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
››› Republic of Belarus

You have attached the following documents to this answer.

Belarus_National__report.pdf - Belarus National report - confirmation letter

Designated Administrative Authority for the Convention on Wetlands

Name of Administrative Authority
››› Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Belarus

Head of Administrative Authority - name and title
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Designated National Focal Point for the Convention on Wetlands

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››› Ludmila Vikent'evna Bartoshevich - Deputy Head of Biological and Landscape Diversity Department, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection

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

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

Name and title
››› Meleshkova Elena Mikhailovna - Deputy Head of the Department of Analytical Work, Science and Information

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

Name and title
››› Maryna Vladimirovna Belous, Chairman of the Council of the Belarusian Public Association “Ecological Initiative”

Name of organisation
››› Belarusian Public Association “Ecological Initiative”

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

Name and title
››› Reut Elizaveta Vladimirovna - consultant of Biological and Landscape Diversity Department, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection

Name of organization
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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)
››› Ecological rehabilitation of peatlands degraded as a result of drainage and peat mining by means of restoration of their hydrological regime on the area of 7.9 thousand hectares (since the previous national report). In total, since 2007, Belarus has carried out ecological rehabilitation of degraded peatlands on an area of 89.4 thousand hectares (target set by the Strategy for the Conservation and Wise (Sustaina-ble) Use of Peatlands for 2030 is 75 thousand hectares).

2)
››› Development of the National Strategy for Water Resources Management in the Conditions of Climate Change for the period up to 2030 (approved by the Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus No. 91 of 22.02.2022 “On the National Strategy for Water Resources Management in the Conditions of Climate Change up to 2030”).

3)
››› The technology of ecological rehabilitation of degraded peatlands taking into account the prevention of radionuclide removal from the lands contaminated as a result of the Chernobyl accident on the area of about 6 thousand hectares was tested.

4)
››› Announcement of new specially protected natural areas on the area of about 24 thousand hectares that are important for the conservation of wetlands (nature reserves “Surazhsky”, “Starobinsky”, “Staritsa”, “Dunaykovsky”, “Floodplain Lvy”, “Mikulishki”).

5)
››› Approving of the Pripyat River Basin Management Plan (2023), the only major meridional river in Europe with wetlands saved in an almost natural state.

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

1)
››› The area of lands under wetlands and other water bodies in the Republic of Belarus decreased by 2% from 2021 to 2023 and consist of 1195.5 thousand hectares

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

Statistical overview

2)
››› The process of overgrowing of open fen mires and floodplain meadows with shrubs and reeds continues, which leads to the loss of globally significant biodiversity. By 2024 this process has affected more than 500 thousand hectares of wetlands. The main causes of overgrowing are the cessation of grazing and haying, as well as disturbance of the hydrological regime.

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

UNDP article

3)
››› Disturbance of wetlands hydrological regime on the area of 516 thousand ha, absence of water level regulation system on drained lands within the forest fund boundaries

4)
››› Peat consumption exceeds its growth by 12 times

5)
››› CO2 emission from peatlands into the atmosphere (4.45 million tons of carbon per year) excess the absorption of CO2 by peatlands (0.23 million tons of carbon per year)

C. Please outline five priorities for implementing the Convention in your country

during the coming triennium (2026-2028)

1)
››› Updating the National Strategy for the implementation of The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Further - the Ramsar Convention), adopted in 2009, in line with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

2)
››› Ensuring rehabilitation of degraded peatlands on an area of at least 100 thousand hectares by 2030.

3)
››› Development of the Scheme of Peatlands Distribution According to Their Use for the period of 2031-2045.

4)
››› Development of a Peatlands Register of the Republic of Belarus.

5)
››› Preparation of a list of degraded peatlands subject to ecological rehabilitation (for the period of 2031-2045).

D. Does the Administrative Authority have any recommendations concerning implementation assistance from the Convention Secretariat?
››› No recommendations

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)?
››› No recommendations

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.
››› There are no special statistics on gender equality in sphere of wetlands conservation in the Republic of Belarus. Indirectly, the balance between men and women in this area can be seen from the data pre-sented below.
As of July 1 2024 4,637,424 men (49.6%) and 4,712,221 women (50.4%) permanently reside in Belarus.
Women are widely represented in State administration: among civil servants at all levels women are more than 68%, including more than 58% of heads of organizations and their deputies. In institu-tions of higher education the share of women in the total number of undergraduate and graduate stu-dents is 52.2%.
In general, gender equality is also respected in public authorities working in the field of wetlands conservation.
In the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection that has a coordinating function in the implementation of the Ramsar Convention, the ratio between men and women in executive posi-tions (minister, deputy ministers, heads of departments, divisions and their deputies, etc.) is 48.5% and 51.5% respectively (https://minpriroda.gov.by/ru/strukturn-ru/).
In the main scientific body providing scientific support to the Ramsar Convention - The SSPA «SPC of The National Academy of Sciences of Belarus on Bioresources» the ratio of men and women in the category "researchers" is maintained at the level of gender equality: in 2021 the share of women per-forming scientific research was 51.1%, in 2023 - 51.0%.
National experts have been invited to prepare this report on the basis of gender equality - 50% male and 50%female.

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

Ministry of Natural resources

G. On the basis of your indications above, list possible areas where change is necessary for the achievement of gender equality.
››› Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus No. 793 of December 30, 2020, adopted the National Plan of Actions to Ensure Gender Equality in the Republic of Belarus for 2021 – 2025 that is a program document in this question for the country.
The purpose of the National Plan is to put gender factor into implementation of state policy as essential condition for the equal development of the human capital of women and men.
The National Plan envisages actions aimed at expanding employment opportunities for women, reduc-ing professional and sectoral gender segregation and reducing women's double employment in favor of developing their personal potential.
It's expected that in result of envisaged actions increase in the proportion of women in management positions

in organizations engaged in economic activities such as information technology and information service activities, professional, scientific technical, research and development activities, including activi-ties related to the protection and sustainable use of wetlands will occur.
As specific measures aimed at achieving gender equality in wetland conservation, it is recommended to increase the proportion of women represented in the Interagency Coordinating Council for the Imple-mentation of the Ramsar Convention, Interagency River Basin Management Councils and in Scientific and Technical Councils of Ramsar Sites.

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

National Plan

H. Please describe lessons learnt in the context of wetlands and gender equality work in your country.
››› Lessons learnt in the context of wetlands and gender equality work cannot be presented

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).
››› There is no specific strategy in Belarus to support youth participation in the implementation of the Convention's Strategic Plan or in wetlands management. The main comprehensive document that consolidates the system of official views and approaches to improving conditions for effective youth participation in political, social, economic and cultural development is the Strategy of the State youth policy of the Republic of Belarus till 2030, approved by Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus 19.06.2021 № 349.
One of the main objectives of this strategy is to ensure the broad involvement of young people in the processes of making environmentally significant decisions that have an impact on the environment.
The mechanisms for solving this task according to the Strategy are:
- Development of environmental awareness and education that meets the needs of sustainable devel-opment of the country;
- raising awareness of young people about the ecological state of the environment;
- creation of necessary conditions to ensure the participation of youth and youth public associations in making environmentally significant decisions.
The above mentioned approaches are fully realized with participation of youth in the implementation of the Convention's Strategic Plan and in wetlands management.

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

State Youth Policy

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 Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Belarus;
Ministry of Forestry of the Republic of Belarus;
National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Belarus;
The National Academy of Sciences of Belarus;
The State Scientific and Production Amalgamation "Scientific and Practical Center of the National Acad-emy of Sciences of Belarus for Biological Resources";
The State Scientific institution «V.F.Kuprevich institute of experimental botany of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus»;
UNDP;
Republican Unitary Enterprise "Central Research Institute for the Integrated Use of Water Resources" (TsNIIKIVR).

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	☐ Y=Not Relevant ☐ X=Unknown ☐ D=Planned ☐ C=Partially ☐ B=No ☑ A=Yes
b) Poverty eradication strategies	☐ Y=Not Relevant ☐ X=Unknown ☐ D=Planned ☐ C=Partially ☐ B=No ☑ A=Yes
c) Water resource management and water efficiency plans	☐ Y=Not Relevant ☐ X=Unknown ☐ D=Planned ☐ C=Partially ☐ B=No ☑ A=Yes
d) Coastal and marine resource management plans	☑ Y=Not Relevant ☐ X=Unknown ☐ D=Planned ☐ C=Partially ☐ B=No ☐ A=Yes
e) Integrated coastal zone management plan	☑ Y=Not Relevant ☐ X=Unknown ☐ D=Planned ☐ C=Partially ☐ B=No ☐ A=Yes
f) National forest management plan/strategies	☐ Y=Not Relevant ☐ X=Unknown ☐ D=Planned ☐ C=Partially ☐ B=No ☑ A=Yes
g) National policies or measures on agriculture	☐ Y=Not Relevant ☐ X=Unknown ☐ D=Planned ☑ C=Partially ☐ B=No ☐ A=Yes

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

1.1 Additional information

››› Wetlands protection, wise use, restoration and wetland benefits are included in the following national strategies and planning processes:

- The Strategy for the Realization of the Ramsar Convention, approved by the resolution of the Council of

Ministers of the Republic of Belarus № 177 dated February 10, 2009.
- Strategy on the Conservation and Sustainable use of Biological diversity approved by the Decree of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus 19.11.2010 № 1707 (as amended on 20.11.2023 N 797);
- Strategy in the field of environmental protection of the Republic of Belarus for the period up to 2035, approved by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Belarus 24.12.2021 № 370-OD;
- Strategy on the realization of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (UNCCD) approved by the Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus on 29.04.2015 No. 361.
- Strategy for conservation and wise (sustainable) use of peatlands and Scheme of Peatlands Distribution According to Their Use until 2030 approved by the Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus on 30.12.2015 No. 1111;
- National Strategy for Water Resources Management in the Conditions of Climate Change for the period up to 2030 and Action Plan of the National Strategy for Water Resources Management in the Conditions of Climate Change for the period up to 2030 approved by the Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus No. 91 of 22.02.2022 (in terms of water resources management);
- National Strategy of Sustainable Social and Economic Development of the Republic of Belarus for the period until 2030, approved by the Presidium of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus on 02.05.2017 № 10;
- National Strategy for the development of the system of specially protected natural areas until January 1, 2030, approved by the Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus 02.06.2014 No. 649 (amended on 20.12.2023);
- Scheme of rational allocation of specially protected natural areas of national significance until January 1, 2025, approved by the Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus 02.06.2014 № 649;
- Draft of the Scheme of rational allocation of specially protected natural areas of national significance until January 1, 2035
- Program of socio-economic development of the Republic of Belarus for the period 2021-2025 approved by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus 29.07.2021 № 292;
- National Action Plan for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity for 2021-2025, approved by the Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus 21.12.2021 № 733
- State Program “Environmental Protection and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources” for 2021-2025, approved by the Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus on 19.02.2021 № 99 (subprogram 2 “Hydrometeorological activities, protection of natural resources in the context of climate change”, subprogram 4 “Conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity”; subprogram 5 “National system of environmental monitoring”);
- State Program “Agrarian Business” for 2021-2025, subprogram “Development of fishery activities”, approved by the Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus on 01.02.2021 № 59 (parts of the development of fisheries and fish farming);
- State program “Belarusian Forest” for 2021-2025, approved by the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus on 28.01.2021 № 52 (ecologically-oriented forestry taking into account environment-forming, water-protective recreational and other protective functions; rational hunting);
- State program “Comfortable housing and favorable environment” for 2021-2025, approved by the Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus 28.01.2021 № 50, subprogram 5 “Clean water” (in terms of improving the quality of drinking water, improving the quality of treatment of wastewater discharged into water bodies);
- State Program for Overcoming the Consequences of the Disaster at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant for 2021 – 2025 approved by the Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus on 22.03.2021 № 159 (in terms of re-wetting of peatlands on the territory of the Polessky State Radiation Ecological Reserve);
- Separate Scientific and Technical Program (SSTP) “Introduction and Invasions” for 2021-2025, Subprogram 2 “Invasive Processes” (in terms of preventing the entry and reducing the negative impact of invasive species).

Target 2

Water userespects 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}
☑ A=Yes

2.1 Additional Information
››› Guidelines for allocation and management of water resources for maintaining the ecological functions of wetlands have been brought to the attention of national ministries and/or agencies at different levels of territorial organization and taken into account in the development of relevant normative legal acts of the Republic of Belarus in the field of wetlands conservation.

The Water Code of the Republic of Belarus is the main Law regulating relations in case of possession, use and ordering of water and water bodies and aimed at the protection and rational (sustainable) use of water resources. In accordance with Article 3 of the Water Code, the main principles of water protection and use in the country are:
- rational (sustainable) use of water resources;
- integrated use of water resources;
- priority of groundwater use for drinking needs over other uses;
- improvement of ecological condition (status) of surface water bodies (their parts);
- prevention of water pollution and contamination;
- basin water resources management;
- standardization in the field of water protection and use;
- payment for water use, except cases stipulated by this Code;
- compensation for damage caused to water objects;
- differentiations of functions of state regulation, management and control of water use and protection and functions of water use;
- participation of citizens and public associations in decision-making in the field of water protection and use.
Since 12.04.2022, amendments to the Water Code of the Republic of Belarus on the issues of construction of surface water objects, construction activities (building) within the boundaries of surface water objects, their improvement and liquidation, aimed at strengthening the protection and improving the quality of water bodies use, have come into force.

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

The Water code

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

››› Methodological approaches to assess the characteristics of environmental flow required to maintain good ecological status of water bodies in the Republic of Belarus have been developed and are taken into account when withdrawing a part of river flow that ensures normal functioning of the aquatic ecosystem and maintains the ability of the river system to self-repair
Assessment of environmental flow in relation to reducing impacts on the ecological character of wetlands is applied in the development of programs for sustainable functioning of water management systems at various levels, taking into account the fulfillment of conditions to ensure good ecological status of water bodies. In the water management practice of the country it is accepted that the ecological safety of a river is ensured by maintaining water flow in it at the rate of 75 % of the minimum average monthly flow rate per year and 95 % of the probability of exceedance.
Environmental flow was assessed for large transboundary rivers in Belarus. The data obtained indicates the necessity to take measures that aimed at adaptation of water resources to climate change. During the last decades there is a decrease in river flow in almost all seasons in the southern part of Belarus that leads to degradation of the ecological character of wetlands in this region. These issues have been taken into account in the development of the National Strategy for Water Resources Management in the Conditions of Climate Change for the period up to 2030.

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

http://
National Strategy for Water Resources Management in the Conditions of Climate Change for the period up to 2030
Methodology for assessment and monitoring of environmental flow

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?

☑ A=Yes

2.3 Additional Information

››› Allocation of Ramsar sites and creation of protected areas on these territories entails the introduction of restrictions and prohibitions established by the Law of the Republic of Belarus "On Specially Protected Natural Areas" of 15.11.2018 No. 150-3 that determines the improvement of the character of water resources use.
In accordance with the Law, economic activities that have a harmful impact on water resources are prohibited on protected areas, including Ramsar sites (hereinafter incomplete and indirect quotation of the Law):
- survey and development of mineral deposits;
- wastewater discharge into the environment;

- washing of motor vehicles;
- performance of works on hydrotechnical drainage, works related to the changing of the existing hydrological regime (except for works on its restoration, reconstruction, repair and maintenance works to ensure the functioning of drainage systems, separately located hydraulic structures, inland waterway structures and flood control facilities);
- construction of industrial, communal and storage facilities, automobile filling stations, service stations and car washes, livestock facilities, waste storage, burial, neutralization and utilization facilities, res-idential development, summer camps for livestock, creation of new horticultural associations and cottage cooperatives;
- storage and application by aviation method of chemical plant protection products, plant growth regu-lators, fertilizers;
- use by legal entities and individuals of water vehicles with internal combustion engines over 15 horsepower, with the exception of water vehicles that perform functions of state control (border service bodies, bodies for emergency situations, Ministry of Natural Resources, etc.);
- plowing of lands in coastal strips (except for works on arrangement and maintenance of mineralized strips, as well as on preparation of soil for planting, reforestation and afforestation).

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}

☑ A=Yes

2.4 Additional Information

››› Resolutions XII.2: Ramsar Strategic Action Plan for 2016-2024 has been taken into account in the development of national strategies and plans for the protection and sustainable use of biodiversity, water resources, Sustainable Development Goals and other water allocation and management documents to maintain the ecological functions of 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 Water Code of the Republic of Belarus is the main legal document regulating relations in case of possession, use and ordering of water and water bodies and aimed at the protection and rational (sustainable) use of water resources, adopted by the House of Representatives of the Republic of Belarus on April 2, 2014 (red. of 18.06.2019 No. 201-Z). In accordance with the Water Code, in order to conserve and rehabilitate water bodies, to manage river basin and for integrated water resources use, Management Plans are developed for river basins. The structure of the Management Plan shall be developed taking into account the European Union Water Initiative Plus (EUWI+) for Eastern Partnership (EaP)
River basin management plans include:
- assessment of quantitative and qualitative indicators of water condition within the river basin;
- measures to determine the ecological condition (status) of surface water bodies (their parts) in case of such condition (status) is not determined;
- specifying of environmental problems of the river basin and ways of their solution;
- the scheme of placement of observation points of the state observation network for identification of surface and groundwater status;
- results of studies on prospective water resources using;
- water management balances;
- measures aimed at improving the ecological condition (status) of surface water bodies (their parts), maintaining the wetlands ecological functions, terms and expected indicators of their realization.
River basin management plans are developed for a period of 5 to 10 years, promote and demonstrate best practices in the field of protection, rehabilitation and management of water resources to maintain the wetlands ecological functions.
In the Republic of Belarus, Water Resources Management Plans for the Neman (2014), Dnieper (2019), and Western Bug (2019) river basins have been developed and adopted for the period up to 2021.
The Pripyat River Basin Management Plan was approved during the reporting period by joint decisions of the Gomel, Brest, Mogilev and Minsk Regional Executive Committees (Decision No. 844/739/43-15/1053 of 27.10.2023). A management plan for the Western Dvina River is in the process of development and is planned to be adopted in 2025.

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

The Water Code

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

☑ C=Partially

2.6 Additional Information
››› Yes, they are used as bioplato for sedimentation of organic and mineral substances suspended in water. In 2023, 5.9 thousand ha of degraded peatlands in the Polesie State Radiation-Ecological Reserve were re-wetted to prevent radionuclides removal from the territories contaminated as a result of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant accident and their deposition in bottom sediments.

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}
☑ A=Yes

3.1 Additional Information

Please specify if it was applied for policy formulation or in implementation of good practice.
››› The National Strategy for Sustainable Socio-Economic Development of the Republic of Belarus until 2030 (NSDS-2030) is the main country development document that includes political issues in water sector in the context of environmental management and protection. The document confirms a number of priorities, such as the application of regulatory measures and economic incentives to reduce the use of drinking water by industrial enterprises and reduction of pollutants in wastewaters; the application of water-saving technologies; the reduction of water losses and unaccounted water consumption; and rising awareness among the population.
The development of incentives to encourage the private sector to apply the principle of wetlands rational use is envisaged in the Action Plan of the National Strategy for Water Resources Management in the Conditions of Climate Change for the period up to 2030: Action 10 of the Plan provides for the creation of mechanisms for economic incentives to reduce the discharge of pollutants in wastewater, including the development of the issue of establishing environmental tax rates for wastewater discharge based on the weight of pollutants discharged in wastewater.
In addition, Belarus applies a number of other economic instruments to provide incentives to increase compliance with environmental legislation in industry and other sectors of the economy. These instruments include, among others, an environmental tax, a tax on the use of natural resources, compensation for environmental damage, payments for public utilities (waste, water supply and sewerage, etc.). Financial incentives are used to attract investment in environmentally friendly technologies and to introduce environmental management practices.

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	☐ Y=Not relevant ☐ X=Unknown ☐ D=Planned ☐ C=Partially ☐ B=No ☑ A=Yes
b) Wetlands in general	☐ Y=Not relevant ☐ X=Unknown ☐ D=Planned ☑ C=Partially ☐ B=No ☐ A=Yes

3.2 Additional information
››› The private sector and the public are widely involved in the implementation of activities and actions for the conservation, wise use and management of Ramsar Sites and wetlands in general. Collaboration is based on the cooperation of State environmental agencies established for the protection and sustainable use of Ramsar Sites with private business and the public. The main areas of cooperation are the development of ecological tourism, sustainable forms of hunting and fishing, collection and harvesting of berries and mushrooms, etc. Such interaction is most often carried out by the type of tourist cluster: geographically concentrated within the boundaries of Ramsar Sites legal entities and individuals are interacting in the production and realization of multi-attribute tourist product. As rule State environmental institutions, local governments, agro-estates of the region, forestry institutions, users of hunting and fishing grounds, tourist organizations providing tourist

services participate in such clusters. Examples of such interaction are eco-festivals: “Sporovskie hay-making” in the biological reserve “Sporovsky” “Cranes and cranberries” in the reserve “Yelnya” “Osveiskie rosy”, etc. Involvement of the private sector and local initiatives is also carried out through international projects. An example of such interaction is the project «Landscape-Oriented and Community-Led Rural Area Development of the Jasieĺda River» (NEAR-TS /2017/391-409) of the International Fund for Rural Development. The aim of the project is to develop local initiatives in the Ramsar site “Sporovsky Biological Reserve”. As a result of the project implementation (07.10.2019 - 07.10.2022), eight development centers were established in the Reserve under village clubs or educational institutions, where local residents could be acquired by new skills necessary for self-employment or running a business focused on the needs and potential of the ecoregion. Similar projects aimed at sustainable use of wetlands resources were implemented in previous years on the Ramsar site “Yelnia”, “Olmany Mires Zakaznik”.

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

Osveiskie rosy
Cranes and cranberries
Sporovskie hay-making

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

3.3 Additional information

Please specify the types of incentive measures (loans, tax breaks, or others).
››› The State provides incentives and measures to encourage the conservation and wise use of wetlands, particularly in the field of ecotourism.
The Tax Code of the Republic of Belarus establishes value-added tax exemptions for turnover on the sale of tourist services within the territory of the Republic of Belarus, certain exemptions for the provision of services in the sphere of agroecotourism, etc. The Decrees of the President of the Republic of Belarus No. 372 of 02.06.2006 (as amended on 04.04.2021) “On Measures for the Development of Agroecotourism in the Republic of Belarus” and “On the Development of Agroecotourism” No. 351 of 04.10.2022 (as amended on 16.02.2024) provide preferential support for agroecotourism, including preferential lending to the subjects of this sphere.
For example, Belagroprombank provides legal entities and individuals with loans “For the development of agroecotourism” for up to 7 years. In addition, there is a possibility for citizens who decide to be engaged in agro-ecotourism and are registered as unemployed to receive a free subsidy.
The application of these benefits and incentives has influenced the growth of the number of tourist industry facilities. Thus, the number of agro-eco-houses increased from 34 in 2006 to 3150 as of 01.01.2023. However, after re-registration in 2023, their number decreased and as of 01.01.2024 amounted to 1300. It should be emphasized that the functioning of the majority of agro-eco-houses is connected with the use of wetlands natural potential.

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

Description of Bank credit

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}
☑ A=Yes

4.1 Additional information
››› In the Republic of Belarus, according to the Concept of National Security and the Strategy on the Conservation and Sustainable use of Biological diversity the penetration of invasive alien species of animals and plants into the environment is recognized as one of the threats to national security in the environmental sphere.
In this regard, within the framework of the National Monitoring System, monitoring of invasive plant species and monitoring of invasive alien species of wild animals and their habitats is carried out on a permanent basis

as a system of regular observation, assessment and forecasting of changes in the status and distribution of invasive species that create a threat to the life or health of citizens, the conservation of biological diversity and cause harm to certain sectors of the economy.
Based on the observations of invasive species in the country, the Black Books of animals and plants were published in 2016 and based on new data reissued in 2020.
The “Black Book of Belarus Flora: Alien Harmful Plants” (2nd edition, 2020) contains information on 52 most dangerous plant species, as well as an annotated list of 270 potentially invasive alien species.
The Black Book of Invasive Animal Species of Belarus includes 109 most dangerous invasive animal species (25 species of aquatic invertebrates, 18 - fish, 1 - reptiles, 60 - terrestrial invertebrates, 5 - mammals) causing ecological and economic damage to natural ecosystems of Belarus. For each species the country (region) of their origin, ways of penetration, ecology and brief description of the species, existing and potential ecological and economic threats and damages, as well as control measures, if any, are given.
The Ministry of Natural Resources has approved lists of alien invasive wildlife and wild plant species whose distribution and numbers are subject to regulation (see Section 4.3. below).
Ongoing assessment of the status of populations of invasive alien species is carried out within the framework of the fauna and flora cadastres.

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

The Black Book of Invasive Animal Species of Belarus

The Black book of Flora

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}

☑ A=Yes

4.2 Additional information

››› The National Security Concept of the Republic of Belarus, approved by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus 09.11.2010 № 575, recognizes the threat of invasive alien plants and animals entering Belarus from neighboring countries as one of the significant external threats to the country's security. In this regard, issues related to the regulation of the spread and number of invasive species are included in all major national policies and strategies in the field of environmental protection (see Section 1.1 above for their list).
Implementation of a unified state policy in the field of control and management of invasive species, development of draft programs, plans and regulatory documents, coordination and interaction of activities in this area with the republican bodies of state administration, local executive and administrative bodies. Control over the implementation of measures taken is entrusted to the Ministry of Natural Resources.
The list of plant species distribution and abundance of which are subject to regulation is established by the Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus of 07.12.2016 No. 1002 “On some issues of regulation of distribution and abundance of plant species”.
The list of invasive animal species subject to regulation was approved by the Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus No. 126 of 30.01.2008 (as amended by the Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus No. 255 of 29.03.2016).
Territorial bodies of the Ministry of Natural Resources shall control the prevention of cultivation by legal entities and citizens of plants prohibited for introduction and (or) acclimatization. In case of establishment of facts of planting and cultivation of invasive plant species, the state inspectors on environmental protection take measures of response in accordance with the current legislation.
The Center for the Study of Invasive Species has been established as an inter-institutional scientific subdivision within The State Scientific institution «V.F.Kuprevich institute of experimental botany of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus», “Central Botanical Garden of NAS of Belarus”, The SSPA «SPC of The National Academy of Sciences of Belarus on Bioresources» and functions as a sector of the SSPA «SPC of The National Academy of Sciences of Belarus on Bioresources». The Internet resource of the Center is www.ias.by. The purpose of the Center is to organize, carry out and coordinate work in the field of identification, assessment and forecasting of penetration and spread of invasive alien species of animals and plants in the territory of the Republic of Belarus, as well as to develop measures to prevent, minimize and reduce damage from the spread of these species, accumulate, summarize and provide information for interested bodies and agencies.
Scientific support of activities aimed at controlling the entering and spread of invasive alien species in Belarus is provided in the course of monitoring of invasive plant species and monitoring of invasive animal alien species, as well as within the framework of maintaining inventories of flora and fauna.
A separate state scientific and technical program “Introduction and invasions” for 2021-2025 (subprogram 2 “Invasive processes”) is aimed at studying invasive species. It addresses the issues of invasion of alien aggressive species into the territory of the Republic of Belarus, assessment of their impact on natural and cultural ecosystems, as well as their localization and extermination.
Control and management of invasive species is carried out in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Belarus, regulatory legal acts and methodological documents. Local executive and administrative bodies develop and approve action plans to limit the spread and number of the most aggressive alien plant species.
To combat the most aggressive species of invasive plants, the country has developed and implemented the

technical code of established practice TCP 17.05-03-2020 (33140) “Requirements for carrying out works to limit the spread and number of invasive plants (Hogweed Sosnowski , Canadian goldenrod, Echinocystis lobata and other invasive plants) by various methods”.

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

The Center for the Study of Invasive Species

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

››› 20

4.3 Additional Information
››› The list of invasive animal species subject to regulation, approved by the Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus 30.01.2008 № 126 (as amended by the Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus 29.03.2016 № 255) includes 13 species of animals, all of which are associated with wetlands. Among them are species of fish, crustaceans and mollusks that have entered the territory of the country in recent decades: Dreissena polymorpha, Lithoglyphus naticoides, Corophium curvispinum, Orcanectes limosus, Percottus glehni, Ictalurus nebulosus, Pseudorasbora parva, Neogobius melanostomus, Neogobius fluviatilis, Neogobius gymnotrachelus and Trachemys scripta, as well as 2 species of mammals that have entered the country's natural ecosystems as a result of ill-conceived introduction or captive breeding: Nyctereutes procyonoides and Mustela vison.
The list of plant species the distribution and number of which are subject to regulation, is approved in the Annex to the Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus 07.12.2016 № 1002 and includes 7 species of alien invasive plants, of which Heracleum sosnowskyi, Heracleum mantegazzianum and Echinocystis lobata represent a threat to floodplain ecosystems.

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

4.4 Additional Information
››› Struggling against invasive plant species is under constant control of the Ministry of Natural Resources. The Ministry of Natural Resources and its territorial bodies, the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus constantly monitor the places of growth of invasive alien species, including the assessment of measures taken to eradicate them. The largest areas of growth among invasive plant species have been identified for Heracleum sosnowskyi and Heracleum mantegazzianum, Canadian and Giant goldenrod. The area of Heracleum sp. at the end of 2023 is about 4.6 thousand hectares, with goldenrods - 5.2 thousand hectares (https://minpriroda.gov.by/ru/news-ru/view/na-osobom-kontrole-minprirody-rastenie-agressor-borschevik-sosnovskogo-5033/. A total of 4.4 thousand hectares of Heracleum sosnowskyi has been eradicated in the country over a 6-year period, including 251 hectares in 2018, 907 hectares in 2019, 978 hectares in 2020, 883 hectares in 2021, 782 hectares in 2022 - 782, and in 2023 - 647 ha.
The assessment of the effectiveness of the measures taken shows that mechanical, chemical, ecological, organizational and integrated control measures applied in Belarus allow to stop the large-scale spread of these species throughout the country, but do not lead to their complete eradication.

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

Sosnowsky's hogweed

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}
☑ A=Yes

5.1 Additional information
››› Development of the network and sustainable protection of Ramsar sites is carried out in accordance with

the Strategy for the Realization of the Ramsar Convention, the Strategy for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversi-ty, the National Strategy for the Development of the System of Specially Protected Areas until January 1, 2030.
Measures for the development of the network of Ramsar sites and their management (including the de-velopment of protected areas management plans) are envisaged in the Scheme of rational allocation of protected areas of national importance until January 1, 2025, the draft Scheme of rational allocation of protected areas of national importance until January 1, 2035, as well as in regional schemes for the devel-opment of protected areas of local importance.

5.2 How many Ramsar Sites have a management plan? {5.3}
☑ E=# Sites

››› 20

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

››› 20

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

››› 6

5.2 – 5.4 Additional information
››› According to the Law of the Republic of Belarus “On Specially Protected Natural Areas”, that includes almost all Ramsar sites in Belarus, management plans are developed when it is necessary to regu-late comprehensively natural and (or) anthropogenic processes occurring in PAs, that have an impact on valuable natural complexes and objects and to carry out significant measures for the protection and use of PAs.
In practice, in most cases, management plans are developed for PAs for which management structures - state nature protection agencies - have been established. The governing bodies are obliged to ensure the implementation of conservation regimes established for these PAs, as well as activities related to the functioning, protection and use of PAs. In this regard, management plans have been developed and approved for all Ramsar sites with State Nature Conservation Agencies (20).
Management plans may also be developed for PAs for which no governmental conservation agencies have been established by decision of the governing body, if such PAs require scientifically based measures to reduce anthropogenic impact. Such Ramsar sites include: Duleby Islands - Zaozerye, Mo-rochno, Podvelikiy Moh, Servech, Stary Zhaden.
Management plans have not been developed for Ramsar sites for which there is currently no need to develop a set of measures to regulate natural and/or anthropogenic processes (Dnieper River Floodplain, Drozbitka-Svina, Iput River Floodplain, Svislochsko-Berezinskiy, Vileity, Golubickaya Puscha).
As progress in achieving the objectives of the Ramsar Convention, it should be noted that during the reporting period management plans were developed and approved for 2 Ramsar sites: Prostyr and Vydrit-sa.

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
☑ C=Partially

››› 8

5.5 Additional information

Please provide the source links or upload the source documents here indicating the assessment tool used (e.g. Ramsar Site Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT), Resolution XII.15), and the source of the information.
››› There are no special instruments to assess the effectiveness of Ramsar sites management in the Republic of Belarus.
As a rule, the effectiveness of PA management, including Ramsar sites, is based on the analysis of the implementation of PA management plans. In accordance with the Law of the Republic of Belarus “On Specially Protected Natural Areas”, the management plan of protected areas is approved by the management body of the protected area in coordination with the Ministry of Natural Resources (in relation to protected areas of national importance) or a territorial body of the Ministry of Natural Resources (in relation to protected areas of local importance), as well as with the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus.
The approved PA management is mandatory for execution. Measures for the protection and use of protected

areas with the indication of implementation dates, volumes and sources of funding for these measures, as well as responsible executors for the implementation of these measures, are developing for five-year periods. After the expiration of the 5-year period, the action plan is revised with an analysis of the implementation of the previous plan.
In addition, the Ministry of Natural Resources and other relevant authorities periodically assess the effectiveness of the implementation of protected area management plans, including Ramsar sites. The last comprehensive audit of the implementation of PA management plans was conducted in the first half of 2024.
Assessment of Ramsar site management effectiveness according to METT forms (Resolution XII.15) was conducted in 2021 as part of the preparation of the GEF-7 project “Conservation of Wetland Biodiversity and Sustainable Management of Freshwater Ecosystems in the Western Dvina Transboundary River Basin” for the following Ramsar sites “Drożbitka-Svina”, “Kozyanski”, “Osveiski”, “Yelnia”.
In addition, METT assessment was carried out for Ramsar sites “Zvanets”, “Servech” , “Sporovsky Biological Reserve, ‘Olmany Mires Zakazniks’ following the implementation of activities of the GEF-UNDP project ‘Conservation-oriented management of forest and wetlands to achieve multiple benefits’ in 2022.

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

››› 3

5.6 Additional information
››› Ramsar sites: “Berezinsky Biosphere Reserve” (1927), “Dikoe Fen Mire” (2263), “Pripyatsky National Park” (2197) have cross-sectoral management committees - scientific and technical councils. Information on the work of the scientific and technical councils is presented on the official websites of these nature protection areas: National Park “Belovezhskaya Pushcha (Dikoe Fen Mire)” - https://npbp.by/, National Park “Pripyatsky” - https://www.npp.by/, Berezinsky Biosphere Reserve - https://www.berezinsky.by/.
The management of Ramsar sites (Yelnia, Zvanets, Servech, Olmany Mires Zakaznik, Mid-Pripyat State Landscape Zakaznik, Sporovsky Biological Reserve, Vigonoshchanskoe, etc.), for which state envi-ronmental agencies have been established, is carried out in close coordination with scientific organizations and agencies (NAS of Belarus, district executive committees, forestry institutions, district inspections of natural resources and environmental protection), but cross-sectoral management committees have not been formally arranged.

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

Berezinsky Biosphere Reserve
National Park “Pripyatsky”
National Park “Belovezhskaya Pushcha

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

››› 26

5.7 Additional information

For example give the name and official number of the Site or Sites.
››› Ecological character descriptions have been prepared for all Ramsar sites and are available at https://www.ramsar.org/news/ramsar-sites-belarus and http://belfauna.by

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

Ecological character descriptions

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.
››› The Republic of Belarus has provided the Secretariat with maps and completed Ramsar Information Sheets for all Sites designated for the Ramsar List.

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 Ministry of Natural Resources of the Republic of Belarus, as the State body responsible for the implementation of the Ramsar Convention creates conditions to receive information as soon as possible from the Sites if the ecological character of any Site from the List has changed, is changing or is likely to change as a result of technological development, pollution or other human intervention.
The National Environmental Monitoring System (NEMS) is responsible for information gathering on the state of the Ramsar sites in the Republic of Belarus. NEMS was created to provide all interested par-ties with the necessary environmental information for determining the strategy of nature management and making operational management decisions. In addition, the NEMS is focused on the fulfillment of envi-ronmental obligations of the Republic of Belarus under international conventions and agreements.
At present, in accordance with the Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus No. 949 of 14.07.2003 “On the National Environmental Monitoring System in the Republic of Belarus”, the NEMS includes 13 organizationally independent types of environmental monitoring, of which 8 types have a key role for the wetlands conservation:
- land monitoring;
- surface water monitoring
- groundwater monitoring
- flora monitoring;
- forest monitoring;
- fauna monitoring;
- integrated monitoring of natural ecological systems on specially protected areas;
- integrated monitoring of peatlands.
Organization and coordination of the functioning of NEMS is carried out by the Ministry of Natural Re-sources

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}
☑ C=Some Cases

7.2 Additional information

If “Yes” or “Some cases”, please indicate for which Ramsar Sites the Administrative Authority has **not** made Article 3.2 reports to the Secretariat
››› In 2018-2020, information on the construction of forest roads and power lines within the boundaries of the Ramsar site “Olmany Mires Zakaznik” (No. 1091) was sent to the Ramsar Secretariat.
Some minor problems of ecosystems and species deterioration related to climate changes and unde-sirable successional processes (lowering of groundwater level, overgrowing of fen mires and floodplain meadows with shrubs and reeds, spread of invasive species, etc.) are observed in many Ramsar sites, but they do not lead to significant changes of ecological character. Therefore, these problems are solving at the national level, and no official letters have been sent to the Ramsar Secretariat.

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}
☑ C=In Progress

8.1 Additional information

For example, if “in progress” or “planned”, by when will it be completed?
››› In Belarus National Wetlands Inventory is not maintained, as it will duplicate other State inventories already available in the country.
The Decree of the Government of the Republic of Belarus “On the State Inventory of Natural Resources” of 20.04.1993 No. 248 approved the following types of State inventories of natural resources related to Wetlands: climatic, land, water, atmospheric air, forest, subsoil (including inventory of peat and sapropel deposits), fauna and flora.
State inventories of natural resources are maintained by the Ministry of Natural Resources, forest inventory - by the Ministry of Forestry and land inventory - by the State Property Committee of the Republic of Belarus.

In addition, information on Wetlands is accumulated in the State registers: the register of protected areas, the register of peat bogs, the register of water bodies and others.

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

8.2 Additional information
››› In Belarus National Wetlands Inventory is not maintained, but all State inventories and registers are updated annually on a permanent basis, including information on the wetlands state. The updating is carried out on the basis of data obtained within the framework of the National Environmental Monitoring System of the Republic of Belarus, materials of scientific research, data from State statistical reporting and other State administration bodies.
In the reporting period, the inventory of forest drainage systems was completed in Belarus, the register of peatlands of the Republic of Belarus is being developed and filled with data.

8.3 How often is the NWI updated?
☑ A=Regular intervals ≤ 6 years

8.3 Additional information
››› All State inventories and registers are updated annually on an ongoing basis, including information on the status of wetlands.

8.4 Is wetland inventory data and information publicly available? {8.4}
☑ A=Yes

8.4 Additional information

For example if “partially” or “planned” by when will the data/information be made public?
››› All State Inventories of natural resources are intended to provide nature-users with information on natural resources taking into account their economic assessment, to inform state authorities and management bodies to take national economic decisions on the effective use of these resources, to forecast their changes under the influence of human activity and to implement the necessary protection measures.
For example, the data of the State Water Cadastre and the register of water bodies are available to all interested parties and are publicly accessible on the website of the Ministry of Natural Resources (information system State Water Cadastre, https://minpriroda.gov.by/ru/new_url_19948904-ru/. The Ministry of Natural Resources annually publishes the collection “State Water Cadastre. Water resources, their use and water quality” (https://www.cricuwr.by/gvkinfo/). Information on the state of water resources is presented on the website of the National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Belarus, in the annual collections “Account of Water Resources Flows in the Republic of Belarus” and “Environmental Protection”, and others.
The “Belarus Peatlands Database” is available on the web page - http://www.peatlands.by/.

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

The Belarus Peatlands Database
State Water Cadastre. Water resources, their use and water quality”
State Water Cadastre

8.5 Please explain how the NWI data/information is maintained if at all? {8.3}
››› In accordance with the Article 72 of the Law of the Republic of Belarus “On Environmental Protection” the following State inventories of natural resources are maintained in the Republic of Belarus: land, subsoil, water, atmospheric air, forest, flora, fauna, climate, and waste. State Inventories of natural resources are maintained by the Ministry of Natural Resources and other specially authorized republican bodies of state administration in accordance with their competence. The Ministry of Natural Resources coordinates the maintenance of State Inventories of natural resources. The inventories are maintained at the expense of the republican budget.

8.6 Inland Wetlands

	Square kilometers (km2)
L -- Permanent inland deltas	
M -- Permanent rivers/streams/creeks; includes waterfalls	2489,0

N -- Seasonal/intermittent/irregular rivers/streams/creeks	471,45
O -- Permanent freshwater lakes	1823,2
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	
Ts -- Seasonal/intermittent freshwater marshes/pools on inorganic soils	
U -- Non-forested peatlands	8630,0
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)

››› 13413

8.6 Human-made wetlands

	Square kilometers (km2)
1 -- Aquaculture ponds.	210,0
2 -- Ponds	156,24
3 -- Irrigated land	
4 -- Seasonally flooded agricultural land	

5 -- Salt exploitation sites	
6 -- Water storage areas	788,5
7 -- Excavations	
8 -- Wastewater treatment areas	
9 -- Canals and drainage channels, ditches	178,29
Zk(c) – Karst and other subterranean hydrological systems	

8.6 Human-made wetlands total (km2)

››› 1333

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	☐ P=Status improved ☑ O=No change ☐ N=Status deteriorated
b) All wetlands in your country	☐ P=Status improved ☐ O=No change ☑ N=Status deteriorated

8.7 Additional Information

››› Both the Ramsar sites and the entire wetlands of Belarus as a whole are affected by multidirectional anthropogenic and natural factors that cause changes in the state of individual components of aquatic and wetland ecosystems. The impact on wetlands most often has a complex character, and the following can be emphasized as the main directions of changes:
- changes in ecosystems related to climate impact (climate aridization);
- changes in ecosystems associated with economic activity (land drainage, unsustainable forms of haying, grazing, surface water pollution from dispersed and point sources).
It can be stated that there were no significant changes in the condition of wetlands after COP14. Below changes of ecological character are presented by 2 categories: Ramsar sites and wetlands of the country as a whole.
Ramsar sites. Belarus is undertaking significant efforts for conservation and sustainable use of wetland ecosystems of the Ramsar sites. Thus, 25 Ramsar sites have been declared as Protected Areas, State Nature Protection Institutions for operational management were established for 15 Ramsar sites, and management plans have been developed and are being implemented for 20 territories.
The analysis of scientific and departmental information on the status of Ramsar sites since COP14 shows that there have been no special changes in their status in recent years, no new Ramsar sites have been declared, the active ones have remained within the old boundaries. For the period starting from 2020, the management plans for the Zvanets and Sporovsky Biological Reserve have been updated, and management plans for the Podvelikiy Moh, Prostyr, and Vydritsa Ramsar sites have been developed.
In order to conserve and sustainably use the Ramsar sites established in Belarus, a number of international projects have been implemented in the post COP14 period:
Project “Ecotourism Development to Promote Green Transition to Inclusive and Sustainable Growth”
Project “Conservation-oriented management of forests and wetlands to achieve multiple benefits”.
LIFEMagniDucatusAcrola LIFE15NAT/LT/001024 “Stepping stones towards ensuring long-term favorable conservation status of Aquatic warbler in Lithuania” (Belarus - Lithuania, 2017 - 2023);
“Landscape-oriented rural development of the Yaselda River Valley with community participation” (NEAR-TS /2017/ 391-409).
Within the framework of these projects, activities aimed at protection and sustainable use of Ramsar sites were implemented, which had the following positive effect on the state of wetland ecosystems:
“Sporovsky Biological Reserve”. The implemented projects were aimed at organizing sustainable forms of protection and use of fen mires and floodplain meadows: (mowing and use of plant biomass, grazing, introduction of large herbivorous animals - turo-like cattle and tarpan-like horses, ancestors of species that have disappeared from the fauna of Belarus). The technology developed and implemented in the Ramsar site allows maintaining about 1500 ha of fen mires in the open state, thus ensuring the conservation of the unique

biodiversity of the Ramsar site.
(https://www.undp.org/ru/belarus/publications/otchet-o-vypolnenii-proekta-ustoychivoe-upravlenie-lesnymi-i-vodno-bolotnymi-ekosistemami-dlya-dostizheniya-mnogocelevykh).
Similar works (mowing of reeds and removal of bushes) were carried out in the Ramsar site “Zvanetc”. To improve the financial sustainability of these Ramsar sites, in the framework of the project the improvement and creation of tourism infrastructure were supported, strategy and action plans for the development of ecotourism were developed, demonstration materials were prepared and published. The implementation of the tourism development strategy will reduce the negative impact of unorganized tourism on vulnerable species, as well as provide additional funds for habitat conservation activities.
“Yelnia”. Activities carried out to rehabilitate the hydrological regime of the Yelnia bog resulted in restoration of vegetation cover and berry resources in areas previously damaged by fires
https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/otsenka-effektov-vosstanovleniya-gidrologicheskogo-rezhima-verhovogo-bolota-elnya-belarus-dlya-biologicheskogo-raznoobraziya-i).
“Servech”. Work was carried out to rehabilitate the hydrological regime of the Ramsar site, which resulted in the improvement of bog ecosystems on an area of about 600 ha. The removal of shrubs and reeds on the bog on the area of 66 ha had a positive effect for the wetland. 35 chicks of the Aquatic warbler were translocated on this territory after mowing. This activity allowed to restore a local population of this globally threatened species in the Ramsar area.
“Osveiski”. The project implemented on the territory of the Ramsar site “Osveiski” allowed to ensure sustainability of ecological tourism on this territory.
“Pripyatsky National Park”. Project works on rehabilitation of the hydrological regime of Mezhch bog on the area of 7591.5 ha, disturbed as a result of drainage were conducted.
As a positive trend it should be noted that on a number of Ramsar areas (“Kozyansky”, “Olmany Mires Zakaznik”, “Podvelikiy Moh”, “Stary Zhaden”, “Vileity”, “Vydritsa”, “Golubitckaya Puscha”), where drainage works were carried out during the last century, there are active processes of natural waterlogging that associated with the failure of hydraulic structures, siltation of channels of drainage network, construction activity of beavers etc.
At the same time, a number of environmental problems caused by the complex impact of anthropogenic and natural factors that have a negative impact on the wetland ecosystems of the Ramsar Sites remain unsolved:
- changes associated with overgrowing of open fen mires and floodplain meadows with woody and shrubby vegetation, caused by cessation of use of fen mires and floodplain meadows for haying and grazing: “Dikoe Fen Mire”, “Zvanets”, “Mid-Pripyat State Landscape Zakaznik’, ‘Polesye Valley of River Bug’, ‘Pripyatsky National park”, “Prostyr”. The consequence of wetlands overgrowing by undesirable vegetation is a sharp decrease in species diversity, including a reduction in the number of globally endangered species;
- changes associated with disturbance of hydrological regime of lakes (“Osveiski”, “Vigonoshchanskoe”) in overgrowing of the shoreline of water bodies with reeds, formation of rafts, deterioration of spawning conditions of native fish species, occurrence of periodic fish kills associated with reduction of oxygen content in water.
All wetlands in Belarus as a whole.
Implementation of state programs, national and international projects resulted in following positive changes in the ecological status of wetland ecosystems.
The ecological status of surface water bodies (rivers and lakes) has improved: 72.4% of surface water bodies have been assigned excellent and good ecological status according to hydrochemical and hydrobiological indicators. The number of water bodies that continue to experience significant anthropogenic pressure is only 1.2% of surface water bodies in the country.
The area of peatlands degraded as a result of drainage and peat extraction was reduced: in the period after COP14, works on ecological rehabilitation of degraded peatlands on the area of 7.9 thousand hectares were carried out, that allowed to restore biosphere functions of wetland ecosystems. The methodology of accelerated restoration of fen mires unused after peat extraction was tested and applied on an area of 70 ha. It was conducted on the depleted area representing bare peat. The first stage was plowing or disking of the peat surface, the second stage was sowing seeds of bog plants, then the water level was raised to the soil surface.
The condition of forest ameliorative systems has been improved. Within the framework of the Wetlands Project (Landscape Approach to Management of Peatlands Aiming at Multiple Ecological Benefits), a targeted comprehensive inventory of ameliorative forest systems and degraded peat bogs transferred to the forestry was carried out to assess their efficiency for forestry and identify areas for further use. On the basis of specially developed criteria, proposals for further utilization of drained forest ecosystems were prepared: reconstruction of drainage systems to increase forest productivity; restoration of unreasonably drained forest bogs; regulation of water levels to prevent fires, etc.
In total, 931 hydroforest-ameliorative systems with a total area of 474,700 ha were surveyed on the territory of 104 forestries. Based on the obtained data, the Scheme of sustainable use of hydroforest ameliorative systems on the lands of the forest fund (474,700 ha, 104 forestries in 6 regions) with the definition of directions of use of each system was developed. The Scheme and recommendations were considered and approved by the Ministry of Forestry of the Republic of Belarus. The scheme recommends the following options for further utilization of hydroforest ameliorative systems: 65,573 ha (14.4%) - re-wetting; 21,275 ha (4.7%) - reconstruction of drainage systems; 369,111 ha (80.9%) - leave unchanged. Based on the results of

the inventory, an electronic catalog “Hydro-forest ameliorative systems in the forest fund of the Republic of Belarus: ecological efficiency, directions of use” was created.
The technology of ecologically and economically efficient use of floodplain meadows for breeding cattle of meat breeds was developed and tested on the example of floodplain meadows of the Pripyat River, the implementation of which will allow conservation of the unique biodiversity of plain rivers of Polesie. The reintroduction of large herbivorous animals - turo-like cattle and tarpan-like horses, ancestors of animals that have disappeared from the fauna of Belarus, has been carried out, which allowed testing the methodology of maintaining floodplain meadows in an open state with the help of these species.
At the same time, despite the measures taken, the ecological character of individual components of the wetlands and the wetlands as a whole continues to deteriorate:
- the area of land under bogs and water bodies in the Republic of Belarus has decreased over the period from 2019 to 2023 from 1,247 thousand ha to 1,195.5 thousand ha or from 6.1 % to 5.8 % of the country's area, which is associated with regional processes of climate aridization (average temperature increased from 6.8 degrees in 2010 to 8.7 degrees in 2023)
- Remain the negative trend of overgrowing of floodplain meadows and open fen mires with woody and shrubby vegetation. According to the calculations of the V.F.Kuprevich institute of experimental botany of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus in Belarus, by 2020 the area of overgrown natural ecosystems has increased to 500 thousand hectares. As a result of shrub overgrowth and accumulation of perennial vegetation, floodplain meadows and fen mires have lost their importance as nesting grounds for birds and spawning grounds for phytophilous fish species. It is obvious that passive protection is not enough to conserve the biodiversity of fen mires, but active measures to restore traditional forms of economic activity, preventing the overgrowth of open areas of bogs with shrubs and reeds, are necessary.
- negative climatic changes and a number of dry years led to lower water levels on fen mires, lack of spring floods in rivers, which, as a consequence, caused a decrease in the number of wetland bird species, including globally threatened species.

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	☐ 5=major improvement ☐ 4=improvement ☐ 3=no change ☐ 2=deterioration ☐ 1=major deterioration
b) Inland	☐ 5=major improvement ☐ 4=improvement ☐ 3=no change ☑ 2=deterioration ☐ 1=major deterioration
c) Human-made	☐ 5=major improvement ☐ 4=improvement ☑ 3=no change ☐ 2=deterioration ☐ 1=major deterioration

8.8 Additional Information

››› The basis for categorizing changes in the ecological character of wetlands as “deteriorating” is the reduction in the area of land under wetlands and water bodies (for the period from 2019 to 2023, the area of land under wetlands and water bodies decreased from 1,247 thousand ha to 1,195.5 thousand ha or from 6.1% to 5.8% of the country's land area (see paragraph 8.6 above). The reason for this negative trend is climatic changes that have been taking place in recent decades.
The next negative trend that has a negative impact on wetlands is overgrowing of fen mires and floodplain meadows with shrubs and reeds. According to scientists' estimates, this process has affected more than 500 thousand hectares of wetlands to a greater or lesser extent. The reasons for this trend are the cessation of use of such wet biotopes for haying and grazing, as well as the decline in groundwater levels.

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

Assessment of the effects of the Yelnya bog hydrological regime rehabilitation
Project report

8.9 What are your main needs in developing or updating an NWI to suport 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	☐
b) Wetland delineation methods and approaches	☐
c) Habitat classifications	☐
d) Standardization in data interpretation methods	☐
e) Regulatory framework and governance structure	☐
f) Resources	☑
g) Relevant skills	☐
h) Data collection and mapping	☑
i) Collaboration	☐
j) Others	☐

8.9 Additional Information

e.g explain others as referred to in (j)
››› At present, an urgent issue for Belarus is the development and filling by information of the peatland register of the Republic of Belarus, which includes information on about 8 thousand objects, including natural and degraded bogs, ecologically rehabilitated peatlands, peat deposits depleted for peat extraction, drained lands with peat soils.

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.I3, XIII.14, XIII.16, XIV.17 and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)) to achieve sustainable development.

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

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}
☑ A=Yes

9.1 Additional information
››› Sustainable use of wetlands is based on integrated water resources management within the main river basins established for the Republic of Belarus by the Neman, Dnieper, Western Bug, Pripyat and Western Dvina River Basin Management Plans.
More detailed information on the Management Plans for these river basins is provided in Section 2.5 above.

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

9.2 Additional information
››› Since COP14 no amendments have been made to existing legislation to reflect commitments under the Convention on Wetlands. Amendments to the Strategy on the Conservation and Sustainable use of Biological diversity are planned for 2024, taking into account both the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Resolutions adopted at the COP14.

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

9.3 Additional information
››› In accordance with the Water Code of the Republic of Belarus, the classification of surface water bodies as inland waterways (i.e. water infrastructure facilities) is carried out upon agreement with the Ministry of Transport and Communications. Legal, economic and organizational bases of shipping on inland waterways of the Republic of Belarus are regulated by the Code of Inland Water Transport of the Republic of Belarus of 24.06.2002 No. 118-Z (https://pravo.by/document/?guid=3871&p0=hk0200118). According to this Code, inland waterways include natural or artificially created parts of water bodies and watercourses, marked with navigational signs or otherwise and used for navigation purposes.

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

the Code of Inland Water Transport of the Republic of Belarus

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}
☑ A=Yes

9.4 Additional information
››› Communication, capacity building, education, participation and awareness (CEPA) expertise and tools have been taken into account in the development of the Dnieper, Neman, Western Bug and Pripyat River Basin Management Plans and are also taken into account in the work of the Basin Councils.

9.5 Additional information
››› In order to enhance the role of wetlands in climate change mitigation or adaptation, Belarus has developed and adopted the National Strategy for Water Resources Management in the Context of Climate Change until 2030, approved by the Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus 22.02.2022 No. 91 (https://pravo.by/document/?guid=3871&p0=C22200091).
The goal of the National Strategy is to achieve long-term water security of the country for its present and future generations based on the following principles:
- guaranteed supply of population with water of normative quality;
- provision of water to economic sectors taking into account the efficiency of its use;
- safe discharge of all types of wastewater into the environment with improvement of their treatment quality;
- protection of life and property of the population and economic sectors from natural emergencies caused by the negative impact of water.
Belarus is one of the few countries that have developed a legislative framework for peatlands conservation (Law “On the protection and use of peatlands.”, Strategy for conservation and wise (sustainable) use of peatlands, etc.) and holds one of the leading positions in the world in peatlands rehabilitation, that contributes to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and climate change mitigation or adaptation.

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
››› Within the framework of the implementation of international commitments to fulfill the provisions of the Paris Agreement to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus adopted Resolution No. 553 of 29.09.2021 “On Establishing the Nationally Determined Contribution of the Republic of Belarus to the Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions by 2030”. In accordance with the Resolution, the country undertakes to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 35% by 2030 against the 1990 level, taking into account the absorption in the “Land use, land use change and forestry” sector.

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}
☑ C=Partially

9.7 Additional information
››› Measures aimed at maintaining and enhancing the role of wetlands in supporting and conservation of effective farming systems are envisaged by:
- Strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity (task 5 - ensure sustainable agriculture, optimize the structure of cultivated areas with bringing the area of perennial grasses to 1 million ha, organic farming, rational use of peat soils);
- Strategy for the conservation and wise (sustainable) use of peatlands - optimisation of structure of agricultural lands with the increase of perennial meadows to 1 million hectares;
- State program “Agribusiness”: withdrawal from agricultural use of inefficiently used hydromeliorative systems on the area of 76.4 thousand hectares with ensuring ecological safety of the environment.

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	☐ C=Planned ☑ B=No ☐ A=Yes
b) climate change	☐ C=Planned ☐ B=No ☑ A=Yes
c) valuation of ecoystem services	☐ C=Planned ☐ B=No ☑ A=Yes

9.8 Additional information
››› Researches aimed at studying of wetlands changes under the influence of climatic processes are carried out within the framework of the subprogram “Development of the State Hydrometeorological Service, mitigation of climate change, improvement of the quality of atmospheric air and water resources” of the State Program “Environmental Protection and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources” for 2021-2025, as well as within the framework of environmental monitoring, other scientific and applied research programs.

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}
☑ A=Yes

9.10 Has your country made efforts to conserve small wetlands in line with Resolution XIII.21 and XIII.15? {9.9}
☑ A=Yes

9.10 Additional information
››› Belarus undertakes significant efforts to conserve small wetlands in accordance with Resolution XIII.21. All springs, streams, small rivers and lakes have water protection zones 500 m wide and coastal lines 50 m wide, with significant restrictions on economic activities. Plowing of land, construction of buildings and structures, construction of residential houses, mining and harvesting of main use are prohibited within the boundaries of the coastal lines.
As part of the preparation of the Strategy for the Conservation and Wise (Sustainable) Use of Peatlands, an inventory of peatlands in Belarus has been carried out, including those with an area of 10 hectares or more. The Law of the Republic of Belarus “On the Protection and Use of Peatlands” prohibits peat extraction from peat deposits with an area of less than 10 hectares. In addition, on all natural bogs in Belarus, including those with a small area, are prohibited to carry out hydrotechnical, agroforestry, cultural and chemical land reclamation; works related to changing the existing hydrological regime; exploration and extraction of minerals; construction of capital structures (buildings, facilities), including engineering networks and

transportation communications; harvesting of main use, etc.

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 Additional Information

››› Belarusians are the indigenous people on the territory of the country and in this connection there is no need for special legislative regulation for them to participate in the government of the state.
The participation of local communities in government is regulated by the Law of the Republic of Belarus of 04.01.2010 No. 108-Z “On Local Government and Self-Governance in the Republic of Belarus” (https://pravo.by/document/?guid=3871&p0=H11000108). According to the Law, local self-governance is a form of organization and activity of the population living in the respective territory to independently solve directly or through bodies elected by them social, economic and political issues of local importance based on the national interests and interests of citizens, features of development of administrative-territorial units on the basis of their own material and financial base and attracted funds.
Local self-government is carried out through local Councils of Deputies, bodies of territorial public self-government, local assemblies, local referendums, normative initiative of citizens to adopt decisions of the Councils, participation of citizens in financing and (or) reimbursement of budget expenditures for the purposes determined by them, realization of civic initiatives and other forms of participation of citizens in state and public affairs.
Local communities through local Councils participate in all issues of local self-governance, including the management of Ramsar Sites in accordance with Article 9 of the Law on Specially Protected Areas:
- take part in decisions on reserving areas that are planned to be declared SPNAs;
- take part in decisions on declaring, transforming, terminating the functioning of nature reserves and natural monuments of local importance;
- ensure the management of protected areas transferred to their management;
- develop jointly with the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, other interested state bodies and other organizations draft regional schemes of rational placement of SPNAs of local importance and organize their implementation;
- implement other activities in accordance with this Law and other legislative acts.

10.2 If the answer to question 10.1 is “yes”, have the guiding principles for considering the cultural values of wetlands including traditional knowledge for the effective management of Sites (Resolution VIII.19) been used?

☑ A=Yes

10.2 Additional Information

››› Traditional knowledge is usually understood as a set of empirical observations of natural phenomena accumulated in pre-industrial society and practical conclusions made on their basis, which are passed on from generation to generation. They cover various spheres of human activity (economic activities, crafts and trades, food preparation and consumption, ways of treating diseases, etc.) and contain unique information about the biological diversity of the ethnos' environment.
The Republic of Belarus acceded to the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity by Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus No. 235 of 22.05.2014.
According to Article 7, Belarus shall take appropriate measures to ensure that access to traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources held by indigenous and local communities is conducted with prior approval and with participation of these indigenous and local communities.
Cultural values of the country are included in the State List of Historical and Cultural Values of the Republic of Belarus. This list includes cultural values related, among others, to wetlands: “Berezina water system”, “Traditions of making the Pripyat shuttlecock”, “Song style of the Pripyat and Stviga interfluves”, “Forest beekeeping of Belarus”, the ritual “Seeing off the mermaid”, etc.. (http://gosspisok.gov.by/Home/Index).
Accounting and protection of cultural values of wetlands is carried out by declaring springs, streams and other valuable water bodies and related ecosystems as natural monuments. Thus, 112 springs and streams (https://www.minpriroda.gov.by/ru/new_url_1100754902-ru/) have been declared as hydrological natural monuments of national and local importance, most of which are not only important for biodiversity conservation, but are also valuable sites from the point of view of preserving local cultural values.

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

natural monuments of national and local importance,

State List of Historical and Cultural Values

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}
☑ A=Yes

10.3 Additional information
››› A number of projects have been implemented in the Republic of Belarus to study traditional practices related to the use of biological diversity, including cultural aspects of wetlands.
UNESCO Project No. 2240116046 “Capacity Building for the Safeguarding of Traditional Knowledge Associated with Genetic Resources and Legal Regulation of Access to It in the Republic of Belarus” (2022-2023) was aimed at raising public awareness of the importance of traditional knowledge and practices associated with genetic resources, their role for sustainable development of the country and saving of national identity, conservation of biological diversity. In addition, the project developed a set of legal and practical measures on the issue of conservation, use and transfer of traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources to ensure effective implementation of the Law of the Republic of Belarus “On the Management of Genetic Resources”.
Within the framework of the project “Strengthening of human resources, legal frameworks and institutional capacities to implement the Nagoya Protocol in the Republic of Belarus” the staff of the Department of Folkloristics and Culture of Slavic Peoples of the Center for the Belarusian Culture, Language and Literature Researches of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus carried out comprehensive work to collect and study the traditional knowledge of Belarusians in the field of traditional medicine, veterinary medicine, pharmacology, botany, zoology, and food culture. The audio-visual materials obtained during the field expeditions, containing interviews with carriers of traditional knowledge are stored in the archives of the Institute of Art History, Folklore and Ethnography of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, which has the status of national scientific heritage. The results of the work were summarized in the collective monograph “Plants in the system of traditional knowledge of Belarusians”.

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

10.5 Additional information
››› Traditional knowledge and management practices relevant to the wise use of wetlands are documented as part of the maintenance of the State List of Historical and Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Belarus (see 10.20 above).

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}
☑ C1=Partially

11.1 Additional information

If “yes” or “partially”, please indicate how many Ramsar Sites and their names
››› Ecosystem benefits/services of wetlands has been taken into account in the development of 20 management plans for protected areas declared on the basis of Ramsar sites (76.9 % of Ramsar sites), thus improving the sustainability of water use in the context of ecosystem requirements.

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

11.2 Additional information
››› Wetland programs or projects that contribute to food and water security and hence poverty alleviation both pre-COP-14 and post-COP-14, within the Ramsar Sites are implementing in the following ways:
- Involvement of the local population living on the Ramsar Sites in the development of tourism activities. For this purpose, the Republic of Belarus has developed and adopted the “Complex of measures for the development and promotion of ecological tourism in specially protected natural areas for the period up to

2025”. Such programs are implemented in most Ramsar sites;
-sustainable use of natural resources of Ramsar sites (berries, mushrooms, medicinal herbs) by the local population in order to obtain additional income (reserves “Yelnia”, “Olmany Mires Zakaznik”, “Vigonoshchanskoe”, “Kozyansky”, “Stary Zhaden”, etc.);
- sustainable use of bog biomass (tree and shrub vegetation, reeds, other bog grasses);
- organization and management of sustainable fishery (Ramsar sites “Pripyatsky National Park”, “Sporovsky Biological Reserve”, “Servech”, “Osveiski”, “Mid- Pripyat State Landscape Zakaznik”, “Vygonoshchanskoe”);
-organization and conducting of sustainable hunting (Ramsar territories “National Park ‘Pripyatsky’, ‘Osveisky’, ‘Srednaya Pripyat Reserve’, ‘Vygonoshchanske’, ‘Zvanets’, etc.).

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

11.3 Additional Information
››› The project “Landscape-oriented development of rural areas of the Yaselda River Valley with the participation of local communities” (NEAR-TS /2017/ 391-409) was completed in the Republic of Belarus in 2022. The project aims to develop local initiatives in the Yaselda River Valley ecoregion, including the Ramsar site “Sporovsky Biological Reserve”. The project is based on the use of landscape-oriented and participatory approaches to harmonize environmental, social and economic development needs of the eco-region.
- The capacity of local authorities has been increased to ensure that the ecoregion is managed based on the initiative of the population, as well as the participation of local initiative groups;
- A Regional Council was established, which is an effective tool for public participation in the sustainable development of the ecoregion;
- a landscape-oriented model of sustainable development of the ecoregion based on the initiative of the population and taking into account local strategies was introduced; the model was strengthened by 8 local development centers at village councils or educational institutions;
- more than 1,500 people have improved business skills in the centers, focused on the needs and potential of the ecoregion, 150 of them have increased self-employment. 25 new types of services and goods are being provided in the ecoregion;
- more than 30 local initiatives have contributed to the conservation of the region's ecology, employment growth, and community-led governance;
- the ecoregion has acquired the image of a region of ecological entrepreneurship, and conditions have been created for branding products made from local raw materials.

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

11.4 Additional information

If “yes” or “partially”, please indicate, if known, how many Ramsar Sites and their names
››› The socio-economic values of wetlands are included in Ramsar Site management planning: a description of the socio-economic values of wetlands is a mandatory part of Protected Area Management Plans (socio-economic and historical-cultural information section).

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
››› The cultural values of wetlands are included in Ramsar Site Management Plans, taken into account in the preparation of nomination applications for declaration of Ramsar Sites (section “Social and Cultural Significance of the Site”), in the development of scientific and feasibility studies for designation of protected areas (section “Historical and Cultural Potential”), and in the development of wetland management plans. See Section V of this report for further details. Management plans have been developed and are being implemented for 20 Ramsar sites and 4 bogs.

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?
☑ A=Yes

12.1 Additional Information

››› National targets for wetlands restoration are taken into account and established in the following strategic planning documents of the Republic of Belarus:
Strategy on the Conservation and Sustainable use of Biological diversity approved by the Decree of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus 19.11.2010 № 1707 (ed. of 03.09.2015 N 743);
Strategy on the realization of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (UNCCD) approved by the Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus on 29.04.2015 No. 361.
Strategy for conservation and wise (sustainable) use of peatlands and Scheme of Peatlands Distribution According to Their Use until 2030 approved by the Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus on 30.12.2015 No. 1111;
National Action Plan for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity for 2021-2025, approved by the Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus 21.12.2021 № 733;
State Program “Environmental Protection and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources” for 2021-2025, approved by the Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus on 19.02.2021 № 99 (subprogram 4 “Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity”).

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

☑ A=Yes

12.2 Additional information

If “yes”, please provide a list of sites, specifying wetland types
››› The Law of the Republic of Belarus “On the Protection and Use of Peatlands” was adopted in 2019. According to Article 35 of the Law, ecological rehabilitation of peatlands is carried out regarding to:
- degraded bogs (their parts);
- depleted peat deposits (their parts), the use of which for agriculture or forestry is technically impossible and (or) economically not effective;
- peat deposits (their plots) drained for peat extraction, where peat extraction has not been carried out;
- drained lands with peat soils, the use of which for agriculture or forestry is technically impossible and (or) economically not effective.

The list of peatlands subject to ecological rehabilitation is determined on the basis of data obtained from comprehensive monitoring of peatlands, results of peatland inventory, inventory of land drainage systems and separately located hydraulic structures, hydrological, soil, geobotanical and other scientific researches in this area and is established by the Ministry of Natural Resources based on proposals of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus.
In 2020, the Ministry of Natural Resources adopted the “List of peatlands subject to ecological rehabilitation”, which includes 211 disturbed peatlands with a total area of 141.5 thousand hectares.

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

☑ A=Yes

12.3 If applicable provide information on the extent of restored wetland area and types since last COP, in square kilometres

	Restoration planned m2 or km2	Under restoration	Total Restored
Marine/Coastal			
Inland	750		894
Human-made			

12.3 Additional information

Explain/clarify the data/statistics presented in the table above
››› Since 2007, 89.4 thousand hectares of wetlands have been rehabilitated within the framework of international projects and at the expense of national funding, with the target set by the Strategy for the Conservation and Wise (Sustainable) Use of Peatlands for 2030 of 75 thousand hectares. Of these, in the period from 2022 to 2024, ecological rehabilitation of peatlands was carried out on an area of about 7.9 thousand hectares.

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}

☑ A=Yes

12.4 Additional Information

If “yes” or “partially”, please indicate the progress in implementation
››› The Republic of Belarus is taking measures to limit activities that lead to the drainage of peatlands and can lead to soil mineralization, flooding and greenhouse gas emissions. For this purpose the country has adopted the Law “On the Protection and Use of Peatlands”, the Strategy for conservation and wise (sustainable) use of peatlands and Scheme of Peatlands Distribution According to Their Use until 2030, approved by Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus No. 1111 of 30.12.2015. According to the adopted documents, drainage works and peat extraction are prohibited on wetlands saved in natural or close to natural state (684 thousand hectares of wetlands).
In the Republic of Belarus, 21 of 26 Ramsar sites have been established for the protection of wetland ecosystems. They cover 252 natural bogs, partially or fully included. These Ramsar Sites are used, among other things, to raise awareness about the conservation, rehabilitation and wise use of peatlands and the ecosystem services they provide.

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	☐ D=Planned ☐ B=No ☑ A=Yes
b) Mining	☐ D=Planned ☐ B=No ☑ A=Yes
c) Agriculture	☐ D=Planned ☐ B=No ☑ A=Yes
d) Tourism	☐ D=Planned ☐ B=No ☑ A=Yes
e) Urban development	☐ D=Planned ☐ B=No ☑ A=Yes
f) Infrastructure	☐ D=Planned ☐ B=No ☑ A=Yes
g) Industry	☐ D=Planned ☐ B=No ☑ A=Yes
h) Forestry	☐ D=Planned ☐ B=No ☑ A=Yes
i) Aquaculture	☐ D=Planned ☐ B=No ☑ A=Yes
j) Fisheries	☐ D=Planned ☐ B=No ☑ A=Yes

13.1 Additional Information

››› State Environmental Expertise is a mandatory element of the process of planning, design and decision-making on socio-economic development of the country, implementation of economic and other activities in the territory of the Republic of Belarus, regardless of the sectors of economic activity in which they are carried out, and covers all the above key sectors. The list of objects subject to environmental expertise is established

by Article 5 of the Law “On State Environmental Expertise, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment” dated 18.06.2016 No. 399-3 (as amended on 17.06.2023 No. 296-3).

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
››› The Republic of Belarus adopted the Law “On State Environmental Expertise, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment” of 18.06.2016 No. 399-Z (as amended on 17.06.2023 No. 296-Z, https://pravo.by/document/?guid=3871&p0=H11600399). Strategic environmental assessment is applied in the country during the development of draft state, regional and sectoral strategies, programs, urban development projects to identify possible environmental impacts (including transboundary) and environmental changes that may occur during the implementation of programs, urban development projects, taking into account amendments and (or) additions to them.

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

the Law “On State Environmental Expertise, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment”

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 the Republic of Belarus environmental impact assessment is carried out in relation to planned economic and other activities that may have a harmful impact on the environment in accordance with Article 58 of the Law “On Environmental Protection”.
Article 7 of the Law of the Republic of Belarus “On State Environmental Expertise, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment” stipulates that environmental impact assessment is carried out for the objects of economic and other activities planned for construction on Ramsar sites and within 2 kilometers from their borders.

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	☐ D=Planned ☐ C=In Progress ☑ B=No ☐ A=Yes
b) Sub-national level	☐ D=Planned ☐ C=In Progress ☑ B=No ☐ A=Yes
c) Catchment/basin level	☐ D=Planned ☐ C=In Progress ☑ B=No ☐ A=Yes
d) Local/site level	☐ D=Planned ☐ C=In Progress ☑ B=No ☐ A=Yes

16.1 Additional information

If “yes” or “in progress” to one or more of the four categories above
››› In the Republic of Belarus a separate CEPA plan for wetlands has not been developed. Information and educational work with the population, raising awareness of government agencies about the objectives of the Ramsar Convention, is carried out in other forms, including participation in the work of the Interdepartmental Coordination Council for the implementation of the Ramsar Convention of all interested agencies, by placing information in the media, holding round tables, environmental festivals and many others.

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

››› 15

b) at other wetlands
☑ X=Unknown

16.2 Additional information

››› Information Centers exist under all State Nature Protection Institutions established for the protection and sustainable use of Ramsar sites.
In addition to them, information on wetlands of the country is provided on a permanent or periodic basis by tourist information centers (13 for 2023), information and educational centers existing in the system of nature protection, education, forestry, local self-government bodies, etc.

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	☐ D=Planned ☐ C=Partially ☐ B=No ☑ A=Yes
b) specifically involve local stakeholders in the selection of new Ramsar Sites and in Ramsar Site management?	☐ D=Planned ☐ C=Partially ☐ B=No ☑ A=Yes

16.3 Additional information

››› The mechanism of stakeholder participation in decision-making on wetlands planning and management is ensured through their participation in the work of the Interagency Coordination Council for the implementation of the Ramsar Convention, as well as through discussion of state, regional and sectoral strategies, programs, projects related to wetlands by all interested departments and organizations.
The possibility for individuals and legal entities to participate in public discussions of drafts of environmentally significant decisions concerning protected areas (including Ramsar sites and other protected areas established for the conservation of wetlands), as well as in the selection of new Ramsar sites, is established by Article 11 of the Law of the Republic of Belarus “On Specially Protected Natural Areas” of 15.11.2018 No.

150-3: individuals and legal entities have the right to participate in public discussions of drafts of environmentally significant decisions related to PAs, including drafts of the National Strategy for the development of the PA system, state programs in the field of development of the PA system, the scheme of rational allocation of PAs of national importance, regional schemes of rational allocation of PAs of local importance, management plans of PAs.
The mechanism for involving stakeholders in the management of Ramsar sites is holding public hearings when approving the management plans of protected areas where Ramsar sites are located. Scientific and technical councils have been established for Ramsar sites created on the basis of national parks. In addition, state nature protection agencies coordinate their activities with local governments and land users.

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

16.4 Additional information
››› The Interdepartmental Coordination Council for the implementation of the Ramsar Convention has been established and is functioning in the Republic of Belarus. It includes representatives of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection, the Ministry of Forestry, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the State Property Committee, the Belarus President Property Management Directorate, the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, the Belarusian State University, the State Association “Belvodkhoz”, the State Association “Beltopgaz”, and the Belarusian Public Association “Ecological Initiative”.
The main tasks of the Interagency Coordination Council are:
- consideration of proposals on implementation of national policy in the field of conservation and sustainable use of wetlands ;
- identification of priority directions of scientific research on the issue of conservation and sustainable use of wetlands;
- coordination of work of state bodies and other organizations in order to fulfill the obligations of the Republic of Belarus under the Ramsar Convention;
- facilitating the exchange of information between state bodies and other organizations on the implementation of the Ramsar Convention;
- organization of activities to inform the public about the issue of conservation and sustainable use of wetlands.
During the period 2021-2023 the Interagency Coordination Council did not meet, the planned meeting in 2021-2022 was not held due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

16.5 Do you have an operational cross-sectoral body equivalent to a national Ramsar/wetlands committee? {16.5}
☑ B=No

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	☐ D=Planned ☐ C=Partially ☐ B=No ☑ A=Yes
b) other MEA national focal points	☐ D=Planned ☐ C=Partially ☐ B=No ☑ A=Yes
c) other ministries, departments and agencies	☐ D=Planned ☐ C=Partially ☐ B=No ☑ A=Yes

16.6 Additional information
››› Information resources of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection, its subordinate organizations and research institutes are used to share the Convention’s implementation guidelines (website of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Belarus www.minpriroda.gov.by and its territorial bodies (priroda-brest.by, https://naturegomel.by/, etc.), Republican Research Unitary Enterprise “Bel SIC ”Ecology” http://www.ecoinfo.by/и, etc.). http://www.cricuwr.by/
The Consolidated Register of Environmental Information of the State Data Fund on the State of the Environment and Impacts is used to provide information on the state of wetlands to the bodies interested in the implementation of the Ramsar Convention. It was created by the Decree of the Council of Ministers of the

Republic of Belarus No. 734 of 24.05.2008 “On the State Data Fund on the State of the Environment and Impacts on it”. The Consolidated Register includes data on environmental information accumulated by the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Ministry of Forestry, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the Ministry of Emergency Situations, the Ministry of Education, the State Property Committee, the State Inspectorate for Fauna and Flora Protection, the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, local executive and administrative bodies, other state bodies and state organizations by virtue of the state data on the state of the environment and its impacts. The consolidated register is maintained by the Ministry of Environment together with the Center for Environmental Information of the Republican Research Unitary Enterprise “Bel SIC ”Ecology” on the basis of 82 registers of environmental information from its holders.

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

Republican Unitary Enterprise "Central research institute for comprehensive use of water resources»
Republican Research Unitary Enterprise “Bel SIC ”Ecology”
Gomel Regional Committee of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection
Brest Regional Committee of Natural Resources and Environmental protection
the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection

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}
☑ A=Yes

16.7 Additional information
››› Events for the World Wetlands Day (February 2) are held annually under the auspices of the Ministry of Natural Resources and its territorial bodies: press conferences, press releases, exhibitions etc.

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

World Wetlands Day
World Wetlands Day
Conservation and wise use of Wetlands

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
››› Campaigns to raise awareness of the importance of wetlands for people and wildlife during World Wetland Days in the Republic of Belarus are conducted annually (see 16.7 above for information).

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 wetlands and/or Ramsar Sites and their status is widely available in publications and websites in Belarus. The most complete information on Ramsar sites is contained on the website “Ramsar Sites of the Republic of Belarus” (http://test.belfauna.by'frontend/web/ramsar-territory/), the website of the Ministry of Natural Resources (https://minpriroda.gov.by/ru/svg_map-ru/list. The country page on the website of the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention (https://www.ramsar.org/country-profile/belarus) is regularly added and updated. The list of Ramsar sites and information about them is provided on other relevant and widely visited sites, such as https://ru.wikipedia.org/, https://ru.ruwiki.ru/wiki/, etc. The list of Ramsar sites and information about them is regularly updated.

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

Belarus page on the Ramsar.org
Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Belarus

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?	☐ Z=Not applicable ☑ B=No ☐ A=Yes
b) from non-national or multilateral development assistance agencies?	☐ Z=Not applicable ☐ B=No ☑ A=Yes

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.
››› Financial support was provided for activities aimed at effective implementation of the 4th Ramsar Strategic Plan for 2016-2024 through inclusion of wetland conservation issues in the state, sectoral and regional planning programs. Activities aimed at implementation of the 4th Ramsar Strategic Plan are included in the following state programs:
State Program “Environmental Protection and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources” for 2021-2025, approved by the Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus on 19.02.2021 № 99 (subprogram 2 “Hydrometeorological activities, protection of natural resources under climate change”, subprogram 4 “Conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity”; subprogram 5 “National system of environmental monitoring”);
State Program “Agrarian Business” for 2021-2025, subprogram “Development of fishery activities”, approved by the Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus on 01.02.2021 № 59 (as parts of fisheries and fish farming development);
- State program “Belarusian Forest” for 2021-2025, approved by the Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus on 28.01.2021 № 52 (ecologically oriented forestry taking into account environment-forming, water-protective recreational and other protective functions; rational hunting);
- State Program “Comfortable Housing and Favorable Environment” for 2021-2025, approved by the Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus 28.01.2021 № 50, subprogram 5 “Clean Water” (in terms of improving the quality of drinking water, improving the quality of treatment of wastewater discharged into water bodies);
- State program on overcoming the consequences of the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant disaster for 2021-2025, approved by the Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus 22.03.2021 № 159 (in terms of re-wetting of peatlands on the territory of The Polesie State Radiation and Ecological Reserve);
- separate scientific and technical program (SSTP) “Introduction and invasions” for 2021-2025, subprogram 2 “Invasive processes” (in terms of preventing the entry and reducing the negative impact of invasive species)
Certain issues of protection and sustainable use of Ramsar sites (infrastructure development, maintenance of conservation institutions, development of management plans, etc.) are included in regional planning programs.
Given the multifaceted nature of financial support for activities aimed at the implementation of the Ramsar Convention , allocated from the country's budget, as well as the availability of various sources of funding, it is not possible to give an exact amount of financial support.

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}
☑ A=Yes

18.1 Additional information
››› National focal points of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the UN Convention to Combat Desertification are invited to the meetings of the Interagency Coordinating Council for the implementation of the Ramsar Convention.

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
››› Cooperation between the Ministry of Environment (the administrative body of the Ramsar Convention), UN focal points and other global and regional organizations and institutions is carried out at the level of development and implementation of projects in the field of wetlands conservation, invitations to participate in the work of the Coordination Council, as well as through regular workshops and meetings.
The GEF-UNDP project "Conservation-oriented Management of Forests and Wetlands to achieve Multiple Benefits", implemented in 2017-2022, is an example of the implementation of joint actions. The project supervisory body was the Project Management Committee consisting of representatives of national, local and international partner organizations. The donor of the project is the Global Environment Facility, the executing organization is the Ministry of Natural Resources, and the implementing agency is the United Nations Development Program (https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2022-09/UNDP-Belarus_.pdf).
However, the main mechanism of international cooperation is regular meetings and negotiations on the implementation of international projects with the participation of UNEP, UNDP and other interested organizations (https://www.belta.by/society/view/borba-s-degradatsiej-zemel-i-izmenenie-klimata-v-minprirody-oboznachili-napravlenija-dlja-raboty-s-578822-2023/).

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

project implementation experience
Combating land degradation and climate change

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	☐
b) FAO	☑
c) UNECE	☐
d) UNFCCC	☐
e) Global Environment Facility	☑
f) UNDP	☑
g) UNESCO	☑
h) World Health Organization	☐
i) World Meteorological Organization	☐
j) ITTO	☐
k) The Convention's IOPs	☐

18.3 Additional information

For example describe the support and indicate the amount of funding.
››› 1) Global Environment Facility (GEF)
GEF-6 Project "Conservation-oriented management of forests and wetlands to achieve multiple benefits" . Implementation period: 2017 - 2022. Budget: $4.3 million USD.
GEF-6 Project "Sustainable Management of Persistent Organic Pollutants and Chemicals in the Republic of Belarus". The project donors are the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). Implementation period: 2020 - 2024. Budget: USD 8.4 million
2) GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP)
During the reporting period, more than 15 projects of the GEF Small Grants Program related to biodiversity protection and wetlands were implemented. At the present time:
BLR/SGP/OP /Y3/CORE/IW/22/01 «Preservation of the ecosystem of Motol Lake». Implementation period: 2020 - 2025.
BLR/SGP/OP /Y3/CORE/IW/22/0 Preservation of the healing water source "Blizhniy" in the Slonim district of the

Grodno region». Implementation period: 2020 - 2024.
BLR/SGP/OP /Y3/CORE/LD/22/01 «Preservation of the garden and park complex on the "Castle Hill"». Implementation period: 2020 - 2024.
BLR/SGP/OP /Y3/CORE/CD/22/02. Inclusive approach to environmental conservation. Implementation period: 2020 - 2024.
BLR/SGP/OP /Y3/CORE/CD/23/01. Ensuring the sustainable functioning of the integrated system of environmental education for local communities. Implementation period: 2020 - 2024.
BLR/SGP/OP /Y3/CORE/CC/23/01 Development of cycling infrastructure in Cherikov (Good bike). Implementation period: 2020 - 2024.
BLR/SGP/OP /Y3/CORE/IW/23/01 Ecological arrangement of the spring under Zamkova Gora - as a source of drinking water. Implementation period: 2020 - 2025.
BLR/SGP/OP /Y4/CORE/CD/24/02. Supporting the creation and multiplication of the best women's environmental initiatives to improve the sustainability of local development. Implementation period 2024-2026.
3) FAO
TCP/BYE/4001 Project “Strengthening the implementation of the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems initiative through capacity development”. Implementation period: 2024 - 2026. Budget: 120,000USD$.
- TCPF Project: Strengthening Strategic Investment in Food Safety. Implementation period:2024 - 2026 Budget: 95,000USD$.
4) UNDP
- UNDP Project “Support to the Efforts of the Republic of Belarus in Nationalization and Localization of SDGs” is implemented by the UN agencies (UN Development Programme, UN Children's Fund, UN Population Fund and World Health Organization). Project implementation period: 2022 - 2025. Budget: USD 3.5 million.
- Project “Ecotourism development to promote green transition to inclusive and sustainable growth ”, which is implemented by UNDP jointly with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment Protection with the financial support of the Russian Federation. Implementation period: 2021 - 2024. Budget: 1.2 million USD.
5) European Union
- The regional project “EU for Climate” aims to support the governments of six eastern EU partner countries - Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine - in combating climate change, as well as in implementing the Paris Agreement and improving climate policy and legislation. Project implementation period: 2018 - 2023. Budget: 1.3 million USD. Stopped due to sanctions imposed on project financing in the Republic of Belarus.
Project LIFE15NAT/LT/001024 “Stepping stones towards ensuring long-term favourable conservation status of Aquatic warbler”. Project implementation period: 2017 - 2023. Budget: 908.4 thousand USD. Stopped due to sanctions imposed on project financing in the Republic of Belarus.
- Project “Landscape-oriented and community-led development of Yaselda River Valley” (NEAR-TS /2017/ 391-409). Project implementation period: 2017 - 2023. Budget: 750 thousand USD. Stopped due to sanctions imposed on project financing in the Republic of Belarus.
6) EBRD
Project “Belarus Water Sector Framework Third Phase - Wastewater Subprojects in Kletsk, Luban, Fanipol, Baranovichi, Bereza, Zhlobin, Shklou”. Project implementation period: 2021 - 2022. Budget: 32 million Euro. Stopped due to the introduction of EU sanctions on project financing in the Republic of Belarus.
7) Project of the Korean Forest Service under the initiative “Partnership for Greening Drylands” (Changwong Initiative) through the Secretariat of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification with funding from the Global Environment Facility:
- Project “Restoration of drained peatlands in Belarus - 2nd phase”. Project implementation period: 2020-2022. Budget: 180 thousand USD.
8)UNESCO
UNESCO Project No. 2240116046 “Capacity Building for the Safeguarding of Traditional Knowledge Associated with Genetic Resources and Legal Regulation of Access to It in the Republic of Belarus”. Project implementation period: 2020 - 2023.

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

18.6 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
››› Coordination Councils have been established for all transboundary Ramsar sites. An agreed management

plan has been developed for the transboundary Ramsar site “Kotra - ‘Chepkeliai’. A management plan has been developed for the Belarusian-Polish-Ukrainian Biosphere Reserve “Pribuzhsky Polesie”, including wetland conservation issues for the Ramsar Site “Polesye Valley of River Bug”. A joint management plan has been developed for the Belarusian-Ukrainian transboundary Ramsar site “Olmany - Perebrodie”, and a number of joint measures have been implemented to regulate anthropogenic pressures and reduce fire danger.
At the same time, cooperation with neighboring countries on joint management of common wetland systems from 2020 has been stopped due to foreign political circumstances.

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
››› On January 1, 2016, Belarus joined the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement ((AEWA), acting within the framework of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus No. 333 of 21.07.2015).

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}
☑ A=Yes

19.1 Additional information
››› The assessment of biodiversity financing needs in the Republic of Belarus for the period up to 2030 and 2050, including issues of protection, restoration and sustainable use of wetlands was carried out within the framework of the UN Joint Program “Promoting new financing instruments for sustainable development with a focus on vulnerable groups in Belarus”.

19.2 Does your country or institution implement capacity development strategies or actions for the Convention’s Strategic Plan?
☑ C=Partially

19.2 Additional Information
››› Issues related to capacity development for the implementation of the Convention Strategic Plan are partially included in the Strategy for the Development of the System of Specially Protected Natural Areas until January 1, 2030, approved by the Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus on 02.07.2014 No. 649, as well as other strategies and plans of the Republic of Belarus.

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

19.3 Additional information
››› Issues related to the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands are partially included in the educational program for schools
(https://adukar.com/images/photo/biologiya_10kl_maglish_rus_2020.pdf) and students
(https://www.gstu.by/sites/default/files/files/resources/2023/09/mavrishchev.pdf).
A more comprehensive course of studying the problems of wetlands conservation for schoolchildren is provided by the educational program of the elective course “Green Schools” for I-IX grades (Block 3), approved by the Decree of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus 13.07.2020 No. 191.
Various aspects related to water use and water conservation are taught at the advanced training courses of the state educational institution “Republican Center for State Environmental Expertise, Training, Professional Development and Retraining” of the Ministry of Environment (https://www.oos.by/education), scientific and educational institutions (lecture courses: water supply, wastewater disposal and water resources protection), etc.

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}
☑ A=Yes

19.5 Additional information
››› Previous National Reports are used by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection and other agencies for monitoring the achievement of the set goals in the field of protection and sustainable use of wetlands, by scientific organizations for preparation of scientific publications in this field (https://elib.bsu.by/bitstream/123456789/292653/1/241-245.pdf, etc.); and by mass media for preparation of publications, round tables, etc. https://minsknews.by/bolee-778-tys-ga-vodno-bolotnyh-ugodij-belarusi-vklyucheny-v-ramsarskij-spisok/).

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

article
Article about modern state of Ramsar Sites

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

☑ A=High

Target 1: Wetland benefits - Resourcing
☑ C=Limiting

Target 1: Wetland benefits - National Targets
››› The importance of wetlands appears in the national and regional political strategies and plans being developed in the Republic of Belarus. Detailed information about them is presented in paragraph 1.1 of Section 3 of this report. The environmental significance of wetlands is taken into account when developing programs and plans for the development of such sectors as water management, energy, mining, agriculture, tourism, urban development, infrastructure, industry, forestry, aquaculture and fisheries.
The latest version of The Strategy for the Realization of the Ramsar Convention was adopted in Belarus in 2009. The Action Plan for the implementation of the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Waterfowl Habitat for 2009-2014 was developed and successfully implemented. However, analysis of implementation of this Strategy and Action plan showed that the planned activities within the framework of the Ramsar Convention implementation are largely duplicated by other strategic documents, plans and programs in the field of protection and sustainable use of biodiversity related to the wetlands conservation.
In this regard, in order to avoid duplication of activities planned within the framework of the implementation of the Ramsar Convention Strategic Action Plan for 2016-2024, the Government decided not to develop an Action Plan for the implementation of the Ramsar Convention for this period, but to include relevant activities in other related strategic planning documents: the Strategy in the field of environmental protection of the Republic of Belarus for the period up to 2035; Strategy on the Conservation and Sustainable use of Biological diversity; National Strategy for the development of the system of specially protected natural areas until January 1, 2030; National Strategy for Water Resources Management in the Conditions of Climate Change for the period up to 2030; Strategy for conservation and wise (sustainable) use of peatlands; National Strategy for Water Resources Management in the Conditions of Climate Change for the period up to 2030 as well as in the Programs and Action plans for them.

Target 1: Wetland benefits - Planned activity
››› The Strategy for the Realization of the Ramsar Convention as part of the implementation of Target 1 includes the improvement of normative legal support for the protection and sustainable use of wetlands, including the development and adoption of normative legal acts on planning of measures for the wetlands protection and sustainable use, other issues related to wetlands, the organization of consideration of projects, programs, action plans related to wetlands protection and sustainable use and other issues related to wetlands.
One of the main priorities in the field of Wetlands conservation in Belarus is the protection and sustainable use of peatlands. In this regard, the Strategy for the conservation and wise (sustainable) use of peatlands and Scheme of Peatlands Distribution According to Their Use until 2030 has been developed. Belarus is one of the few countries that adopted the Law “On the Conservation and Use of Peatlands”, which establishes the legal basis for the protection of peatlands, rational (sustainable) use of their resources and is aimed at peatlands conservation, conservation and restoring the biosphere functions of bogs, meeting the economic and other needs for these resources of the present and future generations, as well as realizing the rights of citizens to a favorable environment and nature use, international agreements of the Republic of Belarus in this area.
National Strategy for Water Resources Management in the Conditions of Climate Change for the period up to 2030 is aimed at the conservation and sustainable use of water bodies. The goal of the strategy is to increase the efficiency of water resources use to ensure sustainable economic growth of the country in the context of a climate change and to create conditions for the conservation of aquatic ecosystems.
Issues related to the development of the network of Ramsar sites in the Republic of Belarus are regulated by the National Strategy for the development of the system of specially protected natural areas until January 1, 2030 and the Scheme of rational allocation of specially protected natural areas of national significance until January 1, 2025.

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 most important result in the realization of Target 1 is the adoption of the Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus No. 91 of 22.02.2022 “On the National Strategy for Water Resources Management in the Conditions of Climate Change for the period up to 2030”. It emphasizes that water resources are one of the vulnerable components of the natural environment and may be significantly affected by climate change with extensive consequences for human society and ecosystems.

The main objectives of the National Strategy for Water Resources Management in the Conditions of Climate Change for the period up to 2030 are equal access of the population to quality drinking water and adequate water supply and sanitation services with ensuring their financial accessibility; improvement of the ecological condition (status) of surface water bodies with prevention of their pollution, contamination and depletion; improvement of water use efficiency in all sectors of economy; development of integrated water resources management, including transboundary context.

The National Strategy for Water Resources Management envisages a set of measures for conservation of water bodies, including measures to reduce pollution of surface water bodies, rehabilitation of water bodies by rewetting of degraded peatlands, assessment of dynamics of changes in the area of water-related ecosystems and development of scientifically based measures for their protection and rehabilitation, inventory of small surface water bodies (springs, streams, lakes and ponds with an area of up to 0.5 km2) and others.

The results of the peatlands and other wetlands inventory were reflected in the development of the Scheme of rational allocation of specially protected natural areas of national significance until January 1, 2035, the adoption of which is planned to be implemented by the end of 2024 (https://minpriroda.gov.by/uploads/files/Sxema-OOPT-respublikanskaja-PROEKT-ObschObs-11.06.2024.pdf). As a result of the Scheme implementation, the Ramsar territory “Golubitskaya Pushcha” with an area of 6 170 ha, large bog massifs “Gaby” (5 530 ha), “Bytensky“ (2 225 ha), ‘Dubovoye bog’ (about 6 000 ha), ‘Ostrov (5 810 ha), floodplain-river complexes ’Grodno Svisloch” (4 880 ha), “Strumensko-Chechersky” (floodplain of the Sozh River, area 22 150 ha). In total, as a result of adoption of this planning document, the protection of water bodies in the area of about 46 thousand hectares will be improved.

The Schemes of rational allocation of specially protected natural territories of local importance in Brest, Vitebsk, Gomel, Grodno, Minsk and Mogilev regions for the period of 2024-2033, in which it is planned to create local nature reserves on the basis of wetlands are in the process of adoption. Thus, the following wetlands and river floodplains with high biological diversity are considered as planned reserves to be declared: Dvinosa (750 ha), Ositskoe (3,769.9 ha), Usha (Vilia) (about 2,500 ha), Chistets (28,66 ha). In total, more than 40,000 hectares of wetlands will be protected through the adoption of these regional schemes.

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

☑ A=High

Target 2: Water Use - Resourcing

☑ B=Adequate

Target 2: Water Use - National Targets

››› In 2022, the Republic of Belarus adopted two most important strategic documents in the field of protection and sustainable use of water resources: the National Strategy for Water Resources Management in the Conditions of Climate Change for the period up to 2030 and Action Plan of the National Strategy for Water Resources Management in the Conditions of Climate Change for the period up to 2030. This National Strategy is based on the Sustainable Development Goals of the Republic of Belarus, on the documents of long-term strategic planning, including the National Strategy for Sustainable Socio-Economic Development of the Republic of Belarus for the period until 2030, and is the main reference point in the composing and implementation of state and other programs, regional complexes of measures in the field of protection and rational use of water.

The main objectives of the National Strategy for Water Resources Management in the Conditions of Climate Change for the period up to 2030 are:

- Equal access of the population to quality drinking water and adequate water supply and sanitation services with ensuring their financial accessibility;
- improving the ecological condition (status) of surface water bodies with prevention of their pollution, contamination and depletion;
- improving the efficiency of water use in all sectors of the economy;
- development of integrated water resources management.

Target 2: Water Use - Planned activity

››› Planned activities

To realize the 2030 Water Strategy's goal of ensuring water security in the country, a number of long-term priority tasks are envisaged to meet the national SDG 6 goals “Ensure availability and sustainable use of water resources and sanitation for all” presented below.

Target 1: Ensure general and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all by 2030.

Indicator 1.1. Proportion of the population using water services organized in a safe manner. It is planned to achieve the target of 100% by 2030.

Target 2: Ensure public access to adequate and equitable wastewater services by 2030.

Indicator 2.1. Proportion of population using wastewater services in a safe manner.

Target 3: Improve natural water quality by reducing pollution and minimizing discharges of dangerous chemicals and materials, stopping discharges of insufficiently treated wastewater and increasing reuse by 2030.

Indicator 3.1. Index of insufficiently treated wastewater discharge into water bodies to the level of 2015. For indicator 3.1, the main efforts will be aimed at introducing the best technical methods of wastewater treatment and optimizing water use at enterprises, creating mechanisms for economic incentives to reduce the discharge of pollutants in wastewater, etc. The main focus will be on the introduction of the best technical methods of wastewater treatment and optimization of water use at enterprises.

Indicator 3.2. Proportion of surface water bodies that have been assigned an ecological status of “good” and above. The solution of this indicator 3.2 lies in the development and implementation of river basin management plans, which are based on action plans to achieve good or excellent ecological status of all water bodies, including measures to reduce diffuse pollution of water bodies.

Target 4: To improve the efficiency of water use in all sectors of the economy and ensure sustainable water supply to the population.

Indicator 4.1. Water resources deficit. Water extraction (withdrawal) from natural sources per year per unit of gross value added.

Indicator 4.2. Level of pressure on water resources. Water production (withdrawal) from natural sources as a percentage of available water resources.

The main direction of increasing of the rational use of water resources is economic stimulation: reduction of specific water consumption, unproductive water losses and introduction of water-saving technologies, increase in the reuse of treated wastewater, including surface wastewater, and use of drainage water.

Target 4a. To increase utilization of water and resource potential.

Target 5: Implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including transboundary cooperation where appropriate.

Indicator 5.1. Degree of implementation of basin water management (from 0 to 100%).
Indicator 5.2. Percentage of transboundary water basin area for which transboundary cooperation mechanisms are in place.
Task 6: Ensure protection and restoration of aquatic ecosystems.
Indicator 6.1. Percentage of change in the area of water bodies. This task is aimed at protection and ecological rehabilitation of wetlands, small watercourses (rivers and streams), inventory, arrangement and protection of springs and other unique natural water bodies.

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
››› National Strategy for Water Resources Management takes into account the requirements for the provision of wetlands functions and services through the development of river basin management plans. In addition, the requirements for the provision of wetlands functions and services are taken into account in the development of management plans for protected areas declared on the basis of Ramsar sites.
As a result of the state policy in the field of water use and protection, as well as in connection with the transition to the application of the best available technical methods, the volume of water extraction (withdrawal) has decreased by 14 % over the last 15 years. There is a steady tendency of reduction of specific water consumption per capita from 162 to 116 liters/day/person, as well as reduction of water use for own needs by 10%. Reduction of water use volumes was facilitated by introduction of water metering devices, as well as by water users' measures to increase water volumes in the systems of water recycling and repeated (sequential) water supply, which allowed, as a whole in the republic, to achieve water saving up to 95% of the volume of water use.
In line with SDG Target 6.3. Belarus takes actions to improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating waste discharges and minimizing emissions of dangerous chemicals and materials, reducing the share of untreated wastewaterr and increasing recycling and safe reuse of wastewater. Thus, over the period from 2016 to 2023, the discharge of insufficiently treated wastewater into surface water bodies, decreased by more than 4 times. The number of water users having wastewater releases into surface water bodies decreased from 393 to 365, the actual capacity of treatment facilities, after which wastewater is discharged into surface water bodies, decreased from 4182 to 4320 million m3 per year. Water losses and unaccounted water discharges decreased from 91.24 to 85.7 million m3, water discharge into the environment with exceeding the norms of permissible discharges of chemical and other substances decreased from 2.342 to 1.515 million m3. The share of households living in apartments (houses) equipped with sewerage systems for the period from 2021 to 2024 increased from 96.6% to 97.3% (https://ecoportal.gov.by/voda/obespechenie-vodnykh-resursov/).
However, negative trends in the condition of water bodies in the Republic of Belarus were also noted during the reporting period:
1. Reduction of the proportion of water bodies with good water quality for the period from 2020 to 2022 from 72.4% to 68%. The most significant substances causing pollution and eutrophication of water bodies remain biogenic elements and organic substances, their excessive concentrations were more often than others recorded in water samples of water bodies. In most river basins, the volume of pollutants entering water bodies and reservoirs from non-point sources (ammonium nitrogen, nitrate nitrogen, phosphates, organic substances) exceeds 50% of their total volume. Moreover, there is a correlation between the share of wetlands in the catchment area of rivers and the level of their pollution: the most polluted rivers have catchment area with drained wetlands.
2. Decrease in the area of natural lakes by 1.34 %, reservoirs - by 0.22 %, large and medium-sized rivers - by 0.22 %, which is associated with climatic changes over the past period.

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

☑ B=Medium

Target 3: Public and private sectors - Resourcing

☑ B=Adequate

Target 3: Public and private sectors - National Targets

››› Ensure involvement of public and private sector in activities aimed at sustainable use of water resources based on application of guidelines and good practices, increasing of funding sources for Ramsar sites management.

Target 3: Public and private sectors - Planned activity

››› General approaches to public-private sector interaction in the field of environmental conservation at the present stage, including wetlands issues, are set out in the Strategy in the field of environmental protection of the Republic of Belarus for the period up to 2035, approved by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Belarus 24.12.2021 № 370-OD.
They include the following mechanisms and tools for solving the priority strategic tasks and achieving the set goals for the period until 2035, including:
- Conducting the state environmental policy balanced with socio-economic development by implementing interrelated measures of political, legal, socio-economic, organizational, scientific, educational, informational aspects to prevent and minimize internal and external threats to the environment;
- Improvement of the environmental management system by coordinating the activities of various government agencies in this area, increasing the effectiveness of environmental control, its focus on preventive measures to reduce environmental risks, and including environmental indicators in the assessment of the effectiveness of economic development;
- Improvement of regulatory legal support for environmental protection through its timely updating, creation and maintenance of a structurally integral, comprehensive and consistent system of national environmental legislation, its harmonization with international environmental law, and the widest possible implementation of international environmental standards;
- Attracting investments to ensure the introduction of energy-efficient, resource-saving technologies, recycling of waste, and the formation of a technological base for the elimination of accumulated environmental damage;
- Expanding the use of economic regulation and market instruments of environmental protection by establishing environmental tax rates that compensate for environmental costs and encourage the careful use of natural resources; stimulating companies that carry out: environmental modernization of enterprises, ecological rehabilitation of degraded ecosystems, production of environmentally friendly products; developing the market of environmental technologies, equipment and services; attracting the participation of local population in the development of environmental technologies, equipment and services.
- Creation of organizational and economic prerequisites for the transition to environmentally optimal technologies of nature management in the production sphere and tourism, corresponding to the best international practices;
- Improvement of territorial planning to ensure mutual coordination of environmental interests with economic development, formation of environmental infrastructure at various territorial levels, and regulation of the spatial distribution of environmental loads;
- Ensuring unimpeded participation of citizens and public associations in decision-making processes in the field of environmental protection and use of natural resources.

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
››› The Ministry of Natural Resources implements a unified state policy and is the governing body in the field of environmental protection, including the use of water resources, protection and sustainable use of water bodies. The Ministry of Environment coordinates the activities of other republican bodies of state administration, local executive and administrative bodies in this sphere. The Public Coordination Environmental Council was established under the Ministry of Environment to coordinate efforts of state and public organizations, private sector and science. Representatives of the business community are invited to participate in the meetings of the Public Coordination Environmental Council, if necessary. The activities of the Council allow representatives of public and business community to participate in the discussion of draft strategic documents, including questions of wetlands and water resources use.

A system of incentives and other economic mechanisms and regulatory measures aimed at the protection and sustainable use of water and other resources of wetlands is applied within the framework of public-private partnership: environmental tax, tax for the use of natural resources, compensation for environmental damage, payments for public services (waste, water supply and sewerage, etc.). Financial incentives are used to attract investments in environmentally friendly technologies and to introduce environmental management practices. More detailed information on the results achieved by 2024 is presented in Section 3 above.

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

☑ B=Adequate

Target 4: Invasive alien species - National Targets

››› The issues of combating with invasive alien species, determining the ways of their introduction and spread are priorities of the state policy in the field of environmental protection and are taken into account in almost all strategic documents in the field of protection and sustainable use of biological diversity.
The Concept of National Security of the Republic of Belarus approved by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus No. 575 dated 09.11.2010 determines that one of the main external threats in the environmental sphere is the penetration of invasive species of animals and plants from neighboring countries.
The National Strategy of Sustainable Socio-Economic Development of the Republic of Belarus for the period until 2030, approved by the Protocol of the meeting of the Presidium of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus of 02.05.2017 No. 10, recognized that one of the unsolved problems in the field of environmental protection is the threat of spread of invasive species of animals and plants that can cause damage to the environment, economy or human health.
In this regard, the Strategy for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity (as amended by Decree of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus No. 743 of 03.09.2015) sets the task to minimize the negative impact of invasive alien species of wild animals and wild plants on the state of populations of native species and ecological systems, to improve mechanisms to prevent the invasion of new alien species of wild animals and wild plants and to reduce the environmental damage caused by them.
Regulation of the spread and abundance of invasive alien species of wild animals and wild plants, development and implementation of measures to prevent and overcome the adverse effects of these animals and plants on ecological systems of wetlands is one of the priority tasks of The Strategy for the Realization of the Ramsar Convention. Minimization of damage caused by alien species is a priority of the Sustainable Development Goals of the Republic of Belarus - target 15.8: by 2020, take measures to prevent the invasion of alien invasive species and to significantly reduce their impact on terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, as well as take measures to prevent limitation or eradication of priority alien invasive species.

Target 4: Invasive alien species - Planned activity

››› Measures to control invasive alien species of wild animals and invasive plants are included in the National Action Plan on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity for 2021-2025 and the State Program “Environmental Protection and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources” for 2021-2025.
- Activity 56: development of a forecast of potential threats of ecological and economic nature from the penetration of new invasive alien species of wild animals and invasive plants into aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems of the Republic of Belarus and recommendations on preventing the penetration and spread of new invasive alien species of wild animals and invasive plants into aquatic and terrestrial ecological systems of the Republic of Belarus;
- measure 57: implementation of measures to regulate the spread and number of Heracleum sosnowskyi and other invasive alien species of wild animals and invasive plants.
Subprogram 6 “Functioning of the Environmental Protection System” of the State Program “Environmental Protection and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources” for 2021-2025, approved by the Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus No. 99 of 19.02.2021, provides for the financing and implementation of measure 111: implementation of measures aimed at combating invasive plants, including the purchase of special equipment and means.

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
››› The most aggressive alien species of animals and plants that are threat to life and health of citizens, animals, plants and their habitat, water bodies, environment as a whole, as well as those that cause harm to certain sectors of the economy are subject to population regulation in the Republic of Belarus. These species are defined by regulatory legal acts, and special measures are developed and implemented for them, aimed at reducing the negative impact. The list of species subject to regulation in Belarus is presented in Section 4.3.

Coordination of works on regulation of number and distribution of invasive alien species of wild animals and wild plants is carried out by the Ministry of Natural Resources and local executive and administrative bodies. Scientific support of these works is entrusted to the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus. These activities are carried out by users of land and (or) water bodies.
Within the framework of the national system of environmental monitoring in the Republic of Belarus, observations are conducted on the state of populations of 15 invasive plant species and 6 invasive animal species. Recommendations are developed to prevent and minimize damage from them. An electronic data base has been created, work on inventory and mapping of invasive plant species locations is underway. Works on creation of Early Warning System for invasive plant and animal species has been started.
The Centre for the Study of Invasive Species has been established and is functioning under the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus. The Centre coordinates the organization and conducting of work in the field of identification, assessment and forecasting of the penetration and spread of invasive alien species of animals and plants on the territory of the Republic of Belarus. In addition, the Center is engaged in the development of measures to prevent, minimize and reduce damage from the spread of these species, accumulating, summarizing and providing information to interested bodies and agencies. The Center's website has been developed and is maintaining. This web resource is aimed at familiarizing all interested parties, including the public, with alien invasive species. Database of places of growth and habitat of these species is being maintained http://www.ias.by/.
The Ministry of Natural Resources, together with local executive and administrative bodies, develops and approves action plans to limit the spread and number of the most aggressive alien plant species (Heracleum sosnowskyi and Heracleum mantegazzianum, Canadian goldenrod (Solidago canadensis), Acer negundo, Robinia pseudoacacia, Echinocystis lobata). Control measures for these species have been developed and are being implemented in practice. The effectiveness of control over the spread of invasive alien species is assessed on the basis of monitoring of alien species, as well as institutional and other data submitted to the Ministry of Natural Resources.
Special attention is paid to the combat against Heracleum sosnowskyi, which poses a threat not only to biodiversity but also to the health of citizens. Systematic work over the last decade has stabilized the situation with this species, and there is a trend towards reducing the area occupied by it, with a decrease in the number of local populations of the species. As of January 1, 2023, the area of Heracleum sosnowskyi growing in the country amounted to 4,639.1 hectares. Vitebsk and Minsk oblasts are the most threatened, accounting for 78.5 % and 16.9 % of the total growing area of the plant in Belarus. Measures to regulate the spread and number of Heracleum sosnowskyi are carried out within the framework of the Republican Plan of Measures to restore order on the land. As of July 1, 2023, these measures were carried out on the area of 4,801.3 hectares or 103.2% of the established task. These activities are carried out by local executive and administrative bodies, other state bodies and organizations, and financial resources from local budgets are allocated for their implementation in the regions and the city of Minsk.

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

The Centre for the Study of Invasive Species

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

☑ A=High

Target 5: Ecological character of Ramsar Sites - Resourcing
☑ C=Limiting

Target 5: Ecological character of Ramsar Sites - National Targets
››› Development of the network and sustainable protection of Ramsar sites is carried out in accordance with the Strategy for the Realization of the Ramsar Convention, the Strategy on the Conservation and Sustainable use of Biological diversity, National Strategy for the development of the system of specially protected natural areas until January 1, 2030.
the Strategy for the Realization of the Ramsar Convention envisages the following tasks:
- development and implementation of management plans for protected areas that include wetlands;
- planning of forest and land use taking into account the requirements of protection and sustainable use of wetlands;
- conservation of populations of rare and endangered species of wild animals and wild plants living and growing on the wetlands;
- Increase the number of wetlands of international importance, ensuring, if necessary, their declaration as protected areas;
- conducting comprehensive monitoring of the ecological systems of the reserves declared for the conservation of wetlands.
The National Strategy for the Development of the System of Specially Protected Natural Areas, envisages the following tasks:
- optimization of the PA management system through the development and implementation of management plans for PAs, including transboundaries;
- optimization of economic activities in PAs on the basis of a balance of national and regional interests and the interests of the local population and land users;
- ensuring the functioning of the environmental monitoring system and ecological systems in PAs by creating an information subsystem within the National Environmental Monitoring System in the Republic of Belarus to collect and process data on integrated monitoring of ecological systems in PAs, use the results of monitoring for decision-making in the management of PAs, optimization of regimes for their protection and use;
- ensuring sustainable functioning of SPNAs, their protection and use by applying the results of environmental impact assessment of the consequences of decision-making on socio-economic development and placement of construction facilities, as well as methods of cost estimation of natural resources of SPNAs, intensification of activities to attract investment in the development of the system of SPNAs.
The Strategy on the Conservation and Sustainable use of Biological diversity envisages the protection and sustainable use of the most significant for the conservation of landscape and biological diversity of natural and near-natural ecological systems (on the territory of at least 22% of the country) by optimizing the system of protected areas (at least 8.8%) and natural areas subject to special protection (at least 13.2%). One of the main ways to implement this strategy is the creation reserves for the protection of wetlands.
Resolution of the Ministry of Natural Resources of 17.09.2020 No. 18 “On establishing lists of bogs and peatlands” approved a list of bogs for which bog management plans are being developed, including 28 priority sites.

Target 5: Ecological character of Ramsar Sites - Planned activity
››› Based on the above listed strategic planning documents, the main tasks in the field of implementation of target 5 are: declaration of SPNAs for protection and sustainable use of wetlands in accordance with the scheme of rational allocation of SPNAs of republican significance, regional schemes of rational allocation of SPNAs of local significance and optimization of SPNA management system through the development and implementation of management plans for SPNAs, including Ramsar sites.
Measures to develop the network of Ramsar sites and their management (including the development of protected areas management plans) were envisaged in the Scheme of rational allocation of specially protected natural areas of national importance until January 1, 2025, as well as in the regional schemes for the development of protected areas of local importance.

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
››› New Ramsar sites of international importance were not established in Belarus during the reporting period. However, in order to conserve key wetlands, new protected areas were declared in the past period on the area of about 24 thousand hectares (nature reserves “Surazhsky”, “Starobinsky”, “Staritsa”, “Dunaykovsky”, “Floodplain of Lva”, “Mikulishki” and others).
According to the Law of the Republic of Belarus “On Specially Protected Natural Areas”, which includes almost all Ramsar sites in Belarus, management plans are developed when it is necessary to comprehensively regulate natural and (or) anthropogenic processes occurring in protected areas, which have an impact on valuable natural complexes and objects, to carry out significant activities for the protection and use of protected areas. In this regard, management plans have been developed and approved for 20 Ramsar sites, for the Ramsar sites “Prostyr” and “Vydritsa” they were developed in the reporting period.
Currently there are no management plans for 6 Ramsar sites (“Dnieper River Floodplain”, “Drozhbitka - Svina”, “Iput River Floodplain”, “Svislochsko-Berezinsky”, “Vileity”, “Golubickaya Pushcha”).
In addition, as part of the implementation of the Resolution of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of 17.09.2020 No. 18 “On establishing lists of bogs and peatlands”, management plans for natural and slightly disturbed bogs important for biodiversity conservation have been developed over the past period: Sinkovskoye (5,934 ha), Yesmonsky Moh (2,613 ha), Dokudovskoye (630 ha), Serzhitsky Moh (543 ha), Podveliki Moh (5,552 ha).

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

☑ A=High

Target 7: Sites at risk - Resourcing

☑ C=Limiting

Target 7: Sites at risk - National Targets

››› Targets of the Strategy for the Realization of the Ramsar Convention, aimed at reducing risks leading to negative changes of ecological character, are:
- Conservation of populations of rare and endangered species of wild animals and wild plants inhabiting and growing on the wetlands (Greater spotted eagle, Short-toed snake eagle, Osprey, European golden plover, Black-tailed godwit, Great snipe, Aquatic warbler) and their main habitats (open fen mires - 30,000 ha, floodplain meadows - 40,000 ha, rised and transitional bogs - 160,000 ha);
- Development and implementation of management plans for protected areas including wetlands (Ramsar sites “Sporovsky Biological Reserve”, “Zvanets”, “Mid-Pripyat State Landscape Zakaznik’, ‘Olmany Mires Zakaznik’, ‘Yelnia’, ‘Osveiski’, ‘Kotra’, ‘Prostyr’, ‘Vigonoshchanskoe’, Berezinsky Biosphere Reserve, National Park ‘Belovezhskaya Pushcha’, National Park ‘Braslav Lakes’);
- Using of recreational and tourist potential of wetlands, especially of international importance (Ramsar territories “Sporovsky Biological Reserve”, ‘Zvanets’, ‘Mid-Pripyat State Landscape Zakaznik”, “Olmany Mires Zakaznik”, ‘Yelnia’, ‘Osveiski’, ‘Kotra’, ‘Prostyr’).
Targets of the implementation of the Strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, including the country's wetlands, are:
- Preventing decrease in the number of wild animal and wild plant species, their habitat and growing areas and their biological and genetic diversity, ecological systems, natural landscapes and biotopes, restoring the number of rare and endangered wild animal and wild plant species, their populations and genetic diversity and maintaining them in amounts that ensure the sustainable existence of these populations;
- Using of biological diversity in such a way and at such a rate that will not lead in the long term to its depletion and will conserve its ability to meet the economic, aesthetic and other needs of present and future generations;
- Maintaining the reproductive capacity of the biosphere, ensuring regional and global ecological balance under conditions of possible climatic changes.

Target 7: Sites at risk - Planned activity

››› Activities aimed at reducing risks leading to negative changes of environmental character are planned and implemented within the framework of the State Program “Environmental Protection and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources” for 2021-2025 (https://pravo.by/document/?guid=3871&p0=C22100099) and include:
1. Development and implementation of projects on ecological rehabilitation of peatlands, including the development of scientific justifications and design and estimate documentation.
2. Development and implementation of projects on renaturalisation of open meadow and natural ecological systems of wetlands by cutting, removal of trees and shrubs, mowing of bog vegetation, including purchase of equipment, development of scientific justifications and design and estimate documentation.
3. Development of bog management plans.
4. Preparation of eco-tourism development strategies for PAs included in the list of prospective for eco-tourism PAs.
5. Implementation of PA management plans activities.

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 implementation of national programs and international projects, significant progress has been made to minimize the threats to wetlands in the Republic of Belarus. The measures taken included:
1. Rehabilitation of hydrological regime of degraded peatlands (re-wetting): implemented for the Ramsar sites “Servech”, “Pripyatsky National Park”. These measures ensure rehabilitation of biosphere functions of bogs and reduction of fire risk. In total, since the preparation of the previous national report, re-wetting of peatlands on the area of 7.9 thousand hectares has been carried out. It is planned that by the end of 2024, ecological rehabilitation of the degraded Mezhch bog on the area of 7,591.5 ha will be carried out in the Pripyatsky National Park.
2. Organization of sustainable forms of protection and use of fen mires and floodplain meadows (mowing and use of plant biomass, introduction of large herbivorous animals, etc.), which allows to maintain in open

condition about 1500 ha of fen mires in the Ramsar sites “Sporovsky Biological Reserve”, ‘Zvanets’.
3. Development and testing of the technology of ecologically and economically effective use of floodplain meadows for breeding cattle of meat breeds on the example of floodplain meadows of the Pripyat River, the implementation of which will allow to conserve the unique biodiversity of plain rivers of Polesie. In addition, in order to keep meadows open, Belarus has introduced large herbivorous animals - turo-like cattle and tarpan-like horses, ancestors of animals that have disappeared from the country's fauna.
The results of the implementation of measures on rehabilitation and conservation of wetlands had a positive effect on animal and plant species associated with wetlands and aquatic ecosystems, including such globally endangered species, such as Greater spotted eagle (Aquila clanga), Aquatic warbler (Acrocephalus paludicola), Meadow pipit (Anthus pratensis), Northern lapwing (Vanellus vanellus), Black-tailed godwit (Limosa limosa), Eurasian curlew (Numenius arquata), Great snipe (Gallinago media).
4. Carrying out works aimed at improving the condition of bog forests drained as a result of forest amelioration: the Scheme of sustainable use of hydro-forest drainage systems on the forest fund lands (474,700 ha) was developed and approved by the Ministry of Forestry, which envisages re-wetting works on the area of 65,573 ha.
5. Development, testing and practical application of various technological approaches to restore lost populations of globally endangered animal and plant species:Acrocephalus paludicola, Dolomedes plantarius, Cerambyx cerdo, Osmoderma eremita, Coenonympha oedippus, Unio crassus, Pseudanodonta complanata, Astacus astacus, Aldrovanda vesiculosa as well as a number of other species of animals and plants.
Scientifically based stocking of the country's water bodies with native fish species are carried out in large volumes, including species under global extinction: Sterlet (Acipenser ruthenus) and Russian sturgeon (Acipenser gueldenstaedtii).
6. Implementation of practical measures for the development of ecotourism as a form of activity allowing to receive additional income and further direct it to environmental protection activities (Ramsar sites “Biological Reserve ‘Sporovsky’, ‘Zvanets’, ‘Yelnya’, Osveysky”, etc.).
Detailed information on wetlands threats in the Republic of Belarus, including Ramsar sites, as well as measures taken by the country to address them, is presented in Section 8.7.

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

☑ A=High

Target 8: National wetland inventories - Resourcing

☑ B=Adequate

Target 8: National wetland inventories - National Targets

››› In Belarus the national wetland inventory is not maintained, as it will duplicate in one or another part the state cadastres already available in the country.
The Decree of the Government of the Republic of Belarus “On State Inventories of Natural Resources” of 20.04.1993 No. 248 approved the following types of state inventories of natural resources related to wetlands: climatic, land, water, forest, subsoil (including cadastre of peat deposits and sapropel deposits), fauna and flora.
In addition, the National Action Plan for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity for 2021 - 2025 envisaged development of a register of peatlands and ensuring its maintenance, as well as the establishment of boundaries of peatlands, hydrological buffer zones of natural bogs.

Target 8: National wetland inventories - Planned activity

››› Activities aimed at continuing works on wetlands inventory are planned and implemented within the framework of the State Program “Environmental Protection and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources” for 2021-2025 and include:
- maintaining the register of protected areas of the Republic of Belarus, including PAs - Ramsar sites;
- monitoring of surface waters on hydrochemical indicators, including at transboundary observation points, as well as monitoring of water bodies most important for fishery and recreational activities.
- monitoring of surface waters by hydrological (at transboundary observation points), hydrobiological, hydromorphological indicators;
- conducting integrated monitoring of peatlands;
- observation of the state of flora objects and their growing environment, assessment and forecast of their changes within the framework of flora monitoring;
- observation, assessment and forecasting of the state of ecosystems in protected areas;
- maintaining state cadastres and registers of natural resources;
- conducting observations, assessing the condition of peat bogs.

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
››› All state inventories and registers are maintained and updated annually on a permanent basis, including information on the state of the wetlands. Updating is carried out on the basis of information obtained within the framework of the National Environmental Monitoring System of the Republic of Belarus, materials of scientific research, data of state statistical reporting and other state administration bodies.
During the reporting period, the inventory of forest ameliorative systems was completed in Belarus, and the register of peatlands of the Republic of Belarus is being developed and filled with data.
Within the framework of surface water monitoring, observations of hydrological, hydrochemical and hydrobiological indicators of surface water conditions are regularly carried out at 297 observation points located on 86 rivers, as well as 74 lakes and reservoirs. Assessment of transboundary pollution dynamics by analyzing observation data from 33 transboundary observation points was continued.

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

☑ A=High

Target 9: Wise Use - Resourcing

☑ C=Limiting

Target 9: Wise Use - National Targets

››› The Strategy for the implementation of the Ramsar Convention within the framework of sustainable use of wetlands determines that one of the main directions of integrated water resources management is the development and implementation of the Schemes of Integrated Water Use and Protection of water of Neman, Western Dvina, Western Bug, Dnieper and Pripyat rivers basins based on the principles of basin management and conservation of wetlands ecological functions.

Target 9: Wise Use - Planned activity

››› Measures aimed at sustainable use of wetlands, including implementation of integrated resource management at appropriate levels, in particular within the river basin, are planned and implemented under the State Program “Environmental Protection and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources” for 2021 - 2025 and include:
- development of management plans for the Neman and Western Dvina river basins;
- development of management plans for bogs;
- development of management plans for reserves of republican and local importance.

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
››› The Water Code of the Republic of Belarus is the main normative and legal document regulating relations arising from the ownership, use and disposal of water and water bodies and aimed at the protection and rational (sustainable) use of water resources. In accordance with the Water Code, Management Plans are developed for river basins in order to conserve and rehabilitate water bodies, and also for river basin management and integrated water resources use. The structure of the Management Plans is developed taking into account the European Union Water Initiative+ for the countries of the EUWI+ Eastern Partnership (EUWI+).
In the Republic of Belarus, the Water Resources Management Plans for the Neman (2014), Dnieper (2019), and Western Bug (2019) river basins have been developed and adopted in the period up to 2021.
During the reporting period, the Pripyat River Basin Management Plan was approved. The Western Dvina River Basin Management Plan is currently being developed, and a new version of the Neman River Basin Management Plan (2023) has been prepared.
In order to ensure sustainable use of wetlands, Management Plans have been developed for 20 Ramsar sites. Management Plans were developed for the Ramsar sites “Prostyr” and “Vydritsa” during the reporting period. Currently, there are no management plans for 6 Ramsar sites: “Dnieper River Floodplain”, “Drozbitka-Svina”, “Iput River Floodplain”, “Svislochsko-Berezinskiy”, “Vileity”, “Golubickaya Pushcha”.
In addition, as part of the implementation of the Decree of the Ministry of Natural Resources of 17.09.2020 No. 18 “On establishing lists of bogs and peatlands”, management plans for natural and slightly degraded bogs important for biodiversity conservation have been developed over the past period: Sinkovskoye (5,934 ha), Yesmonsky Moh (2,613 ha), Dokudovskoye (630 ha), Serzhitsky Moh (543 ha), Podveliki Moh (5,552 ha).

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

☑ B=Adequate

Target 10: Traditional Knowledge - National Targets

››› The Target “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” doesn’t comply with the national targets of conservation and sustainable use strategies.

Target 10: Traditional Knowledge - Planned activity

››› The following activities are planned within the framework of the realization of target 10 of the Fourth Ramsar Strategic Plan in Belarus:
- Ensuring the activity of the National focal point on access to genetic resources and benefit sharing;
- Organizing festivals aimed at sharing and disseminating traditional skills and knowledge on the use of biological resources, including wetlands;
- Development of ecotourism as a way of conservation and dissemination of traditional knowledge relevant for sustainable use of biodiversity;
- Search for traditional knowledge holders in the field of using of genetic resources, contact with them and compile a register of them.

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
››› The Republic of Belarus acceded to the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity by Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus No. 235 of 22.05.2014.
According to Article 7, Belarus shall take appropriate measures to ensure that access to traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources held by indigenous and local communities is conducted with prior approval and with participation of these indigenous and local communities.
In accordance with the requirements of Article 13 of the Nagoya Protocol, a National Focal Point for Access and Benefit Sharing has been established in the country. The National Focal Points on Access and Benefit-sharing (ABS NFP) ensures accounting, analysis and generalization of traditional knowledge, including providing interested parties with information on access to traditional knowledge related to genetic resources of the Republic of Belarus and conditions of its use. Since this area is practically unexplored, the ABS NFP performs the functions of defining the conditions of access to traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources of the Republic of Belarus and its use, including benefit sharing. The problems of conservation of traditional knowledge will be reflected in the proposals to implement the requirements of the Nagoya Protocol into national legislation.
A number of projects aimed at studying traditional practices related to the use of biological diversity, including cultural aspects of wetlands, have been implemented in the Republic of Belarus.
UNESCO Project No. 2240116046 “Capacity Building for the Safeguarding of Traditional Knowledge Associated with Genetic Resources and Legal Regulation of Access to It in the Republic of Belarus” (2022-2023) was aimed at raising public awareness of the importance of traditional knowledge and practices associated with genetic resources, their role for sustainable development of the country and saving of national identity, conservation of biological diversity. Within the framework of the project a set of legal and practical measures on the issue of conservation, use and transfer of traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources to ensure effective implementation of the Law of the Republic of Belarus “On the Management of Genetic Resources” was developed.
Within the framework of the project “Strengthening of human resources, legal frameworks and institutional capacities to implement the Nagoya Protocol in the Republic of Belarus” the staff of the Department of Folkloristics and Culture of Slavic Peoples of the Center for the Belarusian Culture, Language and Literature

Researches of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus carried out comprehensive work to collect and study the traditional knowledge of Belarusians in the field of traditional medicine, veterinary medicine, pharmacology, botany, zoology, and food culture. The audio-visual materials obtained during the field expeditions, containing interviews with carriers of traditional knowledge are stored in the archives of the Institute of Art History, Folklore and Ethnography of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, which has the status of national scientific heritage. The results of the work were summarized in the collective monograph “Plants in the system of traditional knowledge of Belarusians”.
Traditional use of biological resources on the territory of the country includes practices and traditional knowledge related to regional features, including hunting, fishing, beekeeping, weaving from vines and straw, gathering mushrooms and berries (blueberries, cranberries, lingonberries, strawberries) and others.
Demonstration of traditional practice and knowledge takes place in various forms in different regions of the country, including environmental festivals: “Sporovskie hayfields” (revival and conservation of manual haying on the bogs), “Cranes and Cranberries of the Miirsk region” in the “Yelnia” reserve, “Cranberry Festival” in the ‘Olmany Mires Zakaznik’ (conservation of the local population's traditional hobby - cranberry picking), festivals of waders “Turovsky Meadow”, “Polessky Vyun” (“Mid-Pripyat State Landscape Zakaznik”), ‘Osveyskie Rosi’ (”Osveiski") and many others.
Traditional knowledge is increasingly used in ecotourism, which contributes to the accumulation, generalization and conservation of traditional knowledge at the regional level, involving more and more local people in this process.

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

☑ A=High

Target 11: Wetland functions - Resourcing

☑ B=Adequate

Target 11: Wetland functions - National Targets

››› The National Strategy for the Implementation of the Ramsar Convention in terms of the fulfillment of Target 11 of the Fourth Ramsar Strategic Plan provides for the following task:
- Ensuring scientifically based management, protection and sustainable use of wetlands, including development and implementation of integrated water use and protection schemes, land management schemes and projects, protected area management plans and other measures aimed at improving wetlands management, protection and sustainable use.

The targets of implementation of the Strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in the area of Target 11 are:
- Using of biological diversity in such a way and at such a rate that will not lead in the long term to its depletion and will conserve the ability to meet the economic, aesthetic and other needs of present and future generations;
- maintaining the reproductive capacity of the biosphere, ensuring regional and global ecological equilibrium under conditions of possible climatic changes.

Target 11: Wetland functions - Planned activity

››› Within the framework of realization of Target 11 of the Fourth Ramsar Strategic Plan, the following activities are planned:
- taking into account the functions and services provided by wetlands through their inclusion in the national planning system when developing basin management plans and developing Ramsar management plans;
- defining the legal basis for ecosystem services payments, improving the methodology for assessing the value of ecosystem services;
- involvement of wetlands resources in the economy and their sustainable use.

It is planned that as a result of realization of Target 11 in the Republic of Belarus by 2030 the following results will be achieved:
- 684 thousand hectares of bogs will be conserved in their natural state;
- rehabilitation of at least 15% (at least 75 thousand ha) of degraded peatlands;
- conservation of more than 7 billion m3 of fresh water reserves in bogs and ensuring sustainable water supply to rivers and lakes;
- conservation in bogs of about 500 million tons of carbon;
- annual removal of about 900 thousand tons of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere by natural bogs and release of 630 thousand tons of oxygen into the atmosphere;
- ensuring reproduction of cranberry resources in the amount of about 10.7 thousand tons annually;
- conservation of reproduction centers of hunting wildlife species associated with wetlands (Moose, Eurasian capercaillie, black grouse, etc.);
- development of ecological tourism focused on the wetlands recreational potential;
- effective use of lands drained by forest reclamation.

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

››› Accounting of functions and services provided by wetlands is ensured through their inclusion in strategic national planning documents, the most important of which are:

The Strategy for the Realization of the Ramsar Convention;

Strategy on the Conservation and Sustainable use of Biological diversity;

Strategy in the field of environmental protection of the Republic of Belarus for the period up to 2035;

Strategy on the realization of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (UNCCD;

Strategy for conservation and wise (sustainable) use of peatlands and Scheme of Peatlands Distribution According to Their Use until 2030;

National Strategy for Water Resources Management in the Conditions of Climate Change for the period up to 2030 and Action Plan of the National Strategy for Water Resources Management in the Conditions of Climate Change for the period up to 2030;

National Strategy of Sustainable Social and Economic Development of the Republic of Belarus for the period until 2030;
National Strategy for the development of the system of specially protected natural areas until January 1, 2030;
Scheme of rational allocation of specially protected natural areas of national significance until January 1, 2025.
Functions and services provided by wetlands are included in the programs of socio-economic development of each administrative unit of the country (118 administrative districts and 10 cities of regional subordination) in the sections devoted to the problems of environmental protection, rational nature management, development of elements of “green” economy.
The functions and services provided by wetlands are included in the system of national SDG indicators (17 indicators or 7% of the total number of national SDG indicators).
During the development of 18 management plans for Ramsar sites, a value assessment of ecosystem services and biodiversity was carried out, including a value assessment of the carbon-depletion capacity of forest and wetland ecosystems, sorption (water purification) function of wetlands, assimilation potential of forest ecosystems, biodiversity and others. Ecosystem services are integrated into the action plans foresing for these areas.
To assess the value of ecosystem services, including provided by wetlands, Belarus has developed a technical code of established practice “Environmental Protection and Nature Management. Procedure for determining the valuation of ecosystem services and determining the value of biodiversity”, which defines the procedure for conducting assessment of ecosystem services and determining the value of biodiversity for making management decisions in the environmental sphere.

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

☑ A=High

Target 12: Restoration - Resourcing

☑ B=Adequate

Target 12: Restoration - National Targets

››› Restoration of degraded wetlands is one of the priorities of the Strategy for the Implementation of the Ramsar Convention, the Strategy for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity, the Strategy for conservation and wise (sustainable) use of peatlands, the Strategy on the realization of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.
The main priority of these strategic documents in the field of rehabilitation of degraded wetlands is ecological rehabilitation of degraded bogs, depleted peat deposits and drained lands with peat soils, the use of which for agriculture or forestry is technically impossible and (or) economically inexpedient.
The Strategy for conservation and wise (sustainable) use of peatlands, as well as the Strategy for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity envisage ecological rehabilitation of 15% of degraded and inefficiently used peatlands as the main national task in this area.

Target 12: Restoration - Planned activity

››› Implementation of these strategies in the area of ecological rehabilitation of disturbed peatlands is planned to be addressed by:
- carrying out ecological rehabilitation of degraded peatlands by re-wetting;
- effective use of hydro-forest drainage systems (changing the directions of utilization of inefficiently drained bogs);
- improvement of technologies for accelerated rehabilitation of degraded wetland ecological systems (using planting of wetland plants);
- implementation of other measures envisaged in the Strategy for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity, the Strategy for the Implementation of the Ramsar Convention, the Strategy on the realization of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and other strategic documents in the field of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.

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
››› The Strategy for the Conservation and Rational (Sustainable) Use of Peatlands sets the target of ecological rehabilitation of 75 thousand hectares of disturbed peatlands by 2030. However, taking into account the importance of the fulfillment of target 12, Belarus has carried out ecological rehabilitation of disturbed peatlands in the area of 89.4 thousand hectares by 2024.
In 2020, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment adopted the “List of peatlands subject to ecological rehabilitation”, including 211 disturbed peatlands with a total area of 141.5 thousand hectares.
Taking into account the high results achieved in the field of degraded wetlands rehabilitation by 2030 it is advisable to revise the country's targets in this area towards increasing: to provide ecological rehabilitation of bogs on the area of at least 100 thousand hectares, by 2050 - to restore at least 150 thousand hectares of degraded peatlands in need of ecological rehabilitation.

Target 12: Restoration - Additional Information

››› In addition to ecological rehabilitation of degraded peatlands, a priority in this area is the rehabilitation of open sedge mires overgrown with tree and shrub vegetation and reeds as habitats for globally threatened animal species.

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

☑ A=High

Target 13: Enhanced sustainability - Resourcing

☑ B=Adequate

Target 13: Enhanced sustainability - National Targets

››› Issues related to the potential impact of economic and other activities on the environment, including wetlands, in the Republic of Belarus are regulated by the Law “On State Environmental Expertise, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment”. This law regulates relations in the field of state environmental expertise, strategic environmental assessment and environmental impact assessment and is aimed at ensuring environmental safety of planned economic and other activities, as well as at preventing harmful impact on the environment.
In order to determine possible environmental impacts and changes in the environment (including wetlands), strategic environmental assessment is carried out during the development of state, regional and sectoral strategies, programs, urban planning projects at the stage of development of the relevant projects.
In the Republic of Belarus, in accordance with Article 58 of the Law “On Environmental Protection”, it is established that the planned economic and other activities that may have a harmful impact on the environment are subject to environmental impact assessment.
Article 7 of this Law stipulates that planned economic or other activities within the boundaries of Ramsar sites and within 2 kilometers from their borders are subject to environmental impact assessment procedures.
In addition, in order to establish compliance of planned design and other decisions of economic activity with the requirements of legislation on environmental protection and rational use of natural resources, urban planning projects, pre-project (pre-investment), design and (or) other documentation are subject to state environmental expertise.

Target 13: Enhanced sustainability - Planned activity

››› In terms of implementation of target 13 of the fourth Ramsar Strategic Plan, the Strategy for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity establishes that the priority direction of state policy in the environmental sphere is to conduct state environmental expertise and environmental impact assessment of projects of economic and other activities that have a harmful impact on biological diversity.
Strategies for implementation of the Ramsar Convention in terms of improving the sustainability of wetlands are planned actions aimed at improving regulatory legal support for the protection and sustainable use of wetlands, ensuring environmental impact assessment of projects related to wetlands, consideration of projects, programs, action plans related to the use of wetlands at meetings of the Interagency Coordination Council for the implementation of the Ramsar Convention.

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
››› The procedure of state environmental expertise of all documentation related to projects of water protection zones and coastal lines of water bodies and watercourses, as well as fish-biological justifications for the use of water bodies and biological justifications for stocking of fishing grounds was ensured.
Ensured environmental impact assessment of planned economic and other activities that may have a potential negative impact on the state of water bodies, including such facilities as:
- artificial reservoirs with a surface area of more than 50 hectares and canals for transportation and discharge of wastewater into surface water bodies;
- dams with a height of 2 meters or more, canals for navigation needs;
- groundwater intakes with a capacity of 5,000 m3 per day or more;
- peat extraction facilities;
- projects related to the change and (or) straightening of the river, stream channel and (or) conclusion of a section of the river, stream in a collector;
- objects of economic and other activities within the boundaries of protected areas, their protection zones, territories reserved for the declaration of protected areas,
- objects of economic and other activities within the boundaries of habitats of wild animals and places of growth of wild plants belonging to species included in the Red Book of the Republic of Belarus, within the boundaries of typical and rare natural landscapes and biotopes transferred under protection to land users and

(or) users of water bodies;
- objects of economic and other activities in bogs adjacent to the State border of the Republic of Belarus or territories from which these bogs may be affected;
- ameliorative systems with the designed area of 10 km2 and more.

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

☑ C=Low

Target 15: Regional Initiatives - Resourcing

☑ E=No answer

Target 15: Regional Initiatives - National Targets

››› The Republic of Belarus is interested in participating in the Ramsar Regional Initiatives, but is not a party of it.

Target 15: Regional Initiatives - Planned activity

››› Don’t plan

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

☑ B=Medium

Target 16: Wetlands conservation and wise use - Resourcing

☑ B=Adequate

Target 16: Wetlands conservation and wise use - National Targets

››› The Strategy for the Implementation of the Ramsar Convention in terms of implementation of Target 16 of the Fourth Ramsar Strategic Plan envisages improvement of information support of issues related to protection and sustainable use of wetlands, including adaptation of Ramsar Convention implementation guides developed by the Ramsar Convention Secretariat, preparation and publication of wetland guides, holding press conferences and other events on the issues of protection and sustainable use of wetlands.
Development of communication, capacity, education, participation and awareness of citizens in the sphere of conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, including wetlands is envisaged by Target 16 of the Strategy for Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity within the framework of realization of the following targets:
- Target 1: to raise the awareness of the state agencies, population and other organizations, including non-governmental ones, about the state and values of biodiversity and measures that should be taken to conserve and use it sustainably;
-Target 12: to improve the scientific knowledge about the modern state of biological diversity; to define trends and causes of the state dynamics of species and biotopes; to elaborate effective measures of sustainable use and monitoring of biological diversity and to create a platform for the exchange of information and knowledge.

Target 16: Wetlands conservation and wise use - Planned activity

››› Following tasks are included in the National Action Plan for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity for 2021 - 2025:
- preparation, publication and distribution of guides, maps, posters, booklets and other promotional materials on biodiversity conservation activities in Belarusian, Russian and English;
- organization of conferences, round tables, exhibitions, festivals;
- ensuring the functioning of a network of “green schools”;
- development of the institute of volunteering, support of public initiatives in addressing issues related to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity;
- organizing and holding press conferences, thematic briefings, exhibitions on issues of conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity;
- ensuring the functioning of national clearing-house mechanisms on issues of conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity (including monitoring of the genetic resources use) and biosafety.

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
››› Information on wetlands and/or Ramsar sites is widely presented in publications and websites of Belarus. The most complete information on Ramsar sites is contained on the website “Ramsar Sites of the Republic of Belarus” (http://belfauna.by/frontend/web/ramsar-territory/index), the website of the Ministry of Nature and Environmental Protection (https://minpriroda.gov.by/ru/svg_map-ru/list. The country's page on the website of the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention (https://www.ramsar.org/country-profile/belarus) is regularly updated. The list of Ramsar sites and information about them is provided on other relevant and widely visited sites, such as https://ru.wikipedia.org/, https://ru.ruwiki.ru/wiki/, etc. The country page is regularly updated.
The Consolidated Register of Environmental Information of the State Data Fund on the State of the Environment and Impacts created by the Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus No. 734 of 24.05.2008 “On the State Data Fund on the State of the Environment and Impacts on it” is used to provide information on the state of wetland to the bodies interested in the implementation of the Ramsar Convention.
The Consolidated Register includes data on environmental information accumulated by the Ministry of Nature, Ministry of Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Ministry of Emergency Situations, Ministry of Education, State Committee on Property, State Inspection of Fauna and Flora under the President of the Republic of Belarus, National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, local executive and administrative bodies, other state bodies and state organizations of the Republic of Belarus. The consolidated register is maintained by the Ministry of Natural Resources in cooperation with the Center for Environmental Information of the Republican Research Unitary Enterprise “Bel SIC ”Ecology”on the basis of 82 registers of environmental information

Promotion of information on the Ramsar Convention and wetlands of Belarus in the Internet, including the World Wetlands Day, is provided by the websites of the Ministry of Natural Resources (www.minpriroda.gov.by) and its territorial bodies (https://priroda-vitebsk.gov.by/, https://minoblpriroda.gov.by/, etc.), the Ministry of Forestry, district executive committees, public organizations and public campaigns (https://minoblpriroda.gov.by/), individual environmental institutions (https://priroda-vitebsk.gov.by/, https://minoblpriroda.gov.by/, etc.) and their groups (https://minoblpriroda.gov.by/). The State Scientific institution «V.F.Kuprevich institute of experimental botany of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus» http://botany.by/, etc.). Many SPNAs have their own accounts in social networks, actively updated and communicating directly with potential visitors. The website http://www.itourist.by/ informs about the tourism potential of protected areas in Belarus. The site wildlife.by tells both about the diversity of wildlife in Belarus and the sustainable use of natural resources by tourists, photographers, hunters and fishermen.
Schoolchildren and adults actively use the site “Biodiversity of Belarus” florafauna.by to record information about the species of plants and animals encountered in different regions of the country, to determine species independently or with the help of experts.
The Ministry of Natural Resources, state and public organizations issue periodicals devoted to the problem of biodiversity conservation, including the issues of wetlands conservation. The environmental bulletin “State of the Natural Environment of Belarus” is published annually, where a significant place is given to the issues of fauna and flora conservation, data on the results of environmental monitoring and other aspects related to nature protection are presented. Information on the state of the natural environment, including water resources, is available on the website of the National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Belarus (https://www.belstat.gov.by/ofitsialnaya-statistika/makroekonomika-i-okruzhayushchaya-sreda/).
A specialized journal “Native Nature” is published to disseminate knowledge about biodiversity. Printed publications have permanent columns dedicated to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. At least 50 types of information materials on biodiversity (booklets, leaflets, posters, calendars) are published and distributed annually. The total circulation of information materials in the country for the 10-year period exceeded 100 thousand copies.
The Republic of Belarus is implementing the Green Schools program, which is included in the official list of optional classes for schoolchildren in Belarus, approved by the Ministry of Education. More than 600 schools participated in it in 2024. Issues related to the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands are included in the curriculum of the “Green Schools” elective class for I-IX grades (Block 3), approved by Decree of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus No. 191 of 13.07.2020.
In order to promote environmental knowledge, the Ministry of Environment, the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, state and public organizations annually organize and hold at least 10 press conferences, thematic briefings, exhibitions on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, including dedicated to World Ramsar Sites Day (2 February), World Biodiversity Day, International Bird Day and other dates related to biodiversity conservation.

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Belarus
florafauna
wildlife.by - wildlife diversity of Belarus
itourist.by
V.F.Kuprevich institute of experimental botany
Vitebsk Regional Committee of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection
Ramsar.org/Belarus
Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Belarus
belfauna.by

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

☑ B=Medium

Target 17: Financial and other resources - Resourcing

☑ C=Limiting

Target 17: Financial and other resources - National Targets

››› Target 17 of the Fourth Ramsar Strategic Plan corresponds to Target 13 of the Strategy for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity - to ensure the mobilization of financial resources for implementing the measures on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

Target 17: Financial and other resources - Planned activity

››› Financing of measures aimed at wetlands conservation is provided at the expense of implementation of the State Programs of the Republic of Belarus for 2021 - 2025, as well as at the expense of attracting funds of international technical assistance, and other sources not prohibited by legislative acts.

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

››› Belarus has established a developed system of strategic planning of finances allocated for environmental protection activities, including the implementation of measures aimed at the realization of the Fourth Ramsar Strategic Plan. The sources of financing of environmental protection activities related to wetlands are mentioned in various state, regional and sectoral programs. State programs are financed from the rev-enues of the consolidated state budget. Regional programs are approved by local councils of deputies and are financed fully or partially from local budgets. Sectoral programs are aimed at the implementation of tasks and functions assigned to the republican bodies of state administration; they can be financed from the republican budget, local budgets and state extra-budgetary funds.

The main sources of funding for activities aimed at wetlands conservation are the following state pro-grams:

1. State program "Environmental protection and sustainable use of natural resources" for 2021 - 2025, including subprograms:

- Subprogram 2 "Hydrometeorological activities, protection of natural resources in the conditions of cli-mate change". The planned costs for the implementation of activities under the Subprogram for 2021 - 2024 are 5.7 million BYN or 1.8 million USD.
- Subprogram 4 "Conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity". Planned costs for the implementation of activities under the Subprogramme for 2021 - 2024 years amount to 5.4 million BYN or 1.7 million USD.
- Subprogram 5 "National system of environmental monitoring". The planned costs for the implementation of activities under the Subprogram for 2021-2024 amount to 4.5 million BYN or 1.4 million USD.
- Subprogram 6 "Functioning of the environmental protection system". The planned costs of the Subpro-gram for 2021-2024 amount to 213.3 million BYN or 66.4 million USD.

These subprograms are aimed at achieving the objectives of the Fourth Ramsar Strategic Plan, including: conservation and rehabilitation of wetlands; mitigation of climate change; improvement of water quality; conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity; maintenance, development and improvement of the national environmental monitoring system; implementation of measures to combat invasive alien species; etc.

2. Subprogram 5 "Clean Water" of the State Program "Comfortable Housing and Favorable Environment" for 2016 - 2020. Subprogram 5 is aimed at improving the quality of drinking water supplied to consumers, development of drinking water supply and water disposal (sewerage) systems and improving the quality of treatment of discharged wastewater into water bodies. The planned costs for the implementation of measures under the Subprogramme amount to 1,757 million BYN or 547.4 million USD.

3. Subprogramme 5 "Development of fishery activity" of the State Program of Agrarian Business Devel-opment in the Republic of Belarus for 2021-2025 aimed at sustainable use of fish resources of the coun-try. The subprogramme is implemented through the development of fish farming (fish breeding and culti-vation in artificial reservoirs) and fishery in fishing grounds (lakes, rivers, natural reservoirs and water-courses). The planned costs of the Subprogram activities for 2021-2024 amount to 47.4 million BYN or 14.7 million USD.

In addition, some issues of wetlands conservation are financed by other state programs:

- State program on overcoming the consequences of the Chernobyl NPP disaster for 2021 - 2025 - carry-ing out re-wetting of peatlands contaminated with radionuclides;
- State program "Belarusian Forest" in terms of forest bogs conservation, reducing fire danger in peatlands

and forests, hunting, including wetland species;
- Subprogram 3 “Development of tourism industry facilities” and Subprogram 4 “Development of tourism and improvement of tourism infrastructure in the Poozerie region of Vitebsk oblast for 2023 - 2025” of the State Program “Belarus Hospitable” for 2021 - 2025. of the State Program “Belarus Hospitable” for 2021-2025.
These subprograms are aimed at improving tourism infrastructure, improving the material and technical base of tourist industry facilities, providing them with qualified personnel, realizing the invest-ment potential of the tourism sphere, including the development of various types of tourism. Within the framework of these programs, measures to develop the ecotourism potential of the Ramsar territories “Osveiski”, “Yelnia”, “Sporovsky Biological Reserve ” were implemented.
Certain activities to develop the potential of Ramsar sites (infrastructure development, maintenance of environmental institutions, development of management plans, etc.) are included in regional planning programs.
In addition, the source of funding for environmental protection activities in Belarus is international tech-nical assistance funds. However, the provision of international technical assistance funds for Belarus has been stopped since 2020, that prevented Belarus from receiving international financial resources for the implementation of a number of projects important for Belarus, including the GBFF grant “Achieving the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework goals by expanding the network of protected areas, restoring key habitats and conserving globally threatened species” (USD 870,000), GEF-7 project “Conservation of Biodiversity of Wetlands of International Importance and Sustainable Management of Freshwater Eco-systems in the Western Dvina River Basin” ($4,300,000), under which it was planned to develop a West-ern Dvina River Basin Management Plan for Belarus and implement a set of measures aimed at conserva-tion and rehabilitate the ecological state of aquatic and wetland ecosystems in the context of climate change.

Target 18: International cooperation

International cooperation is strengthened at all levels.

Target 18: International cooperation - Priority

☑ B=Medium

Target 18: International cooperation - Resourcing

☑ C=Limiting

Target 18: International cooperation - National Targets

››› The need to develop international cooperation in the field of biodiversity conservation, including wetlands is reflected in the Strategy for the Implementation of the Ramsar Convention, the National Strategy for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity of the Republic of Belarus, the National Strategy for the Development of the System of Specially Protected Natural Areas until January 1, 2030, the Water Strategy of the Republic of Belarus until 2020, Strategy on the realization of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (UNCCD).

In the Strategy for the implementation of the Ramsar Convention as one of the main directions of activity in this area is the intensification of international cooperation, including the development of coordinated action plans to implement the requirements of international agreements of the Republic of Belarus on environmental protection with the Ramsar Convention, the development of cooperation with neighboring contries on the establishment of transboundary wetlands, the development of coordinated action plans for the management of transboundary wetlands, and attracting international technical assistance for the implementation of projects on the protection and sustainable use of the wetlands.

Belarus has acceded to the most important environmental conventions and protocols related to the conservation of wetlands. There is many-sided international cooperation on the issues of wetlands conservation, including neighboring countries. Representatives of Belarus participate in the work of intergovernmental organizations and bodies in the field of wetlands conservation.

At the same time, due to the introduction of sanctions against the Republic of Belarus, there has been a significant decrease in contacts and joint actions in the field of wetlands conservation, primarily with the countries of the European Union.

Cooperation in the management of the transboundary Ramsar sites “Olmany - Perebrody” and “Stokhod - Pripyat - Prostyr” (Belarus - Ukraine), “Kotra” - “Chapkeliai” (Belarus - Lithuania), transboundary biosphere reserve “Western Polesie” (Belarus - Ukraine - Poland) was terminated. Agreements on the protection and use of transboundary waters with neighboring states: Lithuania and Latvia (within the framework of the Water Strategy) were rejected. Belarus' participation in all European Union Projects was stopped, including the projects significant for wetlands conservation not only for Belarus, but also for Europe as a whole:

- LIFEMagniDucatusAcrola LIFE15NAT/LT/001024 “Stepping stones towards ensuring long-term favourable conservation status of Aquatic warbler in Lithuania” (Belarus - Lithuania, 2017 - 2023);
- the project “Together for the community and nature: strengthening the development process in the Miory district through the partnership of local authorities and
civil society” (2019 - 2022);
- the project “Wilderness Without Borders: Protecting one of Europe’s largest natural landscapes” (2019 - 2023) and a number of others.

The GEF project “To achieve improved status of biodiversity and water resources, including key wetland areas, through the integrated management of the Western Dvina/Daugava transboundary river basin”, aimed at improving the ecological status and biodiversity of key freshwater ecosystems of international importance and strengthening transboundary cooperation with Latvia in the Western Dvina basin on improving joint management of transboundary water resources, was cancelled.

Thus, the imposed sanctions resulted in failure of implementation of planned activities aimed at wetlands conservation both at the national and international levels.

Target 18: International cooperation - Planned activity

››› Target 18 of the Fourth Ramsar Strategic Plan corresponds to the following activities of the National Action Plan for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity for 2021-2025:

- Ensuring participation of representatives of the Republic of Belarus in the activities carried out within the framework of the implementation of the management of the Convention on Biological Diversity, its protocols and other international agreements related to the conservation of biological and landscape diversity;
- preparation of proposals on attraction of international technical assistance for realization of projects on conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, access to genetic resources and biosafety.

In the action plan of the National Strategy for Water Resources Management in the Context of Climate Change for the Period until 2030 under the target 18 of the Fourth Ramsar Strategic Plan it is planned:

- preparation and signing of agreements on protection and use of transboundary waters with neighboring states;
- implementation of a set of measures on realization of obligations undertaken by the Republic of Belarus

under the Protocol on Water and Health to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes of June 17, 1999, until 2030.

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
››› In accordance with bilateral agreements, Belarus continues to cooperate with neighboring countries on shared transboundary water resources. Under the agreement with the Russian Federation, a joint Belarusian-Russian commission on transboundary waters of the Dnieper and Western Dvina river basins operates. Under the provisions of the agreement, Belarus and Russia exchange hydrological data and information on water quality, agree on measures to protect and use water resources and coordinate actions to mitigate the consequences of floods and other emergencies.
Participation of representatives of the Republic of Belarus in the events held within the framework of the Ramsar Convention implementation was ensured.
The GEF project “Integrated Landscape and Water Management for the Gomel Polesye: An Ecosystem Approach Model to Achieve the Kunming-Montreal GBF Targets and LDN in Belarus” was prepared and submitted to the UN Office.
With the financial support of the UN Development Program in the Republic of Belarus for 2024, the development of the draft National Action Plan for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity for 2026-2030 (including measures aimed at the conservation of wetlands) is being carried out, and the National Report on the implementation of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (format of the National Report for submission to the COP15) has been prepared.
From 2018 to 2020, a number of international projects aimed at conservation and sustainable use of Ramsar sites have been implemented or are under implementation in the Republic of Belarus, the most important of which are:
- UNDP-GEF project “Conservation-oriented management of forests and wetlands to achieve multiple benefits”. Implementation period: 2017 – 2022;
- Project “Restoration of drained peatlands in Belarus” (1st and 2nd phases) under the agreement between the Secretariat of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification and Green Economy” with the financial support of the Forest Service of the Republic of Korea under the Changwon Initiative (2018 - 2022);
- Project “Ecotourism Development to Promote Green Transition to Inclusive and Sustainable Growth”, which is implemented by UNDP together with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment with the financial support of the Russian Federation. Implementation period: 2021 - 2024.
- Project “GEF-6 Belarus POPs Legacy and Sustainable Chemicals Management”. The project donors are the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). Implementation period: 2020 - 2024.

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

››› Capacity building for the implementation of the Convention and the 4th Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016 - 2024 among government agencies and other organizations, including non-government organizations, with the active participation of wetlands managers and users.

Target 19: Capacity Building - Planned activity

››› The following activities in the area of increasing capacity of wetlands correspond to Target 19 of the 4th Ramsar Strategic Plan:
- development and implementation of key strategic documents and action plans aimed at effective implementation of the convention and the 4th Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016 - 2024, taking into account the increasing of the Ramsar sites potential.
- creation of infrastructure, purchase of machinery and equipment necessary for effective conservation activities on the Ramsar sites;
- ensuring effective work of the Interagency Coordination Council on the implementation of the convention on wetlands under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment Protection;
- assessment of biodiversity financing needs in the Republic of Belarus for the period up to 2030 and 2050.
- training of personnel, including employees of state environmental institutions, on the implementation of the convention and the 4th Strategic Plan of the Ramsar Convention for 2016 - 2024.

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
››› In order to strengthen the capacity to implement the 4th Strategic Plan of the Ramsar Convention, the main strategies and plans in the field of conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, including the conservation of wetlands, were updated: National Strategy for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity, Action Plan for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity of the Republic of Belarus for 2021-2025, National Strategy for Water Resources Management under Climate Change for the period up to 2030, National Strategy for Water Resources Management in the Conditions of Climate Change for the period up to 2030, National Strategy for the development of the system of specially protected natural areas until January 1, 2030. Developed and adopted the Strategy for conservation and wise (sustainable) use of peatlands and Scheme of Peatlands Distribution According to Their Use until 2030.
Issues related to capacity development for the implementation of the Convention Strategic Plan are partially included in the National Strategy for the development of the system of specially protected natural areas until January 1, 2030, Schemes of rational allocation of specially protected natural areas of republican significance until January 1, 2035, regional schemes of rational allocation of specially protected natural areas of local significance for 2024 - 2033. It is planned that as a result of the implementation of these schemes reserves of republican and local importance on the area of more than 86 thousand hectares will be created on the basis of wetlands.
Within the framework of the UN Joint Program project “Promotion of new financing instruments in the region focusing on vulnerable populations” an assessment of biodiversity financing needs in the Republic of Belarus for the period up to 2030 and 2050, including the issues of protection, rehabilitation and sustainable use of wetlands was carried out. Proposals developed in the framework of the project will be applied in updating the National Strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity of the Republic of Belarus taking into account the Kunming-Montreal Global Framework for Biodiversity and development of the National Action Plan for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity of the Republic of Belarus for 2026 - 2030.
Within the framework of implementation of the State Program “Environmental Protection and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources” for 2021-2025, international projects and programs, the technical and information potential of the Ramsar sites “Osveiski”, “Yelnia”, “Zvanets”, “Pripyatsky National Park”, “Vigonoshchanskoe”, “Berezinsky Biosphere Reserve” has been increased through the development of tourist infrastructure, construction of information centers and ecological trails, procurement of specialized equipment, watercrafts, etc.
Various aspects related to biodiversity protection, water use and water conservation are taught at the

advanced training courses of the State Educational Institution “Republican Center for State Environmental Expertise, Training, Professional Development and Retraining of Personnel” of the Ministry of Environment, educational institutions (courses on water supply, drainage and water resources protection) and others.
On the basis of the Republican Center for advanced training of the Ministry of Natural Resources training on the program “Organization of nature protection and tourism activities in protected areas” is carried out.
Almost all heads of state nature protection institutions on the basis of Ramsar sites have been trained at the national and regional levels on the issues of biodiversity conservation, including wetlands. Directors of state nature protection institutions (Ramsar sites) participate in special meetings of the Ministry of Natural Resources, seminars and working meetings to exchange experience with experts of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus on wetlands management, development of ecotourism, involvement of the population in the management of sites.