

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:

Lakes Aittojärvi and Kongasjärvi

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):

65° 16' N / 26° 54' 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 two separate areas are situated in northern part of the province of Oulu, in the municipality of Pudasjärvi, 5–10 km south of Pudasjärvi village. The distance between the areas is 6 km. The municipality (5 646 sq.km of land) has ca. 10 000 residents.

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

125–107 m, mean 112 m.

9. Area: (in hectares)

703 ha

10. Overview:

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

The lakes are important areas for waterfowl and waders in the periods of breeding, molting and migration.

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

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	3	<u>4</u>	5	6	7	8
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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) The shallow freshwater lakes are a representative example of a near-natural wetland type in the EU Boreal region.
- 2) Between 13 to 17 species of the EU Birds Directive Annex I breed in the area, including e.g. Whooper Swan (*Cygnus cygnus*), Smew (*Mergus albellus*), Hen Harrier (*C. cyaneus*), Crane (*Grus grus*), Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*), Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*) and Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*). Mammals of the EU Habitats Directive Annex II include Otter (*Lutra lutra*) at Kongasjärvi.
- 4) The breeding waterfowl at Lakes Aittojärvi and Kongasjärvi includes about 150 pairs of 10 species and the breeding waders ca. 70 pairs of 10 species. The lakes are important staging areas for waterfowl and waders during migration periods, especially for several hundreds of Whooper Swans in autumn and Wood

Sandpipers and Ruffs in spring. The number of staging Whooper Swans (*Cygnus cygnus*) varies: 200–1200 individuals in autumn in single counts.

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 Archaean basement gneiss area. Bedrock is composed mainly of tonalite-trondhjemite-granodioritic gneiss and migmatite.

Origins: Natural

Soil type: Peat, glacial ground moraine and glacial gravel and sand.

Water quality: General quality satisfactory. Eutrophic.

Depth of water: Shallow. Water-level high in spring because of melting snow.

Climate: Duration of growing season ca. 140 days, mean annual temperature ca. +1 °C, mean annual rainfall ca. 600 mm. Ice- and snow-covered normally from mid November to late April. 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.

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)
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Inland: O, M, Ts, Xp, W & Xf

L	<u>M</u>	N	<u>Q</u>	P	Q	R	Sp	Ss	Tp	<u>Ts</u>	U	Va	Vt	<u>W</u>	<u>Xf</u>	<u>Xp</u>	Y	Zg	Zk(b)
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Human-made:

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

O – Permanent freshwater lakes

Ts – Seasonally flooded meadows and sedge marshes

W – Shrub-dominated wetlands

Xf – Seasonally flooded forests

Xp – Forested peatlands

M – Permanent rivers and streams

18. General ecological features:

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

Aittojärvi covers 342 ha and Kongasjärvi 361 ha. The area includes ca. 400 ha of mires and ca. 270 ha of water. The lakes are very shallow with extensive vegetation zones. The growths of Water Horsetail (*Equisetum fluviatile*) and sedge (*Carex* spp.) meadows are very extensive. The shores of Kongasjärvi are swampy in most places.

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.**

None significant.

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.*

13–17 species of the EU Birds Directive Annex I breed in the area, including e.g. Whooper Swan (*Cygnus cygnus*), Smew (*Mergus albellus*), Hen Harrier (*C. cyaneus*), Crane (*Grus grus*), Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*), Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*) and Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*). The breeding waterfowl includes ca. 150 pairs of 10 species and the breeding waders ca. 70 pairs of 10 species. The lakes are important staging areas for waterfowl and waders during migration periods, especially for several hundreds of Whooper Swans in autumn and Wood Sandpipers and Ruffs in spring. Mammals of the EU Habitats Directive Annex II include Otter (*Lutra lutra*) at Kongasjärvi.

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 site includes a part of a locally important traditional rural biotope (16 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.)

22. Land tenure/ownership:

(a) within the Ramsar site:

Private-owned.

(b) in the surrounding area:

Private-owned

23. Current land (including water) use:

(a) within the Ramsar site:

Hunting of waterfowl in autumn.

(b) in the surroundings/catchment:

Mainly forestry is carried out in the surroundings.

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

Mires of Aittojärvi have been drained to some extent. Water-level of Kongasjärvi has been lowered earlier and bushes have conquered the alluvial meadows. Overgrowing of both lakes and hunting of waterfowl in autumn affect negatively on the site. American Mink (*Mustela vison*) and Raccoon Dog (*Nyctereutes procyonoides*) may cause damage to the breeding of birds.

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 as SPA, and 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 sites will be carried out under the Nature Conservation 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 waterfowl was surveyed in the 1970s and 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.

A bird-watching tower has been constructed at Aittojärvi.

30. Jurisdiction:

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

a) North Ostrobothnia 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.

North Ostrobothnia Regional Environment Centre, PO Box 124, FIN-90101 Oulu, Finland.

32. Bibliographical references:

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

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.

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.

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