



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 MT0000103

SITENAME Zona fil-Bahar fl-Inhawi tad-Dwejra (Ghawdex)

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1. SITE IDENTIFICATION

1.1 Type B	1.2 Site code MT0000103	Back to top
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1.3 Site name

Zona fil-Bahar fl-Inhawi tad-Dwejra (Ghawdex)

1.4 First Compilation date 2010-08	1.5 Update date 2012-09
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1.6 Respondent:

Name/Organisation:

Address: Ecosystems Management Unit Environment Protection Directorate Malta
Environment and Planning Authority

Email: natura2000@mepa.org.mt

Date site proposed as SCI:	2010-08
Date site confirmed as SCI:	No data
Date site designated as SAC:	No data
National legal reference of SAC designation:	No data

2. SITE LOCATION

2.1 Site-centre location [decimal degrees]:

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Longitude

14.1861

Latitude

36.0525

2.2 Area [ha]:

228.61

2.3 Marine area [%]

2.4 Sitelength [km]:

0.0

2.5 Administrative region code and name

NUTS level 2 code

Region Name

MTZZ	Marine
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2.6 Biogeographical Region(s)

Mediterranean (%)

3. ECOLOGICAL INFORMATION

3.1 Habitat types present on the site and assessment for them

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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
1120B			9.05		M	C	C	B	C
1170B			26.13		M	B		B	B
8330B					P				

- **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.

- **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)

Species					Population in the site				Motivation					
Group	CODE	Scientific Name	S	NP	Size		Unit	Cat.	Species Annex		Other categories			
					Min	Max		C R V P	IV	V	A	B	C	D
I		Astroides calycularis						P					X	
I		Centrostephanus longispinus						P					X	
I		Cladocora caespitosa						P			X			
P		Cystoseira barbata						P			X			
P		Cystoseira ercegovicii						P			X			
P		Cystoseira spinosa var. tenuior						P					X	
P		Cystoseira stricta						P					X	
F		Epinephelus marginatus						P					X	

I		Ophidiaster ophidianus						P					X	
I		Palinurus elephas						P					X	
I		Paracentrotus lividus						P					X	
I		Petrobiona massilliana						P					X	
I		Pinna nobilis						P					X	
P		Posidonia oceanica						P					X	
P		Sargassum vulgare						P			X			
F		Sciaena umbra						P					X	
I		Scyllarides latus						P					X	

- **Group:** A = Amphibians, B = Birds, F = Fish, Fu = Fungi, I = Invertebrates, L = Lichens, M = Mammals, P = Plants, R = Reptiles
- **CODE:** for Birds, Annex IV and V species the code as provided in the reference portal should be used in addition to the scientific name
- **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)
- **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](#))
- **Cat.:** Abundance categories: C = common, R = rare, V = very rare, P = present
- **Motivation categories:** **IV, V:** Annex Species (Habitats Directive), **A:** National Red List data; **B:** Endemics; **C:** International Conventions; **D:** other reasons

4. SITE DESCRIPTION

4.1 General site character

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Habitat class	% Cover
N01	100.0
Total Habitat Cover	100

Other Site Characteristics

A multitude of geomorphological features are present in this area, hence forming a complex seabed geomorphology. A series of drop-offs closely associated with rocky shoals and rocky platforms are found running along the coast. At the base of cliffs and beneath drop-offs, extensive boulder fields are present. A number of arches, caves and tunnels are also found along the coast of the site.

4.2 Quality and importance

The Dwejra coastal area in Gozo has been identified by the Structure Plan for the Maltese Islands as an area of potential international scientific importance in view of a complex of features of interest known from here, including geological, geomorphological, ecological, archaeological, historical and aesthetic aspects. Considering Posidonia meadows, there is an extensive, though non-continuous, bed within the area of 'Il-Bajja tad-Dwejra' (Dwejra Bay) where the sea-grass strands are dense and healthy. Small patches of the sea-grass also occur on bedrock in other parts of the area. The Posidonia oceanica meadows within this site are considered to be isolated since there is little or no continuity with meadows present in other coastal areas due to the prevailing

deep water off most of the eastern coast of Gozo (Posidonia does not grow in deep waters). A baseline survey on the extent and character of Posidonia oceanica (L.) Delile Meadows in the territorial waters of Malta was carried out in 2002. Following examination of various parameters during this Posidonia Baseline Survey, the meadow and the general environmental conditions have been classified as normal within this site. The classification used was based on Pergent et. al (1995). Marine invertebrates associated with the Posidonia oceanica meadows include numerous species of molluscs, polychaetes, crustaceans and echinoderms that seek refuge in the leaf canopy and root-rhizome layers, hence being quite inconspicuous. Additionally, several species of sponges, corals, sea urchins, sea stars, crabs and anemones occur within this site. Of particular note is the existence of small populations of Pinna nobilis, Centrostephanus longispinus and Scyllarides latus, and Epinephelus marginatus which is frequently encountered by divers. A single sighting of Tursiops truncatus (Baldacchino & Schembri, 2002) has been reported in this area. These are amongst the species which are afforded international (apart from national) protection. Rocky Reefs are present throughout the area and may either be reefs that rise vertically from a sandy bottom littered with large boulders to join submarine bedrock platforms or submarine continuations of emergent cliffs. Associations with Flabellia petiolata and Peyssonnelia squamaria cover most reef areas. A total of five fully submerged caves and six semi-submerged caves are present in the area. Several of these caves support very diverse assemblages characteristic of semi-obscure caves, that is those with dim light conditions but not complete darkness. The macrofaunal component of this assemblage type consists of a large number of bryozoans, sponges and serpulid polychaetes. The submerged caves mostly located in the northern half of the site have a very complex physiognomy and a bottom characterised by fine sediment. The largest of these appear to be two caves lying below the shore of Il-Hofra ta' Birwin and Iz-Zerqa area. The emergent caves, which are distributed throughout the study area, also have a very complex physiognomy, both underwater and above sea-level. The bottom inside the emergent caves consists of bedrock, with small boulders, cobbles and pebbles present in some places. Note on section: Ecological Information - Habitats The extent of national territory covered by Annex I marine habitat types 1170 & 8330 is not known; hence the relative surface fields were left blank. Caves (8330) are present on site, but have not been mapped; hence the % cover at this site was left blank.

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	E01		o
M	A07		o
M	D03.02		o
L	K01.01		o
L	L06		i
M	G02.08		o
L	E03.04		i
L	E03		o
M	F06		b
M	F02.02		b
M	G01.01		i
M	A08		o
L	I01		i
H	G05		i
M	D06		i
M	F03.01		o
M	F02.01		b
L	G05		o
L	L05		i
M	F02.01.01		i
M	F02.03		b

Positive Impacts			
Rank	Activities, management [code]	Pollution (optional) [code]	inside/outside [i o b]
M	A08		o
L	L06		i
M	F02.01		b
M	E01		o
M	F02.02		b
M	D03.02		o
L	K01.01		o
H	G05		i
M	A07		o
L	F02.01.01		o
L	J01		o
M	G02.08		o
L	L06		i
M	F03.01		o
L	E03.04		i
M	F02.01.01		i
L	L05		i
M	F02.03		b
M	G01.01		i

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

5. SITE PROTECTION STATUS (optional)

5.1 Designation types at national and regional level:

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Code	Cover [%]	Code	Cover [%]	Code	Cover [%]
MT99	100.0				

5.2 Relation of the described site with other sites:

designated at national or regional level:

Type code	Site name	Type	Cover [%]
MT99	Zona fil-Bahar fl-inhawi tad-Dwejra (Ghawdex)	=	100.0

5.3 Site designation (optional)

The site is designated as a Special Area of Conservation of International Importance via Government Notice 851 of 2010, as declared through the provisions of the Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Regulations of 2006 (Legal Notice 311 of 2006).

6. SITE MANAGEMENT

6.1 Body(ies) responsible for the site management:

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Organisation:	Malta Environment and Planning Authority (MEPA)
Address:	
Email:	

6.2 Management Plan(s):

An actual management plan does exist:

☐	Yes
☐	No, but in preparation
☒	No

7. MAP OF THE SITES

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INSPIRE ID:

MT0000103

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).