



# Ramsar Information Sheet

Published on 6 July 2022

Update version, previously published on : 11 June 1996

## Ireland Dundalk Bay



Designation date	7 June 1996
Site number	834
Coordinates	53°57'14"N 06°20'07"W
Area	4 768,00 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

Dundalk Bay is located in the north-east of Ireland. It is a large exposed and shallow estuarine complex, extending c.15km from Castletown River on the Cooley Peninsula in the north, to Annagassan/Salterstown in the south. The bay is on average 4-5km in width, although the Ramsar site occupies a slightly smaller area and excludes the permanent marine waters of the bay. The site has excellent examples of marine and coastal wetlands. These include intertidal mud and sand flats, estuarine waters, intertidal marshes, sand and shingle shores. The extensive marine and coastal wetlands and the shallow nature of the wider bay provide important resources for waterbirds and make it the most important area for wintering waterbirds on the east coast of Ireland.

The site is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under the EU Habitats Directive, as it contains representative and unique examples of coastal and marine habitats and natural wetland types within the Atlantic biogeographic region.

The site is designated a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the EU Birds Directive due to the presence of nationally and internationally important populations of species listed on Annex I of the Birds Directive and/or regularly occurring migratory waterbirds. Under this designation, the wetland habitat is also protected as a resource for the regularly-occurring migratory waterbirds that utilise it. The area of the SPA is more extensive than the Ramsar site and includes the shallow permanent marine waters of the bay.

The extensive estuaries, intertidal sand and mud flats support the largest concentration of wintering waterbirds on the east coast (regularly in excess of 50,000). The coastal and marine habitats host rich faunal communities of bivalves molluscs, marine worms and crustaceans providing a key food resource for wintering waterbirds (including waders, gulls, waterfowl) which feed in the intertidal area of Dundalk Bay. As well as providing food the extensive saltmarsh areas are used as high-tide roosts by waterbirds. At night the site is used by roosting geese and swans. The shallow open waters of the bay provide foraging habitat for gulls, sea duck, mergansers and grebes.

## 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 & 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	<input type="text" value="2004"/>
To year	<input type="text" value="2019"/>

#### 2.1.3 - Name of the Ramsar Site

Official name (in English, French or Spanish)	<input type="text" value="Dundalk Bay"/>
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#### 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 <input type="radio"/> No <input checked="" type="radio"/>
(Update) B. Changes to Site area	No change to area
(Update) For secretariat only: This update is an extension	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### 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?	Not evaluated
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## 2.2 - Site location

### 2.2.1 - Defining the Site boundaries

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

Former maps	<input type="text" value="0"/>
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##### Boundaries description

The boundary of Dundalk Bay Ramsar site was delineated as the same boundary as the original Special Protection Area in 1994 (but the latter was subsequently enlarged). The Ramsar site occupies the small estuarine inlet at Ballymascanlan and the extensive intertidal habitats of the wider Dundalk Bay. The boundary of the SAC includes all of the Ramsar site but also includes the estuarine waters of Dundalk Harbour and the subtidal waters (dredged channel) connecting Dundalk Harbour to the open waters of the Bay. Both the Ramsar site and the SAC lie within the larger area of Dundalk Bay SPA. The SPA also includes some additional saltmarsh habitat and an extensive area of open water habitat extending from Riverstown in the North (just east of Giles Quay) to Dunany Point in the South. Details of the SPA and SAC can be viewed here: <https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites>. 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 Mapping layers: Saltmarsh and Marine Community mapping.

The mapped layers were subsequently inspected by a site visit to confirm the presence of the habitats. Habitat areas were subsequently estimated by reference to the available imagery and GIS habitat 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 and variations in high and low water marks.

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

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 vast intertidal and estuarine habitats of Dundalk Bay are important for storm protection (mitigation of flooding and coastal erosion). The complex of coastal and estuarine habitats and the communities (plant and invertebrate) which they support are important for nutrient cycling, carbon sequestration and sediment trapping. The estuary provides 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.

Other ecosystem services provided

With the cycling of carbon and nutrients estuarine systems have a role in climate regulation.  
 Provisioning - aquaculture (extensive industry within the site)  
 Recreation and tourism - boat activity, fishing, beach walking, watersports (adjacent to population centre)  
 Scientific and educational - Long-term monitoring site  
 Biodiversity - intertidal, coastal and estuarine habitats, plant communities and associated invertebrate, bird and mammal species.

Other reasons

Dundalk Bay contains representative and unique examples of marine habitats and natural wetland types within the Atlantic biogeographic region, i.e. tidal mudflats and sandflats, sand, and shingle shores and intertidal marshes. The site is of significant conservation importance because it supports a complex of interconnected wetland types. Dundalk Bay contains the most extensive saltmarshes found in Ireland. Three main areas of saltmarsh habitat occur mostly comprising Atlantic Sea Meadows and variable amounts of the alien invasive Common Cordgrass (*Spartina anglica*). Beds of eelgrass (*Zostera noltii*) are also present within the intertidal, while stoney banks with coastal plant communities are present in upper shore.

- Criterion 2 : Rare species and threatened ecological communities

- Criterion 3 : Biological diversity

Justification

The site is of international importance as the extensive intertidal habitats within the site support significant populations of over wintering waterbirds. The site is one of the most important sites for wintering waterbirds in Ireland. The site provides good quality habitat for the feeding and roosting requirements of the various bird species which winter here making it a significant wetland for maintaining the biological diversity of the Atlantic biogeographic region. The site also supports significant stands of Eel grass (*Zostera noltii*), a species known to be declining internationally, which is important to maintain the biological diversity within the Atlantic biogeographic region. The diversity of interconnected wetland habitats (intertidal mud and sand flats, estuarine waters, intertidal marshes and sand, shingle shores) within the site make it a significant site for the maintenance of regional biodiversity.

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

- Criterion 5 : >20,000 waterbirds

Overall waterbird numbers

57622

Start year

Source of data:

Criterion 6 : >1% waterbird population

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

*Crambe maritima* is listed as near threatened in Ireland due to decline in area of occupancy; future population reduction is suspected (Curtis & McGough 1988; Wyse Jackson et al, 2016).

### 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								
<b>Birds</b>																	
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Anas acuta</i>	<input checked="" 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"/>	161	2010-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Red-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	National (BoCCI) classification, wintering site, assemblage of over 20,000
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Anas clypeata</i>	<input checked="" 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"/>	14	2010-2015			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Red-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	National (BoCCI) classification, wintering site, assemblage of over 20,000
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Anas crecca</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"/>	450	2010-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Wintering site, assemblage of over 20,000
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Anas penelope</i>	<input checked="" 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"/>	475	2010-2015			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Red-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	National (BoCCI) classification, wintering site, assemblage of over 20,000
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>	<input checked="" 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"/>	65	2010-2015			<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, wintering site, assemblage of over 20,000
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Anser anser</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"/>	327	2010-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Wintering site, assemblage of over 20,000
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	<input checked="" 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"/>	3	2010-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Red-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	National (BoCCI) classification, wintering site, assemblage of over 20,000
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Aythya marila</i>	<input checked="" 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"/>	3	2010-2015		LC	<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 classification, wintering site, assemblage of over 20,000
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1852	2010-2015	4.6		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Internationally important population, wintering site, assemblage of over 20,000 hrota, Canada & Greenland/Ireland
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>	<input checked="" 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"/>	53	2010-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Red-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	National (BoCCI) classification, wintering site, assemblage of over 20,000
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Calidris canutus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7062	2010-2015	1.3	NT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Internationally important population, wintering site, assemblage of over 20,000 islandica, NE Canada & Greenland/Western Europe
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	<input checked="" 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"/>	10	2010-2015		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, wintering site, assemblage of over 20,000

Phylum	Scientific name	Species qualifies under criterion				Species contributes under criterion				Pop. Size	Period of pop. Est.	% occurrence <sup>1)</sup>	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendix I	CMS Appendix I	Other Status	Justification
		2	4	6	9	3	5	7	8								
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Cygnus olor</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"/>	39	2010-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Maintaining biological diversity, wintering site
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"/>	36	2010-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive.	Annex I listing (Birds Directive)
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"/>	15	2010-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Maintaining biological diversity, wintering site
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Gavia arctica</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"/>	5	2010-2015		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, and wintering site,
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"/>	25	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 and wintering site
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"/>	16	2010-2015		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, and wintering site
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6012	2010-2015		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 classification and wintering site, assemblage of over 20,000
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3012	2010-2015	2	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, internationally important population, wintering site, assemblage of over 20,000 lapponica, Northern Europe/Western Europe
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Limosa limosa</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3708	2010-2015	4.7	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 classification, internationally important population, wintering site, assemblage of over 20,000 islandica, Iceland/Western Europe
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	713	2010-2015		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 classification and wintering site, assemblage of over 20,000
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"/>	127	2010-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Maintaining biological diversity, wintering site.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Philomachus pugnax</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"/>	4	2010-2015			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Site for passage migrants, 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7428	2010-2015		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, National (BoCCI) classification and wintering site, assemblage of over 20,000
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Podiceps auritus</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"/>	3	2010-2015		VU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive.	Annex I listing (Birds Directive)
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	36	2010-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Wintering site, part of assemblage of over 20,000
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</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"/>	3	2010-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Maintaining biological diversity, wintering site
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	327	2010-2015		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber-listed in Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (Colhoun and Cummins 2013)	Wintering site, part of wintering assemblage of over 20,000.
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"/>	24	2010-2015		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

Phylum	Scientific name	Species qualifies under criterion				Species contributes under criterion				Pop. Size	Period of pop. Est.	% occurrence <sup>1)</sup>	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendix I	CMS Appendix I	Other Status	Justification
		2	4	6	9	3	5	7	8								
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1688	2010-2015		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 of over 20,000.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4243	2010-2015		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 of over 20,000.

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. Dundalk 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.

I-WeBS data (from the period 2006/07 to 2015/16) lists internationally important populations of Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*), Knot (*Calidris canutus*), Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*) and Bar - tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*), The Light-bellied Brent Goose is Vulnerable as several important European populations have declined (Birdwatch Ireland). Knot is Near Threatened on a global scale (IUCN) as subpopulations have experienced population declines; the European population is Least Concern. The Black-tailed Godwit is Vulnerable within Europe and Near Threatened globally; it has undergone rapid declines in Europe and in parts of its global range owing to changes in agricultural practices. The Bar-tailed Godwit's European population is stable but declining globally and is Near threatened. I-WeBS data (same period) also lists nationally important populations of Greylag Goose (*Anser anser*), Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*), Teal (*Anas crecca*), Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*), Pintail (*Anas acuta*), Common Scoter (*Melanitta nigra*), Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*), Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*), Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*), Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*), Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*), Northern Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*), Curlew (*Numenius arquata*), Redshank (*Tringa totanus*), Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) and Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*). The EU population status for the Pintail is Threatened (EUNIS). Red breasted Merganser has undergone moderately rapid declines in Europe and is Near threatened (IUCN). The Oystercatcher, is undergoing rapid population declines across the European part of its global range and its overall global population trend is decreasing, it listed as Vulnerable in Europe and as Near Threatened globally (IUCN).

Dundalk Bay is designated as a Special Protection Area for the important populations of regularly occurring migratory species including some listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive: Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*), Greylag Goose, Light - bellied Brent Goose, Shelduck, Teal, Mallard, Pintail, Common Scoter, Red - breasted Merganser, Oystercatcher, Ringed Plover, Golden Plover, Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*), Northern Lapwing, Knot, Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*), Black - tailed Godwit, Bar - tailed Godwit, Curlew, Redshank, Black - headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*), Common Gull (*Larus canus*) and Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*). Under this SPA designation the wetland habitat is also protected as a resource for the regularly-occurring migratory water birds that utilise it.

### 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
Zostera noltii community	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The site supports areas of eelgrass.	This habitat has a restricted distribution in Ireland. It is considered threatened on the Oskar list of threatened or declining habitats
Saltmarsh community	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Atlantic salt meadows and Mediterranean salt meadows occur within the site.	This community has a restricted distribution within the biogeographical range.
Fine sand community complex	<input type="checkbox"/>	occurs both intertidally and subtidally within Dundalk Bay and reflects the gradation of fine sediment across the bay, present from the upper to the lower shore and occurs in the Mudflats and sandflats.	This community is of importance for maintaining the structure and function of the site. The high densities of selected macro faunal species within this community provide a food resource for birds.
Muddy fine sand community	<input type="checkbox"/>	This intertidal community is confined to the upper shore sediments; it is associated with the estuarine areas of the Castletown River and runs in a narrow band along the eastern margin of the bay.	This community is of importance for maintaining the structure and function of the site. The high densities of selected macro faunal species within this community provide a food resource for birds.
Estuaries (1130)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Annex I Habitats Directive
Perennial vegetation of stony banks (1220)	<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 colonizing mud and sand (1310)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Annex I Habitats Directive
Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco - Puccinellietalia maritima) (1330)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Annex I Habitats Directive
Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia maritimi). (1410)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Annex I Habitats Directive

[Optional text box to provide further information](#)

**Additional information:**

- Fine sand community: subtidal element occurs in the shallow channels running through the sandflat at the western margins of the site and the larger channel of the Castletown River.

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

### 4.1 - Ecological character

The site contains a diverse range of wetland habitats. Many of the marine, estuarine and coastal communities within the site are key contributors to its overall biodiversity by virtue of their structure and function. As such they represent keystone communities. The site is a large bay-like estuarine complex, extending c.15 km from north to south and on average 4-5km in width, although the portion of the bay which forms the Ramsar site is narrower (approximately 3km in width). It is located on the shores of a large town with a significant port. It contains the estuaries of a number of moderately sized rivers, intertidal mudflats and sandflats, areas of saltmarsh, Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud, Eel grass beds and sand and shingle shores.

Shingle beaches are particularly well represented in Dundalk Bay. The shingle is mostly stable, occurring on post-glacial raised beaches. The shingle often occurs in association with intertidal shingle, saltmarsh and/or shingle-based grassland and supports a significant and diverse vegetation community.

The inner bay is shallow and intertidal. The site contains the largest expanse of intertidal sand/mudflats on the east coast of Ireland and has a very marked tidal range. It is predominantly influenced by the sea, though several rivers drain into the bay from the west. The bay encompasses the estuaries of a number of moderately sized rivers, principally the Castletown, the Flurry, the Fane and the Glyde/Dee. These rivers drain fairly intensive agricultural catchments, and the Castletown flows through Dundalk town and serves the port. The Castletown River is routinely dredged for navigation purposes for the deepwater port of Dundalk. This river, in the northwest corner of the bay, cuts through the intertidal zone and the smaller River Fane flows into the southeast corner.

Saltmarsh vegetation occurs in four main areas and two types are represented –Atlantic and Mediterranean salt meadows. The extensive sandflats and mud flats (over 4,000 ha) are comprised of ecological communities such as muddy fine sand communities and fine sand community complexes. In the centre of Dundalk Bay there is a gravel community dominated by polychaetes. These habitats host a rich fauna of bivalves molluscs, marine worms and crustaceans.

The ecological character of the benthic habitats of the site has been altered in recent times by a proliferation in dredging activities. A dredge fishery for cockles (*Cerastoderma edule*) has taken place in Dundalk Bay intermittently since 2001 (Fahy et al. 2005). Since 2007 the fishery has been regulated by a fishery management plan which includes a range of fishery controls and harvest control rules. The annual out take is based on an annual biomass survey and a 33% harvest rate. Prior to 2001, cockles were harvested by hand gathering and raking, but landings data were not recorded.

### 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
B: Marine subtidal aquatic beds (Underwater vegetation)	Eelgrass	0		
E: Sand, shingle or pebble shores	Shingle or pebble shores	4	12	Representative
F: Estuarine waters	Estuarine waters	3	72	Representative
G: Intertidal mud, sand or salt flats	Intertidal mudflats and sandflats	1	4227	Representative
H: Intertidal marshes	Saltmarsh	2	523	Representative

#### (ECD) Habitat connectivity

The site provides a complex system of estuarine, coastal and marine habitats that are interconnected and dependent on each other for the maintenance of the overall structure and function of the site.

### 4.3 - Biological components

#### 4.3.1 - Plant species

##### Other noteworthy plant species

Phylum	Scientific name	Position in range / endemism / other
TRACHEOPHYTA/MAGNOLIOPSIDA	<i>Crambe maritima</i>	Near Threatened on Irish Red Data List for Vascular Plants (2016)
TRACHEOPHYTA/LILIOPSIDA	<i>Zostera noltii</i>	Important food resource for waterbirds. Restricted distribution in the biogeographical area.

##### Invasive alien plant species

Phylum	Scientific name	Impacts	Changes at RIS update
TRACHEOPHYTALILIOPSIDA	<i>Spartina anglica</i>	Actual (major impacts)	unknown

#### 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>Anas platyrhynchos</i>				
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>				
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>				
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Calidris alba</i>				
MOLLUSCA/BIVALVIA	<i>Cerastoderma edule</i>				
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>				
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>				
MOLLUSCA/BIVALVIA	<i>Ensis siliqua</i>				
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Larus argentatus</i>				
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Larus canus</i>				
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Larus fuscus</i>				
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Larus marinus</i>				
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>				
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Mergus serrator</i>				
MOLLUSCA/BIVALVIA	<i>Mytilus edulis</i>				
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>				
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>				

Optional text box to provide further information

A number of wintering waterbird species occur at this site in numbers of national importance, are part of the assemblage of species which use this site and contribute to its biodiversity value.

## 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)

### 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.

Castletown River, 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. The dominant soil type surrounding the site is fine loam over shale or slate bedrock.

#### 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
Water inputs from surface water	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change
Marine water	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change

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 Castletown River enters Dundalk Bay creating a deep channel through the intertidal zone. It is routinely dredged for navigation purposes. Impacts from dredging of the channel on the surrounding wetlands habitats have been previously assessed and deemed not be causing a negative impact on the site. The site is dependent on the inflowing waters from the Castletown River which maintain the structure and function of the estuarine habitats and deep water channels within the site.

#### 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 is highly variable, either seasonally or inter-annually

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

Sediment regime unknown

Please provide further information on sediment (optional):

According to McCorry & Ryle (2009) there are much more frequent indications of accretion at the site rather than erosion; the saltmarsh has expanded significantly in the past 100 years with the Castlebellingham and Dundalk Marshes more than doubling in width in places. However, some of this area is likely to be vulnerable to storm erosion as the site is quite open. There are extensive areas of Rock armour present at the site.

#### 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

Euhaline/Eusaline (30-40 g/l)

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

Unknown

#### 4.4.8 - Dissolved or suspended nutrients in water

Eutrophic

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

Mesotrophic

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

Oligotrophic

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

Dystrophic

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

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 site itself: i) broadly similar  ii) significantly different

- 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:

Dundalk Bay is located on the periphery of a large town and associated deep water port. The landscape around this bay is mostly quite low-lying and flat. As the site is so large the adjacent habitats vary somewhat. Most of the land adjacent to the shore is dominated by farmland including significant areas located behind tall berms in low-lying areas. These areas contain a variety of habitats including wet grassland in unmanaged areas and large areas of tillage in some more intensively managed sections. There is also some extensive urban development with Dundalk Town adjacent to northern section.

### 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)	Medium

##### 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 climactic processes	Medium
Climate regulation	Local climate regulation/buffering of change	Medium
Hazard reduction	Flood control, flood storage	Medium
Hazard reduction	Coastal shoreline and river bank stabilization and storm protection	Medium

##### Cultural Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Recreation and tourism	Recreational hunting and fishing	Low
Recreation and tourism	Nature observation and nature-based tourism	Medium
Recreation and tourism	Picnics, outings, touring	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

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
Provincial/region/state 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, Louth 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	High impact		<input type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change
Commercial and industrial areas	High impact		<input type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change

Water regulation

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Water abstraction	unknown impact		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change

Agriculture and aquaculture

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Annual and perennial non-timber crops	Medium impact		<input type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change
Livestock farming and ranching	Low impact	High impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change

Transportation and service corridors

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Shipping lanes	Medium impact	Medium impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change
Roads and railroads	Medium impact		<input type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change

Biological resource use

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Fishing and harvesting aquatic resources	Medium impact		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input 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
Unspecified/others	Medium 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	High 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
Household sewage, urban waste water	Medium impact		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change
Agricultural and forestry effluents	Medium impact		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change
Industrial and military effluents	Medium impact		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change

Please describe any other threats (optional):

\*Natural system modifications: Other- Dykes, embankments, artificial beaches, general. This is deemed a medium threat within the site (NPWS 2015a, 2015b).  
Siltation rate changes, dumping, depositing of dredged deposits is deemed a medium threat inside the site (NPWS, 2015a, 2015b).

## 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	Dundalk Bay Special Area of Conservation. Site Code:000455	<a href="https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/000455">https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/000455</a>	partly
EU Natura 2000	Dundalk Bay Special Protection Area. Site Code:004026	<a href="https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004026">https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004026</a>	partly

## National legal designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
Bird Sanctuary	Ballymascanlan Estuary Wildfowl Sanctuary		partly
Bird Sanctuary	Lurgan Green Wildfowl Sanctuary		partly

## Non-statutory designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
Important Bird Area	Dundalk Bay	<a href="http://datazone.birdlife.org/site/factsheet/dundalk-bay-iba-irel">http://datazone.birdlife.org/site/factsheet/dundalk-bay-iba-irel</a> and	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
Fisheries management/regulation	Implemented
Harvest controls/poaching enforcement	Implemented
Regulation/management of recreational activities	Implemented
Research	Implemented

Other:

The Dundalk Ramsar site lies within the Dundalk Bay SAC and SPA. Under the European and national legislation, Ireland must maintain at favourable conservation status areas designated as Special Areas of Conservation and 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 SAC and SPA and are listed below; these can be accessed on NPWS.ie.

- To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) for which the SAC has been selected: Estuaries (1130), Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide (1140), Perennial vegetation of stony banks (1220), Salicornia and other annuals colonizing mud and sand (1310), Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco - Puccinellietalia maritimae) (1330), 1410 Mediterranean salt meadows (*Juncetalia maritimi*).
- To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA; and Wetlands & waterbirds.

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. Dundalk Bay is routinely surveyed as part of I-WeBS which provides comprehensive counts of the bird species using the site. Under the Water Framework Directive water quality of the bay is monitored at regular intervals by the EPA and/or local authority.

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
Animal community	Implemented
Plant species	Implemented
Birds	Implemented
Water regime monitoring	Implemented
Water quality	Implemented
Plant 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 and 17 of the EU Birds and Habitats Directives respectively, 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

Curtis, T.G.F & McGough, H.N. (1988) The Irish Red Data Book 1 Vascular Plants. Wildlife Service Ireland Dublin.

Fahy, E., Carroll, J. & Murren, J. (2005). The Dundalk cockle (*Cerastoderma edule*) fishery in 2003-2004. Irish Fisheries Investigations 14, 16pp. Biomass, size and age structure of Cockles (*Cerastoderma edule*) in Dundalk Bay, May 2010. Marine Institute Unpublished Report, 16pp.

Kingston, N. (2012) Checklist of protected & rare species in Ireland. Unpublished National Parks & Wildlife Service Report.

McCorry, M. & Ryle, T. (2009). Saltmarsh Monitoring Project 2007-2008. Vol. 3. Unpublished report to the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Dublin.

NPWS (2016a) Conservation objectives for Dundalk Bay SAC [000455]. Generic Version 5.0. Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

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NPWS (2015a) Dundalk Bay SAC [000455]. Natura 2000 Form. Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

NPWS (2016b) Conservation objectives for Dundalk Bay SPA [0004026]. Generic Version 5.0. Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

NPWS (2015b) Dundalk Bay SPA Natura 2000 Form [004026]. Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

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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.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:



Dundalk Bay ( NPWS, 02-06-2017 )



Dundalk Bay ( NPWS, 02-06-2017 )



Dundalk Bay ( NPWS, 02-06-2017 )

#### 6.1.4 - Designation letter and related data

Designation letter

<1 file(s) uploaded>

Date of Designation