

NATURA 2000

STANDARD DATA FORM

FOR SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS (SPA)
FOR SITES ELIGIBLE FOR IDENTIFICATION AS SITES OF COMMUNITY IMPORTANCE (SCI)
AND
FOR SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION (SAC)

1. Site identification:

1.1 Type 1.2 Site code

1.3 Compilation date 1.4 Update

1.5 Relationship with other Natura 2000 sites

1.6 Respondent(s)

1.7 Site name

1.8 Site indication and designation classification dates

date site proposed as eligible as SCI	
date confirmed as SCI	
date site classified as SPA	199903
date site designated as SAC	

2. Site location:

2.1 Site centre location

longitude	latitude
04 12 00 W	57 41 00 N

2.2 Site area (ha) 2.3 Site length (km)

2.5 Administrative region

NUTS code	Region name	% cover
UKA31	Highland	100.00%

2.6 Biogeographic region

Alpine

Atlantic

Boreal

Continental

Macaronesia

Mediterranean

3. Ecological information:

3.1 Annex I habitats

Habitat types present on the site and the site assessment for them:

Annex I habitat	% cover	Representativity	Relative surface	Conservation status	Global assessment

3.2 Annex I birds and regularly occurring migratory birds not listed on Annex I

Code	Species name	Population			Site assessment			
		Resident	Migratory		Population	Conservation	Isolation	Global
Breed	Winter	Stage						
A043a	<i>Anser anser</i>		1782 I		C		C	
A038	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>		64 I		C		C	
A157	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>		1355 I		B		C	
A094	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>		>2 I		C		C	
A193	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>		294 P		C		C	

4. Site description:

4.1 General site character

Habitat classes	% cover
Marine areas. Sea inlets	
Tidal rivers. Estuaries. Mud flats. Sand flats. Lagoons (including saltwork basins)	92.5
Salt marshes. Salt pastures. Salt steppes	5.0
Coastal sand dunes. Sand beaches. Machair	
Shingle. Sea cliffs. Islets	1.0
Inland water bodies (standing water, running water)	
Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens	0.3
Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana	0.2
Dry grassland. Steppes	
Humid grassland. Mesophile grassland	0.8
Alpine and sub-alpine grassland	
Improved grassland	
Other arable land	
Broad-leaved deciduous woodland	0.2
Coniferous woodland	
Evergreen woodland	
Mixed woodland	
Non-forest areas cultivated with woody plants (including orchards, groves, vineyards, dehesas)	
Inland rocks. Scree. Sands. Permanent snow and ice	
Other land (including towns, villages, roads, waste places, mines, industrial sites)	
Total habitat cover	100%

4.1 Other site characteristics

Soil & geology:

Gravel, Mud, Sand, Sandstone, Sandstone/mudstone, Shingle

Geomorphology & landscape:

Coastal, Enclosed coast (including embayment), Estuary, Floodplain, Intertidal sediments (including sandflat/mudflat), Lowland, Shingle bar

4.2 Quality and importance

ARTICLE 4.1 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC)

During the breeding season the area regularly supports:

Pandion haliaetus

at least 2% of the GB breeding population
Count, as at early 1990s

Sterna hirundo

(Northern/Eastern Europe - breeding)

2% of the GB breeding population
5 year mean, 1989-1993

Over winter the area regularly supports:

<i>Cygnus cygnus</i> (Iceland/UK/Ireland)	1% of the GB population 5 year peak mean, 1992/3-1996/7
<i>Limosa lapponica</i> (Western Palearctic - wintering)	3% of the GB population 5 year peak mean, 1992/3-1996/7

ARTICLE 4.2 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC)

Over winter the area regularly supports:

<i>Anser anser</i> (Iceland/UK/Ireland)	2% of the population 5 year peak mean, 1992/3-1996/7
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ARTICLE 4.2 QUALIFICATION (79/409/EEC): AN INTERNATIONALLY IMPORTANT ASSEMBLAGE OF BIRDS

Over winter the area regularly supports:

30200 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 01/02/1999)
Including:
Cygnus cygnus , *Anser anser* , *Limosa lapponica* .

4.3 Vulnerability

The SPA is vulnerable to industrial development (including land-claim), some of which is associated with the port of Invergordon as well as wider oil-related activities. Both can impact on water quality in the firth. The threat of damage by mechanical cockle-harvesting has been addressed over a large part of the firth by the granting of the Nigg and Udale Bays Nature Conservation (Amendment) Order in 1996. However, the cumulative impacts of a range of small-scale activities including disturbance from wildfowling and recreational activities are recognised pressures on the site. Recent integrated management initiatives (The Cromarty Firth Liaison Group and the wider Moray Firth Partnership) provides a provides a mechanism through which a range of interested parties can help alleviate the range of development and recreational threats to this site.

5. Site protection status and relation with CORINE biotopes:

5.1 Designation types at national and regional level

Code	% cover
UK01 (NNR)	16.9
UK04 (SSSI/ASSI)	100.0