



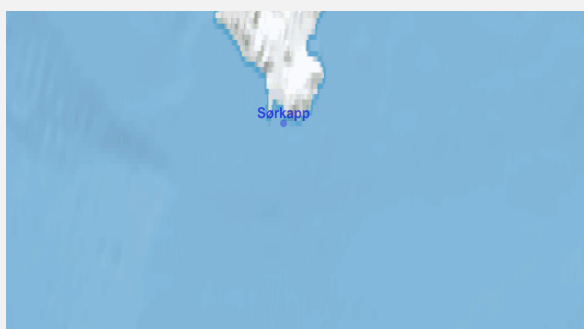
Ramsar Information Sheet

Published on 23 June 2023

Update version, previously published on : 9 July 2018

Norway

Sørkapp



Designation date	12 November 2010
Site number	1965
Coordinates	76°33'35"N 16°34'04"E
Area	55 203,00 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

Sørkapp includes the southernmost part of Spitsbergen together with Sørkappøya island, the surrounding islands and skerries and the sea. Excluding Bjørnøya, located further south, the Site comprises the southernmost part of Svalbard. The Site is characterized by a short growth season, water-saturated soil, frozen subsoil and low precipitation. More than 60% of the Sørkapp land territory is still covered by glaciers despite climate warming since the beginning of the 20th century.

The rich primary production in the sea is the basis for most of the bird- and mammal life, but also for plants and invertebrates. The site covers shallow sea areas, islands, numerous ponds and lakes, streams and small rivers. The low-lying coastal landscape with permafrost has spotted (grass) vegetation, and further inland it meets ice-covered mountain ridges. That is where the bird cliff Keilhauet is situated and it is surrounded by guano-rich ground. 19 species of marine mammals can be seen in the area. Offshore ice carries polar bears around the Cape – however they are not particularly common for the area. Svalbard reindeer and Arctic fox is found here year-round.

Svalbard rock ptarmigan is the only bird species wintering on land. A few bird species like long-tailed duck, gulls and auks may be wintering here in areas free of sea ice, but most are migratory. The number of breeding and migrating bird species is high for the biogeographic region, and they occur in high numbers. Waders, geese and seabirds are dominant groups. Some are listed on the Svalbard Red List.

Sørkappøya and its surrounding islands and skerries is located about 2 km south of Spitsbergen (the largest island on Svalbard) and is situated between two open seas – the Barents Sea in the east and the Greenland Sea in the west. Sørkappøya consists of several habitats attracting a wide variety of bird species. The littoral zone, shallow seashores, and the freshwater supply create a central foraging area where waterfowl gather. Additionally, the unusually high occurrence of seaweed in this area provides important feeding opportunities for waders during their autumn migration. The area surrounding Sørkappøya is important resting-, breeding-, moulting- and feeding area throughout the year for several different bird species.

Sørkapp is part of Sør-Spitsbergen National Park (1973) and is also a protected bird sanctuary.

2 - Data & location

2.1 - Formal data

2.1.1 - Name and address of the compiler of this RIS

Responsible compiler

Institution/agency

Postal address

National Ramsar Administrative Authority

Postal address

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

From year

To year

2.1.3 - Name of the Ramsar Site

Official name (in English, French or Spanish)

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

(Update) A. Changes to Site boundary Yes No

(Update) B. Changes to Site area

(Update) The Site area has been calculated more accurately

(Update) The Site has been delineated more accurately

(Update) The Site area has increased because of a boundary extension

(Update) The Site area has decreased because of a boundary restriction

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

2.1.5 - Changes to the ecological character of the Site

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

2.2 - Site location

2.2.1 - Defining the Site boundaries

b) Digital map/image

<1 file(s) uploaded>

Former maps

Boundaries description

The boundaries include Sørkapp Nature Reserve, and parts of Sør-Spitsbergen National Park (Sørbukta and Sørkapplandet (Øylandet from Sørbukta, Olsokneset, Sørflya, Kikkutodden, Keilhaufjellet to Dumskolten)). NB: The location of the Site border is best represented on the PDF map. The GIS base map does not reflect the land correctly.

2.2.2 - General location

a) In which large administrative region does the site lie?

b) What is the nearest town or population centre?

2.2.3 - For wetlands on national boundaries only

a) Does the wetland extend onto the territory of one or more other countries? Yes No

b) Is the site adjacent to another designated Ramsar Site on the territory of another Contracting Party? Yes No

2.2.4 - Area of the Site

Official area, in hectares (ha):

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

2.2.5 - Biogeography

Biogeographic regions

Regionalisation scheme(s)	Biogeographic region
Marine Ecoregions of the World (MEOW)	2. North and East Barents Sea Ecoregion (Arctic)
Other scheme (provide name below)	1. Elvebakk 1989. Biogeographical zones of Svalbard and Jan Mayen based on the distribution patterns of thermophilous vascular plants. Upubl. manuskript, Universitetet i Tromsø.
EU biogeographic regionalization	Arctic

Other biogeographic regionalisation scheme

1. Elvebakk 1989. Biogeographical zones of Svalbard and Jan Mayen based on the distribution patterns of thermophilous vascular plants. Upubl. manuskript, Universitetet i Tromsø.
2. Marine Ecoregions of the World (MeoW). The Nature Conservancy

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 island Sørkapp is part of a marine archipelago with shallow waters, numerous skerries and small islands. The Mainland Sørkaplandet is a wetland strongly influenced by permafrost and erosion from wind, ice and the sea. The site is a typical archipelago and wetland for the biogeographic region. The number of breeding and migrating bird species is high for the biogeographic region, and represented in high numbers. This type of landscape is representative for this region.

- Criterion 2 : Rare species and threatened ecological communities

Optional text box to provide further information

The site has a high diversity of both nationally common seabirds, and threatened/rare species. Species adapted to bird cliffs such as the Atlantic puffin *Fratercula arctica* (IUCN: VU) are breeding in high numbers in Keilhauet. The sea area between Stormbukta and Øylandet is an important moulting area for king eiders *Somateria spectabilis* (2000 ind., Svalbard Red List: NT, Annex II Berne Convention). The area is also an important breeding area for the red knot *Calidris canutus* (IUCN: NT, Svalbard Red List: VU) and the black-legged kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla* (IUCN: VU).

- Criterion 3 : Biological diversity

Justification

The site supports biological elements that are rare or characteristic for the biogeographic region. The status as a nesting place varies dependent on the disturbance from the Arctic fox and polar bear. The smaller islets are yet important and traditional breeding sites for barnacle geese, the common eider, the Arctic tern, the parasitic jaeger and the great skua. The sabine's gull is likely nesting on the islets as well. Sørkappøya is an important breeding site for the red-throated loon, and Øylandet is known to be a breeding site for the red phalarope and different waders. During autumn migration the area (Sørkappøya in particular) is of great importance for different waders and geese. Especially the purple sandpiper occurs in high numbers. The site has a high diversity of both nationally common seabirds, and threatened/rare species. Species adapted to bird cliffs such as the black-legged kittiwake and the Atlantic puffin are breeding in high numbers in Keilhauet. Other auk species are found here, but not in great numbers (thick-billed murre, dovekie). The sea area between Stormbukta and Øylandet is an important moulting area for common eiders, king eiders and barnacle geese (Georg Bangjord, pers. comm.).

Post-breeding concentrations of barnacle geese are found along the western coasts of Spitsbergen to Sørkapp. Large aggregations of brent geese have been recorded at Sørkapp. It is also reported (Bangjord et al 2006) that northern parts of Øylandet and Sørfløya seem to be an important staging area for brent geese. Important post-breeding aggregations of pink-footed geese have been located in coastal regions in southern parts of Spitsbergen (Mehlum F. 1998).

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

Optional text box to provide further information

The site is used as breeding-, moulting-, feeding- and resting area for several bird species. Stormbukta and Øyrlandet are important moulting areas for common eiders, king eiders (2000 ind.) and barnacle geese. Additionally, Sørflya and northern parts of Øyrlandet seem to be important staging areas for brent geese. An important staging area for marine adapted bird species, geese and waders.

Strandbogen also used to be an haul-out site for walrus.

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
Plantae								
TRACHEOPHYTA/ LILIOPSIDA	<i>Puccinhippsia vacillans</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	Svalbard red list: VU	This rare species is documented at several locations around Stormbukta.

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								
Others																	
CHORDATA/ MAMMALIA	<i>Phoca vitulina</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Criterion 4: The shallow area east of Sørkappøya is especially important resting area during low tide
CHORDATA/ MAMMALIA	<i>Ursus maritimus</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				VU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Svalbard red list: Considered as VU	Polar Bears is frequently observed in the area
CHORDATA/ MAMMALIA	<i>Vulpes lagopus</i>	<input 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"/>		Regularly observed in the area.
Birds																	
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Alle alle</i>	<input 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"/>		
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</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"/>		Criterion 4: Important post-breeding aggregations of Pink-footed geese have been located in coastal regions in southern parts of Spitsbergen (Mehlum F. 1998).
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Branta bernicla</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"/>		Criterion 4: The site is the first (and last) landmark on Spitsbergen on the migratory pathway to and from the continent. It is of special value for geese and waders during the autumn migration. This species breeds within the site.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Branta leucopsis</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"/>	Ann. II Berne Convention	Criterion 3: The smaller islets are yet important and traditional breeding sites for this species. The sea area between Stormbukta and Øyrlandet is an important moulting area for this species. See text box below.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Calidris alba</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Svalbard Red List: Considered as VU, Ann. II Berne Convention	Criterion 4: The site is the first (and last) landmark on Spitsbergen on the migratory pathway to and from the continent. It is of special value for geese and waders during the autumn migration. This species breeds within the site.
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ann. II Berne convention	Criterion 4: The site is the first (and last) landmark on Spitsbergen on the migratory pathway to and from the continent. It is of special value for geese and waders during the autumn migration. This species breeds within 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								
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Calidris canutus</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				NT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Svalbard Red List: Considered as VU	Criterion 4: The site is the first (and last) landmark on Spitsbergen on the migratory pathway to and from the continent. It is of special value for geese and waders during the autumn migration. This species breeds within the site.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Calidris maritima</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"/>	Ann. II Berne Convention	Criterion 4: The smaller islets are important and traditional breeding sites for this species. During autumn migration the area (and maybe Sørkappøya in particular) is of great importance for this species.
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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ann. II Berne Convention	Criterion 4: The site is the first (and last) landmark on Spitsbergen on the migratory pathway to and from the continent. It is of special value for geese and waders during the autumn migration. This species breeds within the site.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Fratercula arctica</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"/>				VU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Criterion 4: Fratercula arctica are breeding in high numbers in Keilhauet.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Gavia stellata</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"/>		Criterion 4: The smaller islets are important and traditional breeding sites for this species.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Larus hyperboreus</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Svalbard Red List: Considered as VU	Criterion 4: The site is the first (and last) landmark on Spitsbergen on the migratory pathway to and from the continent. It is of special value for geese and waders during the autumn migration. This species breeds within the site.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Pagophila eburnea</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"/>				NT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Salbard Red List: Considered as VU, Ann. II Berne Convention,	Occasionally seen in the area
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Phalaropus fulicarius</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"/>		Criterion 4: The site is the first (and last) landmark on Spitsbergen on the migratory pathway to and from the continent. It is of special value for geese and waders during the autumn migration. This species breeds within the site.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				VU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		40000 ind. Criterion 4: The site is the first (and last) landmark on Spitsbergen on the migratory pathway to and from the continent. It is of special value for geese and waders during the autumn migration. This species breeds within the site.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Somateria mollissima</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"/>				NT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Svalbard Red List: Considered as NT	.Criterion 4: The smaller islets are important and traditional breeding sites for this species. The sea area between Stormbukta and Øylandet is an important moulting area for Common Eider.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Somateria spectabilis</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"/>	Ann. II Berne Convention	Criterion 4: The sea area between Stormbukta and Øylandet is an important moulting area for this species. 2000 individuals have been observed in the area.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</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"/>		Criterion 4: The smaller islets are important and traditional breeding sites for this species.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Stercorarius skua</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"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Criterion 4: The smaller islets are important and traditional breeding sites for this species.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Sterna paradisaea</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"/>	Ann. II Berne Convention	Criterion 4: The smaller islets are yet important and traditional breeding sites for this species. 7500 individuals have been observed.
CHORDATA/AVES	<i>Uria lomvia</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"/>	Svalbard red list: Considered as VU	

Phylum	Scientific name	Species qualifies under criterion				Species contributes under criterion				Pop. Size	Period of pop. Est.	% occurrence 1)	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendix I	CMS Appendix I	Other Status	Justification
		2	4	6	9	3	5	7	8								
CHORDATA/ AVES	<i>Xema sabini</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"/>	Svalbard red list: Considered as EN	Criterion 4: The site is the first (and last) landmark on Spitsbergen on the migratory pathway to and from the continent. It is of special value for geese and waders during the autumn migration. This species breeds within the site.

1) Percentage of the total biogeographic population at the site

Further information for *Branta bernicla* - justification of Criterion 3: Large aggregations of brent geese have been recorded at Sørkapp. It is also reported (Bangjord et al 2006) that northern parts of Øyrlandet and Sørflya seems to be important staging area for brent geese.

Post-breeding concentrations of barnacle geese are found along the western coasts of Spitsbergen to Sørkapp. Most barnacle geese leave their nesting islands just after hatching and raise their goslings in coastal tundra areas rich in small lakes and lush vegetation. The largest numbers of barnacle geese during this period are found along the western coasts of Spitsbergen from Isfjorden to Sørkapp.

Polar bear: Sørkapp is frequently visited by polar bears, especially when there is sea ice in the area. Some denning locations exists, and there are indications of bears hunting at the glacier fronts (terminus).

Capitalized letters shows the species' status on the Svalbard Red List 2021

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

<no data available>

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

4.1 - Ecological character

Situated in the Arctic and characterized by:

- Archipelago and tundra wetland. Rock or sand/gravel dominated shores. Low-land plain along the coast, partly covered by marine deposits and presumably formed due to the combined actions of frost weathering and abrasion by the ice. Seasonal streams and ponds.
- Sparse grass vegetation. Vegetation on the islands is influenced by saltwater.
- Drift ice occurs in winter and spring, but the archipelago is normally not icebound.
- An important staging area for marine adapted bird species, geese and waders. Used as breeding-, moulting-, feeding- and resting area.
- Used year-round by mammals such as polar bears, Svalbard reindeer and Arctic fox. Strandbogen is a former haul-out site for walrus.

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

Marine or coastal wetlands

Wetland types (code and name)	Local name	Ranking of extent (1: greatest - 4: least)	Area (ha) of wetland type	Justification of Criterion 1
A: Permanent shallow marine waters		1		Representative
D: Rocky marine shores		3		Representative
E: Sand, shingle or pebble shores				
J: Coastal brackish / saline lagoons				

Inland wetlands

Wetland types (code and name)	Local name	Ranking of extent (1: greatest - 4: least)	Area (ha) of wetland type	Justification of Criterion 1
Fresh water > Flowing water >> N: Seasonal/intermittent/irregular rivers/streams/creeks		4		
Fresh water > Marshes on inorganic or peat soils >> Vt: Tundra wetlands		2		

4.3 - Biological components

4.3.1 - Plant species

Other noteworthy plant species

Phylum	Scientific name	Position in range / endemism / other
TRACHEOPHYTA/MAGNOLIOPSIDA	<i>Draba micropetala</i>	Svalbard Red list: NT
TRACHEOPHYTA/MAGNOLIOPSIDA	<i>Ranunculus glacialis</i>	Svalbard Red list: NT
TRACHEOPHYTA/MAGNOLIOPSIDA	<i>Ranunculus hyperboreus</i>	Svalbard Red list: LC
TRACHEOPHYTA/MAGNOLIOPSIDA	<i>Salix herbacea</i>	Svalbard Red list: LC

Optional text box to provide further information

Capitalized letters shows the species' status on the Svalbard Red List 2021

4.3.2 - Animal species

Other noteworthy animal species

Phylum	Scientific name	Pop. size	Period of pop. est.	% occurrence	Position in range / endemism / other
CHORDATA/MAMMALIA	<i>Rangifer tarandus platyrhynchus</i>				The Svalbard Reindeer <i>Rangifer tarandus platyrhynchus</i> seems to be separated from other reindeer stocks on Svalbard. (pers.comm. Georg Bangjord).

Optional text box to provide further information

The site is utilized throughout the year by mammals such as polar bears, Svalbard reindeer and Arctic foxes.

4.4 - Physical components

4.4.1 - Climate

Climatic region	Subregion
E: Polar climate with extremely cold winters and summers	ET: Tundra (Polar tundra, no true summer)

Spitsbergen has an Arctic climate, mildened by the northern arm of the Gulf stream running along its western coast. Average annual temperatures oscillate between -9°C and -3°C, average summer (July-August) temperature is 3-5°C. During winter time (September-April) the temperature rarely drops below -30°C, whereas in the summertime (June-August) it rarely exceeds +10°C. Frequent changes in temperature, humidity, air pressure and wind strength are characteristic. A perpetual day lasts from April 21th to August 21th, and the polar night from October 28th to February 20th. Annual precipitation, concentrated in the summer, is 300-500 mm.

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.

Norwegian Sea, Greenland Sea, Barents Sea

4.4.3 - Soil

Mineral

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

Organic

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

No available information

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

Please provide further information on the soil (optional)

The strand flat is a low-land plain along the coast, partly covered by marine deposits and presumably formed due to the combined actions of frost weathering and abrasion by the sea during interglacial periods. It is Mesic to seasonally wet with thin snow cover in winter. Closed to discontinuous vegetation. Level silty areas, old stable and vegetated alluvial fans and sedimentation plains. Often graminid dominated. Wind-eroded tussocks imply a thin snow cover. Moss cover reduced due to the less dense snow cover and frost upheaval. The surrounding sea areas are shallow and nutrient-rich. The shoreline around the islands consists partly of cliffs, partly of sandy shores. The land areas consist of bare rock and some areas covered with marine deposits.

The soil is characterized as poor and barren, containing low levels of nitrogen (N), phosphorous (P) and potassium (K).

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 precipitation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change

Water destination

Presence?	Changes at RIS update
Marine	No change

Stability of water regime

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

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

During spring and early summer the soil is nearly saturated with water as permafrost impedes drainage, preventing the water from percolating downwards. The lakes are small and shallow. The rivers are short-lived summer phenomena. At the coasts the thickness of permafrost is 10-40 m. The variation between high and low tides measured at Ny-Ålesund is 137 cm at average.

Fresh water on the islands originates from precipitation.

4.4.5 - Sediment regime

Sediment regime unknown

4.4.6 - Water pH

Unknown

4.4.7 - Water salinity

Unknown

4.4.8 - Dissolved or suspended nutrients in water

Eutrophic

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

Unknown

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

Please describe whether, and if so how, the landscape and ecological characteristics in the area surrounding the Ramsar Site differ from the 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
Wetland non-food products	Other	Medium

Cultural Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Recreation and tourism	Recreational hunting and fishing	Medium
Recreation and tourism	Nature observation and nature-based tourism	Low
Spiritual and inspirational	Cultural heritage (historical and archaeological)	Medium
Scientific and educational	Major scientific study site	Medium
Scientific and educational	Long-term monitoring site	Medium

Other ecosystem service(s) not included above:

Harvesting of eggs and eider down has been performed with various intensity in Svalbard from the 18th century and until today. Trappers using this part of Spitsbergen as hunting grounds have also collected eggs and eider down in the past. This is still done occasionally, but is strictly regulated by law and it requires a permit from the Governor of Svalbard and Ministry of Climate and Environment. Any hunting and gathering taking place is therefore considered sustainable.

There are several cultural heritage sites from Russian wintering in the 17th century and from Norwegian wintering in the 19th century. These are graves, huts, remain from crosses, hunting traps and hut sites. Not all are registered by the Governor of Svalbard.

Some research and biodiversity monitoring have been conducted in the area. On Sørkappøya there is a cabin used by biologists during field studies. It was built in 2009. Several Russian trapper stations have been examined by archaeologists.

There is limited use of the Ramsar site for recreation/tourism. Three different landing sites are known used by the expedition cruise ships. The regulations for Sørkappøya Nature Reserve ban visits from May 15th to August 15th because of the breeding season for the birds.

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

(ECD) Nutrient cycling	Bird species feeding on the sea are of great importance in plant and soil development, delivering organic matter to the land by fertilizing.
(ECD) Notable species interactions, including grazing, predation, competition, diseases and pathogens	The establishment of South Spitsbergen National Park has led to a regeneration of the local reindeer herd and consequently to the overgrazing of the local tundra, resulting in altered plant communities.

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"/>

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

Within the Ramsar site: State owned

In the surrounding area: State owned

5.1.2 - Management authority

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

Governor of Svalbard

Postal address:

Sysseimesteren på Svalbard
Pb. 633
N-9171 LONGYEARBYEN

E-mail address:

firmapost@sysseimesteren.no

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			<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Unspecified development			<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

Transportation and service corridors

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Unspecified			<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

Biological resource use

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Unspecified			<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

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
Unspecified	Medium impact	Medium impact	<input 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

Please describe any other threats (optional):

Within the Ramsar site: No such factors are known.

In the surrounding area: Increasing tourism, oil spill from ships and oil/gas development projects in this part of the Arctic is a possible threat.

5.2.2 - Legal conservation status

National legal designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
National Park	South Spitsbergen		partly
Nature Reserve	Sørkapp		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

Human Activities

Measures	Status
Regulation/management of recreational activities	Implemented

Other:

The proposed site lies within South Spitsbergen National Park and Sørkapp Nature reserve (established in 1973) where hunting of all birds and mammals are permanently prohibited. The regulations for Sørkappøya Nature Reserve ban visits from May 15th to August 15th

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:

No such activities have been conducted, mainly because of the remoteness of the area and difficult access.

5.2.6 - Planning for restoration

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

5.2.7 - Monitoring implemented or proposed

Monitoring	Status
Plant community	Implemented
Animal community	Implemented

Some research and biodiversity monitoring have been conducted in the area.

6 - Additional material

6.1 - Additional reports and documents

6.1.1 - Bibliographical references

Artsdatabanken (2021, 24. november). Norsk rødliste for arter 2021. <https://www.artsdatabanken.no/lister/rodlisterforarter/2021>

Christiaane Hubner 2009. Use of pre-breeding areas and spring migration patterns of Svalbard geese. Report to the Governor of Svalbard

Brattbakk, I. 1986. Flora and vegetation. In Oritsland, N. A. (ed.), Svalbardreinen og dens livsgrunnlag. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 15–34.

Elvebakk, A. 1989: Biogeographical zones of Svalbard and Jan Mayen based on the distribution patterns of thermophilous vascular plants. Unpubl. manuskript, Universitetet i Tromsø.

Braaten, P. Eide, R. Scheie, JO. Strøm, H. og Georg Bangjord. 2000. Sjøfuglregistreringer Spitsbergen vest Mars 2000. Intern rapport. Sysselmannen på Svalbard og Norsk Polarinstitutt.

<http://vannstand.statkart.no/stat.php?lokalitet=13&visNiv=++Vis++&stasj=0>

Mehlum F. 1998. Areas in Svalbard important for geese during the pre-breeding, breeding and post-breeding periods. Norsk Polarinstutt Skrifter 200: 41–55.

Bangjord, G, Frantzen, B.O., Hammer, S. & Oddvar Hagen. 2006. Registreringer av fugl sør på Sørkaplandet august-september 2006. Arbeidsrapport 1- 2006. Longyearbyen feltbiologiske forening

Lagerborg, M. & Kirkemoen, S. 2007. Fugleregistreringer på Sørkappøya 25-28 mai 2007. Arbeidsrapport 1 - 2007. Longyearbyen feltbiologiske forening

Bangjord, G, Hübner, C. & Soot, K.M. 2007. Faunaregistreringer ved Sørkapp september 2007. Arbeidsrapport 3 - 2007. Longyearbyen feltbiologiske forening

Bangjord, G, Nordsteien, O., 2009. Faunaregistreringer på Sørkappøya juli-oktober 2009. Arbeidsrapport 1 - 2009. Longyearbyen feltbiologiske forening

Sigvaldsen, K., & Nordsteien, O. (2013). Bruk av biometriske mål for kjønnsbestemmelse av fjæreplytt, *Calidris maritima*, på høsttrekkplassen Sørkappøya, Svalbard, Norge (Master's thesis, Høgskolen i Telemark).

Kunnskapssammenstilling for flora og vegetasjon i nasjonalparkene NordvestSpitsbergen, Forlandet og Sør-Spitsbergen på Svalbard, 2013

Kunnskapsgrunnlag for de store nasjonalparkene og fuglereservatene på Vest-Spitsbergen Norsk Polarinstitutt, 2013

www.forskningsradet.no

Mehlum, Fridtjof. (1998). Areas in Svalbard important for geese during the pre-breeding, breeding and post-breeding periods. 41-55.

Forvaltningsplan for Nordvest-Spitsbergen, Forlandet og SørSpitsbergen nasjonalparker, samt fuglereservater på Svalbard. 2017-2024. Rapportserie Nr. 2/2017. Sysselmannen på Svalbard.

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:



Sørkappøya (Randi Bygjordet/Sysselmannen, 03-09-2016)



Sørkappøya (Gunhild Lutnæs/Sysselmannen, 03-09-2016)



Sørkappøya (Gunhild Lutnæs/Sysselmannen, 03-09-2016)



Mosvatnet, Sørkappøya. Remains from a Russian trappers station (Sander Solnes/Sysselmannen, 21-07-2010)



The lagoon at Sørkappøya with the purple sandpiper (Georg Bangjord, 23-06-2015)



Sørkappøya (Georg Bangjord, 23-06-2015)



Sørkappøya (Georg Bangjord, 23-06-2015)



Sørkappøya (Georg Bangjord, 23-06-2015)

6.1.4 - Designation letter and related data

Designation letter

<1 file(s) uploaded>

Date of Designation