

Ramsar National Report to COP14

Section 1: Institutional Information

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

Name of Contracting Party

The completed National Report **must be accompanied by a letter** in the name of the Head of Administrative Authority, confirming that this is the Contracting Party's official submission of its COP14 National Report. It can be attached to this question using the "Manage documents" function (blue symbol below)

> Malta

You have attached the following documents to this answer.

[RamsarNR_2018-2020_accompaniedletter.pdf](#) - A copy of the accompanied letter signed by HAA

Designated Ramsar Administrative Authority

Name of Administrative Authority

> Environment and Resources Directorate, Environment and Resources Authority (ERA))

Head of Administrative Authority - name and title

> Ms Michelle Piccinino, Chief Executive Officer

Mailing address

> Environment and Resources Authority

Hexagon House

Spencer Hill

Marsa MRS 1441

Malta

Telephone/Fax

> +356 2292 3500

Email

> ramsar.malta@era.org.mt, nature.director@era.org.mt

Designated National Focal Point for Ramsar Convention Matters

Name and title

> Mr Darrin T Stevens, Deputy Director Environment and Resources

Mailing address

> Environment and Resources Directorate

Environment and Resources Authority

Hexagon House

Spencer Hill

Marsa MRS 1441

Malta

Telephone/Fax

> +356 2292 3665

Email

> ramsar.malta@era.org.mt, darrin.stevens@era.org.mt

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

Name and title

› Mr Darrin T Stevens, Deputy Director Environment and Resources

Name of organisation

› Environment and Resources Authority

Mailing address

› Environment and Resources Directorate
Environment and Resources Authority
Hexagon House
Spencer Hill
Marsa MRS 1441
Malta

Telephone/Fax

› +356 2292 3665

Email

› ramsar.malta@era.org.mt, biodiversity.reporting@era.org.mt

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

Name and title

› Biodiversity and Water Unit

Name of organisation

› Environment and Resources Authority

Mailing address

› Environment and Resources Directorate
Environment and Resources Authority
Hexagon House
Spencer Hill
Marsa MRS 1441
Malta

Telephone/Fax

› +356 22923543 / +356 2292 3500

Email

› ramsar.malta@era.org.mt, biodiversity.reporting@era.org.mt

Section 2: General summary of national implementation progress and challenges

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

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

1)

› Implementation of selected management for Ramsar sites and other protected areas. The management plans were 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'. These management plans were subsequently adopted in 2016, further to the issue of Government Notice (GN) 1379 of 2016, following an extensive bottom-up public consultation and public participation process.

2)

› Special Areas of Conservation that were selected to be Candidate Sites of International Importance in previous Government Notices (GN 112 of 2007 & GN 859 of 2008) were officially declared as Sites of International Importance in 2018, as per GN 681 of 2018. This Government Notice was eventually repealed by GN 1522 of 2019, following addition of more Sites of International Importance.

3)

› Management Agreements have been compiled for a number of protected sites around Malta, including the two Ramsar sites. Through these Agreements, the Ministry for Environment, Climate Change and Planning (MECP), the Environment and Resources Authority (ERA) and a number of NGOs have agreed on the scope and implementation of measures identified for the protection and conservation of the respective sites. In the case of the two Ramsar sites, the NGO responsible is Birdlife Malta. The Agreements stipulate the total amount of funding over a set period of time to be provided by the Ministry as a management fee covering the expenses incurred by the NGO for the implementation of the agreements.

4)

› Communication and environmental awareness processes.

5)

› The implementation of the second Water Catchment Management Plan. This second plan currently covers the period from 2015 to 2021 and deals with the various significant issues identified in the plan.

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

1)

› The need for increased regional collaboration on particular Mediterranean wetlands, notably in non-riparian islands and semi-arid and arid environments.

2)

› A need for greater 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)

› Resource constraints, namely in the limitation of expertise at policy level to ensure the effective implementation of the Convention, along with dedicated training opportunities.

5)

› The need for increased communication and awareness on the importance of wetlands in non-riparian states and the integration of biodiversity in every day life of a developed state.

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

1)

› To further implement the Second Water Catchment Management Plan for the Maltese Islands and

Management Plans for the Ramsar Sites, and develop the Third Plan on the basis of the results obtained, monitoring, gaps, experiences and novel approaches, as applicable.

2)

› To maintain an appropriate monitoring regime for local wetlands and strengthen systematic monitoring, data gathering and analysis, promoting the use of artificial intelligence, as applicable.

3)

› To strengthen research on the poorly-studied small and seasonal wetlands of the Maltese Islands, including the very small and ephemeral rock pools, which house endemic and threatened wetland species and other species of restricted distribution in the Maltese Islands.

4)

› To promote and 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.

5)

› To promote citizen engagement and additional regional collaborative research, cooperation and implementation of policies.

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

› Additional consideration of ephemeral water bodies dependent on rain, and their importance to biodiversity, particularly in semi-arid to arid regions of the world (including the Central and Southern Mediterranean regions).

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)

› Any assistance on the issues identified in the replies to Sections 2.B, 2.C and 2.D.

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

› National implementation is already taking into account 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 ERA. This facilitates matters, as communication and co-ordination is easier than when separate entities are involved, and allows for more effective streamlining in the adoption and implementation of policies in Malta. However, national implementation could possibly be further improved if MEAs consider and make reference to each other. This interlinkage between the MEAs can be beneficial in facilitating national targets and objectives by reducing administrative burdens.

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

› It is acknowledged that a strong link exists between Ramsar Convention implementation and specific implementation of water policies, especially through the EU's River Basin Management Plans. Greater awareness, even within the relevant responsible authorities, is necessary to ensure that appropriate consultation takes place, in order to make sure that 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 Malta's 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 over all economic sectors, including amongst others the primary sectors such as agriculture and fisheries, the service sector such as 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 Register of Protected Areas (under the EU Water Framework Directive) 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. According to paragraph 21 of Resolution XIII.18 on Gender and wetlands, please provide a short description about the balance between men and women participating in wetland-related decisions, programmes and research.

> In Malta, work related to wetland-related decisions, programmes and research is not characterised by any gender dominance. This is reflected both at the administrative level (ERA & MECP), as well as at implementation level (BirdLife Malta).

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

> The Environment and Resources Authority (ERA)
Ministry for the Environment, Climate Change and Planning (MECP)
BirdLife Malta (BLM)

Section 3: Indicator questions and further implementation information

Goal 1. Addressing the drivers of wetland loss and degradation

[Reference to Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, 6, 8, 11, 13, 14, 15]

Target 1

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

[Reference to Aichi Target 2]

1.1 Have wetland conservation and the identification of wetlands benefits been integrated into sustainable approaches to the following national strategies and planning processes, including: {1.3.2} {1.3.3} KRA 1.3.i

Please select only one per square.

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

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

1.1 Additional information

> 1.1 (a) Although there is no specific National Wetland Policy, wise use is ensured through various other policy instruments. As indicated in Section 2 Point G, the two Maltese Ramsar sites have been also protected through local legislation, namely the Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Protection Regulations (S.L. 549.44) and the Conservation of Wild Birds Regulations, 2006 (S.L. 549.42), which transpose the Ramsar Convention as well as other multilateral environmental agreements; 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).

In addition, the Water Catchment Management Plan (WCMP) in the Maltese Islands, as required by the EU's Water Framework Directive (WFD), will also ensure the wise use of wetlands by means of implementation of the WFD management cycles. (The WCMP is Malta's River Basin Management Plan in accordance with the WFD, and is named WCMP since Malta has no rivers, and all natural freshwater resources are dependent on rain water.)

There are also 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 also form part of the EU Natura 2000 network. Both sites are also recognised as transitional waters 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 appropriate 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 WCMP also ensures the wise use of wetlands.

1.1 (c) 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.

1.1 (d) 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 or retention of good status. 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 monitoring programmes aim to enhance Malta's limited knowledge-base of these wetlands, enabling continuous improvement of management of these sites.

In addition, also with reference to 1.1 (h), both the NBSAP and the National Environment Policy (NEP) consider aspects related to coastal and marine resources.

1.1 (e) Malta ratified the the Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) under the the Barcelona Convention on 10th April 2019, which came into force a month later on 10th May 2019.

Given the extent of historical development on the islands and considering that most pressures on the coast arise from development pressures, Malta adopted an approach where spatial planning spearheads ICZM. The Strategic Plan for Environment and Development (SPED), which constitutes the national strategic framework for spatial planning and was approved by Parliament in July 2015, provides the first holistic and strategic policy framework for the coast in Malta, which includes a terrestrial inland boundary and extends to 12nm at sea. The SPED guides the location for socio-economic development within the Maltese islands, both on land and up to the 25nm limit of the Fisheries Conservation Management Zone, thus it is also considered as Malta's first Maritime Spatial Plan. The SPED outlines the spatial planning framework that guides urban forms of development towards the predominantly urban coast away from the predominantly rural coast which is safeguarded primarily for its biodiversity, cultural heritage and landscape value for its informal recreation and traditional agriculture. Development within the predominantly urban coast also needs to safeguard the natural and cultural heritage present. The SPED policies for the Coastal Zone and Marine Area integrate the objectives of biodiversity protection and climate resilience in the process of subsidiary spatial plan formulation and development permitting procedures. The incorporation of such principles in spatial planning provides a direct link for existing regulations and measures governing environment protection and cultural heritage, to be taken into account, particularly through stakeholder engagement and relevant consultation processes, as governed by the Development Planning Act of 2016 (Cap.552).

Planning policies safeguarding Ramsar sites were already in place through the 2006 North West Local Plan (NWLP). As both sites have also been protected as Scheduled Property – Level 1 Areas of Ecological Importance and Sites of Scientific Importance, the 6th conservation policy (NWCO 6) within the above mentioned NWLP states that 'No development will be permitted and access will be limited except to enhance the educational use of the area whilst not damaging the features being protected and for necessary rehabilitation works.' In addition, guidance for interpretation centres was provided in the 7th conservation policy (NWCO 7) of the previously indicated NWLP, which supported 'small scale development proposals that support visits by the public to appropriate sites for educational purposes in order to increase awareness of the importance of the Islands heritage'.

A specific area policy for Għadira is included in the approved NWLP through the policy 'NWML 18' which together with 'NWLP Policy Map 34' (which specifically identifies the Ramsar site) seeks to 'resolve competing spatial demands on Għadira Bay and its environs by giving priority to the conservation and management of the natural and cultural environment of the area, including the landscape, and protecting it from environmentally unsustainable development whilst reducing congestion and its adverse environmental impacts, and improving the overall environmental quality of the area.'

1.1 (g) 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.

1.1 (h) Malta adopted its NBSAP on 12 December 2012 for the period 2012 to 2020 (Link: https://era.org.mt/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/MaltaNBSAP_2012-2020.pdf). 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. Information on the overall assessment of the implementation of the NBSAP between 2012 and 2020 can be found in the 6th National Report of the NBSAP under the CBD, accessible from: <https://chm.cbd.int/database/record?documentID=252696>. Furthermore, works on Malta's NBSAP to 2030 has commenced, which will also take into consideration the integration of measures for safeguarding wetlands/inland water ecosystems.

1.1 (k) As already indicated, in the Maltese Islands, planning policy on land and sea is guided by the

Development Planning Act (Cap. 552) and the Strategic Plan for Environment and Development (SPED). The latter was adopted in 2015, which replaced the former Structure Plan for the Maltese Islands drawn in 1990. The SPED constitutes the national strategic framework for spatial planning and provides a long-term strategic spatial policy framework for both the environment and development with 2020 as the first milestone for review. The first review of the SPED has been set in motion with the commencement of studies set to identify spatial issues. According with the principal planning legislation, this plan is based on the Government's direction for social, economic and environmental issues for the same period. The SPED ensures the sustainable management of land and sea resources and protection of the environment whilst also providing guidance for the development and use of land and sea space. During its formulation, it was ensured that the SPED follows other national policies and plans.

Whilst no direct reference to Ramsar sites are made in the SPED, it provides strategic policy direction to safeguard biodiversity through a number of its policies, including SPED Policy TO 8.2 that are directly relevant to Ramsar sites:

To safeguard and enhance biodiversity, cultural heritage, geology and geomorphology by safeguarding protected areas including SACs, SPAs and MPAs whilst enabling activities aimed at enhancing their management objectives.

The Development Planning Act provisions require co-ordination with national social, economic and environmental objectives for development plan preparation. In addition, national authorities are statutory consultees for the permitting process of development applications.

1.1 (i),(j),(l),(m) Although there are no specific national policies with regard to wetland issues vis-a-vis the specified matters, the issues are handled accordingly through various other policy instruments. National legislation requires a strategic environmental assessment to be carried out for all plans and programmes which - (a) are prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use and which set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to Directive 85/337/EEC, or (b) in view of the likely effect on sites, have been determined to require an assessment pursuant to Article 6 or 7 of Directive 92/43/EEC, as further specified through the provisions of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations (SL 549.61).

Additionally plans and projects may be eligible to appropriate and/or environmental impact assessments in terms of the Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Protection Regulations (SL 549.44) and the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (SL 549.46), depending on the location, scale and significance of impact. In addition, the WCMP also ensures the wise use of wetlands, and the Water Policy Framework Regulations (SL 549.100) also address issues linked with the status of water bodies.

In addition, for 1.1 (l) & (m) it should be noted that links between the planning processes and the environment assessment procedures, with the latter covering the operational aspects of infrastructural and industrial-type development, should cover any relevant issues that can affect natural and Ramsar sites.

1.1 (o),(p) There are legislative provisions and policy measures which have been adopted specifically for pollution control and management as well as wastewater management and safeguarding of water quality. These include the Deposit of Waste and Rubble (Fees) Regulations (S.L. 549.07), the Waste Regulations (S.L. 549.63), and the Urban Waste Water Treatment Regulations (S.L. 549.22). In addition, Malta's Second WCMP also includes measures required for the protection and improvement of the quality of Maltese waters.

Further to all the abovementioned documents and legislation, other relevant national policies that consider habitats including wetlands/inland water ecosystems include:

- National Environment Policy
- Management Plans for Natura 2000 Sited (including Ramsar Sites)
- Rural Development Programme 2014-2020
- National Strategy for Preventing and Mitigating the Impact of Invasive Alien Species (IAS) in the Maltese Islands and National Codes of Good Practice

Target 2

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

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

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

☒ C=Partially

2.1 Additional Information

> Through the WFD, three objectives are set: "Good Ecological Status" in surface waters, "Good Chemical Status" for ground water and surface waters, and "Good Quantitative Status" for ground water bodies. Both the First and Second Water Catchment Management Plan (WCMP), whose aims are to implement any relevant actions and achieve the above objectives, provide detail on the monitoring programmes established by Malta for both surface waters and groundwaters. They also define the environmental objectives for each designated

water body, including the Ramsar sites. During 2012/2013, a comprehensive monitoring programme was carried out to collect baseline data on Malta's inland surface water bodies in order to try to understand the complex dynamics of these small water bodies so as to continue to develop better assessment methods and utilise such data to maintain the ecological functions of wetlands. Moreover, Malta is currently working on the third WCMP, which will cover the period 2022 – 2027.

Information on the WCMPs can be found here: <https://era.org.mt/topic/water-catchment-management-plan-2/>. The management plans for each of the sites have also enabled a qualitative assessment of some of the water related requirements of the various water dependent habitats and species. Further future monitoring is expected to shed more light on the water quality of these environments.

More information can be obtained from:

https://era.org.mt/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Is-Simar_ManagementPlan.pdf

https://era.org.mt/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/L-Inhawi_tal-Ghadira_ManagementPlan.pdf

<https://era.org.mt/topic/natura-2000-management-planning-for-terrestrial-sites-in-malta-gozo/>

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

☒ C=Partially

2.2 Additional Information

› Following the 2012/2013 comprehensive monitoring programme (as indicated in the reply of Question 2.1 above), the assessment methods for data collection on the ecological functions of wetlands are being carried out in order to try to understand the complex dynamics of these small water bodies. More information on such assessments carried out to date can be found within the second WCMP (<https://era.org.mt/topic/water-catchment-management-plan-2/>). However, further work is still required to understand the habitat requirements and the selection of indicator species. The process of establishing ecological flows is planned to naturally extend into subsequent WFD cycles.

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

☒ C=Partially

2.3 Additional Information

› The monitoring programme under the second WCMP is collecting data to provide a better understanding of the ecology and quality of water in wetlands. This will indicate the status of the water quality in relation to, among other aspects, the sustainable use of water as a resource and how this can be managed better to ensure the protection of water bodies in general as well as the Ramsar sites. Furthermore, the second WCMP identifies measures that are required to address the efficient use of water resources in the Malta Water Catchment District and contribute to the achievement of the WFD's good status objectives for natural inland water resources. Hence, such identification of measures can be considered as an initiative to improve the sustainability of water use. More information on the second WCMP can be found here: https://era.org.mt/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/2nd_Water_Catchment_Management_Plan-Malta_Water_in_Maltese_Islands-3.pdf. Furthermore, actions on the sustainable use of water as a resource are also identified in various Natura 2000 sites' management plans.

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

☒ A=Yes

2.4 Additional Information

› The LIFE-IP RBMP-MALTA project is an eight year project led by the Energy and Water Agency and co-financed under the EU LIFE Programme with the objective to support the national implementation of the Water Framework Directive and ensuring the optimised management of water resources on the Maltese Islands. To achieve this, it will seek to address the key horizontal challenges identified during a gap analysis undertaken as part of the development process for the second WCMP, such as increasing relevant awareness and facilitating the uptake of measures.

More information can be found in the following links:

- <https://www.rbmplife.org.mt/>

-

https://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/index.cfm?fuseaction=search.dspPage&n_proj_id=6523

Furthermore, reference can be made to the relevant management plans adopted in December 2016 and the WCMP, which are currently being implemented. Further information can be found in the following links:

- <https://era.org.mt/topic/water-catchment-management-plan-2/>.
- https://era.org.mt/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Is-Simar_ManagementPlan.pdf
- https://era.org.mt/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/L-Inhawi_tal-Għadira_ManagementPlan.pdf
- <https://era.org.mt/topic/natura-2000-management-planning-for-terrestrial-sites-in-malta-gozo/>

2.5 Percentage of households linked to sewage system?

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

> 98.2

2.5 Additional Information

> The country is well served with a sewage disposal infrastructure. Malta has an underground sewage collection network that covers close to 100 % of the national territory with practically all households in Malta being connected to the sewage network system. According to the last Census data (2011 statistics), only 1,286 households (0.9 %) reported not to have a bath or shower in a dwelling for sole use of the household.

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

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

☒ E=Exact number (percentage)

> 98.2

2.6 Additional Information

> 98.2 % of all occupied dwellings. However, it should be noted that 99% of the population is served with a sewage connection.

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

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

☒ E=Exact number (percentage)

> 1.65

2.7 Additional Information

> 1.65 % of all occupied dwellings.

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

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

☒ Y=Not Relevant

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

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

☒ E=Exact number (plants)

> 4

2.9 Additional Information

> The following four Urban Wastewater Treatment Plants (UWWTPs) are operational on the Maltese Islands:

- Ras il-Ħobż, limits of Għajnsielem (island of Gozo);
- Iċ-Ċumnija, limits of Mellieħa (North of Malta) – earmarked for a major capacity upgrade;
- Ta' Barkat, limits of Xgħajra (South of Malta) – commissioned in 2011; and
- Sant' Antnin, limits of Marsaskala (South of Malta) – undergoing a retrofit and expected to be back in service during the 2nd Quarter 2021 to supplement the capacity of the Ta' Barkat wastewater treatment plant.

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

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

☒ A=Good

2.10 Additional Information

> An upgrading programme is currently underway to meet present and future demands brought forth by an unprecedented increase in development and consequent demand.

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

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

☒ Y=Not Relevant

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

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

> 3

2.12 Additional Information

> Three reclaimed water (New Water) treatment plants are in service, one adjacent to each of the urban wastewater treatment plants in service, with the exception of Sant Antnin. The largest facility at Ta' Barkat, in the south of Malta, has a design capacity of 9,600 cubic metres per day. The plants at Iċ-Ċumnija and in Ras il-Ħobż have a capacity of 6,400 and 3,200 cubic metres per day, respectively.

The wastewater reuse systems in Malta are mainly for safe crop irrigation purposes. However, during low periods of low demand by the agricultural sector, such systems can be used for landscaping and industrial purposes.

More information can be obtained from: <http://www.wsc.com.mt/information/new-water/>.

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

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

☒ R=Agriculture

2.13 Additional Information

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

> Reclaimed water in Malta is predominantly used for safe and unrestricted crop irrigation.

In 2019, only 24,000 cubic metres were used in industry out of a total of 0.88 million cubic metres.

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

☒ B=No

2.14 Additional information: If Yes, please provide an example

> There are no wastewater treatment processes in Malta that utilizes wetlands as a natural filter while preserving the wetland ecosystem.

Target 3

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

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

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

KRA 1.10.i

☒ A=Yes

3.1 Additional Information

> During the drafting process of the management plans, private stakeholders were consulted and references to the Ramsar handbooks were made where applicable. Once the management plans were drafted, they were adopted in 2016 and implemented accordingly.

The management plans for the two Ramsar sites call for the establishment of management agreements (both set in terms of the Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Protection Regulations, 2006 (S.L. 549.44)) between ERA as the relevant competent authority, MECP as the relevant Ministry responsible for the environment and BirdLife Malta as the site manager. BirdLife Malta records and monitors the status and trends of relevant species and habitats as part of ongoing management.

In addition, activities in protected wetlands are regulated through the aforementioned Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Protection Regulations, 2006 (S.L. 549.44) and any development considerations are to follow the provisions of the Environment Protection Act (CAP 549). These are both administered through ERA and are supplemented by various supplementary guidance documents.

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

Please select only one per square.

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
|--|--|

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

3.2 Additional information

> Besides national funds through the aforementioned Management Agreement and EU funding on selected activities, BirdLife Malta obtains funds and sponsorships from third parties, including the private sector.

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

☒ A=Yes

3.3 Additional information

> Reference can be made to the relevant management plans and the WCMP.

Links:

<https://era.org.mt/topic/water-catchment-management-plan-2/>.

https://era.org.mt/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Is-Simar_ManagementPlan.pdf

https://era.org.mt/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/L-Inhawi_tal-Ghadira_ManagementPlan.pdf

<https://era.org.mt/topic/natura-2000-management-planning-for-terrestrial-sites-in-malta-gozo/>

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

☒ Z=Not Applicable

Target 4

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

{Reference to Aichi Target 9}

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

☒ A=Yes

4.1 Additional information

> ERA had commissioned two studies to list alien flora and fauna species found in the whole of the Maltese Islands and not just in wetlands. These studies on alien fauna and flora helped identify the alien species of the islands, their invasiveness, extent, threats posed on local biodiversity, present exploitation and other uses; and also provided suggestions on how to control / eradicate the species concerned and the implications resulting from such measures, when feasible. Nevertheless, the list is continuously updated in view of current surveillance, monitoring and research work by different entities, including the Environment & Resources Authority and the University of Malta.

Furthermore, ERA is commissioning a one-year study for the assessment of the status of local amphibian species, based on field data. Part of the study assesses the extent to which the alien Bedriaga's frog (*Pelophylax bedriagae*) is spreading locally, as well as the threat that this species is posing to the local native amphibian populations and to other biota. The outcome of the study will determine the invasive status of *P. bedriagae* through the compilation of an invasive status fiche and an action plan for the eradication or control of the species within various habitats of the Maltese Islands, including wetlands.

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

☒ C=Partially

4.2 Additional information

> A policy document titled 'Guidelines on managing & restoring native plant communities in terrestrial settings in the Maltese Islands' had been issued by ERA. 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. These are available from: <https://era.org.mt/guidelines-on-managing-native-plant-invaders-and-restoring-native-plant-communities-in-terrestrial-settings-in-the-maltese-islands/>. A National Strategy for Preventing and Mitigating the Impact of Invasive Alien Species was compiled during the compilation of this report (which was eventually published in 2020). It holds measures on contingency planning in order to ensure the rapid eradication of IAS. Alien invasions constitute a serious threat to biodiversity and protected habitats and ensuring an effective rapid response requires such contingency plans for the necessary measures and resource mobilisation. The scope of such plans and actions would include protected areas. In addition, ERA also has drafted eight National Codes of Good Practice which hold a number of recommendations tailored to particular sectors, and aimed at preventing as much as possible the introduction and spread of alien species into the wild. More information can be found here: <https://era.org.mt/national-strategy-for-preventing-and-mitigating-the-impact-of-invasive-alien-species-ias-in-the-maltese-islands/>.

Furthermore, Regulation EU No 1143/2014 requires Malta, as a Member State to the European Union, to have effective management measures for those invasive alien species of Union concern which the Member States have found to be widely spread on their territory, so that their impact on biodiversity, the related ecosystem services, and, where applicable, on human health or the economy are minimised. Those management measures shall be proportionate to the impact on the environment and appropriate to the specific circumstances of the Member States, be based on an analysis of costs and benefits and also include, as far as is feasible, the restoration measures referred to in Article 20 of aforementioned Regulation. They shall be prioritised based on the risk evaluation and their cost effectiveness.

Moreover, the NBSAP Plan for Malta, which was adopted in 2012, proposes measures to prevent the introduction and establishment of new invasive non-native species, while prioritising the eradication or control of established invasive species. It is also envisaged that the upcoming NBSAP for 2030 (indicated in Section 1.1 further above) will take into consideration the integration of measures for safeguarding wetlands/inland water ecosystems. More information can be found here: <https://era.org.mt/maltas-national-biodiversity-strategy-action-plan-2012-2020/>.

In addition, the management plans for the two Ramsar sites take into consideration the localised impact of alien species found in these wetlands. More information can be found here:

https://era.org.mt/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Is-Simar_ManagementPlan.pdf

https://era.org.mt/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/L-Inhawi_tal-Ghadira_ManagementPlan.pdf

<https://era.org.mt/topic/natura-2000-management-planning-for-terrestrial-sites-in-malta-gozo/>

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

☒ A=Yes

4.3 Additional Information

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

> Eradication or control activities are currently identified on an ad hoc basis, and are focussed on priority cases. Activities are undertaken following specific method statements that are drawn up on a case-by-case basis as the need arises. In the case of protected areas already covered by a management agreement, site managers undertake activities that aim to curtail the spread of, and eradicate, invasive species. All such efforts are combined with monitoring to assess progress and effectiveness of the measures adopted. The management plans adopted for the Natura 2000 sites also contain relevant actions for the control of invasive species. Further information is also available at the following links:

- <https://era.org.mt/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/PresentationWork-IASMalta-ERA-2017.pdf>

- <https://era.org.mt/era-topic-categories/invasive-alien-species/>

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

☒ B=No

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

☒ C=Partially

4.5 Additional Information

> IAS are being controlled/managed through the implementation of the work plans in the management agreements.

Goal 2. Effectively conserving and managing the Ramsar Site network

[Reference to Sustainable Development Goals 6, 11, 13, 14, 15]

Target 5

The ecological character of Ramsar Sites is maintained or restored through effective, planning and integrated management {2.1.}

[Reference to Aichi Targets 6,11, 12]

5.1 Have a national strategy and priorities been established for the further designation of Ramsar Sites, using the Strategic Framework for the Ramsar List? {2.1.1} KRA 2.1.i

☒ B=No

5.1 Additional information

> Various 'protected areas' have been designated and protected at a national and international level through various criteria set by the Environment Protection Act (Cap. 549) and its subsidiary legislation. Whilst noting that Malta has no rivers and permanent water bodies, the more important freshwater wetlands have already been designated as Ramsar sites.

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

☒ B=No

5.2 Additional information

> The Ramsar Sites Information Service and its tools were 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.

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

☒ E=Exact number (sites)

> 2

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

☒ E=Exact number (sites)

> 2

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

☒ Y=Not Relevant

5.3 – 5.5 Additional information

> 5.3 L-Ghadira and Is-Simar have a management plan which covers the respective Natura 2000 sites. These are reflected in the work plans that were implemented from 2015 by Birdlife Malta in collaboration with ERA (Competent Authority on Protected Areas Management) and the Ministry for the Environment, Climate Change and Planning (MECP).

5.4 L-Ghadira and Is-Simar are being managed through a Management Agreement set out in terms of the Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Protection Regulations (SL 549.44) between ERA (Competent Authority on Protected Areas Management), BirdLife Malta (non-Governmental NGO Site Managers) and MECP (the Ministry responsible for the environment).

5.5 Management plans have been drafted for terrestrial Natura 2000 sites through the aforementioned EAFRD project, these sites including L-Ghadira and Is-Simar, which also form part of the Natura 2000 ecological network.

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

☒ A=Yes

5.6 Additional information

> 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 were subsequently adopted in December 2016, further to the issuing of Government Notice (G.N.) 1379 of 2016.

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

☒ E=Exact number (sites)

> 0

5.7 Additional information

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

> Not Applicable.

Target 7

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

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

7.1 Are mechanisms in place for the Administrative Authority to be informed of negative human-induced changes or likely changes in the ecological character of Ramsar Sites, pursuant to Article 3.2? {2.6.1} KRA 2.6.i

☒ A=Yes

7.1 Additional information

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

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

7.2 Have all cases of negative human-induced change or likely change in the ecological character of Ramsar Sites been reported to the Ramsar Secretariat, pursuant to Article 3.2? {2.6.2} KRA 2.6.i

☒ O=No Negative Change

7.2 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.

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

☒ Z=Not Applicable

Goal 3. Wisely Using All Wetlands

[Reference to Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15]

Target 8

National wetland inventories have been either initiated, completed or updated and disseminated and used for promoting the conservation and effective management of all wetlands {1.1.1} KRA 1.1.i

[Reference to Aichi Targets 12, 14, 18, 19]

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

☒ A=Yes

8.1 Additional information

> Wetlands have been identified, and have been afforded legal protection under various legislation. Additional information is available at the following link: <https://era.org.mt/topic/wetlands-watercourses/>.

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

☒ B=No

8.2 Additional information

> In general, all relevant sites have been designated as Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas under the EC Habitats Directive and EC Birds Directive respectively. Both sites are also delineated as WFD inland surface water bodies and included in the WFD's Protected Area Register.

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

☒ C=Partially

8.3 Additional information

> Refer to the reply for question 8.4.

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

☒ C=Partially

8.4 Additional information

> All environmental data is made accessible in accordance with the Aarhus Convention.

More information can be obtained from:

<https://era.org.mt/topic/wetlands-watercourses/>

<https://era.org.mt/topic/important-natural-areas-2/>

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

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

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

Please select only one per square.

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

8.5 Additional information on a) and/or b)

> In general, all sites have been designated as protected areas in terms of the Environment Protection Act (Cap. 549) and as Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas under the EU Habitats Directive and EU Birds Directive respectively.

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.

8.6 Based upon the National Wetland Inventory if available please provide a figure in square kilometres for the extent of wetlands (according to the Ramsar definition) for the year 2020 and provide the relevant disaggregated information in the box below. This Information will also be used to report on SDG 6, Target 6.6, Indicator 6.6.1, for which the Ramsar Convention is a co-custodian.

☒ E=Exact Number (km2)

> 1.3074

8.6 Marine/Coastal Wetlands

| | Square kilometers (km2) |
|---|-------------------------|
| A -- Permanent shallow marine waters in most cases less than six metres deep at low tide; includes sea bays and straits. | |
| B -- Marine subtidal aquatic beds; includes kelp beds, sea-grass beds, tropical marine meadows. | |
| C -- Coral reefs. | |
| D -- Rocky marine shores; includes rocky offshore islands, sea cliffs. | |
| E -- Sand, shingle or pebble shores; includes sand bars, spits and sandy islets; includes dune systems and humid dune slacks. | |

| | |
|---|--|
| F -- Estuarine waters; permanent water of estuaries and estuarine systems of deltas. | |
| G -- Intertidal mud, sand or salt flats. | |
| Ga -- Bivalve (shellfish) reefs. | |
| H -- Intertidal marshes; includes salt marshes, salt meadows, salttings, raised salt marshes; includes tidal brackish and freshwater marshes. | |
| I -- Intertidal forested wetlands; includes mangrove swamps, nipah swamps and tidal freshwater swamp forests. | |
| J -- Coastal brackish/saline lagoons; brackish to saline lagoons with at least one relatively narrow connection to the sea. | |
| K -- Coastal freshwater lagoons; includes freshwater delta lagoons. | |
| Zk(a) -- Karst and other subterranean hydrological systems, marine/coastal. | |

8.6 Marine/Coastal Wetlands total (km2)

> 1.2211

8.6 Inland Wetlands total (km2)

> 0.0863

8.6 Additional information

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

> Reference or link:

- https://rsis.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/rsiswp_search/exports/Ramsar-Sites-annotated-summary-Malta.pdf?1611924609

- <https://era.org.mt/topic/wetlands-watercourses/>

The area indicated in this report is data of validated wetland areas. Notwithstanding this, Malta is currently reviewing results of the national wetlands survey to identify whether other relevant water bodies occur which still retain important ecological features and are not transient in nature. In this respect, please note that Malta is one of the top 10 water-scarce countries in the world. As a consequence, the wetland area in Malta is very small since the island nation has no mountains and rivers and is subject to rains of less than 500mm in average, these mostly limited to the winter period (usually November-February period), with an extensive very hot and dry period during the rest of the year. Indeed, the island has a semi-arid climate with variable annual precipitation with greater evapotranspiration than rainfall. In this respect, the main source of potable water in Malta is through desalinisation of sea water.

Moreover, it is noted that a number of temporary ponds/rock pools occur, particularly within karstic coralline limestone phrygana areas. These are sparse and ephemeral in nature and variable in size (variable sizes are still very small) as totally dependent on rainfall. Important areas are protected under the Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Protection Regulations (SL 549.44) and the EU Habitats Directive. In this case, the provision of areas would not be realistic, since the site protected is essentially phrygana and other garrigue or xeric grassland areas with rock pools interspersed in the overall areas.

Similarly, a number of springs occur sporadically, especially along blue clay slope areas in the north-western region of Malta. These are not necessarily permanent, with water flowing in trickles and are also subject to use by agriculture. However, key areas are protected under the same legal regime as for rock pools. In the

case of rock pools, the provision of areas for such springs would not be realistic, since the sites protected are essentially maritime coastal communities with xeric grassland areas, where the wetland vegetation is limited to a couple of metres along the spring stream and interspersed in the overall areas. Notwithstanding this, it is to be noted that to date, only two 'wetlands' (i.e. L-Ghadira and Is-Simar) are considered as Ramsar sites, noting that they are the only two which fall under the Ramsar Criteria.

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

› Barring areas with permanent or quasi-permanent water bodies and seasonal watercourses held within geomorphological features (such as valley systems), which are plotted, most wetlands in the Maltese Islands are seasonal, temporary and/or ephemeral.

Target 9

The wise use of wetlands is strengthened through integrated resource management at the appropriate scale, inter alia, within a river basin or along a coastal zone {1.3.}.

[Reference to Aichi Targets 4, 6, 7]

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

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

☒ A=Yes

9.1 Additional information

› Besides the Water Catchment Management Plan, wise use is ensured through various other policy instruments specified in earlier parts of this report

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

☒ A=Yes

9.2 Additional information

› Relevant Ramsar commitments have been included in a number of subsidiary legislation of the Environment Protection Act (Cap. 549), namely the Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Protection Regulations, 2006 (S.L. 549.44) and the Water Policy Framework Regulations, 2004 (S.L. 549.100).

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

☒ A=Yes

9.3 Additional information

› Wetlands are managed as part of the WCMP and are seen to be important elements of the natural water infrastructure due to the habitats and species they harbour. 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.

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

☒ A=Yes

9.4 Additional information

› The second WCMP incorporates communication and awareness-raising measures for wetlands during the second cycle, as part of the wider implementation of the WFD. More information on the WCMP can be found here:

https://era.org.mt/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/2nd_Water_Catchment_Management_Plan-Malta_Water_in_Maltese_Islands-3.pdf

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

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

☒ C=Partially

9.5 Additional information

› 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. This is envisaged to be considered as well in the upcoming NBSAP to 2030.

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

☒ A=Yes

9.6 Additional information

> Under the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, Natura 2000 and areas of HNV are eligible for support/interventions. These areas also include Malta's two Ramsar sites, namely is-Simar and I-Ghadira. 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).

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

{1.6.1} KRA 1.6.i

Please select only one per square.

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

9.7 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 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.

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

☒ B=No

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

☒ A=Yes

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

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

> Efforts to conserve small wetlands are reflected in the management plans.

Target 10

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

[Reference to Aichi Target 18]

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

☒ B=No

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

Please select only one per square.

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

10.2 Additional information

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

> The drafting of management plans for the terrestrial Natura 2000 sites involved considerable stakeholder consultation and involvement, following a bottom-up approach. Stakeholders (including NGOs) for each protected area were identified, further to which, specific stakeholder workshops and seminars were carried out throughout the management planning exercise. In 2015, another public consultation process was carried out by ERA and any comments submitted were considered for inclusion in the management plans.

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

☒ A=Yes

10.3 Additional information

> Refer to reply for question 10.2.

Target 11

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

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

☒ C=In Preparation

11.1 Additional information

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

> Malta carried out a preliminary exercise to identify key ecosystems and ecosystem services as part of the implementation of Malta's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2012-2020 in connection to the Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystems and their Services (MAES). This work involved prioritising ecosystems and ecosystem services for mapping and assessment, identifying available data/data sources and data gaps that will need to be addressed, as well as stakeholders/experts to be consulted in the process, in particular for selection of the relevant indicators.

The ecosystem classification was linked to the habitats listed in the EU Habitats Directive to ensure a synergistic approach with the Directive and other reporting obligations, thus ensuring that the classification is used and integrated in national policy development. The official ecosystem mapping initiated in 2017, following a period of trial mapping to determine the appropriate mapping resolution and scale, and discussions with experts. Further discussions with stakeholders are envisaged, focusing on the ecosystem services and indicators to be included in the national assessment.

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

☒ Y=Not Relevant

11.2 Additional information

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

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

☒ A=Yes

11.3 Additional information

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

› The benefits of the Ramsar sites to the Maltese society and the economy were taken into consideration during the management planning process carried out during the drafting and development of the management plans for the Natura 2000 sites.

More information can be obtained from:

- https://era.org.mt/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Is-Simar_ManagementPlan.pdf
- https://era.org.mt/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/L-Inhawi_tal-Għadira_ManagementPlan.pdf

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

☒ A=Yes

11.4 Additional information

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

› Refer to reply for question 11.3.

Target 12

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

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

☒ D=Planned

12.1 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 management plans for the Natura 2000 sites help to identify the sites where restoration or rehabilitation would be beneficial (most wetlands in Malta are part of Natura 2000 sites) and set relevant Operational Objectives in this regard.

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

☒ C=Partially

12.2 Additional information

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

› L-Għadira and Is-Simar are currently being managed by a local NGO on behalf of the Environment & Resources Authority; their management includes plans for restoration.

Similarly, this is done for other wetlands under the Natura 2000 network in Malta with the same NGO as well as other local NGOs.

12.3 Have the Guidelines for Global Action on Peatlands and on Peatlands, climate change and wise use (Resolutions VIII.1 and XII.11) been implemented including?

Please select only one per square.

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
|--|--|

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

12.3 Additional Information

If 'Yes' or 'Partially', please indicate, the progress in implementation

> There are no peatlands in the Maltese Islands and therefore, the aforementioned guidelines would not be relevant.

Target 13

Enhanced sustainability of key sectors such as water, energy, mining, agriculture, tourism, urban development, infrastructure, industry, forestry, aquaculture and fisheries when they affect wetlands, contributing to biodiversity conservation and human livelihoods

[Reference to Aichi Targets 6 and 7]

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

☒ A=Yes

13.1 Additional information

> National legislation requires a strategic environmental assessment to be carried out for all plans and programmes which - (a) are prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use and which set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to Directive 85/337/EEC, or (b) in view of the likely effect on sites, have been determined to require an assessment pursuant to Article 6 or 7 of Directive 92/43/EEC.

In addition, it should be noted that links between the planning processes and the environmental assessment procedures, with the latter covering the operational aspects of infrastructural and industrial-type development, should cover any relevant issues that can affect Ramsar sites and other natural areas.

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

{1.3.4} {1.3.5} KRA 1.3.iii

☒ A=Yes

13.2 Additional information

> Environment Impact Assessments are required for various activities, as specified by the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (SL 549.61).

Goal 4. Enhancing implementation

[Reference to Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, 6, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 17]

Target 15

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

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

☒ A=Yes

15.1 Additional information

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

> Malta participates in the Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative.

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

☒ B=No

15.2 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 ephemeral/transient and temporary; subject to considerable fluctuations in temperature, nutrients and salinity; and very small.

Target 16

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

[Reference to Aichi Targets 1 and 18]

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

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

Please select only one per square.

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

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| d) Local/site level | <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> C=In Progress |
|---------------------|--|

16.1 Additional information

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

> While no CEPA plans have been developed, extensive CEPA initiatives are carried out.

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 ERA and MECP in implementing such awareness measures.

Regular awareness raising activities targeting the public are carried out by ERA and other various entities.

These activities were aimed at informing all members of society about the various aspects of local legislation concerning conservation and sustainable use of habitats and species together with information regarding adopted conservation measures. Information was delivered through the publication of various press releases and press articles, the participation in educational programs, the dissemination of web-information including guidance documents and the participation in informational courses.

ERA has also undertaken diverse information/education initiatives, such as articles in local newspapers and information panels. ERA's website, also provides information on species, habitats, nature protection policies, legislation, protected areas and biodiversity permitting. An example of such is available through the 'BioSnippets' initiative, which are available at <https://era.org.mt/topic/biosnippets/>. ERA also publishes State of the Environment Reports and updates on the key environment indicators used therein.

Furthermore, monthly Biodiversity Tours to Protected Areas are carried out, whereby ERA officials provide free guided tours to selected areas. These tours are organised on a monthly basis from October to April. In parallel, ERA participates in the popular Sunday TV show 'Malta u lil Hinn Minnha', during which ERA provides weekly guided visits to a protected area, with information snippets on Maltese heritage. Posters on protected species, including marine reptiles, migratory birds and marine mammals, were also distributed to interested parties, as well as a series of bookmarks and coasters depicting important Maltese species. In addition, information campaigns are also undertaken by various environmental NGOs, research entities, relevant government departments, ministries and authorities, and information panels and publications are also included in protected areas, including those aimed for migratory species, like Ramsar sites (wetlands of international importance) and Natura 2000 sites established under the UN Ramsar Convention and the EU Habitats Directive, respectively.

Additionally, Malta also celebrates World Wetlands Day on February of each year. During such event, specialised presentations are given to the public on importance on wetland conservation.

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

{4.1.2} KRA 4.1.ii

a) at Ramsar Sites

☒ E=Exact Number (centres)

> 2

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

{4.1.2} KRA 4.1.ii

b) at other wetlands

☒ E=Exact Number (centres)

> 1

16.2 Additional information

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

> Two centres are found in the two Ramsar sites: I-Għadira & Is-Simar.

Another centre is found at Is-Salini.

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

Please select only one per square.

| | |
|--|--|
| a) promote stakeholder participation in decision-making on wetland planning and management | <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes |
|--|--|

| | |
|--|--|
| b) specifically involve local stakeholders in the selection of new Ramsar Sites and in Ramsar Site management? | <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes |
|--|--|

16.3 Additional information

If 'Yes' or 'Partially', please provide information about the ways in which stakeholders are involved
 > As indicated previously, the two Ramsar sites of Malta are Natura 2000 sites, which contain Management Plans. During the preparation of such Management Plans, stakeholders were consulted at various stages.

16.4 Do you have an operational cross-sectoral National Ramsar/Wetlands Committee? {4.1.6} KRA 4.3.v
☒ B=No

16.5 Do you have an operational cross-sectoral body equivalent to a National Ramsar/Wetlands Committee? {4.1.6} KRA 4.3.v
☒ B=No

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

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

16.6 Additional information

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

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

16.7 Additional information

> On 2nd February 2020, BirdLife Malta celebrated World Wetlands Day by promoting the day on their social media; disseminating Ramsar-branded material (including a poster on wetland biodiversity); and were open to the public on the day.

More information can be found:

<https://www.facebook.com/birdlifemalta/photos/a.296354897104584/3439298789476830/>.

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

16.8 Additional information

If these and other CEPA activities have been undertaken by other organizations, please indicate this
 > 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 to both Ramsar sites, i.e. Is-Simar and L-Ghadira. This is also considered during tours for the general public and other awareness activities organised by ERA, as relevant.

Target 17

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

[Reference to Aichi Target 20]

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

☒ A=Yes

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

☒ B=No

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

☒ Z=Not Applicable

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

☒ Z=Not Applicable

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

☒ Z=Not Applicable

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

☒ Z=Not Applicable

Target 18

International cooperation is strengthened at all levels {3.1}

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

☒ A=Yes

18.1 Additional information

> Not directly applicable, since, as indicated, the national focal points of most environmental MEAs are also within the Environment & Resources Authority (ERA) and the Ministry for the Environment, Climate Change and Planning (MECP).

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

☒ A=Yes

18.2 Additional information

> Most of the environment-related focal points of UN and other global/regional bodies/agencies are administered by ERA and/or MECP. Other collaboration is considered relevant, and the Authority and the Ministry have direct links with offices dealing with foreign affairs, economy, finances, tourism, agriculture, fisheries, aquaculture, plant protection regimes, veterinary services, animal welfare and sustainable development and other Ministries.

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

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

☒ A=Yes

18.3 Additional information

If 'Yes' please name the agency (es) or IOP (s) and the type of assistance received

> BirdLife Malta is part of the BirdLife International network working towards conserving global biodiversity and the sustainability of natural resources and the two Maltese Ramsar sites are administered and managed by the said NGO, who provide their expertise in relation to avifauna and management of the sites. 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.

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

☒ A=Yes

18.4 Additional information

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

> Reference is made to the Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative, which brings together 27 Mediterranean and peri-Mediterranean countries (including Malta) that are Parties to the Ramsar Convention. More information can be obtained from here: <https://era.org.mt/medwet/>.

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

☒ A=Yes

18.5 Additional information

> Information about, and reference to, the sites is also available on the ERA 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. Relevant links:

- <https://era.org.mt/topic/ramsar-sites/>
- <https://era.org.mt/medwet/>
- <https://era.org.mt/topic/wetlands-watercourses/>
- <https://era.org.mt/topic/important-natural-areas-2/>
- <https://era.org.mt/topic/protected-areas-international/>
- <https://era.org.mt/topic/natura-2000-datasheets-maps/>
- <https://era.org.mt/management-plans-for-terrestrial-natura-2000-sites-in-malta-gozo/>
- <https://era.org.mt/topic/water-catchment-management-plan-2/>

Furthermore, information on Malta's Ramsar sites can also be found publically on the Ramsar Convention's website: <https://www.ramsar.org/wetland/malta/>.

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

☒ Z=Not Applicable

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

☒ Y=Not Relevant

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

☒ A=Yes

18.8 Additional information

> Malta participates in such networks and initiatives as a member of the Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative and the European Union (EU).

Target 19

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

[Reference to Aichi Targets 1 and 17]

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

☒ B=No

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

☒ C=Partially

19.2 Additional information

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

> Whilst not directly focused on wetlands, environment-related subjects at the University of Malta and the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) address issues of conservation, sustainability and appropriate environmental management techniques. Moreover, selected dissertations under key science Bachelor degrees addressed the major wetlands protected under the Environment Protection Act (Cap. 549).

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

a) at Ramsar Sites

☒ E=Exact number (opportunities)

> 0

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

b) at other wetlands

☒ E=Exact number (Opportunities)

> 0

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

☒ D=Planned

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

Guidance for filling in this section

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

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

Malta

Ghadira (410)

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

☒ A=Yes

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

☒ B=No

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

☒ C=Partially

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

☒ A=Yes

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

☒ A=Yes

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

☒ A=Yes

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

☒ A=Yes

Is-Simar (789)

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

☒ A=Yes

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

☒ B=No

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

☒ C=Partially

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

☒ A=Yes

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

☒ A=Yes

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

☒ A=Yes

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

☒ A=Yes