



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.

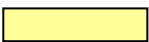
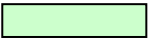
Section 2 is a 'free-text' section in which the Party is invited to provide a summary of various aspects of national implementation progress and recommendations for the future.

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

IMPORTANT – PLEASE READ THIS GUIDANCE SECTION BEFORE STARTING TO COMPLETE THE NATIONAL REPORT FORMAT

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: MALTA

DESIGNATED RAMSAR ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY

Name of Administrative Authority:	Malta Environment and Planning Authority (MEPA)
Head of Administrative Authority - name and title:	Perit Vincent Cassar, MEPA Chairman & Acting Director of Environment
Mailing address:	Malta Environment and Planning Authority Environment Protection Directorate Floriana FRN 1230 Malta
Telephone/Fax:	+356 2290 2020 (Attn. Perit Vincent Cassar)
Email:	ramsar.malta@mepa.org.mt, nature.director@mepa.org.mt

DESIGNATED NATIONAL FOCAL POINT FOR RAMSAR CONVENTION MATTERS

Name and title:	Darrin T. Stevens, Unit Manager
Mailing address:	Malta Environment and Planning Authority Environment Protection Directorate Ecosystems Management Unit St. Francis Ravelin Floriana FRN 1230 Malta
Telephone/Fax:	+ 356 2290 7102 / + 356 2122 8438 (Attn. Mr. Darrin T. Stevens)
Email:	ramsar.malta@mepa.org.mt, darrin.stevens@mepa.org.mt

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

Name and title:	
Name of organisation:	Malta Environment and Planning Authority
Mailing address:	Malta Environment and Planning Authority Environment Protection Directorate St. Francis Ravelin Floriana FRN 1230 Malta
Telephone/Fax:	+ 356 2290 7102 / + 356 2122 8438 (Attn Unit C / Environment Protection Directorate)
Email:	ramsar.malta@mepa.org.mt, eco.admin@mepa.org.mt

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

Name and title:	
Name of organisation:	Malta Environment and Planning Authority
Mailing address:	Malta Environment and Planning Authority Environment Protection Directorate St. Francis Ravelin Floriana FRN 1230 Malta

Telephone/Fax:	+ 356 2290 7102 / + 356 2122 8438 (Attn Unit C / Environment Protection Directorate)
Email:	ramsar.malta@mepa.org.mt, eco.admin@mepa.org.mt
DESIGNATED NON-GOVERNMENT NATIONAL FOCAL POINT FOR MATTERS RELATING TO THE PROGRAMME ON COMMUNICATION, EDUCATION, PARTICIPATION AND AWARENESS (CEPA)	
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) Legal protection of the two Ramsar sites found in Malta - L-Għadira (l/o Il-Mellieħa) and Is-Simar (l/o San Pawl il-Baħar) through:

a) the subsidiary legislation of the Environment and Development Planning Act (Cap. 504), namely the Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Protection Regulations, 2006 (Legal Notice 311 of 2006, as amended) and the Conservation of Wild Birds Regulations, 2006 (Legal Notice 79 of 2006, as amended). Through the provisions of the above-mentioned legislation, both sites are designated as Special Areas of Conservation of International Importance, Special Protection Areas and Bird Sanctuaries.

b) Under the Water Policy Framework Regulations, 2004 (Legal Notice 194 of 2004), which transposes the Water Framework Directive (WFD), the two wetlands have been designated under the Protected Area Registry and are monitored as transitional water bodies.

2) Management measures are being implemented at both sites. Since COP10, BirdLife Malta (a non-governmental organisation) together with the Malta Environment and Planning Authority (the Ramsar Administrative Authority) and the Office of the Prime Minister, have continued with the management of both L-Għadira and Is-Simar sites.

3) In the triennium, draft management plans were being prepared for Natura 2000 sites, covering amongst others the L-Għadira and Is-Simar Ramsar areas, through an EU EAFRD co-funded project titled 'Natura 2000 Management Planning for Malta & Gozo'.

4) The River Basin Management Plan, better known as the Water Catchment Management Plan (WCMP) in the Maltese Islands, as required by the Water Framework Directive, will also ensure the wise use of wetlands by means of implementation of the WFD management cycles.

5) The overlapping designation of the two Ramsar wetlands with the protected areas for the conservation of aquatic habitat and species as required under the Registers of Protected Areas (WFD Art. 6) provides the opportunity to achieve a high level of integration between the Ramsar convention and water policy in the Maltese Islands. This overlapping designation has guaranteed that the wetlands undergo cyclical management regimes as each WFD cycle is implemented. This means that monitoring is carried out in relation to a diverse spectrum of ecological, supporting physico-chemical and hydromorphological parameters, as well as chemical contaminants on a cyclical basis. Ecological objectives are set and measures are revised in order to ensure that the existing wetlands are protected. Malta simultaneously ensures that such management strategy for each site is integrated with the respective Natura 2000-related management measures being considered. The carrying out of monitoring programmes is enhancing Malta's limited knowledge base of these wetlands and therefore it is expected that such an iterative process will enable the continuous improvement of management of these sites.

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

1) Resource constraints, which unfortunately hindered Malta in implementing additional new management measures and in participating fully in the Convention's activities and meetings.

2) The understanding of the ecological status of water resources and linking water quality with the resource requirements of the habitats and species that depend on the water body. Additional research and monitoring is therefore required.

3) Most of the Convention-related focus and information on wetlands is regarding different ecological settings than those found in Malta, where wetlands are exceedingly limited in size and often seasonal, ephemeral and/or temporary (e.g. the freshwater communities of temporary rock pools, which comprise a number of threatened and/or endemic species).

4)

5)

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

1) To consider assessing the potential for designation of more Ramsar sites in Malta.

2) To increase local knowledge on the use of necessary tools to monitor and keep track of the ecological, physical and chemical quality of wetlands so as to support, protect and in some cases restore water-dependent habitats and species.

3) To maintain an appropriate monitoring regime for wetlands.

4) To implement priority actions identified in management plans being prepared regarding the existing sites.

5) To successfully implement the upcoming management plans for the Ramsar Sites as a whole.

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?

National implementation is already taking into account of the link between some of the aspects of implementation of the Ramsar Convention with some of the other MEAs to which Malta is Party. For most of the above-mentioned MEAs, responsibility for implementation lies within the same entity in Malta, namely the Malta Environment & Planning Authority (MEPA). This facilitates matters, as communication and co-ordination is inevitably better than if separate entities were involved. National implementation could possibly be improved further if joint actions were proposed by the various MEAs involved, as this would indirectly instigate national linkages when considering work on the MEAs in question.

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)?

It is acknowledged that a strong link exists between Ramsar Convention implementation and specific implementation of water policies, especially through river basin management. Greater awareness, even within the relevant responsible authorities, is necessary to ensure that appropriate consultation takes place in order that the obligations arising out of the various policies are fulfilled. The biodiversity aspect of the implementation of the Ramsar Convention has been integrated with other policies through the compilation of a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP).

The NBSAP is viewed as an important tool for implementing measures at a national level, while mainstreaming biodiversity concerns into all public sectors, including amongst others the production sectors such as agriculture, fisheries and tourism, and national sustainable development plans. By mainstreaming biodiversity into sectoral strategies, plans and programmes, the crucial role that biodiversity has for human well-being is acknowledged and actions are taken to safeguard this resource.

Furthermore, the overlapping designation of the two Ramsar wetlands with the protected areas for the conservation of aquatic habitat and species as required under the Registers of Protected Areas (WFD Art. 6) already provides the opportunity to achieve a high level of integration between the Ramsar convention and water policy in the Maltese Islands. This overlapping designation has guaranteed that the wetlands undergo cyclical management regimes as each WFD cycle is implemented. This means that monitoring is carried out in relation to a diverse spectrum of ecological, supporting physico-chemical and hydromorphological parameters, as well as chemical contaminants on a cyclical basis. Ecological objectives are set and measures are revised in order to ensure that the existing wetlands are protected. Malta simultaneously ensures that such management strategy for each site is integrated with the respective Natura 2000-related management measures being considered.

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:

Malta Environment and Planning Authority (Environment Protection Directorate)
BirdLife Malta

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.*

1.1.1 Does your country have a comprehensive National Wetland Inventory? {1.1.1} KRA 1.1.i	A - Yes
1.1.1 Additional information: Wetlands have been identified, and have been afforded legal protection under various legislation.	

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>All environmental data is made accessible in accordance with the Aarhus Convention.</p> <p>MEPA website link:</p> <p>http://www.mepa.org.mt/impnatareas-wetlands</p> <p>http://www.mepa.org.mt/impnatareas-pas-int</p>	

<p>1.1.3 Has the condition* of wetlands in your country, overall, changed since the last triennium? {1.1.3}</p> <p>a) Ramsar Sites</p> <p>b) wetlands generally</p> <p>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).</p> <p>* 'Condition' corresponds to ecological character, as defined by the Convention</p>	<p>a) <input type="radio"/> - No change</p> <p>b) <input type="radio"/> - No change</p>
<p>1.1.3 Additional information on a) and/or b):</p> <p>In general, all sites have been designated as Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas under the EC Habitats Directive and EC Birds Directive respectively.</p> <p>The two local Ramsar sites are managed by a local NGO, which records and monitors the status and trends of relevant species, as part of the ongoing management.</p>	

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.*

<p>1.3.1 Is a National Wetland Policy (or equivalent instrument) in place? {1.3.1} KRA 1.3.i</p> <p>(If 'Yes', please give the title and date of the policy in the green text box)</p>	B - No
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1.3.1 Additional information:

Although there is no specific National Wetland Policy, wise use is ensured through various other policy instruments.

As indicated in Section 2, the two Maltese Ramsar sites have been also protected through local legislation, namely the Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Protection Regulations, 2006 (Legal Notice 311 of 2006, as amended) and the Conservation of Wild Birds Regulations, 2006 (Legal Notice 79 of 2006, as amended), which transpose the EU Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (Directive 92/43/EEC) and the EU Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (Directive 2009/147/EC), respectively.

In addition, the River Basin Management Plan, better known as the Water Catchment Management Plan (WCMP) in the Maltese Islands, as required by the Water Framework Directive, will also ensure the wise use of wetlands by means of implementation of the WFD management cycles.

There are current national efforts to establish appropriate means of classifying the ecological and chemical quality of these sites. The carrying out of monitoring programmes is enhancing Malta's limited knowledge base of these wetlands and therefore it is expected that such an iterative process will enable the continuous improvement of management of these sites.

Through the provisions of the above-mentioned legislation, both Ramsar sites are designated as Special Areas of Conservation of International Importance, Special Protection Areas and Bird Sanctuaries, and consequently form part of the EU Natura 2000 network. Both sites are also declared as lakes under the WFD. The obligations arising out of these EU directives ensure the wise use of these wetlands.

Activities, projects and plans which are likely to affect Natura 2000 sites are subject to assessment in terms of Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive, thereby ensuring that no significant adverse effects will impact these sites. In addition, the River Basin Management Plan which is required by the WFD, will also ensure the wise use of wetlands.

In the Maltese Islands, land-use policy is guided by the Environment and Development Planning Act (Cap. 504) and its Structure Plan for the Maltese Islands, which was drawn in 1990. The Plan provides strategic guidance on land-use in the Maltese Islands and contains 320 policies on settlements, the built environment, housing, social and community facilities, commerce and industry, agriculture, minerals, tourism and recreation, transport, urban and rural conservation, ecology and public utilities. Through this Plan, a considerable number of wetlands have been protected as Areas of Ecological Importance and/or Sites of Scientific Importance - including the two Ramsar sites. Such designation affords further detailed protection policies which are applied whenever proposed development projects affect these areas. Work has also been considered regarding the Strategic Plan for Environment and Development (SPED), which is intended to replace the above-mentioned Structure Plan, and hence provide a strategic spatial policy framework for environment and development up to 2020. Further information: <http://www.mepa.org.mt/sped>.

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)
Z - Not applicable
- e) A - Yes
- f) C - Partly
- g) A - Yes

1.3.2 Additional information:

1.3.2 (b) Regarding water resource management, wetland habitats have been identified to be important ecological niches under the WFD and their management has been integrated into the WCMP for Malta. Monitoring programmes for the Ramsar wetlands have also been established.

1.3.2 (c) Through the implementation of the national WCMP, which safeguards all waters including coastal, inland surface waters and groundwater, actions and measures have been proposed, which address the management of water resources and target to provide a significant improvement in their status by 2015. More specifically, the WCMP in Malta aims to ensure the wise use of wetlands by means of establishing the appropriate means of classifying the ecological and chemical quality of L-Għadira/Is-Simar. The carrying out of monitoring programmes at these sites is enhancing Malta's limited knowledge-base of these wetlands, enabling continuous improvement of management of these sites.

In addition, also with reference to 1.3.2 (g), both the NBSAP and the National Environment Policy (NEP) consider aspects related to coastal and marine resources.

1.3.2 (e) In 2002 the Maltese Government set up the National Commission for Sustainable Development (NCSD), and a task force was appointed by the NCSD, to oversee the preparation of a strategy for sustainable development. The overarching goal of the strategy is 'primarily aimed at helping society work towards improving the quality of life of all members of society, promoting convergence between the interests of different sectors and layers of society and between the interest of current and future generations.' The National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) was adopted by the National Commission in 2006; this encompasses wetlands under the generic term of 'habitats' in the strategic directions identified for the policy area 'nature and biodiversity'. Malta is also actively involved in the review process of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD).

1.3.2 (f) There are legislative provisions and policy measures which have been adopted specifically for the agricultural sector, and concern the safeguarding and protection of the environment. These provisions aim at reducing impacts caused by agricultural activity on habitats including wetlands. Measures are monitored at a local scale, by the Competent Authorities responsible, at which monitoring and control provisions, as well as enforcement measures to ensure compliance, is affected.

1.3.2 (g) Malta adopted on 12 December 2012 its NBSAP entitled 'Working Hand-in-Hand with Nature' with the timeline 2012 to 2020. The adopted document is available from: <http://www.mepa.org.mt/file.aspx?f=9219>. Malta's NBSAP adopts 19 national targets in line with the Global Aichi Targets and also defines 80 action- and outcome-oriented measures grouped under 18 themes. Considerations for the safeguard of wetlands/inland water ecosystems are integrated in the thematic areas on species and habitats; ecological network of protected areas; climate change; sustainable use of biological and natural resources; and enforcement. The Ramsar Convention is also specifically mentioned. A review to assess progress on implementing the NBSAP is currently ongoing and is intended to be completed by 2014.

Other national policies that consider habitats including wetlands/inland water ecosystems include:

- Malta's WCMP under the WFD
- Malta's First and Second Communications to the UNFCCC
- National Environment Policy
- Structure Plan Policies
- Management Plans for Ramsar Sites

- Draft Rural Development Programme

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

1.3.3 Additional information:

In Malta, the Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations, 2005 (Legal Notice 418 of 2005, as amended), which transpose the EU Directive on the Assessment of the Effect of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment (Directive 2001/42/EC), provide the regulatory framework for carrying out such assessments on strategic policies, programmes and plans that may impact the environment, including wetlands.

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

A - Yes

1.3.4 Additional information:

Proposals of projects that may impact the environment, are formally screened against legally established criteria to determine whether they qualify for mandatory formal assessments, such as Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA), Appropriate Assessments (AA) and various other Environmental Permitting Instruments (such as Strategic Environment Assessments (SEAs)).

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

A - Yes

1.3.5 Additional information:

Relevant Ramsar commitments have been included in a number of subsidiary legislation of the Environment and Development Planning Act (Cap. 504), namely the Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Protection Regulations, 2006 (Legal Notice 311 of 2006, as amended) and the Water Policy Framework Regulations, 2004 (Legal Notice 194 of 2004, as amended).

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:

Such as assessment is planned as part of the work to be considered in relation to target 2 of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020: 'maintain and restore ecosystems and their services'. As part of the process, the European Commission has consulted Member States on a draft list of ecosystems, habitats and species that are relevant in relation to the Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystems and their Services (MAES). This list was prepared by the European Environment Agency and the European Topic Centre on Biodiversity and will be used for various assessments in relation to the relevant Directives and more widely under the Biodiversity Strategy. In this regard, Malta has reviewed its lists which include habitats and species known from the two Ramsar Sites.

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

Z - Not applicable

1.4.2 Additional information:

It is deemed that poverty is not a direct concern in relation to wetlands and wetland management in Malta.

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

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

The benefits of the Ramsar sites to the Maltese society and the economy have been taken into consideration during the management planning process being carried out during the development of the management plans for the Natura 2000 sites. The drafting of these plans were co-financed by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) under Measure 323 of the Rural Development Programme for Malta, 2007-2013.

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. B - No

1.5.1 Additional information:

The 'Changwon Declaration on human well-being and wetlands' was brought to the attention of a number of non-government organisations on 17th January 2012. Since then this was not brought once again to the attention of any of the above (1.5.1 a - d).

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. B - No
- b. B - No
- c. D - Planned

1.6.1 Additional information:

There is no research related to agriculture and wetland interactions at this stage; however, monitoring and mapping of pressures (not just agricultural) has been carried out and will be maintained in the upcoming WFD cycles, especially since any historical data is lacking and therefore any interactions between land use and water quality cannot be clearly understood at this stage.

Further monitoring would also be required before Malta could be in a position to establish benchmark conditions for the various water quality parameters in these wetland environments. Of course, any water-related requirements of the habitats and species that rely on the water environment would need to be investigated and integrated into the management objectives of the sites. This however is an ongoing process and requires long-term commitments in terms of data collation and monitoring.

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

A - Yes

1.6.2 Additional information:

The management planning procedure was carried out for all terrestrial Natura 2000 sites (both Ramsar sites are Natura 2000 sites) as part of a project which was co-financed by the EAFRD under Measure 323 of the Rural Development Programme (RDP) for Malta, 2007 – 2013. This included gathering information through desktop studies, carrying out field surveys, defining conservation objectives and identifying management measures for each site, with expert advice and intensive stakeholder involvement and participation throughout the entire exercise. These management plans are in a draft status.

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.*

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

A - Yes

1.7.1 Additional information:

Wetlands are included as part of the WCMP and are seen to be important elements of the natural water infrastructure not just due to the habitats and species they harbour, but also due to their role in flood mitigation and their ability to filter out pollutants. Meanwhile, it must be kept in mind that wetland environments in the Maltese Islands constitute a very small part of the water catchment, with the two Ramsar sites in Malta being considerably small.

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}

D - Planned

1.7.2 Additional information:

Although public participation and consultation are inherent to the process of river basin management planning in Malta, no direct public consultation events were held specifically targeting wetland management in Malta during the first WFD cycle. Likewise, awareness raising activities on wetlands have not been carried out to date as part of implementation of the WCMP. It is expected, however, that consultation on the second plan will incorporate proposed measures and monitoring programmes for these wetlands during the second cycle, as part of the wider implementation of the WFD.

Meanwhile, the management plans drafted for Natura 2000 sites under the aforementioned EAFRD project include measures aimed at increasing education and awareness regarding wetland areas falling within this ecological network of protected areas.

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

1.7.3 Additional information:

One of the measures under the theme 'Climate Change' in the NBSAP is to assess the linkages between inland water ecosystems and climate change and the risks of water shortages for freshwater-dependent species are identified and rectified, where possible, especially during the hot summer months.

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

A - Yes

1.7.4 Additional information:

When considering the Rural Development Programme 2007-2013, Natura 2000 and areas of HNV were eligible for support/interventions. These areas also include Malta's two Ramsar sites, namely is-Simar and I-Għadira. In this regard, support from the programme could be accessed in the form of knowledge transfer and information actions (training, demonstration activities), as well as advisory services (provision of technical advice). Costs related to the establishment of the necessary management plans were also covered. The Maltese Managing Authority (EAFRD) is currently in the process of finalising its draft Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 prior to submission to the European Commission for adoption; this will cover similar aspects as per the previous programme.

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.*

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

D - Planned

1.8.1 Additional information:

One measure in the NBSAP calls for guidelines on habitat management and restoration to be adopted (also in relation to Target 2 of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020: 'maintain and restore ecosystems and their services') - this would consider wetlands amongst other important habitat types; while another measure calls for an assessment of the linkages between inland water ecosystems and climate change, and identification and rectification of risks of water shortages for freshwater-dependent species. Measures related to habitat restoration have also been included in the National Environment Policy (NEP), and in the National Strategy on Adapting to Climate Change. The draft management plans for the Natura 2000 sites, which are co-financed through the EAFRD, help to identify the sites where restoration or rehabilitation would be beneficial (most wetlands in Malta are part of Natura 2000 sites).

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

D - Planned

1.8.2 Additional information:

Projects for restoration of Il-Magħluq (l/o Marsaskala) and Is-Salini (l/o Naxxar) are currently being planned. L-Għadira and Is-Simar are currently being managed by a local NGO and their management includes plans for restoration.

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.*

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	A - Yes
<p>1.9.1 Additional information: MEPA has commissioned two studies to list alien plant and animal species found in the whole of the Maltese Islands and not just in wetlands.</p>	
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	C - Partly
<p>1.9.2 Additional information: A policy document titled 'Guidelines on managing & restoring native plant communities in terrestrial settings in the Maltese Islands' has been issued by MEPA. This document assists in the planning and implementation of management programmes aimed at counteracting the spread of plant invaders in the natural environment including wetlands.</p> <p>In addition, the management plans for the two Ramsar sites take into consideration the localised impact of alien species found in these wetlands.</p>	

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

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	A - Yes
<p>1.10.1 Additional information: The two local Ramsar sites are managed by a local NGO, which records and monitors the status and trends of relevant species as part of ongoing management.</p> <p>In addition, activities in protected wetlands are regulated through the aforementioned Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Protection Regulations, 2006 (Legal Notice 311 of 2006, as amended) and any development considerations are to follow the provisions of the Environment and Development Planning Act. These are both administered through MEPA and are supplemented by various supplementary guidance documents.</p> <p>Moreover, management plans with stakeholder consultations were drafted through the aforementioned EAFRD and the Ramsar handbooks for the wise use of wetlands were used in such instances, where applicable.</p>	
<p>1.10.2 Has the private sector undertaken activities or actions for the wise use and management of:</p> <p>a. Ramsar Sites</p> <p>b. Wetlands in general</p> <p>{1.10.2} KRA 1.10.ii</p>	<p>a. B - No</p> <p>b. B - No</p>

1.10.2 Additional information:

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

D - Planned

1.11.1 Additional information:

Reference has already been made to the WCMP. Meanwhile, the Malta Resources Authority launched 'A Water Policy for the Future' initiative prior to the triennium covered by this report.

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

Z - Not applicable

1.11.2 Additional information:

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

B - No

2.1.1 Additional information:

Various 'protected areas' have been designated and protected at a national and international level through various criteria set by the Environment and Development Planning Act and its subsidiary legislation. The more important freshland wetlands have already been designated as Ramsar sites.

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

0 sites

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

.....

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

B - No

2.2.1 Additional information:

The Ramsar Sites Information Service and its tools are not used in view that Malta only has two Ramsar sites, and other national information/databases are utilised; while there are no current plans to designate further sites.

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	---
2.3.1 Additional information: N/A	

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	2 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	2 sites
2.4.3 For how many Ramsar Sites is a management plan currently being prepared? {2.4.3} KRA 2.4.i	0 sites
2.4.1 – 2.4.3 Additional information: 2.4.1 L-Għadira and Is-Simar have a management plan which covers the respective Natura 2000 sites. These will be reflected in the work plans that will be implemented as from 2015 by Birdlife Malta in collaboration with MEPA (Competent Authority on Protected Areas Management) and the Ministry for Sustainable Development, the Environment and Climate Change (MSDEC). 2.4.2 L-Għadira and Is-Simar are being managed in collaboration with MEPA (Competent Authority on Protected Areas Management), BirdLife Malta (non-Governmental NGO Site Managers) and MSDEC. 2.4.3 Management plans have been drafted for terrestrial Natura 2000 sites through the aforementioned EAFRD project, these sites including L-Għadira and Is-Simar, which also form part of the Natura 2000 ecological network.	
2.4.4 How many Ramsar Sites have a cross-sectoral management committee? {2.4.6} KRA 2.4.iv	0 sites
2.4.4 Additional information (If at least 1 site, please give the name and official number of the site or sites):	

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

2 sites

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

Detailed datasheets were prepared for each of the Ramsar sites, especially in relation to the Natura 2000 Standard Data Forms, available at: <http://www.mepa.org.mt/impnatareas-pas-int-n2k-dsmap> (together with related habitat maps).

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):

The effectiveness of the Ramsar sites management is monitored through periodic progress reports prepared by BirdLife Malta, which are then evaluated by MEPA.

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.*

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

2.6.1 Additional information (If 'Yes' or 'Some sites', please summarise the mechanism or mechanisms established):

The Administrative Authority oversees the management of the two Ramsar sites and the site managers are managing the sites through a contractual tripartite management agreement, which requires financial and progress auditing of the activities carried out by the Administrative Authority (MEPA) and MSDEC. Thus, changes in the ecological character of the sites would be known.

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
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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):

Such reporting to the Ramsar Secretariat was not necessary since the ecological character of Malta's Ramsar sites remained stable.

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
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2.6.3 Additional information (If 'Yes', please indicate the actions taken):

.....

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.*

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
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2.7.1 Additional information:

Most of the Maltese wetlands are designated as Natura 2000 sites and are also legally protected and subject to management plans in line with the Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Protection Regulations, 2006 (Legal Notice 311 of 2006, as amended). These plans, co-funded through the EAFRD, have been drafted.

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

<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>

<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>	---
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<p>3.1.1 Additional information: Not applicable.</p>	
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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>	A - Yes
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<p>3.1.2 Additional information: Most of the environment-related focal points of UN and other global/regional bodies/agencies are administered by MEPA within MSDEC, same as for the Ramsar Convention. Other collaboration is considered a relevant.</p>	
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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>	B - No
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<p>3.2.1 Additional information (If 'Yes' or 'Planned', please indicate the regional initiative(s) and the collaborating countries of each initiative):</p>	
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.....

<p>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}</p>	B - No
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3.2.2 Additional information (If 'Yes', please indicate the name(s) of the centre(s):

Unfortunately, most training available does not directly tally with the situation of the Maltese wetlands, which are often transient/temporary; subject to considerable fluctuations in temperature, nutrients and salinity; and very small.

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

Z - Not applicable

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}

Z - Not applicable

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:

Education campaigns have continued in both of the Ramsar sites. It is to be noted moreover, that these sites are open to the public during scheduled times. Additionally, guided visits, including school visits, with talks and publications, have also been provided.

Information about the sites is also included on the website of BirdLife Malta, the NGO responsible for the management of these sites.

Information about, and reference to, the sites is also available on the MEPA website, which includes information on the boundaries of the sites, as well as data on the habitats and species found in the area and their status, threats to the site and its vulnerability, and other related information. This information is included in standard data forms and habitat maps that are prepared in relation to the designation of sites as Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas. Other information in relation to wetlands is also available. MEPA website links:

<http://www.mepa.org.mt/impnatareas-pas-int-n2k-dsmap>;

<http://www.mepa.org.mt/impnatareas-wetlands>.

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

B - No

3.4.3 Additional information:

However, information on the Ramsar sites is available on MEPA's website. (For the type of information which is available there, vide the additional information given in 3.4.2). Meanwhile, Malta is planning to update the Ramsar Information Sheets.

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

Z - Not applicable

3.5.1 Additional information:

.....

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

Z - Not applicable

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

.....

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:

Malta, as a member of the European Union, collaborates in EU processes linked with such issues, and addresses these aspects through the implementation of the EU Birds and Habitats Directives.

GOAL 4. IMPLEMENTATION CAPACITY
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Note: in 'free-text' boxes please do not use double quotes “ ”: use single quotes ‘ ’ instead.

<p>STRATEGY 4.1 CEPA. <i>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.</i></p>
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<p>4.1.1 Has an action plan (or plans) for wetland CEPA been established? {4.1.1} KRA 4.1.i</p>	
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- 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)

<p>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):</p>

Even if no CEPA plans have been developed, the Management Plans for these sites include measures aimed at increasing education and awareness regarding wetland areas. As the site managers, BirdLife Malta work in collaboration with MEPA and MSDEC in implementing such awareness measures.

<p>4.1.2 How many centres (visitor centres, interpretation centres, education centres) have been established? {4.1.2} KRA 4.1.ii</p>	
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- a) at Ramsar Sites
- b) at other wetlands

- a) 2 centres
- b) 0 centres

<p>4.1.2 Additional information (If centres are part of national or international networks, please describe the networks):</p>
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The two Ramsar sites in the Maltese Islands form part of the Natura 2000 Network and the National Ecological Network of protected areas as established through the Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Protection Regulations, 2006 (Legal Notice 311 of 2006, as amended). Both sites are currently administrated by a local NGO, on the basis of a management agreement with the Competent Authority (MEPA) and the relevant Ministry (MSDEC).

<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) C - Partly</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>During the preparation of Management Plans for Natura 2000 sites under the afore-mentioned EAFRD project, stakeholders were consulted at various stages.</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) 0</p>
<p>4.1.5 Additional information (including whether the Ramsar Wise Use Handbooks were used in the training):</p> <p>.....</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</p> <p>b) other MEA national focal points</p> <p>c) other ministries, departments and agencies</p> <p>{4.1.7} KRA 4.1.vi</p>	<p>a) A - Yes</p> <p>b) A - Yes</p> <p>c) A - Yes</p>
<p>4.1.7 Additional information (If 'Yes' or 'Partly', please describe what mechanisms are in</p>	

place):

Working e-groups were assigned to address any nature-related queries. Moreover, since all site managers are acquainted with the Ramsar and other MEA national focal points (most are within the same Authority) this facilitates communication. In addition, close links also exist between the relevant ministries, government departments and agencies.

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}

B - No

4.1.8 Additional information:

The awareness on the importance of the wetlands is highlighted by BirdLife Malta in each and every school visit there is at the two Ramsar sites, and also during tours for the general public and other awareness activities organised by MEPA, as relevant.

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}

A - Yes

4.1.9 Additional information (If these and other CEPA activities have been undertaken by other organizations, please indicate this):

The importance of inland surface waters in general (i.e. including wetlands, valley systems etc) has been raised at public consultation events dealing with implementation of the WFD – such as when the public were engaged in consultation on Malta's significant water management issues. Also their importance is discussed within the context of national water policy seminars and conferences dealing with the ecological significance of limited freshwater environments in the Maltese Islands. Furthermore awareness on the importance of the wetlands is highlighted by Birdlife Malta in each and every school visit there is at both Ramsar sites, i.e. Is-Simar and L-Għadira. This is also considered during tours for the general public and other awareness activities organised by MEPA, as relevant.

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

B - No

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

Efforts will be made to pay the 2014 contribution at the earliest.

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):
N/A

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

D - Planned

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 two Maltese Ramsar sites are administered and managed by Birdlife Malta who provide their expertise in relation to avifauna and management of the sites. The management of the site is funded by Government through a tripartite Management Agreement, established through the vires of the Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Protection Regulations, 2006 (Legal Notice 311 of 2006, as amended), between the relevant Ministry, Culture & the Environment, MEPA and Birdlife Malta. Through this agreement BirdLife Malta receives annual funding for the management of the sites. Moreover, Government has seconded Government employees to BirdLife Malta, to assist in the implementation of the management plans of the sites.

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):

Vide the information provided in 4.4.1.