

# 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 7, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, as amended by COP9 Resolution IX.1 Annex B). A 3<sup>rd</sup> 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.

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### 1. Name and address of the compiler of this form:

Ola Wergeland Krog, Wergeland Krog Naturkart,  
commissioned by Norwegian Directorate for Nature  
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Designation date

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Site Reference Number

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

August 2012

October 2010

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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.

Pasvik

(International No. 810, National No: 23)

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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:**

Only minor adjustments of data and management are performed in the RIS.

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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 boundaries are the same as for the Pasvik 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.

69° 10' N 29° 15' 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.

Situated along Pasvik river at the Norwegian - Russian border, Sør-Varanger Municipality, Finnmark County. Nearest town being Kirkenes app. 65 km north with app. 4000 inhabitants (2005). The adjacent Pasvik Zapovednik on the Russian side is located in Petsjenga Municipality, Murmansk Oblast. An area not yet designated as Ramsar site.

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

51,5 m – 93,5 m.a.s.l.

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

1910 ha of which approx. 450 ha is freshwater.

**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 reserve includes the most intact section of the Pasvik river system, characterized by many bays, islets and shallow waters. The river is surrounded by *Pinus sylvestris* forests and extensive mires. The coniferous forest is the north-west fringe of the Siberian taiga. The area is especially important for breeding, resting and migratory wetland species, and several red listed bird species are breeding in the area.

**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.

This is a low exploited riverine ecosystem consisting of slow flowing waters with a few rapids, many shallow bays with rich water vegetation in contrast to the barren surroundings. The area is the north-west fringe of the Siberian taiga and is the north-west border for many species of plants and animals which are common in Russia but rare in this area.

Criterion 2.

The conservation area is important for a large number of species, among them many red listed species. Among them we find:

EN (Endangered): Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla*, Meadow Starwort *Stellaria palustris*,

VU (Vulnerable): Smew *Mergus albellus* (regular in the site, up to 25 ind), Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*, Greater Scaup *Aythya marila*, Bean Goose *Anser fabalis* (up to 200 ind), Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*, Water Starwort *Callitriche hermaphrodita*,

The area has also a stable population of Brown bear *Ursus arctos* (EN) and Eurasian Otter *Lutra lutra* (VU). Other redlisted mammals like Wolf *Canis lupus* (CR) and Wolverine *Gulo gulo* (EN) is more rarely seen in the area.

See also point 22. Red list categories are given according to the national red list 2010.

Criterion 3.

In addition of being a very important area for a great number of wetland bird species, the area is also important for a series of boreal species with limited distribution in Europe, for instance Northern Hawk Owl *Surnia ulula* and Great Grey Owl *Strix nebulosa* (VU). The area is therefore represented on the list of "Important Bird Areas in Europe" (Heath and Evans 2000). The wetland system found along the Pasvik river system is very rare for rivers draining towards the Barents Sea due to its special richness and

variation. The wetland in Øvre Pasvik are considered as one of the richest wetland systems in Scandinavia and is of great importance for the avifauna.

#### Criterion 4.

The area is especially important for breeding, resting and migratory wetland species: see point 22 for more details.

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**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. Northern boreal zone (NbC1 – slightly continental section)

2. Alpine

**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

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**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.

The Pasvik River originates from the Enare Lake in Finland. The landscape consists of low mountains, moraine scenery and melt water deposits from the Ice Age. The geology consists of precambrian rocks, covered by mighty quaternary deposits. The Norwegian part of the reserve is dominated by shallow waters and extensive mires. The Pasvik River is regulated by seven electric power stations, this has some influence on the fluctuation of the water level, but in the central part of the nature reserve the river still follows its original course. Due to the physical factors with shallow and protected bays the aquatic flora is particularly well developed. The ice breaks very early in this area and is thus very important for staging migratory waterfowl. The climate is mainly continental with relatively warm summers and cold winters, precipitation is moderate.

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**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 surrounding catchment area is covered by pine forest in the lower areas and mountainous birch forest in higher elevations. The geology consists of metamorphic rocks of the Inari-block with dominance of tonalitic to granitic gneiss. Soil types consist of organic soil in mires and glacial deposits with sand, gravel and rocks. The climate is continental with long and cold winters and short relatively warm and intense summers. Moderate to low precipitation.

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**18. Hydrological values:**

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

The river Pasvik drains an area of 18404 km<sup>2</sup>, with a major part in Finland and constitutes the border river between Norway and Russia. As a flood control agent the river is of high importance since the volume of water during the spring floods is huge. Since the degradation of the wetlands in the northern regions is low, there are hardly any flooding problems except the normal situation. The significant transport of sediments and the continuously shifting estuary as a consequence of this is important in maintaining a natural ecosystem in the estuary.

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**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 • Q • 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. M, U, O

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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.

Situated in the northern boreal coniferous forest. The forest is characterized by few species of lichen and ericaceous species on dry ground. A typical feature is extensive tracts of mires, dominated by *Carex* spp. stands in minerogenic parts. Of particular interest is well developed structures of permafrost phenomenon called pals mires, i.e. permanently frozen parts of the mire. Dense thickets of *Salix* spp. can be found along the river. In the river rich stands of *Potamogeton* spp. dominates, while in more shallow parts species like *Sparganium* spp. and *Ranunculus peltatus* dominates. Water Horsetail *Equisetum fluviatile* dominates some parts of the sites (Gjøkbukta). Several other interesting water plant species can be found along the shore.

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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.*

Geographically interesting area with a number of eastern species like *Stella palustris* (EN), *Sagittaria natans sagittifolia*, *Carex globularis* and *Carex lapponica* (VU). A species like *Betula pendula* is rare in this northern climate. The rich and varied aquatic vegetation found in this river is rare for rivers draining towards the Barents Sea.

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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.*

**Mammals:**

The Pasvik area has a stable breeding population of Brown bear *Ursus arctos* (EN), and Eurasian Otter *Lutra lutra* (VU). Common species in the area is Red Squirrel *Sciurus vulgaris*, Red Fox *Vulpes vulpes* and Mink *Mustela vison* and Moose *Alces alces*. A strong population of Muskrat *Ondatra zibethica* has been established the last two decades.

**Birds:**

The area is a rich breeding and resting area for a great number of bird species. A total of 231 bird species has been found in the Ramsar area and nearby areas. A total of 52 species of waterbirds have been recorded here, 16 of this species are listed in the Norwegian red list.

water-birds: Garganey *Anas querquedula* (EN) not common, Smew *Mergellus albellus* (VU), Bean goose *Anser fabalis* (VU) common breeder, Northern Shoveler *Anas chrypeata* (NT) not common, Greater Scaup *Aythya marila* (VU) rare, Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica* (NT) common breeder, Broad-billed Sandpiper *Limicola falcinellus* (NT) not common, Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* (VU) not common, Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus* not common, Northern Pintail *Anas acuta* (NT) not common, Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus* (NT) rare, Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata* (NT) rare, Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus* (NT) not common, Ruff *Philomachus pugnax* (VU) common.

Examples of other red listed breeding birds are: Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* (NT), Great Grey Owl *Strix nebulosa* (VU), Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis* (NT) and Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla* (EN).

The area is an important staging site for water-birds like; Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica* (NT) (200 ind.), Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus* (127 ind.), Bean goose *Anser fabalis* (200 ind.), Wigeon *Anas penelope* (340 ind.), Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra* (300 ind.), and Common Merganser *Mergus merganser* (300 ind.).

Waders and other types of wetland birds also appear in relatively large numbers. The most common waders are Wood sandpiper *Tringa glareola* common breeder, Common greenshank *Tringa nebularia* common breeder, Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus* common breeder and Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* common breeder, but also species like Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*, Ruff *Philomachus pugnax* common breeder and Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus* is often seen. In spring there is recorded up to 300 waders. Red list categories are given according 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:

Rich findings of archeological interest documents human habitation of the area 8,000 years ago. The valley of Pasvik has in the border area a history of Russian, Finnish and Norwegian background. Saami people dominated the area prior to recent settlement by Norwegians.

The famous naturalist Hans Tho. L. Schaanning settled in the valley around 1900 and collected data particularly on the birdlife in the area well known among naturalists. His farm at Noatun (within the reserve) is currently protected as a national historical monument. Several books and articles have been written on historical events and on the local flora and fauna.

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 civilisations 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: Most of the area falls under Finnmarkseiendommen, a regional authority managing state property in Finnmark county. A minor part is private.

b) in the surrounding area: Most of the area falls under Finnmarkseiendommen.

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**25. Current land (including water) use:**

a) within the Ramsar site:

Leisure activities including fishing. Boating is strictly restricted due to specific border regulations. The area is also scarcely populated and the tourist and leisure impact on the area is very low. Also some reindeer husbandry within the site.

b) in the surroundings/catchment:

Reindeer husbandry, forestry, hunting, fishing and other leisure activities.

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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:

The Pasvik river is regulated by two hydro-electric power plants, this has some influence on the fluctuation of the water level. There is also some contamination by air from the industry in Russia.

b) in the surrounding area:

Two power plants, that cause some water-fluctuations, are situated outside the Ramsar area. Large tracts of forests have been felled in the surrounding area on both sides of the border, but still great areas of virgin taiga remains within and outside of the protected areas and a neighbouring national park. Prospecting for minerals has been undertaken in the catchment area, while extraction of a major deposit was rejected with the establishment of the reserve. An old plan for a new highway between Norway and Finland along the river still exists but is strongly opposed due to the unspoiled character of the area.

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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 Ramsar site was established as a Nature Reserve the 15th of October 1993 and got status as a Ramsar area the 19<sup>th</sup> of March 1996. The reserve is connected to a large nature reserve on the Russian side of the border, established in 1992. The Russian strict nature reserve (*zapovednik*) is named Pasvik, and is situated in Petsjenga rajon, Murmansk oblast (County). The area of Pasvik zapovednik is app. 14730 ha.

Part of the Øvre Pasvik IBA (20000 ha)

Part of the Pasvik – Inari Triateral Park, with EUROPARC Transboundary Parks certification, consisting of Vätsäri wilderness area, Pasvik zapovednik, Øvre Pasvik national park, Øvre Pasvik landscape protection area and Pasvik nature reserve.

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.

d) Describe any other current management practices:

From the border of the Ramsar area to the Russian and Finnish border further south, the area has status as a Landscape Protection area - Øvre Pasvik landskapsvernområde, and further along the Finnish border to the west the landscape protection area supersede into Øvre Pasvik National Park. Both the landscape protection area and the national park was established the 29<sup>th</sup> of August 2003.

The site is by a Royal Resolution given the status as a National Nature Reserve (Norw. Naturresevat), which is the strongest form of Nature conservation in Norway. All kind of human activity in the conservation area is regulated by an official set of detailed regulations specific for the area.

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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.

Management plan in preparation

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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.

The research centre at Svanhovd Environmental Center (Bioforsk), approx. 40 km to the North, has been assigned tasks concerning research and monitoring within the conservation area. This is done in close cooperation with the authorities of the Russian *zapovednik*.

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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.

Approximate 40 km to the north we find a national park centre with exhibition from the nature in the Pasvik valley. There is also possible to stay over the night and get information, transport and so on.

<http://www.nasjonalparksenter.no/pasviknps/en/>

A book on the reserve in Norwegian and Russian was published in 1994. Several posters and a brochure in English, Russian and Norwegian have been produced. A bird watching hide is situated south in the small bay Gjokbukta. There is also other information about the site on web.

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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 a low degree used by residents and tourists, mainly for fishing and birdwatching.

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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](mailto: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 Finnmark, which is under the instruction of DN.

Address: Fylkesmannen i Finnmark, Miljøvernavdelingen, Statens Hus, 9815 Vadsø. Phone: +47

78950300. Fax: +47 78 95 03 07. E-mail: [fmfipostmottak@fylkesmannen.no](mailto:fmfipostmottak@fylkesmannen.no)



**34. Bibliographical references:**

Scientific/technical references only. If biogeographic regionalisation scheme applied (see 15 above), list full reference citation for the scheme.

**Biogeographic regionalisation scheme:**

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

**General:**

Günther, M. 2006. Ti år med vannfugltellinger i Pasvik naturreservat. Oppsummering 1996-2005. Bioforsk Rapport 1 (68). 65 s. (List of literature inside)

(<http://www.bioforsk.no/ViewPPP.aspx?view=publication&id=8985&viewLanguage=NorwegianBokmaal>)

Günther, M. (Ed.) 2004. Field Guide to Protected Areas in the Barents Region, Svanhovd Environmental Centre, Svanvik. 376 pp.

William, S., Makarova, O & Aarset, T. 1994. *Pasvik. Norsk-russiske naturreservat*. Grøndahl-Dreyer. 96 pp. (List of literature inside).

**Other:**

Birkeland, I. og Arnesen, G. 2011. Fjærevann, Sør-Varanger kommune. EcoFact rapport 122

Heath, M. F. & Evans, M. I. (eds.) 2000. *Important Bird Areas in Europe. Priority sites for conservation*. 2 vols. Cambridge, UK: BirdLife International. BirdLife Conservation Series No. 8.

Kålås, J.A., Viken, Å. og Bakken, T. (red.) 2006. Norwegian Red List. Artsdatabanken, Norway  
(<http://www.artsdatabanken.no/ThemeArticle.aspx?m=156&amid=2311>)

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