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.

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

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY.

DD MM YY

Designation date | Site Reference Number

Ragnhild Redse Mjaaseth,
County Governor of Nordland, Moloveien 10,
8002 Bodø
Tlf: +47 75 53 15 00
E-mail: postmottak@fmno.no

2. Date this sheet was completed/updated:
May 2013

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.

Grunnfjorden

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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 ❑

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

a) Site boundary and area

The Ramsar site boundary and site area are unchanged: ❑

or
If the site boundary has changed:
i) the boundary has been delineated more accurately ❑; or
ii) the boundary has been extended ❑; or
iii) the boundary has been restricted** ❑

and/or

If the site area has changed:
i) the area has been measured more accurately ❑; or
ii) the area has been extended ❑; or
iii) the area has been reduced** ❑

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

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

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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 Grunnfjorden Nature Reserve.
The reserve has one part with mires and one marine part.
The mire is divided by a road.

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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°57’ N, 15°12’ E

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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 site is located on an island called Gisløya in Øksnes municipality in Nordland County.
The nearest town being Harstad situated 116 km to the southeast.
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)

1472 ha (670 ha sea)

12. General overview of the site:
Provide a short paragraph giving a summary description of the principal ecological characteristics and importance of the wetland.

Grunnfjorden comprises large mires with small rivers, pools and lakes, shallow beach areas with islets, skerries, large intertidal flats and a lagoon system with brackish water and freshwater. Some of the small ponds have belts of Water Horsetail *Equisetum fluviatile* and Bottle Sedge *Carex rostrata.*

Along the shoreline are varied vegetation communities from grass-rich slopes to mudflats. On the extensive shallow water areas are large meadows of eelgrass *Zostera spp*. Because of high food production combined with a favorable location in relation to key migration routes of waterbirds, Grunnfjorden is an internationally important area for many species during spring- and autumn migration.

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
☑	☑	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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).

Criterion 1. The site supports a large and intact mud flat/sand flat in northern Norway. It also comprises large and characteristic fjord mires which are typical and representative for the northern coastal plains. Most of these habitat types have been cultivated or damaged by draining elsewhere in the area.

Criterion 2. Because of high food production combined with a favorable location in relation to key migration routes, Grunnfjorden is an internationally important area for many waterbird species during spring- and autumn migration. The extensive shallow water areas are supporting large communities of eelgrass *Zostera spp*. important for invertebrates as well as grazing waterbirds. A one season count showed the presence of 67 bird species, of which 44 were wetland species. Different threatened species uses the site during the year. Among them are the Atlantic Puffin *Fratecula arctica* (VU), Greater Scaup *Aythya marila* (VU), Ruff *Philomachus pugnax* (VU). Eurasian Otter *Lutra lutra* (VU) occurs throughout the year, and probably breed here as well.

See also See also 14 (Criterion 3) and 22.

Criterion 4. The marine part is important for moulting waterbirds. This applies in particular to Whooper Swan *Cygnus Cygnus.* This part of the reserve is also an important staging area for migratory birds like Greylag Goose, Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus* (NT) and Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus.* About 200 individuals of Mallards *Anas platyrhynchos* and 250 individuals of Red Knots *Calidris canutus* were registered. In the breeding season Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*, Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica* (VU) and Graylag Goose *Anser anser* are considered character species, along with the more common birds in the area. In addition to high species diversity and high populations of waterbirds, the locality is valuable

because of its special function as a northerly wintering area for the Whooper Swan Cygnus Cygnus. Over 100 individuals have been observed in the reserve midwinter.

See also 14 (Criterion 2) and 22.

(Capitalized letters shows the species`status on the Norwegian Red List 2010)

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.

a) biogeographic region:

Atlantic

b) biogeographic regionalisation scheme (include reference citation):

European Environmental Agency (EEA, 2012):
http://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/figures/biogeographical-regions-in-europe-1

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 mostly of gneiss (a metamorphic rock). There are moraine deposits but the area is mainly covered by marine deposits.
Geomorphology and landscape	The area is part of a flat coastal landscape formed by rising landmass. There are tidal marine zones with mud- and sandflats, sheltered bays, islets and skerries with shallow marine waters, including a kind of lagoon system with brackish water and freshwater. In the mire area we find moraine and seabed-deposits, overgrown with precipitation-mires dotted with small ponds and lakes.
Substrate/soil type	Clay, silt and gravel dominate in the marine parts, whereas peat covers most of the mire area.
Water depth/fluctuations	The site comprise a large area of shallow water. The variation between high and low tides measured at Andenes (the closest measure station) averages 134 cm on an annual basis.
Climate (Summary of main climatic features	The site has an oceanic climate with mild winters and relatively wet and cool summers. Annual average temperature: 6-4° C Average July temperature: 12-16° C Average January temperature: 0-4° C Annual precipitation: 1500-2000 mm

17. Physical features of the catchment area:
Describe the surface area, general geology and geomorphological features, general soil types, and climate (including climate type).

Grunnfjorden comprises 12 km coast line, with mud- and sand flats and large mires with many small rivers, pools and lakes. A wide range of coastal and intertidal habitats are found in the site, including saltmarshes, maritime grasslands, brackish lagoon, shallow beach areas with islets, skerries and large intertidal flats.

The catchment area is only about 20 km², but the annual precipitation is quite high, varying between 1500-2000 mm. In average there are between 220-240 days of precipitation per year.

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

Most of the water in the area originates from precipitation.

The sheltered form of the shoreline reduces the impact of waves coming from the open ocean and no particular erosion problems have been noted.

The deposit of piles of seaweed helps stabilizing the shoreline.

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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/coastal wetland

Code Name	% Area
G Tidal flats	20
J Lagoons	13
A Shallow waters	12
H Intertidal marshes	2
U Peatlands	50
O Lakes	2
M Rivers	1

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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.

The Grunnfjorden site is situated in the boreal zone, and is characterized by:
• Extensive mire areas dominated by *Sphagnum* spp., usually poor in nutrients, but with elements of more nutritious parts, particularly in the south. The mire area contains a number of ponds and lakes.
• Marine tidal zones with mud- and sandflats, and shallow marine waters, including communities with *Zostera*, *Potamogeton* and *Salicornia*.
• A unique lagoon system in the tidal zones, where brackish or freshwater conditions occur with aquatic vegetation (e.g. *Potamogeton*, *Equisetum*).
• Wet salt-influenced meadows, e.g. typically with *Puccinellia* and *Carex*.
• Since the mire mostly receives water from precipitation the flora is characterised as poor, however, the unspoiled habitat itself is characterized as botanically interesting. In some smaller parts nutritious water from the bedrock contributes to a richer flora.

• The eastern marine part is characterized by battered islets and skerries, and more sheltered bays and tidal zones.

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 some species living on the boundary of their distribution zone e.g.: Medium Widgeon Grass *Ruppia maritima*, Small Bedstraw *Galium trifidium* and European Bur-reed *Sparganium emersum*.

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 is important due to the favorable conditions created for staging and grazing for a lot of nationally common species caused to the high productivity. Species thriving in the area are for instance Eurasian Wigeon *Anas Penelope*, Mergus Serrator *Clangula hyemalis* and Common Eider *Somateria mollissima.*

The site is also important as a breeding site for species that are characterized as near threatened at the Norwegian Red List such as the Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata* (NT), Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus* (NT), Arctic Skua, *Stercorarius parasiticus* (NT), Black -headed Gull *Larus ridibundus* (NT), Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica* (NT) and the Black Guillemot *Cepphus grylle* (NT). Grunnfjorden is an important wintering area for Whooper Swans *Cygnus cygnus* >100 ind.

It is referred to the national red list 2010.

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:

Archeological/historical sites are registered in the area.

The watercourse and the surrounding area are used for different outdoor activities like birdwatching, berry picking, hunting (ducks, geese and grouse) and fishing.

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

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:

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24. Land tenure/ownership:
a) within the Ramsar site:

Private

b) in the surrounding area:

Private

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25. Current land (including water) use:
a) within the Ramsar site:

Agricultural activities: there are some cattle grazing in the area and a fence is put up to keep the cattle away from the road. Picking of cloudberries, fishing and hunting also occur in the site.

b) in the surroundings/catchment:

Agricultural activities, mainly grazing by cattle and harvesting of grass occurs in the site.

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

Within the Nature Reserve Norway Spruce *Picea abies* is planted.
The species probably drains the mire area. There is a road going through the Nature Reserve.

b) in the surrounding area:

In the catchment area there is some agricultural land and activities, which leads to erosion and nutritious run-off. The number of farms and the extent of agricultural land in the catchment are decreasing.

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

The water system is permanently protected against technical actions.

Grunnfjorden Nature Reserve was established December 21th 2000.

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.

29. Current scientific research and facilities:
e.g., details of current research projects, including biodiversity monitoring; existence of a field research station, etc.

None reported

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 of the regulations of activities have been put up 5 different places.

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

The area is to some extent used by tourists and residents, mainly for fishing and cloudberry picking. The area is occasionally visited by birdwatchers.

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 proposed site is managed by the County Governor of Nordland, which is under the instruction of DN. Address:

Ragnhild Redse Mjaaseth,
County Governor of Nordland,
Molovn. 10, 8002 Bodø.
Phone: + 47 75 53 15 00.
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.

Artsdatabankens homepage: http://www.artsdatabanken.no/frontpage.aspx?m=2. Observasions in Artskart 30/8-09.

Ellefsen, K.O., Nilsen, E. & Solheim, W. 1979. *Stormyra/Grunnfjorden*. Rapport, 38 s.

Elven, R., Alm, T., Edvardsen, H., Fjelland, M., Fredriksen, K. E. & Johansen, V. 1988. *Botaniske verneverdier på havstrender i Nordland. C: Beskrivelser for regionene Ofoten og Lofoten/Vesterålen.*

Fylkesmannen i Nordland. 1985. *Utkast til verneplan for våtmarksområder i Nordland fylke.* Rapport 6-142.

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

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

Øksnes kommune. 1978. *Generalplan for Øksnes kommune.* Arbeidsrapport 17. 25 s.

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