

Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS) – 2009-2012 version

Available for download from http://www.ramsar.org/ris/key_ris_index.htm.

Categories approved by Recommendation 4.7 (1990), as amended by Resolution VIII.13 of the 8th Conference of the Contracting Parties (2002) and Resolutions IX.1 Annex B, IX.6, IX.21 and IX.22 of the 9th Conference of the Contracting Parties (2005).

Notes for compilers:

1. The RIS should be completed in accordance with the attached *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines for completing the Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands*. Compilers are strongly advised to read this guidance before filling in the RIS.
2. Further information and guidance in support of Ramsar site designations are provided in the *Strategic Framework and guidelines for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance* (Ramsar Wise Use Handbook 14, 3rd edition). A 4th edition of the Handbook is in preparation and will be available in 2009.
3. Once completed, the RIS (and accompanying map(s)) should be submitted to the Ramsar Secretariat. Compilers should provide an electronic (MS Word) copy of the RIS and, where possible, digital copies of all maps.

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

Gunhild Dahle, County Governor of Nordland,
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Designation date

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Site Reference Number

2. Date this sheet was completed/updated:

April 2011

3. Country:

Norway

4. Name of the Ramsar site:

The precise name of the designated site in one of the three official languages (English, French or Spanish) of the Convention. Alternative names, including in local language(s), should be given in parentheses after the precise name.

Evenes wetland system: Kjerkvatnet

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

This RIS is for (tick one box only):

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

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:

7. Map of site:

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

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:

e.g. the boundary is the same as an existing protected area (nature reserve, national park, etc.), or follows a catchment boundary, or follows a geopolitical boundary such as a local government jurisdiction, follows physical boundaries such as roads, follows the shoreline of a waterbody, etc.

The boundary is the same as for the existing Kjerkvatnet Nature Reserve

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

Provide the coordinates of the approximate centre of the site and/or the limits of the site. If the site is composed of more than one separate area, provide coordinates for each of these areas.

68°28' N, 16°39' E

9. General location:

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

The Nature Reserve is located in Evenes municipality in Nordland County, the nearest town being Harstad situated 44 km north from Kjerkvatnet. Harstad has a population of approximately 23.000 inhabitants.

10. Elevation: (in metres: average and/or maximum & minimum)

0-10 m.a.s.l

11. Area: (in hectares)

223.5 ha (102 ha terrestrial)

12. General overview of the site:

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

This site must be seen in context with Tennvatn and Myrvatn in Troms county. The site must also be considered together with Nautå and Sommervatnet (see RIS for these areas). The sites belong to catchment and water systems that have much the same characteristics. The wetland system is considered to be one of the only remaining naturally nutrient rich systems in the northernmost part of the world, and is therefore of international importance both botanically and limnologically.

This sub-site comprises of a shallow lake and the shallow and slowly flowing, meandering Tårstad river. The river meets the sea in Tårstadosen where there are numerous ponds, gravel banks and shallow sand areas. The outlet area is approximate 700 meter long.

Kjerkvatnet is of high importance for different species of ducks and other wetland birds. The area has several important biological functions, such as staging area for migrating birds and grazing area for ducks and other birds. Kjerkvatnet and the Tårstad river are also very important areas for moulting ducks.

13. Ramsar Criteria:

Tick the box under each Criterion applied to the designation of the Ramsar site. See Annex II of the *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines* for the Criteria and guidelines for their application (adopted by Resolution VII.11). All Criteria which apply should be ticked.

1 •	2 •	3 •	4 •	5 •	6 •	7	8 •	9
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14. Justification for the application of each Criterion listed in 13 above:

Provide justification for each Criterion in turn, clearly identifying to which Criterion the justification applies (see Annex II for guidance on acceptable forms of justification).

(Capitalized letters shows the species' status on the Norwegian Red List)

Criterion 1: This sub site is a part of a diverse and productive wetlands system which is both representative and unique for the region. *Chara*- lakes are rare in Norway, and Kjerkvatnet represents one of the northernmost of these lakes in Norway. These naturally nutrient rich systems are highly threatened by eutrophication.

The combination of marble in the bedrock and marine deposits gives nutrition to a botanical variation and diversity that is unique to the northern parts of Norway. The site has several nature- and vegetation types that are classified as rare and/or threatened in Norway:

Rich fens with many demanding species like different *Carex* species, orchids, and ponds with threatened *Chara* species.

Large shallow saline/brackish areas with a great variety in vegetation types

Salt marsh: Common salt marsh-grass; *Puccinellia maritima* subtype

Salt marsh: *Carex suspathacea* subtype

Salt marsh: *Juncus gerardii* subtype

Brackish salt marsh: Slender spike rush *Eleocharis uniglumis* subtype

Brackish salt marsh: saltmarsh flat-sedge *Blismus rufus* subtype

Saline and brackish foreshore/pan: Arrowgrass *Triglochin* subtype
 Perennial drift-walls
 Hard eutrophic lakes with different rare vegetation types:
 Elodeid vegetation; lime-rich pondweed, *Potamogeton* subtype
 Chara lake-bottom vegetation; species-rich *Chara* subtype,
 Vegetated alkaline sea-cliffs.

Criterion 2: The site has populations of *Chara contraria* (VU), and is also breeding site for Greater Scaup *Aythya marila* (VU). The site is also important for the conservation of several near threatened species (see points 20, 21 and 22)

Criterion 4: The site is very important for many different waterfowl in different critical phases of their life cycle. It is used as resting area for migratory and moulting waterfowl and as breeding site by different common and rare/threatened bird species (see also 22).

15. Biogeography (required when Criteria 1 and/or 3 and /or certain applications of Criterion 2 are applied to the designation):

Name the relevant biogeographic region that includes the Ramsar site, and identify the biogeographic regionalisation system that has been applied.

Middle boreal vegetation zone, slightly oceanic section (Mb – O1)¹.
 Arctic region².

b) biogeographic regionalisation scheme (include reference citation):

1. Zonal division showing the variation in vegetation from south to north and from the lowlands to the mountains, and sectional graduation showing the variation between the coast and inland (In: Moen, A. 1998. Nasjonalatlas for Norge; vegetasjon. Statens kartverk, Hønefoss).
 2. Biogeographical Regions of Europe, European Environmental Agency, 2005.
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16. Physical features of the site:

Describe, as appropriate, the geology, geomorphology; origins - natural or artificial; hydrology; soil type; water quality; water depth, water permanence; fluctuations in water level; tidal variations; downstream area; general climate, etc.

Geology	The bedrock consists of marble (calcium carbonate).
Geomorphology	A shallow lake and a shallow and slowly flowing, meandering Tårstad river. The river meets the sea in Tårstadosen where there are numerous ponds, gravel banks and shallow sand areas.
Substrate / soil type	Most of the area is covered by till. The lower parts of the area is covered by marine deposits, and the southern parts of Lavangsvatnet and a part of the river Tårstad is covered by a north-south bound terminal moraine.
Water depth / fluctuations	Kjerkvatnet is a shallow (max. depth 5.5 m) lake, influenced by brackish water. The flow in the river Tårstadelva varies during the year depending on precipitation, snow melting and draught. At Tårstadosen freshwater meets the sea and parts of the river are influenced by brackish water depending on the tide. Middle tidal amplitude is approx. 182 cm (Narvik harbour). The water quality in Lavangsvatnet and Tårstadelva has been characterized as “good”.
Climate	The climate is somewhat atlantic with wet summers and mild winters. Average annual precipitation is 900- 1100 mm at sea level. There are 200 -220 days with precipitation per year.

17. Physical features of the catchment area:

Describe the surface area, general geology and geomorphological features, general soil types, and climate (including climate type).

Kjerkvatnet is one of 12 lakes in the Kvitfors/Tårstad watercourse (area 82 km²). This is a small watercourse in a low-lying, undulating terrain dominated by birch forests, some agricultural and built-up areas. There are great waterfalls in the upper part of the watercourse, whereas the lower part is characterised by calm rivers, small riffles and pools.

The bedrock is for the most part rich in calcium carbonate and there are large areas of marble, and most of the bedrock is alloktone layers. The sediments in the area are mostly from the kambro-silurian age, but in the lower areas there are younger marine deposits. The entire area is characterized as “rich in calcium-carbonate” with Ca-concentrations > 4 mg/l.

The climate in the catchment area is somewhat atlantic. The annual precipitation varies from between 1000 – 1500 mm in the higher parts of the catchment and 900- 1100 mm at sea level.

18. Hydrological values:

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

The lake Lavangsvatnet in the northern part of the site is a naturally eutrophic lake and the origin of the river Tårstadelva. The water quality in Lavangsvatnet and Tårstadelva has been characterized as “good”. The wetlands’ ability to clean itself is characterized as good. (maintenance of water quality). The mires represent an important carbon reservoir.

19. Wetland Types

a) presence:

Circle or underline the applicable codes for the wetland types of the Ramsar “Classification System for Wetland Type” present in the Ramsar site. Descriptions of each wetland type code are provided in Annex I of the *Explanatory Notes & Guidelines*.

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:

List the wetland types identified in a) above in order of their dominance (by area) in the Ramsar site, starting with the wetland type with the largest area.

Marine: G, O, H, M, W, Xf

20. General ecological features:

Provide further description, as appropriate, of the main habitats, vegetation types, plant and animal communities present in the Ramsar site, and the ecosystem services of the site and the benefits derived from them.

A diverse and productive wetland. Of great importance for ducks and other waterfowl in different life stages. The bird species present are typical for highly productive lakes (e.g. Horned grebe *Podiceps auritus*).

More than 90 % of the area is characterized as very important. The rest is characterized as important (Direktoratet for naturforvaltning 2007).

21. Noteworthy flora:

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 14, Justification for the application of the Criteria) indicating, e.g., which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc. *Do not include here taxonomic lists of species present – these may be supplied as supplementary information to the RIS.*

Of particular interest is the occurrence of different *Chara*- species in the eutrophic lakes and in the flooded ponds in the wetland: *Chara contraria* (VU) and *Chara aspera* (NT).

Orchids found on the alkaline fens: Fragrant Orchid *Gymnadenia conopsea* (NT) and The Early Marsh Orchid *Dactylorhiza incarnate* (NT).

Different pondweed-species: *Stuckenia pectinata* (NT) *Potamogeton rutilus* (NT) and *Potamogeton friesii* (NT)

Demanding species found on the alkaline sea-cliffs: Field Gentian *Gentianella campestris*, *Primula scandinavica* (NT), and also on the list of species of which Norway has a special responsibility through the Emerald Network), Common Moonwort *Botrychium lunaria* and Autumn Dwarf Gentian *Gentianella amarella*.

22. Noteworthy fauna:

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 14. Justification for the application of the Criteria) indicating, e.g., which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc., including count data. *Do not include here taxonomic lists of species present – these may be supplied as supplementary information to the RIS.*

The site and the rest of the wetlands along Tårstadvassdraget are important staging, grazing and moulting sites for several nationally common species because of their high productivity. A bird counting in Kjerkvatnet September 2008 gave the following result: Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*, 58 ind., Eurasian Wigeon *Anas penelope* 55 ind., Eurasian Teal *Anas crecca* 37 ind., Tufted Duck, *Aythya fuligula* 36 ind., and Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna* 15 ind.

The site is important as breeding site for Horned Grebe *Podiceps auritus* (approx 5 couples), Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus* (approx 10 couples). Northern Shoveler *Anas chipeata* (NT) 1-2 couples, Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus* (NT) and Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata* (NT).

Other rare and threatened species that use the site for foraging and staging are Greater Scaup *Aythya marila* (VU) <5 ind, Northern Pintail *Anas acuta* (NT) <10 ind, Gadwall *Anas strepera* (NT) <5 ind. Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* has also lately been observed hunting in the area.

Mammals like Moose *Alces alces* and Roe Deer *Capreolus capreolus* are regularly observed here. Fish species like Atlantic Salmon *Salmo salar*, anadromous Brown Trout *Salmo trutta* and Arctic Charr *Salvelinus alpinus* are also found within the site.

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:

The watercourse and the surrounding area are used for different outdoor activities like birdwatching, hunting (Moose *Alces alces* and Roe Deer *Capreolus capreolus*) and sports fishing (Atlantic Salmon *Salmo salar*, anadromous Brown Trout *Salmo trutta* and Arctic Charr *Salvelinus alpinus*).

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?

Not known international social and cultural values.

If Yes, tick the box ☐ and describe this importance under one or more of the following categories:

- i) sites which provide 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) sites which have exceptional cultural traditions or records of former civilizations that have influenced the ecological character of the wetland:
- iii) sites where the ecological character of the wetland depends on the interaction with local communities or indigenous peoples:
- iv) sites where 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:

24. Land tenure/ownership:

- a) within the Ramsar site:

Private

- b) in the surrounding area:

Private /State (marine area)

25. Current land (including water) use:

- a) within the Ramsar site:

Along the Tårstad river there are smaller herds of cattle grazing in the summer season. Sports fishing and hunting as described in 23.

- b) in the surroundings/catchment:

Avian activity and activities conducted by the Norwegian Airforce from Evenes/Harstad Airport. The airport is very close to the lake Kjerkvatnet and this represents a threat when it comes to pollution of the Nature Reserve, both through chemicals, noise and general disturbance of the wildlife.

Agricultural activities, mainly in the area close to the sea. Grazing by sheep, reindeer and cattle and harvesting of grass. Some farms and other houses are also located within the area.

One road for common regional traffic goes along the site and through the site at two locations.

26. Factors (past, present or potential) adversely affecting the site's ecological character, including changes in land (including water) use and development projects:

- a) within the Ramsar site:

There has been occasions where farmers have been cleaning and emptying their tractors and manure spreaders in the Tårstad river, close to the bridge. This can affect the water quality in the saline/brackish area of the river.

- b) in the surrounding area:

The Airport and the Norwegian Airforces activities is a potential pollution problem. Various chemicals like formiat and acetat used for deicing of the runway, as well as liquids used for deicing planes, mainly glycol with different additives may seep into the soil. The size and frequency of this problem is not known yet. There are also hangars and garages with oil- and fuel emissions. In addition there are dust and particles in the exhaust from planes. The emissions are regulated through an emission permit given by the County Governor of Nordland.

There is high agricultural activity within the catchment area, which leads to erosion and run-off of nutrients. There have also been some incidents where manure and ensilages have not been stored by the rules and thereby contributed to pollute the watercourse. The number of farms and area used for agriculture in the catchment are decreasing.

27. Conservation measures taken:

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

In particular, if the site is partly or wholly a World Heritage Site and/or a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, please give the names of the site under these designations.

Established as Nature Reserve December 19th 1997. The boundaries for the Ramsar site are the same as for Kjerkvatnet Nature Reserve.

b) If appropriate, list the IUCN (1994) protected areas category/ies which apply to the site (tick the box or boxes as appropriate):

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

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

No management plan exists, but the task has been given high priority by the management authority.

d) Describe any other current management practices:

None

28. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:

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

The site is identified as one of the protected areas where it is necessary to get a management plan. A management plan will also include the other protected areas in the vicinity.

29. Current scientific research and facilities:

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

The Norwegian Institute for Water Research has been given a permit to undertake an inventory of water plants and, if necessary, collect plant species within the site.

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

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

Posters with information about the Nature Reserve, ecological and biological facts and information on the regulations of activities in the site have been put up in three places.

31. Current recreation and tourism:

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

The site is to some extent used for recreation by residents and tourists.

32. Jurisdiction:

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

Norwegian Directorate for Nature Management (DN), Tungasletta 2, 7485 Trondheim
Ph +47 73580500
Fax +47 73580501
Email: postmottak@dirnat.no

33. Management authority:

Provide the name and address of the local office(s) of the agency(ies) or organisation(s) directly responsible for managing the wetland. Wherever possible provide also the title and/or name of the person or persons in this office with responsibility for the wetland.

The site is managed by the County Governor of Nordland, which is under the instruction of DN.
Address: County Governor of Nordland, Molovn. 10, 8002 Bodø. Phone: + 47 75 53 15 80. E-mail: postmottak@fmno.no

34. Bibliographical references:

Scientific/technical references only. If biogeographic regionalisation scheme applied (see 15 above), list full reference citation for the scheme.

<http://artsobservasjoner.no/fugler/>

Direktoratet for naturforvaltning 2007. Kartlegging av naturtyper - Verdisetting av biologisk mangfold. DN-håndbok 13 2.utgave 2006 (oppdatert 2007).

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Kålås, J.A., Viken, Å. og Bakken, T. (red.) 2006. *Norsk Rødliste 2006 – 2006 Norwegian Red List*. Artsdatabanken, Norway

Larsen, B.H. & Gaarder, G. 2009. *Biologisk mangfold i Evenes kommune*. Miljøfaglig Utredning Rapport 2009: 30

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Moen, A. 1998. *National Atlas of Norway: Vegetation*. Norwegian Mapping Authority, Hønefoss

EUs rammedirektiv for vann. *Karakterisering av vannområder I Nord-Norge. Del I, Kvitfjor/Tårstadvassdraget og Ofotfjorden 2004*. Rapport fra samarbeid mellom Sweco Grøner, NINA, Akvaplan og KM Miljøutredning.

Naturbasen, www.naturbase.no , nedlastet 24.08.09

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