

# 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 updated:

January 2004

## 3. Country:

Finland

## 4. Name of the Ramsar site:

Porvoonjoki Estuary – Stensböle

## 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): 60°21' N / 25°42' 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 the province of Southern Finland, on the coast of the Gulf of Finland, in Porvoo city, 1.5 km south of the city centre. The distance between the areas is 2 km. The city (654 sq.km of land) has ca. 45 000 residents.

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

15 – 0 m

**9. Area:** (in hectares)

958 ha

Note: The area of the site has been reduced; this reduction concerns the forest area between the wetland and Stormossen Mire in the east.

**10. Overview:**

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

The estuary is one of the most valuable wetlands in coastal waters of Southern Finland both for breeding and migrating waterfowl and other wetland bird species. The recreational importance is notable.

**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).

<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 representative example of near-natural wetland types (estuarine waters and peatlands) in the EU Boreal region, including 3 priority natural wetland habitat types (active raised bog, bog woodland, Fennoscandian deciduous swamp woods).

2) Threatened birds (VU in Finnish Red List) include Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*) with ca. 200 pairs and Great Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus arundinaceus*) with ca. 10 pairs. 7 species of the EU Birds Directive Annex I breed in the area, including e.g. Bittern (*Botaurus stellaris*), Marsh Harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*), Corncrake (*Crex*

*crex*, globally VU), Spotted Crake (*Porzana porzana*) and Crane (*Grus grus*). The breeding waterfowl includes ca. 600 pairs of 13 species.

Vascular plants of the EU Habitats Directive Annex II include knotgrass species *Pericaria foliosa* (NT in Finnish Red List).

4) The site is an important staging area for waterfowl and waders during migration periods. The highest daily counts include >2 000 ducks in spring, e.g. up to 150 Smews (*Mergus albellus*). Finland's responsibility species also include e.g. 1 300 Goosanders (*Mergus merganser*) and 1 000 Tufted Ducks (*Aythya fuligula*).

**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:**

Southern 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 South Finland high metamorphic area. Bedrock is composed of microcline and rapakivi granites.

**Origins:** Natural.

**Soil type:** Mainly silt and clay with smaller areas of peat and glacial ground moraine.

**Water quality:** General quality poor. Eutrophic. Salinity 0–3 ‰.

**Depth of water:** Maximum 2 m, mean 1 m. Water-level usually low in spring and high in autumn and winter.

**Climate:** Duration of growing season ca. 170 days, mean annual temperature ca. +4 °C, mean annual rainfall ca. 600 mm. Waters ice-covered normally from December to early April. Southern 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).

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	<u>F</u>	G	<u>H</u>	I	J	K	Zk(a)
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**Inland:**

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

- F – Estuarine waters
- U – Active raised bogs
- Xp – Forested bogs
- H – Brackish alluvial meadows
- 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 estuary includes ca. 720 ha of water. Reed zone is vast especially in Ruskis Protected Area, where Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) dominates with White Water-lily (*Nymphaea alba*). Common Club-rush (*Schoenoplectus lacustris*) is abundant.

Submerged vegetation is scarce. The site also includes meadows, swamp woods, bog woodland and the active raised bog of Stormossen (118 ha).

### **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.***

Near-threatened species in Finland also include e.g. Sweet Woodruff (*Galium odoratum*) and Brooklime (*Veronica beccabunga*).

### **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.***

See information in section 12.

### **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 outdoor recreation and birdwatching.

### **22. Land tenure/ownership:**

(a) within the Ramsar site:

Private-owned. Stormossen Mire is partly state-owned.

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

(a) within the Ramsar site:

Fishing occurs regularly.

b) in the surroundings/catchment:

The estuary is restricted to private protected areas of old-growth and herb-rich forests on the eastern side. The northern parts are restricted to Porvoo city population centre.

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

The estuary has become strongly eutrophicated. Expansion of reedbeds and White Water-lily has diminished open-water areas. Wastewaters of Porvoo city were discharged into

the Protected Area without purification still in the 1970s. The purification measures have improved the water quality, but the hygienic condition is still weak and nutrients still run high in River Porvoonjoki. Many areas of meadows and pastures have overgrown after the cessation of mowing and grazing in the 1960s. The increased outdoor recreation, boating, fishing and building on shores cause disturbance to the birds. 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 both as SPA and SCI. Most of the area is also included in the Waterfowl Habitats Conservation Programme, and Stormossen is included in the Mire Conservation Programme. The wetland is designated as the Baltic Sea Protected Area of Helsinki Commission (HELCOM). Ruskis Protected Area (196 ha) was established in 1945 and enlarged in 1966. Access is prohibited in April–August. Private protected areas, established in the 1990s, include parts of meadows and wetlands (ca. 230 ha) and most (89 ha) of Stormossen Mire.

A restoration and management plan for Ruskis Protected Area (196ha) was established in 1996. Restoration of meadows was carried out in 1997–98 with the help of World Wide Fund. The planning of management was carried out under the EU Life Nature project in 1997–2000, when e.g. new open-water areas were dredged. A general plan for the Natura 2000 area was established in 1999.

#### **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, Water Act and Land Extraction Act. The proposed measures include e.g. restriction of fishing by prohibiting use of fishnets.

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

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

Observation of breeding and migrating waterfowl and waders has been regular since the 1930s. The breeding bird fauna was surveyed in 1989 and 1999. The flora was surveyed in 1987 and 1996. The fish fauna was studied in the 1990s and the water quality of River Porvoonjoki has been studied closely since the 1970s.

#### **28. Current conservation education:**

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

The estuary is an important education site for the schools of Porvoo city.

### **29. Current recreation and tourism:**

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

The estuary is a very popular site for outdoor recreation and birdwatching. Two birdwatching towers and two nature trails have been constructed.

### **30. Jurisdiction:**

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

**a)** Porvoo city; Uusimaa 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.

Porvoo city; Uusimaa Regional Environment Centre, PO Box 36, FIN-00521 Helsinki, Finland. Mr. Ilpo Huolman : [ilpo.huolman@ymparisto.fi](mailto:ilpo.huolman@ymparisto.fi)

### **32. Bibliographical references:**

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

Koskimies, P. 1999. Porvoon Ruskiksen-Stensbölefjärdenin linnusto. Alueelliset ympäristöjulkaisut 142, Uudenmaan ympäristökeskus. (English summary: Bird fauna of the Ruskis–Stensbölefjärden wetland).

Lammi, E. & Nironen, M. 1996. Porvoon Ruskiksen ruovikkoalueen kunnostus- ja hoitosuunnitelma. Porvoon kaupungin ympäristönsuojelutoimiston julkaisuja 5/1996. Enviro Oy.

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 julkaisuja 4, Suomen graafiset palvelut, Kuopio.

Lehtonen, E. & Penttilä, S. (toim.) 1991. Porvoonjoen kuormitusselvitys. Vesi- ja ympäristöhallituksen julkaisuja A 68.

Nironen, M., Bäck, S. & Mäkelä, K. 1987. Porvoon kaupungin rakentamattomien alueiden kasvillisuus. Porvoon kaupungin ympäristölautakunnan julkaisuja 1. Luontotutkimus Enviro Oy.

Tihlman, T. 1999. Porvoonjokisuisto-Stensböle Natura 2000 alue – yleissuunnitelma. Alueelliset ympäristöjulkaisut 144, Uudenmaan ympäristökeskus.

Vesi-Hydro 1995. Porvoon edustan merialueen tarkkailu vuonna 1995. Manuscript. Porvoon kaupunki.

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