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# Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands

## (RIS) – 2009-2012 version

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### 1. Name and address of the compiler of this form:

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Designation date

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Site Reference Number

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### 2. Date this sheet was completed/updated:

September 2013

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### 3. Country:

the Netherlands

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### 4. Name of the Ramsar site:

Zuidlaardermeergebied

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### 5. Designation of new Ramsar site or update of existing site:

This RIS is for:

- a) Designation of a new Ramsar site ; or  
b) Updated information on an existing Ramsar site

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### 6. For RIS updates only, changes to the site since its designation or earlier update:

#### a) Site boundary and area

The Ramsar site boundary and site area are unchanged:

or

**If the site boundary has changed:**

- i) the boundary has been delineated more accurately ; or  
ii) the boundary has been extended ; or  
iii) the boundary has been restricted\*\*

and/or

**If the site area has changed:**

- i) the area has been measured more accurately ; or  
ii) the area has been extended ; or  
iii) the area has been reduced\*\*

**\*\* Important note:** If the boundary and/or area of the designated site is being restricted/reduced, the Contracting Party should have followed the procedures established by the Conference of the Parties in the Annex to COP9 Resolution IX.6 and provided a report in line with paragraph 28 of that Annex, prior to the submission of an updated RIS.

**b) Describe briefly any major changes to the ecological character of the Ramsar site, including in the application of the Criteria, since the previous RIS for the site:**

The site does not qualify anymore for criterion 6 (see 14).

Compared to the previous RIS-version the species Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope*, White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons* and Bewick's Swan *Cygnus bewickii* do not meet the 1%-threshold anymore.

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**7. Map of site:**

**a) A map of the site, with clearly delineated boundaries, is included as:**

- i) a **hard copy** (required for inclusion of site in the Ramsar List): 
- ii) an **electronic format** (e.g. a JPEG or ArcView image) 
- iii) a **GIS file providing geo-referenced site boundary vectors and attribute tables** 

**b) Describe briefly the type of boundary delineation applied:**

The Ramsar site Zuidlaardermeergebied has also been designated as the European Natura 2000-site Zuidlaardermeergebied. For this RIS-version, the Ramsar site boundary has therefore been adjusted to the Natura 2000-boundary.

Some residential area, farmland and sluice complex are excluded or exclavated from the Ramsar site.

In total this new boundary resulted in a decrease of -8,0 ha.

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**8. Geographical coordinates** (latitude/longitude, in degrees and minutes):

53°08'N - 06°41'E

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**9. General location:**

On the border of the provinces of Groningen and Drenthe, approx. 15 km southeast of Groningen city (population 195.418 per 1-1-2013; source: CBS, Netherlands Statistics).

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**10. Elevation:** (min & max)

NAP 0 / 1 m

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**11. Area:**

2087,4 ha

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**12. General overview of the site:**

The Zuidlaardermeer is a natural lake which originally received drainage water from the Drents plateau. The site encompasses the Zuidlaarder lake with its shores and wet polders. The eastern site of the lake still has an open landscape, while forest growth of mainly Alder can be found in other parts. The polders are important feeding ground for herbivorous water birds, while the lake is used for roosting.

### 13. Ramsar Criteria:

1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5 • 6 • 7 8 • 9

### 14. Justification for the application of each Criterion listed in 13 above:

The Ramsar site Zuidlaardermeergebied has been designated under Natura 2000 as well. Natura 2000 is the centrepiece of EU nature & biodiversity policy. It is an EU-wide network of nature protection areas which aims to assure the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats. It is comprised of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) designated by Member States under the Habitats Directive, and also incorporates Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Birds Directive. Natura 2000 applies to SACs and SPAs which are divided into biogeographical regions. The Ramsar site Zuidlaardermeergebied applies to both and the justification for the application of each Ramsar criterion below, greatly refers to its designation as a SAC and SPA.

#### Justification criterion 2

The table below shows Annex II species (HD) and Annex I species (BD) for which the site has been designated as a SAC and SPA respectively, as well as their current status on the National Red List. Some other threatened species of the National Red Lists have also been added to the table.

*Species of Annex II of the European Habitat Directive (HD) and Annex I of the European Bird Directive for which the site has been designated as a SAC and SPA respectively, as well as species of annex IV (HD) and some threatened species of the National Red Lists (- = Not Applicable). Year of adoption of the National Red List in parentheses.*

Species(groups)	Species code	HD annex	BD annex	National RL category
<b>Mosses</b>				(2004)
<i>Sphagnum subnitens</i>	-	-	-	VU
<i>Sphagnum capillifolium</i>	-	-	-	VU
<b>Mushrooms</b>				(2004)
<i>Alnicola alnetorum</i>	-	-	-	EN
<i>Cortinarius dumetorum</i>	-	-	-	EN
<i>Inocybe squarrosa</i>	-	-	-	EN
<i>Mycena pterigena</i>	-	-	-	CR
<i>Russula alnetorum</i>	-	-	-	VU
<b>Non-breeding birds</b>				
Bewick's Swan <i>Cygnus bewickii</i>	A037	-	I	-
<b>Breeding birds</b>				(2004)
Great Bittern <i>Botaurus stellaris</i>	A021	-	I	EN
Spotted Crake <i>Porzana porzana</i>	A119	-	I	VU
<b>Fish</b>				(2004)
Weatherfish <i>Misgurnus fossilis</i>	H1145	II	-	VU
<b>Molluscs</b>				(2004)
<i>Lithoglyphus naticoides</i>	-	-	-	VU
<i>Sphaerium rivicola</i>	-	-	-	VU

#### Justification criterion 3

The Zuidlaardermeergebied is designated as a Natura 2000 site (both SAC and SPA) and can therefore be considered important for maintaining the biodiversity of the Atlantic biogeographic region. Besides the species mentioned under criterion 2, the site has also been designated as a SPA for a number of bird species that are not on Annex I of the BD. See the table below.

Bird species (not on Annex I of the BD) for which the site has been designated as a SPA as well as their status on the National Red List (2004).

Species	Species code	National RL category
<b>Non-breeding birds</b>		
<sup>1</sup> White-tailed Eagle <i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>	A075	-
<sup>1</sup> Osprey <i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	A094	-
Tundra Bean Goose <i>Anser fabalis ssp. Rossicus</i>	A039	-
White-fronted Goose <i>Anser albifrons</i>	A041	-
Eurasian Wigeon <i>Anas [Mareca] penelope</i>	A050	-
Northern Shoveler <i>Anas clypeata</i>	A056	-
<b>Breeding birds</b>		
		(2004)
<sup>1</sup> Black-necked Grebe <i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>	A008	LC
Sedge Warbler <i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	A295	LC

#### Justification criterion 4

The site is of particular importance for many breeding and non-breeding bird species (see criterion 2, 3) of which several species gather in relatively small areas especially during the migration and wintering periods.

#### Justification criterion 5

The site regularly supports more than 20,000 wintering water birds: the average peak number was 21.602 for the period 2005/2006-2009/2010, which is less than the average peak number of 26.457 for the period 1999/2000-2003/2004 (Source: Sovon, Dutch Centre for Field Ornithology). This is probably temporary due to harsh winters with cold and snow causing the water birds to move further south.

#### Justification criterion 8

The site has among others been designated as a SAC for the Weatherfish *Misgurnus fossilis* (see criterion 2).

## 15. Biogeography

### a) biogeographic region:

The Ramsar site belongs to the Atlantic biogeographic region.

### b) biogeographic regionalisation scheme (include reference citation):

The bio-geographic regions dataset used, contains the official delineations used in the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and for the EMERALD Network set up under the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention)

## 16. Physical features of the site:

The Zuidlaardermeergebied is of natural origin and is one of the major lakes in the provinces Groningen and Drenthe. The small Hunze river flows into and out of the lake. The average depth is 1 meter. The water level is +0,62 m NAP (NAP = New Amsterdam level) in summer and +0,42 NAP in winter. Until recently water from the lake IJsselmeer has been let into the lake to maintain a high water level in summer.

## 17. Physical features of the catchment area:

<sup>1</sup> This species has been registered for this Ramsar site but the Natura 2000-site Zuidlaardermeergebied has not been designated for this species.

The Zuidelaardermeergebied is part of the river Rhine catchment. The surface area of the Rhine catchment is 185.000 km<sup>2</sup>. Geologically and geomorphologically it consists mainly of Quarternary, Paleozoic and Mesozoic sediments and Tertiary mountains. The general soil types are: Alluvial, Brown forest soils and montane soils. The climates according to Köppen are rainy (Cbf) and montane (EH).

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### 18. Hydrological values:

The river Hunze (length about 40 km) drains into lake Zuidlaardermeer. The lake has a function for agriculture (like irrigation) and flood control. Superfluous water is eventually discharged in the Wadden Sea through various canals and the Lauwersmeer.

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### 19. Wetland Types

#### a) presence:

Marine/coastal: A • B • C • D • E • F • G • H • I • J • K • Zk(a)

Inland: L • M • N • O • P • Q • R • Sp • Ss • Tp • Ts • U • Va •  
Vt • W • Xf • Xp • Y • Zg • Zk(b)

Human-made: 1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5 • 6 • 7 • 8 • 9 • Zk(c)

#### b) dominance:

O, 4

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### 20. General ecological features:

Permanent freshwater lakes 31%, wet grassland 36%, drained grassland/ rough grassy vegetation 30%. The site encompasses a lake, wet polders and woodland. The polders are important feeding ground for herbivorous water birds, while the lake is used for roosting.

Plant communities of European interest that occur are:

- *Cicuto-Caricetum pseudocyperi* (only some 100 m<sup>2</sup>)
- *Carici elongatae-Alnetum typicum* (some four hectares)

The ecosystem services mainly refer to:

- the opportunities for water recreation and recreation on land;
  - the ability to store fresh water (especially i.r.t. climate change);
  - the ability for agriculture to take fresh water in (for irrigation or livestock drinking water) or drain it off.
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### 21. Noteworthy flora:

Nothing particular.

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### 22. Noteworthy fauna:

Most noteworthy fauna is listed under 14.

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### 23. Social and cultural values:

a) Describe if the site has any general social and/or cultural values e.g., fisheries production, forestry, religious importance, archaeological sites, social relations with the wetland, etc.

**Distinguish between historical/archaeological/religious significance and current socio-economic values:** See 25. Current land use.

**b) Is the site considered of international importance for holding, in addition to relevant ecological values, examples of significant cultural values, whether material or non-material, linked to its origin, conservation and/or ecological functioning?** No

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**24. Land tenure/ownership:**

**a) within the Ramsar site:**

The site is partly owned by the Groninger Landschap, Staatsbosbeheer and the Drents Landschap; the remainder is state (Dienst der Domeinen, Ministerie van Financiën) and private ownership.

**b) in the surrounding area:**

Several private owners.

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**25. Current land (including water) use:**

**a) within the Ramsar site:**

Tourism and leisure 40%, Residential (scattered) 1%, Extractive operations 1%, Farming 50%, Commercial fisheries 30%, Conservation and research 63%, Water management 100%, Reed cutting 40% (for habitat management).

**b) in the surroundings/catchment:**

Land use in the immediate surrounding mainly refers to farming. On a broader scale the Zuidlaardermeergebied belongs to the river Rhine-catchment where the general land-use is forestry, pasture farming, arable farming and unproductive land (high mountains).

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**26. Factors (past, present or potential) adversely affecting the site's ecological character, including changes in land (including water) use and development projects: (A = serious threat covering large part of the area; B = moderate threat or local threat; C = minor threat):**

**a) within the Ramsar site:**

- Disturbance to birds: B (by recreation/tourism mainly)
- Drainage (B - drainage to improve dairy farming)

**b) in the surrounding area:**

- Plans to increase recreation facilities: (B).
- Pollution (not Industrial discharge)– (eutrophication of lake water): B.
- Disturbance of water birds (B) due to flight route towards Groningen Airport (Vliegveld Eelde).

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**27. Conservation measures taken:**

**a) List national and/or international category and legal status of protected areas, including boundary relationships with the Ramsar site:**

- Special Protection Area (Birds Directive 79/409/EEC, 2000)
- Natura2000 site

**b) If appropriate, list the IUCN (1994) protected areas category/ies which apply to the site:**

Ia ; Ib ; II ; III ; IV ; V ; VI

**c) Does an officially approved management plan exist; and is it being implemented?:**

The Ramsar site matches 100% with the designation for Natura 2000.  
The process for the Natura 2000 management plan has been started.

**d) Describe any other current management practices:**

Nothing particular.

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**28. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:**

Nothing particular.

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

Ongoing biodiversity monitoring is one of the obligatory activities in relation to the designated Natura2000 habitat types and/or species. SOVON, the Dutch Bird Research Organisation, coordinates for instance a continuous national bird monitoring program in which it cooperates with 7000 volunteers, research institutes and organisations in the monitoring of birds throughout the Netherlands (among which the Oudegaasterbrekken, Fluessen en omgeving).

Research is a.o. carried out by Rijkswaterstaat from the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment and the Institute for River Research, which is part of the Institute for Hydraulic Engineering (IHE, [www.ihe.nl](http://www.ihe.nl)) in Delft, and focuses mainly on floodplain research. The Center for Limnology (NIOO-CL, [www.nioo.nl](http://www.nioo.nl)) in Nieuwersluis studies plant-bird interactions in several large freshwater lakes as part of general limnological research programs.

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**30. Current communications, education and public awareness (CEPA) activities related to or benefiting the site:**

Excursions, hide, information booklet.

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**31. Current recreation and tourism:**

Number of visitors not known.

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**32. Jurisdiction:**

Municipalities Haren, Hoogezand-Sappemeer and Tynaarlo. Functional jurisdiction (conservation purposes): Ministry of Economic Affairs.

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**33. Management authority:**

Main management authorities:

- Stichting Het Groninger Landschap, Rijkswaterstaatweg 333, 9752 CG Haren, +31 (0)50 313 59 01.
  - Stichting Het Drentse Landschap, P.O. Box 83, 9400 AB Assen, tel. +31 (0)592 31 35 52.
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**34. Bibliographical references:**

- BirdLife International, 2004. Birds in Europe, population estimates, trends and conservation status. Cambridge, UK: BirdLife International. (BirdLife Conservation Series No. 12).
- Hornman, M., Hustings, F., Koffijberg, K., Kleefstra, R., Klaassen, O., van Winden, E., SOVON Ganzen- en Zwanenwerkgroep & L. Soldaat, 2012. Watervogels in Nederland 2009/2010. SOVON-rapport 2012/02, Waterdienst-rapport 12.06. SOVON Vogelonderzoek Nederland, Nijmegen.
- Janssen, John, A.M. & Joop, H.J. Schaminée, 2009. Europese Natuur in Nederland. Laag Nederland Natura 2000-gebieden. KNNV-Uitgeverij. 248p.
- Ministerie van EL&I, 2010. Besluit Natura 2000-gebied Zuidlaardermeergebied.
- Van Roomen M.W.J, Boele A., van der Weide M.J.T., van Winden E.A.J, Zoetebier D. 2000. Belangrijke vogelgebieden in Nederland, 1993-97. Actueel overzicht van Europese vogelwaarden in aangewezen en aan te wijzen speciale beschermingszones en andere belangrijke gebieden. SOVON-informatierapport 2000/01. SOVON Vogelonderzoek Nederland, Beek-Ubbergen.

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