

# Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS)

*Categories approved by Recommendation 4.7, as amended by Resolution VIII.13 of the Conference of the Contracting Parties.*

Note for compilers:

1. The RIS should be completed in accordance with the attached *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines for completing the Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands*. Compilers are strongly advised to read this guidance before filling in the RIS.

2. Once completed, the RIS (and accompanying map(s)) should be submitted to the Ramsar Bureau. Compilers are strongly urged to provide an electronic (MS Word) copy of the RIS and, where possible, digital copies of maps.

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FOR OFFICE USE ONLY.

DD MM YY

Designation date Site Reference Number

## 1. Name and address of the compiler of this form:

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## 2. Date this sheet was completed/updated:

January 2005

## 3. Country:

Finland

## 4. Name of the Ramsar site:

Sotkavuoma Mires

## 5. Map of site included:

Refer to Annex III of the Explanatory Note and Guidelines, for detailed guidance on provision of suitable maps.

**a) hard copy** (required for inclusion of site in the Ramsar List): Yes.

**b) digital (electronic) format** (optional): yes

## 6. Geographical coordinates (latitude/longitude):

68°20' N / 23°16' E

## 7. General location:

Include in which part of the country and which large administrative region(s), and the location of the nearest large town.

The unbroken area is situated in northwestern part of the province of Lapland, in the municipality of Enontekiö, 10 km west of Enontekiö village. The municipality (8 050 sq.km of land) has ca. 2 100 residents.

## 8. Elevation: (average and/or max. & min.)

327–288 m, mean 295 m.

## 9. Area: (in hectares)

2 602 ha

## 10. Overview:

Provide a short paragraph giving a summary description of the principal ecological characteristics and importance of the wetland.

Lake Sotkajärvi is the most valuable bird-lake in Northern Lapland as a breeding, molting and staging area.

## 11. Ramsar Criteria:

Circle or underline each Criterion applied to the designation of the Ramsar site. See Annex II of the *Explanatory Notes and Guidelines* for the Criteria and guidelines for their application (adopted by Resolution VII.11).

1, 2 & 4

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	3	<u>4</u>	5	6	7	8
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## 12. Justification for the application of each Criterion listed in 11. above:

Provide justification for each Criterion in turn, clearly identifying to which Criterion the justification applies (see Annex II for guidance on acceptable forms of justification).

1) A representative example of natural wetland types (dominated by peatlands) in the EU Alpine region, including 2 priority natural wetland habitat types included in Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive (aapa mires, bog woodland).

2) 1 nationally threatened bird species.

About 12 species of the EU Birds Directive Annex I breed in the area, of which the most common are Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*), Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*), Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*), Red-necked Phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus*), Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) and Bluethroat (*Luscinia svecica*). Scarce species include Black-throated Diver (*Gavia arctica*), Whooper Swan (*Cygnus cygnus*), Smew (*Mergus albellus*), Hen Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), Crane (*Grus grus*) and Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*).

4) Lake Sotkajärvi is the most valuable bird-lake in Northern Lapland as a breeding, molting and staging area. (see also criterion 2 for breeding species)

Migrating waterfowl favour Lake Sotkajärvi as a staging area and in autumn several

hundreds of e.g. Wigeons (*Anas penelope*), Tufted Ducks (*Aythya fuligula*), Goldeneyes (*Bucephala clangula*) and Goosanders (*Mergus merganser*) can be observed with tens of e.g. Whooper Swans, Bean Geese (*Anser fabalis*) and Smews.

Bird list (Status in Finnish Red List, BD=Birds Directive Annex I, FRS=Finland's Responsibility Species):

The most numerous staging waterfowl, single counts in autumn 1998, individuals: Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*) 260 (FRS), Wigeon (*Anas penelope*) 250 (FRS), Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*) 250 (FRS), Teal (*Anas crecca*) 65 (FRS), Pintail (*Anas acuta*) 40. Occasionally hundreds of Goosanders (*Mergus merganser*) (FRS) and tens of Whooper Swans (*Cygnus cygnus*) (BD, FRS), Bean Geese (*Anser fabalis*) (NT, FRS) and Smews (*Mergus albellus*) (BD, FRS). In spring only few counts, e.g. Black-throated Diver (*Gavia arctica*) 50 individuals (BD).

### **13. Biogeography** (required when Criteria 1 and/or 3 and /or certain applications of Criterion 2 are applied to the designation):

Name the relevant biogeographic region that includes the Ramsar site, and identify the biogeographic regionalisation system that has been applied.

#### **a) biogeographic region:**

Northern boreal forest vegetation zone.

#### **b) biogeographic regionalisation scheme** (include reference citation):

Etelä-Suomen ja Pohjanmaan metsien suojelun tarve-työryhmä. Puheenjohtaja: Ruuhijärvi, R., Sihteerit: Kuusinen, M., Raunio, A. and Eisto, K. 2000. Metsien suojelun tarve Etelä-Suomessa ja Pohjanmaalla. Etelä-Suomen ja Pohjanmaan metsien suojelun tarve-työryhmän mietintö. Suomen ympäristö 437. Ympäristöministeriö. Helsinki.

Working group on the need for forest protection in southern Finland and Ostrobothnia. Chairman Ruuhijärvi, R., Secretaries Kuusinen, M., Raunio, A. and Eisto, K. 2000. Forest protection in southern Finland and Ostrobothnia. The Finnish Environment 437. Ministry of the Environment.

### **14. Physical features of the site:**

Describe, as appropriate, the geology, geomorphology; origins - natural or artificial; hydrology; soil type; water quality; water depth, water permanence; fluctuations in water level; tidal variations; downstream area; general climate, etc.

**Geology:** Geochemically included in Archaean basement gneiss area. Bedrock is composed of granite and granodiorite with gneissic inclusions.

**Origins:** Natural.

**Hydrology:** Aapa mires dependent on ground or surface waters.

**Soil type:** Mainly peat.

**Water quality:** Mesotrophic and dystrophic in Lake Sotkajärvi.

**Depth of water:** Shallow, ca. 1 m in Lake Sotkajärvi. Water-level high in spring because of melting snow.

**Climate:** Duration of growing season ca. 120 days, mean annual temperature ca. –2 °C, mean annual rainfall ca. 450 mm. Ice- and snow-covered normally from mid October to late May. Northern boreal forest vegetation zone.

### 15. Physical features of the catchment area:

Describe the surface area, general geology and geomorphological features, general soil types, general land use, and climate (including climate type).

The climate and general geological features are much the same in the catchment areas as in the Ramsar sites. Look partly chapter 14. Data not available.

### 16. Hydrological values:

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

Virgin aapa mires play an important role in maintenance of water quality and in flood control.

### 17. Wetland Types

#### a) presence:

Circle or underline the applicable codes for the wetland types of the Ramsar "Classification System for Wetland Type" present in the Ramsar site. Descriptions of each wetland type code are provided in Annex I of the *Explanatory Notes & Guidelines*.

#### Marine/coastal:

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	Zk(a)
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#### Inland: U, Tp, O, Ts, M & Xp

L	<u>M</u>	N	<u>O</u>	P	Q	R	Sp	Ss	<u>Tp</u>	<u>Ts</u>	<u>U</u>	Va	Vt	W	Xf	<u>Xp</u>	Y	Zg	Zk(b)
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#### Human-made:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Zk(c)
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#### b) dominance:

List the wetland types identified in a) above in order of their dominance (by area) in the Ramsar site, starting with the wetland type with the largest area.

U – Non-forested peatlands

O – Permanent freshwater lakes

Tp – Permanent freshwater pools

Ts – Seasonal freshwater pools

Xp – Forested peatlands

M – Permanent rivers and streams

### 18. General ecological features:

Provide further description, as appropriate, of the main habitats, vegetation types, plant and animal communities present in the Ramsar site.

The site represents the Mire vegetation region of Northern aapa mires. The area includes ca. 1 700 ha of mires and ca. 400 ha of water. Lake Sotkajärvi covers 275 ha. The aapa mires are typically very wet and non-forested. The vegetation zones of several small ponds and two lakes are very extensive with sedge (*Carex* spp.) meadows and growths of Water Horsetail (*Equisetum fluviatile*) dominating.

### **19. Noteworthy flora:**

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 12. Justification for the application of the Criteria) indicating, e.g., which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc. **Do not include here taxonomic lists of species present - these may be supplied as supplementary information to the RIS.**

None known.

### **20. Noteworthy fauna:**

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 12. Justification for the application of the Criteria) indicating, e.g., which species/communities are unique, rare, endangered or biogeographically important, etc., including count data. **Do not include here taxonomic lists of species present - these may be supplied as supplementary information to the RIS.**

Threatened birds include Scaup (*Aythya marila*) (VU in Finnish Red List). Ca. 12 species of the EU Birds Directive Annex I breed in the area, of which the most common are Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*), Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*), Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*), Red-necked Phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus*), Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) and Bluethroat (*Luscinia svecica*). Scarce species include Black-throated Diver (*Gavia arctica*), Whooper Swan (*Cygnus cygnus*), Smew (*Mergus albellus*), Hen Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), Crane (*Grus grus*) and Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*). Migrating waterfowl favour Lake Sotkajärvi as a staging area and in autumn several hundreds of e.g. Wigeons (*Anas penelope*), Tufted Ducks (*Aythya fuligula*), Goldeneyes (*Bucephala clangula*) and Goosanders (*Mergus merganser*) can be observed with tens of e.g. Whooper Swans, Bean Geese (*Anser fabalis*) and Smews.

### **21. Social and cultural values:**

e.g., fisheries production, forestry, religious importance, archaeological sites, social relations with the wetland, etc. Distinguish between historical/archaeological/religious significance and current socio-economic values.

Significant values include reindeer husbandry.

### **22. Land tenure/ownership:**

(a) within the Ramsar site: State-owned for the major part (93 %).

(b) in the surrounding area: State-owned and private-owned.

### **23. Current land (including water) use:**

(a) within the Ramsar site:

**a) and b)** Reindeer husbandry is an important livelihood in the surrounding areas and is permitted also in the Mire Protection Area. Hunting of waterfowl occurs in some amount in autumn at Lake Sotkajärvi. Fishing and picking of mushrooms and berries (an important species is Cloudberry *Rubus chamaemorus*) are permitted.

(b) in the surroundings/catchment:

**24. Factors (past, present or potential) adversely affecting the site's ecological character, including changes in land (including water) use and development projects:**

Hunting of waterfowl in autumn has negative effects on the site. We have no data of exact numbers of reindeers in the site. Being a rather wet area the numbers are maybe not so high.

**25. Conservation measures taken:**

List national category and legal status of protected areas, including boundary relationships with the Ramsar site; management practices; whether an officially approved management plan exists and whether it is being implemented.

The site is included in the Natura 2000 Network, designated both as SPA and SCI. Sotkavuoma Mire Protection Area (2 279 ha) was established in 1988. Most of the site is included in the Mire Conservation Programme. Forestry, ditching, extraction of earth material and damaging of soil or bedrock are prohibited in the Mire Protection Area. Also construction of new buildings and roads is prohibited in general.

**26. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:**

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

The conservation of the Natura 2000 site outside the already protected areas will be carried out under the Nature Conservation Act.

**27. Current scientific research and facilities:**

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

The breeding bird fauna was studied in the 1970s, and at Lake Sotkajärvi in 1996–98.

**28. Current conservation education:**

e.g. visitors' centre, observation hides and nature trails, information booklets, facilities for school visits, etc.

None significant.

**29. Current recreation and tourism:**

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

A bird-watching tower and a nature trail has been constructed. Only few visitors.

**30. Jurisdiction:**

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

a) Metsähallitus – Forest and Park Service, Northern Lapland District for Wilderness Management, b) Ministry of the Environment.

**31. Management authority:**

Provide the name and address of the local office(s) of the agency(ies) or organisation(s) directly responsible for managing the wetland. Wherever possible provide also the title and/or name of the person or persons in this office with responsibility for the wetland.

Metsähallitus – Forest and Park Service, Northern Lapland District for Wilderness Management, PO Box 36, FIN-99801 Ivalo, Finland.

**32. Bibliographical references:**

scientific/technical references only. If biogeographic regionalisation scheme applied (see 13 above), list full reference citation for the scheme.

Leivo, M., Asanti, T., Koskimies, P., Lammi, E., Lampolahti, J., Mikkola-Roos, M. & Virolainen, E. 2002. Suomen tärkeät lintualueet FINIBA. BirdLife Suomen julkaisu 4, Suomen graafiset palvelut, Kuopio.

Räinä, P., Jokimäki, J. & Kaisanlahti-Jokimäki, M-L. 2000. Lapin lintuvedet – linnusto, tila ja suojelu. Alueelliset ympäristöjulkaisut 94. Lapin ympäristökeskus. (English summary: The Waterfowl Habitats of Lapland – Bird Life, State and Protection).

Rassi, P., Alanen, A., Kanerva, T. & Mannerkoski, I. (eds.) 2001. The 2000 Red List of Finnish Species. Ministry of the Environment & Finnish Environment Institute, Helsinki.

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