

Norway designates 14 new Ramsar Sites

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Norway

The Government of Norway has designated 14 new Wetlands of International Importance. Norway now has 51 sites on the Ramsar List, totaling 838,127 hectares. A full description of these new Ramsar Sites is [accessible here](#).



All 14 sites are protected under national law as nature reserves, national parks or protected landscapes and have now been selected as new additions to the Ramsar List of Wetlands due to their international importance. The total area of these sites is about 721,800 ha out of which two thirds are marine waters. The designations include four sites in Svalbard: Nordenskiöldkysten, Sørkapp, Bear Island (Bjørnøya) and Hopen. All of these sites support nationally threatened bird species, most of them in high numbers. These include species like the Little Auk *Alle alle*, Brunnich`s Guillemot *Uria lomvia*, Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*, Common Guillemot *Uria aalge* (VU), Razorbill, *Alca torda* (EN) and Red Knot *Calidris canutus* (EN). Further, mammal species like the Svalbard reindeer *Rangifer tarandus platyrhynchus*, Arctic Fox *Vulpes lagopus*, Polar Bear *Ursus maritimus*, Harbour Seals *Phoca vitulina* and Walrus *Odobenus rosmarus* are supported. The sites also contain several cultural heritage sites relating to Russian and Norwegian wintering.



Three out of the remaining ten sites consist of archipelagos off the coast of Norway: Sklinna, Rott-Håstein-Kjør and Røstøyan which harbour similar species as the sites in Svalbard, including the Atlantic Puffin *Fratercula arctica*. The remaining seven sites include diverse ecosystems such as active deltas: Ulendeltaet, Måselvutløpet, Reisautløpet, Glomådeltaet. These are important breeding sites for waterbirds such as Common Merganser *Merganser merganser*, Ruff *Philomachus pugnax* (VU), Black Guillemot *Cepphus grylle* (VU), Spotted Crake *Porzana porzana* (EN), Greater Scaup *Aythya marila* (VU), and Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus* (VU). They also support mammals such as the Beaver *Castor fiber*, Moose *Alces alces*, Eurasian Otter *Lutra lutra* (VU), and Lynx *Lynx lynx* (VU) as well as large numbers of fish such as the Brown Trout *Salmo trutta* and Arctic Char *Salvelinus alpinus*.



Furthermore, Atnsjømyrene, a mire complex, as well as two wetland systems including different sub-sites, Hedmarksvidda Wetland System and Evenes Wetland system, are being designated. They play an important role as water reservoirs and in flood protection. Evenes Wetland System also supports nationally threatened plant species such as Sheathed Pondweed *Stuckenia (Potamogeton) vaginata* (VU), and Rugged Stonewort *Chara rudis* (EN). It is also breeding site for Garganey *Anas querquedula* (EN) and Smew *Mergus albellus* (VU) and supports a dense population of the internationally threatened Pearl Mussel *Margaritifera margaritifera* (VU, IUCN Red List).

(Norwegian/Svalbard Red List category classification for threatened species: VU = vulnerable; EN = endangered; CR = critically endangered).

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