



Ramsar Sites Information Service

Annotated List of Wetlands of International Importance

France

53 Ramsar Site(s) covering 3,808,250 ha

Baie d'Audierne

Site number: 2,460 | Country: France | Administrative region: Bretagne

Area: 2,396 ha | Coordinates: 47°52'08"N 04°21'18"W | Designation dates: 04-09-2021

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Situated at the western tip of Brittany, Baie d'Audierne is an impressive coastal wetland featuring cliffs, pebble ridges, intertidal mudflats, freshwater lagoons, marshlands, ponds and vast beaches of fine sand bordered by more than ten kilometres of wind-shaped dunes. The Site includes the two largest natural ponds in the department of Finistère, at Kergalan and Trunvel. The variety of habitats favours biodiversity, and more than 1,000 animal species have been recorded, including about 320 birds. The Site is internationally important for providing nesting opportunities for over one percent of the ringed plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*), bearded reedling (*Panurus biarmicus*) and western marsh harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*), while up to ten percent of the global population of the aquatic warbler (*Acrocephalus paludicola*) pass through the Bay each year. The small coastal rivers which meet the sea here host European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*) migrating upstream to their spawning grounds. The Site provides habitats that are rich in plant diversity, and many protected plants such as the orchids *Spiranthes aestivalis* and *Liparis loeselii* can be found. The Bay is popular for recreation and nature observation; in addition the different wetland types regulate erosion and ensure water quality. Generally, the state of conservation is good: the main threats to the Site are increased nutrient inputs and possible impacts of growth of the tourism industry.

Baie de Somme

Site number: 925 | Country: France | Administrative region: Picardie

Area: 19,043 ha | Coordinates: 50°13'28"N 01°35'44"E | Designation dates: 23-01-1998

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site represents the largest natural estuary in northern France composed of vast sand, mudflats, and grassy areas. The exceptional character of the Site is reflected by its avifauna diversity with 365 bird species identified. Located at the confluence of migratory routes, the Site is one of the most important European resting and feeding areas for migrating waterbirds. It also provides a refuge during cold weather events, especially for waders and ducks. During the wintering period, the Site sustains over 1% of the individuals of the biogeographic population of the Northern pintail, Northern shoveller and common shelduck. The Site also supports 275 species of plants, including various rare species such as the fen orchid *Liparis loeselii*. Human activities include cattle grazing, hunting, commercial fishing, shellfish farming, and tourism. The "Maison Ramsar de la baie de Somme" is one of two study centres at the Site. The main threats to the ecological character of the Site relate to drainage, hunting, invasive species, pollution, and recreational and tourism activities. Silting up of the estuary is accelerating and will alter the food web in the estuary which will in turn become less suitable for migrating and wintering waders. All protected areas on the Site have a management plan and a site-specific management plan covering the whole Ramsar Site is in place for the period of 2014-2022.

Baie du Mont Saint-Michel

Site number: 709 | Country: France | Administrative region: Basse-Normandie-Bretagne

Area: 62,000 ha | Coordinates: 48°39'42"N 01°36'50"W | Designation dates: 14-10-1994

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Baie du Mont Saint-Michel. 14/10/94; Basse-Normandie, Bretagne; 62,000 ha; 48°40'N 001°40'W. World Heritage site, Special Protection Area. The site represents large areas of saltmarshes with a very diverse morphology, and comprises sand/gravel beds of bivalves, reefs of *Sabellaria alveolata*, rocky islets, cliffs and dunes. It is ranked fifth in the world for its exceptional tidal range, and constitutes one of the best examples of Quaternary sedimentation in the world. The area features a great number of habitats with a high biological richness. It is the best French site for *Halimione pedunculata*, one of the most interesting and rare species of European saline grasslands. Up to 100,000 waders winter at the bay, including over 1% of the populations of *Haematopus ostralegus*, *Calidris canutus*, and *C. alpina*. Marine mammals such as dolphins *Tursiops truncatus* and seals *Phoca vitulina* also visit the site. Human activities include recreation, fishing, shellfish farming, waterfowl hunting, and sand extraction. In the terrestrial area there is intensive agriculture and semi-extensive herding of cattle. Ramsar site no. 709.

Basse-Mana

Site number: 643 | Country: France (outr-mer) | Administrative region: Guyane Française

Area: 59,000 ha | Coordinates: 05°40'09"N 53°47'21"W | Designation dates: 08-12-1993

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Basse-Mana. 08/12/93; Guyane Française; 59,000 ha; 05°40'N 053°54'W. Parc Naturel Régional (2001). A plain of sandy barrier beaches, freshwater and brackish swamps, marine clays, mudflats, unexploited mangrove forests, swampland forests and pinot palm (*Euterpe oleracea*) stands. The alternation between erosion and large mud deposits (mudflat formation), preceding future coastal growth, is noteworthy. The site provides important habitat for nesting turtles, wintering grounds for numerous species of waders and feeding, staging, nesting and breeding areas for waterbirds. Human activities include nature tourism, beach activities, fishing, hunting, farming, and conservation education. Most land is owned by the state but the Kalinas Amerindian people have right of usage. The site is an important turtle study and protection station and contains various archaeological or funerary sites. Consumption of marine turtle eggs has diminished but remains within the traditional rights of the Kalinas. Ramsar site no. 643. Most recent RIS information: 2007.

Basses Vallées Angevines

Site number: 715 | Country: France | Administrative region: Pays de la Loire

Area: 6,450 ha | Coordinates: 47°34'N 00°28'E | Designation dates: 19-01-1995

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Basses Vallées Angevines. 01/02/95; Pays de la Loire; 6,450 ha; 47°34'N 000°28'W. Hunting Reserve. Vast alluvial plain encompassing the confluence of four rivers and supporting grasslands dominated by various communities of wet-meadow plants and sparse rows of ash and willow. The site supports various threatened, endemic or rare plants. The wetland is a stopover point of international importance for several Anatidae species and wading birds on the spring migration from their wintering grounds to their breeding grounds in northern and northeastern Europe, and it provides internationally important wintering and nesting habitat for several species of waterbirds. Human activities include agriculture, forestry, boating, fishing and bird hunting. Ramsar site no. 715. Most recent RIS information: 1994.

Bassin d'Arcachon - Secteur du delta de la Leyre

Site number: 1,996 | Country: France | Administrative region: Aquitaine

Area: 5,175 ha | Coordinates: 44°39'51"N 01°01'50"W | Designation dates: 27-10-2011

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Bassin d'Arcachon - Secteur du delta de la Leyre. 27/10/11; Aquitaine; 5,175 ha; 44°39'52"N 001°01'51"W. Natura 2000 (SPA, SIC). Covering a substantial part of the delta, the site is important for many species dependent on the intertidal zone such as threatened fish species. The mosaic of habitats, also including seasonally flooded forests, meadows, salt marshes and fish ponds, acts as a stop-over and wintering site for migratory bird species, many of them protected on a European level. It offers habitat for numerous species of insects, reptiles and mammals, some of them threatened globally. *Luscinia svecica namnetum*, a species of Bluethroat endemic to the French Atlantic coast, also occurs here. The site is important in flood regulation and acts as a buffer zone between Arcachon Bay and its watershed. The Ornithological Park 'Le Teich' forms part of the site, contributing to its popularity as a tourist destination. Further human uses include aquaculture, salt production, agriculture and hunting. The abandonment of traditional management practices, the related overgrowth with invasive species, water pollution and siltation threaten the site. Ramsar Site no. 1996. Most recent RIS information: 2011.

Camargue

Site number: 346 | Country: France | Administrative region: Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur

Area: 85,000 ha | Coordinates: 43°30'N 04°30'E | Designation dates: 01-12-1986

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Camargue. 01/12/86; Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur; 85,000 ha; 43°30'N 004°30'E. Biosphere Reserve, Special Protection Area EC Directive; National Reserve, Regional Natural Park, Hunting Reserve. The Rhône River delta, incorporating vast expanses of permanent and seasonal lagoons, lakes and ponds interspersed with extensive *Salicornia* flats, freshwater marshes, and a dune complex. The wetlands, subject to a salinity gradient, are partly supplied by rainfall, but the main source is groundwater pumped to sustain irrigated agriculture. The Camargue is of international importance for nesting, staging and wintering waterbirds. Among the various breeding species are Ardeidae (herons, bitterns, etc.), with extremely large numbers of Anatidae (ducks, geese, swans, etc.) occurring in winter. Human activities include tourism, hunting, fishing, agriculture and raising livestock. Ramsar site no. 346. Most recent RIS information: 1995.

Estuaire du fleuve Sinnamary

Site number: 1,828 | Country: France (outre-mer) | Administrative region: Sinnamary, Iracoubo

Area: 28,400 ha | Coordinates: 05°25'N 53°04'59"W | Designation dates: 15-09-2008

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Estuaire du fleuve Sinnamary. 15/09/08; Guyane Française; 28,400ha; 05°25' N 053°05'W. The site, located in French Guyana coast, represents a combination of intertidal mudflats, active sand flats, mangroves, freshwater swamps and seasonally flooded areas that extend towards the delta of the Sinnamary river. It represents the preferred habitat for the aquatic mammal *Trichechus manatus*, a threatened species in the Caribbean region. It is an important area for migratory birds, and *Calidris pusilla* winters here with up to 1,000,000 individuals. The site also serves as nesting and foraging area for the Green Turtle (chelonian *mydas*) and hosts the spectacled and dwarf caiman. The mangroves play an important role in coast protection and spawning ground. The site also hosts an important archeological site la roche Milot from the pre-Columbian era. Although hunting is prohibited, illegal practices are observed in the site. Ramsar site no. 1828. Most recent RIS information: 2008.

Etang de Biguglia

Site number: 520 | Country: France | Administrative region: Haute-Corse
Area: 1,790 ha | Coordinates: 42°36'N 09°28'59"E | Designation dates: 05-04-1991

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Etang de Biguglia. 08/04/91; Corse; 1,790 ha; 42°36'00"N 09°29'00"E; Nature Reserve, Natura 2000 (SPA, SAC), Important Bird Area, Natural Area of Ecological Interest for Flora and Fauna. The Site is the largest coastal lagoon in Corsica, divided into two basins connected with the sea. It comprises shrub-dominated wetlands crossed by creeks within seasonally flooded agricultural land characterized by excavations and drainage channels. It is of international importance for the maintenance of biological diversity within the Mediterranean biogeographic region: it supports outstanding numbers of breeding and wintering waterbirds including grebes, cormorants, ducks, geese and swans as well as vulnerable reptile species such as *Testudo hermanni* and mammals such as *Myotis capaccinii*. Moreover, the coastal lagoon is an important spawning and nursery ground for critically endangered fish species such as *Anguilla anguilla*. The lagoon supports diverse and rare vegetation which varies from halophytic species and submerged vegetation fringed by reedbeds to maquis communities. The Site plays an important role in flood regulation and groundwater recharge. The main threats to its ecological character are illegal hunting and sedimentation. Human activities include tourism, fishing and agriculture. A management plan has been approved for the period 2014-2018. Ramsar Site no. 520. Most recent RIS information: 2014.

Etang de Palo

Site number: 1,829 | Country: France | Administrative region: Prunelli di Fiumorbu
Area: 212 ha | Coordinates: 41°55'59"N 09°24'E | Designation dates: 15-09-2008

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Etang de Palo. 15/09/08; Corse; 212 ha. 41°57'N 09°24'E. SPA, ZNIEFF (Zone Naturelle d'Intérêt Ecologique, Faunistique et Floristique). A very well preserved natural freshwater lagoon on the east coast of Corsica, temporarily connected with the sea through a seminatural narrow channel that gets timely opened to regulate the concentration of nutrients, thus avoiding eutrophication events. The lagoon is the fourth largest on the island; with its sandy beaches and surrounding vegetation, it constitutes an important ecosystem for its ecological, faunistic and floristic values. It hosts rare plant species such as *Kosteletkya pentacarpos* and supports five protected bat species, including *Barbastella barbastellus*, *Miniopterus schreibersii*, *Myotis capaccinii*, and *Myotis emarginatus*. The site has high hydrological value in helping the recharge of the aquifer, slowing down the water flow into the sea, and thus also reducing erosion phenomena. Agriculture and aquaculture are the main activities practiced in the surrounding area. Ramsar site no. 1829. Most recent RIS information: 2008.

Etang de Saint-Paul

Site number: 2,398 | Country: France (outr-mer) | Administrative region: Commune de Saint-Paul, Territoire de la Côte Ouest, Département de La Réunion
Area: 485 ha | Coordinates: 20°59'59"S 55°17'30"E | Designation dates: 15-07-2019

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site covers 485 hectares in the western part of the island of Réunion. It lies in an alluvial plain, and saltwater intrusions from underground sources mix with fresh water, creating brackish waters in parts of the Site. This creates a diversity of habitats, which positively influences the biodiversity of the Site and of the Mascarene Archipelago as a whole. The Site particularly helps to support species that need salt and fresh water for their life cycle. 16 plant and 11 animal species found in Etang de Saint-Paul, including three birds, six fish, one crustacean and one insect, are categorized as threatened in the Mascarene Islands. The wetland is also a major habitat for various waterbirds, such as striated heron and common moorhen. Because of its proximity to the densely populated city of Saint-Paul, the Site is threatened by human activities such as the gathering of natural resources and unsustainable water uses. A management plan is implemented to preserve its hydrological and ecological characteristics against these threats.

Etang de Salses-Leucate

Site number: 2,307 | Country: France | Administrative region: Languedoc-Roussillon (Occitanie)

Area: 7,637 ha | Coordinates: 42°50'38"N 02°59'55"E | Designation dates: 30-06-2017

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site consists of the Salses-Leucate coastal lagoon and its peripheral wetlands; it represents a typical Mediterranean coastal area. A wide range of habitats with different levels of salinity, depth and vegetation cover provide favourable conditions for a range of animal and plant species, most notably birds such as the locally-rare common snipe *Gallinago gallinago* and Eurasian curlew *Numenius arquata*, turtles such as the European pond turtle *Emys orbicularis*, bats such as the vulnerable long-fingered bat *Myotis capaccinii* and a large number of fish, including the critically endangered European eel *Anguilla anguilla*. The Site is also important for its fisheries, with traditional fishing techniques still practiced, and for its regulatory functions such as flood control, water purification and groundwater recharge and discharge. Special attention is paid to minimize the effect on the Site of the significant tourism and recreation. Visitor facilities include an interpretation centre and trails around the pond while various public awareness activities can be enjoyed in summer. Other potential issues include urbanisation, drainage, salinisation and invasive alien species. A management plan for the Site is being implemented and a restoration plan is being prepared.

Etang des Salines

Site number: 1,830 | Country: France (outre-mer) | Administrative region: Archipelago of petit Antilles

Area: 207 ha | Coordinates: 14°25'N 60°49'59"W | Designation dates: 15-09-2008

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Etang des Salines. 15/09/08; Martinique; 207 ha; 14°25'N 060°50'W. A coastal lagoon in the south of Martinique located in the Lesser Antilles archipelago at the limit of the Saint Lucia Channel. The waters getting into the lagoon from the Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea create special ecological characteristics which favor diversified and rich aquatic populations. The site is the last stop for many birds coming from North America before crossing the Saint Lucia Channel. Mangroves provide feeding ground for many invertebrates and other marine species. The area used to play an important role for the local livelihood thanks to its salt production and exploitation between the 18th and 20th centuries, hence the name of the lagoon. Beyond several threats related to pesticide and pollutants run-off, the tourism-related developments are becoming a problem in the area as the site includes one of the most popular beaches in Martinique with more than two million visitors a year. Ramsar site no. 1830. Most recent RIS information: 2008.

Etang d'Urbino

Site number: 1,831 | Country: France | Administrative region: commune de Ghisonaccia (Haute-Corse)

Area: 790 ha | Coordinates: 42°01'59"N 09°28'59"E | Designation dates: 15-09-2008

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Etang d'Urbino. 15/09/08; Corse; 790 ha ; 42°02'N 009°29' E. SPA, ZNIEFF (Zone Naturelle d'Intérêt Ecologique, Faunistique et Floristique). On the east coast of Corsica, the second largest lagoon on Corsica with a maximum depth of 9m. The site is separated from the sea through a narrow strip of sand where *Juniperus macrocarpa*, *J. phoenicea* and *Pinus pinaster* dunes are found. The lagoon plays an important role for avifauna, it is a stop-over for many migratory birds on their route towards the south, and it is also habitat for many birds during the reproduction and breeding season. Inventories reveal the presence of 113 different bird species, of which 37 breed here. *Netta rufina* and *Tadorna tadorna* are two species no longer common on Corsica but that still find good conditions for reproduction here. *Aphanius fasciatus* is an endemic fish species typical of the northern part of the Mediterranean. Ramsar site no. 1831. Most recent RIS information: 2008.

Etangs de la Champagne humide

Site number: 514 | Country: France | Administrative region: Grand Est (ex Champagne-Ardenne)

Area: 255,800 ha | Coordinates: 48°32'43"N 04°41'01"E | Designation dates: 05-04-1991

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site is an important complex of rivers, lakes and alluvial forest, featuring more than 400 ponds, four reservoirs, streams, gravel pits and meadows. Abundant wildlife is found within this mosaic of habitats. Various migrant birds are found: the Site is an essential refuge for nearly 150,000 wintering waterbirds; nearly 150 black stork individuals have been recorded in summer, and up to 300,000 migrating common crane. In addition, it is one of the last breeding sites in the Grand Est region for purple heron, little bittern and great reed warbler. The wet meadows, reed beds and forests also support a very large number of plant species (including small fleabane *Pulicaria vulgaris* and greater spearwort *Ranunculus lingua*). The most significant threats are tourism, urbanization, invasive species, drainage and the use of grasslands for intensive farming. A management plan is implemented, which is frequently reviewed to preserve the Site's characteristics.

Etangs de la Petite Woëvre

Site number: 515 | Country: France | Administrative region: Lorraine

Area: 5,300 ha | Coordinates: 49°01'59"N 05°48'E | Designation dates: 05-04-1991

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Etangs de la Petite Woëvre. 08/04/91; Lorraine; 5,300 ha; 49°02'N 005°48'E. Special Protection Area EC Directive; Regional Natural Park. A clay depression consisting of a high density of lakes formed in the Middle Ages by draining the marsh to create fish rearing ponds. The lakes and ponds are interspersed by woodland, pasture, wet meadows, reedbeds and arable land. The complex supports a rich nesting avifauna, and is important for staging and wintering various species of migratory waterbirds. Human activities include fish farming, agriculture and hunting. Management measures include regular mowing, extensification of meadows (cutting hay late in the season), creation of mud flats, and restoration of a dry lake bed. Ramsar site no. 515. Most recent RIS information: 1995.

Etangs du Lindre, forêt du Romersberg et zones voisines

Site number: 1,267 | Country: France | Administrative region: Lorraine

Area: 5,308 ha | Coordinates: 48°46'59"N 06°48'E | Designation dates: 02-02-2003

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Etangs du Lindre, forêt du Romersberg et zones voisines. 02/02/03; Lorraine; 5,308 ha; 48°47'N 006°48'E. Regional Nature Park (in part), proposed Special Protection Area and Site of Community Importance EC Directives. A complex of shallow lakes, marshes, reedbeds, mires, small rivers and associated forests, pastures, hedgerows, and cultivated areas that provide a variety of habitats. Small continental salt grasslands are of particular biodiversity value. The forest contains many rare plant species and an important population of wild cat *Felis silvestris*. The lakes serve as important moulting areas for shoveler *Anas clypeata* and as breeding and wintering sites for many other waterbirds. Non-intensive fish farming, hunting and nature tourism are the main human uses besides agriculture and forestry. Each year, a popular event celebrates the annual fish harvest in the lakes. Ramsar site no. 1267. Most recent RIS information: 2002.

Etangs palavasiens

Site number: 1,832 | Country: France | Administrative region: Languedoc-Roussillon

Area: 5,797 ha | Coordinates: 43°30'N 03°51'E | Designation dates: 15-09-2008

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Etangs palavasiens. 15/09/08; Languedoc-Roussillon; 5,797 ha; 43°30'N 003°51'E. Natura 2000, Nature Reserve. A complex of seven main coastal brackish and saline lagoons typical of the Mediterranean biogeographic region, with dunes and sandy beaches that separate them from the sea. The site represents an important bird habitat during the migration period, in particular for the Caspian Tern (*Sterna caspia*) and the White Stork (*ciconia ciconia*), but it is also an important breeding site for Little Tern (*Sterna albifrons*), with more than 80% of the French breeding population, and the Greater Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber roseus*). The high habitat diversity of the lagoons supports many Mediterranean amphibians, reptiles like *Emys orbicularis*, fishes such as *Anguilla Anguilla* and *Atherina lagunae* and the endemic and endangered insect species (*Metrioptera fedtschenkoi azami* and *Gryllotalpa septemdecimchromosomica*) In the site fishing and hunting are practiced, and it is also very popular for tourism and leisure activities. Ramsar site no. 1832. Most recent RIS information: 2008.

Golfe du Morbihan

Site number: 517 | Country: France | Administrative region: Département du Morbihan

Area: 23,000 ha | Coordinates: 47°34'18"N 02°47'08"W | Designation dates: 05-04-1991

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Golfe du Morbihan. 08/04/91; Bretagne; 23,000 ha; 47°35'N 002°47'W. Nature Reserve, Natural area of ecological, faunistic and floristic interest (ZNIEFF), Biotope Protection Order, Hunting Reserve, Natura 2000 (SPA, SCI), IBA. A large, almost enclosed, estuarine embayment and saltmarsh complex at the mouths of three rivers. Exposed at low tide, vast mudflats connect the bay with the Atlantic Ocean. Important in preventing coastal erosion, and the basis of the wetland's productivity, the intertidal flats support large areas of *Zostera* beds and an extremely high density of invertebrates. Up to 100,000 waterbirds winter annually at the site, and numerous species of migratory waterbirds stage and nest in the area. Many species of flora and fauna are protected under national and EU legislation. Oyster farming produces an annual harvest of more than 10,000 tonnes. Other human activities include commercial and sport fishing and tourism. Environmental education opportunities and several observatories exist. Ramsar Site no. 517. Most recent RIS information: 2012.

Grand Cul-de-Sac Marin de la Guadeloupe

Site number: 642 | Country: France (outre-mer) | Administrative region: Guadeloupe

Area: 29,500 ha | Coordinates: 16°19'26"N 61°35'27"W | Designation dates: 08-12-1993

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Grand Cul-de-Sac Marin de Guadeloupe. 08/12/93; Guadeloupe; 29,500 ha; 16°19'26"N 061°35'28"W. National Park, Biosphere Reserve. A vast lagoon, several islands and associated littoral zones along the Caribbean Sea, bounded to the north by a large coral reef. The littoral zone consists of brackish marshes, wet meadows, mudflats, freshwater swamp forests and, most importantly, mangroves. At 29°C, it is some of the warmest water to be found in the region. The site is an important area for fish, especially as nursery. Out of 600 known species of fish in the Caribbean region, 261 of them have been identified at the site. Numerous species of migratory, non-migratory and nesting birds use the site, many of them globally threatened. Human activities include small-scale fishing in mangrove areas, agriculture and tourism. The site, especially the mangrove area, is valuable in terms of sediment trapping, water purification, and storm protection. Threats to the area include mangrove and coral reef destruction, illegal waste dumping, overfishing and certain types of tourist activities. (The site was extended in 2012 from 20,000 ha.) Ramsar Site no. 642. Most recent RIS information: 2012.

Grande Briere

Site number: 713 | Country: France | Administrative region: Loire-Atlantique
Area: 19,000 ha | Coordinates: 47°22'N 02°10'W | Designation dates: 01-02-1995
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Grande Briere. 01/02/95; Pays de la Loire; 19,000 ha; 47°22'N 002°10'W. Including Marais du bassin du Brivet Natural Regional Park, Hunting Reserves. Flat peatland, vast alluvial marshes, reedbeds, floodplains, stretches of open water and canals. This is the second largest French marsh after the Camargue. The site consists of open water supporting aquatic vegetation, reedbeds, inundated forests and floodplains. The marshland complex, exploited for peat extraction and grazing, has been abandoned over time, resulting in a significant colonization by moisture-loving vegetation (reeds, willows, elms) leading to a loss of biodiversity and a reduction in open water areas. An important site for numerous species of wintering and nesting waterbirds, the site is also very important for the Otter. Human activities include extensive livestock rearing and hunting, fishing, reed cutting for thatch, conservation education, and tourism. Ramsar site no. 713. Most recent RIS information: 1994.

Île Europa

Site number: 2,073 | Country: France (outr-mer) | Administrative region: Terres australes et antarctiques françaises (TAAF)
Area: 214,872 ha | Coordinates: 22°21'52"S 40°21'50"E | Designation dates: 27-10-2011
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site is a low-lying island of coral origin in the Mozambique Channel with a central lagoon enclosed by mangroves. The island itself is surrounded by a "fringing reef", interrupted by sandy beaches, which constitute one of the world's most important breeding and nesting sites for the globally endangered green sea turtle *Chelonia mydas*. The Site offers habitat to the globally endangered Madagascar pond heron (*Ardeola idae*), the vulnerable fin whale (*Balaenoptera physalus*) and the critically endangered great hammerhead shark (*Sphyrna mokarran*). It supports a high number of nesting sea birds including two subspecies endemic to the Indian Ocean: Audubon's shearwater (*Puffinus lherminieri*) and sooty tern (*Onychoprion fuscatus*). Other animals found on the island include endemic nesting birds such as the Madagascar white-eye (*Zosterops maderaspatanus*), four species of reptiles of which two are endemic, and 103 arthropods with more than 20 endemic. The coastal waters host seven species of sea mammals, 390 fish, 141 cnidarians and 176 shellfish. More than 1,250 plant and animal species have been recorded in total. The mangrove and seagrass beds protect and stabilize the coastline, reducing erosion. 14 soldiers of the French Armed Forces in the Southern Indian Ocean Zone permanently occupy the island. Otherwise the only threatening factors relate to introduced species such as goats and plants such as the green choca. Nonetheless, the state of conservation of the island is probably extremely close to its original state. The Site serves as a laboratory for the study of the natural evolution of island ecosystems and global change, and more research is encouraged.

Impluvium d'Evian

Site number: 1,833 | Country: France | Administrative region: Haute- Savoie
Area: 3,275 ha | Coordinates: 46°22'N 06°36'E | Designation dates: 15-09-2008
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Impluvium d'Evian. 15/09/08; Rhône-Alpes; 3,275 ha; 46°22'N 006°36'E. Natura 2000. Close to Lac Léman (Lake Geneva) near the border with Switzerland, the site is located in the heart of a plateau where the popular mineral waters of Evian have their origin as rainwater is absorbed in the soil. During the infiltration process it is purified and redistributed underground, feeding the aquifer. The site is composed of seasonal and permanent freshwater marshes, forested and non-forested peatlands, rivers and streams. Although the site does not support an outstanding number of species, it provides an important habitat for invertebrates, in particular for two butterfly species *Coenonympha tullia* and *Boloria aquilonaris* whose populations are in decline every where else in the region. *Liparis loeserii*, a very rare orchid, is still well represented in the site. Urban development and water abstraction are possible threats for the maintenance of the hydrological balance of the site. Ramsar site no. 1833. Most recent RIS information: 2008.

La Brenne

Site number: 518 | Country: France | Administrative region: Centre-Val de Loire

Area: 140,000 ha | Coordinates: 46°43'21"N 01°15'06"E | Designation dates: 05-04-1991

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

La Brenne consists of a plateau with moors, meadows, wasteland, woodland, dry grassland, and many lakes and ponds; in 2016 around 3,000 ponds were counted within its boundaries. This high variety of habitats supports great biodiversity, including several species of birds, dragonflies, amphibians, and reptiles such as the European pond turtle, one of the main symbols of the Site. The Site also supports more than 1% of the biogeographical populations of whiskered tern *Chlidonias hybrida* and the globally vulnerable common pochard *Aythya ferina*. It attracts more than 23,000 wintering birds during January. Human activities include agriculture, forestry, fish farming, game hunting and nature tourism. Fish farming and agriculture have long been of great importance for the Site, as the existing waterbodies were created during the Middle Ages for irrigation and fishing purposes. Livestock farming has an impact on the open environment, while development projects in surrounding areas and new construction within the Site are seen as potential threats.

Lac de Grand-Lieu

Site number: 714 | Country: France | Administrative region: Pays de la Loire

Area: 6,300 ha | Coordinates: 47°04'59"N 01°40'W | Designation dates: 01-02-1995

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Lac de Grand-Lieu. 01/02/95; Pays de la Loire; 6,300 ha; 47°05'N 001°40'W. Nature Reserve. The site's area fluctuates depending on climatic conditions. A shallow lake, dominated by macrophytic vegetation and three large floating forests and exhibiting features of a tropical wetland. Shaped by tectonic movements some 120 million years ago, the lake was well preserved until the 1960s, when the hydrologic regime was radically altered by large-scale human intervention. Coupled with agricultural pollution and urban effluent, these disturbances caused severe nutrient-enrichment. Over 200 species of birds, including 110 nesting species, and internationally important numbers of numerous species of migrating waterbirds and wintering Anatidae use the area. The site supports 500 important plant species, including many that are threatened or protected at national or regional levels. Human activities include fishing, hunting, hay production and grazing. It is also important for its archaeological, historical and ethnographic values. Ramsar site no. 714. Most recent RIS information: 1994.

Lac du Bourget - Marais de Chautagne

Site number: 1,268 | Country: France | Administrative region: Rhône-Alpes

Area: 5,500 ha | Coordinates: 45°43'59"N 05°51'E | Designation dates: 02-02-2003

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Lac du Bourget - Marais de Chautagne. 02/02/03; Rhône-Alpes; 5,500 ha; 45°44'N 005°51'E. Proposed Special Protection Area and Site of Community Importance EC Directives. One of the largest French Alpine lakes (4,500 ha). Apart from the lakeside town Aix-les-Bains, more than half of the lake shores remain natural, either rocky or covered with reedbeds (stretching along 11 km shoreline). Tourism and leisure activities are important, but restricted to specific lake areas only. Adjoining the lake outlet are the Chautagne marshes and peatbogs. The submerged lake vegetation and animal communities are very well developed and in good condition. During winter, and especially during cold spells, the lake harbours more than 20,000 waterbirds that also use the nearby part of the Rhône river, including up to 16,000 pochard *Aythya ferina* (Criterion 6). Bourget lake provides an important spawning area for the fish *Coregonus lavaretus* (one of the two French top sites), *Salvelinus alpinus* and *Lota lota*. Ramsar site no. 1268. Most recent RIS information: 2003.

La Dombes

Site number: 2,500 | Country: France | Administrative region: Région Auvergne Rhône-Alpes / Département de l'Ain

Area: 47,659 ha | Coordinates: 46°01'37"N 05°03'55"E | Designation dates: 22-03-2023

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

La Dombes features more than 1,200 ponds located on a flat plain north of Lyon. It is a stopover and refuge site for migratory birds, including wintering birds, particularly during cold spells in eastern and northern Europe. It is one of two major nesting sites of the red-crested pochard (*Netta rufina*) in western Europe. Other nesting bird species include the little egret (*Egretta garzetta*), the Eurasian spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*) and the white stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*). It is the only national site where the ferruginous duck (*Aythya nyroca*) breeds regularly, and since 2012 has been the only national breeding site of the whooper swan (*Cygnus cygnus*). Other species that make the Dombes internationally important are the common pochard (*Aythya ferina*), the lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*) and the curlew (*Numenius arquata*). La Dombes is known for its birds, but other characteristic species include the woodland brown butterfly (*Lopinga achine*) and the great capricorn beetle (*Cerambyx cerdo*), as well as bats such as the European barbastelle (*Barbastella barbastellus*) and Beichstein's bat (*Myotis bechsteinii*). The Site is used for long term monitoring and for recreational hunting and fishing. It faces four major challenges: the problem of recurrent droughts, the frequency of which has increased with climate change; the pursuit of water management based on traditional practices that respect the cycles of the ponds (alternating drying and flooding); the reduction of impacts related to the effects of intensive agricultural practices on soils that favour the diffusion of pollutants; and invasive alien species.

Lagon de Moorea

Site number: 1,834 | Country: France (outr-mer) | Administrative region: Polynésie française

Area: 5,000 ha | Coordinates: 17°30'S 149°49'59"W | Designation dates: 15-09-2008

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Lagon de Moorea. 15/09/08; Polynésie française; 5,000 ha; 17°30'S 149°50'W. A coral reef ecosystem developed in the tropical waters of Moorea island in the Archipel de la Société (Society Islands) west of Tahiti, also including beaches, permanent shallow marine waters, and saline lagoons. The coral reef system is one of the best known in the world – it provides habitat for many marine endangered species such as corals, sponges, mollusks, crustaceans, and is also spawning ground for fishes. A number of waterbirds such as *Pseudobulweria rostrata*, *Puffinus pacificus* and *Puffinus bailloni* regularly reproduce here. Many of the human activities on the island are linked to the resources and services provided by this ecosystem for tourism, pleasure, and construction. One of the main threats is the increasing urbanization of the coastal zone. Ramsar site no. 1834. Most recent RIS information: 2008.

La Petite Camargue

Site number: 786 | Country: France | Administrative region: Languedoc-Rousillon

Area: 37,000 ha | Coordinates: 43°30'N 04°15'E | Designation dates: 03-01-1996

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

La Petite Camargue. 08/01/96; Languedoc-Rousillon; 37,000 ha; 43°30'N 04°15'E. State Maritime Zone. Coastal ponds, brackish lagoons, and marshes fed by coastal watercourses. The site includes agricultural areas, sedge meadows, reedbeds, sansouires (*Salicornia* steppes), salt-resistant vegetation, coastal forest, and salt pans. The shallow lagoons provide priority habitat for spawning and hatching sea fish. Human activities include a small-scale fishery, cattle ranching, peat extraction, fruit production, salt extraction, and reforestation. The site has Roman and mediaeval ruins. The Station Biologique de la Tour du Valat research centre provides important opportunities for research and environmental conservation. Ramsar site no. 786. Most recent RIS information: 1993.

La Vasière des Badamiers

Site number: 2,002 | Country: France (outre-mer) | Administrative region: Mayotte

Area: 115 ha | Coordinates: 12°46'59"S 45°16'E | Designation dates: 27-10-2011

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

La Vasière des Badamiers (Île de Mayotte - océan indien). 27/10/11; Île de Mayotte; 115 ha; 12°47'S 045°16'E. The site consists of a mud flat area partially covered by mangroves. Sea grass beds and different species of algae play a key role in maintaining the ecological character of this highly productive and diverse ecosystem, which is used as a refuge as well as a breeding, feeding and wintering site by many bird species, especially waders, but also by fish and turtles such as the Green Sea Turtle. The site is internationally important for the migration of the Lesser Crested Tern, as well as for the presence of several species endemic to the Comores Islands and Madagascar like the globally endangered Madagascar Heron and the spider *Idioctis intertidalis* living in the intertidal zone. The site acts as an important filter upstream of the connected lagoon especially in terms of urban discharge. Siltation, coastal erosion and urban development threaten the site. An educational path to experience the mangrove ecosystem and natural environment of Mayotte is under development. Ramsar Site no. 2002. Most recent RIS information: 2011.

Le Marais audomarois

Site number: 1,835 | Country: France | Administrative region: Hauts-de-France

Area: 3,726 ha | Coordinates: 50°46'53"N 02°15'38"E | Designation dates: 15-09-2008

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Cultural and natural heritage have mixed for the past 13 centuries in this unique human-made Site, which supports high biodiversity within a very urbanized and densely populated area. People have been able to cultivate and live in the Site by building 700 kilometres of canals, drainage channels and hydraulic systems to control water levels. The Site hosts one third of the aquatic plant species found in France, and it also supports different life history stages of 26 fish species including the critically endangered globally European eel *Anguilla anguilla*. Among 13 bat species, *Myotis dasycneme*, the rarest bat in France, is regularly found here during the reproduction period. The Site is an important staging area for the globally vulnerable aquatic warbler *Acrocephalus paludicola* and threatened breeding birds such as the western marsh harrier *Circus aeruginosus*. The ecological character is influenced by the prevailing cultural traditions, with the rich biodiversity closely linked to the regular maintenance of the canals. The Site is important for flood control and fresh water supply as well for recreation and nature observation.

Le Pinail

Site number: 2,461 | Country: France | Administrative region: Nouvelle-Aquitaine

Area: 923 ha | Coordinates: 46°41'45"N 00°30'38"E | Designation dates: 22-10-2021

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Situated at the north-eastern end of the Moulière forest, Le Pinail is a unique complex of ponds and peat bogs, moors and wet meadows, deciduous and coniferous woodlands straddling a 923-hectare plateau between the Vienne and Clain rivers. The Site is one of the most representative and best-preserved examples of the "Poitou heathlands" with their characteristic shrub *Erica scoparia*, and features more than 7,500 ponds resulting from the extraction of silica rocks between the ninth and the nineteenth centuries to manufacture millstones. This mosaic of land and water environments provides rare habitats for dragonflies and amphibians. Overall nearly 2,500 species can be found, and many are nationally or internationally threatened such as the orchid *Spiranthes aestivalis*, the splendid waxcap mushroom (*Hygrocybe splendidissima*) and the globally endangered white-clawed crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*), which normally only lives in streams but can here be found in ponds. Le Pinail is important for the purification and storage of water, regulation of local climate, and flood reduction. Some 10,000 visitors visit the Site each year; local communities benefit from the exploitation of forest plantations, hunting and the use of heather for fencing. The most significant threat is climate change: as the ponds are fed by precipitation, they are vulnerable to rainfall shortages and droughts, but also to the acidification of water and soils by atmospheric deposition and the increase of atmospheric CO₂.

Les étangs de Villepey

Site number: 1,836 | Country: France | Administrative region: Provence - Alpes Cote d'Azur

Area: 255 ha | Coordinates: 43°24'N 06°43'E | Designation dates: 15-09-2008

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Les étangs de Villepey. 15/09/08; Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur; 255 ha; 43°24'N 006°43' E. Natura 2000 SPA, ZNIEFF (Zone Naturelle d'Intérêt Ecologique, Faunistique et Floristique). On the Côte d'Azur between the Camargue region and Italy, in a very urbanized area, one of the last remaining Mediterranean lagoons and its intertidal sand flats, shores, estuarine waters and dune systems. The site supports a number of rare, vulnerable and endangered flora and fauna species. Amongst the protected species are *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*, *Anguilla Anguilla* and *Alosa fallax*, populations of which are declining everywhere else. Potential factors that could impact the ecological character of the site adversely are extractive activities, run-off of pollutants from industrial activities, and urban development. Ramsar site no. 1836. Most recent RIS information: 2008.

Les Etangs littoraux de la Narbonnaise

Site number: 1,593 | Country: France | Administrative region: Languedoc-Roussillon

Area: 12,334 ha | Coordinates: 43°09'N 03°03'E | Designation dates: 02-02-2006

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Les étangs littoraux de la Narbonnaise. 02/02/06; Languedoc-Roussillon; 12,334 ha; 43°03'N 003°03'E; Site du Conservatoire de l'espace littoral et des rivages lacustres, Regional Nature Park. Five Mediterranean lagoons which, though fed by freshwater, are still connected to the sea, the last natural connections to the sea that are still functioning on the French Mediterranean coast. Large areas of lacustrine vegetation and the salt gradient characterize the ponds and create an ample diversity of habitats such as reedbeds, rush, salt marshes, salt steppes and fixed dunes. The proximity of wet and very dry habitats, especially on the calcareous islets, is a great particularity of the site. Since ancient times salt production has formed the site and maintained its outstanding biodiversity. The plant species and their habitats have high value as a wintering and breeding place for birds as well as staging and feeding site for migrating species. Threats are perceived from degradation of the water quality and of water circulation in the lagoons, acceleration of human pressures, and recession of reedbeds. Tourist development and especially water sport activities threaten the highly sensitive ecosystems such as dunes and salt steppes. Land uses include vineyards, rice paddies and pastures, as well as urban utilization, besides the salines and natural habitats. Ramsar site no. 1593. Most recent RIS information: 2006.

Les Lacs du Grand Sud Neo-Caledonien

Site number: 2,194 | Country: France (outr-mer) | Administrative region: Province Sud

Area: 43,970 ha | Coordinates: 22°09'19"S 166°46'06"E | Designation dates: 02-02-2014

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Les Lacs du Grand Sud néo-calédonien. 02/02/2014; Province Sud, Nouvelle-Calédonie; 43,970 ha; 22°08'23"S 166°47'50"E; Provincial Park, Nature Reserve, Habitat/Species Management Area, Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources. The largest freshwater reserve of New Caledonia, situated in the Great Lakes Region (Region des Grands Lacs) in South Province of Grande Terre, the main island. The site consists of tree-dominated wetlands, shrub-dominated marshes, and permanent and seasonal rivers, streams, creeks and lakes, including a reservoir. It is internationally important for the conservation of outstanding endemic species of flora and fauna; it supports vulnerable and endangered species which are important for the maintenance of biological diversity within the New Caledonian Moist Forests biogeographic region. The site, which includes an extensive underground karst system, plays an important role in flood regulation, water supply, maintenance of water quality and groundwater recharge. The artificial Yaté Lake, located at the centre of the site, provides 20% of the country's energy needs. The area is also used for research and outdoor recreational tourism including camping, hiking and kayaking. The main threats to its ecological character derive from fires, forestry, invasive species and mining in surrounding areas. Ramsar site no. 2194. Most recent RIS information: 2013.

Marais Breton, Baie de Bourgneuf, Ile de Noirmoutier et Forêt de Monts

Site number: 2,283 | Country: France | Administrative region: Pays de la Loire

Area: 55,826 ha | Coordinates: 46°54'51"N 02°02'45"W | Designation dates: 02-02-2017

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site covers one of the main areas of coastal marshes and tidal bays on the French Atlantic coast. Behind the muddy, sandy or rocky foreshore lie extensive salt meadows, brackish flooded grasslands, dune wetlands and ponds. The area is part of a chain of coastal wetlands that are essential for the conservation of salt-tolerant (halophytic) habitats and species, and include 16 habitats of community interest listed in Annex I of the European Union Habitats Directive. The duration of flooding and the degree of salinity play major roles in the composition of the different plant communities. The Site is a biodiversity hotspot, as it supports over 60,000 waterbirds and is an important nesting site for several bird species. It supports critical stages in the life cycle of a number of fish species, including the critically endangered European eel *Anguilla anguilla*. The Site is essential for the livelihoods of the local fishermen and salt producers. It is also a popular tourist destination and has appropriate regulations to limit their environmental impact. The area also provides important fresh water resources and plays a major role in flood control and mitigation, coastal stabilization and water purification.

Marais De Kaw

Site number: 644 | Country: France (outr-mer) | Administrative region: Guyane Française

Area: 137,000 ha | Coordinates: 04°39'55"N 52°05'36"W | Designation dates: 08-12-1993

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Marais de Kaw. 08/12/93; Guyane Française; 137,000 ha; 04°38'N 052°06'W. Nature Reserve, Regional Nature Park. A vast grassland swamp, wide mudflats colonized by mangroves, and swamp forests bisected by small tidal rivers and dotted with ponds. The diverse wetland habitats and their continuity with the Amazon basin provide for a high diversity of flora and fauna exhibiting high levels of endemism and supporting various endangered species. The site includes internationally important habitat for numerous species of waterbirds using the site for feeding, breeding, and wintering. An important area for nature tourism, hunting, fishing, and scientific research. Ramsar site no. 644. Most recent RIS information: 2007.

Marais de Sacy

Site number: 2,312 | Country: France | Administrative region: Hauts-de-France

Area: 1,073 ha | Coordinates: 49°20'20"N 02°33'13"E | Designation dates: 09-10-2017

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Marais de Sacy includes a vast wetland and alkaline peatland of great ecological and cultural value, which is also important for research and education. The presence of typical, well-preserved habitats of European importance which have unfavourable status nationally lends the Site great conservation significance for the Atlantic biogeographical region. It is home to globally vulnerable species such as the southern water vole *Arvicola sapidus*, the great raft spider *Dolomedes plantarius* and the narrow-mouthed whorl snail *Vertigo angustior*. It is also an important stage for migratory birds. Non-intensive grazing and traditional hunting practices carried out in cooperation with landowners help maintain the Site's ecological character. Water cress *Nasturtium officinale* was once produced here for the Paris market and many of the ponds remain. The Site has an interesting hydrology; some parts are supplied from the north by calcium carbonate-rich groundwater and others from the south by sulphate-rich rainfall. It provides water for agriculture and drinking water for more than 25,000 people. The peatland traps and stores carbon while the accumulation of organic matter enables soil formation.

Marais d'Orx et zones humides associées

Site number: 1,995 | Country: France | Administrative region: Région Aquitaine
Area: 962 ha | Coordinates: 43°35'52"N 01°23'49"W | Designation dates: 27-10-2011

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Marais d'Orx et zones humides associées. 27.10.11; Aquitaine; 962 ha; 43°35'52"N 001°23'50"W. Nature Reserve, Natura 2000 (SPA,SCI). Mainly consisting of lakes, ponds, marshlands, wet meadows and surrounded by a network of canals, this site has been restored after extensive drainage for agricultural purposes in the past. It now acts as an important stop-over and wintering site for numerous species of waterbirds and is one of the few nesting sites for Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*. The site is also important for a large number of insect, amphibian, reptile, fish and mammal species, including threatened species such as the European Eel *Anguilla anguilla* and the European Mink *Mustela lutreola*, both listed as critically endangered in the IUCN Red List. The site plays a major role in flood control. Human activities include recreation, agriculture and research. Educational activities are undertaken regularly and an exhibition explains the history and restoration of the site. Ramsar Site no. 1995. Most recent RIS information: 2012.

Marais du Cotentin et du Bessin, Baie des Veys

Site number: 516 | Country: France | Administrative region: Basse Normandie
Area: 32,500 ha | Coordinates: 49°22'59"N 01°10'W | Designation dates: 05-04-1991

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Marais du Cotentin et du Bessin, Baie des Veys. 08/04/91; Basse-Normandie; 32,500 ha; 49°23'N 001°10'W. Special Protection Area EC Directive; Hunting Reserve, Natural Reserve, Reserves du domaine public fluvial, Arrête de protection de biotope. An extensive complex of marshes and associated floodplains converging at a coastal embayment. Vegetation consists of converted and unconverted wet grassland and the largest peatlands in France. The area is extremely important for breeding, staging and wintering numerous species of waterbirds, and provides habitat for a variety of passerines and various species of notable plants. Human activities include pastoralism, hunting and fishing. As agriculture declines, natural succession will occur, ultimately replacing flora and fauna presently of great conservation significance with woodland species. The principal aim of the park is to maintain extensive agricultural practices to preserve the marsh habitat. Ramsar site no. 516. [photos] Most recent RIS information: 1990.

Marais du Fier d'Ars

Site number: 1,269 | Country: France | Administrative region: Poitou-Charentes
Area: 4,452 ha | Coordinates: 46°13'N 01°28'W | Designation dates: 02-02-2003

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Marais du Fier d'Ars. 02/02/03; Poitou-Charentes; 4,452 ha; 46°13'N 001°28'W. Nature Reserve (119 ha), Special Protection Area and proposed Site of Community Importance EC Directives. A complex of tidal sands and mudflats and diked marshes on the island of Ré off the Atlantic coast, including active and abandoned salt pans, freshwater marshes, reedbeds, oyster basins, extensive salt pastures, active dunes, dune forests, sandy and rocky coasts, and important seagrass beds (*Zostera noltii*). The site harbours a number of plant and animal species of conservation concern, including two regional endemics, the dune plant *Omphalodes littoralis* and the subspecies of the bluethroat *Luscinia svecica namnetum*. More than 31,000 waterbirds use the site in winter. Four populations of them occur regularly above the 1% threshold: *Branta bernicla bernicla*, *Recurvirostra avoseta*, *Calidris alpina*, *Limosa limosa islandica*. Human uses include oyster farming and numerous leisure and tourist activities (cycling, walking, fishing, canoeing, angling, sailing, swimming). Two visitor centres provide education facilities. Ramsar site no. 1269. Most recent RIS information: 2002.

Marais et tourbières des vallées de la Somme et de l'Avre

Site number: 2,322 | Country: France | Administrative region: Hauts de France

Area: 13,100 ha | Coordinates: 49°56'21"N 02°20'30"E | Designation dates: 18-12-2017

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site includes lower stretches of the Somme River and its main tributary, the Avre, together with adjacent marshes and peatlands. At its northern (downstream) end it meets another Ramsar Site, Baie de Somme ([Ramsar Site no. 925](#)), which stretches to the river's estuary. The Site is part of one of the largest alkaline peat complexes in north-west Europe. The excellent conservation of the Site's peatland habitats, which is exceptional in the Atlantic biogeographical region, together with their different developmental stages, make the Site very important for animal and plant biodiversity. Notable species include the globally threatened purple small-reed *Calamagrostis canescens* and the European eel *Anguilla anguilla*. The Site is important as a wintering location for species such as the Eurasian bittern *Botaurus stellaris* and the Savi's warbler *Locustella luscinioides*, as well as for the breeding little bittern *Ixobrychus minutus*, the Eurasian teal *Anas crecca* and the western marsh harrier *Circus aeruginosus*. The Site is being actively managed as a Natura 2000 site and is also protected under other designations. 70% of the population of the Somme department live close to the Site, and it is central to local farming and the leisure economy. It is of wider cultural and historic importance; the Site's ancient fluvial terraces hold the earliest traces of human occupation in north-west Europe.

Marais salants de Guérande et du Més

Site number: 746 | Country: France | Administrative region: Pays de la Loire

Area: 5,200 ha | Coordinates: 47°19'59"N 02°30'W | Designation dates: 01-09-1995

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Marais salants de Guérande et du Més. 01/09/95; Pays de la Loire; 5,200 ha; 47°20'N 002°30'W. Game Reserve. The site consists of saltmarshes, traicts (mud flats) and dune belts formed around 7,000 BC. The marsh area is protected by an important dyke network, requiring constant maintenance to avoid submersion at high tides. The marshes are divided into a mosaic of pans separated by clay mudwalls fed with water by channels. The salt works date back to Roman times. The site exhibits an exceptional assemblage of great floristic wealth supporting numerous rare or protected plants. The very high level of primary production, the highly diversified aquatic environments, combined with greatly differing salinity levels, gives rise to rich algae and invertebrate communities which in turn support the numerous birds species present. The site is important for numerous species of nesting, feeding, resting and wintering migratory birds and waders. The area has a remarkable ethnological and sociological history. Human activities include salt production, hunting, fish farming, shellfish hatcheries. Ramsar site no. 746. [info] Most recent RIS information: 1994.

Marais Vernier et Vallée de la Risle maritime

Site number: 2,247 | Country: France | Administrative region: Région Haute-Normandie, département de l'Eure (27), France

Area: 9,564.5 ha | Coordinates: 49°25'52"N 00°28'40"E | Designation dates: 18-12-2015

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site is a large estuarine complex of alluvial marshes, mudflats, estuarine waters, rivers, peatlands, and a network of ditches and open water bodies which converge into the Grand'Mare natural pond. Marais Vernier, a former meander of the Seine River, holds the largest peat deposit in France. The Risle coastal river is a transition zone between saline and fresh water, which supports intertidal habitats of great importance for fish. The Site as a whole regroups 43 species of fish, of which 32 are indigenous, and provides important migratory paths or reproductive grounds for a number of species including the globally endangered European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*), the northern pike (*Esox lucius*) and the lamprey (*Lampetra fluviatilis*). The wetland provides wintering grounds for several species of waterbirds including large numbers of European golden plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*) and northern lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*). Human activities are focused on agriculture, hunting and fishing. The Site holds important social and cultural values associated with a history of wetland-related traditional practices which maintain this mosaic of habitats and the associated biodiversity. Cottages on the Site showcase the traditional use of reeds for thatching. The main threats to the Site relate to drainage in Marais Vernier, and the poplar tree plantations, roads, and utility and service lines crossing the Site. A management plan is in place for the Natura 2000 Site, which covers the whole Ramsar Site area.

Mares temporaires de Tre Padule de Suartone

Site number: 1,651 | Country: France | Administrative region: Corse

Area: 218 ha | Coordinates: 41°28'N 09°13'59"E | Designation dates: 02-02-2007

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Mares temporaires de Tre Padule de Suartone. 02/02/07; Corse; 218 ha; 41°28'N 009°14'E. Réserve naturelle. Comprising four temporary pools and their catchments and two temporary streams in the southeast of Corsica, dominated by several types of scrub, rock rose, and spring grasses. The existence of the pools in an almost semi-arid granitic landscape, rich in species adapted to extreme conditions, is a rare geomorphological phenomenon in the region. The pools support a great diversity of species of which most are rare and closely associated with this type of environment, including four amphibian species that are protected at national level. They are naturally formed wetlands representative of the Mediterranean as their hydrological functioning is intimately bound to the climate of the region, enjoying shallow water at 25 to 50 cm depth from late autumn to late spring and drying out from evaporation during the month of May. The principal land use is the grazing of cattle and, to a lesser extent, goats, though these seem to have declined since 2000. The site is the only site of temporary pools in France that has been classed as a nature reserve and benefits from effective management and awareness-raising efforts. The threat from four-wheel sport vehicles has diminished since the arrival of a site manager. Ramsar site no. 1651. Most recent RIS information: 2006.

Réserve naturelle nationale des Terres australes francaises

Site number: 1,837 | Country: France (outre-mer) | Administrative region: Terres Australes et Antarctiques Françaises

Area: 2,337,100 ha | Coordinates: 48°57'30"S 67°17'41"E | Designation dates: 15-09-2008

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site is located in the southern Indian Ocean and consists of two sub-Antarctic archipelagos – Crozet and Kerguelen – and the subtropical islands of Amsterdam and Saint-Paul. The islands are widely separated by open sea, so the centre coordinate given is purely notional. The Site includes a great variety of inland and coastal wetland types such as peatlands, marshes and lakes, rocky shores, estuaries and fjords. It supports many endemic species including the globally vulnerable Eaton's pintail *Anas eatoni* and Crozet pintail *Anas eatoni drygalskii*, and the critically endangered Amsterdam albatross *Diomedea amsterdamensis*. The islands represent an important refuge and reproduction ground for millions of migratory birds. Many marine mammals such as the southern sea elephant *Mirounga leonina* and the Antarctic seal *Arctocephalus tropicalis* are also well represented. The major threat is related to the introduction of non-native species such as cats and rats that are leading to the population decline of many bird species. Climate change is also affecting the ecological character of the Site.

Rhin Supérieur / Oberrhein

Site number: 1,810 | Country: France | Administrative region: Alsace

Area: 22,413 ha | Coordinates: 48°25'N 07°45'E | Designation dates: 05-09-2008

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Rhin supérieur / Oberrhein.05/09/08; Alsace; 22,413 ha; TRS centre 48°25' N 007°45' E. Natura 2000 SPA, National Nature Reserve. The upper part of the river Rhine's western bank, along nearly 170km. The hydrological regime has been strongly regulated in the 19th century and the site consists of many different natural areas such as relict swampy forests and meadows, but also humanmade habitats including dumps, canals and agricultural lands. The site support a large number of internationally protected species such as *Bufo calamita*, *Castor fiber*, *Lutra lutra* and *Myotis myotis*, and it provides nesting, resting, and wintering habitats for many birds, indeed every year an average of 55,000 migratory birds stop here. The Rhine also supports migratory fish species such as *Salmo salar*, *Alosa alosa*, *Salmo trutta*, *Lampetra fluviatilis* and *Anguilla anguilla*. Navigation, water sports, agriculture, hydroelectric power stations are only few of the main land uses. Canalization and deforestation could represent serious threats for the area. Ramsar site no. 1810. Most recent RIS information: 2008.

Rives du Lac Léman

Site number: 519 | Country: France | Administrative region: Rhône-Alpes
Area: 1,915 ha | Coordinates: 46°21'N 06°22'59"E | Designation dates: 05-04-1991
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Rives du Lac Léman. 08/04/91; Rhône-Alpes; 3,335 ha; 46°23'N 006°28'E. Special Protection Area EC Directive; Natural Reserve, Hunting Reserve. Several physically separate zones on the shores of Lac Léman (Lake Geneva) consisting of alluvial terraces, gravel islands, lacustrine dunes, extensive reedbeds and parts of the Dranse, Redon, Foron and Vion rivers. Lac Léman is the second most important wintering area for waterbirds in France. Breeding and staging birds use the site, which also supports various mammals and a rich flora including several rare plant species. Land use includes commercial fishing, fish farming, agriculture, and tourism. Significant shoreline development is causing a decline in nesting birds. Ramsar site no. 519. Most recent RIS information: 1990.

Salins d'Hyères

Site number: 1,838 | Country: France | Administrative region: Région Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur
Area: 900 ha | Coordinates: 43°04'59"N 06°10'59"E | Designation dates: 15-09-2008
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Salins d Hyères. 15/09/08; 900 ha; 43°05 N 006°11 E. Natura 2000 SPA; ZNIEFF (Zone Naturelle d Intérêt Ecologique, Faunistique et Floristique). One of the largest Mediterranean coastal wetlands in France, constituted of two separate sites: Salin des Pesquiers and Vieux Salins. The area is of a great importance for many birds during their migration season, but also for breeding and wintering. It regularly supports 218 bird species, amongst them *Grus grus*, *Lanius senator*, *Calandrella brachydactyla*, and *Hirundo daurisa*. Exploited for salt from 1848 until 1995, the salins d Hyères were acquired by the Conservatoire du littoral and represent a mosaic of different habitats very important in supporting a wide range of other fauna and flora species. These wetlands are the only site in continental France where *Matthiola tricuspidata* and *Tamarix Africana* can be found. The site is located in an urban area where the main economy is based on coastal tourism. Possible threats are the spreading of exotic species and algal bloom. Ramsar site no. 1838. Most recent RIS information: 2008.

Tourbière de Moltifao

Site number: 1,994 | Country: France | Administrative region: Haute-Corse
Area: 33 ha | Coordinates: 42°28'51"N 09°09'12"E | Designation dates: 27-10-2011
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Tourbière de Moltifao. 27/10/11; Corse; 33 ha; 42°28'52"N 009°09'13"E. Forest Nature Reserve (RBD), Biotope Protection Area, Natura 2000. The largest active raised bog on the island of Corsica southeast of the French mainland, located in the watershed of the Asco valley. In terms of flora, several species are protected on a national, European and international level, including three *Sphagnum* species and the orchid species *Liparis loeselii*, listed as vulnerable according to the IUCN Red List and subject to a national action plan. In terms of fauna, numerous regionally and nationally protected species are present, including 9 bat species (e.g., Greater mouse-eared bat *Myotis myotis*), 4 reptile species (e.g., the European Pond Turtle *Emys orbicularis*) and 2 amphibian species. More than 80% of the bird species occurring in the site are protected on a national level, and several endemic species are present, such as the Corsican Fire Salamander *Salamandra corsica*. Traditional hunting is practiced in the site and it has been used for environmental education activities since 2008, mainly on World Wetlands Day. Threats include river bank erosion caused by flooding, the spread of the invasive plant *Ailanthus altissima*, and the use of agricultural fertilizers upstream. A management plan exists for the Forest Nature Reserve. Ramsar Site no. 1994. Most recent RIS information: 2011.

Tourbières et lacs de la Montagne jurassienne

Site number: 1,266 | Country: France | Administrative region: Bourgogne-Franche-Comté

Area: 12,156 ha | Coordinates: 46°42'08"N 06°08'12"E | Designation dates: 02-02-2003

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site extends between the towns of Pontarlier and Saint-Claude in the Jura mountain range. Originally named "Bassin du Dugeon" when it was designated in 2003, the Site's area was extended in 2021 from under 6,000 hectares to cover over 12,000 ha. It now includes large emblematic peat bogs such as those in the Dugeon basin, the valleys of the upper Doubs and Orbe Rivers, and the valley of Chapelle-des-Bois and Bellefontaine. Its 18 lakes and 2000 ha of peatlands represent about 40% of the area of peatlands in the Jura massif. The limestone subsoil allows a juxtaposition of alkaline and acid peatlands which is unique in France for its size. The Site provides numerous habitats of importance for a variety of nationally or internationally protected species, from plants and fungi to dragonflies, butterflies, fish, birds, amphibians and reptiles. Two thirds of the national population of the common snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*) nest here, and the Site is also an important spawning ground for the northern pike (*Esox lucius*), the lavaret (*Coregonus lavaretus*), lake trout (*Salmo trutta*) and the white-clawed crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*). In the past the peat habitats were greatly modified for the exploitation of peat, the development of forestry and agricultural activities, but peatland restoration activities have been successfully implemented. The Site is nonetheless still sensitive to droughts, and to pollution from the surrounding agricultural land.

Vallées de la Scarpe et de l'Escaut

Site number: 2,405 | Country: France | Administrative region: Région Hauts-de-France

Area: 27,622 ha | Coordinates: 50°25'58"N 03°25'27"E | Designation dates: 02-02-2020

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Situated adjacent to the border with Belgium, Vallées de la Scarpe et de l'Escaut is a complex of connected ponds, marshes, canals, peat bogs, alluvial and swamp forests, rivers, streams and aquifers, which lies between the Scarpe and l'Escaut rivers. Some of the larger water bodies are of anthropogenic origin, as they were created by the collapse of old mining complexes. The natural and also the human-made areas provide habitats for nesting and migrant birds, and the wetland also hosts diverse fish and amphibians. Several species are listed as nationally or internationally threatened. Among these are the critically endangered European eel, the moor frog (*Rana arvalis*), of which half of the national population is found in the Site, and the vulnerable aquatic warbler (*Acrocephalus paludicola*). The wetland is also important for its water purification, storage and hazard reduction functions, which benefit over 300,000 people living around the site. Notable threats include drainage, agriculture, urbanization and overuse of the natural resources of the site.

Zones humides et marines de Saint-Martin

Site number: 2,029 | Country: France (outr-mer) | Administrative region: Saint-Martin

Area: 2,996.7 ha | Coordinates: 18°04'59"N 63°04'59"W | Designation dates: 27-10-2011

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Zones humides et marines de Saint-Martin. 27/10/11; Saint-Martin; 2,997 ha; 18°05'N 063°05'W. Protected Biotope, Nature Reserve. Shallow marine waters, sea grass beds, coral reefs, mangroves, lagoons and a network of 14 ponds dispersed throughout the French side of the island. The ponds are influenced by the sea and serve as feeding, breeding and wintering areas for as many as 85 bird species, many of them threatened and some endemic. The marine part of the site harbours most of the coral reef areas surrounding the island and is habitat to several endangered and critically endangered sea turtles such as Leatherback *Dermochelys coriacea*. It constitutes a feeding and spawning area for more than 100 species of fish and is also important as shelter, nursery and migration path. The site fulfills a diverse set of ecological functions like water flow regulation, oxygenation of water, stabilization and storm protection as well as the reduction of pollutant loads entering the Sea. The marine part of the site is used for recreational activities such as diving, sailing, kayaking and surfing. Threats include poaching, water pollution from sewage, and extreme weather events as well as increasing water temperatures. Ramsar Site no. 2029. Most recent RIS information: 2012.