



Ramsar Sites Information Service

Annotated List of Wetlands of International Importance

Netherlands

54 Ramsar Site(s) covering 914,175 ha

Alde Feanen

Site number: 578 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Friesland
Area: 2,124 ha | Coordinates: 53°07'28"N 05°55'31"E | Designation dates: 30-12-1992
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site is an area of freshwater lakes, reed lands, forested marshland and grasslands, which make up one of the few remnants of an extensive peat bog landscape. In 2014 the boundaries of the Site were adjusted to those of the Natura 2000 site, resulting in a reduction of 376 hectares. It supports rare and endangered species of birds, fish, amphibians, reptiles and butterflies, making it important for maintaining the biological diversity of the Atlantic biogeographic region. Moreover, the Site is an important breeding, staging, moulting and wintering area, supporting more than 20,000 birds and up to 1% of the population of barnacle goose (*Branta leucopsis*) and black-tailed godwit (*Limosa limosa*). It also plays an important role in flood regulation and groundwater replenishment. As well as water management, the Site is used for farming, commercial fisheries, oil and gas extraction, and recreational activities such as angling and nautical sports. The main threats derive from drainage, pollution and eutrophication caused by farming activities, and habitat disturbance due to tourism.

Bargerveen

Site number: 581 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Drenthe
Area: 2,082 ha | Coordinates: 52°40'35"N 07°01'32"E | Designation dates: 30-12-1992
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site is a remnant of a vast raised bog which used to cover both sides of the Dutch-German border. It features subatlantic raised bogs in a landscape of dry and wet heaths, swamp forests, peatland and pools within seasonally flooded agricultural land. In 2014 the Site boundary was delineated more accurately and aligned with the Natura 2000 boundary, reducing the area by 18 hectares. The Site is of international importance for various species of wintering geese and endangered species of breeding birds such as the common snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*) and whinchat (*Saxicola rubetra*). It plays an important role in groundwater replenishment and climate regulation, acting as a carbon sink. Human activities include tourism and water management. Drainage is the most important threat to the Site's ecological character; however, hydrological measures have been implemented to promote the natural regeneration of the bog system.

Biesbosch

Site number: 197 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Noord-Brabant and Zuid-Holland
Area: 9,640 ha | Coordinates: 51°44'54"N 04°47'33"E | Designation dates: 23-05-1980

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site, at the confluence of the Rhine and Meuse rivers, is formed by tidal freshwater floodplain marshes characterized by reedbeds, swamp forests and creeks. Biesbosch was created in the year 1421 during the Sint Elizabeth flood, which created an inland sea of 30,000 hectares under the influence of river waters and the tide. The original Site was extended significantly to align with the Natura 2000 boundary, resulting in the addition of an area of over 6,800 hectares. Biesbosch is rich in biodiversity and supports globally threatened species of birds such as common pochard (*Aythya ferina*) and horned grebe (*Podiceps auritus*). It also regularly supports more than 20,000 wintering waterbirds and more than 1% of the populations of six different species of ducks. The shallow waters provide a spawning, nursery and feeding grounds for various fish and mollusc species. The Site's hydrological values include flood control, sediment and nutrient retention, and water purification. It is also used for farming and reed cutting, and it hosts wind farms and commercial fisheries. Threats to the ecological character of the Site include pollution and impacts of recreational activities. There is a visitors' centre, and biodiversity monitoring activities are carried out by the Dutch Bird Research Organisation.

Broekvelden/Vettenbroek

Site number: 1,240 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Zuid-Holland
Area: 700 ha | Coordinates: 52°02'04"N 04°46'12"E | Designation dates: 29-08-2000

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site is a complex of shallow slightly brackish lakes criss-crossed by land strips, peatlands, reed fringes, wet meadows and improved grasslands, located near the city of Gouda. The current landscape has been formed by land reclamation and peat extraction. The Ramsar Site boundaries were aligned with the Natura 2000 site in 2014, resulting in a reduction in area of four hectares. The Site regularly supports more than 20,000 birds and hosts more than 1% of the biogeographic populations of the Eurasian wigeon (*Anas penelope*) and gadwall (*Anas strepera*). It is also an important spawning ground for the European bitterling (*Rhodeus amarus*) and spined loach (*Cobitis taenia*). The main human uses include boating, commercial fisheries, farming and tourism. The Site is threatened by non-industrial pollution and the expansion of agricultural land.

Deelen

Site number: 579 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Friesland
Area: 514 ha | Coordinates: 53°01'17"N 05°54'16"E | Designation dates: 30-12-1992

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Deelen is one of the few remnants of an extensive peat bog landscape that once covered north-western Overijssel and Friesland. It is an area of former peat workings along the small River Boorne, comprising open water, channels ("petgaten"), reedbeds, shrubs and wet meadows. The Site boundary was adjusted to match that of the Natura 2000 Site in 2013. The Site provides breeding ground for nationally threatened birds such as bittern (*Botaurus stellaris*) and black tern (*Chlidonias niger*). It regularly supports more than 20,000 wintering waterbirds and more than 1% of the European populations of gadwall (*Mareca strepera*), northern shoveler (*Spatula clypeata*) and greater white-fronted goose (*Anser albifrons*). It is also very important for flood regulation and groundwater replenishment. Human activities include reed harvesting, farming, peat extraction, water management and recreation. The main threats to the Site's ecological character derive from drainage and nutrient pollution from the surrounding farmland. The Dutch Bird Research Organisation coordinates a national bird monitoring programme at the Site.

Deurnsche Peel & Mariapeel

Site number: 580 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Brabant & Limburg
Area: 2,734 ha | Coordinates: 51°24'59"N 05°52'45"E | Designation dates: 30-12-1992
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site is a former raised bog, with marshland, open water, channels, heathlands, and forests dominated by birch, oak and pine. In 2014 the Site boundary was delineated more accurately and aligned with the Natura 2000 boundary, resulting in the addition of 1,284 hectares. It is of great importance as a representative landscape type specific to the Western European Plain, and it is notable as a resting place for migrating common cranes (*Grus grus*) and tundra bean geese (*Anser serrirostris*). The Site plays an important role in groundwater replenishment, and the land is used for farming, recreation and water management. Potential threats to the Site include agricultural intensification, overgrazing, drainage, infrastructure developments and tourism.

Duinen Ameland

Site number: 2,212 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Province of Friesland.
Area: 2,054.5 ha | Coordinates: 53°27'20"N 05°45'06"E | Designation dates: 29-08-2000
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Duinen Ameland is a small Wadden Sea island characterised by intertidal marshes, dune slacks and polders. The Site was formerly part of Ramsar Site 1252 (Waddeneilanden, Noordzeekustzone, Breebaart) which was divided in six Sites following Natura 2000 borders in 2014. The Site is of international importance for endangered breeding birds such as bittern and red-backed shrike. The dunes form a natural coastal defence against the erosive forces of the North Sea and support rich flora and diverse lichen communities. The Site plays an important role in freshwater supply. Land use is dedicated to tourism, conservation and research, and there is a visitor's centre in the village of Nes. Potential threats to the Site's ecological character are posed by gas exploitation, recreation activities, groundwater extraction and drainage for agriculture.

Duinen en Lage Land Texel

Site number: 2,213 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Province of Noord-Holland
Area: 4,083 ha | Coordinates: 53°04'52"N 04°49'46"E | Designation dates: 29-08-2000
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Texel is the largest island in the Wadden Sea; it is characterized by wet and dry dune slacks, woodland, heathland, salt marshes and polders. The Site was formerly part of Ramsar Site 1252 (Waddeneilanden, Noordzeekustzone, Breebaart) which was divided in six Sites following Natura 2000 borders in 2014. The Site is of international importance for breeding and non-breeding waterbirds such as bittern and little tern that forage at low tide in the sandbanks and use the higher beaches and dunes for resting. The Site supports diverse and threatened species of flora such as fen orchid, fewflower spikerush and flea sedge, mosses, endemic mammals such as root vole and butterflies. All are important for maintaining the biological diversity of the Atlantic biogeographic region. The dunes act as a natural coastal defence against the erosive forces of the North Sea and provide freshwater supply. Human uses include tourism, farming, military training, conservation and research. The main threat to the site is bird disturbance caused by the military, tourist and recreation activities.

Duinen Schiermonnikoog

Site number: 2,214 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Province of Friesland

Area: 833.1 ha | Coordinates: 53°29'15"N 06°10'25"E | Designation dates: 29-08-2000

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Duinen Schiermonnikoog is the smallest of the five inhabited Wadden Sea barrier islands. The Site was formerly part of Ramsar Site 1252 (Waddeneilanden, Noordzeekustzone, Breebaart) which was divided in six Sites following Natura 2000 borders in 2014. It is formed by dunes and intertidal mudflats, oak groves, conifer crops and a small freshwater lake and tidal lagoon. The Site is of international importance for European threatened species of breeding birds such as the northern wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*) and the whinchat (*Saxicola rubetra*), as well as for endangered flora such as fen orchid, musk orchid and yellow centaury. The dunes play an important role in freshwater supply and shoreline stabilization. Land use is dedicated to tourism, conservation and research. The main threats to the Site's ecological character are posed by tourism and groundwater extraction.

Duinen Terschelling

Site number: 2,215 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Province of Friesland

Area: 4,040.3 ha | Coordinates: 53°23'56"N 05°18'23"E | Designation dates: 29-08-2000

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Duinen Terschelling is one of the larger islands in the Wadden Sea, characterized by sand dunes and an extensive intertidal mudflat surrounded by grassland, conifer crops, small villages and silt polders claimed from the sea. The Site was formerly part of Ramsar Site 1252 (Waddeneilanden, Noordzeekustzone, Breebaart) which was divided in six Sites following Natura 2000 borders in 2014. The site is of international importance for European threatened species of breeding birds such as little tern, northern harrier and western marsh harrier, and endangered species of flora such as pigmy rush and green-winged orchid. The dunes form a natural coastal defence against the erosive forces of the North Sea and they retain rain water ensuring freshwater supply. Human activities include tourism, conservation and research. The main threats to the Site's ecological character are posed by groundwater extraction and tourism.

Duinen Vlieland

Site number: 2,216 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Province of Friesland.

Area: 1,484.1 ha | Coordinates: 53°16'51"N 05°00'35"E | Designation dates: 29-08-2000

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Duinen Vlieland is a small island in the Wadden Sea, characterized by an extensive area of sand dunes, conifer crops and embanked brackish lagoons important for maintaining the biodiversity in the Atlantic biogeographic region. The Site was formerly part of Ramsar Site 1252 (Waddeneilanden, Noordzeekustzone, Breebaart) which was divided into six Sites following Natura 2000 borders in 2014. The Site is of particular importance for breeding and non-breeding bird species. Some of these, such as the common redshank (*Tringa totanus robusta*) and Eurasian spoonbill (*Palateia leucorodia*), gather in particularly high numbers. The Site plays also an important role in freshwater supply and shoreline stabilization. Land use is dedicated to tourism, conservation and research. The main threats to the Site are bird disturbance by air force military training and over-exploitation of groundwater.

Engbertsdijkswenen

Site number: 428 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Overijssel

Area: 998 ha | Coordinates: 52°28'07"N 06°40'04"E | Designation dates: 02-06-1989

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

This Site is one of the last remaining raised bogs in the Netherlands, with dry heathland, birch forests, ditches and drainage channels. Apart from the active raised bog core, the area consists of wet heath which features drier areas. Some small birch forests can be found along the edges of the Site. In 2014 the Site boundary was aligned with the Natura 2000 boundary, resulting in the addition of an area of 105 hectares. The Site is an important breeding, resting and moulting area for many species of duck, goose, swan and waders. It regularly supports protected species such as the common crane (*Grus grus*) as well as more than 1% of the population of tundra bean goose (*Anser serrirostris*). The wetland plays an important role in groundwater replenishment and carbon sequestration. Land use is dedicated to water management, recreation and tourism. The main potential threat to its ecological character is drainage and air pollution.

Grevelingen

Site number: 1,272 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Zuid-Holland and Zeeland

Area: 13,753 ha | Coordinates: 51°42'40"N 04°00'13"E | Designation dates: 29-08-2000

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site is an intertidal area which was part of the estuary of the Rhine and Maas (Meuse) rivers until it was cut off from the North Sea in 1971. It is now a stagnant saline lake, mostly bordered by dykes, with some islets, sand dunes and wet meadows. In 2014 the Site was aligned with the Natura 2000 site, and recreational areas, roads and agricultural land covering 116 hectares were excluded. The Site is particularly important for waterbirds: it supports large congregations with annual peaks averaging over 67,000 birds, while more than 1% of the biogeographical populations of 13 species of breeding and wintering birds are present. The main human uses are commercial fishing, water management, boating, tourism and leisure activities. Threats include encroaching industrialization and urbanization, discharge of non-industrial pollutants and expanding recreational activities. Plans to partly restore tidal dynamics are in place to counteract eutrophication.

Groote Peel

Site number: 192 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Noord-Brabant and Limburg

Area: 1,348 ha | Coordinates: 51°20'47"N 05°49'03"E | Designation dates: 23-05-1980

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site supports rich vegetation in a landscape characterized by marshland raised bog, pools, channels, heathland and pine plantations with artificially maintained water levels. In 2014, the boundary of the Ramsar Site was aligned with the Natura 2000 site, resulting in an increase in area of 22 hectares. It is an important breeding area for waterbirds, and particularly known as the most important resting place in the Netherlands of migrating common cranes (*Grus grus*). Groote Peel plays an important role in groundwater replenishment and carbon sequestration as well as water management. The Site is used for farming, forestry and tourism. The management measures have restored the water levels, resulting in a substantial regeneration of peat moss species. There is a visitors' centre, and boardwalks make the Site more accessible.

Haringvliet

Site number: 1,244 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Zuid-Holland
Area: 10,880 ha | Coordinates: 51°47'45"N 04°07'34"E | Designation dates: 29-08-2000
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Haringvliet is a closed inlet that forms part of the Rhine and Maas (Meuse) delta via an open connection with the Hollands Diep. In 2014, The Ramsar Site was aligned with the Natura 2000 site, resulting in an increase in its area of 152 hectares. The water level is artificially regulated and varies according to the supply from the Rhine. After the completion of the Haringvliet locks in 1970, the tide largely disappeared and the water turned from brackish to fresh. In an attempt to restore the original brackish condition and enable fish migration, the locks have been partly opened since 2019. The Site regularly supports more than 20,000 wintering waterbirds and nationally endangered and vulnerable species such as avocet, Eurasian spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*) and sandwich tern (*Thalasseus sandvicensis*). It also plays an important role as spawning, nursery and feeding ground for many fish, and supports nationally endangered molluscs. Human activities include commercial fishing, agriculture, shipping, reed cutting, angling, recreation and tourism. There is a visitors' centre at Tiengemeten Island. Potential threats to the Site's ecological character include an increase in tourism activities, urbanization, industrialization, unsustainable water management and eutrophication.

Het Spaans Lagoen

Site number: 198 | Country: Netherlands (Aruba) | Administrative region: Aruba
Area: 70 ha | Coordinates: 12°30'N 70°00'W | Designation dates: 23-05-1980
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Het Spaans Lagoen. 23/05/80; Aruba; 70 ha; 12°30'N 070°00'W. Conservation Area. A narrow coastal inlet, fringed by tidal mudflats and mangrove swamps. An important feeding and breeding area for waterbirds, and nursery area for various species of fish and crustaceans. Ramsar site no. 198.

Hollands Diep

Site number: 1,273 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Zuid-Holland
Area: 4,139 ha | Coordinates: 51°42'07"N 04°30'35"E | Designation dates: 29-08-2000
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

This freshwater lake used to be a brackish estuary in the Rhine and Maas (Meuse) delta but was separated from the North Sea in 1970 by the Haringvliet dam. In 2014 the Site was aligned with the Natura 2000 site, resulting in an increase in its area of 74 hectares. Hollands Diep is an especially important area for breeding waterbirds such as the Eurasian spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*) and barnacle goose (*Branta leucopsis*), and a valuable spawning, nursery and feeding ground for national threatened fish species such as barbel (*Barbus barbus*) and other migratory fish including silver salmon (*Salmo salar*). The Site plays an important role in flood regulation and sediment trapping. The lake and the adjacent land are used for forestry, farming, commercial fishing, shipping, water management, conservation and research. Factors adversely affecting the Site's ecological character include industrialization, urbanization and pollution leading to eutrophication.

IJsselmeer

Site number: 1,246 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Friesland, Flevoland, Noord-Holland

Area: 113,341 ha | Coordinates: 52°52'07"N 05°23'01"E | Designation dates: 29-08-2000

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site it is a vast shallow freshwater lake, the largest freshwater basin in the country. IJsselmeer was cut off from the Wadden Sea by the Afsluitdijk causeway in 1932, and about 45% of the territory was reclaimed as polders. In 2014 the boundaries of the Site were aligned to those of the Natura 2000 site, resulting in an increase in area of 5,184 hectares. The Site regularly supports more than 20,000 wintering waterbirds as well as endangered bird species such as ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*), bittern (*Botaurus stellaris*), avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*) and spotted crake (*Porzana porzana*). IJsselmeer plays a crucial role in regulating the hydrology of the northern Netherlands. The construction of an innovative "fish migration river" in the Afsluitdijk between the IJsselmeer and the Wadden Sea was started in November 2020 which would restore brackish conditions. Human activities include tourism, commercial fisheries, and shipping traffic. The Site is threatened by artificial water level management, intensive commercial fishing, industrialization, urbanization and the construction of wind farms.

Ketelmeer and Vossemeer

Site number: 1,274 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Overijssel, Flevoland

Area: 3,900 ha | Coordinates: 52°35'49"N 05°45'32"E | Designation dates: 29-08-2000

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site is formed by artificial freshwater lakes created by the construction of dykes in the reclaimed IJsselmeer polders. In 2014 the Site was aligned with the Natura 2000 site, resulting in an increase in its area of 2,060 hectares. The lakes receive their water from the Rhine and IJssel rivers. The Site is of international importance for endangered bird species such as bittern, spotted crake and great reed warbler. It is also particularly important for the conservation of breeding, foraging and resting bird species. The Site also supports more than 1% of the individuals of the northwestern European population of gadwall. The lakes play an important role as reservoirs for irrigating the surrounding agricultural land, while they are also used for boating, commercial fisheries, shipping traffic, water management and sand extraction. Threats include reed cutting, aquaculture and pollution with nutrients increasing eutrophication.

Klein Bonaire

Site number: 201 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Klein Bonaire is an island located offshore from Bonaire island, in the Caribbean Netherlands

Area: 1,295 ha | Coordinates: 12°09'25"N 68°18'36"W | Designation dates: 23-05-1980

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Klein Bonaire is a small uninhabited coral island 800 metres off the west coast of Bonaire in the Dutch Caribbean. Largely tourist-free beaches and saline lagoons provide an ideal stop-over point for many species of migratory birds and an important breeding area for terns, notably the regionally important least tern (*Sterna antillarum*). The sandy beaches are also the main nesting areas of Bonaire for the critically endangered hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) and the endangered loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*) turtles. In 2021, the Site was extended to include a 500-metre buffer zone, which covers part of the fringing reefs. With virtually every species of coral found in the Caribbean, the Site is one of the healthiest, most resilient and most biodiverse reefs in the region. Internationally threatened groupers are among the more than 340 fish species found in the reefs. Infrastructural developments at Klein Bonaire are prohibited; nevertheless the Site is an important ecotourism destination, especially for divers and snorkelers who impose a potential threat to the fragile reefs. The biggest threat however is climate change, as sea-level rise could cause the loss of the low-lying beaches and salinas.

Klein Curaçao

Site number: 2,355 | Country: Netherlands (Curaçao) | Administrative region: Curaçao

Area: 248.5 ha | Coordinates: 11°59'24"N 68°38'36"W | Designation dates: 31-07-2018

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site consists of the small, uninhabited island of Klein Curaçao and the surrounding sea. The eastern shore features a near-pristine, well-developed and still growing coral reef system that supports an enormous diversity of marine organisms. Such self-sustaining reef systems are increasingly rare in the Caribbean: this is one of the few remaining healthy examples and is representative of Caribbean reef communities in general. Its dense populations of branching corals protect the coastline by dissipating wave energy. The island is of global importance for its breeding population of the least tern *Sterna antillarum*, while a 600-metre stretch of sandy beach is the most important nesting area within Curaçao's jurisdiction for the critically endangered hawksbill turtle *Eretmochelys imbricata* and the endangered green sea turtle *Chelonia mydas*. The main threat to the Site is uncontrolled tourism, which may negatively affect the nesting activities of the sea turtles and terns.

Krammer-Volkerak

Site number: 747 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Zeeland, Noord-Brabant, Zuid-Holland

Area: 6,159 ha | Coordinates: 51°36'10"N 04°13'47"E | Designation dates: 04-09-1995

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site is a former tidal estuary of the Rhine and Maas (Meuse) river system, which was transformed into a permanent freshwater lake by its separation from the North Sea in 1987. In 2014 the Site boundary was delineated more accurately and aligned with the Natura 2000 boundary, reducing the area by 219 hectares. The Site's islands, forested peatlands, mud flats and intertidal marshes are very important resting, moulting, feeding and breeding grounds for many species of waterbirds which are threatened in Europe, such as Kentish plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*) and common tern (*Sterna hirundo*). The Site also supports over 50,000 wintering waterbirds and more than 1% of the population of nine bird species. Meanwhile it plays an important role in flood regulation. Human activities include commercial and recreational fishing, shipping traffic, nautical sports and water management. The main threats to the Site's ecological character are pollution, eutrophication and bird disturbance from recreational activities.

Lac Baai

Site number: 199 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Lac Baai lies on Bonaire island, in the Caribbean Netherlands

Area: 1,550 ha | Coordinates: 12°06'25"N 68°13'53"W | Designation dates: 23-05-1980

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Lac Baai (formerly Het Lac) on the south-eastern shore of Bonaire is the largest inland bay in the Dutch Caribbean. This shallow bay with dense sea grass beds is fringed by mangroves and separated from the sea by coral debris and red algae. The mangroves are an important nursery for conch and many species of reef fish and also a critical foraging ground for globally endangered juvenile green turtles and rainbow parrotfish. The Site is an important breeding, wintering and foraging area for waterbirds such as herons, egrets and pelicans. In 2021, the Site was extended to include a 500-metre buffer zone which covers part of the fringing reefs of Bonaire, where sea turtles sleep and practically every species of hard and soft coral of the Caribbean can be found. Besides the impacts of tourism, the biggest threat to the Site is overgrazing by extensively-farmed livestock which is accelerating the infilling of the bay with nutrients and sediment. This is hampering water circulation and causing algae blooms and mangrove die-off.

Lauwersmeer

Site number: 1,247 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Groningen and Friesland
Area: 5,754 ha | Coordinates: 53°22'47"N 06°10'29"E | Designation dates: 29-08-2000

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site is a dammed estuary, which was part of the Wadden Sea until it was closed off in 1969. It includes a shallow freshwater lake, marshes, wet grasslands and arable lands. The Site boundary was aligned with that of the Natura 2000 Site in 2014, with a road and parking areas on the north side excluded, reducing the area by 36 hectares. It hosts more than 20,000 wintering birds and over 1% of the biogeographic populations of nine species of waterbirds. The Site supports threatened mammals such as the otter (*Lutra lutra*) and pine marten (*Martes martes*), and endangered breeding birds such as the ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*), bittern (*Botaurus stellaris*) and Montagu's harrier (*Circus pygargus*). It plays an important role in water supply and the maintenance of the hydrological balance of the region. Human activities include tourism, commercial fishing, shipping, boating and farming. The main threats to the Site's ecological character are the disturbance of birds by military training and tourism, non-industrial pollution and eutrophication.

Leekstermeergebied

Site number: 1,248 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Drenthe and Groningen
Area: 1,543 ha | Coordinates: 53°10'26"N 06°27'05"E | Designation dates: 29-08-2000

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site is a freshwater lake within the Rhine basin, surrounded by reedbeds, peatbogs and pastures, with small marshes and wet grasslands within seasonally flooded agricultural land. The Site boundary was delineated more accurately and adjusted to that of the Natura 2000 site in 2014, with some residential and recreation areas excluded. The Site supports vulnerable species of breeding bird such as the corn crane (*Crex crex*) and spotted crane (*Porzana porzana*) and is of international importance for ducks and geese during migration and wintering periods. It also supports more than 1% of the individuals of the northwestern Siberian / northwestern-northeastern European population of white-fronted goose (*Anser albifrons*). The lake serves as a drain for the surrounding polders and provides water for irrigation. The main human uses include commercial fishing, boating, tourism and water management. Threats include unnatural water level management and eutrophication.

Malpais/Sint Michiel

Site number: 2,117 | Country: Netherlands (Curaçao) | Administrative region: Curaçao
Area: 1,100 ha | Coordinates: 12°10'05"N 68°59'47"W | Designation dates: 05-02-2013

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Malpais/Sint Michiel. 05/02/2013; Curaçao; 1,100 ha; 12°10'N 069°00'W. Important Bird Area. Malpais is a former plantation just to the north of Sint Michiel. There are two freshwater lakes and the hyper-saline St. Michiel lagoon connected to a bay in which coral reefs are found, surrounded by dry deciduous vegetation and a well-developed woodland habitat. The area provides refuge for many birds, such as the IUCN Red Listed Caribbean coot (*Fulica caribaea*). The lagoon also supports a significant fraction of the global population of the Common tern (*Sterna hirundo*) and is part of a regional network of foraging sites for the Caribbean flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber*), protected under the Convention of Migratory Species. Freshwater is scarce in Curaçao and therefore of great ecological, social and economic value. The dam of Malpais is located downstream. Freshwater infiltrates into the soil, recharging groundwater reservoirs which allow woodlands to grow in the area. Some of the current threats which may affect the ecological character of the site are the landfill and runoff from a pig farm situated only 1 km away. Ramsar Site no. 2117. Most recent RIS information: 2013.

Markermeer & IJmeer

Site number: 1,245 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Provinces of Flevoland and Noord-Holland

Area: 68,463.4 ha | Coordinates: 52°27'57"N 05°09'42"E | Designation dates: 29-08-2000

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site is a stagnant freshwater lake with submerged vegetation in the catchment of the river Rhine, which was separated from IJsselmeer by the closing of Houtribdijk in 1976. The two separate Ramsar Sites "IJmeer" and "Markermeer" were merged into a single Site and aligned with the Natura 2000 boundary, increasing the total measured area by 131 hectares. The Site is of international importance for a large number of breeding and non-breeding birds, supporting regularly more than 20,000 wintering waterbirds, including protected species such as the gadwall (*Anas strepera*) and the Eurasian Wigeon (*Anas penelope*). Large resting groups of common pochard (*Aythya ferina*), tufted duck (*Aythya fuligula*) and Eurasian coot (*Fulica atra*) gather in relatively small areas. The lake is also an important spawning, nursery and feeding ground for fish and molluscs, and plays an important role as a freshwater reservoir for irrigation. Human activities include boating, tourism, extractive operations, commercial fisheries, shipping traffic, water management, conservation and research. A large-scale restoration project is currently being undertaken, the Marker Wadden project, in which sand, clay and silt from the Markermeer are being used to create an archipelago of 10,000 ha in total.

Markiezaat

Site number: 2,211 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Provinces of Noord-Brabant and Zeeland

Area: 1,831.9 ha | Coordinates: 51°27'38"N 04°15'36"E | Designation dates: 03-04-1987

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site is a freshwater lake composed of former tidal channels and creeks, mud flats, salt marshes and higher ground with young shifting dunes. The Markiezaat is designated as a Natura 2000 site and is considered important for maintaining the biodiversity of the Atlantic biogeographic region. The Site is important for breeding birds with its thinly vegetated banks, small lakes and reed marshes, for fish-eating birds and as a resting area during high tide for birds which forage in the adjacent tidal Oosterschelde. It is an important area for some bird species such as common teal *Anas crecca*, Eurasian wigeon *Anas penelope* and Kentish plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*. The numbers of wintering birds have been declining in recent years; however, the Site still supports more than 1% of the biogeographic population of the Eurasian spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*. A small part of the Markiezaat is open to the public, and features a hide, a small hiking route and a birdwatching tower. Recreation activities are prohibited on the lake. The main threats are posed by industrialization and livestock farming.

Muizenberg

Site number: 2,118 | Country: Netherlands (Curaçao) | Administrative region: Curaçao

Area: 65 ha | Coordinates: 12°09'34"N 68°55'12"W | Designation dates: 05-02-2013

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Muizenberg. 05/02/2013; Curaçao; 65 ha; 12°09'29"N 068°55'07"W. Important Bird Area; Natural Park. Muizenberg comprises an intermittent shallow lake created by the damming of a stream that drains the surrounding low hills. Periodically inundated grassland and shrubland surround the wetland. A separate small pond, Kaya Fortuna, is situated 200m to the west. This area is internationally significant for its population of the Caribbean coot (*Fulica caribaea*), near-threatened under the IUCN Red List, and the Caribbean flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber*) conserved under the Convention of Migratory Species, but it also supports many other waterbirds, both residents and migrants. The Muizenberg dam was built by Shell Curaçao in 1915 to collect freshwater for industrial cooling purposes; with a capacity of 650,000 m³, it represents the largest freshwater reservoir on the island. The area was designated as a Natural Park for the improvement of the urban living conditions of the nearby population and is mainly used by hikers for recreational purposes. Illegal dumping of garbage, pollution, drainage of surrounding wetlands, and recreational disturbance are seen as the main potential threats. A general environmental education programme is being implemented. Ramsar Site no. 2118. Most recent RIS information: 2013.

Mullet Pond

Site number: 2,270 | Country: Netherlands (Sint Maarten) | Administrative region: Mullet Bay Pond is situated in the Simpson Bay Lagoon, in the Simpson Bay Area on the Dutch Side of Sint Maarten
Area: 26.4 ha | Coordinates: 18°02'52"N 63°07'16"W | Designation dates: 23-05-2014
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Mullet Pond is a semi-enclosed area of permanent shallow marine waters within the Simpson Bay Lagoon. The Site holds some of the few intact sea-grass beds in the wider Lagoon as well as 70% of the mangrove forest remaining on Sint Maarten, the Dutch part of the Caribbean island of Saint Martin. The mangroves and sea-grass beds act as a major nursery area and important habitat for juvenile fish species which develop in the lagoon before moving to local coral reef ecosystems including in the Man of War Shoal Marine Park. The nationally critically endangered buttonwood *Conocarpus erectus* is found on Mullet Pond. The Site is also the last remaining habitat in the wider Simpson Bay area for *Anolis pogus*, a species endemic to the island, and the last intact foraging grounds in the Lagoon for the globally endangered green turtle *Chelonia mydas*. The mangroves provide coastal protection during hurricanes and tropical storms, and help to cycle nutrients in the larger Simpson Bay area. As well as supporting the fish stocks which local fisheries depend on, the Site is also used for eco-tourism activities such as kayaking tours. The area is under continuing pressure from development, while other threats relate to dredging, recreational and tourism activities, storms and flooding and invasive alien species including the red lionfish *Pterois volitans*.

Naardermeer

Site number: 194 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Noord-Holland
Area: 1,151 ha | Coordinates: 52°17'32"N 05°06'54"E | Designation dates: 23-05-1980
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

This complex of shallow freshwater lakes, pools and canals, fens, reedbeds and swamp forests surrounded by wet meadows and marshland is the oldest Dutch nature reserve. The area is important for waterbirds such as purple heron (*Ardea purpurea*) and black tern (*Chlidonias niger*). It supports vulnerable populations of fish, molluscs and dragonflies. The surrounding area is densely populated and dedicated to agriculture. The main threats to its ecological character are related to drainage, water extraction, pollution and disturbance caused by tourism and a railway. Land use is dedicated to water management and recreation. Around the lake there is a 17-kilometre path which leads to birdwatching shelters and a visitor centre. In 2014 the Site boundary was adjusted to that of the Natura 2000 site, resulting in an increase in area of 452 hectares.

North Sea Coastal Area

Site number: 1,252 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Noord-Holland, Friesland, Groningen
Area: 144,474.8 ha | Coordinates: 53°16'16"N 05°15'17"E | Designation dates: 29-08-2000
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The North Sea Coastal Area Site (Noordzeekustzone in Dutch) is an extensive area of coastal shallow waters with sandbanks, mudflats, salt meadows and embryonic shifting dunes. It was formerly part of the Waddeneilanden, Noordzeekustzone, Breebaart Ramsar Site, which was divided in 2014 into six smaller Sites which follow Natura 2000 boundaries. The high food productivity of the Site supports healthy populations of endangered mammals such as harbour porpoise and grey seal, as well as more than 20,000 wintering waterbirds and more than 1% of the individuals of the biogeographic populations of seven waterbird species. In addition, the site is an important spawning and nursery ground for fish such as sea lamprey and twaite shad. The main human activities include angling, boating, commercial fisheries, shipping traffic and military training. Potential threats to the site's ecological character derive from aquaculture and shellfish industry, gas exploration, pollution and bird disturbance caused by air force military training, recreation activities and tourism.

Northwest Curaçao

Site number: 2,119 | Country: Netherlands (Curaçao) | Administrative region: Curaçao Government
Area: 2,441 ha | Coordinates: 12°20'08"N 69°05'17"W | Designation dates: 05-02-2013

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Northwest Curaçao. 05/02/2013; Curaçao; 2,441 ha; 12°21'11"N 069°05'00"W. Important Bird Area, Natural Parks. The area comprises a great variety of ecosystems such as coral reefs, coastal lagoons with sea grass beds and mangroves, coastal limestone terraces, inland hills supporting evergreen woodland, freshwater dams, natural springs and dry deciduous shrublands. The Ramsar site includes parts of Shete Boka and Christoffel Natural Parks. The wetland covers approximately 20 km of the rocky, wave-exposed north coast of Curaçao, including 10 pocket beaches (bokas) and 3 inland bays that are used as nesting and foraging sites for threatened sea turtle species as *Dermochelys coriacea* and *Eretmochelys imbricata*. There is also a breeding colony of more than 500 individuals of Least Tern. Moreover, the northwestern coast of Curaçao locally harbours a fringing coral reef, characterized by more than 50% coral cover and the presence of such critically endangered coral species as *Acropora palmata* and *Acropora cervicornis* as well as endangered fish species like the *Epinephelus itajara*. Some of the caves in the area were used for spiritual rituals in the past, and Indian drawings can be found estimated to be more than 5,000 years old. Numerous manmade dams in the area retain freshwater for several months after the wet season has passed. Subterranean groundwater reservoirs in turn sustain local vegetation types year-round which are used by several bird species, pollinating bats and mammals to survive during Curaçao's dry season. Ramsar Site no. 2119. Most Recent RIS information: 2013.

Oostelijke Vechtplassen

Site number: 1,275 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Utrecht and Noord-Holland
Area: 6,475 ha | Coordinates: 52°10'52"N 05°04'55"E | Designation dates: 29-08-2000

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site consists of an extensive area of permanent shallow lakes, marshes and canals characterized by fenland, reedbeds and wet meadows surrounded by swamp forests. The development of peat was possible due to seepage of water from surrounding higher ground and the influence of the River Vecht. The lakes are a result of past peat extraction activities. The boundaries of the Site were adjusted in 2013 to match those of the Natura 2000 Site, with some residential areas and the Trekragen recreational area excluded. The Site is home to the globally vulnerable beetle *Graphoderus bilineatus* and the Desmoulin's whorl snail (*Vertigo moulinsiana*). It regularly supports more than 20,000 wintering waterbirds and more than 1% of the individuals of the North-West and Central European populations of Northern shoveler (*Spatula clypeata*) and gadwall (*Mareca strepera*). Since 2010, otters have once more been observed. Human activities include conservation and research, commercial fisheries, water management, tourism and farming. Threats include drainage, nutrient pollution from the surrounding farmland and the impacts of recreational activities. The Dutch Bird Research Organisation coordinates a national bird monitoring programme at the Site.

Oosterschelde

Site number: 354 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Zeeland
Area: 36,978 ha | Coordinates: 51°36'49"N 03°55'01"E | Designation dates: 03-04-1987

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site is a 40-kilometre long area of intertidal waters with mudflats. The former Oosterschelde en Markiezaat Ramsar Site was in 2014 divided into two Ramsar Sites, the larger Oosterschelde and the smaller Markiezaat ([Site no.2211](#)), following Natura 2000 boundaries. This led to an increase in their combined area of 810 hectares. Oosterschelde is an important component of the West Palearctic Flyway, with international importance due to the wintering, staging and breeding of a large number of waterbirds. The Site supports threatened birds such as the sandwich tern (*Thalasseus sandvicensis*) and pied avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*). It is an important spawning ground for many fish including garpike (*Belone belone*), sole (*Solea solea*) and plaice (*Pleuronectes platessa*). Aquatic mammals such as the harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*) and harbour seal (*Phoca vitulina*) regularly use the Site. The marshland plays an important role in flood mitigation. Human activities are related to tourism and the fishing and shellfish industries. Potential threats to the ecological character of this wetland include the disturbance of birds by these activities and a reduction in the tidal volume and flow caused by the construction of dykes, dams and other barriers.

Oostvaardersplassen

Site number: 427 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Flevoland

Area: 5,477 ha | Coordinates: 52°26'47"N 05°21'04"E | Designation dates: 02-06-1989

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site is an extensive area of shallow lakes, pools, marshes, reedbeds, willow woodland and grassland within seasonally flooded agricultural land on the shore of the Markermeer. In 2014 the Site was aligned with the Natura 2000 site, and dykes with roads were excluded, resulting in a reduction in its area of 123 hectares. The Site is of international importance for the biological diversity of the Atlantic biogeographic region. It supports threatened species of breeding birds such as spotted crane (*Porzana porzana*) and little bittern (*Ixobrychus minutus*). It also regularly supports more than 30,000 wintering waterbirds and more than 1% of the regional populations of the northern shoveler (*Spatula clypeata*) and the tufted duck (*Aythya fuligula*). The Site plays an important role in flood regulation. Land use is dedicated to water management and tourism. There are a visitors' centre and observation hides. The main threat to the Site is bird disturbance from recreational activities.

Oudegaasterbrekken, Fluessen and surroundings

Site number: 1,243 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Province of Friesland

Area: 3,054 ha | Coordinates: 52°57'12"N 05°32'53"E | Designation dates: 29-08-2000

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site is a complex of freshwater lakes surrounded by seasonally flooded agricultural land, reed beds, pastures and peat polders located in the River Rhine catchment area, south-west of the city of Sneek. In 2014 the two Ramsar Sites "Oudegaasterbrekken en omgeving" and "Fluessen / Vogelhoek / Morra" were combined following Natura 2000 boundaries. This resulted in an increase in the total measured area of 170 hectares. The Site regularly supports more than 1% of the individuals of the regional population of barnacle goose (*Branta leucopsis*), as well as more than 20,000 wintering waterbirds. The Site is a very important feeding and resting area for threatened species such as spotted crane (*Porzana porzana*), smew (*Mergellus albellus*) and ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*). The lakes act as water storage reservoirs providing water for irrigation during summer, while the polders are intensively used for agriculture. Other human activities include commercial fisheries, recreation and boating, water management, conservation and research. Main threats to the ecological character of the Site are nutrient pollution and pressures from tourism.

Pekelmeer

Site number: 200 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Bonaire

Area: 1,612 ha | Coordinates: 12°02'37"N 68°15'19"W | Designation dates: 23-05-1980

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Het Pekelmeer is part of a saltwater lake ("pekelmeer" in Dutch) situated on Bonaire Island in the Dutch Caribbean. It includes a shallow hypersaline lagoon with salt pans and dikes, beaches and reefs separating the lagoon from the ocean. The sparsely vegetated Site hosts one of the most important nesting colonies of Caribbean flamingo. It also provides important nesting areas for the critically endangered hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) and the endangered loggerhead turtle (*Caretta caretta*). In 2019, the Site was extended to include a 500-metre buffer zone, which covers part of the fringing reefs of Bonaire, one of the most biodiverse reefs in the region that provides refuge to several threatened species of fish and coral. The lionfish, an invasive species, has a potentially high impact on the Site, but its population has been kept under control thanks to the efforts of volunteers and the Bonaire National Marine Park.

Rif-Sint Marie

Site number: 2,120 | Country: Netherlands (Curaçao) | Administrative region: Curaçao Government
Area: 667 ha | Coordinates: 12°12'09"N 69°03'04"W | Designation dates: 05-02-2013

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Rif-Sint Marie. 05/02/2013. Curaçao; 667 ha; 12°12'16"N 69°03'16"W. Conservation Area, Important Bird Area. The area of Rif-Sint Marie is relatively undisturbed and undeveloped and comprises a salt marsh surrounded by mud flats, shrub land, and forests. The marsh is a strategic feeding habitat for flamingos and several waterbirds. The coral reef of Rif-Sint Marie is well developed and shelters several threatened coral species such as *Acropora palmata* and *Acropora cervicornis*, as well as such endangered turtle species as *Dermochelys coriacea* and *Eretmochelys imbricata* and threatened fishes like Goliath grouper *Epinephelus itajara*. Dense thickets of Elkhorn coral sustain major ecological processes such as gross community calcification and nitrogen fixation; dense populations of this branching species dissipate wave energy and thus protect the coast. The area is currently used for recreational purposes like hiking, biking and guided eco-tours. The major threats to the site are uncontrolled access of visitors with dogs disturbing flamingos and potentially unwise development of touristic infrastructures in the surrounding area. Ramsar Site no. 2120. Most recent RIS information: 2013.

Rottige Meenthe and Brandemeer

Site number: 1,277 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Friesland
Area: 1,369 ha | Coordinates: 52°51'28"N 05°53'14"E | Designation dates: 29-08-2000

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site is an open landscape of seasonally flooded farmland with small ponds and canals made by peat excavations in the past. The area lies downstream of the small Linde and Tjonger rivers, and it is rich in wet grasslands and heath, peatland, reed marshes and bog woodland characterized by alder and birch trees. The boundary of the Ramsar Site has been aligned with that of the Natura 2000 site, resulting in the addition of the Brandemeer Nature Reserve and an increase in area of 234 hectares. As a remnant of a once-vast peat bog, the area is not only important for carbon sequestration, but also provides habitat for rare animals and plants. The Site is important for nationally endangered bird species such as the Eurasian wigeon *Anas penelope* and great reed warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*, mammals such as the European otter *Lutra lutra*, and fish such as bitterling *Rhodeus amarus* and spine loach *Cobitis taenia*. It is also home to the endemic large copper butterfly. In addition, it supports vulnerable sphagnum moss species and endangered vascular plants such as fen orchid. It is used for recreational purposes including fishing and boating, and features a 15-kilometre hiking trail and a route for canoeing. Additionally, the Site serves as an important centre for conservation and wetland ecosystem research and is involved in studies of natural bogs and wetland and bog restoration ecology. Factors which might adversely affect it include tourism, drainage of surrounding farmlands and eutrophication.

Sneekerveergebied

Site number: 1,250 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Friesland
Area: 2,300 ha | Coordinates: 53°01'27"N 05°46'33"E | Designation dates: 29-08-2000

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site is a complex of freshwater lakes created by peat extraction activities, and adjoining marshlands and wet meadows. The Site boundary was delineated more accurately and adjusted to that of the Natura 2000 site in 2014. The Site is important for waterbirds: it hosts more than 1% of the respective biogeographic populations of the barnacle goose (*Branta leucopsis*), the white-fronted goose (*Anser albifrons*), and the wigeon (*Anas penelope*). It serves as a drain for the surrounding polders and surplus water is discharged into the Wadden Sea; it is also used for irrigation. Main human uses include freshwater usage for irrigation, boating, commercial fisheries, tourism and farming. Threats include drainage, unnatural water level management and eutrophication.

Veerse Meer

Site number: 1,251 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Zeeland
Area: 2,539 ha | Coordinates: 51°32'52"N 03°43'07"E | Designation dates: 29-08-2000
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Formerly part of the Oosterschelde estuary (closed in 1961), the Site is now a 20-kilometre-long stagnant brackish lake with sandbanks and small islands, surrounded by wet meadows, improved grasslands, arable lands and some wood plantations. The Site boundary was aligned with that of the Natura 2000 site in 2014; farmland and the dyke separating the western end of the lake from the North Sea were excluded, reducing the total area by 38 hectares. Veerse Meer hosts more than 20,000 waterbirds in peak season and provides refuge to more than 1% of the biogeographic population of Eurasian wigeon (*Anas penelope*). The lake acts as a storage basin for surplus water pumped from the surrounding polders until it is discharged into the Oosterschelde. Human uses include commercial fishing, farming, tourism and boating. The Site is threatened by nutrient pollution causing eutrophication, and by recreational activities and the Midden-Zeeland airport, which cause disturbance to birds. In 2004 a sluice was constructed in the Zandkreekdam, which separates the eastern end of the lake from the Oosterschelde, to allow more natural water management and improvement of the water quality.

Veluwerandmeren

Site number: 1,242 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: The site is located between the provinces of Flevoland, Gelderland and Overijssel.
Area: 6,123.5 ha | Coordinates: 52°24'26"N 05°42'20"E | Designation dates: 29-08-2000
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site is formed by three lakes situated between the dykes of the Flevoland polder and the mainland. In 2015 the three former sites of "Drontermeer", "Veluwemeer" and "Wolderwijd en Nulderneauw" were combined into a single Site following the boundary of Natura 2000 site "Veluwerandmeren". This resulted in an overall increase of 14 hectares. The Site regularly supports more than 20,000 wintering waterbirds and more than 1% of the north-west European populations of tufted duck (*Aythya fuligula*), mute swan (*Cygnus olor*) and common coot (*Fulica atra*). The Site also supports threatened species of plants, mosses, mushrooms, molluscs and fish, which are important for maintaining the biodiversity of the Atlantic biogeographic region. In addition, it maintains the hydrological balance of the region and is an important fresh water reservoir during periods of drought. Land use is dedicated to commercial fisheries, sand extraction, water management, recreation and tourism, shipping traffic, conservation and research. The main factors adversely affecting the Site's ecological character include the extension and deepening of the shipping lane, impacts of the extraction industry, pollution, eutrophication and disturbance from recreation activities.

Voordelta

Site number: 1,279 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Zeeland and Zuid-Holland
Area: 92,271 ha | Coordinates: 51°44'37"N 03°39'55"E | Designation dates: 29-08-2000
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site is an extensive coastal wetland in the North Sea, characterized by shallow sandbanks, mudflats, salt meadows and dunes. In 2014 the Site was aligned with the Natura 2000 site, resulting in an increase in its area of 10,026 hectares. Its high food productivity, caused by the nutrient supply from the rivers Rhine and Meuse, attracts an outstanding range of species. The Site is important for the conservation of breeding, foraging and resting bird species, and more than 1% of the regional population of the northern pintail (*Anas acuta*) can be found. The shallow mudflats are very important spawning and nursery grounds for migratory fish. Moreover, common seal and grey seal regularly visit the Site. The main human uses include fishing, angling, boating, recreation and tourism. All these uses put pressure on the Site's ecological character, as do other potential threats such as the disturbance of birds by aircraft, non-industrial pollution, construction work on dykes and dams, extraction activities and reclamation projects.

Voornes Duin

Site number: 1,280 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Zuid-Holland
Area: 1,432 ha | Coordinates: 51°52'03"N 04°04'22"E | Designation dates: 29-08-2000
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site is one of the least damaged dune system of the Netherlands. It is located between Oostvoorne and Harlingvliet, just 20 kilometres south of The Hague. In 2014, the boundary was adjusted to that of the Natura 2000 site, including the addition of a new area of 45 hectares. The area includes two lakes – Breedewater and Quackjeswater – and mesotrophic dune slacks surrounded by alder woodland and wet dune valleys. The Site supports rich vegetation including endangered plant species such as water germander and fen orchid, and is of particular importance for many breeding birds such as the Eurasian spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*) and great cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*). The dunes play an important role in shoreline stabilization and water purification. Land use is dedicated to water management, tourism, conservation and research. The main factors adversely affecting the Site's ecological character are industrialization, urbanization and tourism.

Wadden Sea

Site number: 289 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Provinces of Groningen, Friesland, Noord Holland
Area: 271,023.3 ha | Coordinates: 53°20'53"N 06°04'11"E | Designation dates: 02-05-1984
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site is a marine and coastal wetland in the Wadden Sea, between the mainland and barrier islands, consisting of extensive tidal mudflats, salt marshes, wet meadows, reclaimed polders, sand banks, and dune systems. The Ramsar Site boundary has been adjusted to follow the Natura 2000 boundary, and the former Ramsar Sites Griend (former Site no. 196) and Boschplaat (former Site no. 195) as well as 750 ha of the nature development area Friesland Buitendijks have been included within the Wadden Sea Ramsar Site. These changes have together resulted in an area increase of over 5,000 ha. Waddenzee is internationally important for many threatened species such as avocet and Sandwich tern, as well as for more than 20,000 wintering migratory birds. In addition, more than 105,000 individuals of harbour seal regularly use the site. The coastal wetland plays an important role in flood regulation, shoreline stabilization and sediment trapping. The main activities within the Site are commercial fisheries, sand, clay, shell and gravel extraction, oil and gas exploitation, wind turbine electricity generation and military training. All these activities are potential threats to its ecological character. The management plan was updated in 2010.

Washington Slagbaai

Site number: 202 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Bonaire
Area: 5,853 ha | Coordinates: 12°16'24"N 68°22'59"W | Designation dates: 23-05-1980
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Washington Slagbaai straddles almost one quarter of the island of Bonaire in the Dutch Caribbean. In 2021 the two Ramsar Sites De Slagbaai (Site no. 203) and Het Gotomeer (Site no. 202) were combined to form one new Site. It encompasses six salinas, several fresh water springs and ponds, beach and dune areas, small patches of mangroves and pristine coral reefs, and tropical dry forests leading up to Mount Brandaris, the highest point on Bonaire at 241 metres. Most of the island's animal and plant species can be found in the Site's diverse habitats; many are endemic to Bonaire. Washington Slagbaai is a stop-over point for migratory wetland birds, an important foraging site for Caribbean flamingos (*Phoenicopterus ruber*), and a breeding site for terns and snowy plovers (*Charadrius nivosus*). In the coral reefs many globally threatened corals and groupers can be found. The small sandy beaches are nesting areas for small numbers of globally threatened hawksbill, loggerhead and green turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricata*, *Caretta caretta*, *Chelonia mydas*). Overgrazing by free-roaming goats is the most serious threat to the natural environment. The Site is rich in heritage: the Seru Bentana lighthouse and the ruins of the Malmok lighthouse are among the island's most important historical landmarks. The original structures of early plantations now house the visitor centre.

Weerribben

Site number: 193 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Overijssel
Area: 3,325 ha | Coordinates: 52°47'51"N 05°56'49"E | Designation dates: 23-05-1980
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site is a low-lying peatland formed by bogs, marshland, reedbeds, wet meadows, pools, channels, heathland and woodland. Areas in all the stages of succession from open water to swamp forest are found, providing important habitat for notable species of plants, fish and butterflies. Weerribben is the only Site in the world with a viable population of the endemic large copper butterfly subspecies *Lycaena dispar batavia*. It is an important breeding area for numerous species of nationally endangered waterbirds including Eurasian bittern (*Botaurus stellaris*), purple heron (*Ardea purpurea*) and black tern (*Chlidonias niger*). The European otter (*Lutra lutra*) has been reintroduced, and since 2002 healthy and expanding populations have developed. Peat was excavated until around 1920, after which the local community gradually switched to reed-cutting, for which about 1,200 hectares are preserved. Other human activities include farming, commercial fisheries and recreational activities such as angling. In 2014 the boundary was adjusted to that of the Natura 2000 site, resulting in the addition of an area of 790 hectares. Threats include drainage, eutrophication, pollution and animal disturbance caused by recreational activities. There is a visitors' centre, and biodiversity monitoring activities are carried out by the Dutch Bird Research Organisation.

Westerschelde & Saeftinghe

Site number: 748 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Zeeland
Area: 43,647 ha | Coordinates: 51°24'03"N 03°46'E | Designation dates: 04-09-1995
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

This Site covers the entire estuary of the River Schelde, stretching 60 kilometres from the border with Belgium to the North Sea; it is one of the largest and most intact Atlantic salt marshes in Europe. In 2014 the boundary and name of the former "Westerschelde en Verdrongen Land van Saeftinghe" Ramsar Site were updated to align with the Natura 2000 site. The extensive mudflats and sandbanks regularly support more than 100,000 wintering waterbirds and more than 1% of the respective biogeographic populations of 14 bird species, as well as many other endangered breeding birds such as the Kentish plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*) and Sandwich tern (*Thalasseus sandvicensis*). The mudflats support endangered molluscs, and the tidal waters are important spawning grounds for migratory fish including sea lamprey and twaite shad (*Alosa fallax*). Harbour seal (*Phoca vitulina*) regularly use the Site. Human uses include farming, birdwatching, tourism, commercial fisheries, shipping, conservation and research. The main threats to the ecological character of the Site are posed by aquaculture, industrialization, urbanization, the extension of harbours, dredging and canalization, the construction of wind farms, pollution and eutrophication.

Wieden

Site number: 1,241 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Province of Overijssel
Area: 9,018 ha | Coordinates: 52°41'55"N 06°03'14"E | Designation dates: 29-08-2000
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Wieden and the adjoining Weerribben ([Ramsar Site no.193](#)) form the largest peat swamp of its kind in Western Europe. The Site is characterized by shallow freshwater lakes, reed beds, fens, wet meadows, transition mires, quaking bogs, forested peatland and numerous canals created through peat extraction activities which took place until the 1920s. The boundary was adjusted to match that of the Natura 2000 Site in 2017; some wetlands were included while some agricultural land, residential and recreational areas were excluded. The Site regularly supports more than 20,000 wintering waterbirds and is a refuge for more than 1% of the European populations of the greater white-fronted goose (*Anser albifrons*). It also supports notable species of plants, fish and butterflies. The European otter was reintroduced in 2002. The lakes act as water storage reservoirs during the summer and provide water for irrigation. Human activities relate to tourism, angling, boating, commercial fisheries, farming and reed harvesting. The main threats to the Site derive from water abstraction for farming, drainage and pollution. There is a visitors' centre, and biodiversity monitoring activities are carried out by the Dutch Bird Research Organisation.

Zoommeer

Site number: 1,253 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Provinces of Noord-Brabant and Zeeland

Area: 1,171 ha | Coordinates: 51°29'51"N 04°13'04"E | Designation dates: 29-08-2000

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site is a stagnant freshwater lake which is separated from the Oosterschelde estuary by a dam constructed in 1986. It forms a hydrological unit with the Krammer-Volkerak Ramsar Site ([Site no. 747](#)) through the Rhine-Schelde canal. In 2014 the Ramsar Site boundary was aligned with the Natura 2000 boundaries, and some recreational land and a dyke were excluded. The Molenplaat area, although not part of the Natura 2000 site, is included in the Ramsar Site. In total the area decreased by 20 hectares. The wetland is in the process of changing from a marine tidal system into a stagnant freshwater lake, resulting in changes in the composition of plant and animal species; however the potential reintroduction of salt water has been presented as a management option to combat annual algal blooms. The Site is of international importance for threatened breeding waterbirds such as the Mediterranean gull (*Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*), common tern (*Sterna hirundo*) and avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*). It also supports more than 1% of the north-west European population of the gadwall (*Anas strepera*). The primary human activities relate to boating, commercial fisheries, shipping traffic, tourism, dairy farming and water management. The main threats affecting the Site's ecological character include non-industrial pollution leading to an increase in eutrophication, and intensive livestock grazing.

Zuidlaardermeergebied

Site number: 1,282 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Groningen, Drenthe

Area: 2,087 ha | Coordinates: 53°08'56"N 06°40'55"E | Designation dates: 29-08-2000

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Zuidlaardermeer is one of the largest lakes in the provinces of Groningen and Drenthe and is of natural origin. The River Hunze drains into the lake, and reedbeds, swamp forests and extensive areas of wet grassland surround it. These reclaimed polders are important feeding grounds for herbivorous water birds, while the lake is used for roosting by nationally protected waterbirds such as northern pintail (*Anas acuta*) and Eurasian bittern (*Botaurus stellaris*). The Site supports more than 1% of the regional population of the gadwall (*Anas strepera*) and plays an important role in flood regulation. It is used for science and research and provides water for agriculture. In 2014 the Site was aligned with the Natura 2000 site, resulting in a decrease in its area of nine hectares.

Zwanenwater en Pettemerduinen

Site number: 400 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Province of Noord-Holland

Area: 770 ha | Coordinates: 52°48'25"N 04°41'14"E | Designation dates: 15-06-1988

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The site is a coastal wetland dominated by humid dune-slacks, marshes, woodland and two connected freshwater lakes, which are among the largest of their kind in Europe. In 2014 the Site name and boundary were adjusted to follow the Natura 2000 site. Residential land was excluded while a natural area in the south was added, resulting in an increase in the area of 175 hectares. These ecosystems support a rich and vulnerable vegetation as well as endangered species of waterbirds such as the Eurasian bittern (*Botaurus stellaris*) and lesser white-fronted goose (*Anser erythropus*). The Site is an integral part of a dune system which protects the Netherlands from the North Sea. Land use is dedicated to tourism, military training, water management, dams, reservoirs and hydro-electric generation. Water abstraction and airborne pollutants are the main ecological threats to the Site.

Zwarte Meer

Site number: 749 | Country: Netherlands | Administrative region: Flevoland & Overijssel

Area: 2,162 ha | Coordinates: 52°37'49"N 05°57'08"E | Designation dates: 04-09-1995

[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Site comprises a large shallow lake with extensive reed marshes, floodplains, and a human-made island (Vogeleiland). The Site boundary was adjusted in 2014 to reflect the Natura 2000 site; Noordoostpolder dyke was excluded and the area calculated more accurately. It is an internationally important area for wintering and foraging waterbirds such as purple heron (*Ardea purpurea*) and Savi's warbler (*Locustella luscinioides*). In addition, the Site supports endangered species of mosses and plants which are important for maintaining the biological diversity of the Atlantic biogeographic region. It plays an important role in flood control, and sediment and nutrient retention. Human activities include commercial fishing, shipping, nautical sports and water management. The main threats to the Site's ecological character derive from the construction of dykes and dams, from reed cutting and nutrient pollution.