



NATIONAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RAMSAR CONVENTION ON WETLANDS

**National Reports to be submitted to the 12th Meeting
of the Conference of the Contracting Parties,
Uruguay, 2015**

Please submit the completed National Report in Microsoft Word format (.doc, 97-2003), as an electronic file (not a printed copy) and preferably by e-mail, to Alexia Dufour, Regional Affairs Officer, Ramsar Secretariat (dufour@ramsar.org) by **1 September 2014**.

The structure of the COP12 National Report Format

The COP12 National Report Format (NRF) is in four sections:

Section 1 provides the institutional information about the Administrative Authority and National Focal Points for the national implementation of the Convention.

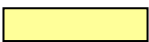

Section 2 is a 'free-text' section in which the Party is invited to provide a summary of various aspects of national implementation progress and recommendations for the future.

Section 3 provides the 66 implementation indicator questions, grouped under each Convention implementation strategy in the Strategic Plan 2009-2015, and with an optional 'free-text' section under each indicator question in which the Contracting Party may, if it wishes, add further information on national implementation of that activity.

Section 4 is an optional annex to allow any Contracting Party that so wishes to provide additional information regarding any or all of its Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites).

General guidance for completing and submitting the COP12 National Report Format

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| IMPORTANT – PLEASE READ THIS GUIDANCE SECTION BEFORE STARTING TO COMPLETE THE NATIONAL REPORT FORMAT |
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1. All Sections of the COP12 NRF should be completed in one of the Convention's official languages (English, French, Spanish).
2. The deadline for submission of the completed NRF is **1 September 2014**. It will not be possible to include information from National Reports received after that date in the analysis and reporting on Convention implementation to COP12.
3. All fields with a pale yellow background  must be filled in.
4. Fields with a pale green background  are free-text fields in which to provide additional information, if the Contracting Party so wishes. Although providing information in these fields is optional, Contracting Parties are encouraged to provide such additional information wherever possible and relevant, as it helps us understand Parties' progress and activity more fully, to prepare the best possible global and regional implementation reports to COP.
5. The Format is created as a form in Microsoft Word. You are only able to submit replies and information in the yellow or green boxes, as all other parts of the form are locked to ensure that the structure and wording of indicators will remain uniform and comparable for all Parties.
6. To select a yellow or green field you wish to complete, move the cursor over the relevant part of the form and left-click the mouse. The cursor will automatically move to the next field available.
7. To move down through the sequence of fields, you can also use the 'Tab' key on the computer keyboard.

8. For a 'free-text' field, you can type in whatever information you wish. Note that there is only limited facility within the Microsoft 'form' format to make editorial changes in the 'free-text' box once text has been entered. Therefore, if you wish to amend any of the text you have put in a green or yellow 'free-text' box, you should cut and paste the existing text into a separate document, make all the amendments, and then cut and paste the revised text back into the box.
9. Certain keyboard characters interfere with the automatic entry of data into the Secretariat's database. For that reason, please **do not use double quote marks " "** in the 'free-text' fields. Please **only use single quote marks ' '**. For the same reason, please **only use simple text in the 'free-text' fields: they cannot accept formatting, colours or objects such as tables and images.**
10. For each of the 'indicator questions' in Section 3, a drop-down menu of answer options is provided. These vary between indicators, depending on the question, but are generally of the form: 'Yes', 'No', 'Partly', 'In progress'. This is necessary so that statistical comparisons can be made of the replies.
11. For each indicator question you can choose only one answer. If you wish to provide further information or clarification, do so in the green additional information box below the relevant indicator question. Please be as concise as possible (**maximum of 500 words** in each free-text box).
12. To select an answer to an indicator question, use the Tab key, or move the cursor over the relevant yellow box and left-click the mouse. The drop-down menu of answer options will appear. Left-click the mouse on the answer option you choose, and this will appear in the centre of the yellow box.
13. An NRF is not usually completed by one person alone: for many indicators it is best for the principal compiler to consult with colleagues in their agency and others within the government and, as appropriate, with NGOs and other stakeholders who might have fuller knowledge of aspects of the Party's overall implementation of the Convention. The principal compiler can save the document at any point and return to it later to continue or to amend answers. Compilers should refer back to the National Report submitted for COP11 to ensure the continuity and consistency of information provided.
14. After each session, **remember to save the file** in Microsoft Word, .doc, 97-2003 format. A recommended filename structure is: COP12NRF [Country] [date], for example: COP12NRFSpain13July2014.doc
15. After the NRF has been completed, please **send it in this format to Alexia Dufour, Regional Affairs Officer, Ramsar Convention Secretariat, preferably by e-mail (dufour@ramsar.org).**
16. The completed NRF **must be accompanied by a letter or e-mail message in the name of the Head of Administrative Authority, confirming that this is the Contracting Party's official submission of its COP12 National Report.**
17. If you have any questions or problems, please contact the Ramsar Secretariat for advice (e-mail as above).

NATIONAL REPORT TO RAMSAR COP12

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 www.ramsar.org/contacts_en.

NAME OF CONTRACTING PARTY: POLAND

DESIGNATED RAMSAR ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY

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|---|---|
| Name of Administrative Authority: | General Director for Environmental Protection |
| Head of Administrative Authority - name and title: | Michał Kielsznia |
| Mailing address: | ul. Wawelska 52/54, 00-922 Warsaw |
| Telephone/Fax: | tel.: (48)225792100, fax.: (48)225792127 |
| Email: | kancelaria@gdos.gov.pl |

DESIGNATED NATIONAL FOCAL POINT FOR RAMSAR CONVENTION MATTERS

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|-------------------------|---|
| Name and title: | National Secretariat of Ramsar Convention |
| Mailing address: | General Directorate for Environmental Protection Department of Nature Resource Management ul. Wawelska 52/54, 00-922 Warszawa |
| Telephone/Fax: | tel.: (22) 57-92-187, fax. (22) 57-92-197 |
| Email: | sekretariat.ramsarska@gdos.gov.pl |

DESIGNATED NATIONAL FOCAL POINT FOR MATTERS RELATING TO THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL REVIEW PANEL (STRP)

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Name and title: | National Secretariat of Ramsar Convention |
| Name of organisation: | General Directorate for Environmental Protection Department of Nature Resource Management |
| Mailing address: | ul. Wawelska 52/54, 00-922 Warszawa |
| Telephone/Fax: | tel.: (22) 57-92-187, fax. (22) 57-92-197 |
| Email: | sekretariat.ramsarska@gdos.gov.pl |

DESIGNATED GOVERNMENT NATIONAL FOCAL POINT FOR MATTERS RELATING TO THE PROGRAMME ON COMMUNICATION, EDUCATION, PARTICIPATION AND AWARENESS (CEPA)

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|------------------------------|--|
| Name and title: | National Secretariat of Ramsar Convention |
| Name of organisation: | General Directorate for Environmental Protection Department of Nature Resource Management |
| Mailing address: | ul. Wawelska 52/54, 00-922 Warszawa |
| Telephone/Fax: | tel.: (22) 57-92-187, fax. (22) 57-92-197 |
| Email: | sekretariat.ramsarska@gdos.gov.pl |

DESIGNATED NON-GOVERNMENT NATIONAL FOCAL POINT FOR MATTERS RELATING TO THE PROGRAMME ON COMMUNICATION, EDUCATION, PARTICIPATION AND AWARENESS (CEPA)

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|------------------------------|-------|
| Name and title: | |
| Name of organisation: | |
| Mailing address: | |
| Telephone/Fax: | |
| Email: | |



SECTION 2: GENERAL SUMMARY OF NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES

REMINDER: Please do not use double quote marks “ ”: use single quotes ‘ ’ instead.

In your country, in the past triennium (i.e., since COP11 reporting):

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

- 1) full implementation of the EU's Water Framework Directive, effective as of 12 July 2014;
- 2) preparing projects of the following policy documents: 'State Water Policy until 2030 (including the stage 2016)', 'State Marine Policy until 2020' and adopting 'Strategy for sustainable rural development, agriculture and fisheries for 2012-2020', where the importance of wetlands in natural environment and enhancing human well-being has been recognized;
- 3) approving management plans for 2 Ramsar Sites: nature reserve Stawy Milickie (2013) and Natura 2000 site Jezioro Świdwie PLB320006 (2014), as well as working on preparation management plans for other Ramsar sites in Poland;
- 4) starting the process of assessing ecosystem services provided by Ramsar sites (Wigry National Park);
- 5) launching many projects including wetland protection and restoration, financed from different funds and realised both by governmental units and NGOs, as well as children addressed educational actions aimed at raising awareness on the importance of wetlands for biodiversity.

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

- 1) Environmental Impact Assessments have not been carried out for several hydrotechnical investments and exploitation of natural aggregates from rivers, which has resulted in deterioration of some wetlands in terms of hydrological conditions. This was halted by introduction changes into the Water Law, effective as of 12 July 2014;
- 2) the level of public awareness on the role of wetlands in natural environment and enhancing human well-being remains still to low;
- 3) there have been shortages in financial and human resources engaged in wetland conservation;
- 4) there lacks a system-based approach to management of invasive alien species threatening wetlands;
- 5) there is a lack of approved long-term management plans for the majority of Ramsar Sites designated in Poland.

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

- 1) approving long-term management plans for all Ramsar sites in Poland;
- 2) starting planned actions for wetlands protection with the use of funds provided by the new financial perspective;
- 3) submitting the new Ramsar Sites to the Secretariat of the Convention;
- 4) introducing payments for agricultural areas serving for natural water retention (e.g. for temporary flooding of river valleys);
- 5) limiting or eliminating of negative impact of hydrotechnical investments and exploitation of natural aggregates from rivers on natural character of watercourses.

D. Do you (AA) have any recommendations concerning implementation assistance from the Ramsar Secretariat?

No

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)

No

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' (Ramsar, Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), CITES, and World Heritage Convention), and UNCCD and UNFCCC?

Poland is the party to the conventions and agreements on nature conservation and has been implementing their provisions through including its commitments into national policies and strategies. One of the main goals of the State Ecological Policy for 2009 - 2012 with the perspective until 2016 was integration of policy on biodiversity conservation with sectoral policies and promotion of common responsibility for the good environmental status in the country. At present the basic strategic document regarding environmental protection in Poland is the Strategy 'Energy Security and Environment - 2020 perspective' adopted on 16 June 2014. Implementation of environmental protection policy has included intensification of legislation and organizational activities on the protection of river valleys and other wetland ecosystems, and at the same time - saving rare and threatened species as well as traditional agricultural landscapes. There is planned restitution of degraded wetland ecosystems and habitats. One of the important instruments of the protection of the most threatened ecosystems and species is the ecological network Natura 2000, of which considerable part encompasses river valleys, bogs and other wetland areas. The protection of the Ramsar Sites as well as preparation and implementation of their management plans enhances sustaining wetland habitats and related plant and animal species following the provisions of CBD and CMS.

G. How can implementation of the Ramsar Convention be better 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)?

The provisions of the Ramsar Convention on conservation and sustainable utilization of wetlands and the urgent need to protect wetlands have been already taken into account in national plans of action and strategies, such as the Strategy 'Energy Security and Environment - 2020 perspective', 'National Strategy and Action Plan for Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use of its Components for 2014-2020' and 'Strategy for sustainable rural development, agriculture and fisheries for 2012-2020'. Some policy documents are still elaborated as the projects or else require endorsement and implementation, e.g 'Project of State Water Policy until 2030', 'Project of State Marine Policy until 2020'. The protection of bogs and river valleys is included in the new Programme of Rural Development for 2014-2020 adopted on 12 December 2014. Ramsar Convention recommendations adopted within the Convention framework are also taken into account while elaborating management plans for national parks, landscape parks, nature reserves and Natura 2000 sites.

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


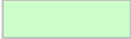
No

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

1. Ministry of National Education
2. Ministry of Infrastructure and Development
3. Ministry of Science and Higher Education
4. Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
5. Ministry of Sport and Tourism
6. Ministry of the Environment
7. National parks: Warta River Mouth NP, Słowiński NP, Wigry NP, Biebrza River NP, Narew River NP, Poleski NP and Karkonosze NP
8. Institute of Environmental Protection – National Research Institute
9. General Directorate of the State Forests
10. General Directorate for National Roads and Motorways
11. National Council of Water Management
12. Regional Directorates for Environmental Protection in Białystok, Bydgoszcz, Gdańsk, Gorzów Wielkopolski, Katowice, Kielce, Kraków, Lublin, Łódź, Olsztyn, Opole, Poznań, Rzeszów, Szczecin, Warszawa and Wrocław
13. Regional Water Management Authorities in Gdańsk, Gliwice, Kraków, Poznań, Szczecin, Warszawa and Wrocław
14. The Offices of the Marshals of the Voivodeships Kujawsko-Pomorskie, Lubelskie, Lubuskie, Małopolskie, Mazowieckie, Opolskie, Podkarpackie, Pomorskie, Śląskie, Świętokrzyskie, Warmińsko-Mazurskie, Wielkopolskie and Zachodniopomorskie
15. Maritime Offices in Gdynia, Słupsk and Szczecin
16. Provincial Land Melioration and Water Authorities in Rzeszów, Katowice, Kielce, Poznań, Białystok, Lublin, Łódź, Opole, Warszawa, Szczecin, Olsztyn, Gdańsk, Elbląg and Włocławek
17. Polish Tourist Organisation

SECTION 3: INDICATOR QUESTIONS AND FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION INFORMATION

REMINDER: Guidance for completing this section

1. For each 'indicator question', please select one answer from the 'drop-down' list in the yellow box. 
2. If you wish to add any additional information on a specific indicator, please provide this information in the green 'free-text' boxes below the indicator questions. 
3. If you wish to amend any of the text you have put in a green 'free-text' box, you should cut and paste the existing text into a separate file, make the amendments, and then cut and paste the revised text back into the green box.
4. Some characters used in the free text box prevent the automatic data entry into our database National Reports. For that reason, **please do not use double quote marks “ ” in the free text boxes. Use single quotes ‘ ’. Text in the ‘free text’ boxes should be simple text only: they cannot accept formatting, colours or objects such as tables and images.**
5. To help Contracting Parties refer to relevant information they provided in their National Report to COP11, for each appropriate indicator a cross-reference is provided to the equivalent indicator(s) in the COP11 NRF, shown thus: {x.x.x}
6. Where appropriate, a cross-reference is also provided to the relevant Key Result Area (KRA) relating to Contracting Parties implementation in the Strategic Plan 2009-2015.
7. Only Strategic Plan 2009-2015 Strategies and KRAs for which there are significant implementation actions for Contracting Parties are included in this reporting format; those parts of the Strategic Plan that do not refer directly to Parties are omitted.

GOAL 1. THE WISE USE OF WETLANDS

STRATEGY 1.1 Wetland inventory and assessment. *Describe, assess and monitor the extent and condition of all types of wetlands as defined by the Ramsar Convention and wetland resources at relevant scales, in order to inform and underpin implementation of the Convention, in particular in the application of its provisions concerning the wise use of all wetlands.*

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|---|------------|
| 1.1.1 Does your country have a comprehensive National Wetland Inventory? {1.1.1} KRA 1.1.i | A - Yes |
| <p>1.1.1 Additional information:</p> <p>The national wetland data base has been carried out by the Institute of Technology and Life Sciences in Falenty within the GIS-Wetlands system. Based on the data collected, there have been prepared the registry and the map of terrestrial ecosystems dependent on water with the main aim to plan management of water resources. There have been also carried out detailed inventories of selected wetland types, e.g. oligotrophic Lobelia lakes, alkaline bogs and Baltic raised bogs. The inventory of natural habitats (including wetlands) has been cyclically carried out on the territories managed by the State Forests National Forest Holding covering about 30% of Poland's area. Moreover, partial inventories have been conducted for selected animal groups (e.g. amphibians, reptiles, birds) as well as water characteristics (water level, chemical and physical properties of water) or else specific habitats and areas. These are supervised by managers of a given territory, and among others: Marshal Offices, Regional Directorates for Environmental Protection, Landscape Parks and National Parks.</p> | |
| 1.1.2 Is wetland inventory data and information maintained and made accessible to all stakeholders? {1.1.2} KRA 1.1.ii | C - Partly |
| <p>1.1.2 Additional information:</p> <p>Most of the gathered data on wetlands is available either at the webpages or on request. The latter means that everyone can gain access to information of interest provided that the request is answered positively. However, some data is the property of scientific units or non-governmental organisations, and in that case these institutions decide on information accessibility. Data concerning the sites of rare and threatened species of plants and animals are not publicly available.</p> | |

1.1.3 Has the condition* of wetlands in your country, overall, changed since the last triennium? {1.1.3}

- a) Ramsar Sites
- b) wetlands generally

Please comment on the sources of the information on which your answer is based in the green 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

- a) O - No change
- b) N - Status deteriorated

1.1.3 Additional information on a) and/or b):

a) There is no data available on change of the condition of Ramsar sites in Poland. However, on these areas there have been continuously carried out various projects with the aim to improve wetland condition. The management plans for the majority of the existing Ramsar Sites in Poland have been either elaborated or finished and approved.

b) Wetlands are still subject of strong pressures connected with intensification of agriculture and better availability of funds for transformation of rivers and their valleys. There has been strong public demand for river regulations, flood control meadow amelioration and destruction of wetlands along the coasts. Consequently, drainage systems are introduced into river valleys and meadow cultivation as well as utilized wetland agricultural areas are turned into agricultural fields or tourist area on the coasts. Under flood control slogans, there are carried out large investments in river valleys which often have negative impact on wetlands. Other difficulties in sustaining good condition of wetlands are associated among others with: climate change (higher temperatures lead to enhanced evaporation as well as shorten snowmelt periods); high fluctuations of water regime; trophic and pH changes within wetlands; abandonment of agricultural activities in some wetland areas followed by ecological succession and invasion of alien species. On the other hand, in some areas in Poland, there are carried out several projects (co-financed by the European Union) with the aim to improve hydrological conditions of wetland sites as well as their conservation status and/or restoration.

STRATEGY 1.3 Policy, legislation and institutions. *Develop and implement policies, legislation, and practices, including growth and development of appropriate institutions, in all Contracting Parties, to ensure that the wise use provisions of the Convention are being effectively applied.*

1.3.1 Is a National Wetland Policy (or equivalent instrument) 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

1.3.1 Additional information:

'Strategy and Action Plan for Wetland Conservation in Poland for the years 2006-2013' was prepared and approved by the Minister of Environment in 2006.

1.3.2 Have wetland issues been incorporated into other national strategies and planning processes, including:

- a) Poverty eradication strategies
- b) Water resource management and water efficiency plans
- c) Coastal and marine resource management plans
- d) National forest programmes
- e) National strategies for sustainable development
- f) National policies or measures on agriculture
- g) National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans drawn up under the CBD

{1.3.3} KRA 1.3.i

- a) Z - Not applicable
- b) C - Partly
- c) C - Partly
- d) A - Yes
- e) Z - Not applicable
- f) A - Yes
- g) A - Yes

1.3.2 Additional information:

a) No need for such strategy.

b) The plans of water management within river basins are prepared taking into account the actions envisaged in the updated version of the national Programme of Aquatic Environment. This document defines the actions aimed at improving or maintaining the good condition of waters within individual river basins as well as achieving the goals established for protected areas. Within the Vistula River Basin mainly the actions in the fields of management, legislation, education, monitoring, municipal economy and agriculture were emphasised.

c) The State Marine Policy is now under preparation. The document will comprise a preliminary assessment of the state of marine environment, a list of characteristic typical for the good state of this environment, environmental goals for marine waters, a programme for monitoring of marine waters and the national plan for its protection. The scope of marine environment assessment include: detailed analyses of the sea bottom state, distribution of temperatures, salt content and chemical composition of water, identification and description of typical habitats connected to the sea bottom and marine waters, assessments of marine and land impacts on marine waters and review of anthropogenic exploitation of these waters.

d) One of the aims included in Poland's Forest Policy is water retention increase in forests. The updated silviculture principles have been implemented in the State Forests. The document includes the section 'Development of Water Resources' with specific instructions on how to effectively protect wetlands during forest management activities.

e) There is no national strategy of sustainable development because the obligation of following of sustainable development rules is included in the Poland's Constitution. The matters connected to protection of wetlands are included in the Strategy 'Energy Security and Environment - 2020 perspective' which is the basic strategic document in the field of environmental protection in Poland.

f) The document 'Strategy for sustainable rural development, agriculture and fisheries for 2012-2020' includes: the protection of water quality; wise use of water resources in agriculture and fisheries; increase of water retention; adaptation of agriculture and fisheries to climate change and its contribution to combating climate change. The protection of river valleys, bogs and other wetlands has been included in the new Rural Development Programme for 2012-2020 to be soon endorsed.

g) The recommendations included in the 'Strategy for Wetland Conservation in Poland' are taken into consideration in the National Strategy and Action Plan for Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use of its Components for 2007-2013 as well as for that elaborated for the years 2014-2020.

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| 1.3.3 Are Strategic Environmental Assessment practices applied when reviewing policies, programmes and plans that may impact upon wetlands? {1.3.4} KRA 1.3.ii | A - Yes |
| <p>1.3.3 Additional information: Polish law requires conducting strategic environmental assessments for each plan and programme that could have influence on environment, and particularly on Natura 2000 areas.</p> | |
| 1.3.4 Are Environmental Impact Assessments made for any development projects (such as new buildings, new roads, extractive industry) that may affect wetlands,? {1.3.5} KRA 1.3.iii | C - In some cases |
| <p>1.3.4 Additional information: Polish law requires carrying out the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for every project that could always significantly impact on the natural environment, also on wetlands. For projects, that could potentially have a significant impact on the environment, impact assessment obligation depends on whether the authority, competent to issue a decision on the environmental conditions, finds such an obligation, therein the statement of the potential impact on wetlands qualifies project for an assessment. Two of the eligibility criteria for full EIA are: the existence of a wetland in a given area and the project's possible effects on this wetland. Unfortunately, there are challenges in this procedure, e.g. how to distinguish whether a particular project refers to water 'maintenance' or water 'regulation'. The answer to this question has an effect on the final decision whether a given project significantly impacts natural environment. Next question is if there is a need for obtaining the decision on environmental circumstances as well as obtaining a permit according to the Water Law Act or not as it is in case of 'maintenance' projects. As a result of not fulfilling the procedures, several hydro-technical projects undertaken in Poland have destroyed (sometimes irreversibly) natural character of some rivers. However, actions to eliminate projects that destroy rivers are already undertaken by governmental institutions such as the General Directorate for Environmental Protection and by non-governmental organizations such as Naturalist' Club, WWF Poland, Polish Society for the Protection of Birds (OTOP) and Wetlands Protection Centre (CMOK) and some legal changes have been made to ensure control of environmental authorities and therefore proper assessment of the impact.</p> | |
| 1.3.5 Have any amendments to existing legislation been made to reflect Ramsar commitments? {1.3.6} | A - Yes |
| <p>1.3.5 Additional information: To avoid situations described above (point 1.3.4) in 2014 the Nature Conservation Act was changed (article 118). At present every project on water storage or project which could possibly change the water balance on a protected area or on a natural watercourse have to be reported to the appropriate regional director for environmental protection. The regional director for environmental protection could impose an obligation for obtaining the decision on environmental circumstances. In cases where planned projects could possibly significantly affect Natura 2000 sites (including wetlands) the regional director for environmental protection could impose an obligation for carrying out full EIA.</p> | |

STRATEGY 1.4: Cross-sectoral recognition of wetland services. *Increase recognition of and attention in decision-making to the significance of wetlands for reasons of biodiversity conservation, water supply, coastal protection, integrated coastal zone management, flood defence, climate change*

mitigation and/or adaptation, food security, poverty eradication, tourism, cultural heritage, and scientific research, by developing and disseminating methodologies to achieve wise use of wetlands.

1.4.1 Has an assessment been made of the ecosystem benefits/services provided by Ramsar Sites? {1.4.1} KRA 1.4.ii

D - Planned

1.4.1 Additional information:

The General Directorate for Environmental Protection has realised the project 'Assessment of ecosystem services provided by the Ramsar Site - the Wigry National Park'.

1.4.2 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 - Partly

1.4.2 Additional information:

Programs and projects that are implemented and carried out on wetlands have only indirect influence on poverty alleviation (new job positions) and food and water security (improvement of overall ecological condition).

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

A - Yes

1.4.3 Additional information (If 'Yes' or 'Partly', please indicate, if known, how many Ramsar Sites and their names):

Polish law requires taking into consideration socio-economic and cultural aspects while planning protection activities in elaborated management plans for nature protection areas such as landscape parks and national parks including those which encompass the Ramsar Sites (for example in Warta River Mouth National Park, Słowiński NP, Wigry NP, Biebrza River NP, Narew River NP, Polesie NP and Subalpine peatlands in Karkonosze NP).

STRATEGY 1.5 Recognition of the role of the Convention. *Raise the profile of the Convention by highlighting its capacity as a unique mechanism for wetland ecosystem management at all levels; promote the usefulness of the Convention as a possible implementation mechanism to meet the goals and targets of other global conventions and processes.*

1.5.1 Since COP11, have you brought the 'Changwon Declaration' (Resolution X.3) to the attention of your:

- a. head of state
 - b. parliament
 - c. private sector
 - d. civil society
- {1.5.2}

- a. B - No
- b. B - No
- c. B - No
- d. A - Yes

1.5.1 Additional information:

The Declaration was not brought to the head of state, to parliament and to private sector. However, the postulates from the Declaration were included into reports, statements and strategies prepared by the Ministry of Environment. The text of the 'Changwon Declaration' is available on the website of the General Directorate for Environmental Protection.

STRATEGY 1.6 Science-based management of wetlands. *Promote successful implementation of the wise use concept by ensuring that national policies and wetland management plans are based on the best available scientific knowledge, including technical and traditional knowledge.*

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

- a. agriculture-wetland interactions
- b. climate change
- c. valuation of ecosystem services

{1.6.1} KRA 1.6.i

- a. A - Yes
- b. A - Yes
- c. D - Planned

1.6.1 Additional information:

a. Research on agriculture and wetland interactions has been conducted by many scientific institutions, and particularly by the Institute of Technology and Life Sciences in Falenty. The activities of the Institute also include research results implementation, dissemination of knowledge, consulting and training, incentive actions and monitoring which concern among others irrigation and drainage engineering, agricultural drainage, water and flood devices. Research of this kind has been also undertaken by Warsaw University of Life Sciences.

b. Research on the effects of climate change and wetlands are conducted by scientific institutions. A good example of this is the project 'Habit-Change - Adaptive management of climate-induced changes of habitat diversity in protected areas' which was conducted in Biebrzański National Park (Ramsar Site) in cooperation with the Institute of Environmental Protection – National Research Institute. The project's overall objective was to evaluate, enhance and adapt existing management and conservation strategies in protected sites to pro-actively respond on likely influences of CC as a threat to habitat integrity and diversity. In 2012 the General Directorate for Environmental Protection published a report 'Evaluation of climate change impact on biodiversity and resulting recommendations for the Nature Conservation Administration in Poland until 2030'. In 2013 on the commission of the Ministry of Environment the 'Strategic Adaptation Plan for the sectors and areas vulnerable to climate change until 2020 with a perspective until 2030' was elaborated. The document was adopted by the Council of Ministers in October 2013. Among other things the Plan contains the guidelines for mitigation and minimizing the negative impact of climate change on wetlands and wetland dependent species.

c. Besides the project which has just been realised by the General Directorate for Environmental Protection - 'Ecosystem services assessment provided by Ramsar Wetland: Wigierski National Park', the Ministry of Environment has launched the project: 'Mapping and assessment of ecosystems and services which they provide in Poland - expertise'. Projects on ecosystem services are also conducted by universities (Warsaw University, University of Poznań) and research institutes (e.g. Institute of Environmental Protection).

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| 1.6.2 Have all wetland management plans been based on sound scientific research, including research on potential threats to the wetlands? {1.6.2} KRA 1.6.ii | C - Partly |
| <p>1.6.2 Additional information:</p> <p>Wetland management plans are based on sound knowledge and scientific research. However, for some Natura 2000 areas there are prepared Plans of Protection Tasks which do not require collecting complete inventory field data, and they are prepared based on existing knowledge, which is not necessarily actual and solid. In such cases knowledge complementation becomes one of the protection tasks.</p> | |

STRATEGY 1.7 Integrated Water Resources Management. *Ensure that policies and implementation of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), applying an ecosystem-based approach, are included in the planning activities in all Contracting Parties and in their decision-making processes, particularly concerning groundwater management, catchment/river basin management, coastal and nearshore marine zone planning and climate change mitigation and/or adaptation activities.*

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| 1.7.1 Do your country's water governance and management systems treat wetlands as natural water infrastructure integral to water resource management at the scale of river basins? {1.7.2} KRA 1.7.ii | D - Planned |
| <p>1.7.1 Additional information:</p> <p>Wetlands are perceived as the element of natural water retention, thus the need for their protection is recognized, at least at a level of general programmes on management of river basin waters. In the next planning cycle there is expected more complete inclusion of the requirements of wetland conservation in these programmes. The project of 'State water policy until 2030 (including the stage 2016)' includes the following aim: the use of more effective non-technical methods for flood and drought mitigation. Thus, in this general document, wetlands are already considered as elements of natural water retention. However, at present this is only the project of policy and needs to be approved and implemented.</p> | |

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| 1.7.2 Have Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness (CEPA) expertise and tools been incorporated into catchment/river basin planning and management (see Resolution X.19)? {1.7.3} | A - Yes |
| <p>1.7.2 Additional information:</p> <p>Ramsar resolution X.19 is not directly implemented, but the approach which it represents - namely consultations, education and actions to raise public awareness is an integral element of preparing River Basin Management Plans in accordance with the Water Directive (three rounds of consultations, conducting surveys among stakeholders, meetings of councils and committees, preparing brochures and articles, internet forums, etc.). There are also organized trainings in the framework of various projects, e.g. trainings for the authorities of Municipalities and employees of the Provincial Land Melioration and Water Unit in Opole city which are connected with preparing the 'Strategy for restoration of river natural character- achievement of the good status of the Stobrawa river waters by 2015'. The further work on raising social awareness on the necessity of wetlands protection is needed.</p> | |

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| 1.7.3 Has your country established policies or guidelines for enhancing the role of wetlands in mitigating or adapting to climate change? {1.7.5} KRA 1.7.iii | C - Partly |
| <p>1.7.3 Additional information: One of the actions included in the 'Strategic adaptation plan for the sectors and areas vulnerable to climate change until 2020 with a perspective until 2030' (prepared by the Ministry of Environment and adopted by the Council of Ministers in October 2013) aims to appropriately direct activities towards biodiversity protection and sustainable forest management in the context of climate change. The 'Strategic adaptation plan' includes among others the following statements: 'in view of habitat protection the most important activities are these which aim to sustain and restore wetlands, wherever it is possible' and "continuation of the programme on protecting soil from erosion, continuation and broadening of small water retention programmes and that on soil retention - especially in forests and grasslands'. There are conclusions and recommendations on expansion of research on the areas particularly vulnerable to climate change such as wetlands, river valleys and seashores as well as sustainable management of wetlands and river floodplains in order to sustain proper water flow and quality. However, at the moment wetlands are more the objects of the protection against climate change than a tool to mitigate or adapt to CC.</p> | |
| 1.7.4 Has your country formulated plans or projects to sustain and enhance the role of wetlands in supporting and maintaining viable farming systems? {1.7.6} KRA 1.7.v | C - Partly |
| <p>1.7.4 Additional information: One of the aims of the ' Rural Development Program for 2014-2020' is to support the activities which lead to the protection of rural biodiversity including the protection of valuable natural habitats on Natura 2000 sites and outside of them (this applies also to wetlands) as well as to the improvement of water management which encompasses also promotion of wise use of fertilizers and pesticides. The Rural Development Programme provides financial support for farmers who manage their land so as to sustain valuable natural habitats in good condition. Among detailed goals there are the promotion of the protection of carbon sink ecosystems in agriculture and forestry, including peatbogs.</p> | |

STRATEGY 1.8 Wetland restoration. *Identify priority wetlands and wetland systems where restoration or rehabilitation would be beneficial and yield long-term environmental, social or economic benefits, and implement the necessary measures to recover these sites and systems.*

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| 1.8.1 Have priority sites for wetland restoration been identified? {1.8.1} KRA 1.8.i | A - Yes |
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1.8.1 Additional information:

The Red List of priority sites for wetland protection and restoration was developed to the order of the Ministry of the Environment by the Institute of Environmental Protection-National Research Institute, Warsaw. Moreover, wetlands which should be restored and/or rehabilitated are being identified while preparing protection plans and plans of protection tasks for designated areas. Numerous wetlands have factually been restored or rehabilitated under such projects in effect of actions taken including: blocking water discharge, water regime restoration and removing of shrubs, trees, common reed and invasive alien species from open wetlands. Protection of wetlands within the Natura 2000 network is also taken into account in the frame of PAF (Prioritised Action Frameworks). The aim of PAF is concentration of actions and financial resources on achieving priority objectives.

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

A - Yes

1.8.2 Additional information:

Examples of projects/programmes aiming at restoration and/or rehabilitation of wetlands include:

- POIS.03.01.00-00-003/09 'Increasing retention ability as well as flooding and drought prevention within the forest ecosystems on lowlands' (The State Forests National Forest Holding),
- POIS.03.01.00-00-003/10 'Prevention of rainfall waters outflow consequences on mountain areas. Increasing of water retention and maintenance of mountain streams with connected infrastructure (The State Forests National Forest Holding),
- POIS.05.01.00-00-199/09 'Continuation of wetland ecosystem protection in the Drawsko Forest' (Naturalists' Club),
- LIFE11NAT/PL/000423 'Protection of alkaline fens (7230) in the young post-glacial landscape of northern Poland' (Naturalists' Club),
- POIS.05.01.00-00-379/12 'Active protection of endangered habitats in Masovian and Podlasie nature reserves' (Wetlands Protection Centre),
- LIFE09NAT/PL/000254 - 'Restoration and maintaining of waterfowl habitats' (Warta River Mouth National Park),
- LIFE09NAT/PL/000257 'Wetlands work wonders!' (Warta River Mouth National Park),
- LIFE11 NAT/PL - 'Protection of the upper Biebrza basin wetlands' (Biebrza National Park),
- LIFE09NAT/PL/000258 'Restoration of hydrological network in the middle Biebrza river basin' (Biebrza National Park),
- POIS 'Conservation of habitats and species on the Rynki peatbogs in the Narew River National Park' (Narew River National Park),
- LIFE09NAT/PL/000263 'Protection of waterfowl species in five national parks – habitat restoration and reduction of effects of invasive alien species' (the project is implemented in wetlands of the five national parks: Narew River NP, Biebrza NP, Drawieński NP, Slowinski NP and the Warta River Mouth NP),
- POIS 'Restoration and maintaining of open ecosystems in the Slowinski National Park' (Słowiński National Park),
- LIFE09NAT/PL/000260 'Facilitating Aquatic Warbler (*Acrocephalus paludicola*) habitat management through sustainable systems of biomass use' (Polish Society for the Protection of Birds),
- LIFE13NAT/PL/000009 'Active protection of water crowfoot species habitats and clearance of the Drawa river green corridor in Poland' (Regional Directorate for Environmental Protection in Szczecin),
- LIFE09NAT/PL/000258 'Restoration of hydrological system in the Middle Basin of the Biebrza Valley. Phase I.' (Biebrza National Park),
- Project financed by Fish Operational Programme 'Maintenance of biodiversity in the Stawy Milickie nature reserve' (Milickie Ponds Company),
- POIS.05.02.00-00-084/08 „Restoration of the Biała Tarnawska valley green corridor clearance” (Regional Water Management Board in Krakow in co-operation with the Institute of Nature Conservation Polish Academy of Sciences and WWF Poland).

STRATEGY 1.9 Invasive alien species. *Encourage Contracting Parties to develop a national inventory of invasive alien species that currently and/or potentially impact the ecological character of wetlands, especially Ramsar Sites, and ensure mutual supportiveness between the national inventory and IUCN's Global Register on Invasive Species (GRIS); develop guidance and promote procedures and actions to prevent, control or eradicate such species in wetland systems.*

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| 1.9.1 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 | B - No |
| <p>1.9.1 Additional information:</p> <p>There is no national inventory of invasive alien species which occur in wetlands. However, a book on 'Invasive species of plants in wetland ecosystems of Poland' was prepared and released by the Naturalists' Club in 2009. In 2012, the Regulation of the Minister of the Environment was issued on the matter of the list of alien species of plants, animals and fungi which in case of release into environment can pose threats to native species and/or habitats. The proposal to include the American mink in that list (now the species is not included) raised controversy and a broad intersectoral discussion. Two additional publications were also released on alien invasive species in Poland including: 'Alien species the Polish fauna' released by the Institute of Nature Conservation of the Polish Academy of Sciences in 2011 [the list is available at the address: http://www.iop.krakow.pl/gatunkiobce] as well as 'Plants of alien origin in Poland with particular emphasis on invasive species' released by the General Directorate for Environmental Protection in 2012. The Best Practice Codex - 'Horticulture vs. alien invasive species' has been prepared in 2014.</p> | |

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| 1.9.2 Have national policies or guidelines on invasive species control and management been established for wetlands? {1.9.2} KRa 1.9.iii | B - No |
| <p>1.9.2 Additional information:</p> <p>An European Parliament Regulation on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species will come in power in January 2015. It will result in establishing coherent policy on this topic within the entire European Union. The knowledge on alien species gathered and extended owing to the scientific research, exchange of information etc. is used in the frame of many projects which are carried out in wetlands as well as activities conducted by wetland managers include the fight against invasive alien species. Recommendations on how to eradicate invasive alien species from wetlands are given in the above mentioned publication of the Naturalists' Club, released in 2009. Currently, on the commission of the General Directorate of Environmental Protection, the guidelines on fighting against Sosnowsky's hogweed (<i>Heracleum sosnowskyi</i>) and giant hogweed (<i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i>) in Poland are elaborated. Programmes to fight against the other alien invasive species harmful to the native species and/or habitats will be prepared successively.</p> | |

STRATEGY 1.10 Private sector. *Promote the involvement of the private sector in the conservation and wise use of wetlands.*

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| 1.10.1 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 - Partly |
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1.10.1 Additional information:

Representatives of the private sector are broadly invited to take part in wetland protection and encouraged to support wetland protection projects. However, the guidance for wise use of wetland ecosystems included in the Ramsar handbooks is not directly implemented by the private sector.

1.10.2 Has the private sector undertaken activities or actions for the wise use and management of:

a. Ramsar Sites

a. A - Yes

b. Wetlands in general

b. A - Yes

{1.10.2} KRA 1.10.ii

1.10.2 Additional information:

Many wetlands, both within and outside protected areas, are privately owned. Maintaining ecological character of those wetlands often requires that they are extensively used and not totally abandoned. While taking actions to sustain the ecological character of wetland, the wetland owners are provided with payments under agri-environmental schemes to ensure that farmers do not suffer losses due to limitations imposed by the protection recommendations. This guarantees undertaking right actions aiming at maintenance of wetland natural character and farmers are not deprived of income derived from wetlands. Unfortunately, sometimes actions inconsistent with agri-environmental schemes are undertaken, which not always results in taking away payments. Many actions for wetland conservation have been undertaken by NGOs, which are not (in this case) treated as private sector.

STRATEGY 1.11: Incentive measures. *Promote incentive measures that encourage the application of the wise use provisions of the Convention.*

1.11.1 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

1.11.1 Additional information:

Farmers and fish farmers can receive payments for their ecologically friendly activity. Farmers are given subsidies under agri-environmental schemes for supporting the wise management of wet meadows, saline pastures, alkaline fens, waterfowl habitats, and to a lesser extent (max. 5 ha/farmer) for the protection of reed beds and bogs. Fish farmers in 2012-2013 were given payments for implementing pro-nature measures connected with aquatic environment (according to the Operational Programme 'Sustainable Development of the Fisheries Sector and Coastal Fishing Areas 2007-2013'). Yet, there has been no payments for natural water retention so far.

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

A - Yes

1.11.2 Additional information:

By introduction of the obligation of environmental impact assessments preparation the measures which caused uncontrolled afforestation of valuable open areas (including wetlands) within Natura 2000 sites were successfully removed. There is a plan to carry out appropriate analyses, and accordingly, to remove the remaining perverse incentive measures which discourage the conservation and wise use of wetlands.

GOAL 2. WETLANDS OF INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE

Note: An optional Annex (Section 4) to this COP12 National Report Format is provided so that a Contracting Party, if it so wishes, can also provide additional information separately on each of its designated Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites).

REMINDER: In 'free-text' boxes please do not use double quotes " "; use single quotes ' ' instead.

STRATEGY 2.1 Ramsar Site designation. *Apply the 'Strategic Framework and guidelines for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance' (Handbook 14, 3rd edition).*

2.1.1 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

2.1.1 Additional information:

The Strategy and Action Plan for Wetland Conservation in Poland for the years 2006-2013 identifies gaps in the Polish List of Ramsar wetlands designated, and indicates wetland types which should be considered for submission to the List. Moreover, the recommendations on priorities for nominating wetlands to the Ramsar List were discussed at the meeting organised by General Directorate for Environmental Protection in 2012

2.1.2 How many Ramsar Site designations are planned for the next triennium (2015-2018)? {2.1.4} KRA 2.1.iii

6 sites

2.1.2 Additional information (If possible, please indicate the name(s) of the Site(s) and anticipated year of designation):

In the years 2015-2018, six new Ramsar wetlands will be proposed to the Ramsar List, including: Vistula Lagoon (Zalew Wiślany), Vistula River Mouth (Ujście Wisły), Peatlands of the Iżera River Valley (Torfowiska Doliny Izery), Przemków Fish Ponds (Stawy Przemkowskie), Warsaw – Berlin Ice Marginal Valley (Pradolina Warszawsko-Berlińska) and Lower Vistula River Valley (Dolina Dolnej Wisły). Drafts of Ramsar Information Sheets have already been prepared for each of the above mentioned sites.

STRATEGY 2.2 Ramsar Site information. *Ensure that the Ramsar Sites Information Service . . . is available and enhanced as a tool for guiding the further designation of wetlands for the List of Wetlands of International Importance and for research and assessment, and is effectively managed by the Secretariat.*

2.2.1 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

A - Yes

2.2.1 Additional information:

The designation of Ramsar Sites has been and is guided by the information provided by Ramsar Sites Information Service.

STRATEGY 2.3 Management planning - new Ramsar Sites. *While recognizing that Ramsar Site designation can act as a stimulus for development of effective site management plans, generally encourage the philosophy that all new Ramsar Sites should have effective management planning in place before designation, as well as resources for implementing such management.*

2.3.1 Have all sites being prepared for Ramsar designation (2.1.2 above) had adequate management planning processes established? {2.3.1} KRA 2.3.i

A - Yes

2.3.1 Additional information:

1. Vistula Lagoon – the Nature conservation plan for Natura 2000 site Vistula Lagoon PLB280010 is in preparation, expected to be completed in 2014,
2. Vistula River Mouth – drafts of Nature conservation plan for the nature reserves within which Vistula River Mouth is situated have been developed while a draft conservation plan for Natura 2000 sites in Vistula River Mouth: Ujście Wisły PLB220004 and Ostoja w Ujściu Wisły PLH 220044 designated within this territory is in preparation,
3. Peatlands of the Izera River Valley – there is an approved nature conservation plan for the nature reserve situated within this territory,
4. Przemków Fish Ponds – a draft plan of nature conservation for Natura 2000 site Przemków Fish Ponds PLB020003 designated within this territory has been prepared but not yet approved,
5. Warsaw-Berlin Ice Marginal Valley – there is an approved plan of protective tasks for Natura 2000 site Bzury-Neru Ice Marginal Valley PLH100006 designated within this territory,
6. Lower Vistula River Valley – the draft plan of protective tasks for Natura 2000 site Lower Vistula River Valley PLB040003 designated within this territory is planned to be completed until the end of 2014.

STRATEGY 2.4 Ramsar Site ecological character. *Maintain the ecological character of all designated Ramsar Sites, through planning and management.*

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

4 sites

2.4.2 For how many of the Ramsar Sites with a management plan is the plan being implemented? {2.4.2} KRA 2.4.i

4 sites

2.4.3 For how many Ramsar Sites is a management plan currently being prepared? {2.4.3} KRA 2.4.i

8 sites

2.4.1 – 2.4.3 Additional information:

1. Biebrza River National Park (Biebrzanski Park Narodowy) – the area is now managed based on the short term protection tasks for 2013-2014, while for 2015 the preparation of the plan of protective tasks for 10 years is scheduled to be finished for two Natura 2000 sites which cover the territory of the Biebrza National Park.
2. Druzno Lake Nature Reserve (Rezerwat przyrody 'Jeziro Druzno') – the area is managed according to the nature conservation plan established in 2005 for 20 years.
3. Karas Lake Nature Reserve (Rezerwat przyrody 'Jeziro Karas') – the area is managed according to the nature conservation plan established in 2001 for 20 years.
4. Lake of Seven Islands Nature Reserve (Rezerwat przyrody 'Jeziro Siedmiu Wysp') – the area is now managed according to the plan of protective tasks for 2014-2015.
5. Luknajno Lake Nature Reserve (Rezerwat przyrody 'Jeziro Luknajno'). There is no nature conservation plan/protective tasks plan for nature reserve and Natura 2000 site 'Luknajno Lake'. There exists nature conservation plan just for the Mazurski Landscape Park (where Luknajno Lake is situated), which was established in 2012 for 20 years.
6. Milicz Fishponds Nature Reserve (Rezerwat przyrody 'Stawy Milickie') – the area is managed according to the nature conservation plan established in 2013 for 20 years.
7. Narew River National Park - the area is now managed according to the short term protective tasks for the year 2014, in 2014 it is planned to finish the preparation of long-term nature conservation plan.
8. Poleski National Park - the area is now managed according to the short term protection tasks for 2014-2015, the preparation of long-term nature conservation plan is in progress.
9. Slowinski National Park (Slowinski Park Narodowy) - the area is now managed according to the protective tasks for 2013-2016, while in 2014 the preparation of long-term nature conservation plan is scheduled to be terminated.
10. Subalpine Peatbogs in Karkonosze National Park – there is elaborated in 2013 nature protection plan for the Karkonosze National Park for 20 years but it is not approved yet. The site is now managed according to the protective tasks.
11. Swidwie Lake Nature Reserve (Rezerwat przyrody 'Jeziro Swidwie') – the area is managed according to the plan of protective tasks for Natura 2000 site 'Świdwie Lake' PLB320006 established for 10 years.
12. Warta River Mouth National Park (Park Narodowy 'Ujscie Warty') – the area is now managed according to the protective tasks for the years 2014-2018, the preparation of the nature conservation plan for 20 years is scheduled for 2014.
13. Wigry National Park – the area is now managed according to the protective tasks for 2014, the preparation of the nature conservation plan for 20 years is scheduled for 2014.

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

8 sites

2.4.4 Additional information (If at least 1 site, please give the name and official number of the site or sites):

In case of seven sites (seven national parks: Warta River Mouth NP, Słowiński NP, Wigry NP, Biebrza River NP, Narew River NP, Polesie NP, and Karkonosze NP) there are cross-sectoral advisory bodies, i.e. the National Park Scientific Councils. Among the members of Scientific Councils there are also the representatives of local selfgovernments. Site: Milicz Fishponds Nature Reserve has established a consultative and advisory team, appointed by the Regional Director for Environmental Protection in Wrocław, which comprises representatives of science, practice, NGOs, local governments, managers and owners of the land.

2.4.5 For how many Ramsar Sites has an ecological character description been prepared? {2.4.7} KRA 2.4.v

13 sites

2.4.5 Additional information (If at least 1 site, please give the name and official number of the site or sites):

Each Ramsar Site in Poland is protected under other type of national or international designation as well. At the stage of preparation for designation a description of ecological character was made for all designation types of individual Ramsar sites. While developing the long term management plans for Ramsar sites the description of ecological character is being updated.

STRATEGY 2.5 Ramsar Site management effectiveness. *Review all existing Ramsar Sites to determine the effectiveness of management arrangements, in line with the 'Strategic Framework and guidelines for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance'.*

2.5.1 Have any assessments of the effectiveness of Ramsar Site management been made? {2.5.1} KRA 2.5.i

A - Yes

2.5.1 Additional information (If 'Yes' or 'Some sites', please indicate the year of assessment and the source of the information):

All Ramsar Sites in Poland are protected under other designations as well (as national parks, nature reserves or Natura 2000 sites), and the duty of various respective area managers of Ramsar sites is to conduct a continuous monitoring within their territories. Those managers include: national park authority and the Minister of the Environment (for national parks), Regional Directorates for Environmental Protection, Maritime Offices and General Directorate for Environmental Protection (for nature reserves and Natura 2000 sites). In case of Natura 200 sites the law also lays down the requirement of periodical reporting on their state to the General Directorate for Environmental Protection.

STRATEGY 2.6 Ramsar Site status. *Monitor the condition of Ramsar Sites and address negative changes in their ecological character, notify the Ramsar Secretariat of changes affecting Ramsar Sites, and apply the Montreux Record, if appropriate, and Ramsar Advisory Mission as tools to address problems.*

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| 2.6.1 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 |
| <p>2.6.1 Additional information (If 'Yes' or 'Some sites', please summarise the mechanism or mechanisms established):</p> <p>It should be noted that the Polish Ramsar sites are fully or partly covered by Natura 2000 sites thus there exists legal obligation to report on their conditions. As was mentioned above, in case of Natura 2000 sites, the law requires to report on their state to the General Directorate for Environmental Protection.</p> | |
| 2.6.2 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 | Z - No negative change |
| <p>2.6.2 Additional information (If 'Yes' or 'Some cases', please indicate for which Ramsar Sites the Administrative Authority has made Article 3.2 reports to the Secretariat, and for which sites such reports of change or likely change have not yet been made):</p> <p>.....</p> | |
| 2.6.3 If applicable, have actions been taken to address the issues for which Ramsar Sites have been listed on the Montreux Record, including requesting a Ramsar Advisory Mission? {2.6.3} KRA 2.6.ii | Z - Not applicable |
| <p>2.6.3 Additional information (If 'Yes', please indicate the actions taken):</p> <p>.....</p> | |

STRATEGY 2.7 Management of other internationally important wetlands. *Appropriate management and wise use achieved for those internationally important wetlands that have not yet been formally designated as Ramsar Sites but have been identified through domestic application of the Strategic Framework or an equivalent process.*

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| 2.7.1 Has the ecological character of internationally important wetlands not yet designated as Ramsar Sites been maintained? {2.7.1} KRA 2.7.i | A - Yes |
| <p>2.7.1 Additional information:</p> <p>As in case of the approved Ramsar sites, all new areas which are scheduled for designation as future Ramsar Sites are also covered partly or as a whole by Natura 2000 sites, thus maintaining their ecological character constitutes a duty imposed by the EU law.</p> | |

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| GOAL 3. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION |
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Note: in 'free-text' boxes please do not use double quotes " ": use single quotes ' ' instead.

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| <p>STRATEGY 3.1 Synergies and partnerships with MEAs and IGOs. <i>Work as partners with international and regional multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and other intergovernmental agencies (IGOs).</i></p> |
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| <p>3.1.1 Are the national focal points of other MEAs invited to participate in the National Ramsar/Wetland Committee? {3.1.2} KRAs 3.1.i & 3.1.iv</p> | <p>B - No</p> |
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3.1.1 Additional information:

At present there is no National Ramsar/Wetland Committee or other body which could fulfill its functions. Nonetheless, in October 2012, a working meeting was held at the General Directorate for Environmental Protection to discuss the need for nominating such a body with all interested parties. The Focal Points for other agreements were invited to the meeting. The matter of establishing of the Ramsar Committee remains open, while the co-operation of invited stakeholders is welcomed within the frame of yearly meetings. The next meeting is scheduled to be held in October 2014.

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| <p>3.1.2 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)? {3.1.3} KRA 3.1.iv</p> | <p>B - No</p> |
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3.1.2 Additional information:

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| <p>STRATEGY 3.2 Regional initiatives. <i>Support existing regional arrangements under the Convention and promote additional arrangements.</i></p> |
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| <p>3.2.1 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</p> | <p>A - Yes</p> |
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3.2.1 Additional information (If 'Yes' or 'Planned', please indicate the regional initiative(s) and the collaborating countries of each initiative):

Poland is involved in the Regional Initiative under the framework of the Convention, known as the Carpathian Wetland Initiative, together with such countries as: Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Romania, Serbia and Ukraine.

3.2.2 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

3.2.2 Additional information (If 'Yes', please indicate the name(s) of the centre(s):

.....

STRATEGY 3.3 International assistance. *Promote international assistance to support the conservation and wise use of wetlands, while ensuring that environmental safeguards and assessments are an integral component of all development projects that affect wetlands, including foreign and domestic investments.*

3.3.1 [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

B - No

3.3.1 Additional information (If 'Yes', please indicate the countries supported since COP11):

.....

3.3.2 [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

3.3.2 Additional information:

.....

3.3.3 [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}

B - No

3.3.3 Additional information (If 'Yes', please indicate from which countries/agencies since COP11):

.....

STRATEGY 3.4 Sharing information and expertise. *Promote the sharing of expertise and information concerning the conservation and wise use of wetlands.*

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

B - No

3.4.1 Additional information (If 'Yes' or 'Partly', please indicate the networks and wetlands involved):

.....

3.4.2 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

3.4.2 Additional information:

Basic information on the Polish wetlands, including Ramsar Sites, is available at the National Secretariat of Ramsar Convention website. This website provides links to websites of national parks and Regional Directorates for Environmental Protection where more detailed information on Ramsar Sites can be found. Reports on nature monitoring are available at the website of the Chief Inspectorate of Environmental Protection, while the summary of these reports is submitted to the European Commission which renders it accessible within the CIRCA European information system. In addition, there are numerous books, scientific articles and internet portals providing information on the Polish wetlands, including Ramsar sites. Trainings in best practices of wetland protection and management were conducted in 2014 by the Coordination Centre for Environmental Projects under a LIFE10 INF/PL/000673 project 'Biodiversity conservation on forest areas including Natura 2000 sites - best practices promotion'. Relevant manuals are published in paper format and via internet at the website of the Coordination Centre for Environmental Projects. The information gathered in the process is a summary of results of the best projects concerning wetland management made over the last several years.

3.4.3 Has information about your country's wetlands and/or Ramsar Sites been transmitted to the Ramsar Secretariat for dissemination? {3.4.3} KRA 3.4.ii

A - Yes

3.4.3 Additional information:

.....

STRATEGY 3.5 Shared wetlands, river basins and migratory species. *Promote inventory and cooperation for the management of shared wetlands and hydrological basins, including cooperative monitoring and management of shared wetland-dependent species.*

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

A - Yes

3.5.1 Additional information:

Main transboundary wetland systems:

- Rivers and river basins: Oder (Odra), Lusatian Neisse (Nysa Łużycka), Bug river,
- Peatlands in Izera Mountains,
- Subalpine peatbogs in Karkonosze Mountains,
- Szczecin Lagoon,

- Vistula Lagoon,
- Orawa-Nowy Targ peatbogs,
- Polesie mires.

3.5.2 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 - Partly

3.5.2 Additional information (If 'Yes' or 'Partly', please indicate for which wetland systems such management is in place):

There is a cooperation agreement between Poland and Germany on the joint management and protection of river basins and transboundary waters (such as Odra and Nysa Łużycka Rivers, and Szczecin Lagoon). Within the above framework there are several working groups dealing with particular issues concerning the above shared wetlands. In case of shared wetlands situated within the limits of national parks (such as Karkonosze National Park, Polesie National Park, which constitute part of transboundary biosphere reserves), Poland cooperates with the respective managements of protected areas in neighbouring countries so as to coordinate the management over the whole territory protected. As part of a coherent management of the Vistula Lagoon, conferences and fora were organized in cooperation with Russia as well as projects within this area which have been jointly implemented (among others 'VILA – Opportunities and Benefits of Joint Use of the Vistula Lagoon'). The aim of these activities is, among others, to prepare a joint strategy for the Vistula Lagoon. Effective management of the Bug river basin requires cooperation between Poland, Ukraine and Belarus. To this end, the Cross-Border Association Euroregion BUG was established. Transboundary co-operation is also carried out within the frame of transboundary Biosphere Reserve 'Western Polesie'. The commitment to properly manage the shared wetlands is reinforced by the provisions of the EU Water Framework Directive which provides that States have to cooperate and work together for the management of the transboundary basins.

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

A - Yes

3.5.3 Additional information:

Poland is a Contracting Party to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals also known as Bonn Convention. Poland also entered into the Memorandum of Understanding Concerning Conservation Measures for the Aquatic Warbler (*Acrocephalus paludicola*). There is a debate on acceding to the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA). Poland has been working for several years in co-operation with the AEWA agreement Secretariat and the representatives of Poland are participating (as an observers) in selected conferences and meetings organized by AEWA.

GOAL 4. IMPLEMENTATION CAPACITY

Note: in 'free-text' boxes please do not use double quotes “ ”: use single quotes ‘ ’ instead.

STRATEGY 4.1 CEPA. *Support, and assist in implementing at all levels, where appropriate, the Convention's Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness Programme (Resolution X.8) for promoting the conservation and wise use of wetlands through communication, education, participation and awareness (CEPA) and work towards wider awareness of the Convention's goals, mechanisms, and key findings.*

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

- a) At the national level
- b) Sub-national level
- c) Catchment/basin level
- d) Local/site level

- a) B - No
- b) B - No
- c) B - No
- d) B - No

(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)

4.1.1 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):

While many tasks related to CEPA for wetlands have been implemented, there is no systematic approach to the subject. Simultaneously, the Strategy for Wetland Conservation in Poland and Action Plan encompass the aims and elements of the CEPA plan.

4.1.2 How many centres (visitor centres, interpretation centres, education centres) have been established? {4.1.2} KRA 4.1.ii

- a) at Ramsar Sites
- b) at other wetlands

- a) 8 centres
- b) 2 centres

4.1.2 Additional information (If centres are part of national or international networks, please describe the networks):

The 8 centers mentioned above pertains to the Ramsar Sites. Education centres are functioning in all national parks encompassing Ramsar Sites: Biebrza River NP, Warta River Mouth NP, Narew River NP, Poleski NP, Wigry NP, Słowiński NP, and Karkonosze NP as well as in the Świdwie Lake Nature Reserve. In Poland there are also many other education centres extending information on nature or/and the environment, including wetlands. Education in the field of wetlands protection is also provided by the State Forests National Forest Holding especially within the framework of two centres dedicated to wetlands, namely: The Riparian Forest Management Center in the Jarocin Forest District and The Three Elements Iżera River Educational Garden in the Świeradów Forest District.

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>4.1.3 Does the Contracting Party:</p> <p>a) promote stakeholder participation in decision-making on wetland planning and management</p> <p>b) specifically involve local stakeholders in the selection of new Ramsar Sites and in Ramsar Site management?</p> <p>{4.1.3} KRA 4.1.iii</p> | <p>a) A - Yes</p> <p>b) C - Partly</p> |
| <p>4.1.3 Additional information (If 'Yes' or 'Partly', please provide information about the ways in which stakeholders are involved):</p> <p>The Polish law requires participation of each relevant stakeholder group in the process of establishing management plans for all the protected areas which constitute Ramsar sites, i.e. national parks, nature reserves and Natura 2000 sites.</p> | |
| <p>4.1.4 Has an assessment of national and local training needs for the implementation of the Convention been made?</p> <p>{4.1.4} KRAs 4.1.iv & 4.1.viii</p> | <p>B - No</p> |
| <p>4.1.4 Additional information:</p> <p>.....</p> | |
| <p>4.1.5 How many opportunities for wetland site manager training have been provided since COP11? {4.1.5} KRA 4.1.iv</p> <p>a) at Ramsar Sites</p> <p>b) at other wetlands</p> | <p>Number of opportunities:</p> <p>a) 0</p> <p>b) 3</p> |
| <p>4.1.5 Additional information (including whether the Ramsar Wise Use Handbooks were used in the training):</p> <p>The Coordination Centre for Environmental Projects, in the frame of the LIFE10 INF/PL/000673 project 'Biodiversity conservation on forest areas including Natura 2000 sites - best practices promotion', has conducted trainings on the best practice in wetland protection. Trainings have taken place in Jastrowie (June 2013) and Ruciane-Nida (October 2013). In July 2014 the Naturalists' Club within the frame of the LIFE11NAT/PL/000423 project 'Protection of alkaline fens (7230) in the young post-glacial landscape of northern Poland' has conducted in Kosobudki a workshop on practical wetland protection. The trainings were attended by wetland managers.</p> | |
| <p>4.1.6 Do you have an operational cross-sectoral National Ramsar/Wetlands Committee or equivalent body? {4.1.6} KRA 4.3.v</p> | <p>B - No</p> |
| <p>4.1.6 Additional information (If 'Yes', indicate a) its membership; b) number of meetings since COP11; and c) what responsibilities the Committee has):</p> <p>.....</p> | |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>4.1.7 Are other communication mechanisms (apart from a national committee) in place to share Ramsar implementation guidelines and other information between the Administrative Authority and:</p> <p>a) Ramsar Site managers b) other MEA national focal points c) other ministries, departments and agencies</p> <p>{4.1.7} KRA 4.1.vi</p> | <p>a) A - Yes b) A - Yes c) A - Yes</p> |
| <p>4.1.7 Additional information (If 'Yes' or 'Partly', please describe what mechanisms are in place):</p> <p>a) The Polish version of a manual 'Wetland management' is available at the National Secretariat of Ramsar Convention website. The manual is utilized by the managers of Ramsar sites. Moreover, there is an every day cooperation between the national park managements and the General and Regional Directorates for Environmental Protection on wetland issues. The representatives of the above bodies participate in conferences and workshops which are organized independently or within various projects. Conferences and workshops are also organized by the National Ramsar Secretariat.</p> <p>b), c) Official communication.</p> | |
| <p>4.1.8 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 COP11? {4.1.8}</p> | <p>A - Yes</p> |
| <p>4.1.8 Additional information:</p> <p>World Wetland Day is celebrated in Poland every year. On this occasion there are events, lectures, trips, workshops and conferences concerning wetlands with particular emphasis on issues chosen on the occasion by the Ramsar Secretariat. The World Wetland Day (WWD) activities are being arranged by both NGOs (among others: Wetlands Protection Centre in cooperation with the University of Warsaw, Faculty of Biology) and governmental agencies, such as national parks (e.g. Biebrza River NP, Warta River Mouth NP).</p> | |
| <p>4.1.9 Have campaigns, programmes, and projects (other than for World Wetlands Day-related activities) been carried out since COP11 to raise awareness of the importance of wetlands to people and wildlife and the ecosystem benefits/services provided by wetlands? {4.1.9}</p> | <p>A - Yes</p> |
| <p>4.1.9 Additional information (If these and other CEPA activities have been undertaken by other organizations, please indicate this):</p> <p>To raise awareness on wetland importance a campaign encompassing various activities has been implemented by governmental agencies, such as national parks, General and Regional Directorates for Environmental Protection), the State Forests National Forest Holding and NGOs, such as Wetlands Protection Centre, Naturalists' Club and others. Examples of the actions taken include: national wide artistic contest for the primary schoolchildren on Ramsar Convention and the coservation of wetlands as well as the Aquatic Warbler protection, 'The Biebrza Academy' (periodical</p> | |

meetings and lectures for the Biebrza Wetland lovers) and the Biebrza Haymaking in the Biebrza National Park, 'The Birds' Commonwealth' initiative in the Warta River Mouth National Park, family bike rides, trips and educational activities for children organized by the other national parks from the Ramsar list as well as by the State Forests' administration units, lectures, nature tours as well as exhibitions and release of educational materials under the LIFE09 NAT/PL/000264 project 'Protecting the habitats of priority bird species of the Vistula Valley under conditions of intensive pressure of Warsaw agglomeration', and various others folders, brochures, books.

STRATEGY 4.2 Convention financial capacity. *Provide the financial resources necessary for the Convention's governance, mechanisms and programmes to achieve the expectations of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, within the availability of existing resources and by the effective use of such resources; explore and enable options and mechanism for mobilization of new and additional resources for implementation of the Convention.*

4.2.1

a) Have Ramsar contributions been paid in full for 2012, 2013 and 2014? {4.2.1} KRA 4.2.i

A - Yes

b) If 'No' in 4.2.1 a), please clarify what plan is in place to ensure future prompt payment:

.....

4.2.2 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

4.2.2 Additional information (If 'Yes' please state the amounts, and for which activities):

.....

STRATEGY 4.3 Convention bodies' effectiveness. *Ensure that the Conference of the Contracting Parties, Standing Committee, Scientific and Technical Review Panel, and Secretariat are operating at a high level of efficiency and effectiveness to support the implementation of the Convention.*

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

A - Yes

4.3.1 Additional information (If 'Yes', please indicate how the Reports have been used for monitoring):

.....

STRATEGY 4.4 Working with IOPs and others. *Maximize the benefits of working with the Convention's International Organization Partners (IOPs*) and others.*

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

4.4.1 Has your country received assistance from one or more of the Convention's IOPs in its implementation of the Convention? {4.4.1} KRA 4.4.iii

A - Yes

4.4.1 Additional information (If 'Yes' please name the IOP (or IOPs) and the type of assistance received):

The Polish partner of the BirdLife International - Polish Society for the Protection of Birds (OTOP), members of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) (among others: the Institute of Nature Conservation of the Polish Academy of Sciences (PAS) and the Institute of Environmental Protection - National Research Institute IEP-NRI) as well as WWF Poland actively participate and take actions to protect wetlands by the support of their foreign partners. Central Europe Habit Change project on wetland management (which was mentioned above) was conducted in the years 2010-2013 by the IEP-NRI, with the financial support of the European Regional Development Fund. The project 'Facilitating Aquatic Warbler (*Acrocephalus paludicola*) habitat management through sustainable systems of biomass use' (LIFE09 NAT/PL/000260) was conducted by OTOP was supported by the BirdLife International. The WWF Poland realized the project 'Waters for life', within which an analysis of impact of hydrotechnical investments on rivers was conducted.

4.4.2 Has your country provided assistance to one or more of the Convention's IOPs? {4.4.2} KRA 4.4.iii

A - Yes

4.4.2 Additional information (If 'Yes' please name the IOP (or IOPs) and the type of assistance provided):

The National Secretariat of the Aquatic Warbler MoU supports projects for the active protection of the Aquatic Warbler and wetland habitats, carried out by the Polish Society for the Protection of Birds (OTOP).

A representative of government is presently involved in the work of an advisory body of the LIFE09 NAT/PL/000260 project 'Facilitating Aquatic Warbler (*Acrocephalus paludicola*) habitat management through sustainable systems of biomass use'.

Poland (the State Budget) supports realization of statutory tasks of some members of IUCN (such as the Institute of Nature Conservation PAS and the Institute of Environmental Protection – NRI) by donations for scientific research and projects, encompassing those which focus on wetland protection and management.