

# Ramsar National Report to COP14

## Section 1: Institutional Information

**Important note:** the responses below will be considered by the Ramsar Secretariat as the definitive list of your focal points, and will be used to update the information it holds. The Secretariat's current information about your focal points is available at <https://www.ramsar.org/search?f%5B0%5D=type%3Aperson#search-contacts>

### 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 COP14 National Report. It can be attached to this question using the "Manage documents" function (blue symbol below)

> BELGIUM

You have attached the following documents to this answer.

[Ramsar\\_NR\\_2020\\_Brief\\_MH.pdf](#) - Letter CEO INBO Belgian National Report 2020 submission

## Designated Ramsar Administrative Authority

### Name of Administrative Authority

> Walloon Region (RW): European policy and International Agreements Department, DGO3, SPW; Flemish Region (FL): Research Institute for Nature & Forest (INBO), Flemish Ministry; Brussels Region (Brussels): Div. Espaces verts, Dpt. Biodiversité et Connaissance Territoriale, Brussels Institute for Environmental Management; Federal authorities (Federal): FPS Public Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment, DG Environment

### Head of Administrative Authority - name and title

> Walloon Region : Olivier Dekyvere, European policy and International Agreements Department; Flemish Region : Institute for Nature and Forest (INBO), Flemish Ministry; Dr. Maurice Hoffmann, CEO. Brussels Region : General Director of the Brussels Institute for Environmental Management; Federal authorities : Pierre Kerkhofs, General Director for Environment

### Mailing address

> Walloon Region : Avenue Prince de Liège, 15 5100 Jambes, BELGIUM

Flemish Region : Havenlaan 88, 1000 Brussels, BELGIUM

Brussels Region : Tour & Taxis, Aile Ouest, 1000 Brussels, BELGIUM

Federal authorities : Eurostation II, Place Victor Horta, 40, Letterbox 10 , 1060 Brussels, BELGIUM

### Telephone/Fax

> Walloon Region : Tel : + 32 81 33 58 04 - fax : + 32 81 33 58 22 Flemish Region : Tel : + 32 473 91 77 12

Brussels Region : Tel : + 32 2 775 77 14 - mobile : + 32 497 599 414 Federal authorities : Tel : + 32 2 524 92 75

### Email

> Walloon Region : olivier.dekyvere@spw.wallonie.be Flemish Region : janine.vanvessem@inbo.be Brussels

Region : obeck@leefmilieu.brussels Federal authorities : mieke.degloire@health.fgov.be

## Designated National Focal Point for Ramsar Convention Matters

### Name and title

> NFP Belgium: Dr. Janine van Vessem, Research Institute for Nature and Forest (INBO), Flemish Ministry.

Regional FPs: Walloon Region : Ir. Catherine Debruyne; Flemish Region : Dr. Janine van Vessem (INBO) & Barbara Geschier, Agency for Nature & Forest (ANB), Flemish Ministry; Brussels Region : Olivier Beck, Brussels Institute for Environmental Management; Federal authorities : Mieke Degloire, FPS Public Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment, DG Environment.

### Mailing address

> NFP: Havenlaan 88, Brussels, BELGIUM;

Walloon Region : Avenue Prince de Liège 15, 5100 Jambes, BELGIUM ;

Flemish Region : Havenlaan 88 1000 Brussels, BELGIUM;

Brussels Region : Tour & Taxis, Aile Ouest, 1000 Brussels, BELGIUM;

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Telephone/Fax

> Tel +32 473 91 77 12 (NFP) (Janine van Vessem)

Email

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**Designated National Focal Point for Matters Relating to The Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP)**

Name and title

> Dr. Janine van Vessem

Name of organisation

> Research Institute for Nature and Forest (INBO), Flemish Ministry

Mailing address

> Havenlaan 88, 1000 Brussels, BELGIUM

Telephone/Fax

> Tel +32 473 91 77

Email

> janine.vanvessem@inbo.be

**Designated Government National Focal Point for Matters Relating to The Programme on Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness (CEPA)**

Name and title

> N/A

Name of organisation

> N/A

Mailing address

> N/A

Telephone/Fax

> N/A

Email

> N/A

**Designated Non-Government National Focal Point for Matters Relating to The Programme on Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness (CEPA)**

Name and title

> N/A

Name of organisation

> N/A

Mailing address

> N/A

Telephone/Fax

> N/A

Email

> N/A

## **Section 2: General summary of national implementation progress and challenges**

In your country, in the past triennium (i.e., since COP13 reporting)

### **A. What have been the five most successful aspects of implementation of the Convention?**

- 1)
  - > Continued efforts for the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive and the Birds and Habitats Directives.
- 2)
  - > Federal: Adoption of the programme of measures required in the framework of the Marine Strategy; finalised in 2016.
- 3)
  - > In 2017 conservation objectives for the marine protected area 'Vlaamse Banken' - which includes the RAMSAR site 'Westelijk Kustbanken' were adopted, followed by the management plan (2018). In 2019 the revised Marine Spatial Plan 2020-2026 was finalised.
- 4)
  - > Preparations of the third version of the River Basin Management Plans in all River Basin Districts are ongoing.
- 5)
  - > FL: Some Ramsar sites have clearly improved : e.g. the Zwin site has seen a substantial extension of 1.2 km<sup>2</sup> extra to create a more robust intertidal wetland; Beneden Schelde and IJzerbroeken have most likely improved.
  - In any case, it is difficult to draw a conclusion, based on such a short time-span of 3 years.

### **B. What have been the five greatest difficulties in implementing the Convention?**

- 1)
  - > Federal: the complex division of competences (between the European Commission, the federal state and the Flemish region) in the marine environment result in slow and difficult decision processes.
- 2)
  - > In general the complex responsibilities between the Flemish-, Brussels- and Walloon Regions and the Federal State. Furthermore, the changes of regional and national focal points in the last years, resulting in several very recent newly appointed focal points.
- 3)
  - > FL: Having the adequate financial resources to ensure full sustainable use, conservation and restoration of all wetlands.
- 4)
  - > FL: Drought in spring in 2019 and 2020 caused increased water take to irrigate the intensive agricultural crops in the surroundings of the Ramsar site IJzerbroeken, worsening the impact of low water levels on habitats and species in the site during the breeding season. These two consequent dry spring/summers resulted in a decline and bad breeding success of certain bird, amphibian and Odonata species.
- 5)
  - > FL: Improving water quality.

### **C. What are the five priorities for future implementation of the Convention?**

- 1)
  - > Federal: implementing measures to avoid or reduce impact of human activities in the marine environment (fisheries, windfarms, ....), building a strategy for habitat restoration (gravel beds and oyster banks) and the further implementation of the Marine Spatial Planning.
- 2)
  - > Federal and FL: produce a comprehensive update on the Ramsar Site Information Sheets for Flanders and the federal site 'Vlaamse Banken'. Although every 6 years reviews were produced, they were (for some reason) never included in the online Ramsar Database.

3)

> FL: No stand still, improvement of habitats.

4)

> FL: Investigate the possibility for designation of new Ramsar Sites.

5)

> FL: A plan how to deal with climate change, in particular longer dry periods, should be ready before drought strikes. Wise use of water resources in such periods should be better regulated.

D. Do you (AA) have any recommendations concerning priorities for implementation assistance and requirements for such assistance from the Ramsar Secretariat?

> Potentially some guidance with the designation process of potential new Ramsar Sites.

E. Do you (AA) have any recommendations concerning implementation assistance from the Convention's International Organisation Partners (IOPs)? (including ongoing partnerships and partnerships to develop)

> Cooperation in the evaluation and implementation regarding the Agreement between CBD and Ramsar.

F. How can national implementation of the Ramsar Convention be better linked with implementation of other multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), especially those in the 'biodiversity cluster' (Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), World Heritage Convention (WHC), and United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)?

> Stronger cooperation between focal points of the MEAs - as priority action of overall biodiversity planning, integrated and collaborative implementation programmes between the MEAs established by the cooperating secretariats and communicated throughout. In Belgium, the environmental policy competences are shared between the federal government and the regions. The regions have jurisdiction for land-use planning, nature protection and conservation, and the protection of the environment. The latter is extremely wide and includes the protection of soil, water and air and the fight against noise pollution. Policy on waste management, water production and the provision and control of industrial activities also falls under the jurisdiction of the regions. The federal government has control over product standardisation policy, protection against ionising radiation, including radioactive waste, the transit of waste, animal welfare, the import/export and transit of non-indigenous plant and animal species and their remains, and the protection of the marine environment. All these authorities ensure that international environmental agreements in their areas of jurisdiction are implemented. Therefore, they must all be closely involved in the preparation of Belgian position points with respect to international policy. Although competences for environmental policy in Belgium are shared between the federal and regional levels, Belgium should nevertheless speak with one voice when negotiations take place in international organisations or the European Union. In order to achieve this and to ensure all parties are equally participating, four important cooperation agreements are used in the field of the environment. Three of these agreements apply to all policy domains; the fourth specifically concerns the environment. The Coordination Committee for International Environmental Policy (CCIEP) exists since 1995 and ensures that Belgium brings well-argued opinions on environmental policy to the international scene. These coordinated standpoints require a preceding debate both at technical and political level.

<https://www.health.belgium.be/fr?ie2Term=CCIM&ie2section=83&&fodnlang=en>

Furthermore, in general it would be easier for Member States if more compatible reporting systems could be developed amongst MEAs.

FL: Ramsar and the Birds Directive overlap. The implementation of the Ramsar Convention is achieved through the implementation of the Birds Directive.

G. How is the Ramsar Convention linked with the implementation of water policy/strategy and other strategies in the country (e.g., on sustainable development, energy, extractive industries, poverty reduction, sanitation, food security, biodiversity) and how this could be improved?

> Link with the Belgian Biodiversity Strategy, which will be updated in 2021.

Ramsar is formally linked to CBD due to the MOU between these conventions and Belgium being member of both.

Furthermore there are close links with Wetlands International and IUCN (BE is also a member of Wetlands International and IUCN);

close links with the information to be provided to several EU Directives;

links to CMS, mainly related to migratory waterbirds;

'Schelde & Maas 2016 - 2021' agreement.

H. According to paragraph 21 of Resolution XIII.18 on Gender and wetlands, please provide a short description about the balance between men and women participating in wetland-related decisions, programmes and research.

› Generally speaking there is a good gender balance.

I. Do you (AA) have any other general comments on the implementation of the Convention?

› The national reporting format is too extensive, very detailed and too long, especially for a country with an extremely complex governance system, such as Belgium.

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

- › 1) FPS Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment, DG Environment;
- 2) Flemish Agency for Nature and Forests (ANB), Flemish Ministry;
- 3) VMM, Flemish Environment Agency, Flemish Ministry.

## Section 3: Indicator questions and further implementation information

### Goal 1. Addressing the drivers of wetland loss and degradation

[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 Aichi Target 2]

1.1 Have wetland conservation and the identification of wetlands benefits been integrated into sustainable approaches to the following national strategies and planning processes, including: {1.3.2} {1.3.3} KRA

1.3.i

*Please select only one per square.*

a) National Policy or strategy for wetland management	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
b) Poverty eradication strategies	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
c) Water resource management and water efficiency plans	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
d) Coastal and marine resource management plans	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
e) Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
f) National forest programmes	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
g) National policies or measures on agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
h) National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans drawn up under the CBD	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant

i) National policies on energy and mining	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
j) National policies on tourism	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
k) National policies on urban development	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
l) National policies on infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
m) National policies on industry	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
n) National policies on aquaculture and fisheries {1.3.3} KRA 1.3.i	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
o) National plans of actions (NPAs) for pollution control and management	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
p) National policies on wastewater management and water quality	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant

### 1.1 Additional information

> FL: Wetland protection and conservation measures are included in the integrated Long Term Vision for the Scheldt Estuary (2030), combining sustainable accessibility, flood control and ecosystem functioning, including the updated SIGMA flood control plan. Wetlands protection and conservation measures are also included in the Integral Water Policy Decree, nature management plans, in agricultural cross compliance and in agri-environmental measures with focus on Natura 2000 sites that include wetlands.

### Target 2

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

[Reference to Aichi Targets 7 and 8], [Sustainable Development Goal 6, Indicator 6.3.1]

2.1 Has the quantity and quality of water available to, and required by, wetlands been assessed to support the implementation of the Guidelines for the allocation and management of water for maintaining the ecological functions of wetlands (Resolution VIII.1, VIII.2) ? 1.24.

C=Partially

### 2.1 Additional Information

> FL: for the Ramsar Site 'IJzerbroeken', target levels have been identified for the Blankaart basin and agreed via a protocol with all water managers and other parties involved.

2.2 Have assessments of environmental flow been undertaken in relation to mitigation of impacts on the ecological character of wetlands (Action r3.4.iv)

B=No

2.3 What, if any, initiatives been taken to improve the sustainability of water use (or allocation of water resources) in the context of ecosystem requirements across major river basins (Resolutions VIII.1 and XII.12)? (Action 3.4.6.)

C=Partially

2.3 Additional Information

> FL: pumping ban in certain river basins.

2.4 Have projects that promote and demonstrate good practice in water allocation and management for maintaining the ecological functions of wetlands been developed (Action r3.4.ix. )

A=Yes

2.5 Additional Information

> BE: National Belgian data:

- Obtained by Eurostat, can be found on:

[https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/sdg\\_06\\_20/default/table?lang=en](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/sdg_06_20/default/table?lang=en)

- Provided in the recent reports of the European Commission:

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0492&from=EN>

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020SC0145&from=EN>

The situation is presented according to the Commission :

The situation for agglomerations = % of the population that can be linked to the sewage system:

100% linked, 99% secondary treatment, 94% tertiary (= removal of nutrients).

RW : La collecte et le traitement des eaux urbaines résiduaires participent à l'atteinte du bon état des masses d'eau q. La mise en place de la Société publique de gestion de l'eau (SPGE) (1999) a permis, d'une part, de mieux organiser et coordonner les efforts des organismes d'assainissement agréés (OAA) et des communes nécessaires pour atteindre les objectifs de la directive 91/271/CEE q et, d'autre part, d'assurer le financement des investissements nécessaires à la mise en œuvre de la directive. Les OAA sont chargés de la construction et de l'exploitation des stations d'épuration, tandis que la responsabilité de l'égouttage incombe aux communes. Depuis la création de la SPGE, d'importants investissements ont été réalisés (4 milliards d'euros sur la période 2000 - 2017) pour finaliser et rénover les réseaux de collecte et traiter les eaux urbaines résiduaires.

La Wallonie n'a pas respecté les échéances de la directive 91/271/CEE, ce qui a généré deux contentieux entre la Belgique et la Commission Européenne :

le premier relatif à une condamnation, le 17/10/2013, au paiement d'une amende pour n'avoir notamment pas organisé la collecte des eaux urbaines résiduaires (Art. 3 de la directive) de 5 agglomérations;

le second relatif à une condamnation, le 06/11/2014, pour n'avoir pas assuré la collecte (Art. 3 de la directive) et/ou le traitement (Art. 4 de la directive) des eaux urbaines résiduaires de 48 agglomérations.

Début 2019, la Commission Européenne a mis fin à ces contentieux[2] suite aux investissements réalisés par la SPGE ainsi qu'à des changements de catégorie d'agglomérations[3] qui ont permis à la Wallonie de répondre aux exigences de la directive.

Au 31/12/2018, selon les informations communiquées par la SPGE à la Commission Européenne, les 39 grandes agglomérations Wallonnes (de 10 000 EH et plus) et 134 agglomérations moyennes (de 2 000 à 9 999 EH) sur les 136 que compte la Wallonie étaient conformes aux exigences Européennes. Deux agglomérations moyennes (Casteau et Visé) n'étaient plus conformes à l'Art. 4 (traitement des eaux urbaines résiduaires).

Fin 2018, la charge polluante traitée dans les agglomérations de 2 000 EH et plus était estimée à 99,1 % de la charge polluante générée. Dans les agglomérations de taille inférieure à 2 000 EH, la charge polluante traitée était estimée à 42,7 % de la charge polluante générée. Celle-ci représentait 15 % de la charge polluante totale générée par l'ensemble des agglomérations.

<http://etat.environnement.wallonie.be/contents/indicator sheets/EAU%2018.html?thematic=b1275a06-3531-44d0-a8d4-42d3d9ddb93c>.

2.6 What is the percentage of sewerage coverage in the country?

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

X=Unknown

2.6 Additional Information

> RW : Selon la SPGE, au 31/12/2018, la Wallonie comptait 451 STEP pour une capacité épuratoire nominale de 4 112 097 équivalents-habitants (EH), ce qui représentait un taux d'équipement de 92,1 %. Ces STEP étaient



réparties en 70 stations de grande capacité ( $\geq 10\ 000$  EH), 141 stations de moyenne capacité (2 000 - 9 999 EH) et 240 stations de petite capacité ( $< 2\ 000$  EH). En 2018, 9 STEP ont été mises en service[4] et 4 STEP ont été déclassées[5], ce qui correspondait à une capacité nominale nette supplémentaire de 20 528 EH. En 1990, la capacité épuratoire nominale de la Wallonie s'élevait à 1 182 990 EH, soit un taux d'équipement de 26,7 %. Entre 1990 et 2000, la capacité épuratoire nominale a augmenté de 635 910 EH, alors que sur la période 2000 - 2018, elle a augmenté de 2 293 197 EH avec la mise en service de 165 STEP. Entre 1990 et 2018, la capacité épuratoire nominale a donc été multipliée par 3,5.

Fin 2018, le solde de la capacité épuratoire nominale à installer en zone d'assainissement collectif représentait 7,9 % de l'objectif à atteindre (4 466 572 EH), avec 12 STEP en construction ou adjudgées pour une capacité épuratoire nominale de 35 082 EH (0,8 %) et environ 474 STEP encore à réaliser, pour une capacité épuratoire nominale de 319 393 EH (7,2 %). Ces STEP concernent les agglomérations  $< 2\ 000$  EH dont les eaux doivent faire l'objet depuis 2005 d'un traitement "approprié" suivant les dispositions de l'Art. 7 de la directive 91/271/CEE. Le type d'installation sera déterminé pour chaque agglomération en fonction des contraintes techniques, des coûts et des priorités environnementales et sanitaires (zones Natura 2000, zones de baignade et zones amont, zones de protection des captages, masses d'eau à risque de non-atteinte du bon état).

<http://etat.environnement.wallonie.be/contents/indicator sheets/EAU%2019.html>

FL : 86,72 %

## 2.7 What is the percentage of users of septic tank/pit latrine if relevant to your country?

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

X=Unknown

### 2.7 Additional Information

> 2.7 Additional information:

RW : L'assainissement des eaux usées est un des facteurs d'amélioration de la qualité des eaux[1]. Dans les zones faiblement peuplées, la construction d'un réseau de collecte des eaux usées domestiques est parfois jugée trop onéreuse ou techniquement difficile à réaliser. Dans ce cas, l'installation d'un système d'épuration individuelle (SEI) est nécessaire. Elle peut faire l'objet de certains avantages financiers octroyés par la Wallonie.

Près de 12 % des Wallons sont potentiellement concernés.

Selon les Plans d'assainissement par sous-bassin hydrographique (PASH), environ 180 000 logements sont situés en zone d'assainissement autonome (ZAA), dont deux tiers environ en zones urbanisables aux plans de secteur.

Zones prioritaires

En ZAA, les nouvelles habitations doivent être équipées d'un SEI. Il en est de même pour les habitations existantes dont les aménagements autorisés par un permis d'urbanisme ont pour effet d'augmenter la charge polluante. Pour les habitations construites avant la date d'approbation ou de modification du Plan communal général d'égouttage et du PASH, cette disposition ne s'applique pas. Toutefois, dans les zones prioritaires telles que définies par l'AM du 27/04/2007 q (zones de baignade q et leur zone amont, zones de prévention de captage q, masses d'eau "Natura 2000" et masses d'eau à risque listées à l'Annexe 2 de cet AM), des études de zones sont réalisées afin de déterminer :

le mode de traitement des eaux usées le plus adéquat ;

les habitations qui seront dans l'obligation d'installer un SEI ;

les délais de mise en conformité.

Les études de zones sont réalisées par les organismes d'assainissement agréés (OAA). Sur la période 2012 - 2018, 51 études de zones[2] ont été approuvées par arrêté ministériel.

Mise en place de la gestion publique de l'assainissement autonome

Une importante réforme[3] de l'assainissement autonome a été réalisée en 2016, aboutissant à la mise en place le 01/01/2018 de la gestion publique de l'assainissement autonome (GPAA). Celle-ci a été confiée à la Société publique de gestion de l'eau (SPGE)[4] avec le concours des OAA. Son objectif est de garantir un niveau de protection de l'environnement équivalent quel que soit le régime d'assainissement (autonome ou collectif) auquel une habitation est soumise. Ce niveau de protection requiert un suivi régulier des SEI agréés, suivi qui a fait défaut jusqu'à présent, tant en ce qui concerne l'entretien, la vidange des boues ou encore les contrôles, entraînant de nombreux dysfonctionnements. Depuis le 01/01/2018, à côté de l'octroi de primes[5] pour l'installation d'un SEI (dont les montants ont été adaptés par rapport au régime antérieur), la SPGE participe à la prise en charge des entretiens périodiques des SEI et à la vidange des boues excédentaires, et ce moyennant la suppression au 31/12/2021 de l'exemption du coût-vérité à l'assainissement (CVA)[6].

Stabilité des demandes de primes et des demandes d'exemption du CVA entre 2010 et 2018. Sur la période 1998 - 2018, le nombre total de primes à l'installation d'un SEI était de 12 935 pour un montant total de 35,5 millions d'euros. Après une croissance régulière jusqu'en 2005, suivie d'une diminution jusque 2010, le nombre annuel de demandes acceptées s'est stabilisé autour d'une moyenne de 577 demandes/an sur la période 2010 - 2018. Le nombre total d'exemptions du CVA accordées entre 1998 et 2018 était de 20 479[7]. Entre 2010 et 2018, l'exemption du CVA faisait l'objet d'environ 1 000 demandes/an. La baisse observée en 2018 est à mettre en lien avec la suppression de l'exemption du CVA contre la prise en charge par la SPGE des entretiens périodiques des SEI et de la vidange des boues excédentaires.

Sur la période 1998 - 2018, la capacité maximale d'épuration des SEI concernés par une demande de prime s'élevait à près de 91 831 EH, tandis que la capacité maximale des SEI concernés par une demande d'exemption du CVA s'élevait à 103 259 EH. À noter que le nombre total d'habitations équipées d'un SEI est difficile à évaluer, toutes les installations ne faisant pas l'objet d'une demande de prime ou d'exemption du CVA et toutes les habitations situées en ZAA n'ayant pas l'obligation de s'équiper d'un SEI.  
<http://etat.environnement.wallonie.be/contents/indicatorsheets/EAU%2020.html>

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

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

C=Partially

2.8 Additional Information

> RW: see 2.7.

2.9 Number of wastewater treatment plants (or volume treated exist at national level)?

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

X=Unknown

2.9 Additional Information

> RW : Selon la SPGE, au 31/12/2018, la Wallonie comptait 451 STEP pour une capacité épuratoire nominale de 4 112 097 équivalents-habitants (EH), ce qui représentait un taux d'équipement de 92,1 %. Ces STEP étaient réparties en 70 stations de grande capacité ( $\geq 10\ 000$  EH), 141 stations de moyenne capacité (2 000 - 9 999 EH) et 240 stations de petite capacité ( $< 2\ 000$  EH). En 2018, 9 STEP ont été mises en service[4] et 4 STEP ont été déclassées[5], ce qui correspondait à une capacité nominale nette supplémentaire de 20 528 EH. En 1990, la capacité épuratoire nominale de la Wallonie s'élevait à 1 182 990 EH, soit un taux d'équipement de 26,7 %. Entre 1990 et 2000, la capacité épuratoire nominale a augmenté de 635 910 EH, alors que sur la période 2000 - 2018, elle a augmenté de 2 293 197 EH avec la mise en service de 165 STEP. Entre 1990 et 2018, la capacité épuratoire nominale a donc été multipliée par 3.5.

2.10 How is the functional status of the wastewater treatment plants? If relevant to your country

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

A=Good

2.11 The percentage of decentralized wastewater treatment technology, including constructed wetlands/ponds is?

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

X=Unknown

2.12 Additional Information

> FL: drinking water production from treated wastewater by IWVA on the West coast, irrigation water for farmers during drought ...

2.13 What is the purpose of the wastewater reuse system if relevant to your country ?

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

Y=Not Relevant

2.14 Does your country use a wastewater treatment process that utilizes wetlands as a natural filter while preserving the wetland ecosystem?

X=Unknown

### Target 3

Public and private sectors have increased their efforts to apply guidelines and good practices for the wise use of water and wetlands. {1.10}

[Reference to Aichi Targets 3, 4, 7 and 8]

3.1 Is the private sector encouraged to apply the Ramsar wise use principle and guidance (Ramsar handbooks for the wise use of wetlands) in its activities and investments concerning wetlands? {1.10.1}

KRA 1.10.i

C=Partially

### 3.1 Additional Information

> FL: By the implementation of the EU Birds Directive.

### 3.2 Has the private sector undertaken activities or actions for the conservation, wise use and management of {1.10.2} KRA 1.10.ii

Please select only one per square.

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

### 3.2 Additional information

> FL: yes, but mostly nature conservation NGO's with focus on biodiversity-conservation/restoration.

### 3.3 Have actions been taken to implement incentive measures which encourage the conservation and wise use of wetlands? {1.11.1} KRA 1.11.i

C=Partially

### 3.3 Additional information

> FL: By the implementation of the EU Birds Directive.

### 3.4 Have actions been taken to remove perverse incentive measures which discourage conservation and wise use of wetlands? {1.11.2} KRA 1.11.i

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 Aichi Target 9}

### 4.1 Does your country have a comprehensive national inventory of invasive alien species that currently or potentially impact the ecological character of wetlands? {1.9.1} KRA 1.9.i

C=Partially

### 4.1 Additional information

> FL: there is no dedicated inventory of invasive alien species that impact wetlands, although plenty of material exist that indirectly covers the same subject (species lists, distribution maps, risk analyses).

### 4.2 Have national policies or guidelines on invasive species control and management been established or reviewed for wetlands? {1.9.2} KRA 1.9.iii

C=Partially

### 4.2 Additional information

> FL: Flanders' efforts focus on species from the EU Regulation nr. 1143/2014 on invasive alien species (on species such as Himalayan balsam, crayfish...), together with a set of alien species of regional importance (such as Canada goose, Australian swamp stonecrop...). Given the large set of alien species occurring in wetlands, not all species are managed equally intensive, nor equally successful.

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

A=Yes

### 4.3 Additional Information

If 'Yes', please provide examples, including the species name and the successful management action

> FL: examples of invasive species from wetlands, for which Flanders has achieved good successes, are : (1) musk rat (*Ondatra zibethicus*), which was once ubiquitous, but now largely contained; (2) Canada goose (*Branta canadensis*), whose populations were halved in a decade's time; (3) Ruddy duck (*Oxyura jamaicensis*), for which rapid response measures seem to have prevented establishment; (4) Floating pennywort (*Hydrocotyle ranunculoides*), that has steeply declined. Many more species are being managed, albeit on longer terms (e.g. American bullfrog *Lithobates catesbeianus*) or with less ambitious goals (e.g. Chinese mitten crab *Eriocheir chinensis*).

4.4 Are there invasive species of high risk to wetland ecosystems that have not been successfully controlled through management actions?

A=Yes

#### 4.4 Additional Information

If 'Yes', please provide examples, including the species name and the challenges to management

> FL: many aquatic species (e.g. fish, crayfish and mollusc species; and even smaller macro-invertebrates), are acknowledged to have detrimental impacts but remain practically unmanaged because no effective measures are available. One particularly worrying plant species, for which containment is failing despite often vigorous action, is Australian swamp stonecrop (*Crassula helmsii*). In many locations, the species has reached near-dominance.

4.5 Have the effectiveness of wetland invasive alien species control programmes been assessed?

C=Partially

#### 4.5 Additional Information

> FL: the population size for some managed bird species is (or was) assessed on a yearly basis (e.g. Ruddy duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*, and Canada goose *Branta canadensis*), but for most of the managed species, no surveys are performed that allow for assessing management effectiveness. An ongoing LIFE project (RIPARIAS) is aiming to improve that workflow.

## Goal 2. Effectively conserving and managing the Ramsar Site network

[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 {2.1.}

[Reference to Aichi Targets 6,11, 12]

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? {2.1.1} KRA 2.1.i

B=No

5.2 Are the Ramsar Sites Information Service and its tools being used in national identification of further Ramsar Sites to designate? {2.2.1} KRA 2.2.ii

B=No

5.3 How many Ramsar Sites have a formal management plan? {2.4.1} KRA 2.4.i

E=Exact number (sites)

> 9

5.4 Of the Ramsar Sites with a formal management plan, for how many of these is the plan being implemented? {2.4.2} KRA 2.4.i

E=Exact number (sites)

> 9

5.5 Of the Ramsar sites without a formal management plan, for how many is there effective management planning currently being implemented through other relevant means e.g. through existing actions for appropriate wetland management? {2.4.3} KRA 2.4.i

Y=Not Relevant

#### 5.3 - 5.5 Additional information

> Federal :

For the marine Ramsar Site (nr. 326) a management plan has been adopted and implementation is ongoing.

FL:

A nature management plan for Natura 2000 has been developed for the Ramsar Site 'Schorren van de

Beneden Schelde' (Ramsar Site nr. 327) which is being implemented.

The Ramsar Site Zwin (nr. 328) has a management plan set up (Cosyns et al. 2014), which is being implemented. (Reference: Cosyns, E., Courtens, C., Lebbe, L., Provoost, S., Van Colen, C., Agten, L., Vincx, M., Verbelen, D., Lambrechts, J. en Zwaenepoel, A. 2014. Gebiedsvisie voor het grensoverschrijdende uitgebreide Zwin en beheerplan voor het uitgebreide Zwin aan Vlaamse zijde. Wvi, INBO & Ghent University, commissioned by Nature & Forest Agency, Brugge, 252 p. + Annexes).

5.6 Have all Ramsar sites been assessed regarding the effectiveness of their management (i.e. sites with either a formal management plan or management via other relevant means where they exist e.g through existing actions for appropriate wetland management)? {1.6.2} KRA 1.6.ii

C=Partially

#### 5.6 Additional information

> FL: This is a continuous exercise. The evolution of the Scheldt Ramsar Site (nr. 327) continues to be evaluated by a wider Management Commission 'Linker Schelde Oever' as well as by the 'Flemish-Dutch Scheldt Commission'. This means that the evaluation of this Ramsar Site forms part of an evaluation of a much wider area.

For the Zwin Ramsar Site (nr. 328), a monitoring is set up. The first results have been published in 2015 (Cosyns et al. 2015). (Reference: Cosyns E., Jacobs I., Jacobs M., Lambrechts J., Provoost S., Van Braekel A., Van Colen C., Verbelen, D., & Zwaenepoel A. 2015. Monitoring van het natuurherstel in het Zwin 2011-2015. Eindrapport. WVI, INBO, Natuurpunt & Ghent University, commissioned by Nature & Forest Agency, Brugge, 266 p. + Annexes).

5.7 How many Ramsar Sites have a cross-sectoral management committee? {2.4.4} {2.4.6} KRA 2.4.iv

X=Unknown

#### 5.7 Additional information

If at least 1 site, please give the name and official number of the site or sites

> Federal : The marine Ramsar Site (nr. 326) has no cross-sectoral management committee, but all sectors are consulted on the marine spatial plan and the management plans.

FL: The Scheldt Ramsar Site (nr. 327) has a cross-sectoral management committee.

The Zwin Ramsar Site (nr. 328) is being addressed within the Flemish-Dutch Scheldt Commission, linking needs for coastal and estuarine flooding protection and ecological conservation.

RW: Of the 4 Ramsar Sites in the Walloon Region, there is only one RS that has no cross-sectoral management committee, i.e. the 'Grottes des émotions', since it is not accessible.

## Target 7

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

[Reference to Aichi Targets 5, 7, 11, 12]

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? {2.6.1} KRA 2.6.i

C=Some Sites

#### 7.1 Additional information

If 'Yes' or 'Some sites', please summarise the mechanism or mechanisms established

> FL: At the Scheldt Ramsar Site (nr. 327) this is being implemented by a management commission ('Beheercommissie Linkeroever').

A monitoring programme has been set up for the Zwin Ramsar Site (nr. 328) (also: see under § 5.6).

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? {2.6.2} KRA 2.6.i

O=No Negative Change

7.3 If applicable, have actions been taken to address the issues for which Ramsar Sites have been listed on the Montreux Record, such as requesting a Ramsar Advisory Mission? {2.6.3} KRA 2.6.ii

A=Yes

#### 7.3 Additional information

If 'Yes', please indicate the actions taken

> FL: For the Scheldt Ramsar Site (nr. 327), actions are being taken through the Natura 2000 Management Plan and Management Commission.

### Goal 3. Wisely Using All Wetlands

[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 {1.1.1} KRA 1.1.i  
[Reference to Aichi Targets 12, 14, 18, 19]

8.1 Does your country have a complete National Wetland Inventory? {1.1.1} KRA 1.1.i

C=In Progress

#### 8.1 Additional information

> Federal: all protected marine areas are included in the Marine Spatial Plan 2020-2026 (Royal Decree dd 22 May 2019).

RW:

- Walloon Natura 2000 sites are categorized by habitats, which include wetlands.

- Wetlands of biological interest are one of the strict nature conservation protected areas in the Walloon Region. Their listing is kept up to date.

- The Walloon Region has registered all "protected areas" according to the Water Framework Directive. This register includes : Natura 2000 sites, areas designated for the abstraction of water intended for human consumption; recreational waters; nutrient-sensitive areas.

FL: Covered by 'Watervlakken'(all stagnant waters  $\geq 1.5$  m<sup>2</sup>), 'Watergangen' and the 'Biological valuation maps (scale of 1/25000)'. These comprise detailed morphological and ecological maps with indication of land use and habitat types, including wetlands. Additional inventories exist on an ad hoc basis or as a contribution to specific plans (restoration, management of a.o. nature reserves). Maps are accessible on:

<http://geo-vlaanderen.agiv.be/geo-vlaanderen>

The conservation status of Natura 2000 habitats (incl. wetlands) is monitored in a network representative at regional level. There is also ecological monitoring taking place for the Water Framework Directive (not comprising smaller water bodies). Data on Ramsar Sites are also being updated based on the Natura 2000 reporting.

For the IBAs, see: <http://datazone.birdlife.org/country/belgium/ibas> .

8.2 Has your country updated a National Wetland Inventory in the last decade?

A=Yes

#### 8.2 Additional information

> RW: environmental Outlook publications on a regular basis <http://etat.environnement.wallonie.be/> RBC (also see 1.1.1).

FL: The inventory is updated continuously through the GIS layers 'Watervlakken' and 'biological valuation maps' (see above under § 8.1).

Every two years the Environmental Report provides an update on the ecological and qualitative state of water courses:

<http://en.vmm.be/>

8.3 Is wetland inventory data and information maintained? {1.1.2} KRA 1.1.ii

A=Yes

#### 8.3 Additional information

> Federal: Relevant 'wetland data' or marine protected areas are stored in the Belgian Marine Data Centre (<http://www.bmdc.be>) - see also [www.vliz.be](http://www.vliz.be) for additional marine data.

RW: Information on habitats is available on the Walloon internet site on biodiversity.

<http://biodiversite.wallonie.be/fr/accueil.html?IDC=6>

Information on the Natura 2000 sites have been collected and is available through the Natura 2000 website.

Article 17 report of the Habitats Directive assessed the implementation of this Directive. As many Natura 2000 sites are wetlands, they have been assessed through this report.

(<http://biodiversite.wallonie.be/fr/accueil.html?IDC=6> ). A page on static and flowing water habitat types is available: <http://biodiversite.wallonie.be/fr/plans-et-cours-d-eau-c.html?IDC=813>

Information on the state of water courses: <http://spw.wallonie.be/dce/spip.php?rubrique4>

The atlas of all Walloon water courses is available online:

<http://environnement.wallonie.be/cartosig/atlasceenn/>.

Every year, the Environmental Outlook for Wallonia (EOW) provides an update on Wallonia's environmental situation, based on a collection of environmental, social, health and other indicators which may be able to shed some light on the pressure put on the different elements of the environment (air, water, soils, fauna, flora, natural habitats, etc.) and their impact. By looking at the responses that have already been implemented, it also is a valuable part of an evaluation of environmental policies. A more detailed report is:

Ramsar National Report to COP13 [Catherine Debruyne] Page 20 of 63, produced every five years (the "Rapport analytique sur l'état de l'environnement Wallon", last edition: 2006-2007), which provides a more comprehensive and detailed analysis of environmental issues:

<http://etat.environnement.wallonie.be/home.html>

Through this EOW, the ecological and morphological characters of watercourses are monitored on a regular basis and the results are available through the dashboard of the Walloon environment. Other components of the state of the wetlands are also monitored such as : main water flows, pollution released, organic pollution, eutrophication, sediments, micro-pollutants, nitrate and pesticides in groundwater, collective and individual treatment of wastewater...

Assessment of the physical and chemical quality of surface water bodies:

<http://aquaphyc.environnement.wallonie.be>

Assessment of the biological quality of watercourses has been pursued by the diversity of macroinvertebrates, macrophytes, diatomea and fishes.

Four data collecting stations have been selected to be included in an European network of stations on waterway's biological quality.

FL: By the 'biological valuation map' and 'Watervlakken' (see under § 8.1).

Status on the ecological and qualitative state of water courses: <http://en.vmm.be/>

Reports on bird populations in certain specific Natura 2000 sites, coastal area and river basins:

[http://www.inbo.be/content/page.asp?pid=EN\\_PUBLICATIONS\\_startnew](http://www.inbo.be/content/page.asp?pid=EN_PUBLICATIONS_startnew)

Several databases are maintained by public institutions and NGO's (e.g. by INBO, Natuur.punt, RBINSc, universities).

The Scheldt Ramsar Site (nr. 327) is part of the River Scheldt estuary, where two monitoring programmes are carried out simultaneously: (1) MONEOS, which is an integrated monitoring programme, coordinated by the Flemish-Dutch Scheldt Commission; and, (2) the nature monitoring programme of the 'Linkeroever' (Left Bank of the River Scheldt), as part of the Management Commission of nature at the 'Linkerschelde oever' (Left Bank).

#### 8.4 Is wetland inventory data and information made accessible to all stakeholders? {1.1.2} KRA 1.1.ii

C=Partially

#### 8.4 Additional information

> 8.4 Additional information:

Federal: Relevant 'wetland data' or marine protected areas are stored in the Belgian Marine Data Centre (<http://www.bmdc.be>) - see also [www.vliz.be](http://www.vliz.be) for additional marine data.

RW: Information on habitats is available on the Walloon internet site on biodiversity:

<http://biodiversite.wallonie.be/fr/accueil.html?IDC=6>

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<http://biodiversite.wallonie.be/fr/accueil.html?IDC=6> . A page on static and flowing water habitat types is also

available : <http://biodiversite.wallonie.be/fr/plans-et-cours-d-eau-c.html?IDC=813>

Information on the state of water courses can be found on: <http://spw.wallonie.be/dce/spip.php?rubrique4>

The atlas of all Walloon water courses is available online: <http://environnement.wallonie.be/cartosig/atlasenn/>

Every year, the Environmental Outlook for Wallonia (EOW) provides an update on Wallonia's environmental situation, based on a collection of environmental, social, health and other indicators which may be able to shed some light on the pressure put on the different elements of the environment (air, water, soils, fauna, flora, natural habitats, etc.) and their impact. By looking at the responses that have already been implemented, it is also a valuable part of an evaluation of environmental policies. A more detailed report is produced every five years (the "Rapport analytique sur l'état de l'environnement wallon", last edition: 2006 - 2007), which provides a more comprehensive and detailed analysis of environmental issues:

<http://etat.environnement.wallonie.be/home.html>

Through this EOW, the ecological and morphological characters of watercourses are monitored on a regular basis and the results are available through the dashboard of the Walloon environment. Other components: the wetland's state is also monitored such as: main water flows, pollution released, organic pollution, eutrophication, sediments, micro-pollutants, nitrate and pesticides in groundwater, collective and individual treatment of wastewater...

assessment of the physical and chemical quality of surface water bodies:

<http://aquaphyc.environnement.wallonie.be>

Assessment of the biological quality of watercourses has been pursued by the diversity of macroinvertebrates, macrophytes, diatomea and fishes.

Four data collecting stations have been selected to be included in an European network of stations on waterway's biological quality. A special tool is dedicated to river quality (aquabio):

<http://geoportail.wallonie.be/catalogue/265605dc-64db-460e-96da-d6cd14b4c950.html>

FL: By the 'biological valuation map' and 'Watervlakken'(see above).

Reports on bird populations in certain specific Natura 2000 sites, coastal area and river basins:

[http://www.inbo.be/content/page.asp?pid=EN\\_PUBLICATIONS\\_startnew](http://www.inbo.be/content/page.asp?pid=EN_PUBLICATIONS_startnew)

All the MONEOS information ([www.vmm.be/data/moneos](http://www.vmm.be/data/moneos)) and data on the Scheldt Estuary can be found on the 'Scheldemonitor' <https://www.scheldemonitor.be/nl>. The data of the 'Linkerscheldeoevergebied' (Left Bank area) can be found on the site of the Management Commission 'Natuur Linkerscheldeoever'.

### 8.5 Has the condition\* of wetlands in your country, overall, changed during the last triennium? {1.1.3}

Please describe on the sources of the information on which your answer is based in the free- text box below. If there is a difference between inland and coastal wetland situations, please describe. If you are able to, please describe the principal driver(s) of the change(s).

\* 'Condition' corresponds to ecological character, as defined by the Convention

Please select only one per square.

a) Ramsar Sites	<input type="checkbox"/> P=Status Improved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> O=No Change <input type="checkbox"/> N=Status Deteriorated
b) Wetlands generally	<input type="checkbox"/> P=Status Improved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> O=No Change <input type="checkbox"/> N=Status Deteriorated

### 8.5 Additional information on a) and/or b)

> BE:

On the Belgian level was chosen for 'No change' (O), but this is an overall answer.

Some wetlands have improved, others have deteriorated.

Federal : See Marine Strategy Framework Directive (2008/56/EC) - updating initial review (<http://odnature.naturalsciences.be/msfd/nl/assessments/2018/>).

RW : La directive-cadre sur l'eau (DCE) 2000/60/CE exige que les masses d'eau de surface et souterraine conservent ou atteignent un bon état ou un bon potentiel pour fin 2015 avec un report possible de la date limite en 2021 ou 2027. L'atteinte de cet objectif nécessite la mise en application de mesures définies dans les Plans de gestion des districts hydrographiques (PGDH) qui sont révisés tous les 6 ans. Objectifs 2015 non atteints en Wallonie.

Les évaluations réalisées pour la période 2010 - 2015 sur les ME de surface indiquent que 41 % de ces ME (146/354) sont en bon ou très bon état écologique. En ce qui concerne l'état chimique, des changements de méthodologie ne permettent pas de tirer des conclusions à ce stade de l'évaluation. Les problèmes se situent principalement dans le district hydrographique de l'Escaut et dans quelques sous-bassins mosans (Sambre, Meuse amont, Meuse aval et Vesdre) où les pressions anthropiques sont plus fortes. Les facteurs qui expliquent le mauvais état des ME sont essentiellement liés aux activités domestiques et de services (assainissement insuffisant des eaux usées), aux activités agricoles (nitrate, pesticides) et aux activités industrielles.

Environ 61 % des ME souterraine (20/33) évaluées sur la période 2009 - 2013 sont en bon état, même si 45 % d'entre elles (9/20) présentent des altérations locales(a). Le mauvais état résulte de pollutions par le nitrate et/ou les pesticides (11 ME) et par d'autres macropolluants (ammonium, phosphore) (2 ME). L'agriculture constitue donc la principale source de pressions diffuses s'exerçant sur les eaux souterraines en Wallonie bien que d'autres sources ne soient pas à négliger (ménages et services et, dans une moindre mesure, industries et pollutions historiques).

Les objectifs fixés dans les premiers PGDH n'ont donc pas été atteints. Compte tenu du programme de mesures, le deuxième cycle de PGDH prévoit de nouveaux objectifs pour 2021 : 58 % (205/354) des ME de surface en bon état écologique et des éléments justifiant un report d'échéances pour 42 % (149/354) des ME pour l'état écologique et pour 95 % (335/354) des ME pour l'état chimique (pour des raisons techniques, économiques ou d'ordre naturel); 67 % (22/33) des ME souterraine en bon état chimique et report d'échéance pour 33 % (11/33) des ME souterraine. Il subsiste un écart important entre les objectifs fixés par la DCE à l'échéance ultime de 2027 et l'état actuel des masses d'eau en Wallonie.

<http://etat.environnement.wallonie.be/contents/indicatorsheets/EAU%201.html>

FL:

Some Ramsar sites have clearly improved : e.g. the Zwin Ramsar site has seen a substantial extension of 1.2 Km<sup>2</sup> from around 1.8 Km<sup>2</sup> in 2010 (Flemish part only) to ca 3 Km<sup>2</sup> in 2019 (Flemish part only), bringing the total Zwin area, including the part on Dutch territory, to over 3.3 Km<sup>2</sup>; Beneden Schelde and IJzerbroeken have most likely improved. In any case, it is difficult to draw a conclusion, based on such a short time-span of 3 years.

Two consequent dry springs/summers resulted in a decline and bad breeding success for certain bird, amphibian and Odonata populations.

Of the 506 monitored water bodies (measurements 2016-2018) 36 % are in a bad ecological status, 39 % scored insufficient and 24 % moderate status and 0.2 % are in a good condition. Looking at the biological quality criteria a good status was shown in 39% of the water bodies for phytoplankton, in 34,05% for macro-invertebrates, in 7% for fish and 20% for macrophytes. Especially



nitrogen and phosphor impact from agricultural land use, improvement of public water treatment systems and improvement

of hydromorphological quality need more attention.

<https://www.milieurapport.be/milieuthemas/waterkwaliteit/ecologischtoestand/ecologische-toestand>

There has been a slight increase in the area of alkaline and acidic fens ('laagveen') and in wet heathland between 2010 and 2020. No known significant trend in the area of other wetland types. Increase in the area of salt and freshwater marshes between 2008 and 2016 (Nature report 2020).

8.6 Based upon the National Wetland Inventory if available please provide a figure in square kilometres for the extent of wetlands (according to the Ramsar definition) for the year 2020 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 Ramsar Convention is a co-custodian.

E=Exact Number (km2)

> Ca 3,670

### 8.6 Marine/Coastal Wetlands

	Square kilometers (km2)
A -- Permanent shallow marine waters in most cases less than six metres deep at low tide; includes sea bays and straits.	< 3,454 Km2
B -- Marine subtidal aquatic beds; includes kelp beds, sea-grass beds, tropical marine meadows.	
C -- Coral reefs.	
D -- Rocky marine shores; includes rocky offshore islands, sea cliffs.	
E -- Sand, shingle or pebble shores; includes sand bars, spits and sandy islets; includes dune systems and humid dune slacks.	
F -- Estuarine waters; permanent water of estuaries and estuarine systems of deltas.	47.2 Km2
G -- Intertidal mud, sand or salt flats.	4.7 Km2
Ga -- Bivalve (shellfish) reefs.	
H -- Intertidal marshes; includes salt marshes, salt meadows, saltings, raised salt marshes; includes tidal brackish and freshwater marshes.	1.9 Km2
I -- Intertidal forested wetlands; includes mangrove swamps, nipah swamps and tidal freshwater swamp forests.	

J -- Coastal brackish/saline lagoons; brackish to saline lagoons with at least one relatively narrow connection to the sea.	3.23 Km2
K -- Coastal freshwater lagoons; includes freshwater delta lagoons.	
Zk(a) - Karst and other subterranean hydrological systems, marine/coastal.	

## 8.6 Marine/Coastal Wetlands total (km2) > 3500

## 8.6 Inland Wetlands

	Square kilometers (km2)
L -- Permanent inland deltas.	
M -- Permanent rivers/streams/creeks; includes waterfalls.	< 23,848 Km
N -- Seasonal/intermittent/irregular rivers/streams/creeks.	
O -- Permanent freshwater lakes (over 8 ha); includes large oxbow lakes.	< 159.4 Km2
P -- Seasonal/intermittent freshwater lakes (over 8 ha); includes floodplain lakes.	
Q -- Permanent saline/brackish/alkaline lakes.	
R -- Seasonal/intermittent saline/brackish/alkaline lakes and flats.	
Sp -- Permanent saline/brackish/alkaline marshes/pools.	
Ss -- Seasonal/intermittent saline/brackish/alkaline marshes/pools.	
Tp -- Permanent freshwater marshes/pools; ponds (below 8 ha), marshes and swamps on inorganic soils; with emergent vegetation water-logged for at least most of the growing season.	max 6.9 Km2

Ts -- Seasonal/intermittent freshwater marshes/pools on inorganic soils; includes sloughs, potholes, seasonally flooded meadows, sedge marshes.	
U -- Non-forested peatlands; includes shrub or open bogs, swamps, fens.	
Va -- Alpine wetlands; includes alpine meadows, temporary waters from snowmelt.	
Vt -- Tundra wetlands; includes tundra pools, temporary waters from snowmelt.	
W -- Shrub-dominated wetlands; shrub swamps, shrub-dominated freshwater marshes, shrub carr, alder thicket on inorganic soils.	
Xf -- Freshwater, tree- dominated wetlands; includes freshwater swamp forests, seasonally flooded forests, wooded swamps on inorganic soils.	
Xp -- Forested peatlands; peatswamp forests.	
Y -- Freshwater springs; oases.	
Zg -- Geothermal wetlands.	
Zk(b) - Karst and other subterranean hydrological systems, inland.	

## 8.6 Inland Wetlands total (km<sup>2</sup>)

> 166

### 8.6 Additional information

Additional information: If the information is available please indicate the % of change in the extent of wetlands over the last three years. Please note: For the % of change in the extent of wetlands, if the period of data covers more than three years, provide the available information, and indicate the period of the change.

> Comments in relation to the data provided under 8.6 above:

- The data included under 8.6 only includes Flanders and the Federal responsibility (marine: sea); the Walloon and Brussels regions are not included.
- No separate data are available for the human-made wetlands, although they clearly appear.
- The total of rivers is an overestimation, since canals are also included in the same figure.
- The rivers (measured in Km's) are not included in the total of the wetland surface area of Km<sup>2</sup>.
- The Marine area is overestimated, since this covers all the Belgian Territorial Waters.

References used:

- According to Decler et al. (2016) Flanders has 680 Km<sup>2</sup> of wetlands (= lakes, ponds, pools, reed land, bogs, mires, fens, marshes, wet heaths, inundation areas, wet grasslands, alluvial forests). Marine habitats, rivers and canals are not included.
- Leysen A., Scheers K., Smeekens V., Wils C., Packet J., De Knijf G. & Denys, L., 2020. Watervlakken versie 1.1: polygonenkaart van stilstaand water in Vlaanderen: uitgave 2020. Rapporten van het Instituut voor Natuur- en Bosonderzoek 2020 (40). Instituut voor Natuur- en Bosonderzoek, Brussel.
- Flemish Nature Report 2020 (based on an inventory of 17/12/2020).

8.7 Please indicate your needs (in terms of technical, financial or governance challenges) to develop, update or complete a National Wetland Inventory

> Governance: include ecologically susceptible sites (with regards to eutrophication and dessication) to list of Ramsar sites; present selection only relevant for bird populations and should be extended to all wetland-dependent species groups (e.g. plants, odonata, amphibia, fish, water beetles, mammals...).

## 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 Aichi Targets 4, 6, 7]

9.1 Is a Wetland Policy (or equivalent instrument) that promotes the wise use of wetlands in place? {1.3.1}  
KRA 1.3.i

If 'Yes', please give the title and date of the policy in the green text box

A=Yes

### 9.1 Additional information

> BE: The governance is based on the European Water Framework Directive, therefore, integrated planning and governance is fundamental to the water management.

RW : The Walloon Water Code ('Code de l'Eau') aims to orient water management by hydrological basins in a coherent way. 15 sub-basins have been identified and are considered as the management units to define quality objectives, waterways schemes (contrat de Rivière), fisheries management, water treatment. Other action plans have also been developed on floodings and on sustainable management of nitrogen in agriculture.

Afin d'assurer la pérennité et la diversité des ressources hydriques ainsi que la sécurité d'approvisionnement du territoire, la Wallonie s'est dotée d'un outil de planification et de réglementation de l'exploitation des ressources en eau. Il implique la coordination des actions et des investissements des différents opérateurs du domaine de l'eau.

<http://jahia7.spw.test.wallonie.be/sites/eew/contents/indicatorsheets/EAU%20Focus%202.html?thematic=a523cbad-8a95-438a-9e5b-a1f39f004268>

Federal: as far as the marine environment policy is concerned, the 'Good Environmental Status' and the related objectives as part of the implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive are the basis of the "wetland policy" along the coast. With respect to the protected areas, the Habitats and Birds Directive form the basis for policy setting.

FL: The framework of the water policy in Flanders is described in the Decree on Integrated Water Policy. It distinguishes 4 integrated policy planning levels and plans: the River Basin District (Scheldt and Meuse), the regional level (Flanders) and the sub-basin level with the river catchment. It also provides for specific instruments such as the "water check" on the level of individual projects.

Through the Decree on Integral Water Policy (managed by the Flemish Environment Agency (June 2018) that includes the Water Division) many programmes have been set up to develop water management plans, improve water quality and quantity and the biological status. Via the Integrated Water Policy Coordination Commission, the Agency coordinates the consultation on the integrated water policy between all the parties concerned at the Flemish level.

<https://codex.vlaanderen.be/PrintDocument.ashx?id=1030008&datum=&geannoteerd=false&print=false#H1089749>

There is still ample room for improvement of integrated management of smaller waterbodies and their surroundings.

9.2 Have any amendments to existing legislation been made to reflect Ramsar commitments? {1.3.5}{1.3.6}

B=No

9.3 Are wetlands treated as natural water infrastructure integral to water resource management at the scale of river basins? {1.7.1} {1.7.2} KRA 1.7.ii

A=Yes

### 9.3 Additional information

> BE: See under Section 9.1.

This falls under the European Water Framework. The implementation is carried out by the different regions (Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels) and the Federal government, whereby the level of 'river basin' is included.

RW : La directive-cadre sur l'eau 2000/60/CE impose une gestion intégrée des eaux par district hydrographique afin de permettre à l'ensemble des masses d'eau d'atteindre le bon état (ou le bon potentiel) à l'horizon 2015, avec un report possible en 2021 ou 2027. L'atteinte de cet objectif repose majoritairement sur la mise en œuvre de Plans de gestion des districts hydrographiques (PGDH). Ceux-ci contiennent notamment un catalogue de mesures à appliquer pour améliorer la qualité de l'eau.

Deuxième cycle des Plans de gestion.

La Wallonie a élaboré les premiers PGDH 2009 - 2015 q en juin 2013 et les deuxièmes PGDH 2016 - 2021 en avril 2016. Ces outils essentiels de planification sont établis à l'échelle des districts hydrographiques (DH). Leur objet est de définir l'ensemble des mesures dont l'objectif direct est l'amélioration de la qualité des eaux de surface et souterraines. Les demandes de dérogations éventuelles en cas de non-atteinte des objectifs environnementaux doivent être dûment justifiées auprès de la Commission Européenne.

Programme de mesures.

Le catalogue de mesures des PGDH 2016 - 2021 propose 50 actions dont le coût total de mise en œuvre avoisine 1,2 milliard d'euros. Près de 90 % est destiné à l'assainissement des eaux usées et à la valorisation des ressources stratégiques. La majorité des coûts de ce programme sera supportée par les consommateurs d'eau (hors secteurs industriel, agricole et SPW). Les coûts évalués pour le secteur agricole, considérés comme disproportionnés, ne seront pas retenus à sa charge. Près de 46 % des mesures proposées sont déjà inscrites dans la législation en vigueur ("mesures de base"). Le solde est constitué de mesures complémentaires qui devront être appliquées aux masses d'eau (ME) à risque, c'est-à-dire celles pour lesquelles les mesures de base risquent de ne pas être suffisantes pour atteindre le bon état ou le bon potentiel. Bien qu'il existe des mesures ciblées comme p. ex. la conclusion de contrats de captage sur les zones à risque, certaines mesures apparaissent insuffisamment ciblées pour atténuer de manière efficiente les pressions qui s'exercent sur les ME. D'autres part, certaines mesures agricoles reposent sur une base volontaire et ne sont pas applicables obligatoirement aux ME à risque.

Des objectifs environnementaux peu ambitieux.

Pour la période 2010 - 2015, 41 % (146/354) des ME de surface (MESU) étaient en bon ou très bon état écologique alors que l'objectif 2015 était de 51 % (182/354). Pour la période 2009 - 2013, 61 % (20/33) des ME souterraine (MESO) étaient en bon état alors que l'objectif 2015 était de 70 % (23/33). À côté de ces résultats, des reports d'échéance pour 2021 ont été octroyés à la Wallonie. Pour l'état écologique des MESU, 149 dérogations (soit 42 % des MESU) ont été accordées. Pour les MESO, des objectifs presque inchangés par rapport à ceux de 2015 ont été fixés, puisque seules 2 MESO supplémentaires (soit 22/33) devront atteindre le bon état d'ici 2021. Ces reports importants et ces objectifs minimalistes pour 2021 compromettent l'atteinte de l'objectif de bon état des masses d'eau à l'échéance ultime de 2027 et des mesures plus contraignantes devront vraisemblablement être mise en œuvre dans le troisième cycle des PGDH.

<http://etat.environnement.wallonie.be/contents/indicator sheets/EAU%2021.html>

FL :

In Flanders, this is co-ordinated by a commission which co-ordinates the integrated water policy (CIW : Coördinatiecommissie Integraal Waterbeleid). This commission is responsible for the preparation, planning, control and follow-up of the integrated water policy and implements the decisions taken by the Flemish Government. It is a meeting platform for all agencies involved in water policy, including the water companies. This co-operation results in a well co-ordinated and integrated implementation of all water policy and -management. This Commission (CIW) is appointed to implement the Water Framework Directive and the Flooding Directive in Flanders

(<https://www.integraalwaterbeleid.be/nl/over-ciw>).

Regarding the river area management plans, more information can be found on the websites of Flanders Statistics and the CIW Commission :

Additional information regarding the ecological status of waterbodies in Flanders can be found at:

<https://www.statistiekvlaanderen.be/nl/ecologische-toestand-oppervlaktewaterlichamen>

Additional information regarding the river basin management plans for Flanders can be found at:

<https://www.integraalwaterbeleid.be/nl/stroomgebiedbeheerplannen>

9.4 Have Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness (CEPA) expertise and tools been incorporated into catchment/river basin planning and management (see Resolution X.19)? {1.7.2}{1.7.3}

A=Yes

#### 9.4 Additional information

> FL: Measures such as participation, awareness, information etc. are part of the "Plan of measures" of the River Basin Management Plans. They may be formulated on a regional, river-basin or local level.

Working groups have been established within the framework of individual RAMSAR-sites, such as the extension of Zwin Ramsar Site.

9.5 Has your country established policies or guidelines for enhancing the role of wetlands in mitigating or adapting to climate change? {1.7.3} {1.7.5} KRA 1.7.iii

C=Partially

#### 9.5 Additional information

> FL:

- A regional adaptation strategy has been adopted in 2013 and gives special focus on water management and biodiversity.

- The river basin management plans 2022-2027 integrate the flood risk management plans as well as the drought risk management plans. Both foresee protection and use of wetlands as part of the risk management.

- For the Scheldt river system, strategies have been established, related to the flooding control and are being implemented on a site specific project basis.
- Establishment of the Blue Deal in July 2020: "Minimizing risks of water shortage and flooding".

9.6 Has your country formulated plans or projects to sustain and enhance the role of wetlands in supporting and maintaining viable farming systems? {1.7.4} {1.7.6} KRA 1.7.v

B=No

9.6 Additional information

> RW : Encore mal connue, la consommation d'eau du secteur agricole en Wallonie a fait, en 2017, l'objet d'une étude visant à évaluer l'eau consommée au sein d'exploitations de bovins viandeux et laitiers et d'exploitations agricoles de grandes cultures.

Analyse du Cycle de Vie (ACV).

Pour comprendre la gestion des ressources en eau d'une activité, des méthodes comme l'ACV sont utilisées. L'approche de Pfister S et al.(a) permet de quantifier l'eau consommée en litre d'équivalent eau (l éq H2O). Cette méthode a été appliquée en Wallonie sur des données issues de dix exploitations agricoles pour la période 2011 à 2013 : six exploitations élevant des bovins viandeux, deux exploitations laitières ainsi que deux exploitations de grandes cultures. Pour ces différentes productions, la consommation d'eau est rapportée soit à la quantité de viande produite (kg éq carcasse), soit à la quantité de lait produite (l de lait), soit à la surface utilisée (ha) pour les cultures concernées.

Premiers résultats.

L'empreinte eau des bovins viandeux est estimée à 41 l éq H2O/kg éq carcasse tandis que celle des bovins laitiers est évaluée à 3,7 l éq H2O/l de lait. En moyenne, pour les bovins, 54 % de cette eau correspond aux besoins métaboliques de l'animal. Pour les bovins viandeux, le reste de l'eau consommée est attribué, à parts quasi égales, aux aliments autoproduits (22 %) et aux aliments achetés (23 %), une part minime (1 %) allant à la production d'énergie. Pour les bovins laitiers, en plus de l'eau pour les besoins métaboliques, de l'eau nécessaire à la fabrication des aliments autoproduits (16 %) et de l'eau nécessaire à la fabrication des aliments achetés (14 %), il faut ajouter l'eau de nettoyage des installations de traite et de stockage du lait (14 %) ainsi que l'eau nécessaire à la production d'énergie (2 %). L'empreinte eau des grandes cultures est estimée en moyenne à 2 415 l éq H2O/ha. En moyenne, 52 % de cette eau est utilisée pour la production d'engrais minéraux et 39 % pour la mécanisation. Le reste de l'eau consommée est attribué à la production de produits phytopharmaceutiques (4 %) et à leur pulvérisation (4 %), ainsi qu'à la production d'énergie (1 %).

Préserver les ressources.

Outre les préoccupations quant à la qualité de l'eau, la gestion quantitative de la ressource est un défi de taille. À l'heure actuelle, il n'existe pas suffisamment d'études pour établir des comparaisons avec les premiers résultats obtenus en Wallonie. La réalisation d'études supplémentaires devrait permettre la généralisation de l'utilisation de l'indicateur "empreinte eau" des spéculations agricoles à l'ensemble de la Wallonie et l'identification de pratiques à encourager afin d'économiser l'eau.

<http://etat.environnement.wallonie.be/contents/indicator sheets/AGRI%20Focus%201.html>

FL : This will be discussed within the Framework of the EU Biodiversity Strategy and CAP.

At the moment, support is part of the investment support for « non-productive investments », such as management of ditches, erosion measures, infiltration and retention basins.

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

{1.6.1} KRA 1.6.i

Please select only one per square.

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

9.7 Additional information

> RW:

- Projet Life de restauration de tourbières (> 1000 ha) dans les Hautes-Fagnes;
- Project réintroduction du tétra lyre (Tetrao tetrix) dans les Hautes Fagnes;
- Project MigraSure (<http://www.crhs.eu/index.php?id=38;lang=fr>) sur la caractérisation génétique des truites (FEAMP).

- Plusieurs projets de restauration/renaturation/libre circulation des poissons dans la Vallée de la Haute Sûre. FL:

- There are several Belspo- or regionally funded research projects on (farmland) ponds (Manscape, Pondscape, ORCA) and various freshwaters (BIOMAN, TESTWAT, SPEEDY,...)

- The paper of Decler K. et al. (2016) describes the area, trend and ecosystem services of wetlands in Flanders: Decler K., Wouters J., Jacobs S., Staes J., Spanhove T., Meire P. & Diggelen R. (2016). Mapping wetland loss and restoration potential in Flanders (Belgium): An ecosystem service perspective. Ecology and Society 21. <https://doi.org/10.5751/ES-08964-210446>.

- Nature Report 2020 (in Dutch only) signals the importance and potential of nature based solutions for marshland and wetlands in general with regard to mitigating drought, climate change mitigation and adaptation, see chapters D.5, D.7 and E.3

- Water-Land-Schap (<https://www.vlm.be/nl/projecten/vlm-projecten/waterlandschap>), farmers and businesses, residents and landscape managers all need to be involved in the future implementation of drought measures in open spaces and rural areas. Within the 14 sub-areas of Water-Land-Schap, a call has therefore been launched for demonstration projects from which lessons can be learned. The call was later renewed for more projects.

9.8 Has your country submitted a request for Wetland City Accreditation of the Ramsar Convention, Resolution XII.10 ?

B=No

9.9 Has your country made efforts to conserve small wetlands in line with Resolution XIII. 21?

C=Partially

9.9 Additional information: (If 'Yes', please indicate what actions have been implemented)

If 'Yes', please indicate what actions have been implemented

> FL:

- Inventory:

'Watervlakken' (all stagnant waters  $\geq 1.5$  m<sup>2</sup>), 'Watergangen' and the 'Biological valuation maps (scale of 1/25000)'. These comprise detailed morphological and ecological maps with indication of land use and habitat types, including wetlands. Additional inventories exist on an ad hoc basis or as a contribution to specific plans (restoration, management of a.o. nature reserves). (see § 8.1 and 8.2).

- Conservation:

Any change to small ponds ('drinking water holes') and streams in the wider (agricultural) landscape is by law subject to prior permission granted by the local authorities. This is part of the wider legal protection of small landscape elements in Flanders, in place since 1998. Compliance and follow-up are, however, quite limited due to insufficient resources.

## 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 Aichi Target 18]

10.1 Have case studies, participation in projects or successful experiences on cultural aspects of wetlands been compiled. Resolution VIII.19 and Resolution IX.21? (Action 6.1.6)

B=No

10.1 Additional information

If yes please indicate the case studies or projects documenting information and experiences concerning culture and wetlands

> FL: traditional management, cultural heritage assets and uses are considered in local management and restoration projects and in some research projects e.g. Manscape

(<http://www.belspo.be/belspo/fedra/proj.asp?l=&COD=EV%2F29#docum>),

traditional pond management (<https://www.natuurenbos.be/aanvullende-subsidie-voor-het-behoud-en-verbetering-van-de-soorten>); a compilation of all relevant info is still lacking at the moment.

10.2 Have the guidelines for establishing and strengthening local communities' and indigenous people's participation in the management of wetlands been used or applied such as (Resolution VII. 8) (Action 6.1.5)

*Please select only one per square.*

a) stakeholders, including local communities and indigenous people are represented on National Ramsar Committees or similar bodies	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=In Preparation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
b) involvement and assistance of indigenous people's and community-based groups, wetland education centres and non-governmental organizations with the necessary expertise to facilitate the establishment of participatory approaches	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=In Preparation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes

10.3 Traditional knowledge and management practices relevant for the wise use of wetlands have been documented and their application encouraged (Action 6.1.2)

A=Yes

### 10.3 Additional information

> BE: Included in the nature management plans of the sites.

## Target 11

Wetland functions, services and benefits are widely demonstrated, documented and disseminated. {1.4.} [Reference to Aichi Targets 1, 2, 13, 14]

11.1 Have ecosystem benefits/services provided by wetlands been researched in your country, recorded in documents like State of the Environment reporting, and the results promoted? {1.4.1} KRA 1.4.ii

A=Yes

### 11.1 Additional information

If 'Yes' or 'Partially', please indicate, how many wetlands and their names

> Ecosystem services in general, no special focus on wetlands.

BE: The Belgium Ecosystem Services (BEES) Community is an open and flexible network that will interface between different societal actors. The BEES Community has the following aims:

- Develop ecosystem services concepts, tools and practices that help to adapt human activity and clarify ecosystem thresholds in order to preserve the actual and potential well-being of present and future generations; and to stop ecosystem and biodiversity degradation, and improve their status.
- Develop mainstreaming & policy tools to promote the integration of ecosystem services concepts in policy and management, business and society.
- Facilitate capacity building, exchange of expertise and experience: including methodologies and transfer of knowledge on Belgian ecosystem services to policy and share the needs from policy makers on this issue, to enable involvement of Belgian actors in national and international initiatives and build the capacity to conduct assessments of ecosystem services.
- Provide overviews of state of the art knowledge and best practices

FL:

The website <http://www.natuurwaardeverkenner.be>, called the "Nature value explorer", is a calculation tool to value ecosystem services and can help everyone who wants to map the socio-economic importance of ecosystems. The calculated figures inform policy makers of the gain or loss of welfare resulting from the impact of a project or policy on the delivery of ecosystem services, including services delivered by wetlands. Flemish Nature Report 2020 (published on 14/12/2020): report about the 'state of nature' in Flanders. It focuses on the 6 goals of the EU Biodiversity Strategy. Restoration and management of ecosystems is one of the goals.

11.2 Have wetland programmes or projects that contribute to poverty alleviation objectives or food and water security plans been implemented? {1.4.2} KRA 1.4.i

C=Partially

### 11.2 Additional information

> RW : Le Schéma régional des ressources en eau (SRRE) est un outil de planification et de réglementation de l'exploitation des ressources en eau. Il s'articule autour de plusieurs axes : environnemental (maîtrise des pressions anthropiques, prise en compte de l'impact des changements climatiques), qualité de l'eau (mise en place de plans de gestion de la sécurité sanitaire de l'eau, protection effective des captages) et économique



(outils financiers à mettre en œuvre, maîtrise du coût-vérité de l'eau...). Les objectifs poursuivis sont entre autres : la régulation des prélèvements publics et privés (agricoles, industriels et domestiques), la sécurité d'approvisionnement du territoire wallon (taux de sécurisation de 30 %), l'accès à l'eau solidaire (mutualisation des coûts de production), la maîtrise du prix de l'eau (synergies entre les opérateurs afin de limiter les coûts d'investissement et d'exploitation), l'application du principe de récupération des coûts ainsi que la cohérence avec les autres politiques régionales (comme l'aménagement du territoire ou l'exploitation des ressources minérales).

<http://etat.environnement.wallonie.be/contents/indicator sheets/EAU%20Focus%202.html>

FL: Sigma plan in de Schelde basin includes goals: flood protection, accessibility for boats, and nature development and recreational possibilities and infrastructure.

11.3 Have socio-economic values of wetlands been included in the management planning for Ramsar Sites and other wetlands? {1.4.3}{1.4.4} KRA 1.4.iii

C=Partially

11.4 Have cultural values of wetlands been included in the management planning for Ramsar Sites and other wetlands including traditional knowledge for the effective management of sites (Resolution VIII.19)? {1.4.3}{1.4.4} KRA 1.4.iii

A=Yes

#### 11.4 Additional information

If 'Yes' or 'Partially', please indicate, if known, how many Ramsar Sites and their names

> For the Ramsar sites "La Vallée de la Haute Sure" and the "Zwin".

### 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. {1.8.} [Reference to Aichi Targets 14 and 15].

12.1 Have priority sites for wetland restoration been identified? {1.8.1} KRA 1.8.i

A=Yes

#### 12.1 Additional information

> BE:

- Restoration of 15% of degraded ecosystems is part of the EU biodiversity strategy as well as part of the Belgian Biodiversity Strategy. In this regard, the Walloon region is reflecting on how to prioritise restoration in order to best implement these objectives.

- 2 main objectives of the Water Framework Directives are the non degradation and the restoration of water bodies. In this regard, the Water code is under revision to include river restoration and priority actions for the free circulation of fish.

It is also important to mention that wetland restoration is executed with priority in Natura 2000 sites. Indeed, most of the wetlands are part of the Natura 2000 network.

FL: priority sites coincide with Natura 2000 areas for which restoration programmes are being developed.

RW: Prioritised hydromorphological restoration measures according to the Water and Flooding Directives.

Federal: scientific studies are ongoing to define appropriate fishery measures to protect the bottom integrity and the benthic fauna...

12.2 Have wetland restoration/rehabilitation programmes, plans or projects been effectively implemented? {1.8.2} KRA 1.8.i

A=Yes

#### 12.2 Additional information

If 'Yes' or 'Partially', please indicate, if available the extent of wetlands restored

> RW: Restoration measures are part of the management plans for all Natura 2000 sites.

Many restoration actions such as spawning grounds, meanders and river limbs, ripisylve.

Many projects funded both by the Walloon region and the European maritime and fisheries fund intend to restore biodiversity, see:

<https://agriculture.wallonie.be/operations-cofinancees-par-le-feamp>

Creation of temporary immersion area in the event of floodings are encouraged to be designed to favour biodiversity.

FL: Restoration measures are being carried out for the Zwin Ramsar site: 1.2 Km<sup>2</sup>; the IJzerbroeken partly (sub-area 'Blankaartbekken': ca 9 Km<sup>2</sup>), the River Scheldt area; the coastal zone; the Nete river, and some sites along the river Maas.

12.3 Have the Guidelines for Global Action on Peatlands and on Peatlands, climate change and wise use

(Resolutions VIII.1 and XII.11) been implemented including?

Please select only one per square.

a) Knowledge of global resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not relevant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
b) Education and public awareness on peatlands	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not relevant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
c) Policy and legislative instruments	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not relevant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
d) Wise use of peatlands	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not relevant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
e) Research networks, regional centres of expertise, and institutional capacity	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not relevant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
f) International cooperation	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not relevant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
g) Implementation and support	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not relevant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes

### Target 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 Aichi Targets 6 and 7]

13.1 Are Strategic Environmental Assessment practices applied when reviewing policies, programmes and plans that may impact upon wetlands? {1.3.3} {1.3.4} KRA 1.3.ii

A=Yes

#### 13.1 Additional information

> In general: wetlands protection and conservation measures are included in the Integral Water Policy Decree, nature management plans, in agricultural cross compliance, and in agri-environmental measures with focus on Natura 2000 sites that include wetlands.

RW:

- Wetlands protection and conservation measures are included in the Water Code, in the Forest Code, in agricultural cross compliance, in agri-environmental measures,...

- The Sustainable Management Programme for Nitrogen in Agriculture (or PGDA) has been revised in 2013. It aims to reduce water pollution due to agricultural practices and to enhance a sustainable use of nitrogen and humus in agriculture. <http://www.nitrawal.be/agriculteurs/legislations/PGDA>

- In 2012 the Walloon authorities have drawn up a pesticide reduction programme (PWRP) including measures involving professionals having to gain a licence to use Phyto Pharmaceutical Products (PPP), a ban on the use

of PPPs in public spaces by 2019, the creation of buffer zones to protect aquatic habitats or the promotion of integrated pest management and alternative methods.  
<http://www.wallonie-reductionpesticides.be/fr>

13.2 Are Environmental Impact Assessments made for any development projects (such as new buildings, new roads, extractive industry) from key sectors such as water, energy, mining, agriculture, tourism, urban development, infrastructure, industry, forestry, aquaculture and fisheries that may affect wetlands?

{1.3.4} {1.3.5} KRA 1.3.iii

A=Yes

#### 13.2 Additional information

> RW: Environmental assessments of plans and programmes are included in the Walloon environmental code.

FL: Environmental assessments of plans and programmes are foreseen under the environmental assessment decree in the Flemish law.

### Goal 4. Enhancing implementation

[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. {3.2.}

15.1 Have you (AA) been involved in the development and implementation of a Regional Initiative under the framework of the Convention? {3.2.1} KRA 3.2.i

B=No

15.2 Has your country supported or participated in the development of other regional (i.e., covering more than one country) wetland training and research centres? {3.2.2}

B=No

#### Target 16

Wetlands conservation and wise use are mainstreamed through communication, capacity development, education, participation and awareness {4.1}

[Reference to Aichi Targets 1 and 18]

16.1 Has an action plan (or plans) for wetland CEPA been established? {4.1.1} KRA 4.1.i

Even if no CEPA plans have been developed, if broad CEPA objectives for CEPA actions have been established, please indicate this in the Additional information section below

*Please select only one per square.*

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

#### 16.1 Additional information

If 'Yes' or 'In progress' to one or more of the four questions above, for each please describe the mechanism, who is responsible and identify if it has involved CEPA NFPs

> In general: Through implementation of the Birds and Water Framework Directives.

16.2 How many centres (visitor centres, interpretation centres, education centres) have been established?

{4.1.2} KRA 4.1.ii

a) at Ramsar Sites

E=Exact Number (centres)

> 6

16.2 How many centres (visitor centres, interpretation centres, education centres) have been established?

{4.1.2} KRA 4.1.ii

b) at other wetlands

E=Exact Number (centres)

> 23

### 16.2 Additional information

If centres are part of national or international networks, please describe the networks

> FL: Ramsar-sites: at the 'Blankaart, at the 'Zwin' and at the 'Kalmthoutse Heide' (3 in total) .

Other wetlands: e.g. Uitkerkse Polders, Buitengoor-Molse Meren, Hageven, Molsbroek, Nationaal Park Hoge Kempen, Zwarte Beek, Grote Netewoud, Grensmaas - De Wissen, Limburgs Vijvergebied - De Wijers, Bourgoyen, Liereman, Mechels Broek (12 in total).

RW: information centres in 3 of the 4 Walloon Ramsar Sites (3 in total).

Furthermore, there are 11 regional centres for environmental education (CRIE), several of them are oriented on wetlands such as the one of Harchies: <http://www.crie.be/CRIE-d-Harchies.html>

Centre Nature de Botrange <http://www.botrange.be/naccueil/fr/>, Natural parcs have their information centres, several of them have a section on wetlands like for the Haute Sure :

<http://www.parcnaturel.be/fr/accueil.html?IDC=339> ; <http://www.fpnw.be/>

Virelles Nature and its aquascope: <http://www.aquascope.be/>

(11 in total).

16.3 Does the Contracting Party {4.1.3} KRA 4.1.iii

Please select only one per square.

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

### 16.3 Additional information

If 'Yes' or 'Partially', please provide information about the ways in which stakeholders are involved

> FL:

- IJzerbroeken - nature development project: committee, steering group framework agreement, ...
- networking events for Natura 2000-sites.
- Public consultation through the Integrated Water Policy Committee action and processes.

16.4 Do you have an operational cross-sectoral National Ramsar/Wetlands Committee? {4.1.6} KRA 4.3.v

B=No

### 16.4 Additional information

If 'Yes', indicate a) its membership; b) number of meetings since COP13; and c) what responsibilities the Committee has

> The Ramsar national committee is the responsibility of the Coordination Committee for International Environmental Policy (CCIEP) Working group on Nature which ensures that Belgium brings well-argued opinions on environmental policy to the international scene. These coordinated points of view require a preceding debate both at technical and political level. Representatives from all regions as well as the federal level for all international or European nature related agreements (CMS (and its daughter agreements), CITES, Ramsar, CBD, ...) and other stakeholders are represented.

<https://www.health.belgium.be/fr?ie2Term=CCIM&ie2section=83&&fodnlang=en>

16.5 Do you have an operational cross-sectoral body equivalent to a National Ramsar/Wetlands Committee? {4.1.6} KRA 4.3.v

A=Yes

#### 16.5 Additional information

If 'Yes', indicate a) its membership; b) number of meetings since COP13; and c) what responsibilities the Committee has

> FL: Dedicated forum with stakeholders ('Gewestelijke Overleginstantie') for implementation of Birds Directive (Natura 2000).

16.6 Are other communication mechanisms (apart from a national committee) in place to share Ramsar implementation guidelines and other information between the Administrative Authority and a), b) or c) below? {4.1.7} KRA 4.1.vi:

Please select only one per square.

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

#### 16.6 Additional information

If 'Yes' or 'Partially', please describe what mechanisms are in place

> Through the implementation of the Birds Directive.

On the Belgian level also communication via the Coordination Committee for International Environment Policy (CCIEP).

16.7 Have Ramsar-branded World Wetlands Day activities (whether on 2 February or at another time of year), either government and NGO-led or both, been carried out in the country since COP13? {4.1.8}

A=Yes

#### 16.7 Additional information

> RW: Yes, in Wallonia each year for the Ramsar site of 'la Vallée de la Haute Sure"; activities done by the Parc Regional de la Vallée de la Haute Sure.

FL: In the Flemish Ramsar regions there are several events (such as guided tours) organised (sometimes by NGO's) about waterbirds.

16.8 Have campaigns, programmes, and projects (other than for World Wetlands Day-related activities) been carried out since COP13 to raise awareness of the importance of wetlands to people and wildlife and the ecosystem benefits/services provided by wetlands? {4.1.9}

A=Yes

#### 16.8 Additional information

If these and other CEPA activities have been undertaken by other organizations, please indicate this

> FL: Since there are more drought problems, there is more media coverage about the importance of wetlands.

### Target 17

Financial and other resources for effectively implementing the fourth Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016 – 2024 from all sources are made available. {4.2.}

[Reference to Aichi Target 20]

17.1a Have Ramsar contributions been paid in full for 2018, 2019 and 2020? {4.2.1} KRA 4.2.i

A=Yes

17.2 Has any additional financial support been provided through voluntary contributions to non-core funded Convention activities? {4.2.2} KRA 4.2.i

B=No

17.3 [For Contracting Parties with a development assistance agency only ('donor countries')]: Has the agency provided funding to support wetland conservation and management in other countries? {3.3.1} KRA 3.3.i

Z=Not Applicable

17.4 [For Contracting Parties with a development assistance agency only ('donor countries')]: Have environmental safeguards and assessments been included in development proposals proposed by the agency? {3.3.2} KRA 3.3.ii

Z=Not Applicable

17.5 [For Contracting Parties that have received development assistance only ('recipient countries')]: Has funding support been received from development assistance agencies specifically for in-country wetland conservation and management? {3.3.3}

Z=Not Applicable

17.6 Has any financial support been provided by your country to the implementation of the Strategic Plan?

B=No

## Target 18

International cooperation is strengthened at all levels {3.1}

18.1 Are the national focal points of other MEAs invited to participate in the National Ramsar/Wetland Committee? {3.1.1} {3.1.2} KRAs 3.1.i & 3.1.iv

A=Yes

### 18.1 Additional information

> The role of "Ramsar national committee" is taken up by the Coordination Committee for International Environmental Policy (CCIEP) Working group on Nature which ensures that Belgium brings well-argued opinions on environmental policy to the international scene. These coordinated point of views require a preceding debate both at technical and political level. Representatives from all regions and the federal level for all international or European nature related agreements are present (CMS (and its daughter agreements), CITES, Ramsar, CBD, ...).

<http://www.sante.belgique.be/eportal/Environment/Inspectionandenvironmentalrigh/international/CCPIE/10972455?ie2Term=CCIM&ie2section=83&&fodnlang=en>

<https://www.health.belgium.be/en>

18.2 Are mechanisms in place at the national level for collaboration between the Ramsar Administrative Authority and the focal points of UN and other global and regional bodies and agencies (e.g. UNEP, UNDP, WHO, FAO, UNECE, ITTO)? {3.1.2} {3.1.3} KRA 3.1.iv

A=Yes

### 18.2 Additional information

> Same as under § 18.1.

18.3 Has your country received assistance from one or more UN and other global and regional bodies and agencies (e.g. UNEP, UNDP, WHO, FAO, UNECE, ITTO) or the Convention's IOPs in its implementation of the Convention? {4.4.1} KRA 4.4.ii.

The IOPs are: BirdLife International, the International Water Management Institute (IWMI), IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature), Wetlands International, WWF and Wildfowl & Wetland Trust (WWT).

B=No

18.4 Have networks, including twinning arrangements, been established, nationally or internationally, for knowledge sharing and training for wetlands that share common features? {3.4.1}

C=Partially

18.5 Has information about your country's wetlands and/or Ramsar Sites and their status been made public (e.g., through publications or a website)? {3.4.2} KRA 3.4.iv

A=Yes

### 18.5 Additional information

> Federal: nothing new since 2017 – information is available on the website [www.de-noordzee.be](http://www.de-noordzee.be) and [www.lamerdunord.be](http://www.lamerdunord.be)  
FL: Ramsar Site specific websites, various publications:  
- Scheldt river: <https://www.natuurenbos.be/projecten/oost-vlaanderen/scalluvia>  
- Zwin: <http://zwininverandering.eu/uitbreiding/>  
[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/index.cfm?fuseaction=search.dspPage&n\\_proj\\_id=3867](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/index.cfm?fuseaction=search.dspPage&n_proj_id=3867)  
- IJzerbroeken: <https://www.natura2000.vlaanderen.be/gebied/ijzervallei/dieren-en-planten>  
- Kalmthout: <https://www.natuurenbos.be/kalmthoutseheide>

18.6 Have all transboundary wetland systems been identified? {3.5.1} KRA 3.5.i

A=Yes

18.6 Additional information

> Yes, according to the Water framework Directive, BE works on an international hydrological district basis.

18.7 Is effective cooperative management in place for shared wetland systems (for example, in shared river basins and coastal zones)? {3.5.2} KRA 3.5.ii

C=Partially

18.7 Additional information

If 'Yes' or 'Partially', please indicate for which wetland systems such management is in place

> FL: Flemish-Dutch River Scheldt Commission (Vlaams-Nederlandse Scheldecommissie), management of the 'Zwin' site and the 'Kalmthout' site, i.e. 'Grenspark Kalmthoutse Heide'.

18.8 Does your country participate in regional networks or initiatives for wetland-dependent migratory species? {3.5.3} KRA 3.5.iii

A=Yes

18.8 Additional information

> Belgium is a Party to the CMS convention and the AEWA and Eurobats Agreements.

## Target 19

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

[Reference to Aichi Targets 1 and 17]

19.1 Has an assessment of national and local training needs for the implementation of the Convention been made? {4.1.4} KRAs 4.1.iv & 4.1.viii

A=Yes

19.1 Additional information

> FL: This is organised by Inverde: [https://www.inverde.be/sites/default/files/courses/downloads/2019-12/2020\\_Eindtermen\\_Natuurmanagement\\_advies\\_beleid\\_def.pdf](https://www.inverde.be/sites/default/files/courses/downloads/2019-12/2020_Eindtermen_Natuurmanagement_advies_beleid_def.pdf)

19.2 Are wetland conservation and wise-use issues included in formal education programmes?

A=Yes

19.2 Additional information

If you answer yes to the above please provide information on which mechanisms and materials

> FL: see above, under §19.1

19.3 How many opportunities for wetland site manager training have been provided since COP13? {4.1.5} KRA 4.1.iv

a) at Ramsar Sites

X=Unknown

19.3 How many opportunities for wetland site manager training have been provided since COP13? {4.1.5} KRA 4.1.iv

b) at other wetlands

X=Unknown

19.4 Have you (AA) used your previous Ramsar National Reports in monitoring implementation of the Convention? {4.3.1} KRA 4.3.ii

B=No

#### 19.4 Additional information

If 'Yes', please indicate how the Reports have been used for monitoring  
> Overlap with the Birds Directive implementation.



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

### Goal 1

#### Target 1: Wetland benefits

Wetland benefits are featured in national / local policy strategies and plans relating to key sectors such as water, energy, mining, agriculture, tourism, urban development, infrastructure, industry, forestry, aquaculture, fisheries at the national and local level. [Reference to Aichi Target 2]

Target 1: Wetland benefits - Priority

B=Medium

Target 1: Wetland benefits - Resourcing

B=Adequate

Target 1: Wetland benefits - National Targets

> BLUE DEAL

Target 1: Wetland benefits - Planned activity

> This Blue Deal focuses on 6 tracks:

1. Public administrations lead by example and ensure appropriate regulation
2. Circular water use as a rule
3. Agriculture and nature as part of the solution
4. Raise awareness and encourage private individuals to soften
5. Increase security of supply
6. Investing together in innovation to make our water system smarter, more robust and more sustainable

Target 1: Wetland benefits - Outcomes achieved by 2021

Outcomes achieved by 2021 and how they contribute to achievement of the Aichi Targets and Sustainable Development Goals

**Note:** this field has to be completed when the full report is submitted in January 2021

> FL: impact of projects / plans on water management and natural values of Natura2000 is included in the EIA obligation and Appropriate assessment. SDG 6.

## **Target 2: Water Use**

Water use respects wetland ecosystem needs for them to fulfil their functions and provide services at the appropriate scale inter alia at the basin level or along a coastal zone. {Reference to Aichi Targets 7 and 8}, [Sustainable Development Goal 6, Indicator 6.3.1]

Target 2: Water Use - Priority

B=Medium

Target 2: Water Use - Resourcing

B=Adequate

Target 2: Water Use - Additional Information

> FL: Ramsar Site 'IJzerbroeken': sometimes good agreements can be made, e.g. the Blankaart basin water level protocols, sometimes there is complete chaos, such as during the droughts of recent years, in which farmers pump up water everywhere they can reach it, without a guiding policy framework (unless at the moment it is already too late). Working point ...

### **Target 3: Public and private sectors**

Public and private sectors have increased their efforts to apply guidelines and good practices for the wise use of water and wetlands. {1.10}. [Reference to Aichi Targets 3, 4, 7 and 8]

Target 3: Public and private sectors - Priority

B=Medium

Target 3: Public and private sectors - Resourcing

C=Limiting

#### **Target 4: Invasive alien species**

Invasive alien species and pathways of introduction and expansion are identified and prioritized, priority invasive alien species are controlled or eradicated, and management responses are prepared and implemented to prevent their introduction and establishment. [Reference to Aichi Target 9]

##### Target 4: Invasive alien species - Priority

A=High

##### Target 4: Invasive alien species - Resourcing

C=Limiting

##### Target 4: Invasive alien species - National Targets

> FL : Flanders' efforts focus primarily on species from the EU Regulation nr. 1143/2014 on invasive alien species. Targets per species were reported in the 2015-2018 reporting (link 1), but are liable to revision (link 2). Coordination with the other regions in Belgium is secured through a National Committee on IAS, which is supported by a Scientific Council, and a Scientific Secretariat. With regards to pathways of introduction, an action plan is drafted, as is requested by the Regulation, too.

##### Target 4: Invasive alien species - Planned activity

> FL : see above.

(1) A revision of management targets for species, in preparation of the next reporting ( $\pm$  2025) on the EU Regulation nr. 1143/2014.

(2) Finalisation of action plans with regards to introduction pathways.

##### Target 4: Invasive alien species - Outcomes achieved by 2021

Outcomes achieved by 2021 and how they contribute to achievement of the Aichi Targets and Sustainable Development Goals

**Note:** this field has to be completed when the full report is submitted in January 2021

> FL : with regard to the Union list species, some targets set in the 2015-2018 reporting, are met, especially for early-invasive species that are liable to a rapid response (see above), while targets are often not met for other, especially late-invasive species (see above). With regard to action plans for introduction pathways, progress has been limited so far.

##### Target 4: Invasive alien species - Additional Information

> Link 1 : [https://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/Converters/run\\_conversion?file=be/eu/ias/envxifnpg/IAS\\_-\\_Invasive\\_Alien\\_Species\\_1.xml&conv=614&source=remote](https://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/Converters/run_conversion?file=be/eu/ias/envxifnpg/IAS_-_Invasive_Alien_Species_1.xml&conv=614&source=remote)

Link 2 : [https://pureportal.inbo.be/portal/en/publications/feasibility-of-eradication-and-spread-limitation-for-species-of-union-concern-sensu-the-eu-ias-regulation-eu-11432014-in-belgium-report-prepared-in-support-of-implementing-the-ias-regulation-in-belgium\(04e5fac7-fe2c-409c-bda3-866b9c1aa41e\).html](https://pureportal.inbo.be/portal/en/publications/feasibility-of-eradication-and-spread-limitation-for-species-of-union-concern-sensu-the-eu-ias-regulation-eu-11432014-in-belgium-report-prepared-in-support-of-implementing-the-ias-regulation-in-belgium(04e5fac7-fe2c-409c-bda3-866b9c1aa41e).html)

## Goal 2

### Target 5: Ecological character of Ramsar Sites

The ecological character of Ramsar Sites is maintained or restored through effective, planning and integrated management {2.1.}.[Reference to Aichi Target 6,11, 12]

Target 5: Ecological character of Ramsar Sites - Priority

A=High

Target 5: Ecological character of Ramsar Sites - Resourcing

C=Limiting

Target 5: Ecological character of Ramsar Sites - National Targets

> Site-Level Conservation Objectives: targets were achieved  
(in accordance with the EU Habitat Directive).

## Target 7: Sites at risk

Sites that are at risk of change of ecological character have threats addressed {2.6.}. [Reference to Aichi Targets 5, 7, 11, 12]

Target 7: Sites at risk - Priority

C=Low

Target 7: Sites at risk - Resourcing

C=Limiting

Target 7: Sites at risk - Outcomes achieved by 2021

Outcomes achieved by 2021 and how they contribute to achievement of the Aichi Targets and Sustainable Development Goals

**Note:** this field has to be completed when the full report is submitted in January 2021

> FL: The Zwin Ramsar Site: threat of complete silting up, resulting in loss of pioneer salt marsh and foraging habitats for birds, has largely be countered by enlargement of the intertidal area and enhanced dynamics in the area.

### **Goal 3**

#### **Target 8: National wetland inventories**

National wetland inventories have been either initiated, completed or updated and disseminated and used for promoting the conservation and effective management of all wetlands {1.1.1} KRA 1.1.i. [Reference to Aichi Targets 12, 14, 18, 19]

Target 8: National wetland inventories - Priority

A=High

Target 8: National wetland inventories - Resourcing

B=Adequate

## Target 9: Wise Use

The wise use of wetlands is strengthened through integrated resource management at the appropriate scale, inter alia, within a river basin or along a coastal zone {1.3.}. [Reference to Aichi Targets 4, 6, 7]

Target 9: Wise Use - Priority

A=High

Target 9: Wise Use - Resourcing

B=Adequate

Target 9: Wise Use - Outcomes achieved by 2021

Outcomes achieved by 2021 and how they contribute to achievement of the Aichi Targets and Sustainable Development Goals

**Note:** this field has to be completed when the full report is submitted in January 2021

> FL: The Zwin Ramsar Site: enlargement of the area was accompanied by strengthening of coastal protection dykes.



### **Target 10: Traditional Knowledge**

The traditional knowledge innovations and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities relevant for the wise use of wetlands and their customary use of wetland resources, are documented, respected, subject to national legislation and relevant international obligations and fully integrated and reflected in the implementation of the Convention with a full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities at all relevant levels. [Reference to Aichi Target 18].

Target 10: Traditional Knowledge - Priority

E=No answer

Target 10: Traditional Knowledge - Resourcing

E=No answer

## **Target 11: Wetland functions**

Wetland functions, services and benefits are widely demonstrated, documented and disseminated. {1.4}.  
[Reference to Aichi Targets 1, 2, 13, 14]

Target 11: Wetland functions - Priority

B=Medium

Target 11: Wetland functions - Resourcing

B=Adequate

Target 11: Wetland functions - Outcomes achieved by 2021

Outcomes achieved by 2021 and how they contribute to achievement of the Aichi Targets and Sustainable Development Goals

**Note:** this field has to be completed when the full report is submitted in January 2021

> FL: Ecosystem Service cases have been successfully implemented in some river valleys: 'Stiemberbeek' (Genk); 'Markebeek' (Maarkedal); river Nete valley; river Dijle valley (south of the city of Leuven).

## **Target 12: Restoration**

Restoration is in progress in degraded wetlands, with priority to wetlands that are relevant for biodiversity conservation, disaster risk reduction, livelihoods and/or climate change mitigation and adaptation. {1.8.}. [Reference to Aichi Targets 14 and 15].

Target 12: Restoration - Priority

B=Medium

Target 12: Restoration - Resourcing

C=Limiting

### **Target 13: Enhanced sustainability**

Enhanced sustainability of key sectors such as water, energy, mining, agriculture, tourism, urban development, infrastructure, industry, forestry, aquaculture and fisheries when they affect wetlands, contributing to biodiversity conservation and human livelihoods.[Reference to Aichi Targets 6 and 7]

Target 13: Enhanced sustainability - Priority

B=Medium

Target 13: Enhanced sustainability - Resourcing

C=Limiting

## **Goal 4**

### **Target 15: Regional Initiatives**

Ramsar Regional Initiatives with the active involvement and support of the Parties in each region are reinforced and developed into effective tools to assist in the full implementation of the Convention. {3.2.}

Target 15: Regional Initiatives - Priority

E=No answer

Target 15: Regional Initiatives - Resourcing

E=No answer

### **Target 16: Wetlands conservation and wise use**

Wetlands conservation and wise use are mainstreamed through communication, capacity development, education, participation and awareness {4.1}. [Reference to Aichi Targets 1 and 18].

Target 16: Wetlands conservation and wise use - Priority

B=Medium

Target 16: Wetlands conservation and wise use - Resourcing

B=Adequate

### **Target 17: Financial and other resources**

Financial and other resources for effectively implementing the fourth Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016 - 2024 from all sources are made available. {4.2.}.[Reference to Aichi Target 20]

Target 17: Financial and other resources - Priority

E=No answer

Target 17: Financial and other resources - Resourcing

E=No answer

**Target 18: International cooperation**

International cooperation is strengthened at all levels {3.1}

Target 18: International cooperation - Priority

B=Medium

Target 18: International cooperation - Resourcing

C=Limiting



### **Target 19: Capacity Building**

Capacity building for implementation of the Convention and the 4th Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016 – 2024 is enhanced. [Reference to Aichi Targets 1 and 17].

Target 19: Capacity Building - Priority

E=No answer

Target 19: Capacity Building - Resourcing

E=No answer

## **Section 5: Optional annex to enable Contracting Parties to provide additional voluntary information on designated Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites)**

### **Guidance for filling in this section**

1. Contracting Parties can provide additional information specific to any or all of their designated Ramsar Sites.
2. The only indicator questions included in this section are those from Section 3 of the COP14 NRF which directly concern Ramsar Sites.
3. In some cases, to make them meaningful in the context of reporting on each Ramsar Site separately, some of these indicator questions and/or their answer options have been adjusted from their formulation in Section 3 of the COP14 NRF.
4. Please include information on only one site in each row. In the appropriate columns please add the name and official site number (from the Ramsar Sites Information Service).
5. For each 'indicator question', please select one answer from the legend.
6. A final column of this Annex is provided as a 'free text' box for the inclusion of any additional information concerning the Ramsar Site.

A final column of this Annex is provided as a 'free text' box for the inclusion of any additional information concerning the Ramsar Site.

### **Belgium**

#### **De Ijzerbroeken te Diksmuide en Lo-Reninge (329)**

5.6 Have all Ramsar sites been assessed regarding the effectiveness of their management (i.e. sites with either a formal management plan or management via other relevant means where they exist e.g through existing actions for appropriate wetland management)? {1.6.2} KRA 1.6.ii

A=Yes

5.7 Has a cross-sectoral site management committee been established for the site?

A=Yes

11.1 Has an assessment been made of the ecosystem benefits/services provided by the Ramsar Site?

C=Partially

11.3 Have socio-economic values of wetlands been included in the management planning for the Ramsar Site?

A=Yes

11.4 Have cultural values of wetlands been included in the management planning for the Ramsar Site?

C=Partially

16.3a Is stakeholder participation in decision-making promoted, especially with local stakeholder involvement in the management of the Ramsar Site?

A=Yes

16.6a Have communication mechanisms been established to share information between the Ramsar Administrative Authority and the Ramsar Site manager(s)?

B=No

#### **Grotte des Emotions (1406)**

5.6 Have all Ramsar sites been assessed regarding the effectiveness of their management (i.e. sites with either a formal management plan or management via other relevant means where they exist e.g through existing actions for appropriate wetland management)? {1.6.2} KRA 1.6.ii

B=No

5.7 Has a cross-sectoral site management committee been established for the site?

B=No

11.1 Has an assessment been made of the ecosystem benefits/services provided by the Ramsar Site?

B=No

11.3 Have socio-economic values of wetlands been included in the management planning for the Ramsar Site?

Z=No Management Plan

11.4 Have cultural values of wetlands been included in the management planning for the Ramsar Site?

Z=No Management Plan

16.3a Is stakeholder participation in decision-making promoted, especially with local stakeholder involvement in the management of the Ramsar Site?

B=No

16.6a Have communication mechanisms been established to share information between the Ramsar Administrative Authority and the Ramsar Site manager(s)?

A=Yes

Any additional comments/information about the site

> This Ramsar Site is underground and not accessible for the public; rarely it is visited by cavers.

### **Kalmthoutse Heide (330)**

5.6 Have all Ramsar sites been assessed regarding the effectiveness of their management (i.e. sites with either a formal management plan or management via other relevant means where they exist e.g through existing actions for appropriate wetland management)? {1.6.2} KRA 1.6.ii

A=Yes

5.7 Has a cross-sectoral site management committee been established for the site?

A=Yes

11.1 Has an assessment been made of the ecosystem benefits/services provided by the Ramsar Site?

C=Partially

11.3 Have socio-economic values of wetlands been included in the management planning for the Ramsar Site?

C=Partially

11.4 Have cultural values of wetlands been included in the management planning for the Ramsar Site?

C=Partially

16.3a Is stakeholder participation in decision-making promoted, especially with local stakeholder involvement in the management of the Ramsar Site?

A=Yes

16.6a Have communication mechanisms been established to share information between the Ramsar Administrative Authority and the Ramsar Site manager(s)?

B=No

### **Les Hautes Fagnes (1405)**

5.6 Have all Ramsar sites been assessed regarding the effectiveness of their management (i.e. sites with either a formal management plan or management via other relevant means where they exist e.g through existing actions for appropriate wetland management)? {1.6.2} KRA 1.6.ii

A=Yes

5.7 Has a cross-sectoral site management committee been established for the site?

B=No

11.1 Has an assessment been made of the ecosystem benefits/services provided by the Ramsar Site?

B=No

11.3 Have socio-economic values of wetlands been included in the management planning for the Ramsar Site?

A=Yes

11.4 Have cultural values of wetlands been included in the management planning for the Ramsar Site?

A=Yes

16.3a Is stakeholder participation in decision-making promoted, especially with local stakeholder involvement in the management of the Ramsar Site?

A=Yes

16.6a Have communication mechanisms been established to share information between the Ramsar Administrative Authority and the Ramsar Site manager(s)?

B=No

Any additional comments/information about the site

> The restoration of wetlands is a continuing process at the site.

### **Marais d'Harchies (331)**

5.6 Have all Ramsar sites been assessed regarding the effectiveness of their management (i.e. sites with either a formal management plan or management via other relevant means where they exist e.g through existing actions for appropriate wetland management)? {1.6.2} KRA 1.6.ii

C=Partially

5.7 Has a cross-sectoral site management committee been established for the site?

A=Yes

11.1 Has an assessment been made of the ecosystem benefits/services provided by the Ramsar Site?

B=No

11.3 Have socio-economic values of wetlands been included in the management planning for the Ramsar Site?

B=No

11.4 Have cultural values of wetlands been included in the management planning for the Ramsar Site?

A=Yes

16.3a Is stakeholder participation in decision-making promoted, especially with local stakeholder involvement in the management of the Ramsar Site?

A=Yes

16.6a Have communication mechanisms been established to share information between the Ramsar Administrative Authority and the Ramsar Site manager(s)?

A=Yes

### **Schorren van de Beneden Schelde (327)**

5.6 Have all Ramsar sites been assessed regarding the effectiveness of their management (i.e. sites with either a formal management plan or management via other relevant means where they exist e.g through existing actions for appropriate wetland management)? {1.6.2} KRA 1.6.ii

A=Yes

5.7 Has a cross-sectoral site management committee been established for the site?

A=Yes

11.1 Has an assessment been made of the ecosystem benefits/services provided by the Ramsar Site?

A=Yes

11.3 Have socio-economic values of wetlands been included in the management planning for the Ramsar Site?

A=Yes

11.4 Have cultural values of wetlands been included in the management planning for the Ramsar Site?

C=Partially

16.3a Is stakeholder participation in decision-making promoted, especially with local stakeholder involvement in the management of the Ramsar Site?

A=Yes

16.6a Have communication mechanisms been established to share information between the Ramsar Administrative Authority and the Ramsar Site manager(s)?

B=No

Any additional comments/information about the site

> 5.6 Has the Ramsar Site been assessed regarding the effectiveness of its management (i.e. sites with either a formal management plan) or management via other relevant means where they exist e.g through existing actions for appropriate wetland management ?

FL: Ramsar Site (327) 'Schorren van de Beneden Zeeschelde':

Being part of the river Scheldt-Estuary, this site is overlapping with the SPA 'Zeeschelde'. In co-operation with the Nature Management Commission of the Left Bank, this Ramsar Site is being managed and evaluated as part of the Flemish-Dutch Scheldt Commission (Vlaams Nederlandse Scheldec Commissie)

(<https://www.vnsc.eu/>); the International Scheldt Commission (Internationale Scheldec Commissie)

(<https://www.isc-cie.org/>); the Nature Management Commission for the Left Bank (Beheercommissie Natuur Linkerscheldeover); as well as within the framework of N2000 (<https://www.natura2000.vlaanderen.be/>).

5.7 Has a cross-sectoral site management committee been established for the site?

FL: Ramsar Site (327) 'Schorren van de Beneden Zeeschelde':

CIW river area management plan; VNSC Long-term vision for the river Scheldt estuary; Development prospect 2010 ('Ontwikkelingsschets 2010') (<https://www.vnsc.eu/publicaties/wetenschappelijke-publicaties-en-rapporten/100-ontwikkelingsschets-2010-schelde-estuarium.html>); The Flemish Waterway ('De Vlaamse Waterweg': het geactualiseerde Sigmoplan) ([https://www.sigmoplan.be /](https://www.sigmoplan.be/))

### **Vallée de la Haute-Sûre (1407)**

5.6 Have all Ramsar sites been assessed regarding the effectiveness of their management (i.e. sites with either a formal management plan or management via other relevant means where they exist e.g through existing actions for appropriate wetland management)? {1.6.2} KRA 1.6.ii

A=Yes

5.7 Has a cross-sectoral site management committee been established for the site?

A=Yes

11.1 Has an assessment been made of the ecosystem benefits/services provided by the Ramsar Site?

A=Yes

11.3 Have socio-economic values of wetlands been included in the management planning for the Ramsar Site?

B=No

11.4 Have cultural values of wetlands been included in the management planning for the Ramsar Site?

B=No

16.3a Is stakeholder participation in decision-making promoted, especially with local stakeholder involvement in the management of the Ramsar Site?

A=Yes

16.6a Have communication mechanisms been established to share information between the Ramsar Administrative Authority and the Ramsar Site manager(s)?

A=Yes

### **Vlaamse Banken (326)**

5.6 Have all Ramsar sites been assessed regarding the effectiveness of their management (i.e. sites with either a formal management plan or management via other relevant means where they exist e.g through existing actions for appropriate wetland management)? {1.6.2} KRA 1.6.ii

C=Partially

5.7 Has a cross-sectoral site management committee been established for the site?

B=No

11.1 Has an assessment been made of the ecosystem benefits/services provided by the Ramsar Site?

C=Partially

11.3 Have socio-economic values of wetlands been included in the management planning for the Ramsar Site?

C=Partially

11.4 Have cultural values of wetlands been included in the management planning for the Ramsar Site?

B=No

16.3a Is stakeholder participation in decision-making promoted, especially with local stakeholder involvement in the management of the Ramsar Site?

D=Planned

16.6a Have communication mechanisms been established to share information between the Ramsar Administrative Authority and the Ramsar Site manager(s)?

B=No

## **Zwin (328)**

5.6 Have all Ramsar sites been assessed regarding the effectiveness of their management (i.e. sites with either a formal management plan or management via other relevant means where they exist e.g. through existing actions for appropriate wetland management)? {1.6.2} KRA 1.6.ii

A=Yes

5.7 Has a cross-sectoral site management committee been established for the site?

D=Planned

11.1 Has an assessment been made of the ecosystem benefits/services provided by the Ramsar Site?

C=Partially

11.3 Have socio-economic values of wetlands been included in the management planning for the Ramsar Site?

A=Yes

11.4 Have cultural values of wetlands been included in the management planning for the Ramsar Site?

B=No

16.3a Is stakeholder participation in decision-making promoted, especially with local stakeholder involvement in the management of the Ramsar Site?

D=Planned

16.6a Have communication mechanisms been established to share information between the Ramsar Administrative Authority and the Ramsar Site manager(s)?

B=No