



# Ramsar Information Sheet

Published on 1 November 2022

Update version, previously published on : 15 December 2014

## Netherlands

### Westerschelde & Saeftinghe



Designation date	4 September 1995
Site number	748
Coordinates	51°24'03"N 03°46'E
Area	43 647,00 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

The Ramsar site Westerschelde & Saefthinghe measures 43,647 ha. The Westerschelde is the Southern branch in the original mouth of the Schelde river. At the moment it's the only estuary of the Delta with an open connection to the North Sea. It's a very dynamic area and the funnel shape causes substantial tidal variations. The estuary has shallow and deep waters, tidal sandbanks and mudflats at low tide and salt marshes. To the east one can find the largest salt (brackish) marsh of the Netherlands, the 3500ha of the Verdrongen Land van Saefthinghe. Due to the high tidal differences this salt marsh has high shores and wide channels. To the west lies the sea inlet of the Zwarte Polder.

In the mouth of the river one can also find dune formation at Rammekenshoek, the Kaloot and on the Hooge Platen. Within the dikes are a number of areas with nature linked to the estuary: Rammekenshoek, Inlaag 1887, Bathse Kreek, Inlaag Hoofdplaat and Herdijkte Zwarte Polder. The site is especially important for a range of coastal habitat types and breeding and non-breeding water birds.

## 2 - Data & location

### 2.1 - Formal data

#### 2.1.1 - Name and address of the compiler of this RIS

##### Responsible compiler

Institution/agency	Wageningen Environmental Research
Postal address	PO Box 47 6700 AA Wageningen The Netherlands

##### National Ramsar Administrative Authority

Institution/agency	Ministry of Agriculture Nature and Food Quality
Postal address	Bezuidenhoutseweg 73 P.O. Box 20401 2500 EK The Hague The Netherlands

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

From year	2015
To year	2020

#### 2.1.3 - Name of the Ramsar Site

Official name (in English, French or Spanish)	Westerschelde & Saeftinghe
Unofficial name (optional)	Originally designated as 'Verdronken Land van Saeftinge', merged with 'Westerschelde'

#### 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?	No
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## 2.2 - Site location

### 2.2.1 - Defining the Site boundaries

#### b) Digital map/image

<1 file(s) uploaded>

Former maps	0
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#### Boundaries description

The boundary of the Ramsar site is equal to the Natura 2000-site with the same name. The 295 ha Hertogin Hedwigepolder in the east of the site, between Saeftinge and the Belgian border is proposed to be added to the Natura 2000-site. It is currently not in the map.

The two Ramsar sites 'Westerschelde' and 'Verdronken Land van Saeftinghe' are one European Natura 2000 site named 'Westerschelde & Saeftinghe'. A logical step as both sites were merged into one in 2014. The Ramsar site boundary has subsequently been adjusted to the Natura 2000-boundary, meaning that both Ramsar sites are now combined in one site. Also the name for the Natura 2000-site has been adopted. Some small areas like the dike and harbour near the town of Breskens have been excluded from the original site, while a vast area of open water especially to the west has been included within the Ramsar site. The site has doubled in size. The new boundary resulted in an increase of +24.139 ha.

### 2.2.2 - General location

a) In which large administrative region does the site lie?	Zeeland
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b) What is the nearest town or population centre? Several population centres among which Vlissingen with a population of 44.358 in 2021 (Source: CBS, Netherlands Statistics).

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): 43647

Area, in hectares (ha) as calculated from GIS boundaries 43644.655

2.2.5 - Biogeography

Biogeographic regions

Regionalisation scheme(s)	Biogeographic region
EU biogeographic regionalization	Atlantic

Other biogeographic regionalisation scheme

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)

### 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

Other reasons

The almost 44.000 ha Schelde estuary is one of the largest estuaries in Europe, while its approx. 3500 ha "Verdronken Land van Saeftinghe" is one of the largest and most intact examples of Atlantic salt marshes in Europe. The estuary still has an open connection with the sea and its infundibular shape towards the east causes tidal variations of up to 6 meters in height. The site is located in one of the main migratory flyways and its tidal flats support many bird species in substantial numbers.

- Criterion 2 : Rare species and threatened ecological communities

- Criterion 3 : Biological diversity

Justification

The Westerschelde en Saeftinge 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 SAC for a range of habitat types (Annex I of Habitats Directive, see section 3.4) and SPA for a number of bird species that are not on Annex I of the BD.

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

Optional text box to provide further information

The Ramsar site is also part of the Natura 2000 network in the European Union. It is designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for the functions that it provides to specific breeding and non-breeding bird species (e.g. migratory, hibernating, sleeping, resting, foraging). The site is also designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for specific non-bird species (and habitat types, see section 3.4). For detailed information please see Natura 2000 data sheet:

<https://natura2000.eea.europa.eu/Natura2000/SDF.aspx?site=NL9803061>  
<https://www.natura2000.nl/gebieden/zeeland/westerschelde-saeftinghe>

- Criterion 5 : >20,000 waterbirds

Overall waterbird numbers 109,842

Start year 2015

End year 2020

Source of data: Sovon, Dutch Centre for Field Ornithology

Optional text box to provide further information

Start season 2015/2016. End season 2019/2020. Peak numbers for all five seasons > 20,000. Average 109,842 individuals.

- Criterion 6 : >1% waterbird population

Optional text box to provide further information

The 1% waterbird population thresholds are based on the 7th Edition of the Conservation Status Report (CSR7).

Criterion 8 : Fish spawning grounds, etc.

Justification

The Westerschelde has among others been designated as an SAC for migratory fish species like Sea Lamprey *Petromyzon marinus*, River Lamprey *Lampetra fluviatilis* and Twaite Shad *Alosa fallax*.

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

Phylum	Scientific name	Criterion 2	Criterion 3	Criterion 4	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendix I	Other status	Justification
<b>Plantae</b>								
TRACHEOPHYTA/ MAGNOLIOPSIDA	<i>Cochlearia officinalis</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species	
TRACHEOPHYTA/ LILIOPSIDA	<i>Liparis loeselii</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species	The site is also designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
TRACHEOPHYTA/ MAGNOLIOPSIDA	<i>Oenanthe lachenalii</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species	

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>Others</b>																	
ARTHROPODA/ INSECTA	<i>Epeolus tarsalis</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"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species	The world population is almost restricted to this site.
CHORDATA/ MAMMALIA	<i>Halichoerus grypus</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"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species	The site is also designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ MAMMALIA	<i>Phoca vitulina</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"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species	The site is also designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ MAMMALIA	<i>Phocoena phocoena</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"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species	The site is also designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
<b>Fish, Mollusc and Crustacea</b>																	
CHORDATA/ ACTINOPTERYGII	<i>Alosa fallax</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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species	The site is also designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
MOLLUSCA/ GASTROPODA	<i>Assiminea grayana</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species	
CHORDATA/ CEPHALASPIDOMORPHI	<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		The site is also designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ CEPHALASPIDOMORPHI	<i>Petromyzon marinus</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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		The site is also designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.

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								
MOLLUSCA/ GASTROPODA	<i>Vertigo angustior</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"/>				NT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species	The site is also designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
<b>Birds</b>																
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Anas acuta</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2919	2015/16-2019/20-	4.9	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species	Reference population: North-west Europe. The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	315	2015/16-2019/20	0.5	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species	Reference population: <i>Spatula clypeata</i> . The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Anas crecca</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3220	2015/16-2019/20	0.6	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species	Reference population: <i>crecca</i> , North-west Europe. The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Anas penelope</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	19747	2015/16-2019/20	1.4	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species	Reference population: <i>Mareca penelope</i> . The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	10877	2015/16-2019/20	0.2	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Reference population: <i>platyrhynchos</i> , North-west Europe. The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Anas strepera</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	210	2015/16-2019/20	0.2	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Reference population: <i>strepera</i> , North-west Europe. The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Anser albifrons</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1208	2015/16-2019/20	0.1	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Reference population: <i>albifrons</i> , NW Siberia & NE Europe/North-west Europe. The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Anser anser</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	18963	2015/16-2019/20	2	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Reference population: <i>anser</i> , NW Europe/South-west Europe. The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Anser serrirostris</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1044	2015/16-2019/20	0.2		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Reference population: <i>rossicus</i> , West & Central Siberia/NE & SW Europe. foraging, resting
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	393	2015/16-2019/20	0.3	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Reference population: <i>interpres</i> , NE Canada & Greenland/W Europe & NW Africa. The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Branta leucopsis</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6780	2015/16-2019/20	0.6	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Reference population: Russia/Germany & Netherlands. foraging, resting

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								
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Calidris alba</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3019	2015/16-2019/20	1.5	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Reference population: alba, East Atlantic Europe, West & Southern Africa (win). The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Calidris alpina alpina</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	29116	2015/16-2019/20	2.2		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Reference population: alpina, NE Europe & NW Siberia/W Europe & NW Africa. The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Calidris canutus canutus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	288	2015/16-2019/20	0.1		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Reference population: canutus, Northern Siberia/West & Southern Africa. The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Calidris canutus islandica</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3480	2015/16-2019/20	0.7		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Reference population: islandica, NE Canada & Greenland/Western Europe. The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	47	2015/16-2019/20	0.1	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species	Reference population: alexandrinus, West Europe & West Mediterranean/West Africa. The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1684	2015/16-2019/20	0.7	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species	Reference population: psammodytes, Canada, Greenland & Iceland/W & S Africa. The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	140	2015/16-2019/20	0.1	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species	Reference population: garzetta, Western Europe, NW Africa. The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Falco peregrinus</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"/>				LC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species	The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	12448	2015/16-2019/20	1.5	NT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Reference population: ostralegus, Europe/South & West Europe & NW Africa. The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</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"/>				LC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	National red list species	The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Ichthyophaga melanocephalus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2541	2015/16-2019/20	1.1		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Reference population: W Europe, Mediterranean & NW Africa. The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3851	2017/18-2019/20	0.6	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Reference population: intermedius, S Scandinavia, Netherlands, Ebro Delta, Spain.



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								
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1147	2015/16-2019/20	0.8	NT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reference population: lapponica, Northern Europe/Western Europe. The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Limosa lapponica taymyrensis</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1313	2015/16-2019/20	0.3		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reference population: taymyrensis, Western Siberia/West & South-west Africa. The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Limosa limosa</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	362	2015/16-2019/20	0.5	NT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species Reference population: limosa, Western Europe/NW & West Africa. foraging, resting
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Luscinia svecica</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"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Mergus serrator</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	33	2015/16-2019/20	0	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reference population: North-west & Central Europe (win). The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7242	2015/16-2019/20	1		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species Reference population: arquata, Europe/Europe, North & West Africa. The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	744	2017/18	0.2	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reference population: phaeopus, Northern Europe/West Africa. foraging, resting
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	572	2015/16-2019/20	0.1	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reference population: sinensis, Northern & Central Europe. foraging, resting
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	637	2015/16-2019/20	4	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reference population: leucorodia, West Europe/West Mediterranean & West Africa. The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	721	2015/16-2019/20	0.1	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species Reference population: altifrons, Northern Europe/Western Europe & NW Africa. The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2887	2015/16-2019/20	1.4	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reference population: squatarola, W Siberia & Canada/W Europe & W Africa. The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	121	2015/16-2019/20	0	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reference population: cristatus, North-west & Western Europe. The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1082	2015/16-2019/20	1.2	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reference population: Western Europe & North-west Africa (bre). The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.

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								
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2209	2015/16-2019/20	0.2	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species Reference population: hirundo, Northern & Eastern Europe (bre). The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	248	2015/16-2019/20	1.1	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species Reference population: albifrons, Europe north of Mediterranean (bre). The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	38666	2015/16-2019/20	15.5	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species Reference population: North-west Europe. The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6851	2015/16-2019/20	4	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species Reference population: sandvicensis, Western Europe/West Africa. The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	151	2015/16-2019/20	0.2	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species Reference population: N Europe/Southern Europe, North & West Africa. The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	199	2015-16-2019/20	0.1		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species Reference population: Northern Europe/SW Europe, NW & West Africa. The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Tringa totanus robusta</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1204	1025/16-2019/20	0.5		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species Reference population: robusta, Iceland & Faroes/Western Europe. The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Tringa totanus totanus</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	999	2015/16-2019/20	0.6		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species Reference population: totanus, Northern Europe (breeding) The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5335	2015/16-2019/20	0.1	NT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	National red list species Reference population: Europe, W Asia/Europe, N Africa & SW Asia. The site is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for this species and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.

1) Percentage of the total biogeographic population at the site

Bird data are provided by SOVON, Dutch Centre for Field Ornithology.  
The 1% waterbird population thresholds are based on the 7th Edition of the Conservation Status Report (CSR7).

### 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
Embryonic shifting dunes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		The site is also designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for this habitat type and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
Spartina swards ( <i>Spartinion maritimae</i> )	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		The site is also designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for this habitat type and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
Estuaries	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		The site is also designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for this habitat type and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Priority habitat type	The site is also designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for this habitat type and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		The site is also designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for this habitat type and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
<i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonizing mud and sand	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		The site is also designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for this habitat type and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		The site is also designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for this habitat type and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		The site is also designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for this habitat type and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
Humid dune slacks	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		The site is also designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for this habitat type and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
Atlantic salt meadows ( <i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i> )	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		The site is also designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for this habitat type and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.
Dunes with <i>Hippophae rhamnoides</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		The site is also designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for this habitat type and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.

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

The site is also designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for the habitat types listed above and is part of the Natura 2000 network within the European Union.

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

### 4.1 - Ecological character

From an ecological point of view, the Scheldt estuary is a unique estuary. The high dynamics (with a tidal difference up to 6m) and the presence of a fresh and salt water gradient, including a 60 km long fresh water tidal area, makes the Scheldt estuary an exceptional ecosystem in Europe.

Plant communities of European interest that occur are:

- Salicornietum brachystachyae
- Salicornietum dolichostachyae
- Puccinellietum maritimae
- Plantagini-Limonietum
- Halimionetum portulacoidis
- Puccinellietum distantis

The ecosystem services mainly refer to:

- Ability for transport to the sea harbors of Vlissingen and Antwerp;
- The ability to drain off water;
- The wetlands potential for recreation both on the water and on land.
- Fisheries

### 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
F: Estuarine waters		1		Representative
G: Intertidal mud, sand or salt flats		2		
H: Intertidal marshes		3		

Other non-wetland habitat

Other non-wetland habitats within the site	Area (ha) if known
Dunes	

### 4.3 - Biological components

#### 4.3.1 - Plant species

<no data available>

#### 4.3.2 - Animal species

<no data available>

### 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)

The climate according to Köppen is rainy (Cbf).

#### 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.

The Westerschelde is the Southern branch in the original mouth of the Schelde river. The estuary is 60 km long from the Belgian border till the North Sea, close to the Voordelta in the northwest. It's 2 to 8 km wide and measures more than 40.000 ha.

#### 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 general soil types are Alluvial and Podzol soils. The general land use is arable and pasture farming.

#### 4.4.4 - Water regime

Water permanence

Presence?	Changes at RIS update
Usually permanent water present	

Source of water that maintains character of the site

Presence?	Predominant water source	Changes at RIS update
Marine water	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change
Water inputs from surface water	<input 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:

At the moment it's the only estuary of the Delta with an open connection to the North Sea. It's a very dynamic area and the funnel shape causes substantial tidal variations.

The relatively well maintained estuarine system of the Westerschelde forms the connection between the river Schelde in Belgium and the North Sea.

The Westerschelde also receives 200 million m<sup>3</sup> drainage water a year from adjacent polders.

#### 4.4.5 - Sediment regime

Sediment regime unknown

Please provide further information on sediment (optional):

Deepening of the shipping lane to Antwerp (combined with sludge disposal elsewhere in the estuary) has affected geo-morphological processes like erosion and sedimentation causing silting up of side channels.

#### 4.4.6 - Water pH

Unknown

Please provide further information on pH (optional):

Probably no change although the pH of the water was not exactly known at the time of completing this database.

#### 4.4.7 - Water salinity

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

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

Unknown

Please provide further information on salinity (optional):

With the tidal flow saline sea water enters the site. This water mixes with the freshwater, the salinity of the water decreases upstream.

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

Eutrophic

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

Unknown

Please provide further information on dissolved or suspended nutrients (optional):

The eastern part of the Westerschelde is one of the most polluted areas in the Netherlands, though the water quality is improving due to measures that have been taken under the European Water Framework Directive. Recent sediments are obviously cleaner than the older ones. The pollution is imported with the Schelde-water from Belgium and also (still) originates from polluted sediments from the past.

#### 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

### 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
Wetland non-food products	Livestock fodder	Low

##### 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
Scientific and educational	Important knowledge systems, importance for research (scientific reference area or site)	Medium
Scientific and educational	Major scientific study site	Medium
Scientific and educational	Educational activities and opportunities	Medium
Scientific and educational	Long-term monitoring site	High

##### 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	High
Soil formation	Sediment retention	Medium

Other ecosystem service(s) not included above:

Dairy farming 5%, Boating 50%, Tourism and leisure 30%, Extractive operations 25%, Commercial fisheries 50%, Shipping traffic 25%, Conservation and research 11%.

Most of the topics studied at in the Wadden Sea (ecology of seals, birds (numbers, distribution, foraging, breeding), fish, invertebrates, seagrass, sediment) are also studied and monitored in the Delta by Rijkswaterstaat ([www.rws.nl](http://www.rws.nl)), the Center for Marine and Estuarine Ecology (NIOO/CEMO, [www.nioo.nl](http://www.nioo.nl)), Deltares ([www.deltares.nl](http://www.deltares.nl)) and IMARES (part of the Wageningen University and Research Centre; [www.imares.wur.nl](http://www.imares.wur.nl)) in Yerseke. One of the projects, named Moneos, monitors the effects of the deepening of the shipping lane on the morphology and ecology of the system.

Besides that, ongoing biodiversity monitoring is one of the obligatory activities in relation to the designated Natura2000 habitat types and species.

See additional material for further information.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>

##### Private ownership

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

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

within the Ramsar site:

The salt marshes are partly owned by Staatsbosbeheer, Natuurmonumenten and Zeeuws Landschap. The water area of the estuary is state owned.

in the surrounding area:

The water (North Sea) is state owned, on land several private owners.

#### 5.1.2 - Management authority

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

Main management authorities:

1. Rijkswaterstaat (Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment), Dienst Zeeland, see <https://www.rijkswaterstaat.nl/water/vaarwegenoverzicht/westerschelde>
2. Stichting het Zeeuwse Landschap, see <https://www.hetzeeuwselandschap.nl/natuurgebieden/verdrongen-land-van-saeftinghe>
3. Staatsbosbeheer, see <https://www.staatsbosbeheer.nl/natuurgebieden/zeeuws-vlaanderen>
4. Natuurmonumenten, see <https://www.natuurmonumenten.nl/natuurgebieden/verdrongen-land-van-zuid-beveland>

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

See websites mentioned above.

Postal address:

1. Rijkswaterstaat, P.O. Box 5014, 4330 KA Middelburg, the Netherlands, +31 118 672200
2. Stichting het Zeeuws Landschap, P.O. Box 25, 4450 AA Heinkenszand, the Netherlands, tel. +31 113 569110.
3. Head office: Staatsbosbeheer, P.O. Box 2, 3800 AA Amersfoort, the Netherlands, tel. +31 (0)30-6926111
4. Head office: Natuurmonumenten, P.O. Box 2166, 3800 CD Amersfoort, the Netherlands, tel. +31 (0)33 47 97 000

## 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
Commercial and industrial areas	Medium impact	Medium impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change
Tourism and recreation areas	Low impact	Low impact	<input checked="" 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
Dredging	High impact	High impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change
Canalisation and river regulation	High impact	High 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
Marine and freshwater aquaculture	Low impact	Low impact	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change

## Energy production and mining

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

## 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	Low impact	Low impact	<input checked="" 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	Medium impact	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change

## Pollution

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Air-borne pollutants	Medium impact	Medium impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change
Industrial and military effluents	Medium impact	Medium impact	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change
Agricultural and forestry effluents	Medium impact	Medium impact	<input 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	Westerschelde & Saeftinghe	<a href="https://www.natura2000.nl/gebieden/zeeland/westerschelde-saeftinghe">https://www.natura2000.nl/gebieden/zeeland/westerschelde-saeftinghe</a>	whole

## National legal designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
National Ecological Network (NEN)	Westerschelde & Saeftinghe	<a href="https://www.government.nl/topics/nature-and-biodiversity/national-ecological-network-nen">https://www.government.nl/topics/nature-and-biodiversity/national-ecological-network-nen</a>	whole

## Non-statutory designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
Important Bird Area	Westerschelde & Saeftinghe	<a href="http://datazone.birdlife.org/site/factsheet/1210">http://datazone.birdlife.org/site/factsheet/1210</a>	whole
Other non-statutory designation	KBA Westerschelde & Saeftinghe	<a href="http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/1210">http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/1210</a>	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

Other:

Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:

In order to compensate for the erosion of tidal flats in the Westerschelde there are plans to “un-polder” and connect the Hertogin Hedwige polder (approx. 300 ha in the Netherlands and Belgium) to the Verdrongen land van Saeftinghe. However, there is strong resistance against this plan from the local community as well as national politics. Other similar projects are at stake as well like Perkpolder and Waterdunen.

5.2.5 - Management planning

Is there a site-specific management plan for the site? Yes

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

Please indicate if a Ramsar centre, other educational or visitor facility, or an educational or visitor programme is associated with the site:

Observation hikes and excursions are organised in the salt marsh of the Verdrongen land van Saeftinghe. This area also has a visitor centre. The Zeeuws Landschap and Vogelbescherming Nederland regularly report about nature facts and findings.

URL of site-related webpage (if relevant):

5.2.6 - Planning for restoration

Is there a site-specific restoration plan? Yes, there is a plan

Further information

The 295 ha Hertogin Hedwigepolder in the east of the site, between Saeftinghe and the Belgian border, is currently being transformed into estuarine nature. It's a compensation for the loss of sand flats in the Westerschelde due to dredging to keep Antwerp Harbor accessible for large ships. The area is proposed to be added to the Natura 2000-site (if so it might as well be added to the Ramsar-site). Similar restoration measures also take place at the Belgian site of the border (see <https://www.zeeland.nl/natuur-en-landschap/natuurpakket-westerschelde/hedwige-prosperproject>).

5.2.7 - Monitoring implemented or proposed

Monitoring	Status
Birds	Implemented
Soil quality	Implemented
Animal species (please specify)	Implemented
Plant community	Implemented
Plant species	
Water quality	Implemented
Water regime monitoring	Implemented

Most of the topics studied at in the Wadden Sea (ecology of seals, birds (numbers, distribution, foraging, breeding), fish, invertebrates, seagrass, sediment) are also studied and monitored in the Delta by Rijkswaterstaat ([www.rws.nl](http://www.rws.nl)), the Center for Marine and Estuarine Ecology (NIOO/CEMO, [www.nioo.nl](http://www.nioo.nl)), Deltares ([www.deltares.nl](http://www.deltares.nl)) and IMARES (part of the Wageningen University and Research Centre; [www.imares.wur.nl](http://www.imares.wur.nl)) in Yerseke. One of the projects, named Moneos, monitors the effects of the deepening of the shipping lane on the morphology and ecology of the system.

## 6 - Additional material

### 6.1 - Additional reports and documents

#### 6.1.1 - Bibliographical references

The site equals the Natura 2000-boundaries. For up-to-date information and references about the site see <https://www.natura2000.nl/gebieden/zeeland/westerschelde-saefthinghe>.

#### 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

<1 file(s) uploaded>

vi. other published literature

<no file available>

#### 6.1.3 - Photograph(s) of the Site

Please provide at least one photograph of the site:



- ( Ruud Knol, - )

#### 6.1.4 - Designation letter and related data

Designation letter

<3 file(s) uploaded>

Date of Designation 1995-09-04