

25. Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands

Categories approved by Recommendation 4.7 of the Conference of the Contracting Parties.

NOTE: It is important that you read the accompanying *Explanatory Note and Guidelines* document before completing this form.

1. **Date this sheet was completed/updated:**
September 1997

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Designation date

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Site Reference Number

2. **Country:** Russian Federation

3. **Name of wetland:** Southern Coast of the Gulf of Finland, Baltic Sea

4. **Geographical coordinates:** 60°00'N, 29°15'E

5. **Altitude:** min 0 m, max 2.7 m a.s.l.

6. **Area:** 6,400 ha

7. **Overview:** The site comprises a shallow sea bay with reeds and sand beaches. The site is important for waterbirds during the spring migration and, to a lesser extent, during the autumn migration and breeding seasons.

8. **Wetland Type** (please circle the applicable codes for wetland types as listed in Annex I of the *Explanatory Note and Guidelines* document.)

marine-coastal: A . B . C . D . E . F . G . H . I . J . K

inland: L . M . N . O . P . Q . R . Sp . Ss . Tp . Ts
U . Va . Vt . W . Xf . Xp . Y . Zg . Zk

man-made: 1 . 2 . 3 . 4 . 5 . 6 . 7 . 8 . 9

Please now rank these wetland types by listing them from the most to the least dominant: A,E,G.

9. **Ramsar Criteria:** (please circle the applicable criteria; see point 12, next page.)

1a . 1b . 1c . 1d . 2a . 2b . 2c . 2d . 3a . 3b . 3c . 4a . 4b

Please specify the most significant criterion applicable to the site: 3a

10. **Map of site included?** Please tick *yes* -or- *no*

(Please refer to the *Explanatory Note and Guidelines* document for information regarding desirable map traits).

11. **Name and address of the compiler of this form:** N.P.Iovchenko, G.A.Noskov: Biological Institute of Saint Petersburg University. 2 Oranienbaum Shosse, Stary Petergoff, S-Petersburg 198904, Russia.

12. Justification of the criteria selected under point 9, on previous page: 3a - the site is important as a staging area for large populations of waterfowl.

13. General location: In Leningrad Region, between the village of Bolshaya Izhora and the town of Sosnovy Bor. To the north, the site borders the Gulf of Finland.

14. Physical features: The site includes coastal shallow waters and the lower terrace of the Gulf of Finland. The terrace is slightly tilted towards the sea and is composed of Palaeozoic clays, overlain by Pleistocene marine sediments. The salinity of water in Gulf of Finland is not so high as that in the Baltic Sea, and the water is warmed up well in summer. Full freezing is observed from late November to late April. Heavy storms may occur in autumn. Tidal variations in water level are small.

The area has a temperate marine climate, with the mean air temperatures of -5°C in January and +15°C in July. Cyclones from the Atlantic have a pronounced effect on the weather. Annual precipitation is about 700 mm, mostly falling during warm months. Snow cover is 40 cm deep and persists for about 120 days.

The soils are predominantly of the soddy and podzolic types.

15. Hydrological values: No information

16. Ecological features: The site includes shallow waters of the Gulf of Finland with sand and stony beaches and reed beds *Phragmites communis*. Terrestrial habitats are represented by mixed forests with spruce, pine, birch and alder, and mires of various types.

17. Noteworthy flora: The vegetation is represented by the alder *Alnus glutinosa* forests, patches of spruce, pine and various mixed forests with birch and aspen. Population of *Myrica gale*, one of the easternmost ones, is found near the village of Bolshaya Izhora.

18. Noteworthy fauna: The site lies on a major migration route, and the shoals near the villages of Lebyazhy, Krasnaya Gorka and Bolshaya Izhora have long been renowned for the large concentrations of waterbirds in spring (Bianki, 1907).

Anatidae are the most numerous among the migrating birds. Three species of swans (*Cygnus cygnus*, *C. columbianus bewickii* and *C. olor*), four geese species (*Anser anser*, *A. albifrons*, *A. erythropus* and *A. fabalis*) and 16 species of ducks have been registered. About 25,000 swans and 100,000 dabbling and diving ducks have been recorded at an area of 10 km² of the shallow waters between the villages of Krasnaya Gorka and Bolshaya Izhora in April-May. Swans pass through the area in the period between 20 March and 20 May. The number of Bewick's swans *Cygnus columbianus bewickii* reaches 4,000.

Charadriiformes include 20 species of Charadriidae, six species of Laridae and four species of Sternidae. The total number of *Larus ridibundus*, *L. argentatus* and *L. canus* may reach 200,000 in spring. Little gull *L. minutus* has become a common species in the last years.

The site provides important staging areas for many threatened species of birds: 17 species, entered in the Russian Red Data Book (RRB) and the Red Data Book of the Baltic Region, occur at the site. These are listed below, with the threatened species categories given in brackets, following the Red Data Book of the Baltic Region: 0= extinct; 1= endangered; 2= vulnerable; 3= rare; 4= indeterminate (required attention):

Gavia arctica (1)
Cygnus cygnus (1)
Cygnus bewickii (RRB)
Anser anser (2)
Anser erythropus (RRB)
Anas penelope (2)
Melanitta fusca (2)
Megrus albellus (1)
Pandion haliaetus (RRB)

Haliaeetus albicilla (RRB)
Circus cyaneus (2)
Circus pygargus (2)
Crex crex (4)
Haematopus ostralegus (2)
Gallinago media (2)
Limosa limosa (2)
Columba oenas (2)

19. Social and cultural values: The area provides favourable conditions for traditional fishing.

20. Land tenure/ownership: The nature reserve is state owned; the lands under villages are in communal ownership.

21. Current land use: Fishing is carried out at a part of the water area. Landuse activities are limited in accordance with the protection regime of the Lebyazhy Nature Reserve.

22. Factors (past, present or potential) adversely affecting the site's ecological character, including changes in land use and development projects: As the adjacent areas are highly populated, disturbance to staging waterbirds is the major threat.

23. Conservation measures taken: The site is protected as the Lebyazhy Nature Reserve ('zakaznik'), established at the regional level. There are two rangers on the staff.

24. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented: The following recommendations have been made to strengthen the protection regime at the site:

- to forbid ploughing of lands, drainage works of all kinds, mining for sand in the coastal areas, houses construction and all projects which might cause changes to the landscape, hay-making and grazing along the coast, use of pesticides for any purpose, use of motor boats during the spring and autumn migration periods (from the break-up of ice till 25 May and from 15 September till 31 October) and all kinds of disturbance to staging waterbirds;
 - to allow sanitary fellings in the forests, collecting of berries and mushrooms, sport fishing with a rod at a distance from the waterfowl staging areas, scientific research and limited eco-tourism;
 - to increase the staff of the Lebyazhy Nature Reserve to five rangers.
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25. Current scientific research and facilities: No information

26. Current conservation education: No information

27. Current recreation and tourism: No information

28. Jurisdiction:

Territorial: Government of Leningrad Region (67 Suvorovsky Prospect, Saint Petersburg 193311, Russia).

Functional: State Committee of the Russian Federation for Environmental Protection (4/6 Bolshaya Gruzinskaya Street, Moscow 123812, Russia).

29. Management authority: Regional Hunting Management Office (3 Smolny Street, Saint Petersburg 193311, Russia).

Ministry of Environment, Government of Leningrad Region (67 Suvorovsky Pr., Saint Petersburg 193311, Russia).

30. Bibliographical references: Bianki (1907); Red Data Book of the Baltic Region (1993); Red Data Book of the USSR (1984).
