

Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands (RIS) – 2009-2012 version

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

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Designation date

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Site Reference Number

2. Date this sheet was completed/updated:

September 2013

3. Country:

the Netherlands

4. Name of the Ramsar site:

Groote Peel

5. Designation of new Ramsar site or update of existing site:

This RIS is for (tick one box only):

- a) Designation of a new Ramsar site ; or
b) Updated information on an existing Ramsar site

6. For RIS updates only, changes to the site since its designation or earlier update:

a) Site boundary and area

The Ramsar site boundary and site area are unchanged:

or

If the site boundary has changed:

- i) the boundary has been delineated more accurately ; or
ii) the boundary has been extended ; or
iii) the boundary has been restricted**

and/or

If the site area has changed:

- i) the area has been measured more accurately ; or
ii) the area has been extended ; or
iii) the area has been reduced**

** **Important note:** If the boundary and/or area of the designated site is being restricted/reduced, the Contracting Party should have followed the procedures established by the

Conference of the Parties in the Annex to COP9 Resolution IX.6 and provided a report in line with paragraph 28 of that Annex, prior to the submission of an updated RIS.

b) Describe briefly any major changes to the ecological character of the Ramsar site, including in the application of the Criteria, since the previous RIS for the site:

- Past ten years the nature management measures applied have resulted in a substantial regeneration of Sphagnum.
- During the counting period of 1999-2003 the Tundra been goose *Anser fabalis rossicus* met the 1% threshold. (criterion 6), though not anymore in the period 2006-2010 (only 0,8%).

7. Map of site:

a) A map of the site, with clearly delineated boundaries, is included as:

- i) a hard copy (required for inclusion of site in the Ramsar List):
- ii) an electronic format (e.g. a JPEG or ArcView image)
- iii) a GIS file providing geo-referenced site boundary vectors and attribute tables

b) Describe briefly the type of boundary delineation applied:

Ramsar site Groote Peel has also been designated as the European Natura 2000-site Groote Peel. For this RIS-version, the Ramsar site boundary has therefore been adjusted to the Natura 2000-boundary. Nature development area has been added to the east, while agricultural area has been excluded in the west of the Ramsar site. In total this new boundary resulted in an increase of +22,3 ha.

8. Geographical coordinates (latitude/longitude, in degrees and minutes):

51°20'N 05°49'E

9. General location:

Provinces of Noord-Brabant and Limburg near the municipalities of Asten (pop. 16.392 on 1-1-2013), Someren (pop. 18.580 on 1-1-2012) and Nederweert (pop. 16.771 on 1-1-2012). (Source: CBS, Netherlands Statistics).

10. Elevation: (min & max)

NAP +27 / +34 m

11. Area:

1348,2 ha

12. General overview of the site:

The site is situated near to the Ramsar site 'Deurnesche Peel en Mariapeel'. Both sites are remnants of a former vast landscape with raised bogs (ca. 30.000 ha in extent). Most of these Peel bogs were excavated till the sandy subsoil. In the Groote Peel peat has also been excavated though the site has not been cultivated. The part in the province of Noord-Brabant has been excavated mechanically, which explains that there are no pits. The part in de province of Limburg

however was excavated by hand causing many peat pits. Due to erosion of the higher remnants these structures are not always visible anymore.

Due to the differences in peat excavations in different parts of the site, there is a great diversity in vegetation and landscape. The Groote Peel is a complex of fragments of open moist and dry heath lands, *molinia* grasslands, shrub, brushwood, marshes with peat pits and locally swamp forests and wet heaths. In some older peat pits, regeneration of raised bogs takes place. After restoration of the water levels some larger ponds developed. Past ten years there has been a substantial increase of Sphagnum species, especially *Sphagnum cuspidatum*.

13. Ramsar Criteria:

1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5 • 6 • 7 • 8 • 9

14. Justification for the application of each Criterion listed in 13 above:

The Ramsar site Groote Peel, has been designated under Natura 2000 as well. Natura 2000 is the centerpiece of EU nature & biodiversity policy. It is an EU-wide network of nature protection areas which aims to assure the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats. It is comprised of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) designated by Member States under the Habitats Directive, and also incorporates Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Birds Directive. Natura 2000 applies to SACs and SPAs which are divided into biogeographical regions. The Ramsar site Groote Peel applies to both and the justification for the application of each Ramsar criterion below, greatly refers to its designation as a SAC and SPA.

Justification criterion 2

The table below shows Annex I species (BD) for which the site has been designated as a SPA, as well as their current status on the National Red List. Some other threatened species of the National Red Lists have also been added to the table.

Species of Annex I of the European Bird Directive for which the site has been designated as a SPA, as well as some threatened species of the National Red Lists (- = Not Applicable). Year of adoption of the National Red List in parentheses.

Species	Species code	BD Annex	National RL category
Vascular plant species			(2004)
Bog Rosemary <i>Andromeda polifolia</i>	-	-	VU
Common Cranberry <i>Oxycoccus palustris</i>	-	-	VU
Heath Spotted Orchid <i>Dactylorhiza maculata</i>	-	-	VU
Lesser Bladderwort <i>Utricularia minor</i>	-	-	VU
Mushroom			(2004)
<i>Mycena megaspora</i>	-	-	VU
Non-breeding birds			
Common Crane <i>Grus grus</i>	A127	I	-
Breeding birds			(2004)
Spotted crane <i>Porzana porzana</i>	A119	I	VU
Bluethroat <i>Luscinia svecica</i>	A272	I	LC
Reptiles			(2004)
Smooth Snake <i>Coronella austriaca</i>	-	-	EN

Justification criterion 3

The Groote Peel is designated as a Natura 2000 site (both SAC and SPA) and can therefore be considered important for maintaining the biodiversity of the Atlantic biogeographic region. Besides the species mentioned under criterion 2, the site has also been designated as a SAC for two habitat types (Annex I of HD) and SPA for a number of bird species that are not on Annex I of the BD. See the tables below.

Habitat types (according to interpretation manual of EU-Habitat Directive) for which the site has been designated as a SAC.

Habitat code	Habitat type
H4030	European dry heaths
H7120	Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration

Bird species (not on Annex I of the BD) for which the site has been designated as a SPA as well as their status on the National Red List (2004).

Bird species	Species code	National RL category
Non-Breeding		
Bean Goose <i>Anser fabalis ssp. fabalis</i>	A039	-
Tundra Bean Goose <i>Anser fabalis ssp. rossicus</i>	A039	-
White-fronted Goose <i>Anser albifrons</i>	A041	-
Breeding		(2004)
Little Grebe <i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	A004	LC
Black-necked Grebe <i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>	A008	LC
Stonechat <i>Saxicola torquata</i>	A276	LC

Justification criterion 4

The site is of particular importance for several breeding and non-breeding bird species (see criterion 2 and 3), of which several species gather in relatively high population numbers in small areas during the breeding, migration or wintering periods. The site is especially known as the most important resting place for migrating Common Cranes *Grus grus* in the Netherlands.

15. Biogeography

a) biogeographic region:

The Ramsar site belongs to the Atlantic biogeographic region.

b) biogeographic regionalisation scheme:

The bio-geographic regions dataset used, contains the official delineations used in the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and for the EMERALD Network set up under the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention).

16. Physical features of the site:

The site is a former raised bog. Large-scale exploitation of peat started in the middle of the 19th century and lasted until 1950 when the site became a nature reserve. Many artificial channels, dating from the peat cutting period, dissect the southern part of the site. The groundwater level of the site lowered as a result of intensification of agriculture in the surrounding area. Nowadays

the site has an artificial high water level. Especially in the South-western part there are more or less stable high water levels.

17. Physical features of the catchment area:

The catchment area is the wetland itself. Geologically and geo-morphologically it consists of quaternary sediments. The soil type is Alluvial. The climate according to Köppen is rainy (Cbf).

18. Hydrological values:

The hydrological values of the Groote Peel include groundwater replenishment and climate change modification (net CO2 consumption).

19. Wetland Types

a) presence:

Marine/coastal: A • B • C • D • E • F • G • H • I • J • K • Zk(a)

Inland: L • M • N • O • P • Q • R • Sp • Ss • Tp • Ts • U •
Va •
Vt • W • Xf • Xp • Y • Zg • Zk(b)

Human-made: 1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5 • 6 • 7 • 8 • 9 • Zk(c)

b) dominance:

U 55%; Xp 15%; O 11%; Tp 8%; 7; 9. Heathland and fens 11%

20. General ecological features:

The Groote Peel together with the 'Deurnesche Peel en Mariapeel' are remnants of a former approx. 30.000 ha landscape with raised bogs. Most of these Peel bogs were excavated till the sandy subsoil. Due to the differences in peat excavations (mechanically or by hand) in different parts of the site there is a big variation in vegetation and landscape. The Groote Peel is a complex of fragments of open moist and dry heathlands, *molinia* grasslands, shrub, brushwood, marshes with peat pits and locally forests and wet heaths. In some older peat pits, regeneration of raised bog takes place. After restoration of the water levels some larger ponds developed.

Plant communities of European interest that occur are:

- *Cicuto-Caricetum pseudocyperi*
- *Eriophoro-Caricetum lasiocarpae*
- *Erico-Betuletum pubescentis*;

In the Groote Peel some 150 bird species of which 95 are breeding birds, can be found. Characteristic birds are Little grebe, Black-necked Grebe, *Porzana* species, Marsh Harrier, Bluethroat and Stonechat). The site is also important for migrating waders and ducks as foraging and resting area. The Groote Peel is especially renowned as the most important resting place for migrating cranes in the Netherlands. In winter it is a sleeping place for geese, mainly Bean Goose.

The Groote Peel is open for the public on designated routes. Board walks have been constructed to make the site better accessible.

21. Noteworthy flora:

The threatened species of the National Red List have been listed under no. 14.
The table below lists other noteworthy flora.

A selection of near threatened species of the National Red List (RL, 2004).

Species(group)	National RL Category
Vascular plant species	
Spoon-leaf Sundew <i>Drosera intermedia</i>	NT
White Beak-sedge <i>Rhynchospora alba</i>	NT

22. Noteworthy fauna:

The Natura 2000-species and threatened species of the National Red Lists have been listed under no. 14. The table below lists other noteworthy fauna.

A selection of near threatened species of the National Red List (RL, 2004).

Species(group)	National RL Category
Fish	
Orfe <i>Leuciscus idus</i>	NT

23. Social and cultural values:

a) Describe if the site has any general social and/or cultural values e.g., fisheries production, forestry, religious importance, archaeological sites, social relations with the wetland, etc. Distinguish between historical/archaeological/religious significance and current socio-economic values:

See 25. Current land use.

b) Is the site considered of international importance for holding, in addition to relevant ecological values, examples of significant cultural values, whether material or non-material, linked to its origin, conservation and/or ecological functioning?

No

24. Land tenure/ownership:

a) within the Ramsar site:

The site is partly owned by Staatsbosbeheer.

b) in the surrounding area:

Surrounding area: several private owners

25. Current land (including water) use:

a) within the Ramsar site:

Diary farming <5%, Forestry 5 - 35%, Leisure and tourism 5 - 35%, Water management >95%.

b) in the surroundings/catchment:

Agriculture

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

a) within the Ramsar site:(A = serious threat covering large part of the area; B = moderate threat or local threat; C = minor threat):

Atmospheric deposition; Drainage (B -).

b) in the surrounding area:

Agriculture, Atmospheric deposition of nutrients from bio-industry.

27. Conservation measures taken:

a) List national and/or international category and legal status of protected areas, including boundary relationships with the Ramsar site:

The site is designated as:

- Special Protection Area (Birds Directive 79/409/EEC, 1986)
- Special Area of Conservation (Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC)
- Natura 2000-site
- National Park (1993)

b) If appropriate, list the IUCN (1994) protected areas category/ies which apply to the site:

Ia ; Ib ; II ; III ; IV ; V ; VI

c) Does an officially approved management plan exist; and is it being implemented?:

The Ramsar site matches 100% with the designation for Natura2000.
The process for the Natura2000 management plan has been started.

d) Describe any other current management practices:

Nothing special.

28. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:

The site will be managed according to the Natura 2000-managementplan.

29. Current scientific research and facilities:

Ongoing biodiversity monitoring is one of the obligatory activities in relation to the designated Natura 2000 habitat types and/or species. SOVON, the Dutch Bird Research Organisation, coordinates for instance a continues national bird monitoring program in which it cooperates with 7000 volunteers, research institutes and organisations in the monitoring of birds throughout the Netherlands (among others the Groote Peel).

30. Current communications, education and public awareness (CEPA) activities related to or benefiting the site:

Visitors centre, excursions, information booklet

31. Current recreation and tourism:

A visitor centre can be found at the entrance. The Groote Peel is open for the public on designated hiking routes. Board walks have been constructed to make the site better accessible.

Many excursions and outdoor activities are organised. The number of visitors is not known.

32. Jurisdiction:

Municipalities Asten, Someren and Nederweert; Functional jurisdiction (conservation purposes):
Ministry of Economic Affairs.

33. Management authority:

Staatsbosbeheer, P.O. Box 1300, 3970 BH Driebergen, the Netherlands, tel. +31 (0)30-6926111.

34. Bibliographical references:

- BirdLife International, 2004. Birds in Europe, population estimates, trends and conservation status. Cambridge, UK: BirdLife International. (BirdLife Conservation Series No. 12).
 - Hornman, M., Hustings, F., Koffijberg, K., Kleefstra, R., Klaassen, O., van Winden, E., SOVON Ganzen- en Zwanenwerkgroep & L. Soldaat, 2012. Watervogels in Nederland 2009/2010. SOVON-rapport 2012/02, Waterdienst-rapport 12.06. SOVON Vogelonderzoek Nederland, Nijmegen.
 - Janssen, John, A.M. & Joop, H.J. Schaminée, 2009. Europese Natuur in Nederland. Hoog Nederland Natura 2000-gebieden. KNNV-Uitgeverij. 360p.
 - Ministerie van LNV, 2009. Besluit Natura 2000-gebied Groote Peel.
 - Van Roomen M.W.J, Boele A., van der Weide M.J.T., van Winden E.A.J, Zoetebier D. 2000. Belangrijke vogelgebieden in Nederland, 1993-97. Actueel overzicht van Europese vogelwaarden in aangewezen en aan te wijzen speciale beschermingszones en andere belangrijke gebieden. SOVON-informatierapport 2000/01. SOVON Vogelonderzoek Nederland, Beek-Ubbergen.
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