How to use the offline RIS Word form

Why use an offline form?

A number of Contracting Parties requested a way to allow local compilers to help in completing the Ramsar Information Sheet (RIS) for a new Ramsar Site or a Site update. These local compilers would be able to work without access to the internet or to the online RIS.

The RIS is used for compiling information on new and updated Ramsar Sites. Until 2014 it was a Microsoft Word form; it is now an online form within the new Ramsar Sites Information Service (RSIS - rsis.ramsar.org). A guide on how to use the RSIS is available here.

RISs can only be submitted to the Ramsar Secretariat through the online RSIS. The National Focal Point of the Administrative Authority (AA) is responsible for starting the process to fill in the online RIS for a newly designated Site, or to update the RIS for an existing Site. Once the work is completed, the AA is also responsible for submitting the completed online RIS to the Secretariat's Regional Team. Often, the AA gives other RIS Compilers (RCs) access to the RSIS so they can help complete the online form.

The offline RIS Word form helps the AA and RCs collect data without an internet connection or seek inputs from different local compilers working offline, while keeping control of the final content to be entered into the online RIS.

How does the offline process work?

A blank form is available for download here. An online compiler may send this to the offline compiler with instructions on the sections to be completed.

Where information is already present in the online form – in the case of a Site update or where online compilers have already input information regarding a new Site – the online compiler should create an offline form which includes this information, using the "Word export" function in the RSIS.

To export a Word form where information is already present in the online form:

- The online compiler must log in to the RSIS and select "Edit" in the "Actions" menu for the Site
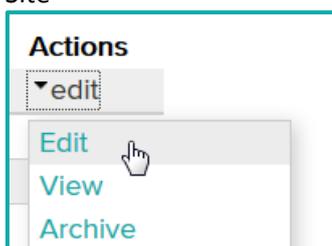
- Select "Word Export" from the "Export" menu
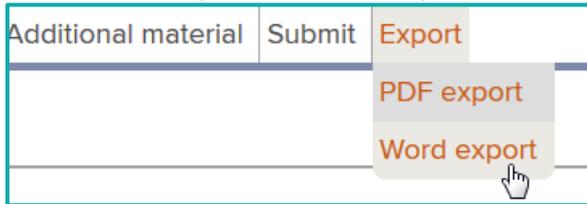
- Follow the instructions on the screen to download the Word form

The offline form replicates the structure, numbering and formats of the online form. The offline compiler adds the information for the sections requested, and sends the form to the online compiler, who can then input information manually into the online form. It is not possible to import the offline content automatically.

Entering information

For guidance on how to complete the RIS, consult the [Strategic Framework and guidelines for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance](#).

Please note that although the Microsoft Word form is a replica of the current online form, the automatic checks, restrictions and limitations which are available in the online form do not appear in the Microsoft Word form. Therefore, hints are provided throughout the Microsoft Word form as well as in the instructions below in order to allow for an easy transfer of the information from the Word form to the online form.

All fields marked with an asterisk (*) are required.

Fields marked with "(Update)" relate to data and information required only for RIS updates.

Some fields concerning aspects on the Ecological Character Description of the Site, annotated with "(ECD)", 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.

Text fields

> Title *(This field is limited to 2500 characters)*
> Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consetetur sadipscing elitr, sed diam nonumy eirmod tempor invidunt ut labore et dolore magna aliquyam erat, sed diam voluptua.

A text field accepts any kind of data, such as letters, numbers and symbols. Where text fields in the online form have limitations, the Word form provides text hints about what these limitations are. Typical hints include:
- "This field is limited to 2500 characters"
- "The online RIS only accepts numeric values"
- "The online RIS only accepts valid e-mail addresses (e.g. example@mail.com)"
- "The online RIS only accepts valid phone numbers (e.g. +1 41 123 45 67)"

Please follow the limitations precisely, otherwise information may be lost when it is transferred to the online form.

Checkboxes

A. Changes to Site boundary (Update)
    [ ] Yes / [x] No
        [ ] The boundary has been delineated more accurately
        [ ] The boundary has been extended

The checkboxes used in the offline form are normal Microsoft word characters, they cannot be checked as in the online form. To select an option, insert an x between the square brackets [x].

Fields with predefined values

6b i. Has the ecological character of the Ramsar Site changed since the previous RIS?
Yes -likely-[1]

[1] Not evaluated | No,Uncertain | Yes -likely- | Yes -actual-

If a field can only be filled with a set of predefined values (and corresponds to a dropdown box in the online form), a footnote is used to list the options available, with the options separated by the symbol "|". To fill in the field, copy an option from the list and paste it in to the field.

Tables

Biogeographic regions

Regionalisation scheme(s) [1]	Biogeographic region
Marine Ecoregions of the World (MEOW)	The greater Region

[1] Marine Ecoregions of the World (MEOW) | Udvardy's Biogeographical Provinces | Bailey's Ecoregions | WWF Terrestrial Ecoregions | EU biogeographic regionalization | Freshwater Ecoregions of the World (FEOW) | Other scheme (provide name below)

The tables used in this form are standard word tables. Every table contains one empty row at the end, and extra rows can be inserted if needed. If a response must correspond to a predefined value, a footnote is used to list the options available (see for example the footnote above, showing fields with predefined values).

Plant and animal species tables (sections 3.2 and 3.3)
The scientific name of a plant or animal species can be filled in without any restrictions in the offline Word form. The data is tested against the "Catalogue of Life" (www.catalogueoflife.org/) when it is transferred to the online form. At this stage only species present in the Catalogue are accepted.