents

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

<no file available>

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

<no file available>

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

<no file available>

iv. relevant Article 3.2 reports

<no file available>

v. site management plan

<no file available>

vi. other published literature

<1 file(s) uploaded>

#### 6.1.3 - Photograph(s) of the Site

Please provide at least one photograph of the site:



Vilsandi ( *Herald Fridolin, 22-08-2010* )

#### 6.1.4 - Designation letter and related data

Designation letter

<1 file(s) uploaded>

Date of Designation