

Ramsar Information Sheet

Published on 7 November 2017 Update version, previously published on : 1 January 2011

Norway Hopen



Designation date
Site number
12 November 2010
1957
Coordinates
76°34'50"N 25°11'43"E
Area
318 567,00 ha

https://rsis.ramsar.org/ris/1957 Created by RSIS V.1.6 on - 18 May 2020

Color codes

Fields back-shaded in light blue relate to data and information required only for RIS updates.

Note that some fields concerning aspects of Part 3, the Ecological Character Description of the RIS (tinted in purple), are not expected to be completed as part of a standard RIS, but are included for completeness so as to provide the requested consistency between the RIS and the format of a 'full' Ecological Character Description, as adopted in Resolution X.15 (2008). If a Contracting Party does have information available that is relevant to these fields (for example from a national format Ecological Character Description) it may, if it wishes to, include information in these additional fields.

1 - Summary

Summary

Hopen island can be found 100 km southeast of Edgeøya. The island is 38 km long and on average 1,5 km wide (2,5 km at the widest and 500 m at its narrowest), giving it a shape like a backbone. The total area of Hopen constitute 3 186 km2, where 46 km2 are land masses and 3 140 km2 constitute marine areas. Apart from a few scattered strandflats, there is a narrow beach that surrounds the entire island, from which the landscape majestically rises. At the top there are steep cliffs with horizontal shelves, ideal for breeding seabirds. Iversenfjellet is the larges mountain (371 m). Hopen meterological station is the only settlement with a year round staff of 4 people. The station is located at the southern tip of the island. Generally the site is characterized by a short period for vegetational growth, with less than 50 days between spring and autumn. The rich production in the sea is the basis for most of the bird- and mammal life, but also for plants and invertebrates, both directly and indirectly.

Hopen has a rich bird diversity with many cliff-breeding seabirds. Most of the cliffs are situated in the south of the island, however, the largest bird cliff is located in the north. Northern fulmar, black guillemot, little auk, Atlantic puffin and glaucous gull are species found here. Other bird species are Arctic skua, great skua and purple sandpiper. Common eider also occur, but in low numbers.

Hopen is an important area for maintenance of the seabird populations in the southeastern parts of Svalbard. Hopen was protected as a nature reserve in 2003 and is an Important Bird Area (IBA) location. The northernmost point of the island makes for an important swimming route for the Brünnich's guillemot. Additionally, the island is a natural resting area for migrating birds. The shallow waters surrounding Hopen are important areas for walrus during winter season and the southern tip of the island host important resting spots.

Hopen is an important migration-, denning- and feeding area for polar bears. However, the number of polar bear dens varies, and according to annual registrations carried out at Hopen's meteorological station since 1976, data indicate that Hopen is loosing its function as a denning area. Seals, an important source of nutrition for the polar bears, are abundant on the drift ice around the island.

2 - Data & location

2.1 - Formal data

2.1.1 - Name and address of the compiler of this RIS

Compiler 1

Name	Pernille Kvernland
Institution/agency	Norwegian Environment Agency
Postal address	Post box 5672 Torgarden, N-7485 Trondheim, Norway
E-mail	post@miljodir.no
Phone	+47 73580500

2.1.2 - Period of collection of data and information used to compile the RIS

From year 1996

To year 2014

2.1.3 - Name of the Ramsar Site

Official name (in English, French or Spanish)

Hopen

2.1.4 - Changes to the boundaries and area of the Site since its designation or earlier update

(Update) A Changes to Site boundary Yes O No

(Update) B. Changes to Site area No change to area

2.1.5 - Changes to the ecological character of the Site

(Update) 6b i. Has the ecological character of the Ramsar Site (including applicable Criteria) changed since the previous RIS?

2.2 - Site location

2.2.1 - Defining the Site boundaries

b) Digital map/image

<1 file(s) uploaded>

Former maps 0

Boundaries description

In the middle of the island there is a small area that is not included in the Ramsarsite. Here we find Hopen meterological station. The boundaries are the same as for the existing Hopen Nature Reserve. Apart from a small area around the meteorological station the whole island is protected as a nature reserve.

2.2.2 - General location

a) In which large administrative region does the site lie?

Svalbard

b) What is the nearest town or population centre?

Longyearbyen (population approx 2 100)

2.2.3 - For wetlands on national boundaries only

a) Does the wetland extend onto the territory of one or more other countries?

b) Is the site adjacent to another designated Ramsar Site on the territory of another Contracting Party?

2.2.4 - Area of the Site

Official area, in hectares (ha): 318567

Area, in hectares (ha) as calculated from 318281.48 GIS boundaries

2.2.5 - Biogeography

Biogeographic regions

Regionalisation scheme(s)	Biogeographic region
Other scheme (provide name below)	Arctic polar desert zone.
EU biogeographic regionalization	2. Arctic

Other biogeographic regionalisation scheme

- 1. The zonal division assigned is based on the distribution of thermophilius vascular plant species. Vascular plants, which are abundant on Svalbard are divided into five groups based on their temperature requirements . The distributions of these groups of species have been surveyed in 163 areas (In: Elvebakk, A. (1997): Tundra diversity and ecological characteristics of Svalbard. In: Wiegolaski, F.E. (ed.): Polar and alpine tundra. Ecosystems of the world 3: 347-359. Elsevier.
- 2. Biogeographical Regions, European Environment Agency, 2005

3 - Why is the Site important?

3.1 - Ramsar Criteria and their justification

☑ Criterion 1: Representative, rare or unique natural or near-natural wetland types

Hopen is a representative arctic island with a rich avian community, particularly among cliff nesting Other reasons species, and an important area for maintenance of the seabird populations in the southeastern parts of Svalbard.

- ☑ Criterion 2 : Rare species and threatened ecological communities
- Criterion 3 : Biological diversity

Hopen is an important area for maintenance of the seabird populations in the southeastern parts of Svalbard. The northernmost point of the island makes for an important swimming route for the Brunnich's guillemot and the island functions as a natural resting area for migrating birds.

Justification

The island is also important for marine mammals such as polar bears, and the shallow waters surrounding Hopen are also important for walrus.

- ☑ Criterion 4 : Support during critical life cycle stage or in adverse conditions
- ☑ Criterion 5 : >20,000 waterbirds

Overall waterbird numbers 877000 Start year | 1988 http://www.birdlife.no/prosjekter/rapporter/2015 05 NOF.pdf and Source of data: https://www.sysselmannen.no/globalassets/sysselmannen-dokument/miljovern/forvaltningsplaner/forvaltn ingsplan for hopen naturreservat.pdf

☑ Criterion 6 : >1% waterbird population

3.2 - Plant species whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

<no data available>

3.3 - Animal species whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

Phylum	Scientific name	Common name	criterion	Species contributes under criterion	Size	Period of pop. Est.	% occurrence 1)	IUCN Red List	 CMS Appendix I	Other Status	Justification
Birds											
CHORDATA / AVES	Alle alle	Dovekie; Little Auk		2 200	10000			LC Sign			Population estimate based on numbers from 1988 (5000 breeding pairs). Criterion 4: The site is especially important for cliff nesting birds such as this species.

Phylum Scientific name	Common name	Species qualifies under criterion	Species contributes under criterion 3 5 7 8	Pop. Size	Period of pop. E	% occurrence		CITES Appendix	CMS Appendix I	Other Status	Justification
CHORDATA Calidris maritima / AVES	Purple Sandpiper		200c				LC ●数 ●開				Criterion 4: The site is important for breeding waders such as this species.
CHORDATA Cepphus grylle AVES	Black Guillemot		220C	480			LC				Population estimate based on numbers from 2012. Criterion 4: The site is especially important for diff nesting birds such as this species.
CHORDATA Fratercula arctica / AVES	Atlantic Puffin	ZZ	200c				VU © \$3: © TSF				Criterion 4: The site is especially important for cliff nesting birds such as this species.
CHORDATA Fulmarus glacialis AVES	Northern Fulmar		220C	10000			LC				Population estimate based on numbers from 1988 (5000 breeding pairs). Criterion 4: The site is especially important for cliff nesting birds such as this species.
CHORDATA Larus / hyperboreus AVES	Glaucous Gull			2000		0.9	LC			Svalbard Red List Considered as NT	Population estimate based on numbers from 1988 (1000 breeding pairs). Criterion 4: The site is especially important for cliff nesting birds such as this species. Biogeographic region: Svalbard & N Russia (bre)
CHORDATA Rissa tridactyla / AVES	Black-legged Kittiwake			130000		2	LC			Svalbard Red List Considered as NT	Population estimate based on numbers from 2012. Criterion 4: The site is especially important for diff nesting birds such as this species. Criterion 6: Biogeographic region: East Atlantic (br)
CHORDATA Somateria mollissima AVES	Common Eider						NT				Criterion 4: The site is especially important for cliff nesting birds such as this species. Common eiders occur, but in low numbers.
CHORDATA Stercorarius / parasiticus AVES	Parasitic Jaeger		290C				LC Sign				Criterion 4: The site is especially important for cliff nesting birds such as this species.
CHORDATA Stercorarius skua / AVES	Great Skua						LC ©				Criterion 4: The site is especially important for cliff nesting birds such as this species.
CHORDATA / AVES	Thick-billed Murre			725000			LC			Svalbard Red List Considered as NT	Population estimate based on numbers from 2012. Criterion 4: The site is especially important for diff nesting birds such as this species.
Others											
CHORDATA Odobenus / rosmarus MAMMALIA	Walrus		3000				VU © is: © is:			Svalbard Red List Considered as VU	Criterion 4: Southern part of the island (Koefoedodden) there is a traditional resting place for walrus.
CHORDATA Usus maritimus MAMMALIA	Polar Bear						VU Gir Gir			Svalbard Red List Considered as VU	Criterion 4: According to annual registrations carried out at Hopen's meteorological station since 1976, there have normally been between 150-300 polar bear visits each winter in the period of 1983–2001.

¹⁾ Percentage of the total biogeographic population at the site

Additional information (Polar bear): According to annual registrations carried out at Hopen's meteorological station since 1976, data indicate that Hopen is loosing its function as a denning area for polar bears. Seals, an important source of nutrition for the polar bears, are also abundant in the drift ice around the island.

Capitalized letters shows the species' status on the Svalbard Red List 2015

3.4 - Ecological communities whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

<no data available>

4 - What is the Site like? (Ecological character description)

4.1 - Ecological character

Situated in the Arctic and characterized by:

- Island with several bird cliffs. Rock or sand/gravel dominated shores.
- · Sparse grass vegetation.
- · The island is usually icebound during winter
- Earlier Hopen was a very important denning site for Polar Bear, but because of the ice condition in recent years the situation has changed.

4.2 - What wetland type(s) are in the site?

Marine or coastal wetlands

Wetland types (code and name)	Local name	Ranking of extent (1: greatest - 4: least)	Area (ha) of wetland type	Justification of Criterion 1
A: Permanent shallow marine waters		2		Representative
D: Rocky marine shores		1		Representative

4.3 - Biological components

4.3.1 - Plant species

Other noteworthy plant species

Other Hoteworthy plant species									
Scientific name	Common name	Position in range / endemism / other							
Draba micropetala		Svalbard Red List: Considered as NT							

Optional text box to provide further information

Capitalized letters shows the species' status on the Svalbard Red List 2015

4.3.2 - Animal species

<no data available>

4.4 - Physical components

4.4.1 - Climate

Climatic region	Subregion
E: Polar climate with extremely cold winters and summers	ET: Tundra (Polar tundra, no true summer)

The climate is characterised by low temperatures and low precipitation. The warmest month is August, with a middle temperature of $2,3^{\circ}$ C. March is the coldest month with an average of -11,3°C. The average temperature in July is $1,9^{\circ}$ C. Annual average temperature is -6,4°C. Only in July, August and September are average temperatures above 0° C (1,9-2,3 and $0,7^{\circ}$ C). Annual precipitation is 476 mm.

Hopen is free for ice from July to October. The island is characterized by fog and precipitation.

4.4.2 - Geomorphic setting

a) Mnimum elevation above sea level (in metres)
a) Maximum elevation above sea level (in metres)
Entire river basin
Upper part of river basin
Middle part of river basin
Lower part of river basin
More than one river basin
Not in river basin

Please name the river basin or basins. If the site lies in a sub-basin, please also name the larger river basin. For a coastal/marine site, please name the sea or ocean.

The Norwegian Sea			
4.4.3 - Soil			
		Mineral ☑	
	(Update) Changes	at RIS update No change	Increase O Decrease O Unknown O
		le information	
Are soil types subject to conditi	o change as a result of changing ions (e.g., increased salinity or	g hydrological acidification)? Yes ○ No ᠖	
	mation on the soil (optional)		
vegetated area are lo		here guano provides n	es and sea ice most of the surface is covered by rocks. The most heavily utrients (in particular nitrogen) that enhances plant growth. The island has nmer.
4.4.4 - Water regime			
Water permanence			
Presence? Usually permanent water	Changes at RIS update		
present			
Source of water that maintain	ns character of the site		
Presence?	Predominant water source	Changes at RIS update	
Water inputs from rainfall Marine water		No change No change	
Ivanile water		No change	
Water destination	Observed at DIC and late		
Presence? Marine	Changes at RIS update No change		
Out till to the state of the st			
Stability of water regime Presence?	Changes at RIS update		
Water levels fluctuating (including tidal)	No change		
-			this box to explain sites with complex hydrology. ater come from snow melt and rain. In the winter all freshwater is frozen.
There are no rivers or	lakes at Hoperi, only sin	aller creeks. All freshw	ater come nom show men and ram. In the winter all heshwater is nozen.
4.4.5 - Sediment regim	ne		
	Sediment reg	ime unknown 🗹	
4.4.6 - Water pH			
		Unknown 🗹	
4.4.7. \\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\			
4.4.7 - Water salinity			
		ine (30-40 g/l) ☑	
	(Update) Changes		Increase O Decrease O Unknown O
		Unknown □	
4.4.9 Dissolved or su	spended nutrients in wate	or	
4.4.6 - Dissolved of Su	spended numerus in wat		
		Unknown 🗹	
4.4.9 - Features of the	surrounding area which r	may affect the Site	
	and if so how, the landscape a surrounding the Ramsar Site		ilar ◯ ii) significantly different ⊚
Surrounding a	rea has greater urbanisation or	development	
Surroundin	ng area has higher human popu	ulation density	
	ding area has more intensive ag	_	
Surrounding area has sig	gnificantly different land cover o	r habitat types	

4.5 - Ecosystem services

4.5.1 - Ecosystem services/benefits

Cultural Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Recreation and tourism	Picnics, outings, touring	Medium
Spiritual and inspirational	Cultural heritage (historical and archaeological)	Medium
Scientific and educational	Important knowledge systems, importance for research (scientific reference area or site)	Medium

Supporting Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Nutrient cycling	Storage, recycling, processing and acquisition of nutrients	Medium

Other ecosystem service(s) not included above:

Bird cliffs are considered to be important in the nutrient flow between the ocean and land.

Trappers have used the island in the 19th century and there are several huts, traps and other cultural values showing their activities. Five trapper huts are protected as cultural heritage sites.

From 1994 there has been intensive research on polar bears. There is also a meteorological station at the island.

Hopen is rarely visited by tourists (60 tourists from coastal expedition cruise boats landed on Hopen in 2009), however recreational activities among the station crew (Meteorological station) commonly include both hiking and use of recreational cabins.

Have studies or assessments been made of the economic valuation of	Voc O No O	I Inknown (6
emsystem services provided by this Ramsar Site?	res O No O	OHKHOWITY	_

4.5.2 - Social and cultural values

i) the site provides 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) the site has exceptional cultural traditions or records of former civilizations that have influenced the ecological character of the wetland
iii) the ecological character of the wetland depends on its interaction with local communities or indigenous peoples
iv) 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

<no data available>

4.6 - Ecological processes

(ECD) Nutrient cycling The bird cliffs are considered to be important in the nutrient flow between ocean and land.

5 - How is the Site managed? (Conservation and management)

5.1 - Land tenure and responsibilities (Managers)

5.1.1 - Land tenure/ownership

Pub	OVVI	ш	μ

Category	Within the Ramsar Site	In the surrounding area
National/Federal		
government	SC.	Se_1

Provide further information on the land tenure / ownership regime (optional):

Within the Ramsar site: State owned In the surrounding area: State owned

5.1.2 - Management authority

Please list the local office / offices of any agency or organization responsible for managing the site:

Postal address:

| Pb 633, 9171 Longyearbyen, Norway | Postal address | Pb 633, 9171 Longyearbyen, Norway | Postal address | Postal address

E-mail address: postmottak@sysselmannen.no

5.2 - Ecological character threats and responses (Management)

5.2.1 - Factors (actual or likely) adversely affecting the Site's ecological character

Energy production and mining

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Oil and gas drilling					✓	

Natural system modifications

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Unspecified/others			✓			

Pollution

1 Ollulott	Ollulott					
Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Industrial and military effluents	Medium impact	Medium impact		No change	/	No change

Climate change and severe weather

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Unspecified	High impact	High impact	✓	No change	✓	No change

Please describe any other threats (optional):

Within the Ramsar site:

Climate change and its effects in the Arctic may be the most serious environmental issue threatening the Arctic environment.

In the surrounding area:

Oil spill from ships and oil/gas development projects in this part of the Arctic is a possible threat.

5.2.2 - Legal conservation status

National legal designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
Nature Reserve	Hopen		whole

Non-statutory designations

Territoria de la constantina della constantina d			
Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
Important Bird Area	Hopen		whole

5.2.3 - IUCN	protected	areas cat	egories	(2008)

la Strict Nature Reserve ⊌
Ib Wilderness Area: protected area managed mainly for wilderness protection
II National Park: protected area managed mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation
III Natural Monument: protected area managed mainly for conservation of specific natural features
IV Habitat/Species Management Area: protected area managed mainly for conservation through management intervention
V Protected Landscape/Seascape: protected area managed mainly for landscape/seascape conservation and recreation
VI Managed Resource Protected Area: protected area managed mainly for the sustainable use of natural ecosystems

5.2.4 - Key conservation measures

Legal protection

Legal protection				
Measures	Status			
Legal protection	Implemented			

5.2.5 - Management planning

Is there a site-specific management plan for the site? Yes

Has a management effectiveness assessment been undertaken for the site? Yes O No •

If the site is a formal transboundary site as indicated in section Data and location > Site location, are there shared management planning Yes O No

processes with another Contracting Party?

Please indicate if a Ramsar centre, other educational or visitor facility, or an educational or visitor programme is associated with the site:

No such activities have been conducted, mainly because of the remoteness of the area and difficult access.

5.2.6 - Planning for restoration

Is there a site-specific restoration plan? Please select a value

5.2.7 - Monitoring implemented or proposed

Monitoring	Status
Animal species (please specify)	Implemented

From 1994 there has been intensive research on polar bears. There is also a meterological station on the island.

6 - Additional material

6.1 - Additional reports and documents

6.1.1 - Bibliographical references

Bakken, V. & Mehlum, F. 1988. AKUP - Sluttrapport Sjøfuglundersøkelser nord for 74N/Bjørnøya. Norsk Polarinstitutt. Rapportserie nr. 44.

Elvebakk, A. 1989: Biogeographical zones of Svalbard and Jan Mayen based on the distribution patterns of thermophilous vascular plants. Upubl. manuskript, Universitetet i Tromsø.

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

Sysselmannen 2007, Forvaltningsplan Hopen naturreservat 2007-2011. Sysselmannen på Svalbard.

Norwegian Polar institute: http://npweb.npolar.no/

Hopen meterologiske stasjon http://hopenmeteo.no/?page_id=2

6.1.2 - Additional reports and documents

i. taxonomic lists of plant and animal species occurring in the site (see section 4.3)

<no file available>

ii. a detailed Ecological Character Description (ECD) (in a national format)

<no file available>

iii. a description of the site in a national or regional wetland inventory

<no file available>

iv. relevant Article 3.2 reports

<no file available>

v. site management plan

<1 file(s) uploaded>

vi. other published literature

<no file available>

6.1.3 - Photograph(s) of the Site

Please provide at least one photograph of the site:



Iversenfjellet, view north (Paul Lutnæs/Sysselmannen, 21-09-2017)



Johan Hjortfjellet towards Småhumpen (*Paul Lutnæs/Sysselmannen, 21-*09-2017)



Johan Hjortfjellet, view south (Paul Lutnæs/Sysselmannen, 2 09-2017)



Thorkelsenskaret, view south (Paul Lutnæs/Sysselmannen, 2: 09-2017)



Kvasstoppen towards Askeheimodden (Paul Lutnæs/Sysselmannen, 21-09-2017)

6.1.4 - Designation letter and related data

Designation letter

<1 file(s) uploaded>

Date of Designation 2010-11-12