

## Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands

1. Date this sheet was completed/updated: 11 January 2000
2. Country: Principality of Monaco
3. Name of wetland: Larvotto Marine Reserve and the Portier Coastal Area
4. Geographical coordinates:

7° 25.69' and 7° 26.40' North latitude  
43° 44.3' and 43° 45' East longitude

5. Altitude: sea level

6. Area: 10 hectares

7. Overview: This is a rocky coastal area with a rock bottom at a depth of up to 10 metres in the western part. There are beaches, artificial breakwaters and a marine grass area of *Posidonia oceanica* on a sandy bottom in the eastern part.

8. Wetland type: B, D

Types of wetlands by decreasing order of importance: B, D

9. Ramsar criteria: 7

Criteria that best characterize the site:

10. Map of site included? Please tick yes -or- no

11. Name and address of the compiler of this form:

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12. Justification of the criteria selected under point 9, on previous page:

This wetland includes all the marine area of *Posidonia oceanica* on the coast of the Principality of Monaco. The grass area is one of the types of wetlands under-represented on the Ramsar list. It is the habitat for many species of fish and is an important breeding area. This marine grass area is in a good conservation status. The nearby rocky coast has interesting characteristics, which are complementary to

those of the marine grass area, forming a surrounding protective area for the grassland.

13. General location:

Monaco

14. Physical features:

A marine area with little slope covered with a bed of *Posidonia* between 5 and 30 metres under water. The coast has been partially rebuilt with pocket beaches protected by artificial rocks made from compact local calcareous rock. The western coast is formed by eroded Jurassic rock. The bottom is formed mostly by detrital sand without mud.

15. Hydrological values:

The *Posidonia* biocoenosis is a very effective block to coastal erosion.

16. Ecological features:

The grassland of *Posidonia oceanica*; biocoenosis of infracoastal photophylic algae; emerged coastal rocks.

17. Noteworthy flora:

*Posidonia oceanica*

18. Outstanding fauna

All the fauna usually found in areas of *Posidonia*

19. Social and cultural values:

This area forms the most important marine reserve in the principality. It is of great interest to the administration, associations, media and the public. Many scientific studies are carried out here.

20. Land tenure/ownership of:

Public maritime domain

21. Current land use:

The surrounding area is completely urbanized.

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

There are development projects in the western part, but in the central part the Larvotto marine reserve is protected.

23. Conservation measures taken:

The area of Larvotto is currently protected by royal decree linked to the maritime police.

24. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:

This area will be included in a revision of the 1998 marine code, giving it the official status of special protected area.

25. Current scientific research and facilities:

Research is being carried out in the reserve, including reintroduction of outstanding species, such as sea urchins and *Pinna nobilis*.

26. Current conservation education:

The site is not open to ecotourism, but classes are held for schoolchildren on special days (for example environment day). Several films and texts have been made by the association that manages the area.

27. Current recreation and tourism:

Apart from the beach area, the site is not open to tourism.

28. Jurisdiction:

The site is fully under the full jurisdiction of the government and within the jurisdiction of the Département des Travaux Publics et des Affaires Sociales.

29. Management authority:

Association Monégasque pour la Protection de la Nature (AMPN)

30. References: