

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:

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Designation date

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Site Reference Number

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.

Horsvær

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 Horsvær 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.

65°19'N 11°37'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.

Horsvær is situated in Brønnøy, Sømna and Bindal municipalities in Nordland County. The nearest town is Brønnøysund 20 km to the northeast with app. 4500 inhabitants.

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

0-18 m.a.s.l

11. Area: (in hectares)

17036 ha of which 16907 ha is sea area.

12. General overview of the site:

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

The area consists of about 360 islands and islets with skerries and shallow marine waters in the coastal zone. The islands are in groups or more isolated. The main group of islands are Gimsan, Terjan, Gjøvan, Horsvær, Henstein and Storbraken. Gimsan, Horsvær and Henstein are Bird Protection Areas, while the rest is a part of Horsvær Nature Reserve. The highest point is found at Henstein (18 m.a.s.l).

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 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.

The location constitutes a breeding and staging site for vulnerable and endangered bird species like: Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* (VU), Black Guillemot *Cepphus grylle* (VU), and Common Guillemot *Uria aalge* (CR). Other species that regularly uses the site are: Black legged kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla* (EN), Eurasian Otter *Lutra lutra* (VU) and Harbor seal *Phoca Vitulina* (VU). (Capitalized letters shows the species' status on the Norwegian Red List 2010)

Criterion 3.

Horsvær is an important breeding area for a large number of seabirds, waterfowls 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. For more information see point 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.

a) biogeographic region:

Atlantic region².

b) biogeographic regionalisation scheme (include reference citation):

² EU Habitat directive 92/43/EEC

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 | Horsvær is formed during the Caledonian orogeny. It is a part of the Bindal Batholith, a sequence of late Ordovician to Silurian plutons emplaced into the Helgeland Nappe Complex of the uppermost Allochthon of the Norwegian Caledonides. The bedrock is mostly bare granite, partly covered by marine deposits. |
| Geomorphology | The archipelago is formed by the waves from the open ocean. The area varies between wetlands, remnant infield areas, and islets with vegetation influenced by seabird droppings. |
| Substrate/ soil type | Some of the islands have remnant infield areas, bogs and moors with common heather. |
| Water depth/ fluctuations | The archipelago is surrounded by shallow areas divided by deeper cracks. The water depth is from 0-250 meters. The variation between high and low tide measured at Rørvik (the closest measuring station) averages annually 149 cm. |
| Climate | The climate is typical Atlantic with high annual precipitation, wet summers and mild winters. |

17. Physical features of the catchment area:

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

The catchment area consists mostly of shallow marine waters, however, some deeper areas occur.

18. Hydrological values:

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

The freshwater in the area originates from precipitation. The thin cover of peat and soil offers only minor potential for groundwater recharge.

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.

A, D, B

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 site consists of shallow marine waters with islands, islets and skerries.

- The site constitutes a breeding location for a large number of seabirds and waterfowls.
- On the main 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 is about to change much of the vegetation.
- Some of the smaller islands have sparse vegetation, mostly heather.
- Bird manure heavily fertilizes some of the islands.

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.*

South boreal vegetation zone, marked oceanic section (Sb-O2).

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).

In the gulls and cormorants colonies the droppings give nitrous substrate which benefit plants like Red Champion *Silene dioica*, Common Valerian *Valeriana sambucifolia* and Scentless Mayweed *Tripleurospermum inodorum*. The vegetation is dominated by common species, and no plants listed on the Norwegian Red List are registered so far.

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.*

Horsvær is an important breeding area for a large number of seabirds, waterfowls and other birdspecies. Of special interests are considerable breeding populations of Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* and the Northern Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus fuscus* (200 breeding pairs – 2008). The site also holds stable populations of Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*, Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*, European Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*, Common Eider *Somateria mollissima*, Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*, Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*, and Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*. We also find the national near threatened species: Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata* (NT), Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus* (NT), European Starling *Sturnus vulgaris* (NT) and White-winged Scoter *Melanitta fusca* (NT). 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:

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. Collecting of seabird eggs and down from Common Eider is performed to some extent.

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?

No

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 (land). State owned (sea).

b) in the surrounding area:
State owned

25. Current land (including water) use:

a) within the Ramsar site:

b) in the surroundings/catchment:
Fishing. Oil drilling.

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:

Gimsan and Henstein were settled for generations. Vegetation is formed through many years of grazing and use as harvesting grounds. Mainly due to changes in agriculture activities this vegetation is now threatened. Traditionally the breeding population of Common Eider were exploited for down- and egg collecting. Protection against predators and building of nesting-houses contributed to a high population of Eider.

b) 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.

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.

Horsvær was designated as Nature Reserve Desember 6th, 2002.

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

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.

None

29. Current scientific research and facilities:

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

Horsvær has been an important site for monitoring the Lesser Black-backed Gull population (SEAPOP Seabird monitoring program - 2008).

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.

None

31. Current recreation and tourism:

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

Buildings on Gimsan and Henstein are used as vacation homes, especially during the summer.

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:

Åsmund Andersen

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.

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

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

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

