

Froan

Information sheet on Ramsar wetlands

1. Country: Norway 2. Date: 3. Ref: 7NO022
4. Name and address of compiler: Øystein R. Størkensen, Directorate for Nature Management, Tungasletta 2, N-7005 Trondheim, Norway. Tel. +47-7358 0500, fax. +47-7391 5433.
5. Name of wetland: Froan, which consists of a nature reserve and a landscape protection area.
6. Date of Ramsar designation: 19/03/1996
7. Geographical coordinates: 64⁰ 00' N, 9⁰ 10' E
8. General location: Situated in Frøya municipality, Sør-Trøndelag county. Nearest city being Trondheim.
9. Area: The total area is 48.400 ha. The nature reserve covers a total area of 40.400 ha, the landscape protection area covers a total area of 8,000 ha.
10. Wetland type: A, D, U.
11. Altitude: Sea level up to 10 masl.
12. Overview: The area is typical for the extreme outermost coastal zone, with shallow marine waters dotted with hundreds of islands and skerries.
13. Physical features: The islands are characterised by hard granite rocks formed by the powers of the sea and ice. Extensive intertidal zones with seaweed and to a lesser degree sandy shores is an important feature. The high precipitation has created bogs and meadows dominated with *Calluna* and *Eriophorum*, while many naked skerries and rocky outcrops are devoid of vegetation due to the rough seas. The area has an Atlantic climate, with relatively cool summers and mild winters. Annual precipitation is relatively high exceeding 1200 mm.
14. Ecological features: Extensive marine shallow waters with a large production of marine invertebrates and fish, combined with extensive seaweed beds sustains a rich animal life. The fact that the area is free of *Mustela vison* has meant that seabirds still breed in profusion. The extremely high numbers of seabirds alone makes this area internationally important.
15. Land tenure/ownership of:
 - a) site: Private.
 - b) surrounding area: None.
16. Conservation measures taken: Established as a nature reserve and landscape

protection area 14 December 1979. A two km zone around the entire area protects all animal life.

17. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented: None.

18. Current land use:

a) Site: Nature conservation, fishing, grazing and some boating activity.

b) Surrounding/catchment: Fishing.

19. Disturbances/threats including changes in land use and major development projects:

a) At the site: Application for seaweed cutting, sand grabbing, seashell trawling and establishment of aquaculture have all been denied.

b) In the surroundings/catchment: None.

20. Hydrological and physical values:

21. Social and cultural values: Parts of this archipelago has been abandoned, while historically interesting fishing villages remain. Two monumental lighthouses has recently been proposed for protection according to the Cultural Heritage Act.

22. Noteworthy fauna: This area is particularly important for migrating, moulting and wintering birds. Also important as a breeding site for *Phalacrocorax aristotelis* (1,000 pairs), *Phalacrocorax carbo* as the southernmost Norwegian breeding site (3,000 pairs), *Cephus grylle* (3,000 pairs), *Somateria mollissima* (1-2,000 pairs), *Anser anser* (800 pairs), *Sterna paradisaea* (\pm 5,000 pairs) and *Haliaeetus albicilla* (5 pairs). Other interesting breeding species are *Rissa tridactyla* and *Fratercula arctica*. *Hydrobates pelagicus* and *Oceanodroma leucorhoa* probably also breed in the area. The area is noted for high numbers of moulting birds: *Somateria mollissima* 30,000, *Anser anser* 8,000 and *Mergus merganser* 3,000. Wintering species in high numbers include *Alle alle* (10-30,000), *Phalacrocorax* spp., *Clangula hyemalis*, *Gavia adamsii* and *Gavia immer*. The area is also noted for the occurrence of rare bird species. The site is nationally important for *Phoca vitulina* (half the Norwegian population) and *Halichoerus grypus*. *Lutra lutra* is common.

23. Noteworthy flora: The shallow tidal waters is ideal for extensive beds of seaweed and mussels. The mild winter climate is ideal for cold sensitive plant species like *Digitalis purpurea*, while mires with *Eriophorum* and ericaceous vegetation is a dominating feature. Lichen dominated rocks with salt tolerant species is typical. A botanical survey has not revealed any particular flora.

24. Current scientific research and facilities: Several long running projects are conducted in the area. Notably these are research on seals and monitoring of the breeding population of *Phalacrocorax* spp. At regular intervals seabirds are counted. On a smaller scale bird ringing and bird observations are conducted.

25. Current conservation education: Different leaflets and posters have been produced.

26. Current recreation and tourism: Boat tourists on a limited scale. Some houses have been turned into leisure houses.

27. Management authority: Fylkesmannen i Sør-Trøndelag, Statens Hus, N-7005 Trondheim.

28. Jurisdiction: Dept. of Environment.

29. Bibliographical references: Numerous reports (in Norwegian) and studies have been published on the natural history and botanical history of the area.

30. Reasons for inclusion: 1 b, 2 b, c, 3 a, b, c.

31. Map of site: Enclosed.