



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 MT0000020
SITENAME L-Inħawi tax-Xlendi u tal-Wied tal-Kantra

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1. SITE IDENTIFICATION

1.1 Type B	1.2 Site code MT0000020	Back to top
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1.3 Site name

L-Inħawi tax-Xlendi u tal-Wied tal-Kantra

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

2.1 Site-centre location [decimal degrees]:

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Longitude 14.2272 **Latitude** 36.0306

M	1303	Rhinolophus hipposideros			p	5	25	i	P	P	B	C	A	C
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- **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

4.1 General site character

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Habitat class	% Cover
N05	4.6
N26	3.29
N08	24.95
N23	6.51
N27	60.27
N06	0.38
Total Habitat Cover	100.00000000000001

Other Site Characteristics

This Natura 2000 site is one of the largest protected areas in the Maltese Islands. It extends from the central part of the island of Gozo to the South-Eastern coast, and includes the whole valley systems of Wied Xlendi and Wied tal-Kantra, both of which end in the inlet of Xlendi. The sides of these valley systems include cultivated agricultural land, rock escarpments with natural vegetation, and promontories bounded by sea cliffs along the coast on either side of Xlendi Bay. Wied tal-Lunzjata forms the upper part of Wied Xlendi and its diverse habitats attract a large and diverse avifauna, and in fact this area serves as a staging post for a number of migratory birds. Wied tal-Lunzjata is one of the few remaining valleys of the Maltese Islands with a permanent freshwater supply. Various species that are associated with this freshwater habitat are found in the valley bed, and these are very rare and/or endemic and/or found only in a few other localities or are restricted to Wied ix-Xlendi valley system. The plateau off the area of Ta' Kantra provides a unique plant community that thrives on an exposed flat conglomerate bed of phosphatic nodules which in itself also represents a rare geological feature in the Maltese Islands.

4.2 Quality and importance

This Natura 2000 site is one of the largest protected areas in the Maltese Islands. The area extends from the central part of the island of Gozo to the South-Eastern coast, and includes the whole valley systems of Wied Xlendi (starting from its tributaries, namely Wied il-Ħmar, Wied tal-Lunzjata, Wied il-Għarab and Wied tal-Għancija) and Wied tal-Kantra, both of which end in the inlet of Xlendi. The sides of the valley system includes cultivated agricultural land, rock escarpments with natural vegetation, and promontories bounded by sea cliffs along the coast on either side of Xlendi Bay. Wied tal-Lunzjata is one of the few remaining valleys of the Maltese Islands with a permanent freshwater supply. Various plant, mollusc, crustacean, insect and other invertebrate species that are associated with this freshwater habitat are found in the valley bed. Such species are either very rare in the Maltese Islands and found only in a few other localities or are restricted to Wied ix-Xlendi valley system. Plant species include *Phragmites australis*, *Arundo donax*, *Apium nodiflorum*, the rare *Apium graveolens*, *Ranunculus muricatus*, *Mentha pulegium* and *Rumex* spp. A small number of individual *Populus alba* trees are found further downstream. Important fauna includes the only known Maltese population of *Haemopsis sanguisuga*; the best population of the Maltese freshwater crab *Potamon fluviatile lanfranconi* in Gozo; the only population of *Planorbis moquini*; very good populations of the otherwise rare *Physa acuta*; the endangered *Pseudamnicola melitensis* and *Mercuria* cf. *similis* (this species may be present as an endemic form); and a small population of *Pisidium* pea-mussels that are otherwise known from another two localities in the Maltese Islands. Furthermore, the valley system also provides adequate breeding ground for *Discoglossus pictus*. Wied tal-Lunzjata forms the upper part of Wied Xlendi and its diverse habitats attract a large and diverse avifauna, including crakes, rails, egrets and herons that are associated with thick reed growth along the stream bed; as well as harriers and honey buzzards, and flycatchers, warblers, chats, thrushes, finches and buntings that are attracted to the dense vegetation cover mostly provided by carob trees. Overall, Wied tal-Lunzjata serves as a staging post for such migratory birds. The vertical sea cliffs themselves support typical rupestral communities. Important plant species include the endemic *Hyoseris frutescens*, *Atriplex lanfranconi* (= *Cremnophyton lanfranconi*), and *Cheirolophus crassifolius* (= *Palaeocyanus crassifolius*), all Annex II species (Habitats Directive) and *Matthiola incana* subsp. *melitensis*. *Trochoidea gharlapsi*, a mollusc endemic to the Maltese Islands, is also found here. These cliffs and other sea caves

found within the site also provide suitable nesting habitat for the bird species *Monticola solitarius*, *Calonectris diomedea* (Annex I species, Birds Directive) and *Puffinus yelkouan* (Annex I species, Birds Directive). The promontory areas support maritime garrigue, other coastal garrigue and steppe communities. Various garrigue communities occur and these are characterised by *Euphorbia dendroides*, *E. melitensis*, *Thymra capitata* and *Erica multiflora*. The garrigue in the area of Dahar il-Fekruna promontory within Wied tax-Xlendi represents the only known locality for the endemic *Muticaria macrostoma mamotica*. The very rare *Euphorbia characias* is known from Xlendi. Maltese plants of this species require further investigation, since they show some similarity with *Euphorbia melapetala*, which is a Sicilian endemic of uncertain taxonomic status. While providing suitable habitat for garrigue species, these areas also contain Mediterranean temporary ponds (Annex I Habitats Directive priority habitat)- an important habitat for plant species, including *Elatine gussonei* (Habitats Directive, Annex II), *Damasonium bourgaei*, *Callitriche truncata*, *Chara vulgaris*, *Zannichellia melitensis*, *Ranunculus saniculaefolius* and *Lythrum hyssopifolia*. Such temporary freshwater ponds have not been thoroughly studied yet and it is expected that this habitat supports several other species of flora and fauna as well. Among the fauna species, *Branchipus* sp. is known to occur. The area is also characterised by traditional rubble/dry stone walls, constructed to retain soil. These walls are important for *Crocidura sicula calypso*, an endemic shrew (Habitats Directive, Annex IV) and various other reptiles including *Coluber viridiflavus carbonarius*, *Chalcides ocellatus tiligugu*, *Tarentola mauritanica*, *Hemidactylus turcicus turcicus* and *Podarcis filfolensis maltensis*. A considerable portion of land is used for agriculture. Some agro-species are reported from the area, including the very rare and declining *Glebionis segetum*. However, such fields were not surveyed in detail and more information is required. The plateau off Ta' Kantra provides a unique community based upon *Salsola melitensis* (= *Darniella melitensis*), *Limonium melitense*, *Anthemis urvilleana*, *Hedysarum glomeratum*, *Senecio leucanthemifolius*, *Silene colorata*, *Hordeum marinum* and *Avena wiestii*. This community thrives on an exposed flat conglomerate bed of phosphatic nodules which in itself also represents a rare geological feature in the Maltese Islands. Xlendi is also very important because it houses endemic and sub-endemic species including: *Anacamptis urvilleana* (Habitats Directive, Annex II), *Allium melitense*, *Anthirrinium siculum*, *Calendula sicula*, *Chiliadenus bocconeii*, *Daucus rupestris*, *Iris sicula*, *Senecio bicolor* and *Epidola melitensis*. The area is also the type locality for the endemic liverwort *Riccia melitensis* and the only known locality from where the endemic Maltese Tineid Moth *Antitinea deluccae* has been recorded.

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]
M	A08		i
M	E04.01		i
L	A07		o
L	A04.03		i
L	G01.03		o
L	F04		b
M	E01.02		i
M	E01		i
M	A02		i
H	J02.05.02		b
M	A07		i
M	G05.01		i
M	G01.08		i
M	E03.03		i
M	H05		b
H	J02.06		o
M	B01.02		i
M	H01		b
M	D01.02		i
M	E03		i
M	D01.01		i
M	J02.05		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)

5.1 Designation types at national and regional level:

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5.2 Relation of the described site with other sites:

5.3 Site designation (optional)

6. SITE MANAGEMENT

6.1 Body(ies) responsible for the site management:

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

6.2 Management Plan(s):

An actual management plan does exist:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	Name: L-Inħawi tax-Xlendi u tal-Wied tal-Kantra Link: https://era.org.mt/en/Pages/Natura-2000-Management-Planning.aspx
<input type="checkbox"/> No, but in preparation	
<input type="checkbox"/> No	

6.3 Conservation measures (optional)

7. MAP OF THE SITES

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INSPIRE ID:

MT.ERA.MT0000020

Map delivered as PDF in electronic format (optional)

Yes No

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

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