

Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS) – 2006-2008 version

Available for download from http://www.ramsar.org/ris/key_ris_index.htm.

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 and guidelines 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:

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Designation date

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Site Reference Number

Niklas Kemi, The County administrative board of Norrbotten, S-971 86 Luleå, Sweden. Tel. +46 920 96147. E-mail: Niklas.Kemi@bd.lst.se

2. Date this sheet was completed/updated:

11.06.2008

3. Country:

Sweden

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.

Sjaunja

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:

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:

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 site is situated mainly within two existing nature reserves (Stubba and Sjaunja) but does not follow their boundaries. Sjaunja is also a part of the World heritage area Laponia.

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.

67°17'N 019°49'E

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.

The Sjaunja site is situated in the mountainous area of northern Sweden about 50 km southwest of the town of Gällivare, in the county of Norrbotten (population 250 800), municipality of Gällivare (pop. 19 010).

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

min.–max. 444–1 600 m

11. Area: (in hectares)

188 600 hectares

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 Sjaunja site encompasses an entire catchment area with virgin wilderness containing a wide range of habitats. The central parts are dominated by one of the largest mire complexes in Europe, dominated by aapa mires but also containing palsa mires. There are also large areas of primeval western taiga and mountainbirch woodland, alpine heaths, grasslands, open marshes and shallow freshwater lakes. More than 150 species of birds have been observed, of them around 100 species breed in the area, including many birds of prey. The area supports at least 25 mammal species including regularly occurring brown bear (*Ursus arctos*), lynx (*Lynx lynx*), wolverine (*Gulo gulo*) and otter (*Lutra lutra*).

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
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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).

1. Sjaunja contains a representative/rare example of a natural wetland type in the alpine region in the sense of an unexploited mire complex consisting of palsa mires and primeval forests.

2. Nationally red listed bird species include bar-tailed godwit (*Limosa lapponica*)* (VU), gyrfalcon (*Falco rusticolus*)* (EN), hen harrier (*Circus cyaneus*)* (VU), red-throated pipit (*Anthus cervinus*) (VU) and ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*)* (VU).

* = listed in the EU Birds directive, Annex I.

Other red listed species at the site include e.g. arctic fox (*Alopex lagopus*)* (CR), lynx (*Lynx lynx*)* (VU), otter (*Lutra lutra*)* (VU) and wolverine (*Gulo gulo*)* (globally listed as VU, nationally as EN).

* = listed in the EU Habitats directive, Annex II

3. Apart from the species mentioned above, the site supports a rich avian fauna such as arctic tern (*Sterna paradisaea*)*, bean goose (*Anser fabalis*), black-headed gull (*Larus ridibundus*), black-throated diver (*Gavia arctica*)*, bluethroat

(*Luscinia svecica*)*, crane (*Grus grus*)*, dotterel (*Charadrius morinellus*)*, golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*)*, golden plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*)*, great grey owl (*Strix nebulosa*)*, great snipe (*Gallinago media*)*, hawk owl (*Surnia ulula*)*, jack snipe (*Lymnocyptes minimus*), little bunting (*Emberiza pusilla*), merlin (*Falco columbarius*)*, osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*)*, pygmy owl (*Glaucidium passerinum*)*, red-necked phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus*)*, red-throated diver (*Gavia stellata*)*, short-eared owl (*Asio flammeus*)*, snowy owl (*Nyctea scandiaca*)*, spotted redshank (*Tringa erythropus*), Tengmalms owl (*Aegolius funereus*)*, ural owl (*Strix uralensis*)*, white-tailed eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*), whooper swan (*Cygnus cygnus*)* and wood sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*)*.

* = listed in the EU Birds directive, Annex I.

Apart from the species mentioned above, mammals at the site also include the brown bear (*Ursus arctos*).

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:

Alpine

b) biogeographic regionalisation scheme (include reference citation):

European Environment Agency. 2003. Europe's environment: the third assessment, p 231. Environmental assessment report No 10. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

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.

Landscape features include open water, mire moraine ridges, mountain slopes, fluvio-glacial channels and tundra polygons. The western area is partly affected by the water regulation at Lake Satihauve. The central parts of Sjaunja are dominated by one of the largest mire complex in Europe. The climate in the county of Norrbotten is characterized by cold winters and short summers. Sjaunja is situated partly in the alpine region with relatively harsh conditions during the winter season. The average precipitation is app. 750 mm/year and the average temperature is -14 °C (January) and 12 °C (July).

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 bedrock in the area is mainly acid. Some parts consists of alkaline bedrock with a high diversity of vascular plants. Moraine and sand dominates in the area and open bedrock exists in the western parts in the mountains with peaks reaching about 1700 meters above the sea level. In the area one can find geomorphological elements such as glacifluvial gullies and tundra polygons. The area has a low impact of human activities. Reindeer management has been present in the area for a long time. The catchment area is app. 310 694 hectares. Sjaunja

is situated partly in the alpine region with relatively harsh conditions during the winter season.

18. Hydrological values:

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

The great mire complexes surely have a major function in the meaning of flood control and sediment trapping. The stream Sjaunjaätno passes through the area.

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 • O • 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.

U, M, O, Xf, Xp

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.

The wetlands in the central parts of Sjaunja is dominated by aapa mires but there are also pals mires. In the west, the highest mountains reach an altitude of 1700 meters above the sea level. Alpine heaths and grassland dominates at higher altitudes in the west and mountain birch forests at lower altitudes. In some south exposed areas with easy weathered bedrock of limestone the vegetation gets very lush with a high diversity of species. The central and eastern parts of Sjaunja have large areas of primeval western taiga.

The great variation among the higher fauna life lacks corresponding areas in Sweden. More than 150 different species of birds have been observed, of them around 100 breeding. About 25 different mammals have been noted in Sjaunja and bear, lynx, wolverine and otter are regularly seen in the area. The Ramsar site provides ecosystem services concerning recreation (e.g hunting, fishing, bird-watching, canoeing) and ecological factors like biodiversity, sediment trapping, etc.

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.*

In Sjaunja you can find the rare species *Ranunculus lapponicus* and *Carex tenuiflora*.

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.*

See above (14).

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 frequently used for reindeer husbandry by the indigenous Saami people.

In this vast area, archaeological surveys have only been performed in the eastern part. The archaeological sites are remains from hunting and gathering societies as well as reindeer husbandry. There are also remains connected to forestry and making of tar.

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 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:
- 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:

Mainly state-owned.

b) in the surrounding area:

Mainly state-owned.

25. Current land (including water) use:

a) within the Ramsar site:

The wetland is used mainly for reindeer husbandry and recreational activities (e.g. sport fishing, hunting and canoeing.)

b) in the surroundings/catchment:
See above (a).

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:

In winter, there is some disturbance to the site from the use of snowmobiles, but this is not considered a problem. In the greater part of the Ramsar site, the use of snowmobiles is prohibited. In total, the impact of human activities within the site is low.

b) in the surrounding area:

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.

Since 1996, the Sjaunja site has been designated as a World Heritage Site. It is listed as being of national importance for nature conservation, and is a Biogenetic Reserve and an EU Special Protection Area (SPA) in the Natura 2000 network (SE0820216 Sjaunja (281 464 ha) – SPA, pSCI). The site is covered by the special provisions in the Swedish Environmental Code, (Chapter 4, section 5: Special provisions concerning land and water management in certain areas in Sweden), which restricts exploitation for buildings and other structures. The whole Ramsar site is included in Sjaunja Nature Reserve (total area 285 000 ha, thereof 277 500 ha on land). The reserve was established in 1986 and is state-owned.

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?:

The reserve is managed by the County Administrative Board of Norrbotten in accordance with a management plan (Decision/Beslut 1986-03-07, 11.121-2177-71).

d) Describe any other current management practices:

The management plan allows the area to develop naturally. Hunting and use of off-road vehicles is restricted.

28. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:

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

29. Current scientific research and facilities:

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

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.

Sjaunja is also a part of the World heritage area Laponia. There are information booklets describing the area and a visitors' centre is planned in the Laponia area.

31. Current recreation and tourism:

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

Some parts of the Ramsar site is used for sport fishing, hunting, canoeing, bird-watching and hiking.

32. Jurisdiction:

Include territorial, e.g. state/region, and functional/sectoral, e.g. Dept of Agriculture/Dept. of Environment, etc.

County Administrative Board of Norrbotten

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 county Administrative board of Norrbotten, S- 971 86 Luleå

34. Bibliographical references:

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

European Environment Agency. 2003. Europe's environment: the third assessment, p 231. Environmental assessment report No 10. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

Please return to: **Ramsar Convention Secretariat, Rue Mauverney 28, CH-1196 Gland, Switzerland**

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