Ramsar Information Sheet

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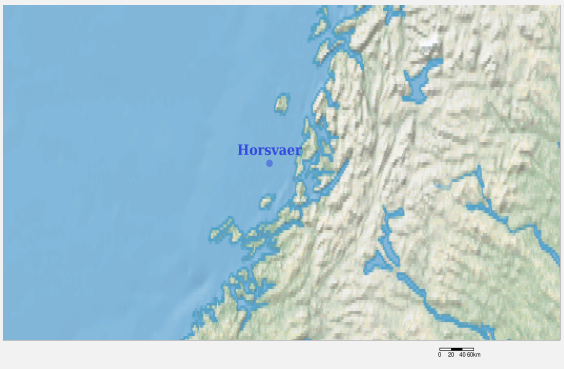
Update version, previously published on : 27 May 2013

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 (200 breeding pairs – 2008), as well as European shag Phalacrocorax aristotelis and 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

2.1.1 - Name and address of the compiler of this RIS

Compiler 1

Name	Ellen Haakonsen Karr
Institution/agency	Norwegian Environment Agency
Postal address	P.O. Box 5672 Torgarden, N-7485 Trondheim, Norway
E-mail	post@miljodir.no
Phone	+47 73 58 05 00

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

From year	2008
To year	2017

2.1.3 - Name of the Ramsar Site

Official name (in English, French or Spanish)	Horsvaer

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	No change to area

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?	Not evaluated

2.2 - Site location

2.2.1 - Defining the Site boundaries

b) Digital map/image
<1 file(s) uploaded>

Former maps	0

Boundaries description

The boundary is the same as for the existing Horsvær 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 centre?	Brønnøysund

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):	17036

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

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	Common 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								
Birds																		
CHORDATA / AVES	*Anser anser*	Greylag Goose	☐	☑	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐	1200	2012		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*	Ruddy Turnstone	☐	☑	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐				LC	☐	☐		Criterion 4: The site holds a stable breeding population of this species.
CHORDATA / AVES	*Cepphus grylle*	Black Guillemot	☑	☑	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐				LC	☐	☐	National red list: Considered as VU	Criterion 4: The site is a breeding and staging site for this species.
CHORDATA / AVES	*Clangula hyemalis*	Oldsquaw; Long-tailed Duck	☑	☑	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐				VU	☐	☐	National red list: Considered as NT	Criterion 4: Breeding and feeding site for this species.
CHORDATA / AVES	*Haematopus ostralegus*	Eurasian Oystercatcher	☐	☑	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐				NT	☐	☐	National red list: considered as NT	Criterion 4: Breeding site for this species.
CHORDATA / AVES	*Larus argentatus*	Herring Gull	☐	☑	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐				LC	☐	☐		Criterion 4: The site holds a stable breeding population of this species.

Phylum	Scientific name	Common 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	*Larus fuscus fuscus*		☐	☑	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐	200	2008			☐	☐		200 breeding pairs (2008) Criterion 3: This site is an important breeding and staging area for this species.
CHORDATA / AVES	*Larus marinus*	Great Black-backed Gull	☐	☑	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐				LC	☐	☐		Criterion 4: Breeding site for this species.
CHORDATA / AVES	*Melanitta fusca*	White-winged Scoter; Velvet Scoter	☑	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐				VU	☐	☐		This species is regularly observed at the site.
CHORDATA / AVES	*Numenius arquata*	Eurasian Curlew	☑	☑	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐				NT	☐	☐	National red list: Considered as VU	Criterion 4: Breeding site for this species.
CHORDATA / AVES	*Phalacrocorax aristotelis*	European Shag	☐	☑	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐				LC	☐	☐		Criterion 4: The site is an important breeding and staging area for this species.
CHORDATA / AVES	*Phalacrocorax carbo*	Great Cormorant	☐	☑	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐				LC	☐	☐		Criterion 4: This site is an important breeding and staging area for this species.
CHORDATA / AVES	*Rissa tridactyla*	Black-legged Kittiwake	☑	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐				LC	☐	☐	National red list: Considered as EN	This species regularly visit this site.
CHORDATA / AVES	*Somateria mollissima*	Common Eider	☐	☑	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐				NT	☐	☐		Criterion 4: Breeding site for this species.
CHORDATA / AVES	*Sterna hirundo*	Common Tern	☑	☑	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐				LC	☐	☐	National red list: Considered as EN	Criterion 4: Breeding and staging site for this species.
CHORDATA / AVES	*Uria aalge*	Common Murre	☑	☑	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐				LC	☐	☐	National red list: Considered as CR	Criterion 4: Breeding and staging site for this species.
CHORDATA / AVES	*Vanellus vanellus*	Northern Lapwing	☑	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐				NT	☐	☐	National red list: Considered as EN	Regularly observed at the site.
Others																		
CHORDATA / MAMMALIA	*Lutra lutra*	European Otter	☑	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐				NT	☑	☐	National red list: Considered as VU	This species regularly uses this site.

1) Percentage of the total biogeographic population at the site

Referred to the Norwegian Red List 2015.

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

Name of ecological community	Community qualifies under Criterion 2?	Description	Justification
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

Scientific name	Common name	Position in range / endemism / other
Silene dioica		This species benefits from the gulls and cormorants colonies' droppings, which give nitrogenous substrate..
Tripleurospermum inodorum		This species benefits from the gulls and cormorants colonies' droppings, which give nitrogenous substrate..
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	Common name	Pop. size	Period of pop. est.	%occurrence	Position in range /endemism/other
CHORDATA/AVES	*Oenanthe oenanthe*	Northern Wheatear				Regularly observed at the site.
CHORDATA/AVES	*Sturnus vulgaris*	European Starling				(National red list: Considered as NT)
CHORDATA/MAMMALIA	*Phoca vitulina*	Harbor Seal				This species regularly uses this site.
CHORDATA/AVES	*Stercorarius parasiticus*	Parasitic Jaeger				Regularly observed at the site. National Red List: NT

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 above sea level (in metres): 0

a) Maximum elevation above sea level (in metres): 18

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

4.4.3 - Soil

Mineral ☑

(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)

Some of the islands have remnant infield areas, bogs and moors with common heather.

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	☑	No change
Water inputs from rainfall	☐	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:

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

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.

4.4.5 - Sediment regime

Sediment regime unknown ☑

4.4.6 - Water pH

Unknown ☑

4.4.7 - Water salinity

Mixohaline (brackish)/Mixosaline (0.5-30 g/l) ☑

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

Unknown ☐

4.4.8 - Dissolved or suspended nutrients in water

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 site itself: i) broadly similar ○ ii) significantly different ◉

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 - 2008).

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

<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

Public ownership

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 agency or organization responsible for managing the site: County Governor of Nordland

Provide the name and title of the person or people with responsibility for the wetland: Åsmund Andersen

Postal address: Molovn. 10, NO-8002 Bodø

E-mail address: fmnopost@fylkesmannen.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)

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

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 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 ◉

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

Henriksen, S & Hilmo, O. 2015. Norwegian Red List of Species 2015. Norwegian Biodiversity Information Centre, Norway

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)
<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
<no file available>

vi. other published literature
<no file available>

<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 Halberg, 22-07-2009*)

Bird colony at one of the islands in the arcipelago (*Morten Halberg, 18-06-2011*)

Nesting common eider in Horsvaer (*Morten Halberg, 11-06-2011*)

6.1.4 - Designation letter and related data

Designation letter
<1 file(s) uploaded>

Date of Designation: 2013-05-27