NATURA 2000 - STANDARD DATA FORM

For Special Protection Areas (SPA),
Proposed Sites for Community Importance (pSCI),
Sites of Community Importance (SCI) and
for Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)

SITE **MT0000022**

SITENAME **Il-Gżejjer ta' San Pawl (Selmunett)**

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1. SITE IDENTIFICATION

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1.1 Type	1.2 Site code
B	MT0000022

1.3 Site name

Il-Gżejjer ta' San Pawl (Selmunett)

1.4 First Compilation date	1.5 Update date
2004-04	2018-05

1.6 Respondent:

Name/Organisation:	Environment and Resources Authority
Address:	Hexagon House, Spencer Hill, Marsa MRS 1441
Email:	natura.2000@era.org.mt

1.7 Site indication and designation / classification dates

Date site classified as SPA:	0000-00
National legal reference of SPA designation	No data

Date site proposed as SCI:	2004-04
Date site confirmed as SCI:	2008-03
Date site designated as SAC:	2016-12
National legal reference of SAC designation:	Government Notice No. 1379 of 2016, in accordance with the Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Protection Regulations, 2016 (S.L. 549.44)

2. SITE LOCATION

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2.1 Site-centre location [decimal degrees]:

Longitude	Latitude
14.4033	35.967

2.2 Area [ha]:

10.75

2.3 Marine area [%]

0.0

2.4 Sitelength [km]:

0.0

2.5 Administrative region code and name

NUTS level 2 code	Region Name
MT00	Malta

2.6 Biogeographical Region(s)

Mediterranean (100.0 %)

3. ECOLOGICAL INFORMATION

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3.1 Habitat types present on the site and assessment for them

Annex I Habitat types						Site assessment			
Code	PF	NP	Cover [ha]	Cave [number]	Data quality	A|B|C|D	A|B|C		
						Representativity	Relative Surface	Conservation	Global
1170			0.02		G	C	C	B	B
1240			5.99		G	B	B	B	B

PF: for the habitat types that can have a non-priority as well as a priority form (6210, 7130, 9430) enter "X" in the column PF to indicate the priority form.

NP: in case that a habitat type no longer exists in the site enter: x (optional)

Cover: decimal values can be entered

Caves: for habitat types 8310, 8330 (caves) enter the number of caves if estimated surface is not available.

Data quality: G = 'Good' (e.g. based on surveys); M = 'Moderate' (e.g. based on partial data with some extrapolation); P = 'Poor' (e.g. rough estimation)

3.2 Species referred to in Article 4 of Directive 2009/147/EC and listed in Annex II of Directive 92/43/EEC and site evaluation for them

Species					Population in the site						Site assessment			
G	Code	Scientific Name	S	NP	T	Size		Unit	Cat.	D.qual.	A|B|C|D	A|B|C		
						Min	Max				Pop.	Con.	Iso.	Glo.

P	4114	Linaria pseudolaxiflora			p				V	P	D		A	

Group: A = Amphibians, B = Birds, F = Fish, I = Invertebrates, M = Mammals, P = Plants, R = Reptiles

S: in case that the data on species are sensitive and therefore have to be blocked for any public access enter: yes

NP: in case that a species is no longer present in the site enter: x (optional)

Type: p = permanent, r = reproducing, c = concentration, w = wintering (for plant and non-migratory species use permanent)

Unit: i = individuals, p = pairs or other units according to the Standard list of population units and codes in accordance with Article 12 and 17 reporting (see reference portal)

Abundance categories (Cat.): C = common, R = rare, V = very rare, P = present - to fill if data are deficient (DD) or in addition to population size information

Data quality: G = 'Good' (e.g. based on surveys); M = 'Moderate' (e.g. based on partial data with some extrapolation); P = 'Poor' (e.g. rough estimation); VP = 'Very poor' (use this category only, if not even a rough estimation of the population size can be made, in this case the fields for population size can remain empty, but the field "Abundance categories" has to be filled in)

3.3 Other important species of flora and fauna (optional)

4. SITE DESCRIPTION

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4.1 General site character

Habitat class	% Cover
N23	6.88
N05	55.72
N08	37.4
Total Habitat Cover	100

Other Site Characteristics

Il-Gżejjer ta' San Pawl (Selmunett) or St. Paul's Islands are located along the North-Eastern part of mainland Malta, and are situated at about 100m away from Tal-Blata, the nearest point. The Islands are named for St. Paul, who is said to have brought the Roman Catholic religion to the Maltese Islands in AD 60. Although the islands were used for agricultural purposes, this activity was halted in the 1930s. Since they were declared a Nature Reserve in 1993, activities on the islands are only permissible between sunrise and sunset, and then only for swimming, berthing of sea craft, and walking along designated footpaths. The two islands are separated by a very low land bridge [which is c.200m long] and can therefore be considered as one island. This bridge, however, is easily submerged on stormy days. The entire length of Selmunett is about 885 metres, and it is about 200 metres at its widest. For practical purposes, the island is considered to be made up of two small islands. The larger one, which is closer to the mainland, has an area of c. 0.07 square km, measures 480m in length, 200m width, and rises to about 24m above sea level; the smaller island has a maximum length and width of about 405m and 150m respectively, and rises only to about 8m above sea level. St. Paul's Islands are composed of Upper Coralline Limestone, the youngest of the sedimentary rocks forming the Maltese Islands. Along the western side of the larger island, the underlying blue clay layer is exposed. The islands were formed by faulting from the mainland. The presence of the fault is indicated by stratification studies in the region; these studies also suggest that tilting occurred. Sub-stratification of the islands indicates a dip of about 12° in the larger one. In the case of the Selmunett Islands, this tilting is probably caused by the slipping of the Upper Coralline limestone block over the underlying slippery Blue Clay stratum, and the undercutting effects of waves. Being mainly coastal, and composed of coralline limestone, the vegetation of the islands is mainly characteristic of Mediterranean rocky coastal areas. However, since the sites are exposed to wind, sun and sea-spray, there is also a very limited amount of soil present, except for some parts of the large island.

4.2 Quality and importance

The vegetation of the small island is mainly made up of extreme halophytes, due to the fact that it is very low-lying and exposed to long drought periods, strong winds and saline conditions. The dominant species are Arthrocnemum glaucum and Mesembryanthemum nodiflorum. In addition to these are the rare endemic Limonium zeraphae and the frequent and endemic Anthemis urvilleana. The large island has a more varied terrain, and hence supports a much richer and heterogeneous flora. The maritime communities are characterised by various coastal species, particularly an assemblage with the endemic Limonium melitense, a good population of the very rare Siculo-Maltese endemic Senecio pygmaeus, and a fairly good population of coastal Daucus species, including the sub-endemic Daucus rupestris. The latter also characterises the cliffs of the area, which are also dominated by the endemic Darniella melitensis. The garrigue community

includes various labiate species, particularly Thymbra capitata, Prasium majus and Teucrium fruticans, although Erica multiflora and pre-desert scrub species, such as Periploca angustifolia, are also present. The dominant species on higher ground are Drimia maritima and Limbarda crithmoides, with Carlina involucrata and Ferula communis being more frequent along abandoned fields. Various important species are found on this island, including a fairly good population of the otherwise very rare Atractylis cancellata, a small population of the critically endangered Linaria pseudolaxiflora and the endangered Parietaria cretica, for which these islands represent the only Maltese locality. As a whole, the flora is particularly interesting, especially considering the number of endemics, sub-endemics and rare species occurring on these small islands. Most of the animal species present are species adapted to live in harsh environments. The most conspicuous invertebrates are the snails Theba pisana, Eobania vermiculata, Cantareus aspersus, Rumina decollata, and the endemics Pomatias sulcatus melitense and Muticaria macrostoma. The islands house other interesting invertebrate fauna too, although this has not been thoroughly studied. The woodlice fauna of the area includes, apart from the common Ligia italica, the endemic Armadillidium schmalfussi; the endemic and rare Ctenoscia dorsalis; and the very rare Tylos europaeus, the latter being a halophilic species confined to these islands and one site in Gozo. Amongst the insects, of interest are the endemic Allophylax picipes melitensis found in abandoned fields and under stones, and the endemic beetle Stenostoma melitense, the latter being monophagous on Arthrocnemum macrostachyum and the endemic Maltese Salt-Tree, Salsola melitensis. Vertebrates known from the island include the geckoes Hemidactylus turcicus turcicus and Tarentola mauritanica, the latter being rarer than H.t. turcicus; and more importantly the endemic Podarcis filfolensis kieselbachi (Bern Convention Annex II; Habitats Directive Annex IV); this lizard is found only on Selmunett Islands, and probably formed due to isolation of the islands' populations from that of the mainland [P.filfolensis maltensis] resulting in allopatry. Up to a few years ago a population of the wild rabbit, Oryctolagus cuniculus (originally introduced) persisted on the islands; this was however eradicated as a result of an epidemic. Rats are known from the area and as the population increases, these are becoming more of a problem. Also of interest are the bioconstructions typified by Dendropoma petraeum together with the rhodophyte Neogoniolithon notarisi. These coastal bioconstructions characterise the low land bridge between the two islets, and are exposed or submerged depending on the various aspects, including seiches and the prevailing wind conditions. Although strictly a marine community, it is also protected within the nature reserve due to its terrestrial exposure. It houses various species, including a number of rare flora and fauna capable of living in partly exposed/submerged areas. Of relevance is a community of the protected star-coral, Astroides calycularis (Bern Convention Appendix II) located within the infralittoral fringe and the sea-fir alga Cystoseira amentacea (Bern Convention Appendix II).

4.3 Threats, pressures and activities with impacts on the site

The most important impacts and activities with high effect on the site

Negative Impacts			
Rank	Threats and pressures [code]	Pollution (optional) [code]	inside/outside [i|o|b]
H	I01		i
M	D01.01		i
M	K01.01		i
L	G05.01		i
L	F03.02.01		b

Positive Impacts			
Rank	Activities, management [code]	Pollution (optional) [code]	inside/outside [i|o|b]

Rank: H = high, M = medium, L = low
Pollution: N = Nitrogen input, P = Phosphor/Phosphate input, A = Acid input/acidification,
T = toxic inorganic chemicals, O = toxic organic chemicals, X = Mixed pollutions
i = inside, o = outside, b = both

4.4 Ownership (optional)

4.5 Documentation

5. SITE PROTECTION STATUS (optional)

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5.1 Designation types at national and regional level:

5.2 Relation of the described site with other sites:

5.3 Site designation (optional)

6. SITE MANAGEMENT

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6.1 Body(ies) responsible for the site management:

Organisation:	Environment and Resources Authority
Address:	
Email:	natura.2000@era.org.mt

6.2 Management Plan(s):

An actual management plan does exist:

[X]	Yes	Name: Il-Gżejjer ta' San Pawl (Selmunett) Link: https://era.org.mt/en/Pages/Natura-2000-Management-Planning.aspx
[ ]	No, but in preparation	
[ ]	No	

6.3 Conservation measures (optional)

7. MAP OF THE SITES

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INSPIRE ID: MT.ERA.MT0000022

Map delivered as PDF in electronic format (optional)

[ ] Yes [X] No

Reference(s) to the original map used for the digitalisation of the electronic boundaries (optional).