

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 Secretariat. Compilers are strongly urged to provide an electronic (MS Word) copy of the RIS and, where possible, digital copies of maps.

1. Name and address of the compiler of this form:**Joint Nature Conservation Committee**

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Designation date

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Site Reference Number

2. Date this sheet was completed/updated:

Designated: 24 July 1981 / updated 12 May 2005

3. Country:

UK (Scotland)

4. Name of the Ramsar site:

Claish Moss

5. Map of site included:

Refer to Annex III of the *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines*, for detailed guidance on provision of suitable maps.

a) hard copy (required for inclusion of site in the Ramsar List): yes -or- no

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

6. Geographical coordinates (latitude/longitude):

56 44 30 N 05 43 50 W

7. General location:

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

Nearest town/city: Fort William

Claish Moss lies between the south shore of Loch Shiel and Ben Resipol, to the east of Acharacle, on the Sunart–Ardnamurchan peninsula in Lochaber.

Administrative region: Highland

8. Elevation (average and/or max. & min.) (metres): **9. Area** (hectares): 568.29

Min. 11
Max. 55
Mean 22

10. Overview:

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

Claish Moss consists of an extensive, linear series of patterned raised mires. Each mire has a pronounced surface pattern consisting of linear ridges following the contours of the mire surface.

The vegetation is very similar to that of western Scottish blanket mire (*Trichophoreto-Eriophoretum*) but unusual floristic elements are well developed. Numerous hummocks of *Racomitrium lanuginosum* occur, especially on islands. Suitable conditions appear to be produced by the local lowering in the water table caused by down-slope coalescing of pool systems. Species diversity within this site is high, with 14 species of *Sphagnum* and nine species of Odonata having been recorded.

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, 3

Secretariat comment: The RIS provides information requiring the application of Criterion 4. This needs to be included in the next update.

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).

Ramsar criterion 1

Claish Moss is one of the best areas of active blanket bog in the United Kingdom. This habitat is restricted in Europe to the UK, Ireland and limited areas of Norway. It is one of only three known examples of `eccentric` mire in Britain.

Ramsar criterion 3

The site supports an outstanding assemblage of 14 *Sphagnum* species and an outstanding assemblage of 9 dragonfly species. Two nationally scarce wetland plants are also supported (brown beak-sedge *Rhynchospora fusca* and bog orchid *Hammarbya paludosa*).

See Sections 19/20 for details of noteworthy species

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:

Atlantic

b) biogeographic regionalisation scheme (include reference citation):

Council Directive 92/43/EEC

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.

Soil & geology	Acidic, peat
Geomorphology and landscape	Upland
Nutrient status	oligotrophic

pH	acidic, strongly acidic
Salinity	fresh
Soil	mainly organic
Water permanence	usually permanent
Summary of main climatic features	Annual averages (Dunstaffnage, 1971–2000) (www.metoffice.com/climate/uk/averages/19712000/sites/dunstaffnage.html) Max. daily temperature: 12.1° C Min. daily temperature: 6.1° C Days of air frost: 29.4 Rainfall: 1660.9 mm Hrs. of sunshine: 1224.0

General description of the Physical Features:

Claish Moss is one of the best examples in Britain of a 'raised' bog that has evolved over the last 8000 years.

The dome-shaped surface holds water up within the peat and a network of pools speckles the bog surface. Claish Moss lies along the southern shore of Loch Shiel, while neighbouring Kentra Moss opens into Kentra Bay. They are representative of a highly oceanic blanket bog type found on the north-west coast of Scotland. These are two of the only three known 'eccentric' mires in Britain. 'Eccentric' bogs are characterised by spectacular surface patterns and are similar in structure to types more commonly found in central Scandinavia, generally as raised bog. The development of this type is very unusual in a blanket bog landscape and is of special interest.

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).

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The dome-shaped surface holds water up within the peat and a network of pools speckles the bog surface. Claish Moss lies along the southern shore of Loch Shiel, while neighbouring Kentra Moss opens into Kentra Bay. They are representative of a highly oceanic blanket bog type found on the north-west coast of Scotland. These are two of the only three known 'eccentric' mires in Britain. 'Eccentric' bogs are characterised by spectacular surface patterns and are similar in structure to types more commonly found in central Scandinavia, generally as raised bog. The development of this type is very unusual in a blanket bog landscape and is of special interest.

16. Hydrological values:

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

No special values known

17. Wetland types

Inland wetland

Code	Name	% Area
U	Peatlands (including peat bogs swamps, fens)	80.1
Other	Other	19.9

18. General ecological features:

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

Claish Moss is representative of a highly oceanic bog type found on the north-west coast of Scotland. It is an example of the very rare 'eccentric' mire form. Blanket bog vegetation is of the M17 type *Scirpus cespitosus*–*Eriophorum vaginatum* blanket mire with frequent bog pools and hummocks of *Sphagnum* and *Racomitrium lanuginosum*. It is divided into three main units by streams flowing into Loch Shiel. There are 14 species of *Sphagnum* recorded from the site and a number of 'Atlantic' bryophytes. Higher plants with a western distribution are well represented, including *Drosera intermedia* and *Rhynchospora fusca*. The assemblage of dragonflies is outstanding (nine species). Breeding birds include some wildfowl and waders restricted to peatland habitats. The site is also used by a wintering flock of Greenland white-fronted geese.

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.*

Assemblage

This site is internationally important for the following Habitats Directive Annex I features:

H7130 Blanket bogs

H7150 Depressions on peat substrates of the *Rhynchosporion*

Nationally important species occurring on the site.

Higher plants.

Hammarbya paludosa, *Rhynchospora fusca*.

Lower plants.

Sphagnum pulchrum, *Sphagnum austinii*

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.*

Species Information

Invertebrates

Northern emerald *Somatochlora arctica*

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.

Environmental education/ interpretation

22. Land tenure/ownership:

Ownership category	On-site	Off-site
National/Crown Estate	+	

23. Current land (including water) use:

Activity	On-site	Off-site
Nature conservation	+	
Commercial forestry		+

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

Explanation of reporting category:

1. Those factors that are still operating, but it is unclear if they are under control, as there is a lag in showing the management or regulatory regime to be successful.
2. Those factors that are not currently being managed, or where the regulatory regime appears to have been ineffective so far.

NA = Not Applicable because no factors have been reported.

Adverse Factor Category	Reporting Category	Description of the problem (Newly reported Factors only)	On-Site	Off-Site	Major Impact?
No factors reported	NA				

For category 2 factors only. What measures have been taken / are planned / regulatory processes invoked, to mitigate the effect of these factors?
Is the site subject to adverse ecological change? NO

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.

Conservation measure	On-site	Off-site
Site/ Area of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI/ASSI)	+	
National Nature Reserve (NNR)	+	
Special Protection Area (SPA)	+	
Site management statement/plan implemented	+	
Other	+	
Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	+	

26. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:

e.g. management plan in preparation; official proposal as a legally protected area, etc.

No information available

27. Current scientific research and facilities:

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

None reported

28. Current conservation education:

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

None reported

29. Current recreation and tourism:

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

Activities, Facilities provided and Seasonality.

Recreational & tourist activities are not significant as the site is not readily accessible. Interpretation is provided at a viewpoint.

30. Jurisdiction:

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

Scottish Executive, Environment and Rural Affairs Department

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.

Scottish Natural Heritage, 2 Anderson Place, Edinburgh, EH6 5NP

32. Bibliographical references:

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

Site-relevant references

Downie, IS & Coulson, JC (1996) *Invertebrate distribution in peatland areas of west Scotland*. Scottish Natural Heritage?, Contract No. NW/S/042/94

Currie, M (1990) *Tree regeneration monitoring on Claish Moss National Nature Reserve*. Nature Conservancy Council.

Green Associates (1995) *A survey of selected blanket mire sites in Scotland, Claish Moss*. Site Report NWR4

McLeod, CR, Yeo, M, Brown, AE, Burn, AJ, Hopkins, JJ & Way, SF (eds.) (2004) *The Habitats Directive: selection of Special Areas of Conservation in the UK*. 2nd edn. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough.
www.jncc.gov.uk/SACselection

Ratcliffe, DA (ed.) (1977) *A Nature Conservation Review. The selection of biological sites of national importance to nature conservation in Britain*. Cambridge University Press (for the Natural Environment Research Council and the Nature Conservancy Council), Cambridge (2 vols.)

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