



RAMSAR CONVENTION

Ramsar National Report to COP15

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Section 1: Institutional Information

Important note: The responses below will be considered by the Convention on Wetlands Secretariat as the definitive list of your focal points. All individuals listed below agree that the submitted information will be used to update the information in the Secretariat's contact database and will be published on the public website here Contacts on website.

Name of Contracting Party

The completed National Report **must be accompanied by a letter** in the name of the Head of Administrative Authority, confirming that this is the Contracting Party's official submission of its COP15 National Report. It can be attached to this question using the "Manage documents" function (blue symbol below)

Link to sample National Report Submission Letter: <https://www.ramsar.org/document/national-reports-cop15-sample-letter>

>>> The letter is attached.

You have attached the following documents to this answer.

[Letter of submission COP15 Albania.pdf](#) - Letter of submission_COP15_Albania

Designated Administrative Authority for the Convention on Wetlands

Name of Administrative Authority

>>> National Agency of Protected Areas

Head of Administrative Authority - name and title

>>> Daniel Pirushi, Commanded on Duty, General Director

Mailing address

>>> Boulevard "Deshmoret e Kombit", Skenderbej Square, No. 1, Tirana, Albania

Telephone

>>> +355 68 2094523

Email

>>> Daniel.Pirushi@turizmi.gov.al

Designated National Focal Point for the Convention on Wetlands

Name and title

>>> Daniel Pirushi, Commanded on Duty, General Director

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>>> Boulevard "Deshmoret e Kombit", Skenderbej Square, No. 1, Tirana, Albania

Telephone

>>> +355 68 2094523

Email

>>> Daniel.Pirushi@turizmi.gov.al

Designated Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) National Focal Point

Name and title

>>> -

Name of organisation

>>> -

Mailing address

>>> -

Telephone

>>> -

Email

>>> -

Designated Government Communication, Capacity Building, Education, Participation and Awareness (CEPA) Programme National Focal Point

Name and title

>>> -

Name of organisation

>>> -

Mailing address

>>> -

Telephone

>>> -

Email

>>> -

Designated Non-Governmental Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness (CEPA) Programme National Focal Point

Name and title

>>> -

Name of organisation

>>> -

Mailing address

>>> -

Telephone

>>> -

Email

>>> -

Designated National Focal Point on Strengthening the Convention on Wetland's Connections through Youth

Name and title

>>> -

Name of organization

>>> -

Mailing address

>>> -

Phone

>>> -

Email

>>> -

Section 2: General summary of national implementation progress and challenges

In your country, in the past triennium (i.e., since COP14 reporting)

A. What have been the five main achievements of the implementation of the Convention since COP14?

- 1)
>>> Organization of IWWB and Pelican Census every year in all Albanian wetlands territories.
- 2)
>>> Protection from illegal hunting (The continuation of the hunting moratorium was approved in 2022) (based on Protected Areas Law, the hunting in PA territories is ban).
- 3)
>>> Conducting a study on the importance of lagoons.
- 4)
>>> Approval of amendments to the law on protected areas.
- 5)
>>> The start of work on the drafting of the Integrated Management Plan for Lake Shkodra.

B. What have been the five main challenges in implementing the Convention since COP14?

- 1)
>>> Conflict Between Development and Conservation: Balancing wetland protection with infrastructure and urban development remains complex.
- 2)
>>> Funding Constraints: Sometimes, Albania lacks adequate financial resources to fully implement wetland conservation and restoration programs.
- 3)
>>> Community Involvement: Limited engagement with local communities hampers effective conservation efforts and sustainable management practices.
- 4)
>>> Degraded Ecosystems: Restoring heavily degraded wetlands is costly and technically demanding, exacerbated by climate change and pollution.
- 5)
>>> Knowledge and Capacity Gaps: In many cases Albania faces difficulties in conducting wetland inventories and applying advanced management techniques due to technical and data limitations.

C. Please outline five priorities for implementing the Convention in your country during the coming triennium (2026-2028)

- 1)
>>> Strengthening Wetland Governance and Legal Frameworks: Enhance national policies and laws to align with Ramsar guidelines, ensuring effective protection and sustainable use of wetlands. This includes integrating wetland conservation into broader land-use and climate policies.
- 2)
>>> Leveraging International and Regional Cooperation: Strengthen collaboration with neighboring countries and international organizations to share knowledge, secure funding, and implement transboundary wetland projects, particularly under the Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative (MedWet).
- 3)
>>> Updating the 2008 Wetland Inventory: Reassess and update the national wetland inventory from 2008 to reflect current conditions, including changes in wetland areas, biodiversity, and ecosystem services. Utilize advanced tools like GIS and remote sensing to ensure accuracy and integration into national planning.
- 4)

>>> Drafting of a new management plan for the protected areas that do not have or have expired.

5)

>>> Promoting Sustainable Wetland-Based Tourism: Develop eco-tourism initiatives that balance environmental protection with local economic benefits, focusing on Ramsar Sites.

D. Does the Administrative Authority have any recommendations concerning implementation assistance from the Convention Secretariat?

>>> No.

E. Does the Administrative Authority have any recommendations concerning implementation assistance from the Convention's International Organization Partners (IOPs) (including ongoing partnerships and partnerships to be developed)?

>>> The Administrative Authority of Albania may recommend that IOPs provide enhanced technical support for updating the national wetland inventory and monitoring efforts. Additionally, they could assist in developing and implementing large-scale wetland restoration projects, promoting sustainable tourism in Ramsar Sites, and facilitating regional cooperation for transboundary conservation. Support in strengthening legal frameworks and policies for wetland management, along with capacity-building initiatives for local authorities, would also be valuable in achieving the Convention's goals effectively. These partnerships would help enhance Albania's conservation efforts and ensure more effective implementation of Ramsar principles.

F. In accordance with paragraph 21 of Resolution XIII.18 on Gender and wetlands, please provide a short description about the balance between genders participating in wetland-related decisions, programmes and research.

>>> Don't have such information.

G. On the basis of your indications above, list possible areas where change is necessary for the achievement of gender equality.

>>> -

H. Please describe lessons learnt in the context of wetlands and gender equality work in your country.

>>> -

I. If possible, please list gender-related policies, strategies and action plans in place relevant to wetlands in your country.

>>> -

J. If applicable, identify examples of strategies and actions your country is implementing to support youth participation in the implementation of the Convention's Strategic Plan or in wetlands management (Resolution XIV.12 on Strengthening Ramsar connections through youth, paragraph 21).

>>> In Albania, the Junior Ranger Program is an example of a successful initiative aimed at involving youth in wetland management and supporting the implementation of the Ramsar Convention's Strategic Plan. This program, which operates in several protected areas, including wetland sites, empowers young people by engaging them in environmental education and conservation activities. Junior Rangers participate in hands-on activities such as habitat restoration, biodiversity monitoring, and wetland clean-up campaigns. These activities not only enhance their understanding of the importance of wetland ecosystems but also foster a sense of responsibility towards their preservation.

The Junior Ranger Program is aligned with Resolution XIV.12 of the Ramsar Convention, which emphasizes strengthening youth involvement in conservation efforts. By involving youth directly in wetland management, Albania helps cultivate a new generation of environmental leaders committed to the sustainable management of natural resources, particularly in Ramsar Sites. This program encourages youth to take an active role in the conservation of their natural heritage, supporting the broader goals of the Ramsar Convention.

K. Please list the names of the organizations which have been consulted on or have contributed to the information provided in this report.

>>> Ministry of Tourism and Environmental technical staff

National Agency of Protected Areas

The Regional Administration of Protected Areas

The network of Nature Conservation NGOs

Section 3 - all goals: Indicator questions and further implementation information

In responding to each of these questions, Contracting Parties are encouraged to provide links, references/ upload documents where applicable and relevant.

Section 3 - Goal 1. Addressing the drivers of wetland loss and degradation

In responding to each of these questions, Contracting Parties are encouraged to provide links, references/ upload documents where applicable and relevant.

[Reference to Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, 6, 8, 11, 13, 14, 15]

Target 1

Wetland benefits are featured in national/local policy strategies and plans relating to key sectors such as water, energy, mining, agriculture, tourism, urban development, infrastructure, industry, forestry, aquaculture, fisheries at the national and local level.

[Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Target 14]

1.1 Have any actions been taken since COP14 to integrate wetland protection, wise use and restoration, or wetland benefits, into other national strategies and planning processes, including: {1.1}

Please select only one per square.

a) National policy or strategy for wetland management	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant <input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
b) Poverty eradication strategies	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
c) Water resource management and water efficiency plans	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant <input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
d) Coastal and marine resource management plans	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant <input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
e) Integrated coastal zone management plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant <input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
f) National forest management plan/strategies	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant <input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
g) National policies or measures on agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes

h) National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans drawn up under the CBD	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant <input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
i) National policies on energy and mining	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
j) National policies on tourism	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant <input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
k) National policies on urban development	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant <input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
l) National policies on infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant <input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
m) National policies on industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
n) National policies on aquaculture and fisheries {1.3.3}	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant <input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
o) National plans of actions (NPAs) for pollution control and management	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
p) National policies on wastewater management and water quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
q) National policies, strategies or plans on sanitation	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
r) National policies, strategies or plans on food security	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes

Target 2

Water users respects wetland ecosystem needs for them to fulfil their functions and provide services at the appropriate scale inter alia at the basin level or along a coastal zone.

[Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Target 7, Sustainable Development Goal 6, Indicator 6.3.1]

2.1 Have the Guidelines for allocation and management of water for maintaining the ecological functions of wetlands and the additional guidance on tools and methodologies been brought to the attention of national ministries and/or agencies at different levels of territorial organizations (Resolutions VIII.1, VIII.2)? {2.1}

☒ C=Partially

2.1 Additional Information

>>> The guidelines for the allocation and management of water to maintain the ecological functions of wetlands have been introduced to relevant Albanian ministries, particularly those focused on environment and water resources. However, their full integration into national policies and practices is still in progress. While awareness is growing, the practical application of these guidelines across all sectors remains partial, and further efforts are needed to ensure consistent implementation at all levels of government.

2.2 Have assessments of environmental flow been undertaken in relation to mitigation of impacts on the ecological character of wetlands? {2.2}

☒ C=Partially

2.2 Additional Information

>>> In Albania, assessments of environmental flow to mitigate impacts on the ecological character of wetlands have been initiated but are not yet fully comprehensive. Some wetland areas, particularly those with significant water flow regulation (e.g., rivers or lakes), have received attention regarding environmental flow management. However, detailed and systematic assessments are still limited and are often carried out on a case-by-case basis, primarily in areas with ongoing or planned infrastructure developments (for example HPP).

2.3 Have the designation or management of Wetlands of International Importance ("Ramsar Sites") improved the sustainable use of water (e.g. reduced drainage, reduced use of pesticides, controlled pollution etc.) in your country?

☒ C=Partially

2.3 Additional Information

>>> The designation and management of Ramsar Sites in Albania have contributed to the sustainable use of water in some areas, but improvements are partial. For instance, in key Ramsar Sites such as Karavasta Lagoon and Butrint, efforts to reduce drainage, control pollution, and limit pesticide use have led to better water quality and ecosystem health. However, challenges remain in fully addressing water-related impacts across all Ramsar Sites. For example, land-use changes and agricultural practices still pose risks to water management in some areas. The sustainable management of water resources in these sites is ongoing but requires further attention and enhanced enforcement of regulations to ensure long-term ecological benefits.

2.4 Have the Guidelines for allocation and management of water for maintaining ecological functions of wetlands (Resolutions VIII.1 and XII.12) been used/applied in decision-making processes? {2.3}

☒ C=Partially

2.4 Additional Information

>>> The Guidelines for the Allocation and Management of Water for Maintaining the Ecological Functions of Wetlands (Resolutions VIII.1 and XII.12) have been partially applied in decision-making processes in Albania. These guidelines have informed some aspects of wetland management, especially in Ramsar Sites, where water management practices have been adjusted to support ecological functions. However, their full application in decision-making across all sectors, such as agriculture and infrastructure development, remains limited. The implementation of these guidelines is still evolving, and more comprehensive integration into national and local policies is needed to ensure they are consistently applied in water-related decisions affecting wetlands.

2.5 Have projects that promote and demonstrate good practice in water allocation and management for maintaining the ecological functions of wetlands been developed {2.4}

☒ A=Yes

2.5 Additional Information

>>> The projects focused on wetland management and biodiversity conservation in Albania include several significant initiatives across different regions.

1. The Prespa and Ohrid Trust Fund (PONT) (2018–2027), supported by MAVA and KfW, works on improving wetland management, biodiversity monitoring, law enforcement, and visitor infrastructure in the Prespa and

Ohrid areas.

2. In the project Shkodra Lake Biosphere Reserve (2023–2025), funded by IPA II AL-MNE, the focus is on ecosystem protection and sustainable socio-economic development, aligning with UNESCO's Man and Biosphere program.

3. Another project, Environmental and Tourism Solutions for Shkodra Lake (2024–2026), supported by the Italian-Albanian Debt for Development Swap (IADSA II), promotes sustainable tourism.

4. The Biodiversity Integration in Coastal Development and Tourism project (2023–2027), funded by GEF and implemented by UNDP, integrates biodiversity into coastal and tourism planning.

5. Lastly, the Capacity Building in Divjakë-Karavasta National Park (2021–2024), funded by JICA, focuses on ecosystem-based management and sustainable practices such as ecotourism, conservation, and agriculture. These projects aim to enhance biodiversity, improve wetland management, and promote sustainable tourism across Albania's protected areas.

2.6 Does the country use constructed wetlands/ponds as wastewater treatment technology? {2.8}

☒ Y=Not Relevant

Target 3

Public and private sectors have increased their efforts to apply guidelines and good practices for the wise use of water and wetlands.

[Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Targets 7, 10, 15, 16 and 18]

3.1 Has your country put in place policies, including incentives, guidelines or other instruments to encourage the private sector to apply the wise use principle and guidance (Ramsar handbooks for the wise use of wetlands) in activities and investments related to wetlands? {3.1}

☒ B=No

3.2 Has the private sector undertaken any activities or actions for the conservation, wise use, and management of (a) Ramsar Sites or (b) wetlands in general? {3.2}

Please select only one per square.

a) Ramsar Sites	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not relevant <input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
b) Wetlands in general	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not relevant <input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes

3.2 Additional information

>>> The private sector in Albania has undertaken various actions related to the conservation and wise use of Ramsar Sites. Notably, private businesses and stakeholders in Shkodra Lake have engaged in promoting sustainable tourism, which includes eco-friendly accommodations and local community involvement in conservation efforts. This aligns with the broader goal of preserving biodiversity and supporting responsible tourism. Additionally, the Prespa and Ohrid Trust Fund, which supports the Ramsar Sites in the Prespa and Ohrid regions, has involved private sector entities, particularly in the promotion of sustainable tourism practices and local economic development while minimizing environmental impact. UNDP-GEF have partnered with the private sector to integrate biodiversity conservation into coastal and tourism development plans, particularly along Albania's coastal wetlands.

3.3 Have actions been taken to implement incentive measures which encourage the conservation and wise use of wetlands? {3.3}

☒ C=Partially

3.3 Additional information

Please specify the types of incentive measures (loans, tax breaks, or others).

>>> Several ongoing projects in Albania's wetland areas have prioritized training and awareness initiatives aimed at local communities. These efforts focus on educating residents about the importance of wetland conservation and promoting sustainable practices.

3.4 Have actions been taken to remove perverse incentive measures which lead to degradation or loss of

wetlands? {3.4}

☒ B=No

Target 4

Invasive alien species and pathways of introduction and expansion are identified and prioritized, priority invasive alien species are controlled or eradicated, and management responses are prepared and implemented to prevent their introduction and establishment.

[Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Target 6]

4.1 Does your country have a national inventory of invasive alien species that currently or potentially impact the ecological character of wetlands? {4.1}

☒ C=Partially

4.1 Additional information

>>> The Strategic Biodiversity Policy Document of Albania, approved by the Council of Ministers (DCM) No. 31 on January 20, 2016, lays the foundation for addressing invasive species in the country. As part of this policy, a list of invasive species was established and approved by DCM No. 477 on July 30, 2021. This list includes measures for managing the entry and prohibition of these species at customs points.

However, Albania still faces challenges in completing a comprehensive national inventory of invasive alien species. While significant steps have been taken to regulate and prevent the spread of these species, the full inventory needed to fully address the issue is still in progress.

4.2 Has your country adopted any national policies, strategies, or guidelines on invasive species control and management that are relevant for wetlands? {4.2}

☒ B=No

4.3. Has your country successfully controlled through management actions invasive species of high risk to wetland ecosystems? {4.3}

☒ X=Unknown

4.4 Has the effectiveness of wetland invasive alien species control programmes been assessed? {4.5}

☒ X=Unknown

Section 3 - Goal 2. Effectively conserving and managing the Ramsar Site network

In responding to each of these questions, Contracting Parties are encouraged to provide links, references/ upload documents where applicable and relevant.

[Reference to Sustainable Development Goals 6, 11, 13, 14, 15]

Target 5

The ecological character of Ramsar Sites is maintained or restored through effective planning and integrated management

[Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Targets 1, 3 and 5]

5.1 Have a national strategy and priorities been established for the further designation of Ramsar Sites, using the Strategic Framework for the Ramsar List? {5.1}

☒ B=No

5.2 How many Ramsar Sites have a management plan? {5.3}

☒ E=# Sites

>>> 3

5.3 How many of the Ramsar Sites are actively implementing their management plan? {5.4}

☒ E=# Sites

>>> 3

5.4 How many Ramsar Sites are implementing management actions outside of formal management plans? {5.5}

☒ X=Unknown

5.2 – 5.4 Additional information

>>> The management plan of the Prespa National Park has completed its term of use in 2024, while the management plan of the Buna River in 2022. In place are the MP of Butrint and Divjaka-Karavasta.

5.5 Have all Ramsar Sites been assessed regarding the effectiveness of their management (through formal management plans where they exist or otherwise through existing actions for appropriate wetland management)? {5.6}

If "yes", please indicate the number of Ramsar Sites

If "partially", please indicate the number of Ramsar Sites

If "planned", please indicate the number of Ramsar Sites

☒ B=No

5.6 How many Ramsar Sites have a cross-sectoral management committee? {5.7}

☒ E=# Sites

>>> 4

5.6 Additional information

>>> According to DCM No. 593, adopted on October 9, 2018, Albania has established Management Committees for all protected areas, including wetlands. These committees are tasked with overseeing the management and protection of these areas, and they are led by the Prefect of the region. Their responsibilities include coordinating efforts to protect biodiversity, monitoring environmental conditions, and ensuring the sustainable use of natural resources within these protected spaces. The Management Committees for protected areas in Albania meet twice a year. These biannual meetings are essential for ensuring ongoing coordination and oversight of the management and conservation efforts within Albania's protected areas, including wetlands.

5.7 For how many Ramsar Sites has an ecological character description been prepared (see Resolution X.15)?

☒ E=# Sites

>>> 4

5.7 Additional information

For example give the name and official number of the Site or Sites.

>>> In 2019, a comprehensive study of Albania's protected areas, including Ramsar Sites, was completed. As part of this study, a general description was provided for all protected areas, outlining the ecological characteristics of these areas. This description included detailed ecological data on the various habitats within these protected areas, following the EU habitat classification. Specific information on flora and fauna of interest to the EU was also incorporated, emphasizing species and ecosystems that are critical for biodiversity conservation.

This ecological data forms the basis for further conservation actions, including monitoring, management planning, and ensuring that Albania's Ramsar Sites are properly protected and meet international standards. The information supports Albania's commitment to both the EU and Ramsar Convention frameworks, helping to maintain and protect its natural heritage, particularly in wetlands.

5.8 Resolution VI.13 urges Parties to give priority to providing the Secretariat with maps and completed Ramsar Information Sheets (RIS) for all Sites designated for the Ramsar List, and to revise this data at least every six years. If your country has not updated its RIS as required, describe the challenges in updating RIS, particularly descriptions of ecological character.

>>> Albania has made progress in providing the Secretariat with maps and completed Ramsar Information Sheets (RIS) for its Ramsar Sites, although challenges remain in updating them regularly, particularly in terms of ecological character descriptions. Some of the difficulties in updating the RIS include:

1. Lack of comprehensive monitoring data: Ongoing monitoring of Ramsar Sites is essential for updating the ecological character descriptions. However, gaps in long-term ecological data hinder the ability to accurately assess and document changes in habitat conditions, species populations, and other key ecological indicators.

2. Inadequate resources and capacity: Limited financial and technical resources for field surveys and data collection make it challenging to complete and regularly update detailed ecological character descriptions. This affects both the quality and frequency of RIS updates.

3. Complexity of ecological assessments: The ecological character of wetlands can be complex, requiring specialized expertise to assess and document accurately. This often necessitates collaboration with external experts or organizations, which can be resource-intensive.

4. Lack of coordination among institutions: While several institutions are involved in wetland management, there is sometimes insufficient coordination between them, leading to delays in gathering and updating the necessary data for RIS updates.

Target 7

Sites that are at risk of change of ecological character have threats addressed {2.6.}.

[Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Targets 3, 4 and 10]

7.1 Are mechanisms in place for the Administrative Authority to be informed of negative human-induced changes or likely changes in the ecological character of Ramsar Sites, pursuant to Article 3.2? {7.1}

☒ A=Yes

7.1 Additional information

If “Yes”, please provide the source links or upload the source documents here describing the mechanisms established
>>> The National Agency of Protected Areas (NAPA) in Albania has a well-established structure to monitor and manage protected areas, including Ramsar Sites. The agency is divided into 12 Regional Administrations, which are located across the country and are responsible for overseeing protected areas at the local level. These regional offices report monthly to the central administration, providing updates on the condition of protected areas. Their reports include details on illegal activities (such as poaching, land conversion, and illegal construction) that negatively affect these ecosystems.

This system helps ensure that the Administrative Authority is regularly informed about any human-induced changes, including violations that may threaten the ecological character of Ramsar Sites. The coordination between the regional administrations and the central agency allows for a rapid response to any negative impacts or potential threats to protected areas, fulfilling the requirements of Article 3.2 of the Ramsar Convention.

7.2 Have all cases of negative human-induced change or likely change in the ecological character of Ramsar Sites been reported to the Ramsar Secretariat, pursuant to Article 3.2? {7.2}

☒ O=No Negative Change

Section 3 - Goal 3. Wisely Using All Wetlands

In responding to each of these questions, Contracting Parties are encouraged to provide links, references/ upload documents where applicable and relevant.

[Reference to Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15]

Target 8

National wetland inventories have been either initiated, completed or updated and disseminated and used for promoting the conservation and effective management of all wetlands

[Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Targets 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 21]

8.1 Does your country have a National Wetland Inventory (NWI)? {8.1}

☒ B=No

8.1 Additional information

For example, if “in progress” or “planned”, by when will it be completed?

>>> After the review of the system of protected areas in Albania, all protected areas have been thoroughly identified, including those that contain wetlands. The boundaries and surface areas of these protected zones are clearly defined. However, there is currently no specific inventory solely dedicated to wetlands. The most recent inventory was conducted as part of a two-year project (2001-2002), led by the Environmental Center for Administration and Technology (ECAT) and the Greek Biotope/Wetland Center (EKBY). This project involved collaboration between Albanian and Greek scientists, and while it provided valuable information, it does not constitute a comprehensive, up-to-date inventory of wetlands across the country.

8.2 If your country has an NWI, has it been updated in the last decade [2014-2024]? {8.2}

☒ B=No

8.3 How often is the NWI updated?

☒ C=Not updated

8.4 Is wetland inventory data and information publicly available? {8.4}

☒ B=No

8.5 Please explain how the NWI data/information is maintained if at all? {8.3}

>>> -

8.6 Based on the information in NWI, if available, please provide the total area in square kilometres (km²) for the extent of wetlands (according to the Convention on Wetland’s definition) for the year of available data and provide the relevant disaggregated information in the box below. This information will also be used to report on SDG 6, Target 6.6, Indicator 6.6.1, for which the Convention is a co-custodian. {8.6}

☒ E=# km²

>>> 981.81

8.6 According to the Convention's definition and classification of wetlands, the disaggregated information on wetland extent is as follows

Note: The minimum information that should be provided is the total area of wetlands for each of the three major categories; "marine/coastal", "inland" and "human-made".

If the data on inventories are partial or not complete, use the available information to fill in the form, specifying if it is partial or not complete.

Guidance on information on national wetland extent can be consulted at: <https://www.ramsar.org/document/guidance-on-information-on-national-wetland-extent>.

>>> Based on available information, Albania's total Ramsar area is 981.81 km², as derived from the official Ramsar Sites data on the Ramsar Convention website. The last comprehensive inventory of wetlands was conducted between 2001 and 2002 by the Environmental Center for Administration and Technology (ECAT) and the Greek Biotope/Wetland Center (EKBY), in collaboration with the Albanian Ministry of Environment (MoE). This inventory identified 784 wetlands, covering an area of 96,803 ha (approximately 3% of the country's territory). Of this total area:

- Natural wetlands make up 79.91% (77,354 ha).
- Lakes and lagoons are the dominant types, with lakes covering 36,565 ha (37.67%) and lagoons covering 25,241 ha (26.07%).
- Man-made wetlands (including reservoirs, aquaculture ponds, and flooded agricultural land) account for 20.09% (19,449 ha) of the total wetland area.

8.6 Marine/Coastal Wetlands

	Square kilometers (km ²)
A -- Permanent shallow marine waters	lagoons 252.41
B -- Marine subtidal aquatic beds	
C -- Coral reefs	
D -- Rocky marine shores	
E -- Sand, shingle or pebble shores	
F -- Estuarine waters	87.99
G -- Intertidal mud, sand or salt flats	
Ga -- Bivalve (shellfish) reefs	
H -- Intertidal marshes	
I -- Intertidal forested wetlands	
J -- Coastal brackish/saline lagoons	8.83
K -- Coastal freshwater lagoons	
Zk(a) -- Karst and other subterranean hydrological systems	

8.6 Marine/Coastal Wetlands total (km²)

>>> 349,23

8.6 Inland Wetlands

	Square kilometers (km ²)
--	--------------------------------------

L -- Permanent inland deltas	Rivers and streams 27.13
M -- Permanent rivers/streams/creeks; includes waterfalls	
N -- Seasonal/intermittent/irregular rivers/streams/creeks	
O -- Permanent freshwater lakes	335.65
P -- Seasonal/intermittent freshwater lakes	
Q -- Permanent saline/brackish/alkaline lakes	
R -- Seasonal/intermittent saline/brackish/alkaline lakes and flats	
Sp -- Permanent saline/brackish/alkaline marshes/pools	
Ss -- Seasonal/intermittent saline/brackish/alkaline marshes/pools	
Tp -- Permanent freshwater marshes/pools	6.36
Ts -- Seasonal/intermittent freshwater marshes/pools on inorganic soils	
U -- Non-forested peatlands	
Va -- Alpine wetlands	
Vt -- Tundra wetlands	
W -- Shrub-dominated wetlands	
Xf -- Freshwater, tree-dominated wetlands	
Xp -- Forested peatlands	
Y -- Freshwater springs; oases.	
Zg -- Geothermal wetlands	
Zk(b) -- Karst and other subterranean hydrological systems	

8.6 Inland Wetlands total (km2)

>>> 369,14

8.6 Human-made wetlands

	Square kilometers (km2)
1 -- Aquaculture ponds.	6.36

2 -- Ponds	Reservoirs, impoundments, dams 178.95
3 -- Irrigated land	
4 -- Seasonally flooded agricultural land	9.07
5 -- Salt exploitation sites	
6 -- Water storage areas	
7 -- Excavations	
8 -- Wastewater treatment areas	
9 -- Canals and drainage channels, ditches	
Zk(c) - Karst and other subterranean hydrological systems	

8.6 Human-made wetlands total (km2)

>>> 194,35

8.7 How has the ecological character of wetlands in your country, overall, changed since COP14 ? {8.5}

Ecological character is the combination of the ecosystem components, processes and benefits/services that characterize the wetland at a given point in time.

Please select only one per square.

a) Ramsar Sites	<input type="checkbox"/> P=Status improved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> O=No change <input type="checkbox"/> N=Status deteriorated
b) All wetlands in your country	<input type="checkbox"/> P=Status improved <input type="checkbox"/> O=No change <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N=Status deteriorated

8.8 On a scale of **1-5** rate the change in the ecological character of wetlands in your country, overall, since last COP

Please select only one per square.

a) Marine/coastal	<input type="checkbox"/> 5=major improvement <input type="checkbox"/> 4=improvement <input type="checkbox"/> 3=no change <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2=deterioration <input type="checkbox"/> 1=major deterioration
b) Inland	<input type="checkbox"/> 5=major improvement <input type="checkbox"/> 4=improvement <input type="checkbox"/> 3=no change <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2=deterioration <input type="checkbox"/> 1=major deterioration
c) Human-made	<input type="checkbox"/> 5=major improvement <input type="checkbox"/> 4=improvement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3=no change <input type="checkbox"/> 2=deterioration <input type="checkbox"/> 1=major deterioration

8.8 Additional Information

>>> a) Marine/Coastal Wetlands: 2 (Deterioration)

Reason: The marine and coastal wetlands in Albania, including lagoons and estuaries, are experiencing increasing pressures from mass tourism, urbanization, and pollution. The document highlights ongoing habitat loss and fragmentation in these areas. Conservation measures, while present, have not effectively countered these pressures.

b) Inland Wetlands: 2 (Deterioration)

Reason: Inland wetlands, particularly freshwater lakes, and marshes, are affected by agricultural expansion, water abstraction, and pollution. Drainage and land-use changes continue to diminish their ecological quality.

Monitoring and management efforts are insufficient to halt these impacts.

c) Human-Made Wetlands: 3 (No Change)

Reason: Human-made wetlands such as reservoirs and aquaculture ponds have largely maintained their ecological character. While these systems are subjected to anthropogenic activities like fishing and water regulation, they have not experienced substantial improvement or deterioration.

8.9 What are your main needs in developing or updating an NWI to support SDG Indicator 6.6.1 reporting for tracking global wetland status and trends? Please select below. {8.7}

	Yes
a) Access to data and data acquisition standards	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Wetland delineation methods and approaches	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Habitat classifications	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Standardization in data interpretation methods	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Regulatory framework and governance structure	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Relevant skills	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Data collection and mapping	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
i) Collaboration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
j) Others	<input type="checkbox"/>

8.10 Please select from the list below the main needs of your country in using NWI results to implement COP mandates, e.g. conservation and wise use of all wetlands (Resolutions X.2, XIII.12, XIII.13, XIII.14, XIII.16, XIV.17 and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)) to achieve sustainable development.

	Yes
a) Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Relevant skills	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Data systems and management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Application of NWI information for decision making (climate, biodiversity and sectoral planning/reporting)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Regulatory framework and governance structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Data interpretation and communication	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Collaboration	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Others	<input type="checkbox"/>

Target 9

The wise use of wetlands is strengthened through integrated resource management at the appropriate scale, inter alia, within a river basin or along a coastal zone {1.3.}.
[Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Targets 1, 9, 10 and 15].

9.1 Is a national wetland policy (or equivalent instrument) that promotes the wise use of wetlands in place? {9.1}

☒ B=No

9.2 Since COP14 have any amendments to existing legislation or policies been made to reflect commitments under the Convention on Wetlands? {9.2}

☒ B=No

9.3 Do your country's water governance and management systems recognize wetlands as natural water infrastructure integral to water resource management at the scale of river basins? {9.3}

☒ A=Yes

9.4 Have communication, capacity building, education, participation and awareness (CEPA) expertise and tools been incorporated into catchment/river basin planning and management (see Resolution X.19)? {9.4}

☒ B=No

9.5 Has your country established policies or guidelines for enhancing the role of wetlands in mitigating or adapting to climate change? {9.5}

☒ B=No

9.6 Has your country included wetland actions in Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and other related national policies on climate change mitigation and adaptation?

☒ C=Partially

9.6 Additional Information

>>> Albania submitted its revised NDC in October 2021. Albania's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement and related climate policies reference ecosystems broadly but do not specifically emphasize wetlands as key components for climate change mitigation or adaptation. While wetlands are recognized for their ecological value, actions targeting wetland conservation and restoration as nature-based solutions for carbon sequestration, flood control, and resilience to climate impacts are limited or implicit.

9.7 Has your country formulated policies, plans or projects to sustain and enhance the role of wetlands in supporting and maintaining viable farming systems? {9.6}

☒ B=No

9.8 Has research to inform wetland policies and plans been undertaken in your country on: {9.7}

Please select only one per square.

a) agriculture-wetland interactions	<input type="checkbox"/> C=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
b) climate change	<input type="checkbox"/> C=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
c) valuation of ecosystem services	<input type="checkbox"/> C=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes

9.8 Additional information

>>> During the year 2022, NAPA conducted a study on the importance in the ecosystem of the lagoons, including the status of protection depending on the importance, as well as the relevant sub-zoning.

9.9 Has your country made efforts to conserve and wisely use urban and peri-urban wetlands in line with Resolutions XI.11 and XIV.10? {9.8}

☒ B=No

Target 10

The traditional knowledge innovations and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities relevant for the wise use of wetlands and their customary use of wetland resources, are documented, respected, subject to national legislation and relevant international obligations and fully integrated and reflected in the implementation of the Convention with a full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities at all relevant levels.

[Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Target 22]

10.1 Do you have national legislation or equivalent on indigenous and local communities at all relevant levels in wetland management, and/or Site management?

☒ C1= Partially

10.1 Additional Information

>>> Albania has made progress in including the rights and involvement of indigenous and local communities in environmental management, including wetland and site management, but the legal framework is still evolving. National legislation such as the Environmental Protection Law (Law No. 66/2024 on Amendments to Law No. 10431, dated 9.6.2011, "On Environmental Protection," as amended) and specific regulations concerning protected areas incorporate aspects of community involvement. However, these laws often focus on broader environmental conservation issues rather than specific and comprehensive engagement with local and indigenous communities in wetland management.

10.3 Have case studies on the participation of indigenous people in projects or successful experiences on cultural aspects of wetlands been compiled? (Resolutions VIII.19 and IX.21) {10.1}

☒ B=No

10.4 Have the guidelines for establishing and strengthening local communities' and indigenous people's participation in the management of wetlands been applied? (Resolution VII. 8) {10.2}

☒ B=No

10.5 Have traditional knowledge and management practices relevant to the wise use of wetlands been documented and their application encouraged {10.3}

☒ B=No

Target 11

Wetland functions, services and benefits are widely demonstrated, documented and disseminated. {1.4.}
[Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Targets 11, 12 and 13]

11.1 Has an assessment been made of the ecosystem benefits/services provided by Ramsar Sites and other wetlands? {11.1}

☒ D=Planned

11.1 Additional information

If "yes" or "partially", please indicate how many Ramsar Sites and their names

>>> Under the RESCOM Project ("Promoting Ecosystem Resilience in the Mediterranean"), an assessment will be carried out regarding the ecosystem benefits and services provided by Divjakë-Karavasta Protected Area. This project is funded by the French Global Environment Facility and the MAVA Foundation, and is implemented by the Mediterranean Biodiversity Consortium. The project's goal is to enhance the social and environmental resilience of vulnerable coastal areas in the Mediterranean by improving the services they provide through the application of Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) and actively engaging stakeholders at all levels through training, consulting, and participation in various regional activities.

11.2 Since COP14, have wetland programmes or projects that contribute to food and water security and hence poverty alleviation been implemented? {11.2}

☒ Y=Not Relevant

11.3 Since COP14 have wetland programmes or projects that contribute to other benefits for human well-being been implemented?

☒ B=No

11.4 Have socio-economic values of wetlands been included in the management planning for Ramsar Sites and other wetlands? {11.3}

☒ C=Partially

11.4 Additional information

If "yes" or "partially", please indicate, if known, how many Ramsar Sites and their names

>>> In all management plans, there is typically a chapter dedicated to the socio-economic values of the area, which includes aspects such as livelihoods, tourism, cultural values, ecosystem services, and their contributions to both local and national economies. This section helps ensure that conservation efforts are aligned with the well-being of local communities, fostering sustainable development and positive community involvement.

11.5 Have cultural values of wetlands been included in the management planning for Ramsar Sites and other wetlands in general? {11.4}

☒ C=Partially

11.5 Additional information

>>> Same logic as the previous question.

Target 12

Restoration is in progress in degraded wetlands, with priority to wetlands that are relevant for biodiversity conservation, disaster risk reduction, livelihoods and/or climate change mitigation and adaptation.

[Reference Global Biodiversity Framework Targets 2, 8 and 11]

12.1 Have national wetland restoration targets been established?

☒ B=No

12.2 Have priority sites for wetland restoration been identified? {12.1}

☒ B=No

12.3 Since COP14 have wetland restoration/rehabilitation programmes, plans or projects been implemented? {12.2}

☒ B=No

12.4 Have the Guidelines for Global Action on Peatlands (Resolution VIII.1) and Resolution XII.11 on Peatlands, climate change and wise use: Implications for the Ramsar Convention been implemented? {12.3}

☒ X=Unknown

Target 13

Enhanced sustainability of key sectors such as water, energy, mining, agriculture, tourism, urban development, infrastructure, industry, forestry, aquaculture and fisheries when they affect wetlands, contributing to biodiversity conservation and human livelihoods.

[Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Targets 10 and 14]

13.1 Have actions been taken to enhance sustainability of wetlands when they are affected by key sectors including

Please select only one per square.

a) Energy	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
b) Mining	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
c) Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
d) Tourism	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
e) Urban development	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
f) Infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
g) Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
h) Forestry	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes

i) Aquaculture	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
j) Fisheries	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes

13.2 Are Strategic Environmental Assessment practices applied when reviewing policies, programmes and plans that may impact wetlands? {13.1}

☒ A=Yes

13.2 Additional information

>>> In Albania, Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) practices are applied when reviewing policies, programmes, and plans that may impact wetlands. The SEA process is required for projects and plans that could have significant environmental impacts, including those affecting wetland ecosystems. This is in line with the European Union's environmental regulations, which Albania follows as part of its integration process. The SEA process includes environmental impact assessments to evaluate the potential effects of proposed policies or development plans on the environment, specifically focusing on wetlands and their associated biodiversity and ecosystem services. This helps ensure that environmental considerations are integrated early in the decision-making process, promoting sustainable development and reducing negative impacts on wetland areas.

Additionally, the SEA process encourages stakeholder engagement, ensuring that local communities, environmental organizations, and other relevant stakeholders are involved in reviewing and mitigating the potential impacts on wetlands.

13.3 Is there a legal requirement in your country to conduct environmental impact assessments for development projects (such as new buildings, new roads, extractive industry) from key sectors (e.g., water, energy, mining and agriculture) that may impact wetlands? {13.2}

☒ A=Yes

13.3 Additional information

>>> In Albania, there is a legal requirement to conduct Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) for development projects that may affect wetlands. This requirement is governed by the Law on Environmental Impact Assessment (No. 10440/2011), which aligns with EU directives on environmental protection. The EIA process is mandatory for projects that may have significant impacts on the environment, including wetlands. Projects from key sectors such as water, energy, mining, and agriculture must undergo EIA procedures if they are likely to affect sensitive ecosystems like wetlands. This includes infrastructure projects (e.g., new buildings, roads, or dams) and extractive industries (e.g., mining or oil extraction). The EIA process assesses potential impacts on wetland habitats, biodiversity, water quality, and ecosystem services, and ensures that mitigation measures are put in place to minimize environmental harm.

In addition to the legal framework, Albania has also committed to international conventions, such as the Ramsar Convention and EU environmental directives, which further emphasize the need for thorough environmental assessments in areas like wetlands. The legal requirement ensures that the impacts on these ecosystems are carefully evaluated and mitigated, contributing to sustainable development.

Section 3 - Goal 4. Enhancing implementation

In responding to each of these questions, Contracting Parties are encouraged to provide links, references/ upload documents where applicable and relevant.

[Reference to Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, 6, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 17]

Target 15

Ramsar Regional Initiatives with the active involvement and support of the Parties in each region are reinforced and developed into effective tools to assist in the full implementation of the Convention.

15.1 Has your country been part of the development and implementation of a Ramsar Regional Initiative?? {15.1}

☒ B=No

15.2 Has your country supported or participated in the development of other regional (i.e., covering more than one country) wetland training and research centres? {15.2}

☒ B=No

Target 16

Wetlands conservation and wise use are mainstreamed through communication, capacity development,

education, participation and awareness.
[Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Target 21].

16.1 Has an action plan (or plans) for wetland CEPA been established? {16.1}

Even if no CEPA plans have been developed, if broad CEPA objectives for CEPA actions have been established, please indicate this in the Additional information section below
Please select only one per square.

a) At the national level	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=In Progress <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
b) Sub-national level	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=In Progress <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
c) Catchment/basin level	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=In Progress <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
d) Local/site level	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=In Progress <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes

16.2 How many centres (visitor centres, interpretation centres, education centres) that focus on wetlands have been established? {16.2}

a) at Ramsar Sites

☒ E=# centres

>>> 4

b) at other wetlands

☒ E=# centres

>>> 3

16.2 Additional information

>>> The same ones as reported in COP 14.

16.3 Does the Contracting Party {16.3}

Please select only one per square.

a) ensure stakeholder participation in decision-making on wetland planning and management	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
b) specifically involve local stakeholders in the selection of new Ramsar Sites and in Ramsar Site management?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes

16.3 Additional information

>>> In Albania, local stakeholders are actively involved in decision-making processes related to wetland planning and management, including the selection of new Ramsar Sites and their management. Local communities participate through the Management Plans for Ramsar Sites, which include provisions for community engagement in conservation and sustainable use activities.

For any activity requiring an Environmental Permit, there is a mandatory public consultation process, specifically targeting the local community. This ensures that the concerns and inputs of local stakeholders are taken into account before issuing permits for projects that may affect wetland areas. These consultations help to align conservation objectives with the needs and interests of local populations, fostering collaborative and sustainable management of Ramsar Sites.

16.4 Do you have an operational cross-sectoral national Ramsar/wetlands committee? {16.4}

☒ B=No

16.5 Do you have an operational cross-sectoral body equivalent to a national Ramsar/wetlands committee? {16.5}

☒ C=Partially

16.5 Additional information

>>> Albania has a partially operational cross-sectoral national Ramsar/wetlands committee. While there isn't yet a fully established national committee, there are active efforts to facilitate collaboration across sectors at various levels, particularly in the context of transboundary wetland management. One notable example is the Prespa Transboundary Park, which includes wetland areas across Albania, Greece, and North Macedonia. During the meeting of the Prespa Park Management Committee (PPMC), held in 2023, stakeholders from all three countries participated, demonstrating cross-border collaboration in wetland conservation. The meeting was attended by:

1. Albania: Representatives from the Ministry of Tourism and Environment, the Regional Administration of Protected Areas of Korça, the Municipality of Pustec, and the PPNEA NGO.
2. North Macedonia: Representatives from the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning (MMPH), the Municipality of Resen, and the MES BirdLife NGO.
3. Greece: Representatives from the Ministry of Environment and Energy (YPEN), the National Environmental and Climate Change Agency (NECCA), the Municipality of Prespa, and the SPP NGO.
4. European Union: Representatives from the European Commission and the European Union Delegation in North Macedonia.

In addition to the primary participants, the meeting also included members of the Water Management Working Group (WGWM), as well as officials and consultants from state agencies and organizations from the three countries, attending as observers.

These efforts highlight Albania's commitment to cross-sectoral cooperation and multi-level engagement in wetland management, particularly in regions of shared ecological significance like the Prespa Lakes. However, while substantial progress has been made in the context of the Prespa Park, a fully operational national Ramsar committee for all wetlands in Albania is still in development.

16.6 Are other communication mechanisms (apart from a national committee) in place to share the Convention's implementation guidelines and other information between the Administrative Authority and: {16.6}

Please select only one per square.

a) Ramsar Site managers	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
b) other MEA national focal points	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
c) other ministries, departments and agencies	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes

16.6 Additional information

>>> The Regional Administrations of Protected Areas (RAPAs) in each county are responsible for managing the Ramsar sites. As territorial branches of the National Agency for Protected Areas, they work in close collaboration with the national agency to ensure effective management and protection of these areas.

16.7 Has your country organized any Convention on Wetlands-branded World Wetlands Day events, whether led by government or NGOs, since COP14? {16.7}

☒ B=No

16.8 Did your country undertake any campaigns, programmes or projects to raise awareness about the importance of wetlands to people and wildlife during the World Wetlands Days since COP14? {16.8}

☒ A=Yes

16.8 Additional information

>>> Every year, on February 2nd, in celebration of World Wetlands Day, the National Agency for Protected Areas (NAPA) and the Regional Administrations of Protected Areas (RAPAs) organize a wide range of activities

to promote the importance of wetlands and engage the public in their conservation. These activities typically include tree planting initiatives, environmental education sessions, and clean-up campaigns in wetland areas. In addition to these, there are also workshops, seminars, and guided tours for students and local communities to raise awareness about the ecological value of wetlands. Other activities include art and photography exhibitions, community outreach programs, and the distribution of informational materials to highlight the significance of wetlands in maintaining biodiversity and supporting local livelihoods. These efforts aim to foster greater environmental responsibility and inspire collective action for wetland conservation.

16.9 Has information about your country’s wetlands and/or Ramsar Sites and their status been made public (e.g., through publications or a website)? {18.5}
☒ A=Yes

16.9 Additional Information
>>> Information about Albania's wetlands and Ramsar Sites is publicly available through various platforms, including publications and dedicated websites. The National Agency for Protected Areas (NAPA) regularly provides updates, reports, and educational materials related to wetland conservation. Additionally, information on the status of Ramsar Sites and other protected areas is accessible to the public through the official websites of the National Agency for Protected Areas and other governmental institutions. These platforms aim to raise awareness about the ecological value of these sites, their biodiversity, and the ongoing efforts for their protection.

Target 17
Financial and other resources for effectively implementing the Convention’s fourth Strategic Plan 2016 – 2024 from all sources are made available.
[Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Target 19]

17.1 [For Contracting Parties with a development assistance agency (“donor countries”)] Since COP14, has the agency provided funding to support wetland conservation and management efforts in other countries? {17.3}
☒ Z=Not Applicable

17.2 [For Contracting Parties with a development assistance agency (“donor countries”)] Have environmental safeguards and assessments been included in development proposals proposed the development of projects by the agency? {17.4}
☒ Z=Not Applicable

17.3 [For Contracting Parties that have received development assistance since COP14] Has your country received financial support specifically for national wetland conservation and management: {17.5}
Please select only one per square.

a) from development assistance agencies of another country?	<input type="checkbox"/> Z=Not applicable <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
b) from non-national or multilateral development assistance agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/> Z=Not applicable <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes

17.3 Additional information
for example from which countries or agencies
>>> both bilateral and multilateral development assistance agencies. Specific examples of this support include:
From Development Assistance Agencies of Another Country:
Albania has received funding from countries like France through projects such as RESCOM (Enhancing Ecosystem Resilience in the Mediterranean), which aims to improve the resilience of vulnerable coastal areas, including wetlands, by implementing Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) and promoting biodiversity conservation. This project involves cooperation with the French Global Environmental Facility and the MAVA Foundation.
From Non-National or Multilateral Development Assistance Agencies:
Albania has also benefited from multilateral funding, including support from the EU and UNDP. The EU has financed wetland management projects under programs like IPA (Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance), which includes activities for the restoration of wetland habitats and the sustainable management of Ramsar Sites. Additionally, UNDP has supported the GEF (Global Environment Facility) funded projects, focusing on enhancing Albania's wetland ecosystems through conservation programs and the restoration of degraded areas.

17.4 Has any financial support from the national budget been provided by your country to facilitate the

implementation of the Convention on Wetlands? {17.6}

☒ A=Yes

17.4 Additional information

If “yes” please state the amounts, and for which activities.

>>> The financial support allocated from the national budget for the implementation of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands amounted to a limited fund of 13,816,666 ALL. The key project funded by this budget was the study on the ecosystem importance of lagoons, which included an assessment of their protection status based on ecological value and the development of sub-zoning for better management and protection.

Target 18

International cooperation is strengthened at all levels

18.1 Are the national focal points of other MEAs invited to participate in the national Ramsar /wetland committee? {18.1}

☒ C=Partially

18.1 Additional information

>>> The national focal points of other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) are partially invited to participate in the national Ramsar/wetland committee. Their involvement depends on the specific issues being addressed at the time, ensuring coordination between various environmental conventions and enhancing the overall effectiveness of wetland management in Albania.

18.2 Are mechanisms in place at the national level for collaboration between the Convention on Wetland's Administrative Authority and the focal points of UN and other global and regional bodies and agencies (e.g. UNEP, UNDP, WHO, FAO, UNECE, ITTO)? {18.2}

☒ A=Yes

18.2 Additional information

>>> In Albania, there are mechanisms in place for collaboration between the Convention on Wetlands' Administrative Authority and the focal points of various UN and other global and regional bodies. These mechanisms ensure coordinated efforts in addressing environmental challenges and promoting sustainable wetland management. Regular communication, joint initiatives, and participation in international forums facilitate the exchange of knowledge, expertise, and resources to support the implementation of the Ramsar Convention and other related environmental conventions. This collaboration strengthens Albania's commitment to achieving broader environmental goals, including wetland conservation and sustainable development.

18.3 Has your country received assistance from any of the following UN or other global and regional bodies and agencies in implementing the Convention on Wetlands since COP14? {18.3}

a) UNEP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) FAO	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) UNECE	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) UNFCCC	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Global Environment Facility	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) UNDP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) UNESCO	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) World Health Organization	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) World Meteorological Organization	<input type="checkbox"/>
j) ITTO	<input type="checkbox"/>
k) The Convention's IOPs	<input type="checkbox"/>

18.3 Additional information

For example describe the support and indicate the amount of funding.

>>> The project titled "Realization of Biodiversity Protection through Effective Management and Climate Change Adaptation in Protected Areas in the Northern Region of Albania (GEF7)" aims to enhance biodiversity protection and climate resilience in Albania's protected areas. The total funding for the project is 10,121,188 USD, with 1,411,188 USD provided by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and 8,710,000 USD in co-financing (including both in-kind and cash contributions). The project will be implemented from October 1, 2023, to October 1, 2026 (a duration of 48 months), with financial support from GEF, the Ministry of Tourism and Environment (MTE), and UNEP. Periodic in-kind expenses amount to 1,000,000 USD, while cash investments include 200,000 USD allocated for workshops, training programs, and improvements in protected areas management.

The project "Integration of Biodiversity in Coastal Development and Sustainable Tourism Development Planning", funded by GEF and implemented by UNDP, with a total budget of USD 986,900, aims to promote the development of the tourism industry in Albania while ensuring positive impacts on biodiversity in key coastal areas. It focuses on integrating biodiversity into tourism planning and development. The project, which started on October 15, 2023, will run until October 15, 2027, with co-financing of USD 200,000 for various activities. The specific target areas include NP Divjakë-Karavasta, Karaburun-Sazan, PL Pishë-Poro-Nartë, Vjosë River, Kune-Vain-Patok, and Lake Shkodra. The project aims to support the development of regulations that restore lost wetland functions by preserving existing wetlands and enhancing their functionality, with the participation of local administrations such as RAPA Fier, RAPA Vlorë, RAPA Lezhë, and RAPA Shkodër. The project "Increasing the Financial Sustainability of the Protected Areas System" aimed to assist the Albanian government in addressing the financial challenges faced by the protected areas system. The main objective of the project was to reduce the existing funding gaps, improve the management of specific protected areas, enhance cost-effectiveness in individual protected zones, and build financial management capacities for the staff managing these areas. The project received funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) amounting to 1,420,000 USD, with 100,000 USD from the Ministry of Tourism and Environment (MTE) and 100,000 USD from UNDP. Implemented from May 2017 to December 2022, the project focused on several key protected areas, including Llogara, Divjakë-Karavasta (Ramsar Site), and Dajti. The project was managed by UNDP, with the participation of the Ministry of Tourism and Environment (MTE) and the Agency for the Protected Areas of Albania (NAPA).

18.4 Has your country established international network(s), such as twinning arrangements, to facilitate knowledge sharing and training related to wetlands that share common features? {18.4}

☒ B=No

18.5 Have all transboundary wetland systems been identified? {18.6}

☒ A=Yes

18.5 Additional information

>>> Shkodra Lake and Prespa Lakes are cross-border areas.

18.6 Is effective cooperative management in place for shared wetland systems (for example, in shared river basins and coastal zones)? {18.7}

☒ C=Partially

18.6 Additional information

>>> A cross-border management committee exists only for the Prespa Lakes.

18.7 Does your country participate in regional networks or initiatives for wetland-dependent migratory species? {18.8}

☒ A=Yes

18.7 Additional information

If "yes", please list which regional networks or initiatives

>>> One notable example is the International Census of Wintering Waterfowl, which takes place annually across 146 countries worldwide. This initiative, which has been conducted in Albania since 2016, is organized by the National Agency for Protected Areas (NAPA). The census aims to monitor and assess the population of wintering waterfowl species, providing valuable data for conservation efforts and promoting collaboration with other countries engaged in similar efforts. The participation in this international network supports Albania's commitment to preserving migratory species and their wetland habitats.

Target 19

Capacity building for implementation of the Convention and its 4th Strategic Plan 2016 – 2024 is enhanced.

[Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Target 20]

19.1 Has your country conducted any national needs assessment since COP14 to inform capacity building planning to implement the Convention's Strategic Plan? {19.1}

☒ B=No

19.2 Does your country or institution implement capacity development strategies or actions for the Convention's Strategic Plan?

☒ B=No

19.3 Are wetland conservation and wise-use issues included in formal education programmes (Resolution XIV.11)? {19.2}

☒ A=Yes

19.3 Additional information

>>> Wetland conservation and wise-use issues are integrated into formal education programs in Albania. These topics are included in various levels of education, from primary schools to universities. Specific environmental education programs focus on the importance of wetlands, their biodiversity, and the ecosystem services they provide. Moreover, curricula for environmental science and ecology incorporate lessons on wetland management, sustainable use, and conservation practices. This is done through cooperation between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Environment, along with local environmental organizations. Additionally, activities like field trips to Ramsar sites and protected wetlands help students gain a practical understanding of the significance of wetlands.

19.4 How many training events for wetland site managers have occurred since COP14? {19.3}

a) at Ramsar Sites

☒ X=Unknown

b) at other wetlands

☒ X=Unknown

19.5 Have you (AA) used your previous National Reports in monitoring implementation of the Convention? {19.4}

☒ Z=Not Applicable

Section 4. Optional annex to allow any Contracting Party that has developed national targets to provide information on those

Goal 1

Target 1: Wetland benefits

Wetland benefits are featured in national/ local policy strategies and plans relating to key sectors such as water, energy, mining, agriculture, tourism, urban development, infrastructure, industry, forestry, aquaculture, fisheries at the national and local level. [Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Target 14]

Target 1: Wetland benefits - Priority

☒ C=Low

Target 1: Wetland benefits - Resourcing

☒ B=Adequate

Target 1: Wetland benefits - National Targets

>>> The national targets for wetland conservation are reflected in several key policy strategies and plans, addressing various sectors such as water, energy, agriculture, tourism, urban development, and infrastructure. These strategies are aligned with national sustainable development objectives and aim to integrate wetland conservation and sustainable use into these sectors. The government is working to strengthen cross-sectoral coordination to ensure that the benefits of wetlands are factored into sector-specific policies and practices.

Target 1: Wetland benefits - Planned activity

>>> 1 Integration of Wetlands in Sectoral Policies: Strengthening the integration of wetland conservation into national and local planning strategies for key sectors. This will be achieved through policy reforms and the adoption of guidelines that incorporate the sustainable management of wetlands in land-use planning, water resource management, and urban development.

2 Capacity Building: Providing training and capacity-building programs for stakeholders involved in sectors affecting wetlands, including local governments, private sectors, and communities, to ensure that they understand the importance of wetlands and how to integrate wise-use principles into their activities.

3 Monitoring and Reporting: Establishing systems to monitor the status of wetlands and track the implementation of wetland-related policies, to ensure accountability and inform future policy adjustments.

Target 1: Wetland benefits - Outcomes achieved by 2021

Outcomes achieved by 2024 and how they contribute to achievement of the Global Biodiversity Framework Targets and Sustainable Development Goals

Note: this field has to be completed when the full report is submitted in October 2024

>>> The iNaturalist platform has become an integral part of the Capacity Building in Divjakë-Karavasta National Park (2021–2024) project, funded by JICA. As a key tool for monitoring biodiversity, iNaturalist enables both park staff and local communities to actively engage in the documentation and observation of plant and animal species in the park. Launched in June 2021, the platform has facilitated over 700 observation reports within its first two months, with 345 species of plants and animals identified so far. The data collected through iNaturalist contributes significantly to improving the park's biodiversity monitoring system. By continuously accumulating observational data, the project aims to enhance the understanding of the park's flora and fauna, providing valuable insights for effective ecosystem-based management and conservation strategies. Additionally, the integration of iNaturalist strengthens the park's commitment to sustainable practices, helping to foster ecotourism and engage the public in environmental protection efforts. This initiative supports the broader goal of enhancing local capacity and promoting sustainable, community-driven conservation practices in Divjakë-Karavasta.

Target 2: Water Use

Water use respects wetland ecosystem needs for them to fulfil their functions and provide services at the appropriate scale inter alia at the basin level or along a coastal zone. [Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Target 7, Sustainable Development Goal 6, Indicator 6.3.1]

Target 2: Water Use - Priority

☒ C=Low

Target 2: Water Use - Resourcing

☒ C=Limiting

Target 2: Water Use - National Targets

>>> The Water Resources Management Agency (WRMA) ensures the protection of aquatic ecosystems by regulating water use in hydropower projects. In the agreements made with hydropower plant (HPP) operators, the WRMA specifies that a certain percentage of water, typically 25-30%, must be allocated to maintain ecological balance and support natural ecosystem functions.

Target 2: Water Use - Planned activity

>>> To achieve this target, a key planned activity is the regular monitoring phase of hydropower plants. This monitoring ensures that the projects adhere to the contractual obligations related to water flow for ecosystems. By verifying compliance, the WRMA aims to safeguard water resources and promote the sustainable development of hydropower in alignment with environmental protection goals.

Target 2: Water Use - Outcomes achieved by 2021

Outcomes achieved by 2024 and how they contribute to achievement of the Global Biodiversity Framework Targets and Sustainable Development Goals

Note: this field has to be completed when the full report is submitted in October 2024

>>> The Ministry of Tourism and Environment, along with the National Environmental Agency, plays a key role in ensuring the continuous monitoring and enforcement of environmental regulations. This includes overseeing the fulfillment of conditions stipulated in Environmental Permits, which are required for various projects, including those that may impact natural ecosystems. Through regular inspections and assessments, the Ministry ensures that these projects comply with environmental standards, particularly those related to the conservation of wetlands and biodiversity. By monitoring the implementation of these permits, the Ministry helps prevent environmental degradation and promotes sustainable development, contributing to the broader goals of ecosystem protection and sustainable resource use. This oversight supports the achievement of national and international environmental objectives, including those outlined in the Aichi Targets and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Target 3: Public and private sectors

Public and private sectors have increased their efforts to apply guidelines and good practices for the wise use of water and wetlands. [Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Targets 7, 10, 15, 16 and 18]

Target 3: Public and private sectors - Priority

☒ C=Low

Target 3: Public and private sectors - Resourcing

☒ C=Limiting

Target 3: Public and private sectors - National Targets

>>> Strengthen forest protection, promote reforestation, combat illegal logging.

Target 3: Public and private sectors - Planned activity

>>> Plant as much trees as possible.

Target 3: Public and private sectors - Outcomes achieved by 2021

Outcomes achieved by 2024 and how they contribute to achievement of the Global Biodiversity Framework Targets and Sustainable Development Goals

Note: this field has to be completed when the full report is submitted in October 2024

>>> 2024 was the "Year of Forests" in Albania, with significant afforestation efforts carried out.

Target 4: Invasive alien species

Invasive alien species and pathways of introduction and expansion are identified and prioritized, priority invasive alien species are controlled or eradicated, and management responses are prepared and implemented to prevent their introduction and establishment. [Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Target 6]

Target 4: Invasive alien species - Priority

☒ A=High

Target 4: Invasive alien species - Resourcing

☒ E=No answer

Target 4: Invasive alien species - National Targets

>>> Identify, prioritize, and control invasive alien species (IAS) that threaten wetland ecosystems, focusing on both prevention and eradication efforts.

Develop and implement management strategies to prevent the introduction, establishment, and spread of invasive species in Albania's wetlands and Ramsar Sites.

Target 4: Invasive alien species - Planned activity

>>> Inventory of Invasive Species: Conduct a national survey to identify and prioritize invasive alien species that affect wetland ecosystems.

Eradication Programs: Implement eradication or control programs for high-priority invasive species in wetlands, particularly those in Ramsar Sites and protected areas.

Prevention and Monitoring: Establish monitoring systems to track the spread of invasive species and prevent new introductions through border controls and early detection systems.

Public Awareness and Stakeholder Engagement: Raise awareness among local communities and stakeholders about the risks of invasive species and promote participation in control and prevention programs.

Target 4: Invasive alien species - Outcomes achieved by 2021

Outcomes achieved by 2024 and how they contribute to achievement of the Global Biodiversity Framework Targets and Sustainable Development Goals

Note: this field has to be completed when the full report is submitted in October 2024

>>> No outcomes till now.

Goal 2

Target 5: Ecological character of Ramsar Sites

The ecological character of Ramsar Sites is maintained or restored through effective, planning and integrated management. [Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Targets 3, 4 and 5]

Target 5: Ecological character of Ramsar Sites - Priority

☒ B=Medium

Target 5: Ecological character of Ramsar Sites - Resourcing

☒ C=Limiting

Target 5: Ecological character of Ramsar Sites - National Targets

>>> Ensure the protection and restoration of Albania's Ramsar Sites, through integrated management plans, effective monitoring, and stakeholder collaboration.

Target 5: Ecological character of Ramsar Sites - Planned activity

>>> • Planning and Management: Develop and implement effective management plans for Ramsar Sites to protect their ecological character.

• Monitoring and Restoration: Establish monitoring systems for Ramsar Sites to assess their ecological health and identify areas for restoration.

• Stakeholder Involvement: Engage local communities, government agencies, and NGOs in the management and conservation of Ramsar Sites.

• Legal and Policy Frameworks: Strengthen national and local legal frameworks to support the protection of Ramsar Sites.

Target 5: Ecological character of Ramsar Sites - Outcomes achieved by 2021

Outcomes achieved by 2024 and how they contribute to achievement of the Global Biodiversity Framework Targets and Sustainable Development Goals

Note: this field has to be completed when the full report is submitted in October 2024

>>> • Management Plans: Effective management plans have been developed for at least one Ramsar Site (Shkodra lake Management Plan is being drafted).

• Monitoring Systems: Initial monitoring programs have been implemented in key Ramsar Sites.

• Ecological Health: Some positive changes in the ecological health of Ramsar Sites have been observed, especially in protected wetland areas.

Target 7: Sites at risk

Sites that are at risk of change of ecological character have threats addressed. [Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Targets 3, 4, and 10]

Target 7: Sites at risk - Priority

☒ C=Low

Target 7: Sites at risk - Resourcing

☒ E=No answer

Target 7: Sites at risk - National Targets

>>> Identify and address threats to sites at risk of ecological changes by 2025, through the implementation of site-specific action plans and enhanced monitoring systems.

Target 7: Sites at risk - Planned activity

>>> Rehabilitation and Maintenance of Communication Channels Between the Sea and Coastal Wetlands:

- Restore and maintain the natural hydrological flow between the sea and coastal wetlands, which is vital for the ecological health of wetlands like the Karavasta Lagoon.
- Address barriers caused by human activities or infrastructure that disrupt natural water flows.

Flooding Control:

- Implement effective flood management strategies to mitigate the impact of flooding on wetlands and surrounding communities. This includes both structural and non-structural flood control measures.
- Enhance the resilience of wetland ecosystems to flooding events, especially those influenced by climate change.

Target 7: Sites at risk - Outcomes achieved by 2021

Outcomes achieved by 2024 and how they contribute to achievement of the Global Biodiversity Framework Targets and Sustainable Development Goals

Note: this field has to be completed when the full report is submitted in October 2024

>>> As part of the "Support for Capacity Building to Improve the Management of Divjaka-Karavasta National Park" project, funded by the Japanese Government in cooperation with JICA, significant progress was made:

- Till the end of the project was made the monitoring equipment was installed to measure water levels in three channels connecting the Karavasta Lagoon to the sea, allowing for better management of water flow and habitat restoration.
- This action played a crucial role in maintaining the ecological balance of the wetland, helping mitigate the impact of both natural and human-induced changes.

Goal 3

Target 8: National wetland inventories

National wetland inventories have been either initiated, completed or updated and disseminated and used for promoting the conservation and effective management of all wetlands. [Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Targets 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 21]

Target 8: National wetland inventories - Priority

☒ B=Medium

Target 8: National wetland inventories - Resourcing

☒ B=Adequate

Target 8: National wetland inventories - National Targets

>>> • **Conduct Wetland Inventories:** Carry out a comprehensive national inventory of all wetlands in Albania, focusing on identifying key wetland areas and assessing their ecological status.
• **Data Collection and Mapping:** Collect data on wetland types, biodiversity, ecosystem services, and threats. This will involve field surveys, satellite imagery, and collaboration with local experts and communities.

Target 8: National wetland inventories - Planned activity

>>> **Field Surveys and Data Collection:** Conduct field surveys to gather detailed data on wetland ecosystems, including biodiversity, ecosystem services, and environmental threats.
Satellite Imagery and Remote Sensing: Utilize satellite imagery and remote sensing technologies to map wetland distribution and monitor changes over time.
Collaboration with Experts and Communities: Work closely with local experts, stakeholders, and communities to ensure accurate data collection and assessment of wetland health.
Data Dissemination and Use: Disseminate the collected data to support national wetland conservation policies, management plans, and regional cooperation.

Target 8: National wetland inventories - Outcomes achieved by 2021

Outcomes achieved by 2024 and how they contribute to achievement of the Global Biodiversity Framework Targets and Sustainable Development Goals

Note: this field has to be completed when the full report is submitted in October 2024

>>> The financial support allocated from the national budget for the implementation of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands amounted to a limited fund of 13,816,666 ALL. The key project funded by this budget was the study on the ecosystem importance of lagoons, which included an assessment of their protection status based on ecological value and the development of sub-zoning for better management and protection. The study can be used has a good basis for the future development of the inventory.

Target 9: Wise Use

The wise use of wetlands is strengthened through integrated resource management at the appropriate scale, inter alia, within a river basin or along a coastal zone. [Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Targets 1, 9, 10 and 15]

Target 9: Wise Use - Priority

☒ B=Medium

Target 9: Wise Use - Resourcing

☒ C=Limiting

Target 9: Wise Use - National Targets

>>> To promote the wise use of wetlands, Albania aims to integrate wetland management principles into broader resource management strategies, particularly at the scale of river basins and coastal zones. This involves aligning wetland conservation with national policies on water resource management, tourism, and urban development, ensuring these activities are conducted sustainably.

Target 9: Wise Use - Planned activity

- >>> 1. Develop Integrated River Basin Management Plans (IRBMP) that incorporate wetland conservation as a core component.
2. Conduct capacity-building workshops for local authorities and stakeholders to promote sustainable wetland resource management.
3. Enhance monitoring systems to track changes in wetland conditions within river basins and coastal zones.
4. Strengthen cross-sectoral coordination to ensure alignment between agricultural, urban development, and tourism practices with wetland conservation objectives.
5. Foster community engagement programs to encourage the wise use of wetlands, emphasizing the benefits of wetlands for biodiversity and local livelihoods.

Target 9: Wise Use - Outcomes achieved by 2021

Outcomes achieved by 2024 and how they contribute to achievement of the Global Biodiversity Framework Targets and Sustainable Development Goals

Note: this field has to be completed when the full report is submitted in October 2024

- >>> • Improved coordination between sectors affecting wetland use.
- Enhanced awareness and capacity for wise-use practices among stakeholders.
 - Progress in integrating wetland conservation into river basin and coastal zone management plans.

Target 10: Traditional Knowledge

The traditional knowledge innovations and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities relevant for the wise use of wetlands and their customary use of wetland resources, are documented, respected, subject to national legislation and relevant international obligations and fully integrated and reflected in the implementation of the Convention with a full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities at all relevant levels. [Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Target 22]

Target 10: Traditional Knowledge - Priority

☒ B=Medium

Target 10: Traditional Knowledge - Resourcing

☒ C=Limiting

Target 10: Traditional Knowledge - National Targets

>>> Albania aims to document and integrate traditional knowledge and practices of local communities in the management and wise use of wetlands. The goal is to ensure that wetland-related policies and practices respect and benefit from local knowledge, promoting sustainable resource use while safeguarding community rights and cultural heritage.

Target 10: Traditional Knowledge - Planned activity

>>> • Documentation of Traditional Practices: Conduct field studies and consultations to document traditional knowledge and practices related to wetland management and resource use.
• Integration into Management Plans: Incorporate traditional knowledge into the management plans for Ramsar Sites and other wetlands, emphasizing sustainable use and conservation strategies.
• Community Engagement: Facilitate community participation in decision-making processes related to wetland management to ensure their knowledge and needs are addressed.
• Capacity Building: Train local stakeholders, including indigenous and local communities, on wetland conservation practices while promoting the exchange of knowledge between communities and authorities.
• Legal Framework Development: Strengthen legislation to recognize and protect the rights and contributions of local communities in wetland conservation.

Target 10: Traditional Knowledge - Outcomes achieved by 2021

Outcomes achieved by 2024 and how they contribute to achievement of the Global Biodiversity Framework Targets and Sustainable Development Goals

Note: this field has to be completed when the full report is submitted in October 2024

>>> • Enhanced recognition of local communities' roles in wetland management.
• Inclusion of traditional knowledge in wetland conservation and use policies.
• Strengthened collaboration between authorities and communities for the sustainable management of wetlands.

Target 11: Wetland functions

Wetland functions, services and benefits are widely demonstrated, documented and disseminated.
[Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Targets 2, 12 and 13]

Target 11: Wetland functions - Priority

☒ C=Low

Target 11: Wetland functions - Resourcing

☒ D=Severely limiting

Target 11: Wetland functions - National Targets

>>> Promote the ecological functions, ecosystem services, and socio-economic benefits of wetlands to a broad audience, with a specific focus on engaging and educating local communities living in or near wetland areas.

Target 11: Wetland functions - Planned activity

>>> • Celebrating International Wetlands Day: Organize annual events, including educational workshops, community clean-up initiatives, and public awareness campaigns, to highlight the importance of wetlands in biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.

• Participation in Local Festivals: Utilize platforms such as the "Mandarina Fest" and other community events to showcase wetland benefits, emphasizing their contributions to local livelihoods, tourism, and biodiversity.

Target 11: Wetland functions - Outcomes achieved by 2021

Outcomes achieved by 2024 and how they contribute to achievement of the Global Biodiversity Framework Targets and Sustainable Development Goals

Note: this field has to be completed when the full report is submitted in October 2024

>>> • Increased public awareness of wetland benefits, particularly among communities living in wetland areas.

• Enhanced community participation in wetland conservation activities, contributing to sustainable management efforts.

• Integration of wetland functionality and services into local development plans and tourism initiatives, supporting broader conservation goals.

Target 12: Restoration

Restoration is in progress in degraded wetlands, with priority to wetlands that are relevant for biodiversity conservation, disaster risk reduction, livelihoods and/or climate change mitigation and adaptation.
[Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Targets 2, 8, and 11]

Target 12: Restoration - Priority

☒ C=Low

Target 12: Restoration - Resourcing

☒ D=Severely limiting

Target 12: Restoration - National Targets

>>> Stabilize threats to water systems in degraded wetlands, focusing on biodiversity conservation and climate resilience.

Target 12: Restoration - Planned activity

- >>> • Expand reforestation in wetland areas.
• Rehabilitate coastal dunes with native, climate-resilient species.
• Maintain tidal channels to support hydrological flow.

Target 12: Restoration - Outcomes achieved by 2021

Outcomes achieved by 2024 and how they contribute to achievement of the Global Biodiversity Framework Targets and Sustainable Development Goals

Note: this field has to be completed when the full report is submitted in October 2024

- >>> • Reforested of degraded land.
• Rehabilitated coastal dunes.

Target 13: Enhanced sustainability

Enhanced sustainability of key sectors such as water, energy, mining, agriculture, tourism, urban development, infrastructure, industry, forestry, aquaculture and fisheries when they affect wetlands, contributing to biodiversity conservation and human livelihoods. [Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Targets 10, 14 and 15]

Target 13: Enhanced sustainability - Priority

☒ C=Low

Target 13: Enhanced sustainability - Resourcing

☒ D=Severely limiting

Target 13: Enhanced sustainability - National Targets

>>> Harmonize national policies in key sectors with sustainable development principles to ensure wetland conservation.

Target 13: Enhanced sustainability - Planned activity

- >>> • Engage the private sector to adopt sustainable practices for wetland conservation.
• Promote cross-sectoral policies that integrate wetland sustainability into development planning.

Target 13: Enhanced sustainability - Outcomes achieved by 2021

Outcomes achieved by 2024 and how they contribute to achievement of the Global Biodiversity Framework Targets and Sustainable Development Goals

Note: this field has to be completed when the full report is submitted in October 2024

- >>> • Support for Local Economies: Continued sustainable initiatives in Prespa National Park, promoting eco-tourism, agriculture, beekeeping, and fisheries.
• Policy Alignment: Progress in harmonizing policies for sustainable development across agriculture, tourism, and urban planning.
• Private Sector Engagement: Increased adoption of sustainable practices, especially in tourism and aquaculture near Ramsar Sites.
• Capacity Building: Workshops and consultations to promote integration of wetland conservation into development practices.
• Sustainable Resource Use: Improved integration of sustainability into national strategies, reducing sectoral impacts on wetlands.

Goal 4

Target 15: Regional Initiatives

Ramsar Regional Initiatives with the active involvement and support of the Parties in each region are reinforced and developed into effective tools to assist in the full implementation of the Convention.

Target 15: Regional Initiatives - Priority

☒ A=High

Target 15: Regional Initiatives - Resourcing

☒ C=Limiting

Target 15: Regional Initiatives - National Targets

>>> Strengthen Albania's participation in regional Ramsar initiatives like MedWet and joint transboundary wetland projects.

Target 15: Regional Initiatives - Planned activity

- >>> • Strengthen regional cooperation through MedWet.
- Collaborate on transboundary wetland management, such as the Prespa Lakes.
 - Provide capacity-building and awareness programs for regional stakeholders.
 - Align national policies with regional Ramsar frameworks.

Target 15: Regional Initiatives - Outcomes achieved by 2021

Outcomes achieved by 2024 and how they contribute to achievement of the Global Biodiversity Framework Targets and Sustainable Development Goals

Note: this field has to be completed when the full report is submitted in October 2024

- >>> • Enhanced regional collaboration, particularly in the Prespa Lakes, with joint management committees functioning effectively.
- Progress in implementing transboundary conservation projects, such as the Prespa Transboundary Park.
 - Strengthened capacities for wetland management in Albania and neighboring countries, improving conservation practices across the region.
 - Active participation in MedWet and similar initiatives, contributing to regional and global biodiversity goals.

Target 16: Wetlands conservation and wise use

Wetlands conservation and wise use are mainstreamed through communication, capacity development, education, participation and awareness. [Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Target 21]

Target 16: Wetlands conservation and wise use - Priority

☒ C=Low

Target 16: Wetlands conservation and wise use - Resourcing

☒ D=Severely limiting

Target 16: Wetlands conservation and wise use - National Targets

- >>> • Mainstream wetland conservation and sustainable use through national communication, capacity development, and awareness efforts, with a focus on engaging local communities and stakeholders.
- Promote environmental education programs that highlight the importance of wetlands for biodiversity and ecosystem services.

Target 16: Wetlands conservation and wise use - Planned activity

- >>> • Public Awareness Campaigns: Organize national campaigns to raise awareness about wetland conservation, such as World Wetlands Day activities and community outreach programs.
- Educational Programs: Develop and integrate wetland conservation topics into school curricula and university programs to foster long-term environmental stewardship.
 - Stakeholder Engagement: Increase participation from local communities, NGOs, and the private sector in wetland conservation through workshops, consultations, and collaborative projects.
 - Capacity Building: Provide training for local authorities and community leaders on sustainable wetland management and the wise use of resources.

Target 16: Wetlands conservation and wise use - Outcomes achieved by 2021

Outcomes achieved by 2024 and how they contribute to achievement of the Global Biodiversity Framework Targets and Sustainable Development Goals

Note: this field has to be completed when the full report is submitted in October 2024

- >>> • Increased public awareness and community engagement in wetland conservation.
- Integration of wetland conservation into national education programs.
 - Strengthened capacity for wetland management at the local level.

Target 16: Wetlands conservation and wise use - Additional Information

- >>> Challenges in this area include limited financial and human resources, making it difficult to fully implement widespread awareness and capacity-building initiatives.

Target 17: Financial and other resources

Financial and other resources for effectively implementing the Convention's fourth Strategic Plan 2016 – 2024 from all sources are made available. [Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Target 19]

Target 17: Financial and other resources - Priority

☒ E=No answer

Target 17: Financial and other resources - Resourcing

☒ E=No answer

Target 17: Financial and other resources - National Targets

>>> Secure financial resources from national and international sources to support wetland conservation and the Ramsar Convention's Strategic Plan.

Target 17: Financial and other resources - Planned activity

- >>> • Strengthen resource mobilization efforts.
- Advocate for increased national budget for wetland management.
 - Develop partnerships with international organizations and explore new financial mechanisms.

Target 17: Financial and other resources - Outcomes achieved by 2021

Outcomes achieved by 2024 and how they contribute to achievement of the Global Biodiversity Framework Targets and Sustainable Development Goals

Note: this field has to be completed when the full report is submitted in October 2024

>>> No outcomes.

Target 18: International cooperation

International cooperation is strengthened at all levels.

Target 18: International cooperation - Priority

☒ A=High

Target 18: International cooperation - Resourcing

☒ C=Limiting

Target 18: International cooperation - National Targets

>>> Strengthen international cooperation to enhance wetland conservation and management, focusing on regional and global partnerships, knowledge sharing, and joint projects.

Target 18: International cooperation - Planned activity

>>> • Regional and International Partnerships: Engage in collaborative initiatives with neighboring countries and international organizations to protect shared wetland ecosystems, such as the Prespa Lakes and Karavasta Lagoon.

• Participation in Global Forums: Actively participate in Ramsar COPs and other international conventions, ensuring Albania contributes to and benefits from global wetland conservation efforts.

• Joint Research and Data Sharing: Collaborate with international experts and organizations to conduct joint research on wetland biodiversity and ecosystem services.

Target 18: International cooperation - Outcomes achieved by 2021

Outcomes achieved by 2024 and how they contribute to achievement of the Global Biodiversity Framework Targets and Sustainable Development Goals

Note: this field has to be completed when the full report is submitted in October 2024

>>> • Participation in Regional and International Initiatives: Albania has improved its participation in regional and international initiatives, particularly in the management of transboundary wetland systems such as Karavasta Lagoon and the Prespa Lakes. Active participation has been facilitated through partnerships with organizations like GEF and MedWet.

• Joint Projects and Support for Ramsar Sites: Under international projects, such as those in Shkodra Lake and Divjakë-Karavasta, significant support has been provided for implementing management plans and enhancing protection for wetlands. This cooperation has included capacity building, training, and technical support from international organizations like UNDP and GEF.

• Support for Research and Data Sharing: A major outcome has been the collaboration in research and data sharing at the regional and global levels. This cooperation has helped improve policies and practices for wetland conservation, particularly for lagoon and wetland ecosystems.

Target 19: Capacity Building

Capacity building for implementation of the Convention and its 4th Strategic Plan 2016 – 2024 is enhanced. [Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Target 20]

Target 19: Capacity Building - Priority

☒ A=High

Target 19: Capacity Building - Resourcing

☒ C=Limiting

Target 19: Capacity Building - National Targets

>>> Enhance capacity-building efforts to improve the implementation of the Ramsar Convention's 4th Strategic Plan, focusing on strengthening skills for wetland management and conservation.

Target 19: Capacity Building - Planned activity

- >>> • Training Programs: Conduct training for local authorities, site managers, and stakeholders involved in wetland conservation.
- Workshops and Seminars: Organize workshops to increase awareness and knowledge on sustainable wetland management practices.
 - Collaboration with International Experts: Partner with international organizations to facilitate technical assistance and capacity-building initiatives.

Target 19: Capacity Building - Outcomes achieved by 2021

Outcomes achieved by 2024 and how they contribute to achievement of the Global Biodiversity Framework Targets and Sustainable Development Goals

Note: this field has to be completed when the full report is submitted in October 2024

- >>> • Improved skills for wetland management at the national and local levels.
- Increased participation in capacity-building activities, fostering better management of Ramsar Sites.
 - Enhanced collaboration with international bodies to share expertise and best practices.

Target 19: Capacity Building - Additional Information

>>> Limited resources remain a challenge in implementing extensive capacity-building initiatives, especially at the local level.

