



Ramsar Information Sheet

Published on 6 July 2022

Update version, previously published on : 11 June 1996

Ireland

Ballycotton Bay



| | |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| Designation date | 7 June 1996 |
| Site number | 830 |
| Coordinates | 51°50'33"N 08°00'58"W |
| Area | 92,00 ha |

Color codes

Fields back-shaded in light blue relate to data and information required only for RIS updates.

Note that some fields concerning aspects of Part 3, the Ecological Character Description of the RIS (tinted in purple), are not expected to be completed as part of a standard RIS, but are included for completeness so as to provide the requested consistency between the RIS and the format of a 'full' Ecological Character Description, as adopted in Resolution X.15 (2008). If a Contracting Party does have information available that is relevant to these fields (for example from a national format Ecological Character Description) it may, if it wishes to, include information in these additional fields.

1 - Summary

Summary

Ballycotton Bay is an east-facing coastal complex situated on the south coast of Co. Cork. The site stretches northwards from Ballycotton to Shanagarry, a distance of c.2 km. The site comprises two sheltered inlets which receive the flows of several small rivers. The southern inlet had formerly been lagoonal (Ballynamona Lagoon) but breaching of the shingle barrier by erosion has led to the habitat becoming estuarine in nature since 1991. The principal habitat within the site is intertidal sand and mudflats, which are mostly well exposed. Saltmarsh and freshwater marsh habitat fringe these flats in the sheltered inlets, while rocky shore (reef) is exposed at low tide in various locations. A small area of shallow marine water is also included. These coastal and marine habitats provide important roosting sites and foraging resources for waterbirds and while relatively small in area, Ballycotton Bay supports an excellent diversity of wintering waterbirds. They coastal habitats at this site also supports Sea Kale (*Crambe maritima*) listed as near threatened in the Irish Red Data Book.

Ballycotton Bay Ramsar site is integral to and situated within the Ballycotton Bay Special Protection Area. The SPA is designated for nationally important populations of regularly occurring migratory waterbirds some of which are listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive. Under this designation the wetland habitat is also protected as it is a resource for the migratory waterbirds that utilise it. According to the I-WeBS data (2010-2015) the site has nationally important populations of five species, of which one, the Golden Plover, is listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive. Ballycotton Bay is also important for wintering gulls. Ballycotton Bay is recognised as an Important Bird Area (IBA) and a Wildfowl Refuge. The site is also a well know location for passage waders, especially in Autumn.

2 - Data & location

2.1 - Formal data

2.1.1 - Name and address of the compiler of this RIS

Responsible compiler

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Institution/agency | National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. |
| Postal address | National Parks and Wildlife Service, 90 North King Street, Smithfield, Dublin, Ireland D07 N7CV |

National Ramsar Administrative Authority

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Institution/agency | National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. |
| Postal address | National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. 90 North King Street, Smithfield, Dublin, Ireland D07 N7CV |

2.1.2 - Period of collection of data and information used to compile the RIS

From year

To year

2.1.3 - Name of the Ramsar Site

Official name (in English, French or Spanish)

Unofficial name (optional)

2.1.4 - Changes to the boundaries and area of the Site since its designation or earlier update

(Update) A. Changes to Site boundary Yes No

(Update) B. Changes to Site area No change to area

(Update) For secretariat only: This update is an extension

2.1.5 - Changes to the ecological character of the Site

(Update) 6b i. Has the ecological character of the Ramsar Site (including applicable Criteria) changed since the previous RIS?

2.2 - Site location

2.2.1 - Defining the Site boundaries

b) Digital map/image
<2 file(s) uploaded>

Former maps

Boundaries description

The boundary of Ballycotton Bay Ramsar site was delineated as the same boundary as the original Special Protection Area in 1994 (but the latter was subsequently enlarged). The site comprises areas of intertidal mudflats and sandflats as the main area of interest for this site. Some additional fringing wetland habitats were also included within the site. The Ramsar site now lies within and is integral to the larger wetland complex which is Ballycotton Bay SPA (Site Code: 4022). Details of the SPA can be found on the NPWS website at <https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites>.

Within this area a number of GIS data layers were used to define the Ramsar habitats within the site. These included:

- CORINE (Co-Ordinated Information on the Environment) land cover data sets (2012).
- Bing Maps Aerial - © Harris Corp, Earthstar Geographics LLC © 2017 Intermap Earthstar Geographics SIO © 2017 Microsoft Corporation.
- Environmental Protection Agency of Ireland Rivers and Lakes layers data layers.
- NPWS data layers (Saltmarsh habitats).

The mapped layers were inspected by a site visit to confirm the presence of the habitats. Habitat areas were subsequently estimated by reference to the available imagery and layers and should be considered representative but approximate.

The mapped area, as calculated from the GIS boundary, differs slightly from the official boundary of the Ramsar site. This is due to historic mapping issues generally as a result of differing mapping projections.

2.2.2 - General location

- a) In which large administrative region does the site lie?
- b) What is the nearest town or population centre?

2.2.3 - For wetlands on national boundaries only

- a) Does the wetland extend onto the territory of one or more other countries? Yes No
- b) Is the site adjacent to another designated Ramsar Site on the territory of another Contracting Party? Yes No

2.2.4 - Area of the Site

- Official area, in hectares (ha):
- Area, in hectares (ha) as calculated from GIS boundaries

2.2.5 - Biogeography

Biogeographic regions

| Regionalisation scheme(s) | Biogeographic region |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Marine Ecoregions of the World (MEOW) | Atlantic |
| EU biogeographic regionalization | Atlantic |

Other biogeographic regionalisation scheme

3 - Why is the Site important?

3.1 - Ramsar Criteria and their justification

- Criterion 1: Representative, rare or unique natural or near-natural wetland types

Hydrological services provided

The estuarine and coastal habitats of Ballycotton Bay provide natural filtration services which are important for coastal water quality, however where input levels (e.g. chemicals, organic waste) are excessive the natural character of the estuary can be greatly affected. The shallow subtidal waters and the coastal and estuarine habitats of Ballycotton Bay are important within the context of coastal erosion control and storm protection.

Other ecosystem services provided

The coastal habitats and the communities (plant and invertebrate) which they support are important for nutrient cycling, carbon sequestration and sediment trapping. With the cycling of carbon and nutrients estuarine systems have a role in climate regulation. The site is important for its diversity of habitats and the plant and animal communities which they support. It is important for biological monitoring; informing conservation assessment and contributing to habitat and species monitoring nationally. It is also important for recreation and tourism.

Other reasons

Ballycotton Bay contains representative and natural examples of coastal habitats and natural wetland types within the Atlantic biogeographic region, i.e. estuaries, tidal mudflats, sandflats and saltmarshes. Combined these habitats provide an interconnected and interdependent mosaic of habitats.

- Criterion 2 : Rare species and threatened ecological communities

- Criterion 3 : Biological diversity

Justification

This site contains a range of coastal habitats which are representative of the biogeographical region and important in maintaining its biological diversity. It includes areas of saltmarsh critical to maintaining the structure and function of the site. In addition, rare migrant birds are dependent on the adjacent reed beds for breeding, roosting or staging, while the saltmarsh habitat provides high tide roosts. The site supports a diversity of waterbirds which rely on the site for feeding and roosting.

- Criterion 4 : Support during critical life cycle stage or in adverse conditions

3.2 - Plant species whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

3.3 - Animal species whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

| Phylum | Scientific name | Species qualifies under criterion | | | | Species contributes under criterion | | | | Pop. Size | Period of pop. Est. | % occurrence ¹⁾ | IUCN Red List | CITES Appendix I | CMS Appendix I | Other Status | Justification |
|--------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|-----------|---------------------|----------------------------|---------------|------------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| | | 2 | 4 | 6 | 9 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 8 | | | | | | | | |
| Birds | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| Phylum | Scientific name | Species qualifies under criterion | | | | Species contributes under criterion | | | | Pop. Size | Period of pop. Est. | % occurrence ¹⁾ | IUCN Red List | CITES Appendix I | CMS Appendix I | Other Status | Justification |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|---------------------|----------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|--|
| | | 2 | 4 | 6 | 9 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 8 | | | | | | | | |
| CHORDATA/ AVES | <i>Anas penelope</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 264 | 2011-2015 | | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Red-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013) | National (BoCCI) classification, part of wintering assemblage |
| CHORDATA/ AVES | <i>Branta bernicla hrota</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 141 | 2011-2015 | | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013) | Part of wintering assemblage, maintaining biodiversity |
| CHORDATA/ AVES | <i>Calidris alpina</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 228 | 2011-2015 | | LC | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Red-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013) | National (BoCCI) classification, part of wintering assemblage |
| CHORDATA/ AVES | <i>Calidris canutus</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 27 | 2011-2015 | | NT | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013) | Part of wintering assemblage, maintaining biodiversity |
| CHORDATA/ AVES | <i>Egretta garzetta</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 14 | 2011-2015 | | LC | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Listed on Annex I (Birds Directive) | Annex I listing |
| CHORDATA/ AVES | <i>Gallinago gallinago</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 29 | 2011-2015 | | LC | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013) | Part of wintering assemblage, maintaining biodiversity |
| CHORDATA/ AVES | <i>Gavia immer</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 | 2011-2015 | | LC | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Listed on Annex I (Birds Directive), Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013), and Vulnerable classification IUCN Europe region) | Annex I listing, IUCN classification, part of wintering assemblage. |
| CHORDATA/ AVES | <i>Gavia stellata</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 | 2011-2015 | | LC | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Listed on Annex I (Birds Directive), Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013) | Annex I listing, part of wintering assemblage. |
| CHORDATA/ AVES | <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 255 | 2011-2015 | | NT | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013), and Vulnerable classification IUCN Europe region) | IUCN classifications, part of wintering assemblage. |
| CHORDATA/ AVES | <i>Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 | 2011-2015 | | | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Listed on Annex I (Birds Directive), Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013) | Annex I listing, part of wintering assemblage. |
| CHORDATA/ AVES | <i>Limosa lapponica</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 47 | 2011-2015 | | NT | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Listed on Annex I (Birds Directive), Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013) | Annex I listing, part of wintering assemblage. |
| CHORDATA/ AVES | <i>Limosa limosa</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 189 | 2011-2015 | | NT | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013), and Vulnerable classification IUCN Europe region) | IUCN classifications, part of wintering assemblage. |
| CHORDATA/ AVES | <i>Lymnocyptes minimus</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 | 2011-2018 | | LC | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013) | Part of wintering assemblage, maintaining biodiversity. |
| CHORDATA/ AVES | <i>Numenius arquata</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 410 | 2011-2015 | | NT | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Red-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013), and Vulnerable classification IUCN Europe region) | National (BoCCI) and IUCN classifications, part of wintering assemblage |
| CHORDATA/ AVES | <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 13 | 2011-2015 | | LC | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013) | Part of wintering assemblage, maintaining biodiversity. |
| CHORDATA/ AVES | <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2132 | 2011-2015 | | LC | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Listed on Annex I (Birds Directive), Red-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013) | Annex I listing, and National (BoCCI) classification, part of wintering assemblage |
| CHORDATA/ AVES | <i>Podiceps cristatus</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 | 2011-2015 | | LC | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013) | Part of wintering assemblage, maintaining biodiversity. |
| CHORDATA/ AVES | <i>Tadorna tadorna</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 30 | 2011-2015 | | LC | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013) | Part of wintering assemblage, maintaining biodiversity. |

| Phylum | Scientific name | Species qualifies under criterion | | | | Species contributes under criterion | | | | Pop. Size | Period of pop. Est. | % occurrence ¹⁾ | IUCN Red List | CITES Appendix I | CMS Appendix I | Other Status | Justification |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|---------------------|----------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|---|
| | | 2 | 4 | 6 | 9 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 8 | | | | | | | | |
| CHORDATA/ AVES | <i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 46 | 2011-2015 | | LC | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Listed on Annex I (Birds Directive), Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013) | Annex I listing |
| CHORDATA/ AVES | <i>Tringa totanus</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 99 | 2011-2015 | | LC | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Red-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013) | National (BoCCI) classification, part of wintering assemblage |

1) Percentage of the total biogeographic population at the site

Wintering bird species listed under 3.3 have been selected based on an assessment of Irish Wetland Bird Survey data from the period 2006/07 to 2015/16. Ballycotton Bay is a Special Protection Area (SPA) for birds, however not all species listed for the SPA may be listed under 3.3 (or vice versa) as the SPA designation is based on other data and criteria.

Ballycotton Bay is a designated Special Protection Area due to the presence of the following species listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive and/or regularly occurring migratory species: Teal (*Anas crecca*), Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*), Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*), Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*), Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*), Black - tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*), Bar - tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*), Curlew (*Numenius arquata*), Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*), Common Gull (*Larus canus*) and the Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*). The E.U. Birds Directive pays particular attention to wetlands and, as these form part of this SPA, the site and its associated waterbirds are of special conservation interest for Wetland & Waterbirds.

3.4 - Ecological communities whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

| Name of ecological community | Community qualifies under Criterion 2? | Description | Justification |
|--|--|---|--|
| Saltmarsh community | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | A wide range of communities are supported by the habitat: Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glaucopuccinellietalia maritimae</i>) which is listed on Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive and considered threatened in the biogeographical range. | It provides a high tide roost for waterbirds and supports the maintenance of the structure and function of the site. The communities associated with Atlantic Salt meadows have a restricted distribution within the biogeographical range |
| Estuaries [1130] | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | | Annex I (Habitats Directive) |
| Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | | Annex I (Habitats Directive) |
| Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | | Annex I (Habitats Directive) |
| Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glaucopuccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330] | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | | Annex I (Habitats Directive) |
| Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410] | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | | Annex I (Habitats Directive) |
| Reed beds | <input type="checkbox"/> | Beds of <i>Phragmites australis</i> | Provides breeding habitat for rare migratory birds and supports the maintenance of the structure and function of the site. |

Optional text box to provide further information

Reed beds lie within the Ballycotton Bay SPA but outside of the Ramsar site. This habitat is an intergal part of the wetland complex providing breeding habitat for rare migratory birds and supporting the maintenance of the structure and function of the site.

Saltmarsh and intertidal mud and sand flat habitat which is within the Ramsar site but extends beyond the Ramsar boundary is also integral to this wetland complex and supports the maintenance of the structure and function of the site.

4 - What is the Site like? (Ecological character description)

4.1 - Ecological character

The site is characterised by a large expanse of exposed intertidal sandflats subject to frequent swell. The bay has a range of littoral sediments, ranging from the exposed eastward facing shores of the outer bay characterised by mobile sands and shingle, to the mid to low shore and inner bay that supports muddier sediments, with a richer species diversity (MERC/ERM, 2012). Saltmarsh and marsh habitat is well represented at Shanagarry. The shallow marine waters of the bay supports kelp beds on areas of geogenic reef.

Near Ballynamona Lagoon, peat exposures derived from former lake sediments occur. These exposures have a well-developed gallery of burrows from a former piddock population but were not found to contain live piddocks (boring bivalves) when surveyed in 2011. Peat and clay exposures with either existing or historical evidence of piddock activity are unusual communities of limited extent, adding to the biodiversity interest where they occur (MERC/ERM, 2012). The relict burrows provide a potential micro-habitat for species such as small crabs and anemones and the bivalve *Ruditapes decussatus* is also frequent (NPWS, 2014).

While relatively small in area, Ballycotton Bay supports an excellent diversity of wintering waterfowl and has nationally important populations of eleven species, of which two, Golden Plover and Bar-tailed Godwit are listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive. The saltmarsh and intertidal habitats are important for roosting and feeding wintering waterbirds, while the reedbed habitat is important for breeding and roosting waterbirds and passerines, including some rare migrants.

4.2 - What wetland type(s) are in the site?

Marine or coastal wetlands

| Wetland types (code and name) | Local name | Ranking of extent (1: greatest - 4: least) | Area (ha) of wetland type | Justification of Criterion 1 |
|---|------------------------------------|--|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| A: Permanent shallow marine waters | Shallow marine waters | 3 | 10 | Representative |
| B: Marine subtidal aquatic beds (Underwater vegetation) | Subtidal reef | 2 | 28 | Representative |
| E: Sand, shingle or pebble shores | Sand, shingle or pebble shores | 4 | 2 | Representative |
| G: Intertidal mud, sand or salt flats | Intertidal mud, sand, or salt flat | 1 | 40 | Representative |
| H: Intertidal marshes | Salt marsh and reed beds | 4 | 12 | Representative |

4.3 - Biological components

4.3.1 - Plant species

Other noteworthy plant species

| Phylum | Scientific name | Position in range / endemism / other |
|---------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| TRACHEOPHYTAMAGNOLIOPSIDA | <i>Crambe maritima</i> | |

Invasive alien plant species

| Phylum | Scientific name | Impacts | Changes at RIS update |
|------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-----------------------|
| TRACHEOPHYTALILIOPSIDA | <i>Spartina anglica</i> | Potential | unknown |

Optional text box to provide further information

Sea Kale (*Crambe maritima*) is listed as near threatened in Ireland due to decline in area of occupancy; future population reduction is anticipated (Wyse-Jackson et al, 2016).

4.3.2 - Animal species

Other noteworthy animal species

| Phylum | Scientific name | Pop. size | Period of pop. est. | % occurrence | Position in range /endemism/other |
|---------------|-----------------------------|-----------|---------------------|--------------|--|
| CHORDATA/AVES | <i>Calidris alba</i> | 78 | 2011-2015 | | Occurs in nationally important numbers |
| CHORDATA/AVES | <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> | 43 | 2011-2015 | | Occurs in nationally important numbers |

4.4 - Physical components

4.4.1 - Climate

| Climatic region | Subregion |
|---|---|
| C: Moist Mid-Latitude climate with mild winters | Cfb: Marine west coast (Mild with no dry season, warm summer) |

Unknown.

4.4.2 - Geomorphic setting

a) Minimum elevation above sea level (in metres)

a) Maximum elevation above sea level (in metres)

- Entire river basin
- Upper part of river basin
- Middle part of river basin
- Lower part of river basin
- More than one river basin
- Not in river basin
- Coastal

Please name the river basin or basins. If the site lies in a sub-basin, please also name the larger river basin. For a coastal/marine site, please name the sea or ocean.

Irish Sea

4.4.3 - Soil

Mineral

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

Organic

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

No available information

Are soil types subject to change as a result of changing hydrological conditions (e.g., increased salinity or acidification)? Yes No

Please provide further information on the soil (optional)

The site itself is largely marine and comprised of sands and muds and tidal marsh.

4.4.4 - Water regime

Water permanence

| Presence? | Changes at RIS update |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Usually permanent water present | No change |

Source of water that maintains character of the site

| Presence? | Predominant water source | Changes at RIS update |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Marine water | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | unknown |
| Water inputs from surface water | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | unknown |

Water destination

| Presence? | Changes at RIS update |
|-----------|-----------------------|
| Marine | No change |

Stability of water regime

| Presence? | Changes at RIS update |
|--|-----------------------|
| Water levels fluctuating (including tidal) | No change |

Please add any comments on the water regime and its determinants (if relevant). Use this box to explain sites with complex hydrology:

The site is largely comprised of an exposed east facing bay. However the landward side of the site is influenced by the flow of two small rivers which drain into the sites. The influence of these rivers has contributed to the diversity of habitats within the site, especially the formation of reed beds.

4.4.5 - Sediment regime

Significant erosion of sediments occurs on the site

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

Significant accretion or deposition of sediments occurs on the site

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

Sediment regime unknown

Please provide further information on sediment (optional):

Saltmarshes occur within the site, Accretion and erosion are natural elements of saltmarsh systems. Coastal erosion has long been a phenomenon at Ballycotton Bay, especially given its location at the eastern end of the Cloyne syncline, a band of low-lying carboniferous limestone and the soft coastline of cliffs of glacial till (NPWS 2014b). Such coastlines are predisposed to erosion by the sea and this evidenced today by collapsing cliffs. Protective walls of boulders can be seen at Ardnahinch and Garryvoe to protect caravan parks and habitats behind (NPWS 2014b).

4.4.6 - Water pH

Alkaline (pH>7.4)

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

Unknown

4.4.7 - Water salinity

Fresh (<0.5 g/l)

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

Mixohaline (brackish)/Mixosaline (0.5-30 g/l)

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

Euhaline/Eusaline (30-40 g/l)

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

Unknown

Please provide further information on salinity (optional):

The site is characterised by two sheltered inlets which receive the flows of several small rivers. The southern inlet had been lagoonal in character (Ballynamona Lagoon) but breaching of the shingle barrier in recent times has seen the area revert back to estuarine conditions. A small area of shallow marine water is also included (NPWS 2014b).

4.4.8 - Dissolved or suspended nutrients in water

Unknown

4.4.9 - Features of the surrounding area which may affect the Site

Please describe whether, and if so how, the landscape and ecological characteristics in the area surrounding the Ramsar Site differ from the i) broadly similar ii) significantly different site itself:

Surrounding area has greater urbanisation or development

Surrounding area has higher human population density

Surrounding area has more intensive agricultural use

Surrounding area has significantly different land cover or habitat types

Please describe other ways in which the surrounding area is different:

The land bordering the site is consists of low-lying improved agricultural grassland.

4.5 - Ecosystem services

4.5.1 - Ecosystem services/benefits

Provisioning Services

| Ecosystem service | Examples | Importance/Extent/Significance |
|---------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| Food for humans | Sustenance for humans (e.g., fish, molluscs, grains) | Low |
| Wetland non-food products | Livestock fodder | High |

Regulating Services

| Ecosystem service | Examples | Importance/Extent/Significance |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| Erosion protection | Soil, sediment and nutrient retention | Medium |
| Pollution control and detoxification | Water purification/waste treatment or dilution | Medium |
| Climate regulation | Regulation of greenhouse gases, temperature, precipitation and other climatic processes | Medium |
| Climate regulation | Local climate regulation/buffering of change | Medium |
| Hazard reduction | Coastal shoreline and river bank stabilization and storm protection | Medium |
| Hazard reduction | Flood control, flood storage | Medium |

Cultural Services

| Ecosystem service | Examples | Importance/Extent/Significance |
|----------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| Recreation and tourism | Picnics, outings, touring | Medium |
| Recreation and tourism | Nature observation and nature-based tourism | Medium |
| Recreation and tourism | Water sports and activities | Medium |
| Scientific and educational | Important knowledge systems, importance for research (scientific reference area or site) | Medium |
| Scientific and educational | Long-term monitoring site | Medium |

Supporting Services

| Ecosystem service | Examples | Importance/Extent/Significance |
|-------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| Biodiversity | Supports a variety of all life forms including plants, animals and microorganisms, the genes they contain, and the ecosystems of which they form a part | Medium |
| Soil formation | Sediment retention | Medium |
| Soil formation | Accumulation of organic matter | Medium |
| Nutrient cycling | Storage, recycling, processing and acquisition of nutrients | Medium |
| Nutrient cycling | Carbon storage/sequestration | Medium |

Within the site:

Outside the site:

Have studies or assessments been made of the economic valuation of ecosystem services provided by this Ramsar Site? Yes No Unknown

4.5.2 - Social and cultural values

- i) the site provides a model of wetland wise use, demonstrating the application of traditional knowledge and methods of management and use that maintain the ecological character of the wetland
- ii) the site has exceptional cultural traditions or records of former civilizations that have influenced the ecological character of the wetland
- iii) the ecological character of the wetland depends on its interaction with local communities or indigenous peoples
- iv) relevant non-material values such as sacred sites are present and their existence is strongly linked with the maintenance of the ecological character of the wetland

<no data available>

4.6 - Ecological processes

<no data available>

5 - How is the Site managed? (Conservation and management)

5.1 - Land tenure and responsibilities (Managers)

5.1.1 - Land tenure/ownership

Public ownership

| Category | Within the Ramsar Site | In the surrounding area |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| National/Federal government | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Private ownership

| Category | Within the Ramsar Site | In the surrounding area |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Other types of private/individual owner(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Provide further information on the land tenure / ownership regime (optional):

All of the foreshore of Ireland is deemed owned by the State, unless a valid alternative title is provided. The foreshore of Ireland is classed as the land and seabed between the high water of ordinary or medium tides (shown HWM on Ordnance Survey maps) and the twelve-mile limit (12 nautical miles equals approximately 22.24 kilometers). Foreshore also covers tidal areas of rivers particularly estuaries (Housing.gov.ie).

5.1.2 - Management authority

Please list the local office / offices of any agency or organization responsible for managing the site:

National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS), Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
Waterford County Council.
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment.
Marine Institute.

Provide the name and/or title of the person or people with responsibility for the wetland:

Maurice Eakin

Postal address:

National Parks and Wildlife Service,
90 North King Street,
Smithfield, Dublin,
Ireland
D07 N7CV

E-mail address:

maurice.eakin@chg.gov.ie

5.2 - Ecological character threats and responses (Management)

5.2.1 - Factors (actual or likely) adversely affecting the Site's ecological character

Human settlements (non agricultural)

| Factors adversely affecting site | Actual threat | Potential threat | Within the site | Changes | In the surrounding area | Changes |
|----------------------------------|---------------|------------------|--------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| Housing and urban areas | Medium impact | | <input type="checkbox"/> | No change | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No change |

Agriculture and aquaculture

| Factors adversely affecting site | Actual threat | Potential threat | Within the site | Changes | In the surrounding area | Changes |
|----------------------------------|---------------|------------------|--------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| Livestock farming and ranching | Low impact | | <input type="checkbox"/> | No change | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No change |

Human intrusions and disturbance

| Factors adversely affecting site | Actual threat | Potential threat | Within the site | Changes | In the surrounding area | Changes |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|-----------|
| Recreational and tourism activities | Medium impact | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No change | <input type="checkbox"/> | No change |

Natural system modifications

| Factors adversely affecting site | Actual threat | Potential threat | Within the site | Changes | In the surrounding area | Changes |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|-----------|
| Vegetation clearance/ land conversion | High impact | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No change | <input type="checkbox"/> | No change |

Invasive and other problematic species and genes

| Factors adversely affecting site | Actual threat | Potential threat | Within the site | Changes | In the surrounding area | Changes |
|------------------------------------|----------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|-----------|
| Invasive non-native/ alien species | unknown impact | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No change | <input type="checkbox"/> | No change |

Pollution

| Factors adversely affecting site | Actual threat | Potential threat | Within the site | Changes | In the surrounding area | Changes |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|------------------|--------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| Agricultural and forestry effluents | Medium impact | | <input type="checkbox"/> | No change | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No change |

Climate change and severe weather

| Factors adversely affecting site | Actual threat | Potential threat | Within the site | Changes | In the surrounding area | Changes |
|----------------------------------|----------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| Habitat shifting and alteration | unknown impact | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No change | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No change |

5.2.2 - Legal conservation status

Regional (international) legal designations

| Designation type | Name of area | Online information url | Overlap with Ramsar Site |
|------------------|---|---|--------------------------|
| EU Natura 2000 | Ballycotton Bay Special Protection Area. Site Code:004022 | https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004022 | whole |

National legal designations

| Designation type | Name of area | Online information url | Overlap with Ramsar Site |
|--------------------|--------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| wildfowl refuge | | | whole |
| Wildfowl Sanctuary | | | whole |

Non-statutory designations

| Designation type | Name of area | Online information url | Overlap with Ramsar Site |
|---------------------|---|---|--------------------------|
| Important Bird Area | Ballycotton, Ballynamona and Shanagarry | http://datazone.birdlife.org/site/factsheet/ballycotton-bay-iba-ireland | whole |

5.2.3 - IUCN protected areas categories (2008)

- Ia Strict Nature Reserve
- Ib Wilderness Area: protected area managed mainly for wilderness protection
- II National Park: protected area managed mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation
- III Natural Monument: protected area managed mainly for conservation of specific natural features
- IV Habitat/Species Management Area: protected area managed mainly for conservation through management intervention
- V Protected Landscape/Seascape: protected area managed mainly for landscape/seascape conservation and recreation
- VI Managed Resource Protected Area: protected area managed mainly for the sustainable use of natural ecosystems

5.2.4 - Key conservation measures

Legal protection

| Measures | Status |
|------------------|-------------|
| Legal protection | Implemented |

Habitat

| Measures | Status |
|---|-------------|
| Catchment management initiatives/controls | Implemented |
| Land conversion controls | Implemented |

Species

| Measures | Status |
|---|-------------|
| Threatened/rare species management programmes | Implemented |

Human Activities

| Measures | Status |
|--|-------------|
| Regulation/management of wastes | Implemented |
| Regulation/management of recreational activities | Implemented |
| Fisheries management/regulation | Implemented |
| Harvest controls/poaching enforcement | Implemented |
| Research | Implemented |

Other:

The Ballycotton Bay Ramsar site lies within the Ballycotton Bay SPA (004022). Under European and national legislation, Ireland must maintain at favourable conservation status areas designated as Special Protection Areas. The Government and its agencies are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of regulations that will ensure the ecological integrity of these sites. Conservation objectives of this site have been set for the SPA and are listed below; these can be accessed on NPWS.ie.

- To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA; and Wetlands [A999].

Legislation in the Republic of Ireland affords protection to bird species outside of designated sites e.g. all wild bird species are afforded protection by The Wildlife Act 1976. Waterfowl shooting is under license only, managed by the National Parks & Wildlife Service.

5.2.5 - Management planning

Is there a site-specific management plan for the site? No

Has a management effectiveness assessment been undertaken for the site? Yes No

If the site is a formal transboundary site as indicated in section Data and location > Site location, are there shared management planning processes with another Contracting Party? Yes No

URL of site-related webpage (if relevant):

5.2.6 - Planning for restoration

Is there a site-specific restoration plan? No need identified

5.2.7 - Monitoring implemented or proposed

| Monitoring | Status |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| Birds | Implemented |
| Water regime monitoring | Implemented |
| Water quality | Implemented |
| Animal community | Implemented |

A requirement of the Water Framework Directive is that benthic macro-invertebrates must be sampled from coastal and transitional waters at least twice within a river basin cycle (6 years) in order to classify these water bodies. The site is monitored under this programme. As an EU Natura 2000 site, it is required under Article 12 of the EU Birds Directives that the status and trends of the conservation objectives within the site are monitored and reported on every 6 years. The site is monitored under this programme. The site is monitored under the I-WEBS scheme. The site is regularly inspected by the National Parks and Wildlife Service Conservation Rangers for the area

6 - Additional material

6.1 - Additional reports and documents

6.1.1 - Bibliographical references

Colhoun, K. and Cummins, S. 2013. Birds of conservation concern in Ireland 2014-2019. Irish Birds 9: 523-544.
McCorry, M. & Ryle, T. (2009). Saltmarsh Monitoring Project 2007-2008. Unpublished report to the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Dublin.
MERC/ERM (2012) Intertidal benthic survey of Ballycotton Bay SPA. Report for the Marine Institute in partnership with National Parks & Wildlife Service. August 2012
NPWS (2014a) Conservation Objectives: Ballycotton Bay SPA 004022. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
NPWS (2015a) Ballycotton Bay SPA 004022 Natura 2000 Form. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
NPWS (2015b) Site Synopsis for Ballycotton Bay SPA 004022. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
NPWS (2014b) Conservation objectives supporting document for Ballycotton Bay SPA 004022. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
IUCN 2014. IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Version 2014.2. . Downloaded on June 2017.
Smiddy, P. (2005) Breeding waterfowl at Ballycotton, County Cork, 1960 – 2004. Irish Birds 7, 497 – 502
Wyse Jackson, M., FitzPatrick, Ú., Cole, E., Jebb, M., McFerran, D., Sheehy Skeffington, M. & Wright, M. (2016) Ireland Red List No. 10: Vascular Plants. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Dublin, Ireland.
<http://www.catalogueoflife.org/>
[Birdwatchireland.ie](http://birdwatchireland.ie)
<http://wpe.wetlands.org>
<http://irishwetlands.ie>
<http://www.ramsar.org>
<http://eunis.eea.europa.eu>
The Irish Wetland Bird Survey (I-WeBS).

6.1.2 - Additional reports and documents

i. taxonomic lists of plant and animal species occurring in the site (see section 4.3)

<no file available>

ii. a detailed Ecological Character Description (ECD) (in a national format)

<no file available>

iii. a description of the site in a national or regional wetland inventory

<no file available>

iv. relevant Article 3.2 reports

<no file available>

v. site management plan

<no file available>

vi. other published literature

<no file available>

<no data available>

6.1.3 - Photograph(s) of the Site

Please provide at least one photograph of the site:



Ballycotton Bay (NPWS, 12/8/17)



Ballycotton Bay (NPWS, 12/8/17)



Ballycotton Bay (NPWS, 12/8/17)

6.1.4 - Designation letter and related data

Designation letter

<1 file(s) uploaded>

Date of Designation