

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:

April 2002

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DD	MM	YY

Designation date

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Site Reference Number

2. Country:

Sweden

3. Name of wetland:

Helgeån

4. Geographical coordinates:

56°00'N, 014°13'E

5. Altitude: (average and/or max. & min.) 0 – 10 m

6. Area: (in hectares) 8 050 ha

7. Overview: (general summary, in two or three sentences, of the wetland's principal characteristics)

The site forms a section of the River Helgeån, from the immediate north (Araslövssjön) and south (Hammarsjön-Egeside) of Kristianstad to the Baltic Sea, in the south of Sweden.

The site was classified as a Ramsar site in 1974 (5 480 ha) and was extended in 2001.

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 . Q . 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: O, Tp, 4, W, M, A

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

1 . 2 . 3 . 4 . 5 . 6 . 7 . 8

Please specify the most significant criterion applicable to the site: 2

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:

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Please provide additional information on each of the following categories by attaching extra pages (please limit extra pages to no more than 10):

12. Justification of the criteria selected under point 9, on previous page. (Please refer to Annex II in the *Explanatory Note and Guidelines* document).

1. A representative example of a near-natural wetland type (shallow lakes and connecting river) in the EU Continental region
 2. 2 globally redlisted bird species, >110 nationally redlisted species, including 25 bird species, 30 fungi species, > 20 vascular plant species, 5 fish species, 3 bat species and 2 amphibian species
 3. Supports particular elements of biological diversity that are characteristic of the EU Continental region
 5. >20 000 waterbirds, including 15 000 *Anser fabalis* and 5 000 *Branta canadensis*
 6. Supports about 15 % (15 000) of the west Siberian/northwest European population of *Anser fabalis*, 5 % (800) of the same region's population of *Cygnus columbianus* and 7% (4 800) of the north-west European population of *Grus grus*
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13. General location: (include the nearest large town and its administrative region)

Located just outside the town Kristianstad, in the County of Skåne, southernmost Sweden. Municipality: Kristianstad.

14. Physical features: (e.g. geology, geomorphology; origins - natural or artificial; hydrology; soil type; water quality; water depth water permanence; fluctuations in water level; tidal variations; catchment area; downstream area; climate)

The Helgeån River, the greatest watercourse of Scania, flows through a flat arable plain towards the Baltic Sea. Most of the lakes along the river have been drained, but the shallow eutrophic lakes, Araslövssjön and Hammarsjön have almost not been drained and both are included in the site. The river is generally unregulated, allowing regular flooding of the meadows.

15. Hydrological values: (groundwater recharge, flood control, sediment trapping, shoreline stabilisation etc)

The lower stretches of the river, of which the site is a part, are unregulated and has an important role in flood control.

16. Ecological features: (main habitats and vegetation types)

The site is comprised of shallow freshwater lakes, Helgeån river including the mouths of its tributaries; Vramsån, Mjöån and Vinneån, reedbeds, scrubs, extensive pasture meadows, wet forests and alluvial forests.

17. Noteworthy flora: (indicating, e.g., which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc)

The site has important botanical value and supports important species such as *Liparis loeselii*, *Herminium monorchis*, *Apium inundatum* and *Taraxacum austrinum*. *Najas flexilis*, *Senecio paludosus*, *Nitellopsis obtusa* and *Potamogeton rutilus* also occur and all species mentioned are nationally redlisted. This list also include about 30 fungi species (*i.a.* *Amanita sstrobiliformis*, *Leccinum crocipodium* and *Polyporus umbellatus*) and 2 *Chara* species.

18. Noteworthy fauna: (indicating, e.g., which species are unique, rare, endangered, abundant or biogeographically important; include count data, etc.)

The site holds breeding species such as the black-tailed godwit *Limosa limosa* (65 pairs, nationally redlisted), ruff (male) and reeve (female) *Philomachus pugnax* (35-40, EU Birds directive species), dunlin *Calidris alpina schinzii* (10, nationally redlisted), black tern *Chlidonias niger* (50, nationally redlisted, EU Birds directive species), spotted crane *Porzana porzana* (5-15, nationally redlisted, EU Birds directive species), corncrake *Crex crex* (2, globally and nationally redlisted, EU Birds directive

species), bittern *Botaurus stellaris* (8-10, nationally redlisted, EU Birds directive species), shoveler *Anas clypeata* (50-55, nationally redlisted), garganey *Anas querquedula* (30-35, nationally redlisted), marsh harrier *Circus aeruginosus* (30), Montagu's harrier *C. pygargus* (1-2, nationally redlisted, EU Birds directive species), osprey *Pandion haliaetus* (2, EU Birds directive species), hobby *Falco subbuteo* (3), kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* (3), bearded tit *Panurus biarmicus* (20, nationally redlisted), grasshopper warbler *Locustella naevia* (120-140), savi's warbler *Locustella luscinioides* (1-3), scarlet rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus* (>15), lesser spotted woodpecker *Dendrocopos minor* (10) and penduline tit *Remiz pendulinus* (10, nationally redlisted). Regular annual visitors in the area include species such as the river warbler *Locustella fluviatilis* (3-5, nationally redlisted), bean goose *Anser fabalis* (15 000), bewick's swan *Cygnus columbianus* (800, EU Birds directive species), caspian tern *Sterna caspia* (5, nationally redlisted, EU Birds directive species), canadian goose *Branta canadensis* (5 000), white-tailed eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla* (15-20, globally and nationally redlisted, EU Birds directive species) and peregrine falcon *Falco peregrinus* (2-3, nationally redlisted, EU Birds directive species). In the migration period, up to 4800 cranes *Grus grus* can be seen.

Other species found in the site include the natterjack toad *Bufo calamita* (nationally redlisted, EU Habitats directive species) and the fish species *Salmo salar* (nationally redlisted, EU Habitats directive species), *Salmo trutta*, *Silurus glanis* (nationally redlisted) and *Gobio gobio* (nationally redlisted). Three nationally redlisted bat species have been recorded.

19. Social and cultural values: (e.g. fisheries production, forestry, religious importance, archaeological site etc.)

The remains from a medieval castle (Lillöhus) can be found within the site.

20. Land tenure/ownership of: (a) site (b) surrounding area

(a) Owned privately, by the state and by the municipality.

(b) Owned privately, by the state and by the municipality.

21. Current land use: (a) site (b) surroundings/catchment

(a) The region is characterized as arable land and the site is used mainly for livestock grazing and hay-making, partly also for cultivation of crops.

(b) Agricultural land, urban areas and partly forests

22. Factors (past, present or potential) adversely affecting the site's ecological character, including changes in land use and development projects: (a) at the site (b) around the site

(a) Species of breeding waders and ducks have declined in numbers during the 1970's and 1980's due to vegetation overgrowth as a result of a decrease in grazing and haymaking. Restoration measures including, cutting of vegetation and increased grazing pressure starting in early 1990's has broken the downward trend and several breeding species have increased in numbers. Nutrient-rich water contributes to a slow plant invasion process in the lakes. Turbid and humic water may have a negative impact on submerged vegetation.

(b) Nutrient-rich water, from the agricultural affected catchment area upstream and surrounding the Ramsar area has also added to eutrophication and the earlier mentioned plant invasion.

23. Conservation measures taken: (national category and legal status of protected areas - including any boundary changes which have been made: management practices; whether an officially approved management plan exists and whether it has been implemented)

The site is listed as being of national importance for nature conservation. There are five nature reserves within the site.

Isternäset Nature Reserve – 107 ha. Protected since March 2001 and owned by the Municipality.

Hercules Nature Reserve – 94 ha. Protected since 1999 and owned privately and by the Municipality.

Fredriksdalsvikens Nature Reserve – 100 ha. Protected since 1992 and privately owned.

Håslövs Ängar Nature Reserve – 183 ha. Protected since 1967 and owned by the state and privately.

Norra Lingenäset Nature Reserve – 3.9 ha. Protected since 1968 and owned by the Municipality.

Management plans exist for all reserves.

24. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented: (e.g. management plan in preparation; officially proposed as a protected area etc.)

The County Administration and the Municipality have developed a joint action programme for nature conservation, setting priorities for the future safeguarding of the site. All areas owned by the state will be made nature reserves in due course.

A large proportion of the site is included in the Natura 2000 network.

25. Current scientific research and facilities: (e.g. details of current projects; existence of field station etc.)

Nedre Helgeåns Bird Station carries out research, inventories and bird ringing.

26. Current conservation education: (e.g. visitors centre, hides, information booklet, facilities for school visits etc.)

The Kristianstads Vattenrike Ecomuseum offers four outdoor museums, 12 bird towers, one hide, trails as well as boat rides, nature school activities and folders. Website address: www.vattenriket.kristianstad.se

27. Current recreation and tourism: (state if wetland is used for recreation/tourism; indicate type and frequency/intensity)

Estimated number of visitors amount to 150 000 - 200 000 per year. Other activities include sport fishing, and bird watching.

28. Jurisdiction: (territorial e.g. state/region and functional e.g. Dept of Agriculture/Dept. of Environment etc.)

County Administrative Board of Skåne

29. Management authority: (name and address of local body directly responsible for managing the wetland)

County Administrative Board of Skåne

S-205 15 Malmö

Sweden

Municipality of Kristianstad

Ecomuseum Kristianstads Vattenrike

Rådhuset

S-291 32 Kristianstad

Sweden

30. Bibliographical references: (scientific/technical only)

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von Proschwitz, T. 2001. Landlevande mollusker i Kristianstads Vattenrike och en översikt av landmolluskfaunan i Kristianstads kommun. Naturhistoriska Museet, Göteborg. Länsstyrelsen i Skåne län, Kristianstads kommun. Skåne i utveckling 2001: 38.

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