

Ramsar Information Sheet

Published on 12 April 2024 Update version, previously published on : 9 July 2018

Norway Horsvaer



Designation date 27 May 2013 Site number 2157

Coordinates 65°18'37"N 11°40'54"E

Area 17 036,00 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 consists of about 360 islands and islets with skerries and shallow marine waters in the coastal zone in the county of Nordland. The islands are in groups or more isolated. The main groups of islands are Gimsan, Terjan, Gjøvan, Horsvær, Henstein and Storbraken, but Gimsan, Horsvær and Heinstein are not included in the Ramsar area. The highest point is found at Henstein (18 m.a.s.l). On the larger islands the vegetation is still affected by the earlier human settlements and their traditional agricultural practice, namely livestock grazing. Here we also find bird fertilized meadow vegetation. As the islands are no longer inhabited and grazing has ceased, the vegetation here is slowly changing character. The smaller islands and skerries consist to a higher degree of bare rock and sparse heather vegetation compared to the larger islands.

The Site is an important breeding area for a large number of seabirds and waterfowl. Of special interests are considerable breeding populations of great cormorant (Phalacrocorax carbo) and the northern lesser black-backed gull (Larus fuscus fuscus, up to 400 breeding pairs), as well as the European shag (Phalacrocorax aristotelis) and the common eider (Somateria mollisima).

When the islands were inhabited, there was a strong traditional practice of collecting of seabird eggs and down from the common eider. In these days they provided the common eider with houses, often made from old boats turned upside down. Even though the islands are vacated today, this is still done to some extent, partly in order to preserve the character of the site.

2 - Data & location

2.1 - Formal data

2.1 Torrida data	
2.1.1 - Name and address of the com	piler of this RIS
Responsible compiler	
Institution/agency	Norwegian Environment Agency
	P.O. Box 5672 Torgarden, N-7485 Trondheim, Norway
Postal address	
National Ramsar Administrati	
	Postboks 5672 Sluppen Trondheim Norway
2.1.2 - Period of collection of data and	d 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)	Horsvaer
	d area of the Site since its designation or earlier update
	Changes to Site boundary Yes O No No No No No No No No
	e) B. Changes to Site area
^(Update) For secretariat only: TI	nis update is an extension LJ
2.1.5 - Changes to the ecological cha	racter of the Site
(Update) 6b i. Has the ecological character of t	he Ramsar Site (including
applicable Criteria) change	d 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	0
Boundaries description	ovieting Herover Netwo Deceme
The boundary is the same as for the	existing noisvær nature Reserve.
2.2.2 - General location	
a) In which large administrative region does the site lie?	Nordland
b) What is the nearest town or population	Degraper ay and
centre?	Brønnøysund
2.2.3 - For wetlands on national bound	daries only
a) Does the wetland extend onto the ter	rritory of one or more other countries? Yes O No
b) Is the site adjacent to another design territory of	gnated Ramsar Site on the Yes O No No No No No No No No

Data & location, S2 - Page 1

Official area, in hectares (ha): 17036

2.2.4 - Area of the Site

Area, in hectares (ha) as calculated from GIS boundaries 17485.93

2.2.5 - Biogeography

Biogeographic regions

Regionalisation scheme(s)	Biogeographic region
EU biogeographic regionalization	Atlantic

Other biogeographic regionalisation scheme

EU Habitat directive 92/43/EEC

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 site is a marine archipelago with shallow waters dotted with numerous skerries, islets and islands. This kind of archipelago is representative of the North-European coast in this part of the Atlantic region.

- ☑ Criterion 2 : Rare species and threatened ecological communities
- ☑ Criterion 3 : Biological diversity

Justification

Horsvær is an important breeding area for a large number of seabirds, waterfowl and other bird species. Among them we find five colonies with great cormorant Phalacrocorax carbo. There is also a large breeding population of European shag Phalacrocorax aristotelis. Greylag goose Anser anser uses the site during the moulting period.

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

Optional text box to provide further information

Optional text box to provide further The site is a staging and breeding site for several bird species.

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

<no data available>

3.3 - Animal species whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

Phylum	Scientific name		alifi cri	ecies u terio	ınde on	ι	con ınde	r cr	es utes terion 7 8	Pop. Size		Period of pop. Est	t. occı	ırrence	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendix I	CMS Appendix		Other Status	Justification
Others														,			<u>'</u>			·
CHORDATA / MAMMALIA	Lutra lutra	V			00		1								NT	✓		Anr	n. Il Berne Convention	This species regularly uses this site.
Birds																				
CHORDATA / AVES	Anser anser		¥	9	00		2	_		1200) 2	012			LC					Criterion 4: This species uses the site during the moulting period. Highest ind. Count was 1200 in 2012, but this can vary between years.
CHORDATA / AVES	Arenaria interpres		V	9	00		2								LC					Criterion 4: The site holds a stable breeding population of this species.
CHORDATA / AVES	Cepphus grylle		V	0	00		/								LC					Criterion 4: The site is a breeding and staging site for this species.
CHORDATA /	Clangula hyemalis	•	W	0	0		1								VU					Criterion 4: Breeding and feeding site for this species.
CHORDATA / AVES	Haematopus ostralegus		V	7	0		/								NT			Na	tional red list: considered as NT	Criterion 4: Breeding site for this species.
CHORDATA / AVES	Larus argentatus	1	V	0	00		/								LC			Na	tional red list: Considered as VU	Criterion 4: The site holds a stable breeding population of this species.
CHORDATA / AVES	Larus fuscus fuscus		w	9	00		Z			400										Up to 400 breeding pairs (SEAPOP), vary between years. Criterion 3: This site is an important breeding and staging area for this species.
CHORDATA /	Larus marinus		W	0	0		/								LC					Criterion 4: Breeding site for this species.
CHORDATA / AVES	Melanitta fusca	1			00		√								VU			Na	tional red list: Considered as VU	This species is regularly observed at the site.
CHORDATA / AVES	Numenius arquata	1	W	7	0		₽								NT			Na	tional red list: Considered as EN	Criterion 4: Breeding site for this species.
CHORDATA / AVES	Phalacrocorax aristotelis		V	90	00		4													Criterion 4: The site is an important breeding and staging area for this species.
AVES	Phalacrocorax carbo		V	7	00		/								LC					Criterion 4: This site is an important breeding and staging area for this species.
CHORDATA / AVES	Rissa tridactyla	1			0		1								VU			Na	tional red list: Considered as EN	This species regularly visit this site.
CHORDATA / AVES	Somateria mollissima	V	W	0	0		1								NT			Na	tional red list: Considered as VU	Criterion 4: Breeding site for this species.
CHORDATA / AVES	Sterna hirundo	1	V		0		/								LC			Na	tional red list: Considered as EN	Criterion 4: Breeding and staging site for this species.
CHORDATA / AVES	Uria aalge	1	V		00		1								LC			Na	tional red list: Considered as CR	Criterion 4: Breeding and staging site for this species.
CHORDATA / AVES	Vanellus vanellus	V			0		1								NT			Na	tional red list: Considered as CR	Regularly observed at the site.

1) Percentage	of the	total	biogeogra	aphic	popul	ation	at	the	site

Referred to the Norwegian Red List 2021.		

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

<no data available>

Optional text box to provide further information

Bird rocks with meadow vegetation: Partly naked rock, and partly meadow vegetation, fertilized by the large bird colonies. Specialized vegetation type due to the large amounts of droppings. This bird rocks and cliffs along the Norwegian coast is of high importance to a high number of bird species.

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

4.1 - Ecological character

The Site consists of shallow marine waters with islands, islets and skerries, and constitutes breeding locations for a large number of seabirds and waterfowl.

On the larger islands, the vegetation is formed through many years of grazing and harvesting grounds. In addition to remnant infield areas, here are moisturized moor and coastal heathland. Ceased grazing activities are about to change much of the vegetation. Most of the smaller islands have sparse vegetation, mostly heather.

Bird manure heavily fertilizes some of the islands, which create a rich flora with a spectacular flowering in the summer.

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		
B: Marine subtidal aquatic beds (Underwater vegetation)		3		
D: Rocky marine shores		2		Representative

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 > Lakes and pools >> Tp: Permanent freshwater marshes/ pools		3		

4.3 - Biological components

4.3.1 - Plant species

Other noteworthy plant species

Phylum	Scientific name	Position in range / endemism / other
TRACHEOPHYTA/MAGNOLIOPSIDA	Silene dioica	This species benefits from the gulls and cormorants colonies' droppings, which give nitrogenous substrate
TRACHEOPHYTA/MAGNOLIOPSIDA	Tripleurospermum inodorum	This species benefits from the gulls and cormorants colonies' droppings, which give nitrogenous substrate
TRACHEOPHYTA/MAGNOLIOPSIDA	Valeriana sambucifolia	This species benefits from the gulls and cormorants colonies' droppings, which give nitrogenous substrate

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	Phoca vitulina				This species regularly uses this site.

4.4 - Physical components

4.4.1 - Climate

Climatic region	Subregion
D: Moist Mid-Latitude climate with cold winters	Dfc: Subarctic (Severe winter, no dry season, cool summer)

The climate is typical Atlantic with high annual precipitation, wet summers and mild winters.

4.4.2 - Geomorphic setting

a) Minimum elevation a	. (0		
	metres)		
a) Maximum elevation a	metres) 18		
	Er	ntire river basin	
	Upper pa	rt of river basin	
	Middle pa	rt of river basin	
	Lower pa	rt of river basin	
	More than	one river basin	
	No	ot in river basin	
		Coastal 🗹	
Please name the river hasi	n or basins. If the site lies in a		e the larger river basin. For a coastal/marine site, please name the sea or ocean.
Norwegian Sea		, ,	
4.4.3 - Soil			
		Mineral 🗹	
	(Update) Changes	at RIS update No change	Increase O Decrease O Unknown O
		ole information	
Are soil types subject to	change as a result of changir		
conditi	ions (e.g., increased salinity or	acidification)?	
Please provide further infor	mation on the soil (optional)		
Some of the islands h	nave remnant infield area	as, bogs and moors wit	h common heather.
4.4.4 - Water regime			
Water permanence			
Presence?	Changes at RIS update		
Usually permanent water present			
p. coo		I	
Source of water that maintain Presence?	ns character of the site Predominant water source	Changes at RIS update	
Marine water	✓	No change	
Water inputs from precipitation		No change	
prospinateri			
Stability of water regime Presence?	Changes at RIS update		
Water levels fluctuating	No change		
(including tidal)			
Please add any comments	on the water regime and its de	eterminants (if relevant). Use	this box to explain sites with complex hydrology.
The freshwater in the	area originates from pre	ecipitation. The thin cov	er of peat and soil offers only minor potential for groundwater recharge.
	urrounded by shallow are		cracks. The water depth is from 0-250 meters. The variation between high rages annually 149 cm.
4.4.5 - Sediment regime	ne		
	Sedimentre	gime unknown 🗹	
4.4.6 - Water pH			
		Unknown 🗹	
4.4.7 - Water salinity			
	Mixohaline (brackish)/Mixosal	ine (0.5-30 g/l) ☑	
			Increase O Decrease O Unknown O
	Changes	Unknown	- militaria de describir de la compansión de la compansió
		UTIKHOWN 🗀	

4.4.8 - Dissolved or suspended nutrients in water

RIS for Site no. 2157, Horsvaer, Norway

4.4.9 - Fea	atures of the	surrounding	area which	may affect	t 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 O 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 Please describe other ways in which the surrounding area is different:

The main islands Gimsan and Henstein were settled for generations, and resources were gradually exploited. The Gimsan and Henstein are now vacated, and the houses are used as holiday homes for private landowners.

Buildings at Malmen have been used in connection with the fisheries in the area.

Fishing and Oil drilling occurs in the surrounding sea areas.

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)	Low
Wetland non-food products	Other	Low

Regulating Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Maintenance of hydrological regimes	Groundwater recharge and discharge	Low

Cultural Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Recreation and tourism	Recreational hunting and fishing	Medium
Spiritual and inspirational	Cultural heritage (historical and archaeological)	Medium
Scientific and educational	Long-term monitoring site	High

Other ecosystem service(s) not included above:

The thin cover of peat and soil offers only minor potential for groundwater recharge.

Collecting of seabird eggs and down from common eider is performed to some extent in order to preserve the islands' character.

Horsvær has been an important site for monitoring the lesser black-backed gull population (SEAPOP Seabird monitoring program).

Have studies or assessments been made of the economic valuation of ecosystem services provided by this Ramsar Site?

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	

4.6 - Ecological processes

<no data available>

<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

	ΩW		

Category	Within the Ramsar Site	In the surrounding area
National/Federal government		✓
Other public ownership	√	

Private ownership

Category	Within the Ramsar Site	In the surrounding area
Other types of private/individual owner(s)	₽	

5.1.2 - Management authority

Please list the local office / offices of any	County Governor of Nordland
agency or organization responsible for	
managing the site:	
Provide the name and/or title of the person	
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	County Governor of Nordland
or people with responsibility for the wetland:	
	Statsforvalteren i Nordland
Postal address:	Pb. 1405
	N-8002 BODØ
E-mail address:	sfnopost@statsforvalteren.no

5.2 - Ecological character threats and responses (Management)

5.2.1 - Factors (actual or likely) adversely affecting the Site's ecological character

Biological resource use

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Unspecified	Low impact	Medium impact	✓	No change	✓	No change

Please describe any other threats (optional):

Part of the site had a traditional agricultural land use such as grazing. Mainly due to changes in agriculture activities the vegetation that developed due to this practice is now threatened. Traditionally the breeding population of common eider were exploited for down- and egg collecting, and this practice is still done under controlled forms, in order to preserve the character of the islands. Protection against predators and building of nesting-houses contributed to a high population of eider.

In the surrounding area: Seabird populations dependent on pelagic fish as a food source seem to be influenced by the decline in some fish stocks.

5.2.2 - Legal conservation status

National legal designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
Nature Reserve	Horsvær		whole

5.2.3 - IUCN protected areas categories (2008)

la 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	ged mainly for		
landscape/seascape conservation and recreation			
VI Managed Baseures Protected Areas protected area managed mainly			

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

5.2.5 - Management planning

Is there a site-specific management plan for the site? No

Has a management effectiveness assessment been undertaken for the

If the site is a formal transboundary site as indicated in section Data and location > Site location, are there shared management planning Yes O No oprocesses with another Contracting Party?

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
Animal species (please specify)	Implemented

Horsvær has been an important site for monitoring the lesser black-backed gull population (SEAPOP Seabird monitoring program - 2008).

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/rodlisteforarter/2021

Norsk institutt for naturforskning 2010. www.seapop.no.

Tromsø museum og Norsk Polarinstitutt. Overvåkings- og kartleggingsprogram for norske sjøfugler.

Moen, A. 1998. Nasjonalatlas for Norge; vegetasjon. Statens Kartverk, Hønefoss

www.artskart.artsdatabanken.no (Norway's Species Map Service)

6.1.2 - Additional reports and documents

i. taxonomic lists of plant and animal species occurring in the site (see section 4.3)

ii. a detailed Ecological Character Description (ECD) (in a national format)

iii. a description of the site in a national or regional wetland inventory

iv. relevant Article 3.2 reports

<no file available>

v. site management plan

vi. other published literature

<no data available>

6.1.3 - Photograph(s) of the Site

Please provide at least one photograph of the site:



Bird colony at one of the islands in the arcipelago (Morten Helberg, 22-07-2009)



Nesting common eider in Horsv aer (*Morten Helberg* 11-06-2011)



6.1.4 - Designation letter and related data

Designation letter

Date of Designation 2013-05-27