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

Available for download from http://www.ramsar.org/ris/key_ris_index.htm.

Categories approved by Recommendation 4.7 (1990), as amended by Resolution VIII.13 of the 8th Conference of the Contracting Parties (2002) and Resolutions IX.1 Annex B, IX.6, IX.21 and IX. 22 of the 9th Conference of the Contracting Parties (2005).

Notes 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. Further information and guidance in support of Ramsar site designations are provided in the *Strategic Framework and guidelines for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance* (Ramsar Wise Use Handbook 14, 3rd edition). A 4th edition of the Handbook is in preparation and will be available in 2009.

3. Once completed, the RIS (and accompanying map(s)) should be submitted to the Ramsar Secretariat. Compilers should provide an electronic (MS Word) copy of the RIS and, where possible, digital copies of all maps.

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

Ingvild Gabrielsen, County Governor of Nordland,
Moloveien 10, 8002 Bodø
e-mail: Postmottak@fmno.no
Phone: +47 75 53 15 00

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DD MM YY

Designation date | Site Reference Number

2. Date this sheet was completed/updated:

April 2011

3. Country:

Norway

4. Name of the Ramsar site:

The precise name of the designated site in one of the three official languages (English, French or Spanish) of the Convention. Alternative names, including in local language(s), should be given in parentheses after the precise name.

Røstøyan

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:

7. Map of site:
Refer to Annex III of the *Explanatory Note and Guidelines*, for detailed guidance on provision of suitable maps, including digital maps.

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:
e.g. the boundary is the same as an existing protected area (nature reserve, national park, etc.), or follows a catchment boundary, or follows a geopolitical boundary such as a local government jurisdiction, follows physical boundaries such as roads, follows the shoreline of a waterbody, etc.

The boundaries are the same as for Nykan Nature Reserve and Røstøyan Landscape Protected Area.

8. Geographical coordinates (latitude/longitude, in degrees and minutes):
Provide the coordinates of the approximate centre of the site and/or the limits of the site. If the site is composed of more than one separate area, provide coordinates for each of these areas.

67°27' N, 11°56' E

9. General location:
Include in which part of the country and which large administrative region(s) the site lies and the location of the nearest large town.

Røstøyan is an archipelago situated in Røst municipality, in Nordland County. The nearest town is Bodø, circa 100 km to the SW. Bodø has a population of approximately 47 000 inhabitants.

10. Elevation: (in metres: average and/or maximum & minimum)

0-259 m.a.s.l.

11. Area: (in hectares)

6986.4 ha (6692.9 ha sea)

12. General overview of the site:
Provide a short paragraph giving a summary description of the principal ecological characteristics and importance of the wetland.

Røstøyene is a large archipelago with hundreds of islands and islets. The site constitutes the outermost part of Lofoten. The size and topography of the islands are varying. In the northern part of the site the two largest islands are located; Vedøya and Storfjellet. The highest peak is Storfjellet at 259 m.a.s.l. Other large islands are Sandøya, Ellevsnyken, Trenyken and Hærnyken. In the southernmost part of the site is Skomvær lighthouse. The site is the most important breeding area for seabirds in Nordland County, and many rare and threatened species occur. There are bird cliffs located at Vedøya, Storfjellet, Ellevsnyken, Trenyken and Hernyken. In the bird cliffs there are breeding populations of Puffin *Fratercula arctica*, Black-legged Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*, Razorbill *Alca torda*, Common Guillemot *Uria aalge* and Northern Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*. On the skerries there are breeding colonies of Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*, Common Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis* and Black Guillemot *Cepphus grylle*. Other breeding birds of special interest are the European storm-petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus*, the Leach's Storm-petrel *Oceanodroma leucorhoa*. The Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* has also two known breeding sites within the site.

There are also large populations of more common seabirds like Common Eider *Somateria mollissima*, Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*, Herring Gull *Larus argentatus* and the Common Gull *Larus canus*. The White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla* breeds in the area.

13. Ramsar Criteria:

Tick the box under 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). All Criteria which apply should be ticked.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	❑	❑	❑

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

(Capitalized letters shows the species`status on the Norwegian Red List)

Criterion 1
The landscape at Røstøyan is uniqe within the biogeographic region. Røstøyan is a large archipelago with hundreds of islands and islets surrounded by shallow marine waters. The ecological feature varies within the site between shallow water, caves, skerries, bird cliffs and larger islands.

Criterion 2
Birds:
The site is breeding area for many vulnerable, endangered and critically endangered bird species. In the bird cliffs there are large breeding populations of Puffin (VU), Black-legged Kittiwake (EN), Razorbill (VU), Common Guillemot (CR) and Northern Fulmar (NT). Røstøyan is also breeding area for the Black Guillemot (VU), Leach's Storm-petrel (NT), Peregrine Falcon (LC). For more details see 12 and 22.

Mammals:
The site has stable population of European Otter *Lutra lutra* (VU), Common Seal *Phoca vitulina* (VU), and Grey Seal *Halichoerus grypus* (LC).

Criterion 3
The site has a high diversity of both nationally common seabirds, and threatened/rare species. Species adapted to bird cliffs like Puffin, Black-legged Kittiwake, Razorbill and Common Guillemot occur in numerous populations (for more details see 22).

Criterion 4

The site supports many different species of breeding birds. For details please see justification of Criterion 2, point 12 and 22.

Criterion 5
The site is breeding area for numerous populations of seabirds. Monitoring data from 2005 illustrate this for some of the most numerous species: 430 000 breeding couples of Puffin, 13 000 breeding couples of Black-legged Kittiwake, 600 breeding couples of Razorbill and 600 breeding couples of Black Guillemot. For more details see 22.

Criterion 6
The Norwegian population of Puffin constitutes 5-25 % of the global population (www.artsdatabanken.no). The population of Puffin at Røstøyene constitutes approx. 25 % of the Norwegian population. Out of this one estimates that Røstøyan support 1-5 % of the global population of Puffin.
The site also supports more than 1% of the East Atlantic population of *Rissa tridactyla;* approx. 13 000 couples in 2005. (Waterbird Population Estimates. 4th Edition. Wetlands International.)

15. 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:

- Middle boreal vegetation zone, highly oceanic section (Mb-03)
- Arctic

b) biogeographic regionalisation scheme (include reference citation):

- Moen, A. 1998. *National Atlas of Norway: Vegetation*. Norwegian Mapping Authority, Hønefoss
- Biogeographical Regions, European Environment Agency, 2005

16. 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	The bedrock at the site consists mainly of basement rock like different types of gneiss. Here are valuable geological sites, sea caves. One of the caves "Vishellaren" is located at Vedøya, the other is located at Trenyken.
Geomorphology	Røstøyene is a large archipelago with hundreds of islands and islets. The site constitutes the outermost part of Lofoten. The size and topography of the island is varying.
Substrate / soil type	Deposit occurs at Vedøya and Storfjellet, mainly from crumbling and landslides.
Water depth / fluctuations	The marine water in the site consists of shallow water, mostly less than twenty meters deep. Middle tidal amplitude is approx. 174 cm (Bodø harbor).
Climate	The climate is typical Atlantic with high annual precipitation, wet summer and mild winter.

17. Physical features of the catchment area:
Describe the surface area, general geology and geomorphological features, general soil types, and climate (including climate type).

Shallow marine waters, mostly less than 20 m deep.

18. Hydrological values:

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

Because most of the shoreline consists of hard basement rock, erosion is minimal. All freshwater in the area originates from precipitation.

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19. 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)

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:
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.

A, D, Zk(a)

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20. General ecological features:
Provide further description, as appropriate, of the main habitats, vegetation types, plant and animal communities present in the Ramsar site, and the ecosystem services of the site and the benefits derived from them.

Characterized by:

- Shallow marine waters, with numerous islands and skerries.
- High productive marine areas.
- Bird cliffs at Vedøya, Storfjellet, Ellevsnyken, Trenyken and Hernyken with numerous populations of seabirds.
- Unique landscape.
- Due to vegetation there are three main types of islands present in the site:
    - ✓ Low islands dominated of herbs and grass. These islands have a high species richness, and many different plant communities are present. On many of these islands sheep is grazing.
    - ✓ Islands with large colonies of puffins and other sea birds. Rocky islands with low peaks (highest 259 m. at Storfjellet), cliffs and grass dominated slopes. Because of the fertilizing from the birds there is a high production and many demanding species are present. On many of these islands sheep is grazing.
    - ✓ Heathland islands where crowberry dominates the vegetation. These islands have usually not been grazed for many years.

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21. Noteworthy flora:
Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 14, 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.*

Not known.

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22. Noteworthy fauna:

Provide additional information on particular species and why they are noteworthy (expanding as necessary on information provided in 14. 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.*

The site is a very important breeding area for seabirds and birds of prey. Many of the birds are threatened nationally according to the national red list. The seabirds at Røst have been monitored since 1960-1970. The monitoring data show that the numbers of many seabirds have had a dramatic decline during these years. Below is a description of the most important birds that breed at the site and the numbers of the population in 2005:

- The Puffin (VU) is most numerous at the site. In 2005 approx. 430 000 couples were breeding. In spite of this high number there has been a dramatic decline. The number of Puffins at the site in 2005 is about 30 % of the number in 1979. The last few years there has been a small increase in the population. The population is closely linked to the abundance of herring and other fish species.
- The population of Common Guillemot (CR) has had a very dramatic decline since 1960. In 2005 there were 600 breeding couples, compared to approx. 16 000 couples in 1960. The decline is related to the decrease in the population of Capelin in the Barents Sea.
- The population of Razorbill (VU) was approx. 600 couples in 2005. The population has declined with 85-90 % since 1964.
- The Great Cormorant was first recorded in 1997. In 2005 there were about 70 couples at two different locations.
- The population of Common Shag has been stable during the time of monitoring, in spite of annual variation in numbers of breeding couples.
- The Northern Fulmar is breeding at the site. There has been a large decline in the population during the time of monitoring. The exact number of breeding couples is not known.
- The population of Black-legged Kittiwake (EN) was approx. 13 000 couples in 2005. The colony of Black-legged Kittiwake at Vedøya has declined with 50 % since 1979.
- The Black Guillemot (VU) is a common breeding bird at the site. The population is stable.
- The European Storm-petrel has a small breeding population at the site.
- The Leach's Storm-petrel (NT) has a small breeding population at the site.
- The Common Eider is a common breeding bird at the site. In 2005 the numbers of adult males were 1900. There has been a decline in the population during the last twenty years.
- The Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*, was first recorded at the site in 1988. In 2005 there were two breeding couples. The population of Great Skua is increasing in Norway.
- The Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* (LC) has two known breeding locations at the site.

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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:

- In the summer there are guided tours with boat from Røstlandet to Røstøyan. The area around Røstøyan is also popular for sports fishing. Many tourists come to Røst for sports fishing.
- On many islands sheep are grazing. The site is a part of an area selected in "Utvalgte kulturlandskaper i Norge". This is a selection of cultural landscapes with high values in both natural and cultural diversity.
- Traditionally, down and eggs were collected from nests of Common Eider. The close relationship between humans and birds along the northern coast contributed to a high population of eider. The eider benefited from predator protection and the construction of breeding-houses.

This tradition has gradually faltered and at present it exists only at a few revived sites (outside this area).

- In the site there are recorded three protected archaeological sites/cultural heritages:
  - ✓ Skomvær lighthouse with surrounding buildings.
  - ✓ Sanden at Storfjellet; old settlement.
  - ✓ Vedøya; old settlement, birdcatcher cabin, wharf, fence

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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

If Yes, tick the box and describe this importance under one or more of the following categories:

i) sites which provide a model of wetland wise use, demonstrating the application of traditional knowledge and methods of management and use that maintain the ecological character of the wetland:

ii) sites which have exceptional cultural traditions or records of former civilizations that have influenced the ecological character of the wetland:

iii) sites where the ecological character of the wetland depends on the interaction with local communities or indigenous peoples:

iv) sites where relevant non-material values such as sacred sites are present and their existence is strongly linked with the maintenance of the ecological character of the wetland:

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24. Land tenure/ownership:
a) within the Ramsar site:

Private

b) in the surrounding area:

Private

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25. Current land (including water) use:
a) within the Ramsar site:

Mainly for leisure. Use of cabins. Traditionally used for collecting seabird eggs.
Fishing and grazing as described in 23.

b) in the surroundings/catchment:

As in a)

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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:

If the grazing by sheep ends it will affect the vegetation in the area. This will probably not affect the population of seabirds.

b) in the surrounding area:

Over-fishing directly affects the population of many seabirds. For example is the population of Puffin related to the population of Herring in the Norwegian Sea.

Oil spill and fishing equipment also affect the population of many seabirds. Especially Common Guillemot, Puffin and Razorbill are exposed to oil spill.

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27. Conservation measures taken:
a) List national and/or international category and legal status of protected areas, including boundary relationships with the Ramsar site:
In particular, if the site is partly or wholly a World Heritage Site and/or a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, please give the names of the site under these designations.

Røstøyan was established as Landscape Protected area December 6th 2002.
Nykan was established as Nature Reserve December 6th 2002.

The boundary for the Ramsar site is the same as for the Nature Reserve and the Landscape Protected Area.

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

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

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

No management plan exists, but the task has been given high priority by the management authority.

d) Describe any other current management practices:
None

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28. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:
e.g. management plan in preparation; official proposal as a legally protected area, etc.

The site is identified as one of the protected areas where it is necessary to get a management plan.

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29. Current scientific research and facilities:
e.g., details of current research projects, including biodiversity monitoring; existence of a field research station, etc.

- There is a large research project on seabirds within the site. This work has been ongoing for more than 40 years. Norwegian Institute for Nature Research leads the project and has a research station at Hernyken.

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30. Current communications, education and public awareness (CEPA) activities related to or benefiting the site:
e.g. visitors' centre, observation hides and nature trails, information booklets, facilities for school visits, etc.

No

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

Yes, as described in 23.

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

Norwegian Directorate for Nature Management (DN), Tungasletta 2, 7485 Trondheim
Ph +47 73580500
Fax +47 73580501
Email: postmottak@dirnat.no

33. 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.

The site is managed by the County Governor of Nordland, which is under the instruction of DN. Address: County Governor of Nordland, Molovn. 10, 8002 Bodø. Phone: + 47 75 53 15 80. E-mail: postmottak@fmno.no

34. Bibliographical references:
Scientific/technical references only. If biogeographic regionalisation scheme applied (see 15 above), list full reference citation for the scheme.

Fylkesmannen i Nordland. 1994. *Utkast til kystverneplan for Nordland fylke. Del 4a: Røstøyene.* Rapport 7-94.

Anker-Nilssen, T. & Aarvak, T. 2006. *Tidsseriestudier av sjøfugler i Røst kommune, Nordland. Resultater med fokus på 2004 og 2005.* – NINA-Rapport 133. 85 s.

- A lot of NINA-reports have been created during the last decades. For a complete overview; http://www.nina.no/

Kålås, J.A., Viken, Å. og Bakken, T. (red.) 2006. *Norsk Rødliste 2006 – 2006 Norwegian Red List.* Artsdatabanken, Norway

Moen, A. 1998. *National atlas of Norway. Vegetation.* Norwegian Mapping Authority, Hønefoss.

Myrvoll, M. & Myrvoll, E. R. 2008. *Forvaltningsplan for "Utvalgte kulturlandskap i jordbruket " Røst kommune. Kulturhistoriske verdier.* Landskapsavdelingen – rapport 16/08. Norsk institutt for kulturminneforskning.

Norderhaug, A. Johansen, A. & Karlsen, G. 2008. *Innspill til forvaltningsplan for jordbrukslandskapet i Røst kommune. "Utvalgte kulturlandskap i jordbruket i Nordland".* Lofoten forsøksring og Bioforsk.