

# Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS) – 2009-2012 version

Available for download from [http://www.ramsar.org/ris/key\\_ris\\_index.htm](http://www.ramsar.org/ris/key_ris_index.htm).

*Categories approved by Recommendation 4.7 (1990), as amended by Resolution VIII.13 of the 8<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Contracting Parties (2002) and Resolutions IX.1 Annex B, IX.6, IX.21 and IX. 22 of the 9<sup>th</sup> 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:

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

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY.

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Designation date

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Site Reference Number

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### 2. Date this sheet was completed/updated:

May 2013

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### 3. Country:

Norway

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### 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.

Risøysundet

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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 Risøysundet Nature Reserve.

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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°59' N, 15°40'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 situated in Andøy municipality in Nordland County, the nearest town being Harstad 130 km to the southeast with approx. 30.000 inhabitants.

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

0-10 m.a.s.l.

**11. Area:** (in hectares)

504 ha (86 ha terrestrial, 29 ha freshwater, 389 ha marine).

**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 locality is dominated by shallow marine areas with a complex of flat grassy islets, lagoons and brackish ponds. In the west there is a 15 ha lake surrounded by a large beach meadow complex. The lagoon is characteristic for the area, but there are also exposed bays, isolated freshwater ponds, sheltered saltmarshes and exposed seaweed meadows. The area is of great importance as a reference area for beach vegetation, due to a broad range of rare vegetation types and species, and little human disturbance. Because of high food production, many species of waterbirds depend on these areas for food and rest during spring- and autumn migration. The reserve is also an important breeding site, and is an essential part of Andøya internationally important wetland system.

**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 one of the few, intact larger mud flats/sand flats in northern Norway. It has high diversity, and is one of the best representations of this nature type in the region. This wetland type is of great importance as resting and breeding ground for many bird species, and the site hosts some of the largest remaining populations of many plant and animal species that were previously common.

**Criterion 2.** Risøysundet is a diverse wetland with high biological production. It offers favorable habitats for many groups of waterbirds, like Ruff *Philomachus pugnax* (VU). The area has a solid population of the European Otter *Lutra lutra* (VU).

**Criterion 4.** The site is important for many waterbirds in various critical phases of their life cycle. Considerable numbers of staging birds are registered for Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator* (800 ind), Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis* (200 ind), Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula* (300 ind), Dunlin *Calidris alpina* (300 ind), Greylag Goose *Anser anser* (200 ind), Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* (600 ind) and Common Merganser *Mergus merganser* (100 ind).

The vegetation is diverse, and contains a broad range of regionally rare species (see also 21 and 22). The vegetation is only slightly influenced by human activities, which makes the area an important reference for sublittoral vegetation, saltmarshes and brackish swamps.

(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, gabbro and amphibolites and is mainly covered by marine deposits.
Geomorphology and landscape	The area is characterized by a lagoon beach, but has a large diversity of exposed bays, freshwater ponds, sheltered meadows of seaweed and exposed drift-walls.
Substrate/soil type	Clay, sand and silt dominate in the marine part.
Water depth/fluctuations	The site comprises a large area of shallow water. The variation between high and low tide measured at Andenes (the closest measuring station) averages 134 cm annually.
Climate (Summary of main climatic features)	The site has an oceanic climate with mild winters and relatively wet and cool summers. Annual average temperature: 4-2° 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).

The area is characterized by a lagoon beach, but has a large diversity of exposed bays, freshwater ponds, sheltered meadows of seaweed and exposed drift-walls. Marine deposits cover the area. The variation between high and low tides averages annually 134 cm. The annual precipitation is quite high, varying between 1500-2000 mm. On average there are between 220-240 days of precipitation per year.

**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 structure of the shoreline reduces the impact of waves from the open ocean and no particular erosion problems have been noted.

The population of seaweed also stabilizes shoreline.

**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	42
J Lagoons	28
A Shallow waters	9
H Intertidal marshes	8
Sp Brackish pool	5
Other	8

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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.

Risøysundet is situated in the mid boreal zone, and is characterized by a varied and productive vegetation:

- Marine tidal zones with mud- and sandflats, and shallow marine waters, including communities with *Zostera*, *Potamogeton* and *Salicornia*.
- There is a gravel ridge creating a unique protected lagoon system in the tidal zones, where brackish conditions occur with aquatic vegetation (e.g. *Puccinella maritima*, *Zostera* ssp, *Spergularia salina*).
- Wet salt-influenced meadows, e.g. typically with *Puccinellia* and *Carex*.

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#### 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 species living close to the limit of their distribution zone or species that are on the Norwegian Red List: Grassleaf orache *Atriplex littoralis*, Sago-pondweed *Stuckenia pectinata* (NT), Saltmarsh flat-sedge *Blysmopsis rufa*, MediumWidgeon Grass *Ruppia maritima*.

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#### 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 area has a stable population of European Otter *Lutra lutra* (VU).

Near threatened species that are observed within the site are; Black Guillemot *Cepphus grylle* (NT), Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus* (NT), the Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata* (NT), the Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca* (NT) and the Whooper swan *Cygnus Cygnus* (NT). The Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica* (VU) is probably occurring regularly in and outside the site.

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#### 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:

Archaeological/historical sites are registered in the area.

The watercourse and the surrounding area are used for outdoor activities like bird watching and sports 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:

Grazing by cattle  
Sports fishing

b) in the surroundings/catchment:

There are some agricultural activities, mainly on the northern side of a road located northwest of the site. Grazing by cattle and harvesting of grass.

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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:

A road runs through the site. Within the borders of the protected area, military bunkers are located and the site is used for illegal waste disposal. Norway Spruce planted outside its native range is also found in the area.

b) in the surrounding area:

In the catchment area there are some agricultural activity, which leads to erosion and nutrient run-off. The number of farms and land areas used for agriculture in the catchment area 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 activities. Risøysundet Nature Reserve was established December 21<sup>th</sup>, 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:

Picking waste.

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**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.

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**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

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**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.

A poster with information about the Nature Reserve, ecological and biological facts, and information of the regulations has been put up near the site.

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**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 sports fishing. The area is occasionally visited by birdwatchers.

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### 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

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### 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 site is managed by the County Governor of Nordland, which is under the instruction of DN.

Address:

Ragnhild Redse Mjaaseth

County Governor of Nordland,

Moløvn. 10, 8002 Bodø.

Phone: + 47 75 53 15 00.

E-mail: postmottak@fmno.no

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### 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>. Observations in Artskart 9/9-09.

Artsdatabankens homepage: <http://artsobservasjoner.no/fugler/>

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*. Statens kartverk, Hønefoss

Rikardsen, F. 1980. *Registrering av ornitologisk viktige våtmarksområder i Andøy kommune*. 18 s.

Strann, K-B, Iversen, H-M & Guldberg, T.I.. 1986. *Hekkeregistreringer i Vesterålen 1986*. 42 s.

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Please return to: **Ramsar Convention Secretariat, Rue Mauverney 28, CH-1196 Gland, Switzerland**  
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