Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS)

Categories approved by Recommendation 4.7, as amended by Resolution VIII.13 of the Conference of the Contracting Parties.

Note for compilers:
1. The RIS should be completed in accordance with the attached *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines for completing the Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands*. Compilers are strongly advised to read this guidance before filling in the RIS.

2. Once completed, the RIS (and accompanying map(s)) should be submitted to the Ramsar Bureau. Compilers are strongly urged to provide an electronic (MS Word) copy of the RIS and, where possible, digital copies of maps.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY.
DD MM YY
Designation date Site Reference Number

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

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2. Date this sheet was completed/updated:

January 2005

3. Country:

Finland

4. Name of the Ramsar site:

Kainuunkylä Islands

5. Map of site included:
Refer to Annex III of the Explanatory Note and Guidelines, for detailed guidance on provision of suitable maps.

a) hard copy (required for inclusion of site in the Ramsar List): Yes.

b) digital (electronic) format (optional): Yes.

6. Geographical coordinates (latitude/longitude):

66°12' N / 23°44' E

7. General location:
Include in which part of the country and which large administrative region(s), and the location of the nearest large town.

The unbroken area is situated in southwestern part of the province of Lapland, in the municipality of Ylitornio, 8 km south of Ylitornio village and 40 km north of Tornio city. The area is restricted to Sweden in the west. The municipality (2 023 sq.km of land) has ca. 5 500 residents. Tornio city (1 183 sq.km of land) has ca. 22 600 residents.

8. Elevation: (average and/or max. & min.)

45–0 m, mean 2 m.

9. Area: (in hectares)

1 005 ha

10. Overview:
Provide a short paragraph giving a summary description of the principal ecological characteristics and importance of the wetland.

The site represents the most extensive area of alluvial meadows in Finland and the largest pool in River Tornionjoki. The breeding and migrating wetland bird fauna is valuable.

11. Ramsar Criteria:
Circle or underline each Criterion applied to the designation of the Ramsar site. See Annex II of the *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines* for the Criteria and guidelines for their application (adopted by Resolution VII.11).

1, 2, 4 & 8

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

12. Justification for the application of each Criterion listed in 11. above:
Provide justification for each Criterion in turn, clearly identifying to which Criterion the justification applies (see Annex II for guidance on acceptable forms of justification).

1) A rare example of a natural wetland type (river wetlands) in the EU Boreal region. It includes the wetland types 3210 Fennoscandian natural rivers and 6450 Northern boreal alluvial meadows of the EU Habitats Directive Annex I

2) 1 nationally threatened fish species.
Eight species of the EU Birds Directive Annex I breed in the area, of which the most common is Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*) with 25 pairs. Scarce species include Smew (*Mergus albellus*), Hen Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*), Red-necked Phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus*), Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*), Arctic Tern (*S. paradisaea*), and Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*).

4) The breeding and migrating wetland bird fauna is valuable. The breeding waterfowl includes ca. 160 pairs of 11–13 species, and the breeding waders ca. 140 pairs of 10–12 species. The pool area of the river is an important staging place during migration and moulting periods.

8) River Tornionjoki is the most important reproductive area of Salmon (*Salmo salar*) (EN in Finnish Red List) of the Baltic Sea in Finland.

13. Biogeography (required when Criteria 1 and/or 3 and /or certain applications of Criterion 2 are applied to the designation):
Name the relevant biogeographic region that includes the Ramsar site, and identify the biogeographic regionalisation system that has been applied.

a) biogeographic region:

Middle boreal forest vegetation zone.

b) biogeographic regionalisation scheme (include reference citation):

Etelä-Suomen ja Pohjanmaan metsien suojelun tarve-työryhmä. Puheenjohtaja: Ruuhijärvi, R., Sihteerit: Kuusinen, M., Raunio, A. and Eisto, K. 2000. Metsien suojelun tarve Etelä-Suomessa ja Pohjanmaalla. Etelä-Suomen ja Pohjanmaan metsien suojelun tarve-työryhmän mietintö. Suomen ympäristö 437. Ympäristöministeriö. Helsinki.

Working group on the need for forest protection in southern Finland and Ostrobothnia. Chairman Ruuhijärvi, R., Secretaries Kuusinen, M., Raunio, A. and Eisto, K. 2000. Forest protection in southern Finland and Ostrobothnia. The Finnish Environment 437. Ministry of the Environment.

14. Physical features of the site:
Describe, as appropriate, the geology, geomorphology; origins - natural or artificial; hydrology; soil type; water quality; water depth, water permanence; fluctuations in water level; tidal variations; downstream area; general climate, etc.

Geology: Geochemically included in Svecokarelian schist belt. Bedrock is composed of quartzmonzodiorite, quartz monzonite and granodiorite, mica schist, black schist, conglomerate and arkosite.
Origins: Natural
Soil type: Fluvial gravel, sand and silt.
Water quality: General quality good. Mesotrophic.
Depth of water: Water-level high in spring because of melting snow. Islands nearly covered by water during flood peaks in May–June.
Climate: Duration of growing season ca. 135 days, mean annual temperature ca. +1 ºC, mean annual rainfall ca. 550 mm. Ice- and snow-covered normally from mid November to early May. Middle boreal forest vegetation zone.

15. Physical features of the catchment area:
Describe the surface area, general geology and geomorphological features, general soil types, general land use, and climate (including climate type).

The climate and general geological features are much the same in the catchment areas as in the Ramsar sites. Look partly chapter 14. Data not available.

16. Hydrological values:
Describe the functions and values of the wetland in groundwater recharge, flood control, sediment trapping, shoreline stabilization, etc.

None significant.

17. Wetland Types

a) presence:
Circle or underline the applicable codes for the wetland types of the Ramsar "Classification System for Wetland Type" present in the Ramsar site. Descriptions of each wetland type code are provided in Annex I of the *Explanatory Notes & Guidelines*.

Marine/coastal:

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	Zk(a)

Inland: Ts, W & M + N, Xf

L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	Sp	Ss	Tp	Ts	U	Va	Vt	W	Xf	Xp	Y	Zg	Zk(b)

Human-made:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Zk(c)

b) dominance:
List the wetland types identified in a) above in order of their dominance (by area) in the Ramsar site, starting with the wetland type with the largest area.

Ts – Seasonally flooded meadows
M – Permanent rivers and streams
N – Seasonal streams
W – Shrub-dominated wetlands
Xf – Seasonally flooded forests

18. General ecological features:
Provide further description, as appropriate, of the main habitats, vegetation types, plant and animal communities present in the Ramsar site.

The area is situated in the middle of River Tornionjoki, in place where the river is divided into numerous small tributaries. The area includes ca. 300 ha of water. Ca. 15 islands form an extensive area of alluvial meadows. The meadow vegetation is very diverse but aquatic vegetation is scarse. Sedge (*Carex* spp.) meadows are extensive near the waterline, where the dominant species are Water Sedge (*C. aquatilis*) and

Slender Tufted-sedge (*C. acuta*). Further from the shoreline the dominant meadow species are e.g. Reed Canary-grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*), Purple Small-reed (*Calamagrostis canescens*) and Tufted Hair-grass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*). Also areas of e.g. Meadow Sweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*) and Common Meadow-rue (*Thalictrum flavum*) occur in drier places. In central areas the vegetation becomes bushy and partly forested on the largest islands.

19. Noteworthy flora:

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 12. Justification for the application of the Criteria) indicating, e.g., which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc. ***Do not include here taxonomic lists of species present - these may be supplied as supplementary information to the RIS.***

The vascular plant species include some rarities, of which Almond-leaved Willow (*Salix triandra*) (NT in Finnish Red List) is common in the area.

20. Noteworthy fauna:

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 12. Justification for the application of the Criteria) indicating, e.g., which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc., including count data. ***Do not include here taxonomic lists of species present - these may be supplied as supplementary information to the RIS.***

8 species of the EU Birds Directive Annex I breed in the area, of which the most common is Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*) with 25 pairs. Scarce species include Smew (*Mergus albellus*), Hen Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*), Red-necked Phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus*), Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*), Arctic Tern (*S. paradisaea*), and Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*).
The breeding waterfowl includes ca. 160 pairs of 11–13 species, and the breeding waders ca. 140 pairs of 10–12 species. The pool area of the river is an important staging place during migration and moulting periods.

21. Social and cultural values:

e.g., fisheries production, forestry, religious importance, archaeological sites, social relations with the wetland, etc. Distinguish between historical/archaeological/religious significance and current socio-economic values.

The valley of River Tornionjoki is a nationally important landscape area. The site includes a nationally important traditional rural biotope (109 ha). "Traditional rural biotope" is a synonym for a group of biotopes as semi-natural grassland, wooded pastures and grazed forests. (They are the most important areas for biodiversity in the agricultural landscape and also unreplaceable for the cultural heritage. They are classified as nationally, provincially or locally valuable. Most of these areas are very small. Most valuable areas are threatened because of e.g. overgrowing and enrichment caused by fertilization.)
Significant values also include recreation fishing.

22. Land tenure/ownership:

(a) within the Ramsar site:

Private ownerships and the state (49 %).

(b) in the surrounding area: Private-owned and state-owned.

23. Current land (including water) use:
(a) within the Ramsar site:

a) and **b)** Fishing in a wide area along the river.

(b) in the surroundings/catchment:

24. Factors (past, present or potential) adversely affecting the site's ecological character, including changes in land (including water) use and development projects:

Overgrowing because of the cessation of grazing and hay cutting. Some natural erosion occurs of course.

25. Conservation measures taken:
List national category and legal status of protected areas, including boundary relationships with the Ramsar site; management practices; whether an officially approved management plan exists and whether it is being implemented.

The site is included in the Natura 2000 Network, designated both as SPA and SCI. The area is included in the Waterfowl Habitats Conservation Programme.

26. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:
e.g. management plan in preparation; official proposal as a legally protected area, etc.

Conservation of the Natura 2000 site will be carried out under the Nature Conservation Act, Land Use and Building Act and Water Act.

27. Current scientific research and facilities:
e.g., details of current research projects, including biodiversity monitoring; existence of a field research station, etc.

The breeding bird fauna was surveyed in the 1970s, 1980, 1984 and 1997. The vegetation was surveyed during the 1990s.

28. Current conservation education:
e.g. visitors' centre, observation hides and nature trails, information booklets, facilities for school visits, etc.

None significant.

29. Current recreation and tourism:
State if the wetland is used for recreation/tourism; indicate type(s) and their frequency/intensity.

Licensed recreation fishing is popular in a wide area along the river.

30. Jurisdiction:

Include territorial, e.g. state/region, and functional/sectoral, e.g. Dept of Agriculture/Dept. of Environment, etc.

a) Lapland Regional Environment Centre, **b)** Ministry of the Environment.

31. Management authority:

Provide the name and address of the local office(s) of the agency(ies) or organisation(s) directly responsible for managing the wetland. Wherever possible provide also the title and/or name of the person or persons in this office with responsibility for the wetland.

Lapland Regional Environment Centre, PO Box 8060, FIN-96101 Rovaniemi, Finland.

32. Bibliographical references:

scientific/technical references only. If biogeographic regionalisation scheme applied (see 13 above), list full reference citation for the scheme.

Leivo, M., Asanti, T., Koskimies, P., Lammi, E., Lampolahti, J., Mikkola-Roos, M. & Virolainen, E. 2002. Suomen tärkeät lintualueet FINIBA. BirdLife Suomen julkaisuja 4, Suomen graafiset palvelut, Kuopio.

Räinä, P., Jokimäki, J. & Kaisanlahti-Jokimäki, M-L. 2000. Lapin lintuvedet – linnusto, tila ja suojelu. Alueelliset ympäristöjulkaisut 94. Lapin ympäristökeskus. (English summary: The Waterfowl Habitats of Lapland – Bird Life, State and Protection).

Rassi, P., Alanen, A., Kanerva, T. & Mannerkoski, I. (eds.) 2001. The 2000 Red List of Finnish Species. Ministry of the Environment & Finnish Environment Institute, Helsinki.

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