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

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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 for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance* (Ramsar Wise Use Handbook 7, 2nd edition, as amended by COP9 Resolution IX.1 Annex B). A 3rd edition of the Handbook, incorporating these amendments, is in preparation and will be available in 2006.
- 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: Miljøfaglig Utredning AS commissioned by Norwegian Directorate for Nature Management, Tungasletta 2, 7485 Trondheim
Tlf +47 73580500 Fax: +47 73580501 Designation date Site Reference Number
 E-mail: postmottak@dirnat.no
2. Date this sheet was completed/updated: August 2012
3. Country:
Norway
4. Name of the Ramsar site: Giske Wetlands System (includes the following sub-sites: Roaldsand, Rørvikvågen, Rørvikvatnet, Synesvågen, Giske, Blindheimsvik. (International No. 805, National No. 18)
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:

If the site boundary has changed: i) the boundary has been delineated more i) 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 accura ii) the area has been extended □; or iii) the area has been reduced** □	ıtely ☑; or
Contracting Party should have followed the proc	of the designated site is being restricted/reduced, the edures established by the Conference of the Parties in ed a report in line with paragraph 28 of that Annex, prior
b) Describe briefly any major changes to the the application of the Criteria, since the previous	ecological character of the Ramsar site, including in ious RIS for the site:
affected the protected areas. This includes overgraph 26). Some breeding wading birds have disappeared in this plan there are some suggestion for restorations.	duced the islands' biological values, which have in turn rowing and various forms of exploitation (see also point ed from the site. A management plan is being developed, tion.
7. Map of site: Refer to Annex III of the <i>Explanatory Note and Guidelines</i> , a maps.	for detailed guidance on provision of suitable maps, including digital
a) A map of the site, with clearly delineated be i) a hard copy (required for inclusion of s	
ii) an electronic format (e.g. a JPEG or	ArcView image) ☑ ;
iii) a GIS file providing geo-referenced □;	site boundary vectors and attribute tables
	neation applied: (nature reserve, national park etc.), or follows a catchment boundary, ent jurisdiction, follows physical boundaries such as roads, follows the
The boundary is the same as for the six sub-sites; Rørvikvatnet, Rørvikvågen and Synesvågen natur	Roaldsand, Blindheimsvik, Giske Bird sanctuaries and re reserves.
8. Geographical coordinates (latitude/longitud 62° 33'N 06° 05'E	e):
	istrative region(s), and the location of the nearest large town. s – Vigra and Giske – in Giske municipality in the county of Ålesund.
10. Elevation: (average and/or max. & min.) 0 – 12,5 m.a.s.l.	11. Area: (in hectares) 553.3 ha, of which 427.8 is sea

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

Giske Wetland System comprises 6 sub-sites, of which one is on the island of Giske and five on the island of Vigra. Five of the sites are characterised by shallow water and associated beach environment and damp meadows and solid ground within. One site includes a small body of fresh water with surrounding mire and moor. All of these sites are within a radius of 10 km and it is natural to consider these together as far as waterbirds are concerned. In general, developments in recent years have reduced the islands' biological values, which have in turn affected the protected areas. This includes overgrowing and various forms for exploitation.

The coastal environment is still varied, well developed and have a considerable botanical value. There are large areas of mudbanks and saltmarsh. In addition there are other rare and threatened environments such as sandy beaches and sand dunes. One national red-listed plant occurs, as well as several locally rare and threatened species, including some good populations.

The birdlife is rich throughout the year, and a total of over 20000 waterbirds may at times be present. Several demanding and seriously threatened species breed or have bred. Large numbers of birds stage during passage and in particular waders in some sections may occur in impressive numbers. Together this is the most important site for waders in the county. The area is also important for other wetland species. In addition large numbers of birds winter including ducks, grebes, divers and waders.

13. Ramsar Criteria:

Circle or underline 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).



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).

Note: more detailed information is provided in RIS for individual sub-sites.

- Criterion 1. The area includes a broad spectrum of coastal habitats: there are large areas of mudbanks and saltmarsh, in addition there are other rare and threatened environments such as sandy beaches and sand dunes. Some of these are well developed and the area is therefore representative for these.
- Criterion 2. The area is important for several birds on the national red-list both during breeding, during migration and during winter. The threatened Corn Crake *Crex crex* (CR, Norwegian Red List, NT IUCN red list, Ann. II Berne Convention) occurs regularly during summer and Ruff *Philomachus pugnax* (VU, Ann. III Berne Convention) (National red-list 2010) during migration. For more information see point 21 and 22.
- Criterion 4. The site is important for migrating wetland birds. This applies to the waders on passage such as Common Ringed Plover *Caradrius hiaticula*, Dunlin *Calidris alpina*, Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*, Jack Snipe *Lymnocryptus minimus* and Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*. This is also the case for several species of ducks and geese. The area is also important during the breeding season for various waders and duck such as Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*. The wetland system is important for moulting Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*, which occur in flocks of several hundred individuals. The site is also wintering area for waterbirds. See also 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:

- 1. Boreonemoral vegetation zone, highly oceanic section (Bn O3).
- 2. Atlantic

b) biogeographic regionalisation scheme (include reference citation):

- 1. 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).
- 2. Biogeographical regions of Europe, European Environment Agency, 2005

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	logy Roaldsand, Blindheimsvik, Rørvikvatnet and Rørvikvågen are made up of geologie	
	deposits form the Quarternary period. Synesvågen and Giske are composed of	
	autochthonous or almost autochthonous gneiss from primitive times, deformed and	
	metamorphosed during the Caledonian mountain chain folding. Some gabbro from	
	the same period is present at Giske West.	
Geomorphology	All the sub-sites are part a large flat coastal landscape formed by rising landmass.	
Substrate / soil	The site is varied with rocks, stones, gravel, sand, clay and silt. Peat and raw humus	
type	are also found, as is bare rock.	
Water quality	Atlantic seawater with exchange of large amounts of water affects all the sub-sites	
	bordering the sea. Rørvikvatnet is probably slightly dystrophic.	
Water depth /	Rørvikvatnet is only around $1-2$ m deep, with stable water levels. The shallow	
fluctuations	coastal waters are no deeper than around 5 metres during the lowest low tides. The	
	variation between high and low tides measured at Ålesund averages annually 123 cm.	
Climate	The area has a very oceanic climate with mild winters and relatively cool summers.	
	Annual precipitation is 1000 – 1500 mm.	

17. Physical features of the catchment area:

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

Giske municipality consists of four islands, all of which are inhabited. The protected areas are on Giske and Vigra. These two islands are very flat. The highest point on Giske is 25 m a.sl., whereas the highest point on Viga is the hill Molnesfjellet at 122 m a.s.l. Bedrocks from prehistoric times and deposits from the Quarterenary period dominate. Marine deposits and peat dominates the flat and low lying areas. Scattered dwellings dominate the cultivated parts. The town of Roald is situated on the north side of Vigra, and Ålesund airport is situated in the middle of the same island. The whole municipality is influenced by a very oceanic climate with relatively cool summers and mild winters. There are probably quarternary geological values along the old coastline in the area.

18. Hydrological values:

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

A couple of the sub-sites are rather exposed to the sea and may be important in reducing erosion further inland. There are a number of sand dunes at one sub-site where erosion from the wind is a natural process but where encroachment and overgrowing have reduced the natural dynamic process within this ecosystem. See also RIS for individual sub-sites.

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.

Human-made: $1 \cdot 2 \cdot 3 \cdot 4 \cdot 5 \cdot 6 \cdot 7 \cdot 8 \cdot 9 \cdot Zk(c)$

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.

For more detailed information se the individual sub-sites

20. General ecological features:

Provide further description, as appropriate, of the main habitats, vegetation types, plant and animal communities present in the Ramsar site.

The largest areas are shallow waters and tidal areas with various deposits. On the landward side are saltmarshes, seaweed wall communities, brackish communities and coastal marshes and also poor fens and moor. Rørvikvatnet is part of a large mire complex and part of a dune heath complex. The shallows and tidal water are used by staging and wintering divers, grebes, cormorants, waders, ducks and gulls, whereas the land area is used by breeding waders, rails, gulls and allies, ducks and passerines which are associated with wetlands. There are also hedgehog, deer, otter and seals in the area. See also RIS for individual sub-sites.

21. Noteworthy flora:

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 12. 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*.

The nationally red-listed *Carex paniculata* (VU) occurs sparsely at one of the sub-sites. Several regionally unusual and some threatened species occur, both species associated with sand dunes/beaches and also damp meadows/freshwater bogs. In the first group are species such as *Carex arenaria*, *Cakile maritima*, *Gentianella amarella* and *Elymus farctus*, and in the latter group *Lysimachia thyrsiflora*, *Ranunculus sceleratus* and the regional responsibility species *Senecio aquaticus*. See also RIS for individual sub-sites.

22. Noteworthy fauna:

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 12. 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.

Mammals:

Harbour Seal *Phoca vitulina (VU, Ann. II Berne Convention)* is resident, at times in good numbers. Otter *Lutra lutra (VU)* occurs at several sites.

Birds:

The number of birds is generally large, in particular for wetland species, and a total of 220 species are observed. All the regularly occurring grebe species in Norway are recorded, including Black-throated Diver Gavia arctica (NT) and numbers of Red-necked Grebe Podiceps grisegena can be considerable during winter. Most of the goose species recorded in Norway is found here. In particular greylag geese Anser anser occur in large numbers during summer, although they are less common in winter. Other wintering birds are Whooper Swan Cygnus Cygnus, Velvet Scoter Melanitta fusca (NT). Large numbers of dabbling ducks, including several rare and threatened species, occur, including breeding Northern Shoveler Anas clypeata and Northern Pintail A. acuta. Several rail species occur, and the globally endangered Corn Crake Crex crex (CR-Norwegian red-list, NT-IUCN red-list) is still an annual visitor, often several individuals. In general the area supports large concentrations of waders, in particular during the passage months, and there is a good range of species present. Of particular note are species occurring in numbers of several thousand, such as Dunlin Calidris alpina, Golden Plover Pluvialis apricaria and Ruff Philomachus pugnax (VU), although there are also other species occurring in their hundreds (perhaps thousands for some species) such as Purple Sandpiper Calidris maritima, Bar-tailed Godwit Limosa lapponica, Jack Snipe Lymnocryptus minimus and Common Snipe Gallinago gallinago. Several of these species are also numerous in winter. We also find breeding birds like Northern Lapwing Vanellus vanellus (NT). In addition there are thousands of small birds, especially on migration, as well as regionally important populations of several species such as Linnet Carduelis cannabina in summer. There are also considerable numbers of gulls and cormorant. A lack of collation of available counts means that these data are considered incomplete.

It is possible that in total the sub-sites can at times support at least 20 000 waterbirds at one time, and/or over 1% of the population of some wetland species. Lack of data, and not least lack of collation of data means that these criteria are not yet fulfilled.

See also RIS for individual sub-sites.

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:

 The area is important for recreation (walking, bathing, riding, birdwatching, and fishing using nets (not commercial) as well as farming. At Roaldsand a nearby school uses the area for educational purposes, and also help to clean the area. At Giske, at Kvalneset in the north-west are remains of a site for drying fish. This site is also looked after by local school children. See also RIS for individual sub-sites.
- 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?

If Yes, tick the box \square 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:
- 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, although the state aviation authority (Avinor) owns part of Roaldsand Bird Sanctuary, Rørvikvatnet Nature Reserve and Blindheimsvik Bird Sanctuary.

(b) in the surrounding area: Private and state (Avinor).

25. Current land (including water) use:

(a) within the Ramsar site:

In some sub-sites there is some grazing by livestock, whereas the bird snactuaries are used for activities including walking, hobby fishing and birdwatching. An ornithological station is established at Giske. See also RIS for individual sub-sites.

(b) in the surroundings/catchment:

The surrounding area includes scattered buildings and traditional agriculture with grass production and grazing. Ålesund Airport is close to the sub-sites at Roaldsanden, Blindheimsvik and Rørvikvannet. See also RIS for individual sub-sites.

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:

Overgrowing due to changes in agriculture is considered to be the factor affecting the area most, as well as run-off of fertilizer at 2-3 sub-sites. Boat traffic creates some disturbance, as does windsurfing. Planting of shelter belts has also a negative effect. Several factors have had a negative contribution on the areas waterbirds in recent years, in particular overgrowing following cessation of grazing, as well as forestry plantations.

Information of factors specific for particular sub-sites is also provided in RIS for individual sub-sites.

(b) in the surrounding area:

Changes in landuse in the surrounding area have also had a negative effect on elements within the protected areas. The nearby airport poses a threat to three sub-sites, and plans to increase the security zone around the airport will probably affect one of these. Seepage is possible from an old rubbish dump just outside the site boundary.

Information of factors specific for particular sub-sites is also provided in RIS for individual sub-sites.

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.

Giske Wetland System received protection on 27th May 1988, with the designation of three nature reserves (Rørvikvatnet, Rørvikvågen and Synesvågen) and three bird sanctuaries (Roaldsand, Blindheimsvik, Giske).

b) If appropriate, list the IUCN (1994) protected areas category/ies which apply to the site (tick the box or boxes as appropriate):

Ia \square ; Ib \square ; II \square ; III \square ; IV \square ; VI \square

- c) Does an officially approved management plan exist; and is it being implemented?:
- d) Describe any other current management practices:

28. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:

e.g. management plan in preparation; official proposal as a legally protected area, etc.

A management plan is being developed by the management authority.

29. Current scientific research and facilities:

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

Several studies on passage waders have been carried out. At Makkevika which is within the Giske West Bird Protection Area is Norway's oldest and perhaps Møre og Romsdal's most important ringing station. A new ringing hut was set up a few years ago.

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.

An information booklet is produced by the management authorities, comprising all the Ramsar sites in Møre and Romsdal county.

31. Current recreation and tourism:

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

This is one of the most important sites for members of the Møre og Romsdal branch of the Norwegian Ornithological Society (NOF) and is visited regularly throughout the year.

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 site is managed by the County Governor of Møre og Romsdal, which is under the instruction of DN. Address: County Governor of Møre og Romsdal, Fylkeshusa, 6404 Molde, Norway. Phone +47 71 25 84 43, E-mail: postmottak@fmmr.no

34. Bibliographical references:

scientific/technical references only. If biogeographic regionalisation scheme applied (see 13 above), list full reference citation for the scheme.

Kålås, J.A., Viken, Å., Henriksen, S. and Skjelseth, S. (eds.). 2010. The 2010 Norwegian Red-list for Species. Norwegian Biodiversity Information centre, Norway.

Botanical and management plans:

Frøland, T. 2003. Re-evaluering av seks freda våtmarksområder i Giske. Rapport 2003-1. 13 s. + vedlegg. . (In Norwegian – on Reevaluation of six protected wetlands in Giske).

Holten, J. I., Frisvoll, A. A. & Aune, E. I. 1986. Havstrand i Møre og Romsdal. Flora, vegetasjon og verneverdier. Økoforsk rapport 1986:3A: 253 s. (In Norwegian – on flora and vegetation along the coast of Møre og Romsdal).

Holten, J. I., Frisvoll, A. A. & Aune, E. I. 1986. Havstrand i Møre og Romsdal. Lokalitetsbeskrivelser. Økoforsk rapport 1986:3B: 184 s. (In Norwegian – on site descriptions along the coast of Møre og Romsdal).

Holtan, D. i trykk. Biologisk mangfald i Giske kommune. Rapport, Giske kommune. 69 s. (In Norwegian – on biodiversity in Giske).

Rabben, J. 1984. Makkevika – Rasteplassen ved havet. Grøndahl & Søn Forslag A/S. 112 s. (In Norwegian – on staging in Makkevika).

Røsberg, I. 1974a. Inventering av Blindheimsstranden, Giske. Landsplan for verneverdige områder/forekomster. Miljøverndepartementet. Upubl. Rapport, delrapport 2. (In Norwegian – cataloguing of valuable sites at Blindheimstrand).

Røsberg, I. 1974b. Inventering av Synnes og Synnesvågen, Giske. Landsplan for verneverdige områder/forekomster. Miljøverndepartementet. Upubl. Rapport, delrapport 3. (In Norwegian – cataloguing of valuable sites at Synnes and Synnesvågen).

Røsberg, I. 1974c. Inventering av område sør for flyplassen, Giske. Landsplan for verneverdige områder/forekomster. Miljøverndepartementet. Upubl. Rapport, delrapport 5. (In Norwegian – cataloguing of valuable sites south of the airport).

Søvik, N.1945. Om vegetasjonen på flygesandfelt på Vigra, Sandøya og Gosssen. Blyttia 3: 53-70. (In Norwegian – on Vegetation at Vigra, Sandøya and Gossen).

Birds:

Folkestad, A. O. 1978a. Fylkesvis oversikt over ornitologisk viktige våtmarksområder i Norge. Møre og Romsdal. Miljøverndepartementet juni 1978. (In Norwegian – on Ornithologically important wetlands in Norway).

Folkestad, A.O. 1978b. Våtmarker i Møre og Romsdal. I. Giske vestside, Giske kommune. Rallus 8: 72-84. (In Norwegian – on Wetlands in Møre og Romsdal).

Folkestad, A. O., 1995. Kommunepresentasjonen: Giske kommune. Rallus 25:85-96. (In Norwegian – on birdlife in Giske municipality).

Follestad, A. 1983. Morfologiske variasjoner hjå myrsnipe Calidris alpina (L.) under hausttrekk. Hovudfagsoppgåve i zoologi, Univ. i Trondheim. (In Norwegian – on Morphology of dunlin in autumn).

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Fylkesmannen i Møre og Romsdal, Miljøvernavdelinga, 1982. Utkast til verneplan for våtmarksområde i Møre og Romsdal. Fylkesmannen i Møre og Romsdal, Miljøvernavdelinga. 224 s. (In Norwegian – draft management plan for wetlands in Møre og Romsdal).

Michaelsen, T. C. 1997. Antipredator-adferd hjå rastende sandlo (*Charadrius hiaticula*) og myrsnipe (*Calidris alpina*) på høsttrekk. Hovedfagsoppgave, Univ. Bergen. 43 s. (In Norwegian – on anti-predator behaviour in waders).

Solbakken, K. A. in prep. Status for fuglelivet i norske Ramsarområder. NOF-rapport. (In Norwegian – On Birdlife of Norwegian Ramsar sites).

Valde, K. 1983. Trekkforløp og habitat hjå enkeltbekkasin, *Gallinago gallinago* på hausttrekk. Hovudfagsoppgåve i zoologi, Univ. Trondheim. (In Norwegian – on migration of common snipe).

Ørskog, D. 1981. Lappspurven – påvist som rugefugl på Sunnmøre. Rallus 11: 80-81. (In Norwegian – on Breeding Lapland Longspur).

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