

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)

> REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

You have attached the following documents to this answer.

[4853_001.pdf](#) - Letter from AA

Designated Ramsar Administrative Authority

Name of Administrative Authority

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Head of Administrative Authority - name and title

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

Name and title

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Name of organisation

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

Name and title

> To be nominated but matters relating to the CEPA Programme are currently performed by National Focal Point

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

Name and title

> To be nominated

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)

> 1) Proclamation of special reserves in the Neretva Delta Ramsar site

The Regulation declaring special reserves “Modro oko i jezero Desne”, “Ušće Neretve” and “Kuti” (Official Gazette, 94/2020) proclaimed: Special Ornithological reserve “Modro oko i jezero Desne”, Special Ornithological and ichthyological reserve “Ušće Neretve” and Special ornithological reserve “Kuti”.

The Delta Neretva area Protection Initiative dates back to the 1990 s, when it was mentioned as an objective in two strategic documents adopted by the Croatian Parliament. Fifteen years have passed since the preparation of the expert basis for the proclamation of the Neretva Nature Park. Given the importance of remaining fragmented, extremely valuable habitats on the European and world level, it has been estimated that it is necessary to focus on these, surface smaller parts, and to declare a stricter category of protection on them.

In order to protect the most sensitive and valuable parts of the mouth and delta of the river Neretva in the appropriate national category of protection which enables an adequate limitation of the use of this area and an active management of the values for which it is protected, an expert basis for valorisation of the wider area of Delta Neretva has been developed. The mouth and delta of the Neretva River are recognized because of the exceptional values for birds and fish, therefore the proposal is to proclaim a special ornithological and ichthyological reserve and special ornithological reserves, thus following the guidelines of the recently adopted EU Biodiversity Strategy.

The protection of these areas in the special reserves category is of special interest to the Republic of Croatia, thus fulfilling the preconditions for the long-term conservation of wetland ecosystems and its biodiversity and landscape diversity. The greatest wealth and diversity of fauna refers to the world of birds, and to the estuary of the Neretva and fish. Delta Neretva is the only real delta and also the largest river mouth in Croatia. It contains the largest and most valuable remains of Mediterranean wetlands with preserved coastal lagoons and is one of the few remaining in Europe. The Neretva, as a key area for birds migrating on the Adriatic rural route, provides shelter for more than 10,000 winter birds, Delta Neretva is a habitat complex and associated species unique on our coast and one of the few remaining in the Mediterranean, making Delta Neretva a part of the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International importance in the area of 12,742 ha in 1993. The protection of representative wetland habitats in the Ramsar area of the Neretva delta, in the category of special ornithological reserves, creates conditions for effective management with the aim of preserving and protecting ornithopauna and wetland habitats to which it is associated and thus the Republic of Croatia actively contributes to the preservation of these habitats on the world level and fulfils a part of its obligations under the Ramsar Convention.

In the Neretva Delta Ramsar Site there are already 3 ornithological special reserves proclaimed in the past, “Prud”, “Orepak” and “Pod gredom”.

2)

> 2) Completion of the process of updating the information on Croatian five Ramsar Sites.

In 2020. Croatia completed the update of Ramsar Sites Information Sheets for its all five Ramsar Sites, Crna Mlaka Fishponds, Neretva Delta, Lonjsko polje, Kopački rit and Vransko Lake Nature Parks.

3)

> 3) Out - of court settlement with the owner of fishponds due to keep extensive fishery production in Crna Mlaka Fishponds Ramsar Site.

The owner of Crna Mlaka Fishponds few times announced the termination of the fishery production on these fishponds due to the unresolved court cases against Republic of Croatia because of the damages from the birds that he is seeking for compensation. In the meantime Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development representing Republic of Croatia in these court cases concluded an out-of-court settlement with the owner of fishponds.

With this settlement, the Republic of Croatia obliges to pay 17,400,000.00 HRK to the owner of fishponds in four annual instalments in the amount of 4,350,000.00 HRK. According to this settlement Croatia has so far paid 8,700,000 .00. HRK

Furthermore, pursuant to the Ordinance on conditions, criteria and methods of granting state aid for damages caused by various types of birds and other animals on carp ponds since 2018, the Ministry of Agriculture has provided state aid to all fish farms.

The implementation of nature protection measures in order to maintain the ecological function can also be financed from the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, pursuant to the Ordinance on conditions, criteria and methods of awarding support under measure II.10. “Aquaculture providing environmental protection services” from 2020.

The drafting of both regulations was done in close cooperation between the ministries responsible for fisheries and nature protection.

No new litigation has been initiated since 2018.

The Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, in cooperation with The Ministry of Agriculture, has found a solution for all carp fish farms in financing through 2 above mentioned ordinances and no further judicial proceedings are expected.

All these measures have been taken to keep fishery production as it is on the Crna Mlaka Fishponds and maintain the biodiversity of this Wetland of International Importance.

4)

> 4) Implementation of the project "Development of the Natura 2000 ecological network management framework"

Within the framework of the Operational Programme Competitiveness and Cohesion 2014-2020, in order to meet the specific objective 6 III2 establishment of the framework for sustainable biodiversity management (primarily through the Natura 2000 ecological network), in 2017 a grant contract was signed for financing the project "Development of the Natura 2000 Ecological network management framework". Implementation of this project is essential for fulfilling the obligations of the Republic of Croatia as an EU member in the area of nature protection. The project beneficiary is the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, while the Institute for Environment and Nature is a project partner. The planned project duration is until the end of 2022.

The purpose of the project is to contribute to the achievement of goals and the establishment of conservation measures for target species and habitat types of the Natura 2000 ecological network in the Republic of Croatia.

The main goal of the project is to establish a framework for efficient management of the Natura 2000 ecological network in Croatia, through participatory development of management plans of ecological network areas, development of both institutional and individual capacities for management and raising public awareness of the importance of preserving these areas. All public institutions managing protected areas and ecological network areas will participate in project activities as collaborators. Management plans for 4 Ramsar sites and other wetlands that are not on the Ramsar List will be developed within the framework of this project.

5)

> 5) Adoption of the Regulation on the ecological network and the competence of public institutions competent for managing areas of the ecological network (Official Gazette, 80/2019).

This Regulation establishes the competence of public institutions managing protected areas and areas of the ecological network for the management and adoption of plans for the management of the ecological network. The basic method of managing the ecological network area is the implementation of conservation measures for target species and habitat types. They are incorporated into management plans for ecological network areas as well as sectoral natural resource management plans. For the purpose of managing ecological network areas, the Ordinance on conservation objectives and conservation measures for target bird species in the ecological network areas has been adopted (Official Gazette, 25/2020, 38/2020), while an ordinance defining the objectives and measures for conservation of other species and habitat types for each ecological network area is being drafted. Measures for the conservation of target species on fish ponds including the Crna Mlaka fishpond listed as internationally important wetland habitat are an integral part of the said Ordinance and have been adopted in close cooperation with the fishpond authorities (including owner of Crna Mlaka fishpond) and the Ministry of Agriculture.

The ecological network of the Republic of Croatia covers 36.67% of the land territory and 16.26% of the coastal sea, and consists of 745 conservation areas important for species and habitat types and 38 conservation areas important for birds. All Ramsar areas in Croatia are part of the ecological network and some other ecological network areas are wetlands.

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

1)

> 1) Lack of staff and financial resources.

2)

> 2) The concept of wetland is wide and involves many stakeholders and processes.

3)

> 3) Harmonizing wise use principles with demands of other sectors (agriculture, water management, forestry, hunting, spatial planning, energy); on the site level – water regime regulation, habitat fragmentation, expansion of invasive species, urbanization, intensive agriculture, use of pesticides.

4)

> 4) Lack of coordination and common working methods.

- 5)
> 5) Lack of National Ramsar Committee.

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

- 1)
>) Development and adoption of a management plan for 4 Ramsar sites
In frame of above mentioned project "Development of the Natura 2000 Ecological network management framework" management plans for 4 Ramsar Sites will be developed. As a management plan for Nature parks Kopački rit, Vransko Lake and Lonjsko polje expired, new ones will be developed. For a first time a management plan for Crna Mlaka Fishponds will be developed and adopted.
- 2)
> 2) Update of the existing inventory so as to cover all the national territory and to incorporate relevant information about wetlands
- 3)
> 3) Adoption of the Ordinance on conservation objectives and conservation measures for other species and habitat types.
- 4)
> 4) Application and implementation of LIFE WILD Islands project.
Among others the activities proposed by this project include the development of an international Regional Ramsar Initiative as a form of development of the protection of the wetlands and river habitats of the Danube and establishment of a multilateral Danube Wild Island Ramsar Site.
- 5)
> 5) Determine new sites for Ramsar list of internationally important wetlands by using Strategic Framework for the Ramsar List

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

- > We will need assistance from Secretariat in order to determine suitable sites to inscribe on Ramsar List, to give us information on underrepresented wetlands on Ramsar List of wetlands of international importance. Also to continue giving us support for capacity building including wetland managers, to continue in providing webinars on management of Ramsar sites and the implementation of recommendations adopted by COP.

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)

- > To give recommendations for better implementation of Convention on countries level.

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)?

- > Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development is the Focal Point for all MEAs mentioned above, National Focal Point for Ramsar Convention is also National Focal Point for WHC for natural heritage but Ministry of Culture and Media is responsible for implementation of the WHC Convention. Consequently, there is a good linkage in terms of implementation of the above mentioned MEAs. But national implementation of the Ramsar Convention needs to be closely linked with implementation of other biodiversity related MEAs in order to improve synergy, possibly through enhancing cooperation of all focal points.

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?

- > Cooperation between nature protection and certain sectors has significantly improved, e.g. forestry, agriculture, fishery and water management. All sectorial legislation has been in principle strengthened regarding sustainable use of natural resources and biodiversity protection because they have been harmonized with the EU acquis. Generally, it is evident that cooperation on mainstreaming biodiversity improves and intensifies in cases when sectors are obliged to implement certain activities or include nature protection issues into their agenda. Cooperation between nature protection and water management sectors was achieved through intensive collaboration on assessment of annual programs of water maintenance works. Also, within the framework of the above-mentioned project "Development of the Natura 2000 ecological

network management framework“, the effectiveness of conservation measures for freshwater ecosystems is monitored and Manual and field Manual for the implementation of conservation measures for freshwater ecosystems is prepared during the execution of works planned by programming documents related to regular maintenance of waters.

Future cooperation should be strengthened, especially in the process of drafting and adopting strategic and planning documents.

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.

> The majority of employees in the nature protection sector, including the protection of wetlands, are women, but still mostly men occupy decision making and better paid positions.

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

> Water Management Directorate for questions of sewage system and wastewater treatment and Institute for Environment and Nature for questions of wetland extent, both under the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development.

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 type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
d) Coastal and marine resource management 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
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 type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" 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 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
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 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
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 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
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

> The Nature Protection Strategy and Action Plan of the Republic of Croatia for the period 2017-2025 is a basic instrument for the implementation of ratified international agreements in the field of nature conservation, establishing long-term objectives and measures for the conservation of biological and geological diversity and the manner of their implementation. During the Strategy drafting process, five strategic goals have been defined, and aligned with the aforementioned Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and with the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020. The Strategy serves as an instrument that ensures the integration of biodiversity conservation measures into relevant sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies. The Strategy has been drafted in a consultation process involving a number of interested stakeholders, and its implementation will require active inclusion of a number of central state administration bodies, administrative bodies of regional self-government units and/or of the City of Zagreb, as well as local self-government units, public institutions and other institutions.

Nature protection activities and measures outlined in the Strategy will become constituent parts of all sectors whose activities depend or may have an impact (positive or negative) on biodiversity and geodiversity. These activities and measures will also be taken into account in the process of drafting the amendments of physical planning documents and natural resources management plans at the national and regional level. However, the adoption of the Strategy is merely the first step, and achieving its goals will represent a major challenge.

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

> These analysis are included in River Basin Management Plans. Croatia adopted River Basin Management Plan for a period 2016 - 2021. which integrated number of measures and activities to be undertaken to maintain the ecological functions of wetlands.

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)

C=Partially

2.2 Additional Information

> This is incorporated in River Basin Management Plans, but main obstacle is in the absence of biologically based criteria for the classification of surface waters according to the change in the amount of water flow, that is, the absence of a defined "environmentally acceptable flow", which is one of the activities planned by above mentioned RBMP.

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

> This is also partially addressed in River Basin Management Plans.

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

2.4 Additional Information

> One of the examples is the project "DRAVA LIFE - Integrated River Management" which implements an innovative approach to river management and aims to create an example of best practice for the reconstruction of rivers in Croatia and the region. The main objective of the project is to improve the ecosystem of the Drava River in Croatia, which will be achieved by implementing activities for the reconstruction of the river in cooperation with competent authorities in the field of water management and nature protection and non-governmental organizations. Restoration activities will be of immense benefit to threatened habitats and species in Natura 2000 areas and contribute to better protection against floods in populated areas along the Drava River and will increase the recreational value of the area for the local population.

2.5 Percentage of households linked to sewage system?

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

> 55

2.5 Additional Information

> 55% of the total population is linked to sewage systems, while 43% of the population is connected to wastewater treatment plants.

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

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

E=Exact number (percentage)

> 57

2.6 Additional Information

> 57% of the population has the availability to connect to sewage systems, while 55% are linked to sewage

systems.

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

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

F=Less than (percentage)

> 45

2.7 Additional Information

> Less than 45% of the population has some form of individual treatment of wastewater.

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

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

A=Yes

2.8 Additional Information

> There are a couple of wastewater treatment plants already in function that use wetlands as a natural filter (Metković, Kaštelir - Labinci), as well as some in development.

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

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

E=Exact number (plants)

> 195

2.9 Additional Information

> There are 195 wastewater treatment plants in Croatia, with a total incoming load of 2.703.028 PE (population equivalent). Of the total number of wastewater treatment plants, 73 have primary treatment, 96 secondary and 26 tertiary.

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

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

C=Functioning

2.10 Additional Information

> All 195 wastewater treatment plants are in function.

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

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

Y=Not Relevant

2.12 Number of wastewater reuse systems (or volume re-used) and purpose?

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

> 0

2.12 Additional Information

> n/a

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

2.13 Additional Information

Please indicate if the wastewater reuse system is for free or taxed or add any additional information.

> The legislative is in place, but no significant needs were observed for now.

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

X=Unknown

2.14 Additional information: If Yes, please provide an example

> There are a couple of wastewater treatment plants already in function that use wetlands as a natural filter (Metković, Kaštelir – Labinci), as well as some in development but those are artificial wetlands under no preservation law.

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

3.2 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes

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

A=Yes

3.3 Additional information

> Pursuant to the Ordinance on conditions, criteria and methods of granting state aid for damages caused by various types of birds and other animals on carp ponds since 2018, the Ministry of Agriculture has provided state aid to all carp fishponds.

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

A=Yes

4.1 Additional information

> Available at web site: <https://invazivnevrste.haop.hr/>

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

A=Yes

4.2 Additional information

> National policies on invasive species:

- The nature Protection Strategy and Action Plan of the Republic of Croatia for the period 2017 – 2025 (Official

Gazette 72/17)

- Nature Protection Act (Official Gazette 80/13, 15/18, 14/19, 127/19)
- Act on the Prevention and Proliferation of Foreign and invasive alien species (Official Gazette 15/18, 14/19)
- Ordinance on alien species that may be placed on the market and invasive alien species (Official Gazette 17/17)

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

X=Unknown

4.3 Additional Information

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

> Management actions are in progress.

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

X=Unknown

4.4 Additional Information

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

> Effectiveness of the management plans will be seen after the implementation of the plans.

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

C=Partially

4.5 Additional Information

> In order to develop a comprehensive and efficient system for the management and control of invasive alien species, the Republic of Croatia is implementing the project "Development of the system for Management and control of invasive alien species" financed by the Operational Programme Competitiveness and Cohesion 2014-2020.

Two action plans on the routes of intent introduction of invasive alien species by spontaneous spread and transport will be developed within the framework of the project, as well as management plans for three animal and two plant species from the Union list of invasive alien species that are already widespread in the Republic of Croatia (*Herpestes javanicus auropunctatus*, *Pacifastacus leniusculus*, *Trachemys scripta*, *Impatiens glandulifera* and *Asclepias syriaca*).

The project envisages the acquisition of knowledge and skills necessary for the identification of invasive alien species and goods containing them, as well as the control of their introduction into the Republic of Croatia and the strengthening of capacities of employees of bodies responsible for official controls and implementation of the EU and national legislation on invasive alien species. For this purpose, a manual on the recognition and treatment of invasive alien species will be developed, an education programme for planned 1,200 employees of the bodies responsible for official controls (customs, inspection and police) will be implemented, a study trip will be organised in order to exchange experiences and examples of good practice and participate in expert conferences in order to strengthen expert knowledge on invasive alien species.

In order to raise awareness on this topic and ensure active participation of stakeholders in the processes of drafting and implementing action plans and management plans, the project plans to develop a communication plan and conduct a public campaign in the media, as well as prepare and produce educational materials on invasive alien species.

Implementation of "Sava TIES" project (Preserving Sava River Basin Habitats through Transnational management of Invasive Alien Species) in Lonjsko polje Ramsar Site. Project objective is to reduce habitat fragmentation and improve the connectivity of the transnational Sava River basin ecological corridor by developing cross-sectoral measures for monitoring, controlling and eradication of invasive alien species in the protected areas network of the Sava River basin. Project will focus on the species that are already causing serious damage in the Sava River basin, *Reynoutria japonica*, *Amorpha fruticosa* and *Ailanthus altissima*.

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

A=Yes

5.1 Additional information

> Determination of sites to be designated as Ramsar Sites is one of the activities planned in The Nature Protection Strategy and Action Plan of the Republic of Croatia for the period 2017 – 2025. When determination of new sites will occur, Strategic Framework for the Ramsar List will be used.

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

D=Planned

5.2 Additional information

> Ramsar Sites Information Service and its tools will be used in future for designation of new Ramsar sites.

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

E=Exact number (sites)

> 3 sites

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)

> 3 sites

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

E=Exact number (sites)

> 1 site

5.3 – 5.5 Additional information

> 5.3 – 5.5 Additional information:

3 Ramsar Sites have a formal management plan, Kopački rit, Lonjsko polje and Vransko Lake but all these Plans expired and in frame of previously mentioned project “Development of the Natura 2000 Ecological network management framework” new management plans are in process of drafting. Management plan for Neretva Delta Ramsar Site is drafted but it is in process of adoption. For first time the management plan for Crna Mlaka Fishponds Ramsar Site will be drafted and adopted, also in frame of the above mentioned project which is financed from EU funds.

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

5.6 Additional information

> Management of protected areas in Croatia including wetlands is conducted according to the principles of adaptive management, based on the management plan. The management plan shall be adopted for a period of ten years, with the possibility of amending it after five years. The management plan shall contain an analysis of the situation and the management zone and shall define the management objectives, activities for achieving those objectives and implementation indicators.

In order to standardize the process of drafting and standardising the content of management plans for protected areas and ecological network areas, Guidelines for planning of Management of protected areas and/or ecological network areas have been developed. The guidelines are based on the principle of adaptability and participativeness of management and include the recommended content and format of the management plan, the procedure for its adoption and the procedure for its amendments and recommendations regarding the design and management of the process of drafting the plan.

Management plans are implemented through annual programmes for the protection, maintenance, conservation and promotion. In order to monitor the effectiveness of protected area management, annual reports on the achievement of the annual programme shall be adopted.

As previously mentioned all Ramsar sites, currently do not have management plan but management plans for 4 Ramsar sites are being drafted. Also, all public institutions managing protected areas, including wetland areas, adopt annual programmes and reports on the implementation of annual programmes.

The global most widespread tool, METT (Management effectiveness tracking Tool), is used to assess the effectiveness of protected area management. So far these questionnaires have been conducted only in Ramsar sites, which include nature parks, Lonjsko Polje, Vransko Lake and Kopački Rit. Based on the collected data, an analysis of threat trends and assessment of efficiency of individual management elements was made, and the Report on implementation and analysis of the questionnaire for evaluation of management

efficiency was made. The analysis of the results showed that pressures and threats are the result of construction activities, the use of natural resources, pollution, climate change and various other activities. The most pronounced are a group of threats to cultural and social threats in the form of depopulation and the decline of cultural values. The assessment of management efficiency is satisfactory, mostly more than 70% of activities planned in the management plan were performed. Positive developments are present in the planning, especially due to the defined management objectives, their implementation through annual programmes, better education of employees and equipment and infrastructure (especially for visitors), and the influence of local community on management has been strengthened. The biggest disadvantage is the lack of staff, but also the lack of sufficient financial resources to govern the area more effectively.

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

E=Exact number (sites)

> 0 sites

5.7 Additional information

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

> Usually one representative of Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development (AA) is a member management committee, one representative is from public institution that is managing the site and others are sometimes representatives of other sectors but mostly representatives of local communities.

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

A=Yes

7.1 Additional information

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

> Ramsar Sites are managed by public institutions which are in contact with National Focal Point and Administrative Authority. Also as mentioned Reports on implementation of Annual Programmes are submitted.

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

> Kopački rit Ramsar Site is listed on the Montreux Record. Ramsar Advisory Mission has been undertaken in 2005. Since than many activities has been undertaken, first of all a management of Ramsar Site is put in place, more than 70% of the activities planned in management plan has been carried out. Short-term goals related to sustainable use have been satisfactorily achieved, which is evident in the progress of adaptive management and use of natural resources by stakeholders and influence of public institution on them. Progress has been achieved in relations between Public institution managing the Site and stakeholders. Significant progress has been made in preserving the Park's cultural heritage, but it is necessary to continue implementing activities to achieve this goal. It is also necessary to emphasize that increased availability of greater area of the park since the area of mine suspected areas has been reduced and through the "Naturavita" project by the end of 2023 the area should be completely demined. There is also significant progress in visitors and education system as a result of intensive implementation of given activities for this purpose.

One of the most important improvements in governance has been made in national, but especially in international cooperation. The contribution to this was made by intensive communication with the local community through volunteer actions, media, web social tools for communication and other activities. The promotion and influence of the Park at the international level has been strongly raised to a higher level by participating in the work of the Danubeparks network, but also by proclaiming Transnational Biosphere Reserve Mura-Drava-Danube. Additional position of nature protection of the park has been strengthened by joining the European Natura 2000 ecological network.

In the previous period, progress has been made in strengthening the capacity of the Public Institution, in the

form of employee recruitment, their professional training and equipment for work, but it is necessary to further improve the capacity of the Public Institution.

Ten year period under the previous management plan expired and the assessment on implementation of the Plan showed that Kopački Rit Nature Park was effective in order to achieve long-term goals and that when planning the next ten-year period it should continue in the same direction. The new management plan will be developed in the scope of the previously mentioned project.

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

D=Planned

8.1 Additional information

> National Wetland Inventory should be updated according to the latest data of the extent of wetlands in Croatia. The data of the MedIsWet on island wetland conservation led by WWF Adria and Association Hyla in Croatia should be also included.

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

D=Planned

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

D=Planned

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

D=Planned

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)

>) Answer is based on the Reports on the implementation of Annual Programmes for Ramsar Sites.

b) Answer is based on estimation and on the facts that all physical planning documents and sectorial management plans for use of natural resources, incorporate nature protection requirements issued by the Nature Protection Directorate of the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development. The Ministry issues requirements on the basis of expert document prepared by Institute of Environment and Nature which contains: an overview of the protected parts of nature, area of ecological network and ecologically significant areas with the corresponding maps; proposal on protection measures and requirements for sustainable use of natural resources and sites of the ecological network, and on measures for the conservation of biodiversity, landscape diversity and geodiversity. Nature protection requirements are supposed to be incorporated into sectorial documents.

The other key mechanism is the procedure of Appropriate Assessment of plans, programs and projects that could have significant effect on sites of ecological network.

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)

> 1846,81

8.6 Marine/Coastal Wetlands total (km2)

> 144,57

8.6 Inland Wetlands total (km2)

> 1702,24

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.

> As data sources, we used the map of habitats of the Republic of Croatia from 2004, the map of terrestrial non-forest and freshwater habitats of the Republic of Croatia from 2016, determined, i.e. appropriate classes of courses of the Corine Land Cover (CLC) from 2018, and the courses water and wet (WAW) from 2015 and 2018. Our data are unfortunately not structured in a way that enables quick and easy data on the surfaces of wetland types classified by RAMSAR, so at this point we have not isolated certain types of freshwater and marine wetland habitats, but only the total number. We have a special problem with the sea, since our data are quite old and largely unavailable. We unfortunately do not have data for anthropogenic formations at this moment.

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

> Update of a National Wetland Inventory is planned, due to the gathered data in meantime, but main issues are lack of staff and finances.

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

> Protection and wise use of wetlands is incorporated in The Nature Protection Strategy and Action Plan of the Republic of Croatia for the period 2017-2025.

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

9.4 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

> It is incorporated in River Basin Management Plans for big rivers like Danube and Sava.

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

> Croatia has supported the global coalition for nature-based solutions as one of the main mechanisms for climate change mitigation and adaptation, and therefore cross-sectoral cooperation in the use, restoration, revitalization of habitats is important, including the application of measures related to traditional knowledge

and agricultural practices affecting wetland ecosystems. Strengthening ecosystems, their “health status” and reconstruction is the basic approach for an adequate response to climate change.

Croatia has recognised climate changes and their impact on biodiversity in its strategic documents. The main strategic document related to nature protection in the Republic of Croatia is the Strategy and Action Plan for nature Protection of the Republic of Croatia for the period 2017-2025 (Official Gazette, 72/2017). The strategic objectives are aimed at identifying and adapting species and habitats most sensitive to the impact of climate change. Since it is already known that wetland habitats are important in adapting to climate change and can significantly mitigate them, the aim is to preserve such habitats even where they need to be restored and prevent their degradation. Also some of the strategic objectives are monitoring the distribution of invasive species that are an indicator of climate change and solving the problem of existing climate change.

The draft Strategy for adaptation to Climate change in the Republic of Croatia has been prepared for the period until 2040 with a view to 2070.

The effectiveness of the aforementioned strategic documents will depend, inter alia, on the level of intersectoral cooperation and the dynamics of the transformative change of society in its entirety.

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

C=Partially

9.6 Additional information

> Mainly for traditional grazing and extensive carp fishponds.

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

9.8 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

> WWF and Association Hyla are implementing MedIsWet project on conservation of small island wetlands.

Activities to be done by this project are: creating a map of island wet habitats larger than 0,1 ha in the Mediterranean area, inventory based on a standardised methodology, creating a database accessible to the public, dissemination of knowledge and awareness to local, national and regional authorities, residents of the island, the general public, the scientific and professional community. Database created by this project is going to be used when update of national inventory is going to occur.

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)

A=Yes

10.1 Additional information

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

> Cultural values are taken into account in the management planning process, conservation of cultural values is one of the objectives of a management plan.

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 type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes

10.2 Additional information

If the answer is "yes" please indicate the use or application of the guidelines

> National Ramsar Committee is not established but local communities are stakeholders included in management planning and representatives of local communities are part of the Managing Boards of Public Institutions that are managing Ramsar Sites.

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

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

C1=Partially

11.1 Additional information

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

> The issue of ecosystem services that is directly connected to the Aichi Targets 14 and 15, as well as EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy is still quite new concept for Croatia. This topic has been indirectly integrated in The Nature Protection Strategy and Action Plan of the Republic Croatia for the period 2017 - 2025. However, a number of activities related to assessment of the values of biodiversity and economic valuation of its ecosystem services have been initiated, mostly connected to implementation of different projects and studies. Economic valuation of biodiversity and ecosystem services as a tool for improvement of the sustainable management in Nature Park Vransko jezero was conducted. Contingent valuation and the replacement costs methods were implemented in order to assess the value of cultural services and regulatory services provided by fresh water of the area.

The study of benefits and values of freshwater ecosystems and biodiversity in the Danube basin, implemented in a pilot-area of the Drava River, with the overall aim to strengthen the link between biodiversity of freshwater ecosystems and human well-being as well as their contribution to economic development. A list of ecosystem services relevant for Sava-Drava-Danube floodplains was drafted, including: provisioning services (timber production; biomass energy; fish production and angling; game and hunting; drinking water supply; agriculture production; energy production); regulating services (flood mitigation; sediment deposition; water self-purification; carbon sequestration-storage; local climate regulation; air quality; erosion prevention; draught

mitigation and water storage); supporting services (habitats for species; biocorridor - connectivity) and cultural services (esthetic value of landscape; recreation/tourism, naive art; local crafts-willow baskets; traditional architecture; indigenous breeds).

Implementation of MED - ESCWET project on economic valuation of Mediterranean wetlands services to climate change adaptation and regulation in Lonjsko Polje Ramsar Site. A very high value is attributed to the flood protection service provided by the Lonjsko polje floodplain in Croatia, which currently requires human management of the retention potential in the natural areas. The Site absorbs excess water when the Sava and its tributaries are in flood, protecting the downstream populations from potentially large - scale damage. During 2018, Institut for Environment and Nature implemented a project entitled "Reed habitats - evaluation of freshwater ecosystem services". The aim of the project was to evaluate the value of ecosystem services on the territory of the Republic of Croatia, in which the emphasis, besides on ecosystem accounting, will be on testing new methods for estimating ecosystem value and multilayered popularization of this approach in expert and scientific research.

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

B=No

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

A=Yes

11.3 Additional information

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

> In the management planning process socio - economic values are taken into account, but also in the Strategic Environment Assessment and Environment Impact Assessment procedures. All Ramsar Sites that have Management Plan included socio - economic values in them, Lonjsko polje, Kopački rit, Vransko Lake but also draft of the Management Plan for Delta Neretva.

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

> Cultural values are one of the main themes of the Management Plans for protected areas including Ramsar Sites.

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

D=Planned

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

> Ramsar Site Vransko Lake with Association Biom implemented restoration project "Preserving wet meadows at Vransko Lake". Wet meadows are a rare habitat in the Mediterranean, but also in the Lake Vrana area itself, which is dominated by freshwater habitats, reed beds and thickets. The goal of the restoration project is to protect the important wet meadow habitat on Lake Vrana. The project aim is to restore wet meadows, threatened by overgrowth by reeds and bushes, and to create a plan for their sustainable management in cooperation with the Lake Vransko Nature Park Public Institution. Wet meadows are exceptionally valuable feeding grounds for numerous bird species that can be found on Vransko Lake, and preservation activities help us restore their environmental function for birds, significantly contributing to biodiversity of Croatia's coastal areas. The project includes implementing activities of manual removal of unwanted vegetation that wet meadows are overgrown with and making a schedule for mowing and maintaining Vransko Lake's wet meadows. In order to continue with meadow maintenance in the future, a volunteer programme will be

designed, valorising this important habitat and giving citizens the opportunity to make a significant contribution to the protection of one of the most beautiful natural parks through their work.

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 type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
b) Education and public awareness on peatlands	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not relevant <input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
c) Policy and legislative instruments	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not relevant <input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
d) Wise use of peatlands	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not relevant <input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
f) International cooperation	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not relevant <input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
g) Implementation and support	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not relevant <input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input checked="" 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 accordance with the Environmental Protection Act, the Strategic Environmental Assessment is mandatory for:

- strategies, plans and programmes, including their amendments to be adopted at national, regional and local level, in the areas of agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, mining, transport, electronic communications, tourism, spatial planning, regional development, waste management and water management when providing a framework for projects subject to Evaluation of the need for Environmental Impact Assessment, i.e. Environmental Impact Assessment

- strategies, plans and programmes, including their amendments, which implementation is financed from EU funds

- strategies, plans and programmes which, according to a Nature Protection Act, are found to have a significant negative impact on the ecological network.

For strategies, plans and programmes for which a Strategic Environmental Assessment is obligatory, it is obligatory to carry out an Appropriate Assessment in accordance with a Nature Protection Act.

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

> The Environmental Protection Act and the Regulation on Environmental Impact Assessment prescribe the implementation of the procedure for Environmental Impact Assessment of projects. For each development project an Evaluation procedure is carried out on the need for Environmental Impact Assessment. The Environmental Impact assessment shall be carried out for projects listed in Annex I of the Environmental Protection Act and for projects for which this obligation is stipulated in the Evaluation procedure on the need for assessment.

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

A=Yes

15.1 Additional information

If 'Yes' or 'Planned', please indicate the regional initiative(s) and the collaborating countries of each initiative

> Republic of Croatia is involved in implementation of Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative that brings together 27 Mediterranean and peri - Mediterranean countries that are Parties to the Convention. Participating countries are: Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, North Macedonia, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Turkey and Palestinian Authority. A number of organizations and wetland centers are also part of the MedWet Initiative.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input 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

> Objectives of CEPA are incorporated in strategic and planing documents on all levels in the work of the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, managers of protected areas (Ramsar and other wetlands sites), NGOs, etc.

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)

> 5 centres

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

G=More than (centres)

> more than 5 centres

16.2 Additional information

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

> Ramsar Sites Nature Parks Vransko Lake, Kopački rit and Lonjsko polje together have 5 visitor centres and 3 of them are in Lonjsko Polje, Krapje, Repušnica and Čigoč. But, additionally 3 visitor centres are in construction, one in every of these 3 Ramsar Sites, in frame of project financed from Financed by EU funds, from the Operational Programme Competitiveness and Cohesion.

In addition to visiting centres in the Ramsar area, there are several visitor centres in other areas managed by public institutions of national parks, nature parks, other protected areas and ecological network areas, including wetlands not included in the Ramsar list of internationally important wetlands. Also, several new centres are being built from EU funds. Recently, 2 presentation centres have been opened, "Med Dvemi Vodami" for the presentation of the Međimurje County natural heritage and "Dravska priča" for the presentation of the Virovitica - Podravina County natural heritage, which includes the cross-border Biosphere reserve Mura Drava Danube.

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 type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes

16.3 Additional information

If 'Yes' or 'Partially', please provide information about the ways in which stakeholders are involved
 > Local stakeholders are involved in management of Ramsar sites in several ways, they are always involved in the process of preparing a management plan, in implementation of different kind of projects, special activities like maintenance of lawns and pastures but also they representatives are often included in Management Bodies.

Any individual can make a proposal for a selection of a new Ramsar site with appropriate documentation justifying it and when proposal comes from a representative of a local community it is taken into account.

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

B=No

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

B=No

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 type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
b) other MEA national focal points	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input 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

> a) Regular communication between managers of the Ramsar sites and National Focal Point and AA is in place.

b) Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development is AA for all biodiversity MEAs.

c) Other ministries and relevant organizations are involved in management planning of Ramsar Sites as stakeholders, also through the process of giving opinion to the relevant legislation pursuant to the Law on Nature Protection.

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

> Each year on the occasion of World Wetlands Day special public events are organized, presentations, lectures, exhibitions, field visits, art competition for children etc, all reflecting the importance and relation of given theme for respective year. Reports are regularly sent to Ramsar Secretariat.

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

> Regular public raising awareness activities on Ramsar Sites and other protected wetlands are in place.

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

B=No

18.1 Additional information

> National Ramsar/Wetland Committee has not been established.

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

C=Partially

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

18.4 Additional information

If 'Yes' or 'Partially', please indicate the networks and wetlands involved

> Public Institutions that are managing Ramsar Sites Kopački rit and Lonjsko polje are part of the Danubeparks network. Public Institutions that are managing Lonjsko polje and Crna Mlaka Fishponds are part of the SavaParks Network. Also Public Institutions that are managing Vransko Lake and Neretva Delta Ramsar Site are part of the MedWet Network of Mediterranean Ramsar Sites (MeRSiM - Net). Transboundary MaB reserve Mura - Drava - Danube is established.

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

> Information about Croatian Ramsar sites are published regularly on AA web site and web sites of Public Institutions that are managing the Ramsar Sites.

<http://www.mingor.gov.hr>

<http://www.pp-lonjsko-polje.hr>

<http://www.pp-kopacki-rit.hr>

<http://www.pp-vransko-jezero.hr>

<http://www.zeleni-prsten.hr>

<http://www.zastita-prirode-dnz.hr>

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

A=Yes

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

D=Planned

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

> Within the framework of Adriatic Flyway project, financed by Euronatur and MAVA foundations, implemented by Association Biom many activities in aim to protect Neretva Delta Ramsar Site have been conducted. The main goal of the project is to protect the Neretva delta as a key resting place, winter resort and bird nesting ground on the Adriatic migration route. Biom through this project follows the status of bird populations on the Neretva River, organises educational lectures and workshops for the local population, participated in the drafting of the Plan for Management of the area with the Public Institution that manages Neretva Delta Ramsar Site, but also monitors the impact of illegal bird hunting. Through cooperation with key stakeholders and the local population, efforts are being made to maintain a diverse bird world, as well as to suppress threats to them.

Regular International Waterbird Census has been conducted.

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

B=No

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

C=Partially

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

19.3 Additional information

including whether the Ramsar Wise Use Handbooks were used in the training

> Exact number of training is unknown but there are many opportunities for training for managers of Ramsar Sites and managers of other wetlands. There are a few training modules available for site managers like training on monitoring of Natura 2000 and other species, management planning, involvement of stakeholders and participatory management of protected areas, treatment of injured, sick or dead specimens of strictly protected species, introductory course for new employees in the system etc. Also lot of opportunities for training is given through projects implemented by Ramsar sites and other wetlands managers like projects "Change we care" and "CREW".

“CREW” - Coordinated Wetland Management in Italia - Croatia Cross border Region is an INTERREG project that will establish an expert team for monitoring ecosystem data in wetlands and thus contribute to improving the protection of their biodiversity. The project will also exchange experiences of good practice in managing wetlands, develop a coordinated methodology and a common strategy for their management. The project will raise public awareness of the value of preserving ecosystem stability through its activities.

“Change we care” is also an INTERREG project aimed at creating connectivity among all stakeholders and improving the capacities of local and regional authorities through the process of drafting climate change adaptation measures in the coastal area. The main result of the project is to transfer the latest knowledge about climate change and related changes in water systems to policymakers and raise citizens' awareness about the impacts of climate change and planning possible adaptation measures.

The seminars of supervision and expert services of public institutions competent for managing protected areas including wetlands are held annually.

A new opportunity to exchange experiences for the managers of the Ramsar sites is also MedWet Network of Mediterranean Ramsar Sites Managers.

Regular exchange of good practices is going through 2 mailing list. The first one gathers employees in the nature protection sector and the other one, in addition to employees in the sector, includes members of non-governmental organizations of the sector, independent consultants and employees of private companies active in the field of the sector, employees and associates of scientific or educational institutions whose scientific or educational work is in the field of the sector.

In order to exchange knowledge and experience, an Internal portal of the Nature protection information system was developed. News, calendar of events and documents relevant to colleagues within the system can be found on the Internal portal.

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

D=Planned

