

# 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.

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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:

Riisitunturi National Park

## 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 / 28° 27' 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 nearly unbroken area is situated in southeastern corner of the province of Lapland, in the municipality of Posio, 8 km northeast of Posio village and 50 km west of Russian border. The municipality (3 051 sq.km of land) has ca. 4 600 residents.

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

465–240 m, mean 337 m.

## 9. Area: (in hectares)

12 461 ha

## 10. Overview:

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

The steep and diverse blanket mires form the unique values of Riisitunturi National Park.

Riisitunturi National Park represents the fell and hill landscape of Koillismaa district at its best. The most valuable feature of Riisitunturi Fell are the unique hanging bogs, blanket mires, of the slopes.

## 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) A unique example of natural wetland types (dominated by peatlands) in the EU Boreal region, including 2 priority natural wetland habitat types of the Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive (aapa mires, bog woodland).

2) 1 nationally threatened bird species, 3 nationally threatened vascular plant species. Vascular plants of the EU Habitats Directive Annex II include buttercup species *Ranunculus lapponicus*.

Threatened birds include Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) (VU in Finnish Red List). About 13 species of the EU Bird Directive Annex I breed in the area, of which the most common are Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*) with >100 pairs and Capercaillie (*Tetrao urogallus*) with >50 pairs. Scarce species include e.g. Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*), Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*) and Red-necked Phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus*).

4) 13 species of the EU Bird Directive Annex I breed in the area, of which the most common are Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*) with >100 pairs and Capercaillie (*Tetrao urogallus*) with >50 pairs.

Bird list (Status in Finnish Red List, BD=Birds Directive Annex I, FRS=Finland's Responsibility Species):

Breeding grouses, waders, wetland passerines and/or valuable species (woodpeckers–passerines), pairs, minimum estimation (based on line transect counts): Hazel Grouse (*Bonasa bonasia*) >10 (BD), Willow Grouse (*Lagopus lagopus*) >35, Black Grouse (*Tetrao tetrix*) >80 (NT, BD, FRS), Capercaillie (*Tetrao urogallus*) >120 (NT, BD, FRS), Crane (*Grus grus*) 1 (BD), Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*) >15 (BD), Snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*) >45, Whimbler (*Numenius phaeopus*) >2 (FRS), Spotted Redshank (*Tringa erythropus*) >9 (FRS), Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*) >40 (FRS), Green Sandpiper (*Tringa ochropus*) >14, Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*) >240 (BD, FRS), Cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*) >60 (NT), Wryneck (*Jynx torquilla*) >2 (VU), Three-toed Woodpecker (*Picoides tridactylus*) >15 (NT, BD, FRS), Meadow Pipit (*Anthus pratensis*) >500, Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*) >550, Bluethroat (*Luscinia svecica*) >6 (BD), Whinchat (*Saxicola rubetra*) >15 (NT), Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*) >13 (NT), Siberian Tit (*Parus cinctus*) >45 (NT), Siberian Jay (*Perisoreus infaustus*) >70 (NT, FRS), Pine Grosbeak (*Pinicola enucleator*) >80 (FRS), Rustic Bunting (*Emberiza rustica*) >350, Reed Bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus*) >20.

**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:**

Northern 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 Central Lapland granitoid area. Bedrock is composed mainly of quartzite, arkosite and mica schist.

**Origins:** Natural

**Hydrology:** Aapa mires dependent on ground or surface waters.

**Soil type:** Mainly glacial ground moraine and peat, also bedrock terrain and glacial gravel and sand.

**Water quality:** General quality good or excellent. Oligotrophic–mesotrophic. Ponds and mire waters dystrophic.

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

**Climate:** Duration of growing season ca. 130 days, mean annual temperature ca. –1 °C, mean annual rainfall ca. 550 mm. Ice- and snow-covered normally from late October to mid May. Northern 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.

Virgin aapa mires play an important role in maintenance of water quality and in flood control.

### 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: U, Xp, Tp, M & Y & Xf, O, Ts

L	<u>M</u>	N	<u>Q</u>	P	Q	R	Sp	Ss	<u>Tp</u>	<u>Ts</u>	U	Va	Vt	W	<u>Xf</u>	<u>Xp</u>	<u>Y</u>	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.

- U – Non-forested peatlands
- Xp – Forested peatlands
- Tp – Permanent freshwater pools
- Xf – Seasonally flooded forests
- M – Permanent rivers and streams
- O – Permanent freshwater lakes
- Ts – Seasonal freshwater pools
- Y – Freshwater springs

**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 site represents the Mire vegetation region of Main aapa mires of sloping type. The area includes over 6 700 ha of mires and ca. 100 ha of water. The National Park is located on the watershed of Maanselkä and the climate is very humid affecting the vegetation, which is exceptionally "maritime" and rich. Mires cover one third of the Park, consisting of aapa mires, Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) bogs and spruce swamps. On the banks of numerous brooks and small rivers, and in the lower parts of hill slopes with springs there are luxuriant grass-, hay- and fern-rich spruce swamps. The most peculiar mire types are the well developed and locally very steep and open blanket mires, which form the special value of the area. The area includes nearly one hundred small ponds. The two fells of Riisitunturi rise to above 450 m and eleven other summits rise to above 400 m. The forests, covering most of the Park, are dominated by Spruce (*Picea abies*). Lichen species can be found which are associated with old forms of agriculture and reindeer farming.

The northern part is an area of old-growth spruce-dominated forests (the enlargement of the Park).

**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.***

Threatened vascular plant species (VU in Finnish Red List) include sedge species *Carex heleonastes*, Fragrant Orchid (*Gymnadenia conopsea*) and Marsh Saxifrage (*Saxifraga hirsuculus*). Vascular plants of the EU Habitats Directive Annex II also include buttercup species *Ranunculus lapponicus*.

**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.***

Threatened birds include Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) (VU in Finnish Red List). Ca. 13 species of the EU Bird Directive Annex I breed in the area, of which the most common are Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*) with >100 pairs and Capercaillie (*Tetrao urogallus*) with >50 pairs. Scarce species include e.g. Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*), Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*) and Red-necked Phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus*). Finland's responsibility species also include e.g. >70 pairs of Siberian Jays (*Perisoreus infaustus*) and >40 pairs of Pine Grosbeaks (*Pinicola enucleator*). Mammals of the EU Habitats Directive Annex II include Brown Bear (*Ursus arctos*).

## **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.

Significant values include environmental education, scientific research, outdoor recreation and reindeer husbandry. The site includes one provincially (6 ha) and six locally (84 ha) important traditional rural biotopes.

"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: State-owned (99 %).

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

## **23. Current land (including water) use:**

(a) within the Ramsar site:

Reindeer husbandry is an important livelihood in the area. Hunting is permitted for local residents. Picking of mushrooms and berries is permitted.

(b) in the surroundings/catchment:

Reindeer husbandry, forestry, hunting and fishing.

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

Reindeer husbandry and mowing of mire meadows have slightly changed the natural vegetation. Hunting of birds and mammals might have negative effects on the site.

**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 SCI. The mires are partly included in the Mire Conservation Programme and four smaller areas are included in the Programme for the Protection of Old-Growth Forests (1892ha). Riisitunturi National Park (7 644 ha) was established in 1982 and Karitunturi Mire Protection Area (2 078 ha) in 1988. A master plan for the National Park was established in 1987. The use of motor vehicles is prohibited outside the roads.

Forestry, ditching, extraction of earth material and damaging of soil or bedrock are prohibited in the Mire Protection Area. Also construction of new buildings and roads is prohibited in general.

**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 outside the already protected areas will be carried out under the Nature Conservation Act. A management and land use plan for the Mire Protection Area will be established in the near future.

**27. Current scientific research and facilities:**

e.g., details of current research projects, including biodiversity monitoring; existence of a field research station, etc.

The area is an important research site for the Oulanka Biological Station of Oulu University. It is among the most important areas for the research of blanket mires. The mires have been studied since 1919. The breeding bird fauna and flora were surveyed during the 1980s. The volume of bird populations was estimated in 1985–86 and 1992–94 by using line transect censuses. Also studies on mammals and beetles have been carried out since the 1980s.

**28. Current conservation education:**

e.g. visitors' centre, observation hides and nature trails, information booklets, facilities for school visits, etc.

Various educational themes are carried out in the Park, and it functions as an important education site for the Oulanka Biological Station of Oulu University.

**29. Current recreation and tourism:**

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

One wilderness hut, five campfire sites and a network of marked trails (23 km) plus UKK (UKK hiking trail was named after Urho Kaleva Kekkonen (as well as a national park of the same name), the former president of Finland.) hiking trail crossing the area have been constructed in the National Park. Two roads cross the Park. Recreation fishing is licensed. The Park had ca. 7 000 visitors in 2003.

### **30. Jurisdiction:**

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

**a)** Metsähallitus – Forest and Park Service, Natural Heritage Services, Northern Finland, **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.

Metsähallitus – Forest and Park Service, Natural Heritage Services, Northern Finland,  
PO Box 8016, 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.

Jäkäläniemi, A. 1992. Posion Karitunturin soidensuojelun metsäkasvillisuuden kartoituksia. Manuscript. Metsähallitus.

Leivo, M. 2000. Suomen kansainvälisesti tärkeät lintualueet. Linnut-vuosikirja 1999. (English summary: Important Bird Areas in Finland).

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

Metsähallitus 1987. Riisitunturin kansallispuiston runkosuunnitelma. Metsähallitus SU 4:78.

Muona, J., Viramo, J. & Helle, P. 1983. What do beetles tell about the Riisitunturi area? Oulanka Reports 3.

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.

Viramo, J. (toim.) 1986. Riisitunturi – luonto ja tutkimus. Oulangan biologisen aseman monisteita 9.

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