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
››› New Zealand

You have attached the following documents to this answer.

Letter_of_Submission_of_the_COP15_National_Report_by_Aotearoa_NZ._DG_Signed_.pdf - Letter of Submission of the COP 15 New Zealand Ramsar Convention on Wetlands Report

Designated Administrative Authority for the Convention on Wetlands

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Head of Administrative Authority - name and title
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Designated Non-Governmental Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness (CEPA) Programme National Focal Point

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Name of organisation
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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)
››› Investment in wetland restoration
The Government's Jobs for Nature programme provided $1.2 billion of funding to protect and restore natural ecosystems. Within the programme, $400m was allocated to improve freshwater management. This includes wetland restoration as well as riparian planting, pest control, and fish passage remediation. 235 freshwater projects were delivered in collaboration with regional councils, environmental NGOs, Māori iwi and hapū (tribes and sub-tribes), communities and landowners. Over 6,000 hectares of freshwater ecosystems, including wetlands, are under active restoration and more than 8 million plants have been planted in riparian, lake or wetland areas.

2)
››› Integration of mātauranga Māori/indigenous knowledge to understand changes to the ecological character of Ramsar Sites
Monitoring and reporting on the ecological character (health) of Ramsar Sites in New Zealand was enhanced through an initiative to increase engagement with indigenous people (Waikato Tainui and associated sub-tribes/hapu) in 2024 to describe the changes in the ecological character of the Whangamarino Wetland Ramsar Site. In particular, the assessment of changes in the condition of the Ramsar Site benefited from the integration of mātauranga Māori/indigenous knowledge on the movement of water, cultural traditions and the recognised historical importance of the wetlands of food gathering (mahinga kai). This approach will be further applied to other Ramsar Sites in New Zealand.

3)
››› Government's first emissions reduction plan – recognising potential for wetlands
New Zealand's first emissions reduction plan specifically identified the management and restoration of non-forest ecosystems, including wetlands, as an important opportunity to remove and store carbon. It noted that drained and degraded peatlands are emitting approximately 1.9 Mt CO2-e per year. The second emissions reduction plan further recommends the assessment of non-forest activities, including the rewetting of peatlands and restoration of blue carbon ecosystems. These actions can also help build resilience to climate change impacts such as sea-level rise, improve water quality, and protect the habitats of birds, fish and other species.

4)
››› Establishment of a national initiative to protect and enhance priority river ecosystems
Ngā Awa is the Department of Conservation's priority river restoration programme, with a vision to work with local communities to manage and restore river ecosystems from source to sea (entire river-system focus). The national programme is implemented across 12 large-scale river systems in collaboration with landowners, local government and Māori iwi and hapū (tribes and sub-tribes).

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

Ngā Awa river restoration programme

5)
››› National wetland symposium 2024
The New Zealand Wetland Restoration Symposium organised by the National Wetland Trust was held in 2024, bringing together community groups, landowners, iwi, scientists, wetland managers and students. The Symposium further promoted the value of wetlands as nature-based solutions to address environmental challenges and highlighted many community led wetland restoration projects, including many Māori iwi and hapū projects underpinned by Mātauranga Māori (indigenous knowledge).

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

National Wetland Symposium 2024

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

1)
››› Historical and ongoing loss and degradation of wetlands
New Zealand has historically lost 90% of inland wetlands, with lowland fertile wetlands often reduced to less

than 1% of their original extent. Evidence indicates there is ongoing loss of wetlands in many regions (Our land environment, MfE 2024). This is partly due to challenges regarding implementation and compliance with policies and rules that are in place to conserve wetlands. Remaining wetlands within changed catchments, including due to land drainage, are at risk of ongoing degradation and are difficult to restore, even if most historic drivers of wetland loss have been addressed. In addition, many estuaries, lakes and river systems in lowland and coastal regions of New Zealand are under pressure, due to a legacy of catchment degradation and land use change (Our marine environment, MfE 2022).

2)
››› Responding to current and projected impacts of climate change on wetlands
Climate change is expected to have a range of impacts on wetlands, including from invasive species, increase in fire frequency, sea level rise, changed rainfall patterns, flood events and impacts on alpine wetlands from reduced snow and ice cover. Improving and maintaining the ecological character of wetlands is an important part of addressing wetland and other freshwater and coastal water quality and quantity issues arising from climate change. New Zealand has established new systems for addressing climate change at a national level (including to meet emission targets and begin adaptation programmes). Similarly, while many wetland restoration projects are supporting biodiversity recovery, there is a need to focus on climate change impacts. For example, human-induced fires at three significant peatlands (Whangamarino, Awarua, Kaimaumau) resulted in significant carbon emission into the atmosphere (>600,000 t CO_2-equivalents) as well as causing substantial ecosystem damage to two of New Zealand's Ramsar Sites. Projected changes in rainfall also present a risk to wetlands. In some regions flood events may transport contaminants (sediment, nutrients) and lead to decline in wetland condition.

3)
››› Implementation and compliance for Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites)
The seven Ramsar Sites in New Zealand are internationally recognized for the significant ecological and cultural values they support. Several of these Ramsar Sites are under threat, however, due to water quality decline, water diversion, drainage, human-induced fires, and invasive species. The recent fire at the Whangamarino Wetland Ramsar site (2024), and the fire and algal blooms at the Awarua Wetland Ramsar site (2022-24) highlight the need for ongoing efforts to improve implementation, monitoring and ensure compliance of land use activities in catchments with national and regional rules and policies.

4)
››› Targets for wetland conservaton and wise use
There is a high level of interest in New Zealand, from different sectors, to undertake actions for wetland conservation and wise use, and particularly for restoring wetlands for biodiversity, water management and climate benefits. Development of specific targets for wetland restoration, including prioritising high value and threatened wetland ecosystems, is being explored to guide national, regional and local conservation programmes, and to support the implementation of wetland action plans.

5)
››› Coordinated action and wetland partnerships
Wetland management is undertaken by many groups and agencies in New Zealand, including Māori iwi and hapū, local community, industry groups, NGOs, landowners, local, regional and national government agencies and recreation groups. Funding and resources are often limited which is a barrier to achieving wetland outcomes. Enhanced coordination between groups, and development of cross-sector partnerships, including partnerships with the private sector is highly valuable to ensure wetland projects are effective and sustainable.

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

1)
››› Ramsar Convention Strategy for New Zealand
A New Zealand Ramsar Convention on Wetlands Strategy is to be developed by the Administering Authority (Department of Conservation). The Strategy will identify priorities for the implementation of the Convention within New Zealand’s domestic framework for implementation, including the priorities for the management, monitoring and designation of Ramsar Sites and delivering on the wise use of wetlands. The strategy will also describe priorities for New Zealand’s international engagement under the Convention including aligned work programmes and potential resolutions to support wetland conservation.

2)
››› Wetlands Action Plan
There is extensive effort by local communities, landowners, NGOs, government, and Māori to restore wetlands. Recognizing that wetland restoration is occurring at different scales and by different groups, a clear action plan is needed to ensure wetland management is delivering on the wise use of wetlands and is

coordinated and focused on high priority wetlands. Establishment of restoration targets for different wetland types is also recommended to guide a coordinated approach to restoration.

3)
››› Strengthening our work on wetlands with Māori (New Zealand's Indigenous Peoples)
New Zealand is supportive of the long-standing commitment of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands to the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities in the management of wetlands. Under New Zealand's environmental legislation, the rights and interests guaranteed to Māori under the Treaty of Waitangi are recognised. This extends to the protection of the natural world (including wetlands). The Crown is also committed to settling historic claims under the Treaty of Waitangi that can involve the return of land and waterways to Māori ownership and/or establishing co-governance arrangements. Local government can also enter into similar arrangements with iwi or hapū (tribes and sub-tribes). New Zealand's freshwater legislation and Te Mana o Te Taiao – the Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy 2020 (ANZBS) seek to manage freshwaters in a way that is consistent with iwi values and in partnership with iwi and hapū. New Zealand plans to strengthen our existing work with iwi and hapū on the Ramsar Convention. This work includes integrating indigenous knowledge into Convention reporting and implementation work, and exploring further opportunities to enable the participation of indigenous peoples in the management of wetlands including at domestic and international levels.

4)
››› Developing and sharing approaches to monitor the ecological character of Ramsar Sites
Recent experience from undertaking a Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, Article 3.2 review of changes in the ecological character of a Ramsar Site in New Zealand, highlighted a need to enhance the Convention's guidance to countries on the principles and approaches that apply to this assessment. New Zealand aims to share the methodological approach, and corresponding insights, applied to report on the status of Ramsar Sites under Article 3.2, including the integration of data and observations from different knowledge systems, the principles and approaches that apply to understanding ecological character change, and defining the baseline state and limits of acceptable change which determine if a human-induced change has occurred.

5)
››› Integrating wetlands in our responses to climate change
Wetlands are increasingly recognised for their potential role in responding to climate change. Peatlands and blue carbon ecosystems (e.g. mangroves) store carbon and are identified in the Government's first Emissions Reduction Plan as nature-based options to manage carbon emissions. Further, climate change adaptation strategies to manage biodiversity are being identified. During the next triennium New Zealand will further investigate the potential for wetlands (non-forest activities) to support our climate response.

D. Does the Administrative Authority have any recommendations concerning implementation assistance from the Convention Secretariat?
››› New Zealand supports existing calls from Contracting Parties for the Secretariat and STRP, as appropriate, to revise legal and policy best practice guidance clarifying understanding and implementation of wise use, as the central concept of the Ramsar Convention.
New Zealand encourages the Secretariat to provide additional secretarial support for the Oceania Region, including supporting regional and international partnerships to progress the global implementation of the Convention, and seek opportunities for funding to enhance implementation in the Oceania region, such as through an Oceania based Ramsar Regional Initiative or other mechanism.

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)?
››› There may be potential for New Zealand to engage with IOPs, such as IUCN, to provide technical advice regarding the IUCN guidelines for the assessment of threatened ecosystems (Red-List Ecosystems) in a domestic context. In addition, the support of IOPs in the broader Oceania region, may help to identify the resources and administrative support required to facilitate a Ramsar Regional Initiative in the Oceania region.

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.
››› Women in New Zealand hold central roles in the political, social and economic fabric of New Zealand, including in all dimensions of environmental stewardship and management. New Zealand maintains a strong commitment to the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and is committed to addressing the remaining challenges for New Zealand women. Along with pursuing progress for all New Zealand women, New Zealand is committed to ensuring progress for wahine Māori. In relation to the management of New Zealand's protected area conservation estate, the Department of Conservation (New Zealand's Ramsar Administrative Authority) is committed to equal employment opportunities with a diverse workforce that represents the communities we serve. It does this by

focusing on the five priority commitments (the ‘Papa Pounamu’ priorities) identified by Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission:
1. Strengthening cultural competence
2. Addressing bias and discrimination
3. Building inclusive leadership
4. Developing relationships that are responsive to diversity
5. Supporting and engaging with employee-led networks.

G. On the basis of your indications above, list possible areas where change is necessary for the achievement of gender equality.
››› There is good female representation within the New Zealand government in decision-making roles and coordination of Ramsar Convention implementation activities. New Zealand does not monitor workforce gender breakdown specifically related to wetlands. However, within the Administrative Authority (Department of Conservation), the current proportion of females in senior leadership positions has significantly improved over the past three years (44%), the current staff representation is made up of 53% females and 46.5% males and the gender pay gap is 3.2% (compared with the national public sector gender pay gap of 7.7%) Maintaining gender-balanced leadership continues to be a focus area for improvement within the Administrative Agency. A women’s employee-led network has recently been established through the Kia Toipoto (Closing Gaps) Action Plan 2023. The current Head of Administrative Authority and Designated National Focal Point for the Convention on Wetlands are women. There is a good gender balance in the wetland sector in New Zealand’s Ramsar Convention Administrative Authority.

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

Kia Toipoto (Closing Gaps) Action Plan 2023

H. Please describe lessons learnt in the context of wetlands and gender equality work in your country.
››› As previously noted in sections F and G, the Ramsar Convention Administrative Authority has five priority commitments to address ongoing gender equality issues across the Department of Conservation. These are not specific to wetlands but apply generally across all public conservation land, protected area and general Department of Conservation work. One example of a lesson learnt (according to Kia Toipoto) from achieving a more gender-balanced workforce and leadership model is likely to be attributable to an increase in flexibility of working arrangements which supports a work-family-life balance.

I. If possible, please list gender-related policies, strategies and action plans in place relevant to wetlands in your country.
››› Please see Kia Toipoto (Closing Gaps) Action Plan 2023 which details gender related policies and action plans for the Ramsar Convention on Wetland’s Administrative Authority in New Zealand.

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).
››› New Zealand is currently developing a Ramsar Convention on Wetlands Strategy which will also consider youth participation in the implementation of the Convention.

K. Please list the names of the organizations which have been consulted on or have contributed to the information provided in this report.
››› Department of Conservation
Ministry for the Environment
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Ministry for Primary Industries
National Wetland Trust of New Zealand
Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society (Inc)

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

››› New Zealand has a range of national policies and legislation, and national planning instruments that integrate and provide direction on wetlands. Since COP14 (November 2022) the National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity (NPSIB) was enacted, the national policy is part of the New Zealand response to

biodiversity decline in Aotearoa. It provides direction to councils to protect, maintain and restore indigenous biodiversity.

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}
☑ C=Partially

2.1 Additional Information
››› Under the 1991 Resource Management Act, water allocation and water use proposals that lead to changes to water quantity/flows need to consider potential adverse effects on aquatic ecosystems. The tools and methodologies applied are aligned to the guidance provided by the Convention.

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

››› Under the Resource Management Act 1991 catchment development and water use proposals that lead to changes to water quantity/flows must consider potential adverse effects on aquatic ecosystems. There are numerous examples of environmental flow and water level assessments being applied to river systems in New Zealand and to define the water level requirements for lakes and some palustrine wetlands. This includes assessment of the optimal water levels to maintain and enhance the ecological character of Ramsar sites (e.g. Waituna Lagoon). In some cases, Water Conservation Orders under the RMA provide specific water level regimes intended to prevent further drainage of, and to protect outstanding wetland areas, such as for Lakes Wairarapa, Ellesmere (Te Waihora) and Te Waikoropupū Springs, to protect their wildlife and fishery values. These also balance effects of flood control and drainage schemes which can have ongoing effects on wetlands.

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

☑ C=Partially

2.3 Additional Information
››› New Zealand has seven (7) Wetlands of International of Importance. These Ramsar Sites are recognized for their outstanding ecological and cultural values, and this recognition has supported efforts by local communities, local and national government authorities to improve water quality management and water levels/flows at these wetlands. For example, there are ongoing and concerted efforts to improve the management of water within the Whangamarino Wetland Ramsar Site catchment based on acknowledgment of the threats to the wetland ecosystem.

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

☑ C=Partially

2.4 Additional Information
››› Refer to Question 2.1

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}
☑ C=Underway

2.5 Additional Information
››› Examples of projects that demonstrate good practice in water allocation and management in New Zealand include:
- The guidance and direction provided by the National Science Challenge ‘Our Land and Water’ to transform

the management of freshwater
- The development of regional regulatory Freshwater plans to provide rules and policies for the sustainable management of freshwater resources.
- Waituna Lagoon: a multi-partner initiative to improve the management of water levels for the coastal lagoon (part of the Awarua Ramsar Site).
- Kaituna River/Maketu Estuary: an initiative to re-align the Kaituna River/Maketu Estuary (located in the North East of the North Island) is being implemented to facilitate an improved hydrological regime.
- The Jobs for Nature Programme is a $1.2 billion cross-agency programme to benefit the environment, people and the regions, including projects focused on ecosystem restoration and freshwater improvement.

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

Jobs for Nature Programme
Waituna Lagoon multi-partner initiative
Our Land and Water National Science Challenge

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

2.6 Additional Information
››› Constructed wetlands and ponds are utilized across New Zealand to facilitate treatment of agricultural and urban wastewater. Pond systems, in particular, are the most common treatment technology used for small or medium towns. Constructed wetlands are sometimes used to provide further treatment. In 2021, revised guidelines for the treatment of agricultural run-off using constructed wetlands were published by a Crown Research Agency.
In addition, a new Constructed Wetland Practitioner Guide has been produced in partnership with the dairy industry.

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

Constructed wetland guidelines

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}
☑ C=Partially

3.1 Additional Information

Please specify if it was applied for policy formulation or in implementation of good practice.
››› Although further effort is required to disseminate Ramsar Convention handbooks, particularly to create greater understanding of the concept of the wise use of wetlands, nevertheless, the broader approaches within this material are consistent with New Zealand's approaches to private-public sector projects concerning wetlands. For example, the Department of Conservation partnership with Fonterra Co-operative Group Limited (New Zealand's largest dairy co-operative) (10-year partnership ended in 2024), Air New Zealand, Genesis and Meridian Energy.

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

››› a) Ramsar Sites

‘Living Water’ was a 10-year partnership between the Department of Conservation and Fonterra to improve biodiversity and water quality across New Zealand which ended in 2024. The partnership worked to improve five sensitive catchments by developing tools and trialing best-practice methods to promote sustainable agriculture and enhance wetlands, including at two Ramsar Sites: (i) Tīkapa Moana/the Firth of Thames: Pūkorokoro/Miranda catchment; and (ii) Waituna Lagoon catchment.

In addition, several Jobs for Nature projects supported local community employment in response to the coronavirus global pandemic and have benefitted Ramsar Sites, such as Wairarapa Moana Wetland.

b) Wetlands in general

There are multiple groups within the private sector that are actively contributing to the conservation and wise use of wetlands, this includes:

• Many private landowners voluntarily protected wetlands on their land via covenants with the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust, or similar arrangements with the Department of Conservation, Fish and Game Councils or local authorities. Other landowners have also developed or enhanced wetlands, without protecting them through covenants.

• Jobs for Nature projects that supported local community employment in response to the coronavirus global pandemic have benefited other wetlands, including wetlands in the Upper Taiari River catchment.

• Living Water (Fonterra and the Department of Conservation partnership) to promote sustainable agriculture and freshwater ecosystem restoration.

• Gamebird hunters support wetland conservation through a levy on hunting licence sales which supports wetland conservation, management and purchase. The New Zealand Game Bird Habitat Trust also actively manages many wetlands and supports freshwater conservation across the country as fisheries and wildlife habitats and for fishing and hunting.

• The Aotearoa Circle is partnership of public and private sector leaders, unified and committed to the pursuit of sustainable prosperity and reversing the decline of New Zealand’s natural resources.

• Hydropower companies such as Mercury contribute to wetland/freshwater conservation partnerships.

• Species conservation programmes are supported by the private sector, such as the Genesis Energy partnership with DOC to protect Whio/Blue Duck.

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

Genesis Energy Whio Forever partnership

Mercury Energy Partnerships

The Aotearoa Circle

The New Zealand Game Bird Habitat Trust

Upper Taiari River project

QEII National Trust

Living Water partnership

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).

››› New Zealand has several funding programmes to support sustainable agriculture and community restoration initiatives, many of which directly or indirectly benefit wetlands. A significant, ecosystem-focused response to Covid was the Jobs for Nature programme which enabled support for community programmes to improve environmental outcomes, including for some wetlands.

There have also been adjustments to tax policies to ensure that valuable investments such as riparian fencing and planting are not disadvantaged. Policy development to better align climate policy with biodiversity protection has the potential to better incentivise wetland protection and management, including as part of the Governments Emission Reduction Plan.

Jobs for Nature funding employed people on numerous wetland restoration projects, in collaboration with regional councils, Māori iwi and hapū (tribes and sub-tribes), communities and land-owners. Many of these projects involve wetland restoration as a core objective.

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

New Zealand’s emissions reduction plan

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

☑ Z=Not Applicable

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
››› The New Zealand Freshwater Fish Database records the occurrence of fish in fresh waters of New Zealand, including native, introduced and pest fish species. Data is variably provided spatially and over time by a range of interests, including management agencies, research institutions, consultancies and interest groups. Data stored includes the site location, the species present, abundance and size, and information such as the fishing method used and a physical description of the site.
Biosecurity NZ is the national statutory body responsible for biosecurity, which works regionally with regional councils and other bodies such as DOC which manage wetlands and certain invasive species (eg freshwater fish and wildlife species). Some pest species are identified in biosecurity legislation and national and regional pest plans and actively controlled at the border or to restrict or prevent their spread to new sites within the country. Regions may differ as to both what species are regarded as pests or what their status is and what response will likely be made to any new incursions.
The list of environmental weeds in New Zealand was updated in 2024.
The National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA) updated national guidance on freshwater invasive species in 2020.
Other resources (including invasive wetland plants) include:
• Freshwater plant and animal pest records published by Statistics New Zealand
• the National Plant Pest Accord
• Weedbusters
• NZ Plant Conservation network
Several other databases of invasive alien species are also maintained by local authorities and are publicly accessible.

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

NZ Plant Conservation Network
Weedbusters
National Plant Pest Accord
Freshwater pest records published by Stats NZ
Freshwater Invasive Species of New Zealand2020
List of environmental weeds in New Zealand 2024
NZ Freshwater Fish Database

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
››› Biosecurity is a high priority for New Zealand. Biosecurity is managed under the 1993 Biosecurity Act. Biosecurity New Zealand (BNZ) is an operational component of the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) with oversight for biosecurity activity in New Zealand. Multiple government agencies also have a role in components of the pest border security system. MPI takes a lead role in dealing with pests that are considered a national priority and the Department of Conservation (DOC) manages pests on public conservation land and pest species and the movement of aquatic life nationally (jointly with MPI and Fish & Game) under the Freshwater Fisheries Regulations. Regional and district councils are required to prepare and implement regional pest management strategies under the Biosecurity Act 1993. BNZ, DOC and regional councils actively undertake weed and pest management in wetlands throughout the country.
The National Pest Plant Accord is aimed at preventing some pests already established in New Zealand from spreading further. All plants listed in the Accord are unwanted organisms under the Biosecurity Act 1993. These plants cannot be sold, propagated or distributed in New Zealand.
In 2020, the Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy/Te Mana o Te Taiao was published, that provides specific goals and objectives relating to management of invasive species to protect indigenous biodiversity and important introduced species.
In addition, a 2019 NIWA report provides guidance on invasive plant strategic analysis, incursion detection and control methods.

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

Best Management Practice for Aquatic Weed Control
Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy/Te Mana o Te Taiao
Biosecurity NZ

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

››› 100

4.3 Additional Information
››› Invasive species management is a significant focus for DOC, Biosecurity NZ, Land Information New Zealand (LINZ), iwi, regional and local councils, NGOs, community and the primary industry sector. As an estimate, more than 100 wetland dependent species (including river, lake, estuary, and palustrine wetland species) are currently targeted in control and surveillance programmes. For example, biosecurity responses to address the infestation of Spartina (an invasive grass common in inter-tidal habitats) are regularly undertaken in New Zealand, with eradication effectively achieved in many regions. Control of invasive marine and freshwater fish species and other organisms is also common where new infestations are recorded. For example, two species of exotic freshwater clams have been found in the Waikato region – Corbicula fluminea and C. australis. The response has focused on identifying the spread of the clams and containing them to their known locations. National Interest Pest Responses aim to eradicate selected established pests from New Zealand that are considered to present a very high biosecurity risk. Several of these species are freshwater pest plants including Phragmites, Hydrilla, Salvinia, Ceratophyllum demersum, Manchurian wild rice and water hyacinth. All these National Interest Pest Response programmes are progressing well towards their goals. For example, eradication of C. demersum from the South Island has been successful. Additionally, eight wetland invasive alien plant species, one invasive alien fish species and two alien invasive invertebrate species have been eradicated from New Zealand.

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

Knowledge to action on aquatic invasive species: Island biosecurity – the New Zealand and South Pacific story

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

4.4 Additional Information
››› The Ministry for Primary Industries, the Department of Conservation, regional authorities and community groups routinely undertake assessments of the effectiveness of invasive species control as part of standard operational procedures. Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand also control wetland/aquatic weeds for lands, lake and rivers beds for which they are responsible, with independent assessment of their control programmes.

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}
☑ C=Partially

5.1 Additional information
››› New Zealand has published Guidelines for the Assessment of Potential Ramsar Sites in New Zealand, which are available for use by any interested community groups, central and local government, iwi and other stakeholders. Identification of priorities for further designation of Ramsar sites in New Zealand will be based on these guidelines. The Guidelines can be found on the Department of Conservation website.

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

National guidelines for the assessment of potential Ramsar wetlands in New Zealand

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

☑ E=# Sites

››› 1

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

››› 1

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
››› The Department of Conservation has implemented a national ecosystem management planning system, which includes all Ramsar Sites. Ecosystem 'prescriptions' are prepared that outline the primary threats (pressures) on each site, and the management interventions to maintain and enhance the ecological character of sites.
These prescriptions align with and support other management plans (such as the Lake Waikare and Whangamarino Wetland Catchment Management Plan) and can be updated readily as part of annual business planning processes.
The Manawatu Estuary Ramsar Site has a formal management plan which is currently being updated.

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

››› 6

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.
››› Reviews of the management effectiveness of Ramsar Sites occurred through a review of Ramsar Information Sheets, including reporting on any actual or likely changes in ecological character. At all Ramsar Sites, general performance reporting is undertaken as part of the Department of Conservation operational programmes. In addition, during 2024 a comprehensive review of the change in the ecological character of the Whangamarino Wetland was initiated, which is due for publication in early 2025.

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

››› 2

5.6 Additional information
››› New Zealand's wetlands have a range of stakeholders outside government, including iwi, local communities, NGOs and private landholders, many of which have an interest in being involved in site management. Two of New Zealand's Ramsar Sites have formal cross-sectoral committees, including the Manawatu Estuary and Wairarapa Moana Wetland Ramsar sites. The remaining sites have formal or informal cross-sectoral agreements, where site managers seek to liaise with interested parties.
In the management of Ramsar Sites the Department of Conservation works with local Māori iwi and hapū (tribes and sub-tribes) to ensure that the strength and nature of their interests in these places are understood and that this understanding is incorporated into the Department of Conservation's ongoing management of sites in keeping with obligations under section 4 of the 1987 Conservation Act.

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

››› 6

5.7 Additional information

For example give the name and official number of the Site or Sites.
››› Description of the ecological character are included in the Ramsar Information Sheets for six Ramsar Sites, that is, all sites except the Farewell Spit Ramsar Site.

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.
››› A concerted effort to updated Ramsar Information Sheets (RISs) was undertaken during the past triennium, with RISs submitted to the Secretariat for 5 of the 6 Ramsar Sites in New Zealand where RIS updates were required. Some minor edits are required to the RISs prior to their finalisation which is a priority for 2024/2025.

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 Department of Conservation (as Administrative Authority) is responsible for, or contributes to, the management of New Zealand’s Ramsar Sites. The Scientific and Technical (STRP) National Focal Point is also a staff member of the Department of Conservation and clear lines of communication exist between Ramsar Site managers and National Focal Points.
At all Ramsar Sites, monitoring is implemented by regional authorities, the Department of Conservation, Fish and Game Councils, NGOs (e.g., the Ornithological Society of New Zealand), iwi and research partners. While mechanisms are in place for informing changes in Ramsar Sites, at several Ramsar Sites the ecological character monitoring programmes are limited by available resources.

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}
☑ B=No

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
››› The Department of Conservation completed the update of Ramsar Information Sheets (RISs) documents for five (5) Ramsar Sites, with the support of key stakeholders, and submitted these to the Secretariat in 2022. Some minor revisions to RISs were pending (as at October 2024). The five Sites were: Whangamarino Wetland (Waikato), Firth of Thames (Waikato), Kopuatai Peat Dome (Waikato), Manawatu River Estuary (Manawatu) and Awarua Wetland (Southland). Only 1 site (Farewell Spit) is now outstanding.
For all 5 Ramsar sites assessed, both positive and negative changes in ecological character were reported. Negative changes include deteriorating trends in water quality at some sites, decline in populations of some threatened or migratory species, and habitat degradation due to weed invasion or human-induced fire.
Since 2022, there have been some instances of negative changes in the condition of Ramsar sites in New Zealand. This includes: human-induced peatland fires at Awarua Wetland (980 ha) and Whangamarino Wetland (1039 ha); an anoxic (low oxygen)/botulism event that negatively affected wetland-dependent species (Whangamarino wetland), and an algal blooms in a coastal lake (Waituna Lagoon).
A comprehensive review of the change in the ecological character of the Whangamarino Wetland was initiated in 2024, due for publication early 2025. The outcomes of the review will be reported to the 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}
☑ A=Yes

8.1 Additional information

For example, if “in progress” or “planned”, by when will it be completed?
››› The Freshwater Ecosystems of New Zealand (FENZ) geodatabase of inland palustrine wetlands, rivers/streams and lakes consists of a large set of spatial data layers and supporting information on the extent and classification of New Zealand's rivers, lakes and wetlands. FENZ can be used to objectively map and quantify various aspects of New Zealand's freshwater. MfE also has published updated wetland maps derived from FENZ.
There are limitations to the FENZ mapping of wetlands when being applied at local scales. To address this a range of new technologies have been explored to improve wetland inventory, although still in development.
A framework for mapping of coastal wetlands, including their environmental values, has also been compiled as part of an inventory of New Zealand Coastal Hydrosystems and associated coastal classification framework.
Further, the Land Cover Database (LCDB) provides regular mapping of is a multi-temporal, thematic classification of New Zealand's land cover. It identifies 33 mainland land cover classes, including some wetland types such as mangroves and herbaceous wetlands.

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

LCDB v5.0 - NZ Land Cover Database

A classification of New Zealand's coastal hydrosystems

NZ Coastal Hydrosystems GIS layer

Wetland extent, 2001-16 GIS layer

Freshwater Ecosystems of New Zealand (FENZ) geodatabase

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 May 2017, a revised assessment of wetland extent and loss was published by the Ministry of the Environment.
The Land Cover Database (LCDB) is regularly updated based on satellite imagery. Land Cover changes were assessed during: 1996/97, 2001/02, 2008/09, 2012/13, and 2018/19.

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

An analysis of wetland loss between 2001/02 and 2015/16

8.3 How often is the NWI updated?
☑ B=Irregularly ≥ 7 years

8.3 Additional information
››› The FENZ geodatabase (see section 8.1 above) is designed as a support tool to provide a base inventory data layer to be used by other agencies.
Information on the state and trend of wetlands (currently focused on the health of rivers and lakes) is maintained by councils and used for national state of the environment reporting. For example:
- Our freshwater 2023 domain report (released under the New Zealand Environmental Reporting Act 2015) presents information about the state of New Zealand’s freshwater ecosystems and species.
- Land, Air, Water Aotearoa (LAWA) provides a publicly available website with information on the quality of all New Zealand freshwater rivers and lakes. The website displays information from more than 1100 freshwater monitoring sites located around the country. In 2022 a new Estuaries Health Topic was added to LAWA with information on mud content, contaminants and macrofaunal health indicators measured within 80 estuaries.
- A number of councils also undertake regional monitoring of palustrine wetlands, although no coordinated national programme currently exists.
- Further, the Land Cover Database (LCDB) is regularly updated based on satellite imagery. LCDB Version 5 was based on satellite imagery captured during summer 2018/19.

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

Land, Air, Water Aotearoa (LAWA)

Our freshwater 2023

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?
››› The environment state and trend reports prepared by central and local government and centralised databases (e.g. FENZ geodatabase, LCDB database, and LAWA data platform) are publicly available for use by stakeholders.
The Our fresh water 2023 domain report (see section 8.3 above) is publicly available on the New Zealand Ministry for the Environment website. Other information, such as underpinning datasets, and supporting scientific papers for the domain report are also available at this website.
The Our marine environment 2022 domain report (released under the New Zealand Environmental Reporting Act 2015) is also publicly available on the New Zealand Ministry for the Environment website.

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

Our marine environment 2022

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

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

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
››› a) Ramsar sites
Taken in their entirety, the condition of New Zealand's Ramsar Sites has likely declined since the last report. Since COP14 (November 2022) some of the seven designated Wetlands of International Importance in New Zealand have been impacted by human-induced fire (Awarua wetland; and Whangamarino Wetland) and anoxic (low oxygen)/botulism events that negatively affected wetland dependent species (Whangamarino wetland), and algal blooms (Waituna Lagoon).
While extensive conservation and restoration actions are also occurring at Ramsar Sites, overall, the ecological character of the Sites declined between 2022-2024.
b) Wetlands in general
Under the Environment Reporting Act 2015, New Zealand regularly reports on the status of freshwater, land and marine based ecosystems, including wetlands.
The 2024 report, Our Land, noted that wetlands are among New Zealand’s most degraded ecosystems and continue to be lost, stated that remaining wetlands continue to degrade due to drainage, pollution, increased sedimentation, invasive weeds, animal pests, and climate change.
The 2023 report, Our Freshwater noted the many freshwater habitats in New Zealand are degraded by contaminants from human activities on land, which can harm freshwater species and observed that native species and their habitats are impacted by introduced freshwater species.
The 2022 report, Our Marine Environment, indicated that coastal and estuarine water quality and sediment show variable trends, while noting that condition and extent of some marine habitats continues to change, which can adversely affect ecosystems and species.
The ability to determine the overall change in ecological character since COP14 is constrained by data availability.

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

Our marine environment 2022
Our land 2024
Our freshwater 2023

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

››› Under the Environment Reporting Act 2015, New Zealand regularly reports on the status of freshwater, land and marine based ecosystems, including wetlands. Limited information is available on human-made wetlands as a separate category.
The 2024 report, Our Land, noted that wetlands are among New Zealand's most degraded ecosystems and continue to be lost, stated that remaining wetlands continue to degrade due to drainage, pollution, increased sedimentation, invasive weeds, animal pests, and climate change.
The 2023 report, Our Freshwater noted the many freshwater habitats in New Zealand are degraded by contaminants from human activities on land, which can harm freshwater species and observed that native species and their habitats are impacted by introduced freshwater species. Wetlands are also negatively influenced by drainage and other land use activities.
The 2022 report, Our Marine Environment, indicated that coastal and estuarine water quality and sediment show variable trends, while noting that condition and extent of some marine habitats continues to change, which can adversely affect ecosystems and species.
The ability to determine the overall change in ecological character since COP14 is constrained by data availability.

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

Our marine environment 2022
Our land 2024
Our freshwater 2023

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)
››› Technological advances in the use of Earth Observation (EO) for national wetland inventory and for evaluating changes in ecological character would support wetland conservation efforts in New Zealand.

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
››› Specific provisions of the Resource Management Act (section 6(a) and (c); 7(d) and (f); Part 9) and national direction under the Act, in particular the National Policy Statement on Freshwater Management and associated National Environmental Standards-Freshwater, provide a framework for managing the use of water and wetlands, and activities that impact wetlands. The freshwater regulations are currently under review.

9.2 Since COP14 have any amendments to existing legislation or policies been made to reflect commitments under the Convention on Wetlands? {9.2}
☑ B=No

9.2 Additional information
››› New Zealand has a range of national policies and legislation, and national planning instruments that integrate and provide direction on wetlands. Since COP14 (November 2022) no amendments have been made in relation to the Convention on Wetlands.

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

››› Water resource management in New Zealand is undertaken at a catchment or multiple catchment level, at the scale of freshwater management units determined by Regional Councils. The National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM) directs Councils to manage freshwater through their regional plans, including specific policies for managing, mapping and protecting wetlands. Freshwater Management Units are defined as “all or any part of a water body or water bodies, and their related catchments, that a regional council determines…is an appropriate unit for freshwater management and accounting purposes”. These units can be at any scale, and specifically identify wetlands (including lakes, rivers, estuaries) and set objectives and targets for their management. The freshwater regulations are currently under review.

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
››› Water resource management in New Zealand is undertaken at catchment or multiple catchment level by regional councils (local government), based on collaborative processes that enables community and stakeholders to participate in planning and management. In these forums, CEPA principles and tools are routinely applied to ensure the community representatives and stakeholders have knowledge of the water resource issues, and are able to participate in discussions relating to the management of freshwater and coastal habitats.

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

9.5 Additional information
››› The first emissions reduction plan (2022-25) for New Zealand has recognised the role of wetlands as nature-based solutions in responding to climate change. The restoration of coastal and inland wetlands was identified in the plan. The National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management also currently includes a policy (Policy 4), that requires freshwater to be managed “as part of New Zealand’s integrated response to climate change”.

9.6 Has your country included wetland actions in Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and other related national policies on climate change mitigation and adaptation?
☑ A=No

9.6 Additional Information
››› New Zealand is currently investigating the potential for non-forest activities, including relating to restoration of wetlands, to be part of the priority actions within the second emissions reduction plan (2026-30).

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
››› Agriculture is a core component of New Zealand primary industries and trade, and this sector is engaging in projects that promote sustainable catchment management, including management of wetlands – through agencies such as DairyNZ, Beef and Lamb NZ, Forest Owners Association and Horticulture NZ.
Substantial investment in catchment focused programmes also occurred as part of the Freshwater Improvement Fund.
Crown Research Institutes, such as the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA), have also previously invested in applied research, for example, to develop and test effectiveness of constructed wetlands to address water quality effects associated with nutrient run-off from agriculture. Furthermore, the Ministry of Primary Industries through its Sustainable Land Management and Climate Change Fund supported collaborative programmes to demonstrate and test the performance of constructed wetlands intercepting farm run-off in a range of farming systems across New Zealand. Funding from the Ministry for the Environment has supported the Catchment Solutions Project which aims to enhance rural capability in effective water quality mitigation, including through wetland construction.

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

Catchment Solutions Project
Freshwater Improvement Fund
Horticulture NZ environmental information

NZ Forest Owners Association environmental information
Beef and Lamb NZ environmental information
DairyNZ environmental information

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
››› Research on aquatic ecosystem functioning and biological conservation in New Zealand is considered to be of a high standard, including research on agriculture-wetland interactions, climate change and to a lesser degree on ecosystem services supported by wetlands.
For example, National Science Challenges involved extensive research on water, land use and aquatic environments, see: Our Land & Water - Toitū te Whenua, Toiora te Wai.
Further, the National Wetland Symposium, 2024, organised by the National Wetland Trust, coordinated a national event to bring together researchers, community groups, Maori and policy makers.

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

National Wetland Symposium 2024
Our Land & Water National Science Challenge

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

9.9 Additional information
››› Refer to Question 9.10

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
››› Small wetlands are actively managed in New Zealand through policy instruments and conservation programmes. The national policy and legislation for wetlands in New Zealand contains specific policies and rules for the protection of wetlands, irrespective of size or location, including for urban and peri-urban wetlands. Specifically, the NPS-Freshwater Management includes a national policy: Policy 6: There is no further loss of extent of natural inland wetlands, their values are protected, and their restoration is promoted. As above, New Zealand’s freshwater legislation (which wetland regulations and policy sit within) are currently under review.

Target 10
The traditional knowledge innovations and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities relevant for the wise use of wetlands and their customary use of wetland resources, are documented, respected, subject to national legislation and relevant international obligations and fully integrated and reflected in the implementation of the Convention with a full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities at all relevant levels.
[Reference to Global Biodiversity Framework Target 22]

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

10.1 Additional Information

››› The Resource Management Act and national direction under the Act, in particular the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM) provides the framework for managing the use of water and wetlands by regional councils (local government), and provides the basis for involvement of Māori (indigenous peoples), and the public in general.
The NPS-FM (October 2024 version) includes the fundamental concept of Te Mana o Te Wai that recognises the 'importance of water and recognises that protecting the health of freshwater protects the health and well-being of the wider environment. It protects the mauri of the wai. Te Mana o te Wai is about restoring and preserving the balance between the water, the wider environment, and the community.' Its application by local authorities in their plans and decision-making is presently under review, as well as a stated intention to rebalance weight given to different sectors in water management. The NPS-FM also describes 6 principles relating to the roles of tangata whenua and other New Zealanders in the management of freshwater, and these principles inform this National Policy Statement and its implementation.
The NPS-FM also requires considerable local engagement from local communities and other stakeholders, including landowners, industry, conservation interests and the wider public in freshwater management, as coordinated by regional councils.
Te Mana o te Taiao – the Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy (2020) provides the overall non-statutory strategic direction for biodiversity conservation. Many of the goals of the Biodiversity Strategy, which encompass wetlands, aim to strengthen the role of Māori (indigenous peoples), including to embed Te ao Māori perspective throughout the biodiversity system, including through the use of cultural practices and tools.
Establishing and strengthening Mātauranga Māori (indigenous knowledge systems) in water resources management is a focus for many iwi, government, and community projects in New Zealand, and within Te Mana o te Taiao. As part of New Zealand's implementation of its obligations under the Ramsar Convention to maintain, monitor and report on the ecological character of its Ramsar Sites, New Zealand engages with our indigenous peoples to integrate Mātauranga Māori (knowledge systems) into the assessment of ecological character change and this knowledge informs ongoing management and restoration actions.

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?
☑ C1= Partially

10.2 Additional Information
››› Refer to additional information provided for question 10.1.

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
››› In 2021, a significant new publication describing traditional wetland knowledge was released titled, Te Reo o Te Repo – Kei konei tonu au. The cultural handbook provides Māori values, knowledge, and perspectives from across Aotearoa New Zealand, illustrating the diversity and significance of wetland ecosystems and mātauranga Māori based tools and approaches.
The release of Te Reo o Te Repo followed the success of the 2017 publication, 'Te Reo o Te Repo: The voice of the wetland'.

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

Te reo o te repo: The voice of the wetland
Te reo o te repo – kei konei tonu au: The Voice of the Wetland – I am still here

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}
☑ A=Yes

10.4 Additional information

If "yes" please list national legislation/policies and actions that consider the needs and participation of indigenous and local communities in wetland management at all relevant levels.
››› Refer to additional information provided for question 10.1.

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

10.5 Additional information

››› Refer to additional information provided for question 10.3.

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}
☑ A=Yes

11.1 Additional information

If “yes” or “partially”, please indicate how many Ramsar Sites and their names
››› A New Zealand review of the ecosystem services that wetlands provide was published in 2013 (Clarkson et al. 2013). Refer to: Clarkson, B.R., Ausseil, A.E., Gerbeaux, P. (2013). ‘Wetland ecosystem services’. In Dymond, J.R. (ed.) Ecosystem services in New Zealand – conditions and trends. Manaaki Whenua Press: Lincoln, New Zealand.
The ecosystem services/benefits of some Ramsar sites in New Zealand have also been specifically assessed in technical reports and as part of reviewing catchment management, including for the Whangamarino, Wairarapa Moana Wetland and Awarua sites.

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

Ecosystem services in New Zealand

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
››› The Jobs for Nature project invested NZ$1.2B of funding across New Zealand to support environmental projects, many of which focused on wetland or catchment restoration and supporting local communities.

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

Jobs for Nature

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

11.3 Additional Information
››› Refer to additional information provided for question 11.2.

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

11.4 Additional information

If “yes” or “partially”, please indicate, if known, how many Ramsar Sites and their names
››› A range of formal and informal mechanisms are applied in the management planning for Ramsar Sites and other wetlands, which take into consideration the spectrum of socio-economic values held by stakeholders, iwi, community and industry.

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 Department of Conservation works in close partnership with iwi across New Zealand as Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti o Waitangi) partners, including iwi associated with Ramsar Sites and other wetlands. Cultural values are embedded within wetland management and are described within all Conservation Management Strategies (administered by the Department of Conservation), and Regional and District Plans (administered by councils). Although, recognising that further effort is needed to strengthen cultural values in wetland management and to enhance the role of iwi in management planning for Ramsar Sites and other wetlands.

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?
☑ C=Partially

12.1 Additional Information
››› The Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy (Te Mana o Te Taiao) outlines a range of goals for the protection and restoration of biodiversity, including wetlands. For example, Goal 10.3.3 aims by 2025 that “An interconnected series of indigenous land, wetland and freshwater ecosystems have been restored to a ‘healthy functioning’ state and are connected to marine and coastal ecosystems”.
The NGO Ramsar Convention CEPA Focal Point for New Zealand (Forest & Bird) recommended the establishment of specific targets for wetland restoration. The Government will consider establishing a target for wetland restoration under the Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy or National Adaptation Plan when determining the scope of future reviews of either instrument.

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

Forest & Bird - Every Wetland Counts petition
Te Mana o te Taiao

12.2 Have priority sites for wetland restoration been identified? {12.1}
☑ C=Partially

12.2 Additional information

If “yes”, please provide a list of sites, specifying wetland types
››› The Department of Conservation is leading a comprehensive ‘Biodiversity Planning’ initiative that seeks to identify, map and prioritise the conservation of indigenous ecosystems, including wetlands, and Ramsar Sites. This initiative includes geospatial mapping of priority freshwater ecosystems, for example Freshwater Ecosystems of New Zealand (FENZ).
New Zealand’s vulnerable freshwater catchments have also been identified and mapped.

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

Vulnerable catchments of New Zealand
Freshwater Ecosystems of New Zealand

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

12.3 Additional information

Explain/clarify the data/statistics presented in the table above
››› Since COP14 (November 2022) considerable government funding has been allocated to projects to restore wetland ecosystems, including as part of Freshwater Improvement Fund, Jobs for Nature and government led initiatives such the Arawai Kakariki wetland restoration programme. Wetland restoration has also occurred through numerous iwi, industry, landowner, community, local government and NGO initiatives.
A consolidated database is not available to provide statistics on the extent of marine, inland and human-made wetlands that are being actively restored.

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}
☑ C=Partially

12.4 Additional Information

If “yes” or “partially”, please indicate the progress in implementation
››› The potential role of non-forest ecosystems including peatlands, to store carbon and reduce emissions alongside a range of wider benefits, was recognised in New Zealand’s first emissions reduction plan, and in the development of the second emissions reduction plan. This aligns with the Guidelines for Global Action on Peatlands and provides the foundation for the wise use of peatlands as part responding to climate change.

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

New Zealand’s second emissions reduction plan (2026–30) Discussion document

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
››› The sustainability of wetlands is enhanced through a combination of:
• the Resource Management Act 1991, which promotes the sustainable management of natural and physical resources, including the management of adverse effects of different activities and sectors; and
• the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management and associated National Environmental Standards for Freshwater, which provide a framework for managing activities that impact wetlands, and the use of water and wetlands. The freshwater regulations are currently under review.

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 Resource Management Act effectively establishes a comprehensive system of SEAs for decisions at all levels.

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
››› The Resource Management Act effectively establishes a comprehensive system of environmental impact assessment in the establishment of plans and/or the granting of consents for water use and land use changes.

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}
☑ A=Yes

15.1 Additional information

If “yes”, please list the Ramsar Regional Initiatives in which your country is actively involved.
››› New Zealand is an active member of the East-Asian Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP).

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
››› A draft Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness (CEPA) Action Plan was prepared in 2017 to provide a national framework for coordinated delivery of wetland CEPA in New Zealand. It sets out actions and priorities, identifying who might lead the action and who the target audience is. It covers all five components of CEPA with the overall strategic intent of empowering people to take action for wetlands. This is under review.

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

››› 1

b) at other wetlands
☑ G=More than #

››› 10

16.2 Additional information
››› a) Ramsar Sites
The Firth of Thames Ramsar Site is the location for the Pūkorokoro Miranda Shorebird Centre, owned and operated by the Pūkorokoro Miranda Naturalists' Trust. The Centre has hosted hundreds of visits by local and international visitors, schools, and tertiary institutions. The Pūkorokoro Miranda Shorebird Centre collaborates with East-Asian Australasian Flyway (EAAFP) network.
Interpretation for site visitors also occurs at the Awarua Wetland; Whangamarino Wetland; Wairarapa Moana Wetland; Manawatu Estuary and Farewell Spit Ramsar Sites, with tourism operations to better enable visitor access to Farewell Spit.
b) Other wetlands (examples)
There are a range of other visitor centres in New Zealand that have a focus on wetlands. Some examples of these are outlined below:
- Matuku Link aims to restore and protect wetland habitat in West Auckland, linking several other conservation projects to create a habitat corridor. The project is named after the endangered Matuku (Australasian bittern).
- An outdoor wetland education discovery trail, developed by the National Wetland Trust at Rotopiko near Hamilton, provides a self-guided experience for schools and families.
- The Visitor Centre at the National Trout Centre (Turangi) provides interpretation and education on freshwater ecology and the sustainable use of freshwater.
- The Travis Wetland education centre (Christchurch) provides a laboratory, educational facility and meeting space for groups.
- Sinclair Wetland (Otago) is privately owned by Te Runanga o Ngāi Tahu. It includes an information centre.
- Forest & Bird also manage an 'outdoor classroom' associated with wetlands at Bushy Park, Tarapuruhi
The National Wetland Trust continues the development of plans for a National Wetland Education Centre that will include exhibits on Ramsar Sites.

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

Pūkorokoro Miranda Shorebird Centre

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
››› a) There are established processes in New Zealand for promoting public participation in environmental decision-making, planning and management. A key opportunity for this public participation is in the development of region-wide Conservation Management Strategies and Regional Plans, which require public participation and provide the opportunity for public submissions on how wetlands should be managed. Further, in the management of wetlands on Crown Land, the Department of Conservation works with iwi, hapū and whānau (local Māori) to ensure that the strength and nature of their interests in these places are understood and that this understanding is incorporated into the Department of Conservation's ongoing management of sites in keeping with engagement obligations.
b) Stakeholder support for nomination is an important criterion for selection of new Ramsar Sites in New Zealand. The 2020 designation of the Wairarapa Moana Wetland as a Ramsar site involved extensive consultation with stakeholders and local community and was broadly supported across the region.

16.4 Do you have an operational cross-sectoral national Ramsar/wetlands committee? {16.4}
☑ B=No

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

16.5 Additional information
››› New Zealand does not have a formal national Ramsar or wetland committee. However, a range of environmental and conservation forums have been established that provide national advice to central government agencies, such as the New Zealand Conservation Authority.

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
››› The Department of Conservation is both the Administrative Authority for the Convention and an agency responsible for the operational delivery of services at Ramsar Sites. The role the Department plays ensures regular and ongoing communication between national focal points with Ramsar Site managers.
The Department of Conservation is also the Administrative Authority for New Zealand for the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora; the Convention on Migratory Species; the Convention on Biological Diversity; and the World Heritage Convention, as well as providing key supporting roles to other ministries leading on the CBD. All national leads (NFPs) sit within the international team at the Department of Conservation and there is good communication in place to share relevant Ramsar Convention information with other MEA NFPs both within the Department of Conservation and with other ministries.
The National Wetland Trust and Forest & Bird provides several communication mechanisms to exchange information including regular wetland restoration events and newsletters which have included Ramsar-related articles.

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
››› Forest & Bird and the National Wetland Trust of New Zealand (NGO-co focal points for Ramsar in New Zealand) and Fish and Game NZ have undertaken a range of projects for World Wetlands Day each year and used the outcomes of those projects (data, maps, info) to educate the public and create media attention on 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
››› Forest & Bird (NGO-co focal point for Ramsar in New Zealand) is a strong advocate of the value and importance of wetlands and has had ongoing campaign related to wetlands for several years. They have a campaign called 'Every Wetland Counts' that calls on the Government to take a range of actions to better protect and restore wetlands.
The Government responded in 2024, agreeing:
i. to consider establishing a target for wetland restoration when determining the scope of future reviews of the Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy or National Adaptation Plan.
ii. that work to recognize carbon sequestration (including blue carbon) should be progressed and that landowners should benefit from carbon sequestration by wetlands on their property.

Fish and Game NZ owns and manages many wetlands across the country totalling more than 2500 ha, including some as part of Ramsar sites such as the Whangamarino (eg Whangamarino Wetland - Fish & Game (fishandgame.org.nz)), and beside Lake Wairarapa. For the most recent World Wetlands Day Fish and Game announced the completion and hosted an event to mark the second stage of an ambitious project to rewild a 342-hectare area Northland valley into a lush wetland to celebrate World Wetlands Day.

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

Fish & Game NZ

Government Response to Report of the Environment Committee on Petition of Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society: Every Wetland Counts

Every Wetland Counts

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 New Zealand's Ramsar Sites is available on the Department of Conservation Website.
An information brochure covering 40 wetlands to visit in New Zealand can be downloaded from the Department of Conservation website.
The National Wetland Trust of New Zealand also publishes information about wetlands/Ramsar sites.
A broad range of technical reports that summarise the status of wetlands and Ramsar Sites have also been produced. For example, these include:
- Our freshwater 2023 and Our marine environment 2022 reports on the state of New Zealand's environment
- LAWA - Land, Air, Water Aotearoa - Local government (council) publications
- Arawai Kākāriki wetland restoration programme publications
- Living Water publications
- Lakes380 research outputs on the state of New Zealand lakes

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

Lakes380 research outputs on the state of New Zealand lakes

Living Water publications

Arawai Kākāriki wetland restoration programme publications

Land, Air, Water Aotearoa

Ministry for the Environment Environmental Reporting

National Wetland Trust Resources

Magical places - 40 wetlands to visit in New Zealand brochure

Information on NZs Wetlands of International Importance - DOC website

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}
☑ A=Yes

17.1 Additional information
››› New Zealand is a contributor country to the KIWA programme for Pacific countries, which has included support for Ramsar initiatives.
The New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Aid Programme provides core, untagged, multi-year funding to the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP).
SPREP's Biodiversity and Ecosystem Management programme activities include wetland conservation and restoration work.
New Zealand is also a contributor country to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Global Climate Fund (GCF). This funding supports a range of projects to support climate resilience and protect biodiversity and ecosystems within developing countries, including the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands.

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}
☑ A=Yes

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.
››› New Zealand has contributed to the implementation of the Convention on Wetlands through the participation and leadership of the Chair of the Scientific & Technical Review Panel (STRP) for the 2022-2025 triennium. The time required to perform this role has been supported by the Department of Conservation, estimated at >300 hours per annum.
At a domestic level within New Zealand, significant funding has been provided from national budgets from the Department of Conservation, Ministry for the Environment, regional and local governments, as well as resourcing from Māori tribes and subtribes (hapū), non-governmental organisations, industry groups, research agencies and local communities. It is not possible to quantify the total investment or specific activities for this report. Numerous key projects and activities with financial estimates have been detailed throughout this report.

Target 18
International cooperation is strengthened at all levels

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

18.1 Additional information
››› The Department of Conservation is the Ramsar Administrative Authority and is also the focal point for other biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements (including the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora; the Convention on Migratory Species; and the World Heritage Convention as well as a supporting agency on the Convention on Biological Diversity). This provides for the integration and assessment of key issues across these multilateral environmental agreements.

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
››› The Department of Conservation works closely with other government agencies and global bodies on crosscutting issues, including issues of relevance to implementation of the Ramsar Convention.

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}
☑ A=Yes

18.4 Additional information
››› Various initiatives from Crown Research Institutes, universities, NGOs and the government regularly engage with international colleagues and partners to develop collaborative, information sharing projects. Example initiatives include:
- Engagement with partners in the East-Asian Australasian Flyway (EAAFP)
- Our Lakes, Our Future research programme
- Contribution to the Global Peatlands Assessment 2022
- National Science Challenge - Our Land and Water

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

Our Land and Water National Science Challenge
Global Peatlands Assessment: The State of the World's Peatlands
Our Lakes, Our Future research programme
East-Asian Australasian Flyway (EAAFP)

18.5 Have all transboundary wetland systems been identified? {18.6}
☑ Z=Not Applicable

18.6 Is effective cooperative management in place for shared wetland systems (for example, in shared river basins and coastal zones)? {18.7}
☑ Y=Not Relevant

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
››› New Zealand is an active member of the East-Asian Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) and contributes to a number of multi-lateral forums and projects to progress conservation of migratory species.

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}
☑ D=Planned

19.2 Does your country or institution implement capacity development strategies or actions for the Convention's Strategic Plan?
☑ B=No

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

19.3 Additional information
››› New Zealand implements an Enviroschools programme which integrates a range of environmental topics (including projects relating to wetlands and freshwater) into primary and secondary education in New Zealand.
In addition, a community water and catchment engagement programme, Wai Connection, has been developed.
Most universities and tertiary institutes also coordinate strong education and research programmes that relate to wetland conservation and wise use, including academic programmes focused on lakes, rivers, and coastal environments. The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands is included as part of courses on International Environmental Law at all universities teaching this subject in New Zealand.
The Department of Conservation directly supports post-graduate research through a national conservation scholarship programme.

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

Wai connection
Enviroschools

19.4 How many training events for wetland site managers have occurred since COP14? {19.3}
a) at Ramsar Sites
☑ Y=Not Relevant

b) at other wetlands
☑ X=Unknown

19.4 Additional information

››› The biennial National Wetland Restoration Symposia provides training opportunities for all New Zealanders, on wetland management and monitoring. These symposia are organised by the National Wetland Trust, with the support of multiple agencies. The Symposia provides a highly practical, participant-driven forum for knowledge exchange, training and networking for landowners, iwi, people committed to wetland biodiversity and restoration, policy makers and wetland scientists from all over New Zealand.
In 2024, the Symposium was held in Paihia, Northland, with more than 250 people attending. Crown Research Institutes, the Department of Conservation, local authorities and some technical institutes run several courses linked to training in wetlands, including identifying wetland biodiversity, assessing fish passage, monitoring techniques, and wetland delineation. Most of these training opportunities are offered to anyone wishing to attend, including wetland site managers.

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

National Wetland Restoration Symposium

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

☑ A=Yes

19.5 Additional information

››› National Reporting provides an opportunity to stocktake activities in wetland management regionally and nationally and feed into future strategy and management development.