

National planning tool for the implementation of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands

(And the approved format for National Reports to be submitted for the 8th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, Spain, 2002)

file 1

Institutional information

Contracting Party: **IRELAND**

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Name and title of the designated national non-government (NG) focal point for matters relating to the Outreach Programme of the Ramsar Convention: [REDACTED]

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Note – Not all actions from the Convention Work Plan 2000-2002 are included here, as some apply only to the Bureau or Conferences of the Contracting Parties. As a result, the numbering system that follows contains some gaps corresponding to those actions that have been omitted.

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GENERAL OBJECTIVE 1

TO PROGRESS TOWARDS UNIVERSAL MEMBERSHIP OF THE CONVENTION

Operational Objective 1.1: To endeavour to secure at least 150 Contracting Parties to the Convention by 2002.

Actions – Global Targets
<p>1.1.1 Recruit new Contracting Parties, especially in the less well represented regions and among states with significant and/or transboundary wetland resources (including shared species), [CPs, SC regional representatives, Bureau, Partners]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The gaps remain in Africa, central Asia, the Middle East and the Small Island Developing States. Refer to Recommendation 7.2 relating to Small Island Developing States. Global Target - 150 CPs by COP8 These are the countries which at present are not CPs of the Convention: Afghanistan, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Barbados, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Cook Islands, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Holy See, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People’s Republic, Lesotho, Liberia, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Federated States of Micronesia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nauru, Nigeria, Niue, Oman, Palau, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Rwanda, St Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Sudan, Swaziland, Tajikistan, Tonga, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Yemen, Zimbabwe.
<p>Is your country a neighbor of, or does it have regular dealings or diplomatic-level dialogue with, one or more of the non-Contracting Parties listed above? (This list was correct as of January 2000. However, accessions to the Convention occur on a regular basis and you may wish to check with the Ramsar Bureau for the latest list of non-CPs.) Yes If No, go to Action 1.1.2.</p>
<p>If Yes, have actions been taken to encourage these non-CPs to join the Convention? No</p>
<p>If Yes, have these actions been successful? Please elaborate.</p>
<p>If No, what has prevented such action being taken? Our priority has been to concentrate</p>

<p>our limited resources on national issues., However, under the National Biodiversity Plan there is now a commitment that biodiversity will be made a specific objective of our overseas aid. Under these circumstances opportunities to recruit new contracting parties will be explored during the next triennium.</p>
<p>Proposed national actions and targets: To encourage the Department of Foreign Affairs, to give a higher priority to Biodiversity measures in their general aid programme and to support wetland conservation in particular by encouraging non contracting parties to join Ramsar Convention. Target 2005</p>
<p>Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands and Dept. of Foreign Affairs.</p>

<p>1.1.2 Promote membership of Ramsar through regional meetings and activities, and through partners' regional offices. [SC regional representatives, Bureau, Partners]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These efforts are to continue and to focus on the above priority regions and the Small Island Developing States. • The current member and permanent observer States of the Standing Committee are Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Costa Rica, France, India, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Slovak Republic, Spain, Switzerland, Togo, Trinidad & Tobago, and Uganda
<p>Is your country a member of the Standing Committee? No If No, go to Action 2.1.1.</p>
<p>If Yes, have actions been taken to encourage the non-CPs from your region or subregion to join the Convention? No Reply</p>
<p>If Yes, have these actions been successful? Please elaborate.</p>
<p>If No, what has prevented such action being taken? Please elaborate.</p>
<p>Proposed national actions and targets:</p>
<p>Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action:</p>

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**GENERAL OBJECTIVE 2
TO ACHIEVE THE WISE USE OF WETLANDS BY IMPLEMENTING AND
FURTHER DEVELOPING THE RAMSAR WISE USE GUIDELINES**

Operational Objective 2.1: To review and, if necessary, amend national or supra-national (e.g., European Community) legislation, institutions and practices in all Contracting Parties, to ensure that the Wise Use Guidelines are applied.

<p>Actions - Global and National Targets</p>
<p>2.1.1 Carry out a review of legislation and practices, and indicate in National Reports to</p>

the COP how the Wise Use Guidelines are applied. [CPs]

- This remains a high priority for the next triennium. The *Guidelines for reviewing laws and institutions* (Resolution VII.7) will assist these efforts.
- Global Target – For at least 100 CPs to have comprehensively reviewed their laws and institutions relating to wetlands by COP8.

Has your country **completed** a review of its laws and institutions relating to wetlands? **No**

If **No**, what are the impediments to this being done? **There has been no specific wetland policy development in Ireland to date . However Ireland aims to be actively involved in the implementation of the EU Commission's strategic framework for a policy of wise use and conservation of wetlands. It is envisaged that wise use will be achieved within the context of the National Sustainable Development Strategy. Environmental policy in Ireland is now based on the internationally recognised principles of sustainability, the precautionary principle, the integration of environmental consideration into all policy areas, the polluter-pays principle and the principle of shared responsibility for environmental protection by public bodies, private enterprises and the general public. A priority for the strategy is to maintain the quality, quantity and diversity of our natural endowments which include wetlands. A National Biodiversity Plan and A National Heritage Plan was published in April 2002, which contains a commitment to the review.**

The principal biodiversity related legislation is that concerned with nature conservation. The most important legislation is the Wildlife Act, 1976 as amended by the Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000, and the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997. While the Wildlife Act 1976 provided a fairly adequate legislation base for nature conservation, it has been considerably strengthened by the Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000, which was enacted in December 2000.

The principal objectives of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000 which are relevant to Wetland Conservation are to:

- 1. provide statutory protection for Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs);**
- 2. improve a number of measures, or introduce new ones, to enhance the conservation of wildlife species and habitats;**
- 3. enhance a number of existing controls in respect of hunting, which are designed to serve the interests of wildlife conservation, and introduce new powers to regulate commercial shoot operators;**
- 4. ensure or strengthen compliance with international agreements and, in particular, enable ratification of CITES and the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds Agreement (AEWA)**
- 5. increase substantially monetary fines for offences under the Wildlife Acts and introduce prison sentences in addition to those fines;**
- 6. broaden the scope of the Wildlife Acts to comprehend all species, including fish and aquatic invertebrates (except specified commercial marine species), which heretofore were excluded;**

7. enable the Minister to act independently of forestry legislation (e.g.in relation to the acquisition of land by agreement);

8. strengthen the protective regime for Special Areas of Conservation by ensuring that protection will in all cases apply from the time of notification of proposed sites;

9. give specific recognition to the Minister's responsibilities in regard to promoting the conservation of biological diversity, in the context of Irelands commitment to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity.

Various other legislation, particularly in, through not limited to, the environmental field contributes directly and indirectly to the conservation of biological diversity. The Planning and Development Act 2000, and the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations are particularly important and include provisions which are directly concerned with the protection of the natural heritage and biodiversity. A number of species are in a very precarious state in Ireland (i.e Red Data Book species such as the Corncrake and Marsh Saxfrage). A review will be undertaken to determine if it would be appropriate and feasible to introduce specific legal provisions to provide for the conservation of species that might otherwise face extinction.

The conservation of biological diversity is now a key concept goal globally and one which Ireland has endorsed by ratifying the CBD. The Government decided it was important and proper to give explicit recognition to the conservation of biological diversity in the relevant national legislation and it is now a statutory function of the Minister of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands. Provisions concerning the conservation of biological diversity have also been included in other relevant legislative codes which have been drafted since Ireland's ratification of the CBD

If a review is **planned**, what is the expected timeframe for this being done? **If resources allow a review will be completed by 2005.**

If the review has been **completed**, did the review result in amendments to laws or institutional arrangements to support implementation of the Ramsar Convention? **No Reply**

If **No**, what are the impediments to these amendments being completed?

If **Yes**, and changes to laws and institutional arrangements were made, please describe these briefly.

Proposed national actions and targets: **Transpose of the Water Framework Directive into National Legislation by the end of 2003**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Department of Environment and Local Government**

2.1.2 Promote much greater efforts to develop national wetland policies, either separately or as a clearly identifiable component of other national conservation planning

initiatives, such as National Environment Action Plans, National Biodiversity Strategies, or National Conservation Strategies. [CPs, Bureau, Partners]

- The development and implementation of National Wetland Policies continues to be one of the highest priorities of the Convention, as does the integration of wetland conservation and wise use into broader national environment and water policies. *The Guidelines for developing and implementing National Wetland Policies (Resolution VII.6) will assist these efforts.*
- Global Target - By COP8, at least 100 CPs with National Wetland Policies or, where appropriate, a recognized document that harmonizes all wetland-related policies/strategies and plans, and all CPs to have wetlands considered in national environmental and water policies and plans. *The Guidelines for integrating wetland conservation and wise use into river basin management (Resolution VII.18) will assist these efforts.*

Does your country have **in place** a National Wetland Policy (or similar instrument) which is a comprehensive statement of the Government's intention to implement the provisions of the Ramsar Convention? **No**

If **No**, what are the impediments to this being put in place? **No specific wetland policy exists, however all designated sites receive protection through the planning system, wildlife legislation and the regulatory systems. A wide range of strategies, policies and plans are used to deliver objectives relating to the wise use of wetlands alongside, and in combination with, the achievement of other key goals such as promoting wider participation by the public and private sectors in environmental protection. Our Government is committed to the aim of sustainable development through its policies, which include environmental protection and the wise use of natural resources.**

Wetlands protection in Ireland, is based on the following:

The protection of significant wetland area, through the designation of Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Natural Heritage Areas.

The protection of some species of wetland flora and fauna under the Wildlife Act, 1976 and the Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000.

The encouragement of environmentally friendly farming and land use.

Implementation of the EU Habitats Directive, which gives additional protection to the Ramsar sites which are all candidate Special Areas of Conservation or Special Protection Areas.

The National Biodiversity Plan and National Heritage Plan set out the framework through which Ireland will provide for the conservation of our Natural Heritage for the next five years.

Progress towards implementation of intergrated management plans for wetlands within the context of The Water Framework Directive.

Other relevant work in Ireland includes, amendment of the policy guidelines relating to planning and forestry policies which take into account Biodiversity. Marine Nature

Conservation will be taken into account within the context of the Intergrated Coastal Zone Management Plans and the Water Framework Directive.

If the development of such a Policy is **planned**, what is the expected timeframe for this being done? Policy will be developed within the constraints of National Biodiversity and Heritage Plans. Significant progress on policy development should be made within their 5 year time frames. National Biodiversity Plan contains a section on Inland Water and Wetlands and Marine Coastal Areas, which have the following objectives.

Inland Waterways and Wetlands

1. Maintain and expand the catchment-based national strategy for the protection and improvement of water quality in rivers and lakes by the establishment by Local Authorities of comprehensive projects for river basin management in relation to all inland and coastal waters, and groundwaters. These projects will provide a major input, to be complemented by appropriate measures by other public authorities, to the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive and the achievement of at least 'good status' in relation to all waters.

2. Ensure that all significant drainage, including both initial drainage and maintenance drainage, will require assessment of its implications for biodiversity, and particularly for wetlands.

3. Produce guidelines for drainage and wildlife.

4. Consider initiatives which could be employed to ensure the conservation of freshwater fish species and communities including the need to designate sites for the conservation of important fish communities.

4. Ensure waters will primarily be stocked with indigenous species, including reviewing the situation in regard to the translocation of fish between catchments and producing appropriate guidelines or other necessary regulations.

5. Draw up a strategy for the use of machine cutaway and cutover raised bogs as wetland or woodland habitats.

Marine and Coastal

1. Prepare and adopt a National Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy making specific provision for the conservation of biodiversity.

2. The Marine Institute and the Central and Regional Fisheries Board will advance the conservation, as well as the sustainable use, of biodiversity, through the establishment of biodiversity units, the provision of appropriate legislation responsibilities and other measures.

3. Develop a National Marine Biodiversity Resources Database as part of the National Biological Data Management System.

4. Enhance surveys and research on marine biodiversity through the implementation of a prioritised programme of surveys and mapping of marine benthic species and

communities.

5. Introduce national measures to research and reduce adverse effect of marine fisheries on biodiversity, and within the EU, continue seeking to ensure the Common Fisheries Policy and marine fisheries provide for the conservation of fish species and marine biodiversity generally.

6. Draw up guidelines and a Code of Best Practice on Aquaculture and Biodiversity.

7. Continue, and where necessary enhance, in line with relevant EU and International instruments (e.g. OSPAR Convention), existing programmes and measures to control and monitor pollution of coastal and marine ecosystems.

Has your country taken its obligations with respect to the Ramsar Convention into consideration in related policy instruments such as National Biodiversity Strategies, National Environmental Action Plans, Water Policies, river basin management plans, or similar instruments? **Yes**

If **No**, what are the impediments to doing so?

If **Yes**, please provide brief details. **The Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands is the lead Department in the production of the National Biodiversity Plan which deals specifically with wetland conservation issues including those requiring cross-sector initiatives. It has published a National Heritage Plan which will focus more on the contribution to be made by Dúchas, The Heritage Service to conservation of the natural and man made heritage. The implementation of these plans in relation to wetland conservation will initially be via national regulations associated with the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive for internationally important sites and the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000 for all other sites. The EC Water Framework Directive 'no deterioration' provisions should prove beneficial for existing wetland sites of high nature conservation value. Moreover, provisions exist to designate waters as 'Protected Areas' in order to permit a higher level of protection for nature conservation interests and/or economically important aquatic species. Protected Areas must achieve 'good status' by 2015, with this definition being linked to the ecological requirements of wetlands.**

Has your government reviewed and modified, as appropriate, its policies that adversely affect intertidal wetlands (COP7 Resolution VII.21)? **No**

If **No**, what has prevented this from happening? **An Intergrated Costal Zone Management System has been proposed, but not yet implemented. Some aspects related to the protection of the intertidal zone will be covered under the River Basin District Management Plans, required by the Waterframe Workshop Directive.**

If **Yes**, what were the conclusions of this review? and what actions have been taken subsequently?

Proposed national actions and targets: **It is hoped to have Draft Policy on wetland**

protection in place by 2005

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action:

Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.

Operational Objective 2.2: To integrate conservation and wise use of wetlands in all Contracting Parties into national, provincial and local planning and decision-making on land use, groundwater management, catchment/river basin and coastal zone planning, and all other environmental planning and management.

Actions - Global and National Targets

2.2.2 Promote the inclusion of wetlands in national, provincial and local land use planning documents and activities, and in all relevant sectoral and budgetary provisions. [CPs]

- **Achieving integrated and cross-sectoral approaches to managing wetlands within the broader landscape and within river basin/coastal zone plans is another of the Convention’s highest priorities in the next triennium.**
- **Global Target - By COP8, all CPs to be promoting, and actively implementing, the management of wetlands as integrated elements of river basins and coastal zones, and to provide detailed information on the outcomes of these actions in the National Reports for COP8.**

Is your country **implementing** integrated river basin and coastal zone management approaches? **Yes/No**

If **No**, what are the impediments to this being done? **Department of the Environment is at present developing new strategies for catchment management of the water environment. Preparatory work on large scale Water Framework Directive River Basin Management Plans, which will tie together the interlinked issues of water quality, quantity, water use and biodiversity, is in progress.**

If integrated management approaches are being applied in part of the country, indicate the approximate percentage of the country’s surface area where this is occurring and to which river basins and coastal areas this applies.

If **Yes**, are wetlands being given special consideration in such integrated management approaches? **Yes/No**

If **No**, what are the impediments to this being done? **While designated sites will be given special status, non designated sites will not, due to the vey large number of areas involved and resources required for investigation, evaluation and identification of conservation requirements. It is envisaged that over time all sites of significant conservation or functional interest will receive some form of protection.**

Has your country undertaken any specific pilot projects to implement the *Guidelines for integrating wetland conservation and wise use into river basin management* (COP7 Resolution VII.18)? **No**

If **Yes**, please describe them briefly. **[REDACTED]**

Proposed national actions and targets: The National Biodiversity Plan has been developed in parallel with the National Heritage Plan which sets out the framework for the promotion and enhancement of all aspects of Ireland's Heritage, including the natural heritage from 2002 to 2008. The Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands is involved, mainly through its protected areas designation activities and, more recently, the Waterframe Work Directive, in promoting the inclusion of wetlands in national, provincial and local land use strategies.

The National Heritage Plan provides for Heritage at the Local Level

1. That each local authority will establish a local heritage forum, including elected representatives and representatives of communities and non-government organisations, to prepare a Local Heritage Plan in consultation with the County/City Board and other relevant statutory bodies.

2. Establish a fund of €12.7m (£10m) over five years to assist in the preparation and implementation of Local Heritage Plans.

3. Develop and strengthen partnership between the Government and local authorities in the protection and management of heritage.

4. Local authorities will appoint heritage officers to promote the conservation of heritage, and will also acquire the expertise, on a shared basis where appropriate, to deal with the natural, archaeological and architectural heritage.

5. Develop guidance documents on best practice regarding heritage conservation for local authorities.

6. Enhance the protection of heritage through the environmental impact assessment (EIA) process by issuing guidelines on EIA and the archaeological, architectural and natural heritage.

7. Assess the impact on heritage of prescribed projects in all sites of natural heritage importance.

8. Apply heritage appraisal to all local authority draft plans

9. Examine with local authorities the means by which investments, including investment by local authorities, in the waterways network and waterways corridors can act as a catalyst for greater development in local areas and define the extent of waterways corridors.

10. Convene an annual heritage forum representative of relevant government and non-government organisations.

11. Develop and strengthen partnership between the Government and relevant non-governmental organisations in the protection of heritage.

13. Assist, in accordance with Local Heritage Plans, communities, user groups, and the private sector to participate in the protection of our heritage.

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action:

Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.

Operational Objective 2.3: To expand the Guidelines and Additional Guidance on Wise Use to provide advice to Contracting Parties on specific issues not hitherto covered, and examples of best current practice.

Actions - Global and National Targets

2.3.1 Expand the Additional Guidance on Wise Use to address specific issues such as oil spill prevention and clean-up, agricultural runoff, and urban/industrial discharges in cooperation with other bodies. [CPs, STRP, Bureau, Partners]

- **Global Target - Following COP7, the Bureau, with other appropriate collaborators, will produce a series of Wise Use handbooks, based on the outcomes of Technical Sessions at COP7.**
- **(added by the Ramsar Bureau pursuant to Resolution VII.14 *Invasive Species and wetlands*) CPs are requested “to provide the Ramsar Bureau with information on databases which exist for invasive species, information on invasive species which pose a threat to wetlands and wetland species, and information on the control and eradication of invasive wetland species.”**

Does your country **have** resource information on the management of wetlands in relation to the following which could be useful in assisting the Convention to develop further guidance to assist other CPs :

- oil spill prevention and clean-up? **No**
- agricultural runoff? **Yes**
- urban/industrial discharges? **No**
- invasive species? **No**
- other relevant aspects such as highway designs, aquaculture, etc.? **No** – **The Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands are planning to produce guideline material for all staff on eutrophication related issues in the next few years. Such information will be forwarded to the Ramsar Bureau.**

In each case, if the answer was **Yes**, has this information been forwarded to the Ramsar Bureau for possible inclusion in the Wise Use Resource Centre (see 2.3.2 below)? **No**

Additional comments?

Proposed national actions and targets: **Guideline material produced on eutrophication by 2005**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action:

Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.

2.3.2. Publicize examples of effective application of existing Guidelines and Additional Guidance on Wise Use. [CPs, Bureau, Partners]

- **Promoting and improving the availability of such resource materials is a priority under the Convention's Outreach Programme (Resolution VII.9)**
- **Global Target - By COP8, to have included in the Wise Use Resource Centre 500 appropriate references and publications as provided to the Bureau by CPs and other organizations.**

Further to 2.31. above, has your country, as urged by the Outreach Programme of the Convention adopted at COP7 (Resolution VII. 9), **reviewed** its resource materials relating to wetland management policies and practices? **No**

If **No**, what has prevented this being done? **Lack of resources to deal with such issues. All available resources are dealing with issues relating to the designation of Natura 2000 sites.**

If **Yes**, have copies of this information been forwarded to the Ramsar Bureau? **No Reply**

If **No**, what has prevented this being done?

Proposed national actions and targets: **Through the National Ramsar Committee publicise the availability of this information resource.**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands,**

Operational Objective 2.4: To provide economic evaluations of the benefits and functions of wetlands for environmental planning purposes.

Actions - Global and National Targets

2.4.1 Promote the development, wide dissemination, and application of documents and methodologies which give economic evaluations of the benefits and functions of wetlands. [CPs, Bureau, Partners]

- **Given the guidelines available for this activity (see below: *Economic Valuation of Wetlands* handbook), this will be an area of higher priority in the next triennium.**
- **Global Target - By COP8, all CPs to be incorporating economic valuation of wetland services, functions and benefits into impact assessment and decision-making processes related to wetlands.**

Does your government **require** that economic valuations of the full range of services, benefits and functions of wetlands be prepared as part of impact assessments and to support planning decisions that may impact on wetlands? **No**

If **No**, what are the impediments to this being done? **In the Irish Planning system the role of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA's) is to identify likely significant effects on the environment. While EIAs may consider the loss of some functions and benefits from**

wetlands a specific economic valuation is not required.
If this applies in some, but not all cases, what is the expected timeframe for this to be required in all cases? <input type="text"/>
If Yes, has the inclusion of economic valuation into impact assessment resulted in wetlands being given special consideration or protection. Yes/No If Yes, please elaborate.
Proposed national actions and targets: To produce a draft document on the economic evaluation of wetland benefits and functions by 2005
Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.

Operational Objective 2.5: To carry out environmental impact assessments (EIAs) at wetlands, particularly of proposed developments or changes in land/water use which have potential to affect them, notably at Ramsar sites, whose ecological character “is likely to change as the result of technological developments, pollution or other human interference” (Article 3.2 of the Convention).

Actions - Global and National Targets
2.5.2 Ensure that, at Ramsar sites where change in ecological character is likely as a result of proposed developments or changes in land/water use which have potential to affect them, EIAs are carried out (with due consideration of economic valuations of wetland benefits and functions), and that the resulting conclusions are communicated to the Ramsar Bureau and fully taken into account by the authorities concerned. [CPs]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global Target - In the next triennium, CPs will ensure that EIAs are applied to any such situation and keep the Bureau advised of the issues and the outcomes of these EIAs.
Has an EIA been carried out in all cases where a change in the ecological character of a Ramsar site within your country was likely (or possible) as a result of proposed developments or changes in land/water use? No
If No , what has prevented this from occurring? In general EIAs are required for activities which could damage Ramsar sites. However overgrazing has damaged Ramsar sites without triggering an assessment requirement as this activity is not controlled under our EIA regulations. Assessments of overgrazing in designated sites are now undertaken in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development and site plans are being drawn up to deal with this issue.
If Yes , has this EIA, or have these EIAs, given due consideration to the full range of environmental, social and economic values of the wetland? (See also 2.4.1 above) No Reply
AND: Have the results of the EIA been transmitted to the Ramsar Bureau? No Reply
If No , what has prevented this from occurring? <input type="text"/>

Proposed national actions and targets: **Monitoring systems currently being set up should allow us to report on conditions and trends in most Ramsar sites by 2005.**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action:

Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.

2.5.3 Carry out EIAs at other important sites, particularly where adverse impact on wetland resources is likely, due to a development proposal or change in land/water use. [CPs]

- **Global Target - By COP8, all CPs to require EIAs under legislation for any actions which can potentially impact on wetlands and to provide detailed reports on advances in this area in their National Reports for COP8.**

Are EIAs required in your country for **all** cases where a wetland area (whether a Ramsar site or not) may be adversely impacted due to a development proposal or change in land/water use? **No**

If **No**, what are the impediments to this occurring? **An EIA is required for proposals which have an adverse impact on a wetland area provided that:**

1. The development is one which the EIA Directive (85/337/EEC as amended) applies

2. It meets the minimum threshold referred to in EIA regulations

3. and the environmental impact is likely to be significant, .

The thresholds are aimed at helping competent authorities determine whether an EIA is needed for particular projects. They establish a presumption of not requiring an EIA if the project falls below the threshold, but enable a competent authority to require an EIA for these projects if the particular circumstances indicate that there should be one. Since our previous National Report, a statutory consent system has been introduced for initial afforestation, which provides for mandatory EIA above a 50 hectare threshold and provides for a sub-threshold EIA where a project is likely to have a significant effect on the environment. The threshold for mandatory EIA in relation to peat extraction has been reduced from 50 hectares to 30 hectares under the EIA Regulations. Additional regulations under the Local Government Planning and Development Acts introduce a new planning threshold for peat extraction of 10 hectares and therefore these smaller developments are now subject to some form of assessment. Amendments to the Wildlife (Amendment) Act and European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations allow for EIAs for peat extraction in NHAs and SACs below this threshold where a project is likely to have significant effects on the environment. Developments of less than 10 hectares in undesignated wetlands will still not require an assessment.

If **Yes**, are such EIAs required to give due consideration to the full range of environmental, social and economic values of the wetland? (See COP7 Resolution VII.16, also 2.4.1 & 2.5.2 above.) **No**

Are EIAs “undertaken in a transparent and participatory manner which includes local stakeholders” (COP7 Resolution VII.16)? **Yes**

If **No**, what are the impediments to this occurring? **Please elaborate.**

Proposed national actions and targets: **Encourage increased appreciation of wetlands functions and benefits, so that they can be taken more fully into account in environmental impact assessments.**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.**

2.5.4 Take account of Integrated Environmental Management and Strategic Environmental Assessment (at local, provincial and catchment/river basin or coastal zone levels) when assessing impacts of development proposals or changes in land/water use. [CPs]

(Refer to 2.5.3 above) In addition to the assessment of the potential impact of specific projects on wetlands, has your country **undertaken** a review of all government plans, programmes and policies which may impact negatively on wetlands? **Yes/No**

If **No**, what has prevented this from occurring?

If **Yes**, has this review been undertaken as part of preparing a National Wetland Policy or similar instrument? (refer 2.12 above) **No**

Or as part of other national policy or planning activities? **Yes/No** – **In common with other European Union States, Ireland will be implementing the 'strategic environmental assessment' or SEA Directive. The Directive will require a formal environmental assessment of plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment. Authorities will have to prepare a report on the significant environmental effects of a plan or programme, consult environmental authorities and the public, and take the results into account. The Directive will also require monitoring of the implementation of plans.**

Water Framework Directive

The Water Framework Directive requires for each River Basin District (RBD) an analysis of its characteristics, a review of the impact of human activities on the status of water bodies within it and an economic analysis of water use to be carried out according to the technical specifications set out in the Directive. The results will be used to set appropriate objectives for ground and surface waters within the river basin. The results of the analyses, the objectives set and the programme of measures established to achieve them will be set out in a River Basin Management Plan. The plan will include a register of areas designated under specific Community legislation as requiring special protection for the protection of habitats or species where the maintenance or improvement of the status of water is an important factor in their protection, including relevant international sites. Work has commenced on drawing up the first River Basin Management Plans.

Proposed national actions and targets: **Implement the new EU Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive in line with the timeframe required by the Directive.**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action:
Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands,

Operational Objective 2.6: To identify wetlands in need of restoration and rehabilitation, and to implement the necessary measures.

Actions - Global and National Targets

2.6.1 Use regional or national scientific inventories of wetlands (Recommendation 4.6), or monitoring processes, to identify wetlands in need of restoration or rehabilitation. [CPs, Partners]

- **The completion of such inventories is a continuing area of priority for the Convention.**
- **Global Target - Restoration/rehabilitation inventories to be completed by at least 50 CPs by COP8.**

Has your country **completed** an assessment to identify its priority wetlands for restoration or rehabilitation? (COP7 Resolution VII.17) **No**

If **No**, what has prevented this from being done? **Lack of resources has restricted work in this area. However some progress has been made in relation to raised bogs, one of the most threatened habitats in Europe. Approximately 40% of the remaining raised bogs have been surveyed and an outline assessment made, of their conservation and restoration requirements. Restoration work has been undertaken on 8 raised bogs to date.**

If this has been done for only part of the country, please indicate for which areas or river basins.

If **Yes** (that is, an assessment has been **completed**), have actions been taken to undertake the restoration or rehabilitation of these priority sites? **No Reply**

If **No**, what has prevented this from being done? **Please elaborate.**

If **Yes**, please provide details.

Proposed national actions and targets: **Continue work on the restoration requirements of raised bogs.**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action:
Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands

2.6.2 Provide and implement methodologies for restoration and rehabilitation of lost or degraded wetlands. [CPs, STRP, Bureau, Partners]

- **There is considerable information resource on this subject, although it is not as**

<p>readily accessed as desirable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global Target - The addition of appropriate case studies and information on methodologies, etc., to the Convention's Wise Use Resource Centre (refer to 2.3.2 above also) will be a priority in the next triennium.
<p>Refer to 2.3.1 and 2.3.2. Does your country have resource information on the restoration or rehabilitation of wetlands? Yes</p>
<p>If Yes, has this been forwarded to the Ramsar Bureau for possible inclusion in the Wise Use Resource Centre and for consideration by the STRP Expert Working Group on Restoration? No</p>
<p>If this material has not been forwarded to the Bureau, what has prevented this from occurring? The available information on raised bogs is in a number of unpublished reports, final report to the Raised Bog Restoration project, is in press at present. This will be followed in 2-3 years by another report of the success of restoration measures taken on Irish and Dutch Raised Bogs.</p>
<p>Proposed national actions and targets: Publish and transmit to Ramsar, Raised Bogs Report, on Irish and Dutch sites 2002, follow up 2005</p>
<p>Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands</p>

<p>2.6.3 Establish wetland restoration / rehabilitation programmes at destroyed or degraded wetlands, especially in association with major river systems or areas of high nature conservation value (Recommendation 4.1). [CPs]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Convention will continue to promote the restoration and rehabilitation of wetlands, particularly in situations where such actions will help promote or retain the 'health' and productivity of waterways and coastal environments. Global Target - By COP8, all CPs to have identified their priority sites for restoration or rehabilitation and for projects to be under way in at least 100 CPs. <p>Refer to 2.6.1 above.</p>
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Operational Objective 2.7: To encourage active and informed participation of local communities, including indigenous people, and in particular women, in the conservation and wise use of wetlands.

<p>Actions - Global and National Targets</p> <p>2.7.1 Implement Recommendation 6.3 on involving local and indigenous people in the management of wetlands. [CPs, Bureau]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global Target - In the next triennium, the implementation of the Guidelines on local communities' and indigenous people's participation (COP7 Resolution VII.8) is to be one of the Convention's highest priorities. By COP8, all CPs to be

promoting local stakeholder management of wetlands.
Is your government actively promoting the involvement of local communities and indigenous people in the management of wetlands? Yes
If No , what are the impediments to this occurring?
If Yes , describe what special actions have been taken (See also 2.7.2, 2.7.3 and 2.7.4 below) (COP7 Resolution VII.8). Local committees have been set up to help manage sites of European importance and to ensure local involvement in the protection of sites. The National Biodiversity Plan, sets out to promote a greater public understanding on the importance of biodiversity and the objectives of conservation. Actions set out in the National Heritage Plan relevant to public awareness and enjoyment of the heritage generally will also contribute to a greater appreciation of biodiversity: empower local communities to become more involved in heritage issues; enhance the role and resources of local authorities in the protection of heritage; set up local heritage forums through the local authorities identifying the way forward through the preparation of Local Heritage Plans ; and, providing a fund of €2.7m over five years to assist in the preparation and implementation of Local Heritage Plans Develop partnership between Governments and non-governmental organisations on heritage issues.
Proposed national actions and targets: As outlined above.
Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: Department of Arts, Heritage Gaeltacht and the Islands

2.7.2 Encourage site managers and local communities to work in partnership at all levels to monitor the ecological character of wetlands, thus providing a better understanding of management needs and human impacts. [CPs]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Convention's Outreach Programme (COP7 Resolution VII.9) seeks to give such community participation higher priority as an education and empowerment tool of the Convention.
Does your government actively encourage or support site managers and local communities in monitoring the condition (ecological character) of Ramsar sites and other wetlands? (Also refer to Operational Objective 5.1.) Yes
If No , what prevents this from occurring? Please elaborate.
If Yes , does this include both site managers and local communities, where they are not the same people? Yes The National Heritage Plan proposes to increase the interaction

between the managing authorities and local communities, through the provision of appropriate forums in which they can express their views. In addition heritage conservation expertise is to be increased within local authorities. A monitoring programme is being developed for use by Dúchas Staff. It still requires further development and during that process opportunities for involving local people will be explored.

AND, where such monitoring occurs, are the findings being used to guide management practices? **Yes**

If **No**, what prevents this from happening? **Please elaborate.**

Proposed national actions and targets: **Continue to involve local people in site management by consulting them about the Conservation Management Plans for Ramsar and Natura 2000 sites.**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands**

2.7.3 Involve local communities in the management of wetlands by establishing wetland management committees, especially at Ramsar sites, on which local stakeholders, landowners, managers, developers and community interest groups, in particular women's groups, are represented. [CPs, Partners]

- **Global Target - Ramsar site management committees operating in at least 100 CPs, and including non-government stakeholder representation.**

Are there wetland site management committees **in place** in your country? **Yes/No**

If **No**, what are the impediments to such being established? **Attempts have been made to set up Liaison Committees all for SAC's and SPA's for which Management Plans are being developed. Setting up such committees takes time and is not always successful.**

If **Yes**, for how many sites are such committees in place? **88**

AND: How many of these are Ramsar sites? **5**

AND: Of these committees, how many include representatives of local stakeholders? **All**

AND: Of these, how many have women's groups represented? **none**

Proposed national actions and targets: **It is hoped to have Liaison Committees set up for all Ramsar sites before 2005.**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.**

2.7.4 Recognize and apply traditional knowledge and management practice of indigenous people and local communities in the conservation and wise use of wetlands.

[CPs]

- **Refer to 2.7.1 above.**
- **Global Target - This will be addressed in the next triennium, possibly in partnership with the Convention on Biological Diversity and Convention to Combat Desertification, which have already initiated work in this area.**

Has your government **made any special efforts** to recognize and see applied traditional knowledge and management practices? **No**

If **No**, what has prevented this from occurring? **Lack of resources available to carry out the required research both of local knowledge and historical records relating to traditional methods. Some research has been undertaken by Irish Universities in relation to wet grassland and the opportunity now exists to collect information from local liaison committees.**

If **Yes**, please provide details of how this traditional knowledge was recognized and then put into practice.

Proposed national actions and targets: **To increase support for research in Ireland's Educational System into traditional management practices and to enable a structured programme of investigation into traditional management methods on the full range of wetland types.**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Island**

Operational Objective 2.8: To encourage involvement of the private sector in the conservation and wise use of wetlands.

Actions - Global and National Targets

2.8.1. Encourage the private sector to give increased recognition to wetland attributes, functions and values when carrying out projects affecting wetlands. [CPs, Bureau, Partners]

- **Global Target - In the next triennium, the efforts to work in partnership with the private sector will be further increased and the Bureau will seek to document and make available case studies on some of the more effective and innovative approaches. By COP8, the target is to have private sector support for wetlands conservation in more than 100 CPs.**

Have **special efforts been made** to increase the recognition of wetland attributes, functions and values among the private sector in your country? **No**

If **No**, what has prevented this from happening? **While some efforts were made to involve the private sector in protection of individual sites and species, no co-ordinated programme has been developed to date in-order to encourage increased knowledge of wetland attributes, functions and values in this sector.**

Under the National Heritage Plan communities, user groups and the private sector are encouraged to participate in the protection of heritage by:

promoting greater involvement by landowners in the conservation of Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas;

funding local heritage events and community heritage projects through the expansion of the Heritage Councils Grant Scheme;

assisting the network of community groups involved in heritage issues;

encouraging communities and volunteers to participate in the conservation and management of heritage sites;

ensuring that local heritage schemes which receive grant aid have appropriate professional supervision and

encourage, through the provision of advice and training by relevant State Bodies, the utilisation of heritage as a resource in community development

If Yes, describe these special efforts.

AND: Have these efforts been successful? **No Reply**

If No, why not? **Please**

If Yes, how do you judge this success? Financial support for management or monitoring? Active involvement in management or monitoring? (Refer to 2.8.3 below) Application of Ramsar's Wise Use principles by private sector interests? (Refer to 2.8.2 below)? Other criteria? **Please elaborate.**

Proposed national actions and targets: **As above by 2008**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.**

2.8.2 Encourage the private sector to apply the Wise Use Guidelines when executing development projects affecting wetlands. [CPs, Bureau, Partners]

- **Global Target - In the next triennium the application of this tool for promoting Wise Use will be a priority under the Convention. By COP8, the target is to have more than 50 CPs which have completed reviews of their incentive measures.**

Refer to 2.8.1 above. Has your government **completed** a review of its "existing, or evolving, policy, legal and institutional frameworks to identify and promote those measures which encourage conservation and wise use of wetlands and to identify and remove measures which discourage conservation and wise use" (COP7 Resolution VII.15)? **No**

If No, what has been the impediment to this being done? **The focus until now has been on the designation of sites leaving insufficient resources to undertake work in this area.**

If Yes , what actions have been taken to introduce “incentive measures designed to encourage the wise use of wetlands, and to identify and remove perverse incentives where they exist” (COP7 Resolution VII.15). Please elaborate
AND: Have these actions been effective? No Reply
If No , why not? Please elaborate.
If Yes , please describe how.
AND if Yes , COP7 Resolution VII.15 requested Parties to share these “experiences and lessons learned with respect to incentive measures and perverse incentives relating to wetlands, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable use of natural resources generally, by providing these to the Ramsar Bureau for appropriate distribution and to be made available through the Wise Use Resource Centre of the Convention’s Web site”. Has this been done? No Reply
Proposed national actions and targets: Encourage adoption of Wise Use Guidelines into formal and informal planning and assessment procedures. Target 2008
Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.

2.8.3 Encourage the private sector to work in partnership with site managers to monitor the ecological character of wetlands. [CPs]
• This action will be promoted further in the next triennium.
Refer to 2.7.2 above. In addition, have any special efforts been made to encourage the private sector involvement in monitoring? Yes
If No , what has prevented this from happening?
If Yes , describe these special efforts. Duchas has provided funding and staff support for the ornithological monitoring for Waterfowl and Corncrake programmes in conjunction with Birdwatch Ireland. These are very successful projects e.g., monitoring data collected from the Corncrake survey, has influenced the management statutory for the protection of this highly endangered species.
AND: How successful has this been? As mentioned above these two projects have being very successful in providing us with essential monitoring information on the condition of many wetland sites and an endangered species.
Proposed national actions and targets: Continue and encourage participation of the private sector in monitoring activities.
Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action:

Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands

2.8.4 Involve the private sector in the management of wetlands through participation in wetland management committees. [CPs]

- **Global Target - As indicated under 2.7.2 and 2.7.3 above, the establishment of cross-sectoral and stakeholder management committees for wetlands, and especially Ramsar sites, will be a priority in the next triennium.**

Refer to 2.7.3 above

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**GENERAL OBJECTIVE 3
TO RAISE AWARENESS OF WETLAND VALUES AND FUNCTIONS
THROUGHOUT THE WORLD AND AT ALL LEVELS**

Operational Objective 3.1: To support and assist in implementing, in cooperation with partners and other institutions, an international programme of Education and Public Awareness (EPA) on wetlands, their functions and values, designed to promote national EPA programmes.

Actions - Global Targets

3.1.1 Assist in identifying and establishing coordinating mechanisms and structures for the development and implementation of a concerted global programme of EPA on wetlands. [CPs, Bureau, Partners]

Refer to Operational Objectives 3.2 and 3.3 below

3.1.2 Participate in the identification of regional EPA needs and in the establishment of priorities for resource development. [CPs, Bureau, Partners]

Has your country **taken any action** to help with the identification of regional EPA needs and in the establishment of priorities for information/education resource development? **No**

If **No**, what has prevented this from happening? **Limited resources have meant that we were not able to become actively involved in this area other than answering questionnaires related to this issue.**

If **Yes**, please provide details, and as appropriate, provide samples to the Ramsar Bureau for possible inclusion in the Wise Use Resource Centre's clearing house for Wetland Communications, Public Awareness, and Education (CEPA) (COP7 Resolution VII.9). **[REDACTED]**

Proposed national actions and targets: **To increase participation in EPA at regional level, by 2005.**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action:

Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.

3.1.3 Assist in the development of international resource materials in support of national EPA programmes [CPs, Bureau, Partners]

Refer to 3.1.2 above also. Has your country **taken any action** to assist with the development of international wetland CEPA resource materials? **No**

If **Yes**, please provide details, and as appropriate, provide samples to the Ramsar Bureau for possible inclusion in the Wise Use Resource Centre's clearing house for Wetland CEPA (COP7 Resolution VII.9). **[REDACTED]**

If **No**, what has prevented this from happening? **As for 3.1.2.,**

Proposed national actions and targets: **To increase participation in EPA at the international level by 2005.**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.**

3.1.4 Support international programmes that encourage transfer of information, knowledge and skills between wetland education centres and educators (e.g., Wetland International's EPA Working Group, Global Rivers Environment Education Network (GREEN), Wetland Link International). [CPs, Bureau, Partners]

Refer to 3.2.4 also. Does your country support any international programmes that encourage transfer of information, knowledge and skills among wetland education centres and educators? **No**

If **No**, what are the impediments to this occurring? **As for 3.1.2. As part of the National Biodiversity Plan an internet based National Clearing House Mechanism will be developed. This will involve developing a website which will publish the information, skills and knowledge available in Ireland on biodiversity related issues including wetlands.**

If **Yes**, please provide details. **[REDACTED]**

Is your country specifically supporting the Wetlands Link International initiative (COP7 Resolution VII.9)? **No**

If **No**, what is preventing this from happening? **Funding unavailable.**

If **Yes**, please provide details. **[REDACTED]**

AND indicate which Wetland Centres (refer 3.2.3 below), museums, zoos, botanic gardens, aquaria and educational environment education centres (refer 3.2.4) are now participating as part of Wetlands Link International. **[REDACTED]**

Proposed national actions and targets: **Provide wetland related information to the National**

Clearing House Mechanism.

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action:

Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.

Operational Objective 3.2: To develop and encourage national programmes of EPA on wetlands, targeted at a wide range of people, including key decision-makers, people living in and around wetlands, other wetland users and the public at large.

Actions - Global and National Targets

3.2.1 Encourage partnerships between governments, non-governmental organizations and other organizations capable of developing national EPA programmes on wetlands. [CPs, Bureau, Partners]

- **Global Target - By COP8 to see the global network of proposed CP and non-government focal points for Wetland Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) in place and functioning effectively in the promotion and execution of the national Outreach Programmes in all CPs. To secure the resources to increase the Bureau's capacity for implementing the Outreach Programme.**

Did your Government **inform** the Ramsar Bureau by 31 December 1999 of the identity of its Government and Non-Government Focal Points for wetland CEPA (COP7 Resolution VII.9)?

No

If **No**, what has prevented this from occurring? **Lack of resources to undertake this work.**

Has your country **established** an "appropriately constituted Task Forces, where no mechanism exists for this purpose (e.g., National Ramsar Committees), to undertake a review of national needs, capacities and opportunities in the field of wetland CEPA and, based on this, to formulate its National Wetland CEPA Action Plans for priority activities which consider the international, regional, national and local needs" (COP7 Resolution VII.9). **No**

If **No**, what has prevented this from occurring? **Lack of resources to undertake this work.**

If **Yes**, please provide details of the organizations, ministries, etc., represented on this Task Force.

AND: Has a National Wetland CEPA Action Plan been finalized by 31 December 2000?

No Reply

If **No**, what has prevented this from occurring?

If **Yes**, is the Action Plan being implemented effectively? **No Reply**

If **No**, what is preventing this from occurring? **Please elaborate.**

If **Yes**, what are the priority target groups of the Action Plan and the major activities being undertaken?

AND: Has a copy of this plan been provided to the Ramsar Bureau? **No Reply**

Proposed national actions and targets: **To set up a National Ramsar Committee and identify government and non-government focal points by 2004**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.**

3.2.2 On the basis of identified needs and target groups, support national programmes and campaigns to generate a positive vision of wetlands and create awareness at all levels of their values and functions. [CPs, Bureau, Partners]

- **Global Target - see 3.2.1 above.**

3.2.3 Encourage the development of educational centres at wetland sites. [CPs, Bureau, Partners]

- **Global Target - The Convention will aim to have more than 150 active education centres (and similar venues - see 3.2.4 below) promoting the principles of the Convention by COP8 and to ensure that all CPs have at least one such centre.**

Has your country **encouraged** the establishment of educational centres at wetland sites? **Yes**

If **No**, what has been the impediment to such action being taken? **Please elaborate.**

If **Yes**, how successful has this been? **Ireland encourages the provision of visitor facilities where this is consistent with the conservation of the site and all the sites attract significant numbers of visitors.**

AND: How many such centres are in place? and at what sites? **4. Three at Ramsar sites (Coole Lough/Garryland Wood, Wexford Wildfowl Reserve and North Bull Island) and one at Connemara National Park.**

How many centres are being established? and at what sites? **1. Clara Bog, also a Ramsar site.**

How many centres are being planned? and at what sites? **1. Ballycroy National Park, Co Mayo.**

Of the sites in place, how many are participating as part of Wetlands Link International (Refer 3.1.4 above)? and at which sites are they? **None**

Proposed national actions and targets: **Increase numbers and establish links with Wetlands Link International where appropriate by 2005**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.**

3.2.4 Work with museums, zoos, botanic gardens, aquaria and environment education

centres to encourage the development of exhibits and programmes that support non-formal EPA on wetlands. [CPs, Bureau, Partners]

- **Global Target - see 3.2.3 above**

Do all museums, zoos, botanical gardens and similar facilities in your country have exhibits and/or programmes that support non-formal wetland CEPA? **Yes/No**

If **No**, what are the impediments to this occurring? **Resource availability and for some types of museums, etc., wetland exhibiting may not be appropriate.**

If such exhibits or programmes are in place for some facilities, how many and what types of facilities are they? **Very little information is available on this issue. The Natural History Museum has a Wetland Trail and The Corlea Trackway Visitor Centre highlights the importance of bogs for preserving archaeological material. Other sites may also have small exhibits but the total number of exhibits involved is likely to be quite small.**

If **Yes**, how many facilities does this apply to and how many of these are participating as part of Wetlands Link International (Refer 3.1.4 above)? and which facilities are they?

Proposed national actions and targets: **Encourage a significant increase in the numbers and quality of such exhibits by 2008**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.**

3.2.5 Encourage the inclusion of modules related to wetlands in the curricula at all levels of education, including tertiary courses and specialized training courses. [CPs, Bureau, Partners]

- **Global Target - By COP8, to see wetland issues incorporated into curricula in over 100 CPs.**

In your country are there modules related to wetlands in the curricula at all levels of education, including tertiary courses and specialized training courses? **No**

If **No**, what is preventing this from occurring? **The first priority has been to strengthen general environmental education within the educational system. Such programmes are now an integral part of the school curricula, both as a subject in its own right and integrated with other subjects. The coverage of wetland related issues remains uneven especially at Primary and Secondary levels. There is however an increasing availability of teaching aids on wetland related issues developed by ENFO and a range of other organisations including NGOs. Under the National Heritage Plan a Task Force will be established to review the role of the formal education system in heritage education and awareness. The Task Force will coordinate the development of practical resources to assist with the intergration of heritage awarness into the education system.**

If this is the case for some levels of education, or some parts of the country, please provide details.

If **Yes**, have samples of this curriculum material been provided to the Ramsar Bureau for possible inclusion in the Wise Use Resource Centre? **Yes/No**

Proposed national actions and targets: **Through our membership of the Task Force to encourage the Department of Education to include materials related to wetland issues in the education curriculum**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.**

Operational Objective 3.3: To improve the Ramsar Bureau's communications activities and to develop a Convention Communications Strategy, capable of further promoting the Convention and its wider application, and of raising awareness of wetland values and functions.

Actions - Global and National Targets

3.3.1 Review the Bureau's communications activities, especially those related to the creation and functioning of regional and national communication networks; develop new material and use of technology, and improve existing material. [Bureau]

Refer to 3.2.1 "To secure the resources to increase the Bureau's capacity for implementing the Outreach Programme.". Has your government provided any voluntary contributions to increase the Bureau's capacity for implementing the Outreach Programme? **No**

If **Yes**, please provide details.

Proposed national actions and targets: **The provision of such funding will be considered.**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.**

3.3.4 Seek the support of an electronic communications carrier to provide and maintain an electronic mail network and electronic bulletin board/ mailing lists linking the Contracting Parties, Standing Committee members, the STRP, the Bureau, and partner organizations. [All]

- **Global Target - By COP8, to gain a sponsor(s) for the Convention's Web site, to ensure that all CPs have Internet access, to increase the use of French and Spanish in the Ramsar Web site, and to see over 300 Ramsar site managers also communicating with the Bureau, and each other, via the Internet.**

The Standing Committee and Bureau will consider the issue of a sponsor for the Convention's Web site, and increased presence of French and Spanish materials on the Web site.

With respect to Ramsar site managers, has your government taken steps to provide for Internet links for these people? **Yes**

If No , what are the impediments to this action being taken? Please elaborate.
If Yes , how many Ramsar site managers have Internet access? All
AND: Which Ramsar sites have this facility? North Bull Island, Wexford Wildfowl Reserve, Coole Lough/Garryland Wood.
Proposed national actions and targets: Encourage contact between Irish Ramsar site managers and other managers in the next three years.
Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands

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Please go to file 2.

National planning tool for the implementation of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands

(And the approved format for National Reports to be submitted for the 8th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, Spain, 2002)

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file 2

GENERAL OBJECTIVE 4

TO REINFORCE THE CAPACITY OF INSTITUTIONS IN EACH CONTRACTING PARTY TO ACHIEVE CONSERVATION AND WISE USE OF WETLANDS

Operational Objective 4.1: To develop the capacity of institutions in Contracting Parties, particularly in developing countries, to achieve conservation and wise use of wetlands.

Actions - Global and National Targets

4.1.1 Review existing national institutions responsible for the conservation and wise use of wetlands. [CPs]

Has your country reviewed the national institutions responsible for wetland conservation and wise use and the “designated national Administrative Authority for the Convention to ensure [that] these have the necessary resources to support the increasing demands being placed upon them by the growing expectations of the Convention” (COP7 Resolution VII.27)? **No**

If **No**, what is the impediment to this being done? **The national priority has been to concentrate limited resources on the designation of Natura 2000 sites . The National Biodiversity Plan now commits Ireland to fully implement the Ramsar Convention. Thus it should be possible to undertake such a review in the next triennium.**

If **Yes**, what were the conclusions and outcomes of the review? (Refer to 4.1.2 also). **Please elaborate.**

Proposed national actions and targets: **Planned review should be completed by 2005**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltachts and the Islands**

4.1.2 On the basis of such a review, identify and implement measures to:

- **increase cooperation and synergy between institutions;**
 - **promote the continued operation of these institutions;**
 - **provide appropriately trained staff, in adequate numbers, for these institutions.**
- [CPs]

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global Target - By COP8, to see coordinating mechanisms in place in all CPs, and more particularly to see National Ramsar Committees including government and non-government stakeholder representatives, in place in more than 100 CPs. In addition, by COP8, all CPs that have reported the existence of NRCs at COP7 to have evaluated their effectiveness (COP7 Resolution VII.27).
Refer also to 8.1.9. Does your country have a National Ramsar Committee or similar body? No
If No , what has prevented the establishment of such a committee? Lack of resources to carry out the task..
If Yes , is the committee cross-sectoral, including representatives of appropriate government ministries and non-government expert and stakeholder groups? No Reply
What is the composition of this Committee?
Has there been an evaluation of the effectiveness of the Committee? No Reply
If No , what has prevented this from happening? Please elaborate.
If Yes , did the review show the Committee was proving to be effective? No Reply
If No , why not?
Refer also to 7.2.1 with reference to coordinating the implementation of international conventions.
Proposed national actions and targets: Set up committee, proposed target 2003
Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands

Operational Objective 4.2: To identify the training needs of institutions and individuals concerned with the conservation and wise use of wetlands, particularly in developing countries, and to implement follow-up actions.

Actions - Global and National Targets
4.2.1 Identify at national, provincial and local level the needs and target audiences for training in implementation of the Wise Use Guidelines. [CPs, Bureau, Partners]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global Target - By COP8, to have training needs analyses completed in more than 75 CPs.
Has a training needs analysis been completed? No
If No , what has prevented this from happening? Little progress has been made in this area with the exception of a training needs analysis completed for the Duchas Conservation Rangers who are involved with Ramsar Site management.
If Yes , have the results of this analysis been used to provide direction for training priorities in

the future? No Reply
If No, why not? Please elaborate.
If Yes, how has this been done? Please elaborate.
AND: What impact has this had on the national training effort? Please elaborate.
Proposed national actions and targets: Training needs analyses by 2005
Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.

4.2.2 Identify current training opportunities in disciplines essential for the conservation and wise use of wetlands. [CPs, Bureau, Partners]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global Target - By COP8, to have reviews of training opportunities completed in more than 75 CPs.
Has your country completed a review of the training opportunities which exist therein? No
If No, what are the impediments to this being done? Lack of resources.
If Yes, have the results of this review been used to provide direction for training priorities in the future? No Reply
If No, why not? Please elaborate.
If Yes, how has this been done? Please elaborate.
AND: What impact has this had on the national training effort? Please elaborate.
Has this information on training opportunities been provided to the Ramsar Bureau for inclusion in the Directory of Wetland Manager Training Opportunities? (Refer to 4.2.3 below also) No
Proposed national actions and targets: Training Opportunities Review , target 2005
Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands

4.2.3 Develop new training activities and general training modules, for application in all regions, concerning implementation of the Wise Use Guidelines, with specialized modules covering [CPs, Bureau, Partners]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global Target - To launch a major wetland manager training initiative under the Convention, possibly in partnership with one or more of the Convention's International Organization Partners, which can promote and take advantage of these new training tools. Refer also to 4.2.4 below regarding the <i>Wetlands for the Future Initiative</i>.

Following its review of training needs and opportunities, has your country developed any new training activities, or training modules? **No**

If Yes, please provide details. **[REDACTED]**

AND: Has information on these training activities and modules been provided to the Ramsar Bureau for inclusion in the Directory of Wetland Manager Training Opportunities and the Wise Use Resource Centre? (Refer to 4.2.2 above also) **No Reply**

Proposed national actions and targets: **Develop training in relation to monitoring and restoration of raised bogs by 2005**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.**

4.2.4 Provide opportunities for manager training by: personnel exchanges for on-the-job training; holding pilot training courses at specific Ramsar sites; siting wetland manager training facilities at Ramsar sites; obtaining and disseminating information about training courses for wetland managers around the world. [CPs, Bureau, Partners]

- **Global Target - Refer to 4.2.3 above. Also to seek the resources from donors or interested CPs to establish *Wetlands for the Future Initiatives* for the Asia-Pacific, Eastern European, and African regions.**

Refer to 4.2.1, 4.2.2, and 4.2.3 above. Has training been provided for wetland managers:

- Through personnel exchanges for on-the-job training? **Yes, a one year exchange was arranged with the South Australian Wildlife Service and Duchas for the Manager of the Wexford Wildfowl Reserve.**
- Holding pilot training courses at specific Ramsar sites? **Yes, a training course was held at Pollardstown Fen into the identification and management requirements of the protected mollusc, *Vertigo geyeri*.**
- Siting wetland manager training facilities at Ramsar sites? **No, Please elaborate.**
- Obtaining and disseminating information about training courses for wetland managers? **Yes, Use is made of the Eurosite Workshop Programme to provide our wetland managers with training in best practice at various wetland sites throughout Europe. Other wetland management courses are organised inhouse on an ongoing basis.**

Has your country provided resources to support the establishment of *Wetlands for the Future* style programmes in any part of the world? (COP7 Recommendation 7.4) **No**

If Yes, please provide details. **[REDACTED]**

Proposed national actions and targets: **Continue current training programmes, and begin training on raised bog management issues in 2003**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.**

4.2.6 Exchange information, technical assistance and advice, and expertise about the conservation and wise use of wetlands, also with regard to South-South cooperation. [CPs, Bureau, Partners]

Refer to 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 4.2.1-4 above. Has your country specifically undertaken activities as indicated here which could be deemed to be South-South cooperation? **No**

If **No**, what has prevented this from happening? **The relatively low level of public awareness of the environmental importance of wetlands means that wise use has not received sufficient priority within our international development cooperation programme.**

If **Yes**, please provide details.

Proposed national actions and targets: **We are at present exchanging information with United Kingdom and The Netherlands on management of raised bogs, which will be continued and extended to other habitats, in the context of Habitats and Water Framework Directive. Duchas will work with The Department of Foreign Affairs to raise the profile of wise use of wetlands within their development aid programme.**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Dúchas, Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.**

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GENERAL OBJECTIVE 5

TO ENSURE THE CONSERVATION OF ALL SITES INCLUDED IN THE LIST OF WETLANDS OF INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE (RAMSAR LIST)

Operational Objective 5.1: To maintain the ecological character of Ramsar sites.

Actions - Global and National Targets

5.1.1 Define and apply the precise measures required to maintain the ecological character of each listed site, in the light of the working definitions of ecological character adopted at the 6th COP (1996) and amended by Resolution VII.10 of COP7. [CPs]

- **Global Target - By COP8, each CP will seek to ensure that the measures required to maintain the ecological character of at least half of the Ramsar sites have been documented.**

Have the measures required to maintain the ecological character of Ramsar sites in your country been documented? **Yes/No**

If **No**, what has prevented this being done? **43 of 45 Ramsar sites have had the main measures necessary for the maintenance of their ecological character identified. Two sites, Glen Lough and Lough Oughter have yet to have such measures identified.**

If **Yes**, has this documentation been developed as part of management planning and associated action at the sites? **Yes**

AND: Has a copy been provided to the Ramsar Bureau? **No**

Proposed national actions and targets: **Management plans will be provided to the Bureau when the public consultation process is completed and an agreed plan is available.**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Dúchas, Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.**

5.1.2 Conduct regular internal reviews to identify potential changes in ecological character, with input from local communities and other stakeholders; take remedial action and/or nominate the site for the Montreux Record. [CPs]

- **Refer to 2.5.2 - In the COP7 National Reports, 35 CPs reported Ramsar sites where some change in ecological character had occurred or was likely to occur in the near future. This was true for 115 sites in 33 CPs, and two other CPs stated that changes had occurred to all or some of their sites. In COP7 Resolution VII.12, these CPs were urged to consider nominating these sites to the Montreux Record.**
- **Global Target – In the period up to COP8, promote the application and benefits of the Montreux Record as a tool of the Convention through disseminating reports and publications on the positive outcomes achieved by a number of countries which have now removed sites from the Record.**

Refer to 2.7.2 and 2.8.3 also. Are regular internal reviews undertaken to identify factors potentially altering the ecological character of Ramsar sites? **Yes/No**

If **No**, what are the impediments to this occurring? **Monitoring is an integral part of our management planning system, and its results will be used to identify what changes are required. A basic monitoring programme called Site and Condition Monitoring commenced 3 years ago. However it has only collected baseline information to date and the first review is yet to be completed. Despite this it is possible to make the following statements concerning sites identified as suffering adverse change in the previous national report.**

1. Peat cutting and drainage were noted as causing problems at 3 raised bog sites, Mongan, Clara and Raheenmore. All surface drains on the 3 bogs are blocked and surface rewetting and Sphagnum regeneration is occurring locally. Turf cutting which was taking place at Clara and Mongan is decreasing in intensity and will be phased out by 2008. Drying out due to peat cutting is expected to continue for some time until a new hydrological equilibrium is reached. Attempts to prevent such drying out by the installation of large dams have had mixed success with 2 of the 3 dams built at Raheenmore Bog collapsing. The remaining dam appears to be stable and has had significant positive effects on the bog.

2. Since the last report overgrazing pressures on most blanket bogs and wet heaths have been reduced due to an agricultural extensification scheme under the Rural Environment Protection Scheme which has, to date, included compensation payments

for a 30% reduction in stocking levels on sensitive areas. A major survey is almost complete to identify levels of damage and the necessary stock reductions on individual agricultural units. A monitoring programme is being put in place to detect favourable or unfavourable trends and the scheme will be adjusted accordingly. Until such monitoring data is available it will not be possible to say if conditions on specific sites are improving or disimproving.

3. After increasing for almost 3 decades eutrophication levels in Irelands rivers and lakes have started to fall. There has been an increase in unpolluted channel length from 67 % to 70% and a 28% increase in the lake area classified as unpolluted when comparing figures for 1998 to 2000 against those for 1995 to 1997. These favourable changes have been due to the catchment management initiatives, mentioned in the previous report, to major increases in tertiary treatment at sewage treatment plants and to agricultural nutrient initiatives. The implementation of the Water Framework Directive to all waters in the State, should lead to further improvements in future years. A major investment of €2.4 billion, in waste water treatment is taking place under the National Development Plan 2000 -2006. The Agricultural sector is now the biggest single contributor of nutrients to water, accounting for 73% of all phosphorus and 82% of nitrate inputs. It is expected that inputs from this source will be reduced by initiatives associated with the Phosphorus Regulations 1988. Despite the overall improvement eutrophication problems will continue to occur at some sites during unfavourable weather conditions until nutrient levels drop further.

The rapid spread of the invasive alien Zebra Mussel (*Dreissena polymorpha*), which entered Ireland in the mid 90's, will cause significant changes in some fresh water systems. It has invaded the Shannon and Erne river catchments which contain all of the lakes on our Ramsar list. To date it has not invaded any of these lakes but given its rate of spread it can be expected to colonise all of them within the next decade. Based on our experience to date, the initial build up of large population leads to improvements in water transparency, especially in lakes suffering from eutrophication. The longer term implications for the biology of these systems and their conservation interest remains unclear and is currently under study.

4. No significant impacts have been detected to date from the road bypass on Pollardstown Fen or by the landfill adjacent to Rogerstown Estuary.

If Yes, have these reviews detected situations where changes in ecological character have occurred or may occur? **No Reply**

If Yes, for how many sites was this case, which sites were they, and what actions were taken to address these threats? **Please elaborate.**

AND: Were these sites where change in ecological character was detected, or may occur, added to the Montreux Record? **No Reply**

If No, why not? **Please elaborate.**

Proposed national actions and targets: **To continue to monitor sites and where significant adverse change is detected to consider adding the sites to the Montreux Record if appropriate.**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Dúchas, Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.**

5.1.3 Review and regularly update the Montreux Record (Resolutions 5.4, 5.5, and VI.1). [CPs, STRP, Bureau]

- **Global Target - CPs with Ramsar sites in the Montreux Record, and for which Ramsar Advisory Missions (RAMs) have been completed prior to COP7, are expected to have taken the actions necessary to warrant their removal from the Record before COP8.**

For those CPs with a site, or sites, included in the Montreux Record, and for which RAMs (previously Management Guidance Procedures, MGPs) have been completed, have all actions recommended by the RAM been undertaken for each site? **No Reply**

If **No**, what are the impediments to this occurring? **Please elaborate.**

If **Yes**, have these actions resulted in a restoration of the ecological character? **No Reply**

AND: If **Yes**, has the site been removed from the Montreux Record following the completion of the necessary questionnaire (COP6 Resolution VI.1)? **No Reply Additional comment?**

Proposed national actions and targets: **As for 5.1.2.**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Dúchas, Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.**

Operational Objective 5.2: To develop and implement management plans for all Ramsar sites, consistent with the Convention's Guidelines on Management Planning and emphasizing involvement of local communities and other stakeholders.

Actions - Global and National Targets

5.2.3 Ensure that, by the 8th COP (2002), management plans or other mechanisms are in preparation, or in place, for at least half of the Ramsar sites in each Contracting Party, beginning with pilot programmes at selected sites with input from local communities and other stakeholders. [CPs, Partners]

- **Global Target - By COP8, management plans will be in preparation, or in place, for at least three-quarters of the Ramsar sites in each CP and all CPs will seek to ensure that these are being implemented in full.**

Do all the Ramsar sites in your country have management plans **in place?** **No**

If **No**, how many sites do not have management plans in place and which sites are they? **No Ramsar site has a plan which has gone through the full public consultation phase leading to a finalised plan, 2 are in this phase (Mongan and Raheenmore Bogs) and 38 are almost ready to begin that phase.**

If plans are being prepared for some sites, please indicate which sites these are. **Plans are in**

preparation for all but 2 sites (Glen Lough and Lough Oughter).

For those sites where management plans are in place, how many of these are being implemented fully, and which sites are they?

Where plans are not in place, or not being fully implemented, what has prevented this from being done? **Until the Management Plans have gone through the public consultation phase and an agreed final plan produced they cannot be implemented.**

Proposed national actions and targets: **Complete the Draft Management Plan for all Ramsar Sites currently on the list and expedite the production of the final plan for each site.**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Dúchas, Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.**

5.2.4 Promote the establishment and implementation of zoning measures related to larger Ramsar sites, wetland reserves and other wetlands (Kushiro Recommendation 5.3). [CPs, Partners]

For those sites where it is warranted, are zoning measures being used to regulate the activities allowed in different parts of the wetlands? **No**

If **No**, what is preventing these from being implemented? **Zoning is an integral part of our Management Plans. As no plans are yet finalised, formal Zoning is not being implemented currently. However most landowners in Ramsar sites have been provided with habitat specific lists of notifiable actions for which clearance must be sought from the Minister prior to implementation.**

If **Yes**, for which sites are these in place?

AND: Are they proving a successful management tool? **Please elaborate.**

Have you provided the Ramsar Bureau with information regarding such cases of zoning for possible inclusion in the Wise Use Resource Centre? **No Reply**

Proposed national actions and targets: **Expedite production of completed plans and their implementation .**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.**

5.2.5 Promote the establishment and implementation of strict protection measures for certain Ramsar sites and other wetlands of small size and/or particular sensitivity (Recommendation 5.3). [CPs, Partners]

- **This aspect of Ramsar site management was not considered in the COP7 National Reports and will have to be reviewed in time for COP8.**
- **Global Target - Provide for consideration at COP8 detailed information on the implementation of strict protection measures at small and/or sensitive sites.**

For those sites where it is warranted, are strict protection measures being used to regulate the activities allowed in different parts of the wetlands? No
If No , what is preventing these from being implemented? The same protection measures are being used for both small and large sites (see 5.2.4 above). Particularly sensitive sites will be zoned to take their sensitivities into account. At the landscape level such sensitivities will be taken into account in the River Basin Management Plans, required under the Water Framework Directive, which are now being drawn up.
If Yes , for which sites are these in place?
AND: Is this proving to be a successful management tool? Please elaborate.
Have you provided the Ramsar Bureau with information regarding such cases for possible inclusion in the Wise Use Resource Centre? No Reply
Proposed national actions and targets: Continue to draw up appropriate Management Plans and incorporate the requirements of the Ramsar sites and all other designated wetlands into the River Basin Management Plans.
Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: Duchas, Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.

Operational Objective 5.3: To obtain regularly updated information on wetlands of international importance, in accordance with the approved standard format.

Actions - Global and National Targets
5.3.1 Ensure that the maps and descriptions of Ramsar sites submitted to the Ramsar Database by the Contracting Parties at the time of designation are complete, in the approved standard format of the Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands, and provide sufficient detail to be used for management planning and monitoring of ecological character. [CPs, Bureau, Wetlands International]
5.3.2 Ensure that missing or incomplete data sheets and/or maps of listed sites are submitted as a matter of priority and in the shortest possible time, as a means to enhance the relevance and use of the Ramsar Database. [CPs]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global Target – By the end of 1999, for there to be no Ramsar sites for which appropriate sites descriptions and maps are still required.
If yours is one of the CPs referred to in COP7 Resolution VII.12 as not having provided a Ramsar (Site) Information Sheet in the approved format, with a suitable map, in one of three working languages of the Convention, has this now be rectified? No
If No , what is preventing this from being done? Other priorities have until recently prevented work from being undertaken in this area. However for the 18 new sites preposed RISs will be provided prior to COP8 and for the currently listed sites by COP9

5.3.3 Ensure that data sheets on Ramsar Sites are regularly updated, at least for every

second meeting of the COP, so that they can be used for reviewing the achievements of the Convention, for future strategic planning, for promotional purposes, and for site, regional and thematic analysis (Resolution VI.13). [CPs, STRP, Bureau, Wetlands International]

- **Global Target - By the end of 1999, for there to be no Ramsar sites designated before 31 December 1990 for which updated site descriptions are still required.**

If yours is one of the CPs referred to in COP7 Resolution VII.12 as not having provided an updated Ramsar (Site) Information Sheet for sites designated before 31 December 1990, has this now be rectified? **No**

If **No**, what is preventing this from being done? **See section 5.3.2 above**

Proposed national actions and targets: **Completed and updated information provided by 2005**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.**

Operational Objective 5.4: To keep under review the content and structure, as well as the hardware and software, of the Ramsar Database, in order to ensure that it retains its relevance in light of evolving information and communication technology.

Actions - Global and National Targets

5.4.1 Assess data currently available in the database and identify any gaps in the data provided by Contracting Parties. [CPs, STRP, Bureau, Wetlands International]

Refer to 5.2.2, 5.2.3, and 5.2.4 above.

5.4.4 Support the establishment of national wetland databases compatible with the Ramsar Database and develop a common protocol to facilitate exchange and interaction. [CPs, Partners]

- **Global Target - By COP8, to have national wetland databases in over 50 CPs which are accessible globally.**

Refer also to 6.1.1 and 6.1.2. Does your country have a national wetland database? **No**

If **No**, what is preventing such a database being established? **At present there is a series of databases of SACs, SPAs and NHAs, supported by Dúchas. One of these is available on the Internet and includes maps of the sites and site synopses but it does not include detailed site descriptions. Databases of undesignated sites are poorly developed and a full listing would require a full national survey of the very numerous wetlands known to occur throughout the country, but which have never been documented.**

If **Yes**, is this database generally available for reference and application by all ministries and stakeholders? **No Reply**

If **No**, why not? **Please elaborate.**

AND: Is it available through the Internet? (COP7 Resolution VII.20) No Reply
If Yes , please provide details. [REDACTED]
If No , why not? [REDACTED]
AND: Is it available on CD-Rom? (COP7 Resolution VII.20) No Reply
If Yes , please provide details. [REDACTED]
If No , why not? [REDACTED]
Proposed national actions and targets: As part of Irelands response to the Water Framework Directive, there is a requirement to combine many different data sets to allow the catchments to be properly characterised. For this purpose a Central Reporting and Data Management Unit has been proposed. Dúchas is committed to further developing and intergrating our data bases on protected areas in order to be in a position to provide the information required by other users by 2006.
Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.

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GENERAL OBJECTIVE 6

TO DESIGNATE FOR THE RAMSAR LIST THOSE WETLANDS WHICH MEET THE CONVENTION'S CRITERIA, ESPECIALLY WETLAND TYPES STILL UNDER-REPRESENTED IN THE LIST AND TRANSFRONTIER WETLANDS

Operational Objective 6.1: To identify those wetlands that meet the Ramsar criteria, and to give due consideration to their designation for the List.

Actions - Global and National Targets
6.1.1 Develop, regularly update -- especially in the case of Africa -- and disseminate regional wetland directories, which identify potential Ramsar sites. [CPs, Partners]
Refer to 6.1.2 and 6.2.1. Does there exist for your country a directory or similar listing of sites which are potential Ramsar sites? No
If No , what are the impediments to such a list of sites being prepared? No comprehensive wetland inventory exists but wetland sites on the Natura 2000 list for Ireland can provide a useful list of important sites from which further Ramsar sites could be selected. The resources to undertake this selection work to ensure appropriate sites, unique or representative was until recently unavailable.

If **Yes**, when was it prepared and was it prepared taking into consideration the *Strategic Framework and guidelines for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance* (COP7 Resolution VII.11)? **No Reply**

AND: How many potential Ramsar sites are identified within the important sites directory for your country?

Proposed national actions and targets: **By 2005, draw up a list of potential Ramsar sites based on the final list of Natura 2000 sites for Ireland.**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands**

6.1.2 Establish, update and disseminate national scientific inventories of wetlands which identify potential Ramsar sites and wetlands of provincial or local importance in the territory of each Contracting Party. [CPs, Partners]

- **Global Target - By COP8, to have national wetland inventories completed by over 50 CPs and the information housed in databases (Refer to 5.4.4) which are accessible globally**

Does there exist a comprehensive national inventory (as opposed to a directory of important sites; see 6.1.1 above) for your country? **No**

If **No**, what are the impediments to such an inventory being prepared? **No comprehensive wetland inventory for the country is available as the necessary surveys have not been completed. The inventory information so far obtained was collected in different ways and for different purposes over the years, it does not have a standard format and is therefore difficult to analyse.**

If only some parts of the country have had inventories completed, please indicate which parts these are. **None**

AND: What is the likely timeframe for completing the national inventory? **10 Years or longer**

If a national inventory has already been completed, when was it finalized?

AND: Is the information housed where it is accessible to stakeholders and the international community? (COP7 Resolution VII.20) **Yes/No**

If **No**, what are the impediments to this occurring? **The information is accessible from Dúchas files. However, in practical terms, as much of the data is not in electronic form significant practical problems exist in providing public access to it.**

Has national/subnational inventory information been provided to the Ramsar Bureau (if it is not accessible through the Internet)? **No**

Proposed national actions and targets: **To continue with the survey of wetland habitats**

with the aim of surveying all important sites within 10 years.

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action:

Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.

6.1.4 Support the work of Wetlands International and IUCN in updating information on population sizes of waterfowl and other taxa, and utilize these data in identification of potential Ramsar sites. [CPs, Bureau, Partners]

Does your country regularly gather waterbird population data? **Yes**

If **No**, what prevents this from happening? **Please elaborate.**

If **Yes**, is this information provided to Wetlands International? **Yes**

If **No**, why not? **Please elaborate.**

Proposed national actions and targets: **Continue and expand as necessary the collection, analysis and review of ornithological data for monitoring and Ramsar site identification purposes.**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action:

Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands and Birdwatch Ireland.

Operational Objective 6.2: To increase the area of wetland designated for the List of Wetlands of International Importance, particularly for wetland types that are under-represented either at global or national level.

Actions - Global and National Targets

6.2.1 Promote the designation for the Ramsar List of an increased area of wetland, through listing by new Contracting Parties, and through further designations by current Contracting Parties, in particular developing countries, in order to ensure the listing of a representative range of wetland types in the territory of each Contracting Party and in each Ramsar region. [CPs, Bureau, Partners]

- **Global Target - As proposed in the Strategic Framework, the short-term target of the Ramsar List should be to achieve the designation of 2000 sites, in accordance with the systematic approach advocated therein, by the time of COP9 in the year 2005. In addition, by COP8 the target is to have at least 20 CPs that are applying a systematic approach to site selection nationally.**

Refer also to 6.1.1, 6.1.2, and 6.2.3. Has your country taken a systematic approach to identifying its future Ramsar sites (as promoted in the *Strategic Framework for the List – COP7 Resolution VII.11*)? **No**

If **No**, what are the impediments to this being done? **Lack of a comprehensive wetland inventory and the resources to analyse the material which already exists in a systematic**

manner.
If Yes , has this included considerations to ensure the designation of a representative range of wetland types? No Reply
If No , why not? Please elaborate.
If Yes , has this resulted in the designation of a representative range of wetland types? No Reply
Proposed national actions and targets: Before COP9, to analyse our current Ramsar list for significant gaps and to put forward appropriate sites to fill such gaps from our current Natura 2000 series.
Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.

<p>6.2.3 Give priority attention to the designation of new sites from wetland types currently under-represented on the Ramsar List, and in particular, when appropriate, coral reefs, mangroves, sea-grass beds and peatlands. [CPs]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global Targets - The long-term targets are set by the <i>Strategic Framework and guidelines for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance</i> (COP7 Resolution VII.11). Based on this, short-term targets for each wetland type will be derived [by the STRP].
Further to 6.2.1 above: If your territory includes under-represented wetland types, has special attention been given to identifying suitable sites for designation? Yes
If No , what has prevented this from occurring? Please elaborate.
<p>If Yes, has this included designations of wetlands including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> coral reefs? No mangroves? No seagrass beds? Yes peatlands? Yes intertidal wetlands? (COP7 Resolution VII.21) Yes
Proposed national actions and targets: At present of our 45 Ramsar sites at least 3 have seagrass beds, 11 are peatlands and 20 contain intertidal wetland. We will continue to identify suitable sites and seek to increase the number of designated seagrass beds and peatlands in particular.
Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.

<p>6.2.4 Pay particular attention to the designation of new sites currently enjoying no special conservation status at national level, as a first step towards developing measures for their conservation and wise use. [CPs]</p>
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- **This question was not considered in the National Reports for COP7. It will be included for consideration in the NRs for COP8.**
- **Global Target - All CPs to consider this approach to ensuring the long-term conservation and wise use of wetlands that are subject to intense human use.**

Has your country designated wetland sites for the Ramsar List which previously had no special conservation status? **No**

If **No**, what has prevented this from happening? **Only sites proposed for the Natura 2000 Network or as NHAs currently have legislative protection. It is our policy not to list as Ramsar sites areas which do not have such legislative protection.**

If **Yes**, please provide details.

AND: Are there plans for further such designations? **No**

If **No**, why not? **See above.**

If **Yes**, please elaborate.

Proposed national actions and targets: **It is proposed to designate a considerable number of wetland sites as NHAs within the next triennium which will afford them statutory protection.**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands**

6.2.5 Consider as a matter of priority the designation of transfrontier wetland sites. [CPs]

- **The issue of transfrontier or shared wetlands is addressed in the *Guidelines for international cooperation under the Ramsar Convention (COP7 Resolution VII.19)* and the *Guidelines for integrating wetlands into river basin management (COP7 Resolution VII.18)*.**
- **Global Target - By COP8, for there to be over 50 transfrontier wetland sites designated under the Convention.**

For those CPs which 'share' wetlands with other CPs, have all suitable sites been designated under the Convention? **No**

If **No**, what has prevented this action being taken? **The Republic of Ireland shares a number of important wetland sites with Northern Ireland which may merit Ramsar status. There is increasing co-operation in the designation of crossborder SACs and SPAs.**

If **Yes**, are there arrangements in place between the CPs sharing the wetland for the cooperative management of the site? **No Reply**

If **No**, what has prevented such arrangements from being introduced? **Please elaborate.**

Proposed national actions and targets: **To review with Northern Ireland the possibility of designating at least one of the crossborder SACs or SPAs as a Ramsar site during the next triennium.**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands and Environment and Heritage Service, Northern Ireland.**

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GENERAL OBJECTIVE 7

TO PROMOTE INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND MOBILIZE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR WETLAND CONSERVATION AND WISE USE IN COLLABORATION WITH OTHER CONVENTIONS AND AGENCIES, BOTH GOVERNMENTAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL

Operational Objective 7.1: To identify international and/or regional needs for managing shared wetlands and shared catchments, and develop and implement common approaches.

Actions - Global and National Targets

7.1.1 Identify transfrontier wetlands of international importance (including those within shared catchment/river basins), and encourage preparation and implementation of joint plans for such sites, using a “catchment approach” (Recommendation 5.3). [CPs, Partners]

Refer to 6.2.5 above.

7.1.2 Encourage twinning of transfrontier wetlands, and of other wetlands with similar characteristics, and use successful cases for illustrating the benefits of international cooperation. [CPs, Bureau, Partners]

- **Both the *Guidelines for international cooperation under the Ramsar Convention* (COP7 Resolution VII.19) and the *Convention’s Outreach Programme* (COP7 Resolution VII.9) promote site twinning as a mechanism for accelerating the flow of knowledge and assistance and promoting training opportunities.**
- **Global Target - By COP8 to have in place over 100 Ramsar site twinning arrangements. The Bureau will keep a record of which sites are twinned and make this available through the Convention’s Web site.**

Does your country have Ramsar sites twinned with those in other CPs? **Yes**

If **No**, what has prevented this from happening? **Please elaborate.**

If **Yes**, please note how many such twinning arrangements are in place and indicate which sites are involved. **Clara and Raheenmore Bogs has been twinned with Bargerveen, The Netherlands as part of the European Natural Sites Twining Programme. The agreement from 1998 -2001 was a continuation of a previous twinning programme from 1992-1995.**

All sites are raised bogs.

AND: Do these arrangements involve:

- sharing of information resources? **Yes**
- transfer of financial resources? **No**
- exchanges of personnel? **No**
- other activities?
- **1. Technical co-operation in relation to hydrological issues.**
- **2. Scientific co-operation on ecohydrological monitoring and on mathematical modeling**
- **3. Management planning and quality auditing.**
- **4. Information and educational programmes, recreational provision, management and public relations**
-

Proposed national actions and targets: **Continue joint research and management efforts. One research programme is currently active and two others, on peat subsidence / acrotelm functioning and on the management requirements of soak systems will shortly be initiated.**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Island and Staatsbosbeheer, Department of Agriculture, The Netherlands.**

Operational Objective 7.2: To strengthen and formalize linkages between Ramsar and other international and/or regional environmental conventions and agencies, so as to advance the achievement of shared goals and objectives relating to wetland species or issues.

Actions - Global and National Targets

7.2.1 Participate in, or initiate, consultations with related conventions to foster information exchange and cooperation, and develop an agenda for potential joint actions. [SC, Bureau]

- **Global Target - A Joint Work Plan between the Ramsar Convention and the Convention to Combat Desertification which encourages cooperative implementation of both at the international, national and local levels.**

Refer also to 4.2.1. Does there exist a mechanism (such as an inter-ministry committee) at the national level with the charter of coordinating/integrating the implementation of international/regional conventions/treaties to which your country is a signatory? **No**

If No , what are the impediments to such a mechanism being introduced? While several interdepartmental committees exist, none seems to have a focus on the overall role of ensuring the integration and co-ordination of work required for all the environmental conventions to which Ireland is a party. Most of the conventions involved are the responsibility of the Department of Environment and Local Government and the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands but their successful implementation requires the active co-operation of many other Departments.
If Yes , describe the mechanism and the conventions/treaties it is expected to consider.
AND: Has the mechanism proven to be effective? No Reply
If No , why not? Please elaborate.
If Yes , please elaborate.
Proposed national actions and targets: Examine whether a such a role could be undertaken by one of the current interdepartmental groups or whether some other mechanism would be more appropriate.
Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.

7.2.2 Prepare project proposals together with other conventions and partner organizations, and submit them jointly to potential funding agencies. [CPs, SC, Bureau, Partners]
For eligible countries, have there been project proposals prepared and submitted to funding agencies which were intended to assist with implementation of the Ramsar Convention? No
If No , what has prevented this from happening? Not eligible
If Yes , were such proposals successful in gaining funds? No Reply - Please elaborate.
Proposed national actions and targets:
Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action:

7.2.3 Strengthen cooperation and synergy with the Convention on Biological Diversity, in particular as regards inclusion of wetland concerns in national biodiversity strategies, and planning and execution of projects affecting wetlands. [CPs, Bureau, Partners]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global Target - To see the Joint Work Plan implemented in full and resulting in cooperative implementation of both Conventions at the international, national and local levels.
Further to 7.2.1 above: Has there been a review completed of the Joint Work Plan between

Ramsar and Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to establish the areas of priority for cooperative implementation of these Conventions? **No**

If **No**, what has prevented such a review being done? **A formal review not has been completed due to lack of resources but the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands are responsible for the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and as well as Ramsar and therefore is in a good position to adopt an integrated approach to their implementation. The National Biodiversity Plan, in the preparation which they took the lead role, contains proposals for improving the protection of both Freshwater and Coastal Wetlands along the same general lines as those proposed in the Joint Work Plan**

If **Yes**, what are the areas established as priorities for national cooperation between Ramsar and CBD implementing agencies/focal points?

Proposed national actions and targets: **Assist in the implementation of the National Biodiversity Plan especially in relation to the recommendations for Inland Waters and Wetlands and for Marine and Coastal Areas.**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.**

7.2.4 Develop cooperation with the World Heritage Convention and UNESCO's Programme on Man and the Biosphere (MAB), especially as regards wetlands designated as World Heritage sites, Biosphere Reserves and/or Ramsar sites. [CPs, Bureau, Partners]

- **Global Target - A Memorandum of Cooperation with the Man and the Biosphere Programme, leading to Joint Work Plans with the MAB Programme and with the World Heritage Convention which encourages cooperative implementation of both at the international, national and local, levels.**

Refer to 7.2.1 above.

7.2.5 Enhance Ramsar's contribution to international cooperation on shared wetland species, notably through cooperative arrangements with the Convention on Migratory Species, flyway agreements, networks and other mechanisms dealing with migratory species (Recommendation 6.4). [CPs, Bureau, Partners]

- ***The Guidelines for international cooperation under the Ramsar Convention propose an increase in the joint efforts between Ramsar and CMS (COP7 Resolution VII.19)***
- **Global Target - A Joint Work Plan between the Conventions which encourages cooperative implementation of both at the international, regional and national and local levels.**

Refer to 7.2.1 above.

7.2.6 Develop Ramsar's contribution to wildlife trade issues affecting wetlands, through increased interaction with CITES. [Bureau]

- **The *Guidelines for international cooperation under the Ramsar Convention* propose an increase in the joint efforts between Ramsar and CITES (COP7 Resolution VII.19)**
- **Global Target - A Memorandum of Cooperation with CITES, leading to a Joint Work Plan between the Conventions which sees cooperative implementation of both at the international, national and local levels.**

Refer to 7.2.1 above

7.2.7 Initiate links with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in view of the potential impacts on wetlands of climate change. [CP, Bureau]

- **Global Target - A Memorandum of Cooperation with UNFCCC, leading to a Joint Work Plan between the Conventions which encourages cooperative implementation of both at the international, national and local levels.**

Refer to 7.2.1 above.

7.2.8 Extend cooperation with conventions and agencies concerned with conservation and wise use of wetlands at regional level, and in particular: with the European Community, as regards application of its Habitats Directive to wetlands, and adoption and application of measures like the Habitats Directive for wetlands outside the states of the European Union; with the Council of Europe (Bern) Convention on the conservation of European wildlife and natural habitats as regards the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy; with the Barcelona Convention and Mediterranean Action Plan in relation to the MedWet initiative; with the Western Hemisphere Convention; with UNEP programmes, in particular the Regional Seas Conventions; and with the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP). [CPs, Bureau]

- **Global Target - With the European Commission and SPREP, develop and sign a Memorandum of Cooperation and prepare and implement a Joint Work Plan. For Medwet, secure the long-term funding base for this important initiative and continue to develop new programmes of regional action. For the others referred to, and others which are appropriate, develop an appropriate working relationship.**

Refer to 7.2.1 above.

7.2.9 Develop relationships with other specialized agencies that deal with wetland-related issues, such as the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) and the World Water Council (COP7 Resolution VI.23). [Bureau]

- **Global Target - To progress to closer working relations with these and other relevant initiatives, as appropriate.**

Refer to 7.2.1 above.

Operational Objective 7.3: To ensure that the development assistance community, and multinational corporations, follow improved wetland practices such as the Wise Use Guidelines in developing countries and countries whose economies are in transition.

Actions - Global and National Targets

7.3.2 Work with multilateral and bilateral development agencies and multinational corporations towards a full recognition of wetland values and functions (Recommendation 4.13), and assist them to improve their practices in favor of wetland conservation and wise use taking account of the *Guidelines for Aid Agencies for Improved Conservation and Sustainable Use of Tropical and Sub-Tropical Wetlands*, published by OECD's Development Assistance Committee (Recommendation 6.16). [Bureau, Partners]

- **Global Target - At the Bureau level, to consider ways and means to increase its ability to work more systematically in this area, so as to increase the level of donor agency support for wetland conservation and wise use activities, and to see an increasing number of multinational corporations adopting voluntary codes of conduct for protecting wetlands.**

While this action is directed at the Bureau principally, CPs also have a role to play in this area; refer to 7.4.2 below with respect to bilateral development agencies. For the multilateral donors: Is your government represented on the governing bodies or scientific advisory bodies of the multilateral donors, or the GEF? **No**

If **Yes**, has this person/agency/ministry been briefed on the obligations of your country under the Ramsar Convention, and the relevant expectations raised of each CP by the Strategic Plan and COP decisions? **No Reply**

Additional comments?

7.3.3 Interact with multilateral development agencies and through bilateral development programmes, to assist developing countries in meeting their Ramsar obligations, and report on actions taken and results achieved (Recommendation 5.5). [CPs]

Refer to 7.4.2 to 7.4.6 below.

Proposed national actions and targets: **[Redacted]**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **[Redacted]**

Operational Objective 7.4: To obtain funds to fulfil obligations contracted under the Convention, notably for developing countries and countries whose economies are in transition.

Actions - Global and National Targets

7.4.1 Allocate funds for conservation and wise use of wetlands in the budget of each Contracting Party. [CPs]

- **Global Target - By COP8, to see allocations for wetlands made by all CPs and also for specific wetland programmes in more than 40 CPs.**

Does your government allocate funds for wetland conservation and wise use activities? **Yes**

If **No**, what are the impediments to this happening?

If **Yes**, is this:

- As a separate allocation to a Wetlands Programme (or similar)? **No**
- As part of a broader allocation for the environment? **No**
- As part of the programmes maintained by a range of Ministries? **Yes**

AND: What mechanisms are in place for determining priorities and coordinating the expenditure of these funds? **The overall allocation of funds for each Government Department is decided by Government following annual submissions from each organisation in the context of 3 year rolling budgets.**

Most wetland conservation work in the traditional sense is undertaken by the Dept. of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, who are responsible for deciding nature conservation policy and priorities, for identifying protected sites and species and ensuring their appropriate management either directly or in liaison with landowners. However three other Departments have major roles to play in wise use of wetlands, the Dept. of Environment and Local Government who are responsible for water quality issues and the implementation of the Water Framework Directive, the Dept of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development who are responsible for the agri-environment schemes, one of which provides incentive payments for biodiversity conservation, and the Department of Marine who are responsible for the protection and management of freshwater and marine fisheries.

Is it linked to a National Wetland Policy, Biodiversity Plan, Catchment Plan or something similar? **Yes/No Funding for Ramsar related activities are likely to be increasingly linked to the National Biodiversity Plan and the implementation of the Water Framework Directive and will be assisted by the biodiversity related incentive payments to farmers under the agri- environmental Rural Environment Protection Scheme .**

Proposed national actions and targets: **To seek to maximise the delivery of wise use of wetlands by improving co-ordination amongst the different organisations and programmes.**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action:

7.4.2 Include projects for conservation and wise use of wetlands in development plans funded by development assistance agencies, and ensure the latter consult the Ramsar administrative authority in each Contracting Party. [CPs]

- **Global Target - To see this trend continue such that all eligible CPs are receiving donor support for a range of major wetland-related projects by the time of COP8. In particular, to see this support being provided, as appropriate, for the priority areas of policy development, legal and institutional reviews, inventory and assessments, the designation and management of Ramsar sites, training and communications.**

If your country has a bilateral development assistance programme, does it allocate funds for wetland-related projects on a regular basis? **No**

<p>If No, what are the impediments to this occurring? In general, Ireland Aid ,the Government's Official Development Programme concentrates on development activities such as poverty alleviation, education and capacity building. While it does not initiate it, it has supported, wise use of wetland projects in association with e.g. IUCN as reported on in our last National Report. All projects supported are assessed so that adverse impacts on the enviroment are minimised.</p> <p>Ireland Aid have recently signed an agreement with UNEP to establish the Ireland Aid Multilateral Enviromental Trust Fund for Africa to assist the UNEP's sustainable development programmes in 6 priority countries. Its initial contribution of one million Euros is to be focussed on freshwater resources, access to environmental information, protection of marine and coastal environments and the conservation of biodiversity.</p>
<p>If Yes, are these projects subjected to rigorous impact assessment procedures, which take account of the full environmental, social and economic values of wetlands? No Reply</p>
<p>If No, why not? Please elaborate.</p>
<p>If Yes, is the Ramsar Administrative Authority consulted during the screening and assessment phases of the projects? No Reply</p>
<p>If No, why not? Please elaborate.</p>
<p>AND: Is there a formal consultative process in place (such as a National Ramsar Committee) which ensures that the development assistance agency is fully aware of the Ramsar Convention obligations of the country with respect to international cooperation? No Reply</p>
<p>If No, why not? </p>
<p>If Yes, please elaborate. </p>
<p>Proposed national actions and targets: To encourage the Dept. of Foreign Affairs to more actively incorporate wise use of wetlands into their development programs.</p>
<p>Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: Dept. of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands</p>

<p>7.4.4 Mobilize direct funding support from multilateral and bilateral development assistance agencies to assist developing countries and countries whose economy is in transition, in the conservation and wise use of wetlands and in implementation of the present Strategic Plan. [CPs. Bureau]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global Target - By COP8 for all the bilateral donors from appropriate CPs to have funds earmarked for wetland projects, and for all of these CPs to have in place mechanisms for consultation between the development assistance agency and their Ramsar Administrative Authority. <p>Refer to 7.4.2 above</p>
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**GENERAL OBJECTIVE 8
TO PROVIDE THE CONVENTION WITH THE REQUIRED INSTITUTIONAL
MECHANISMS AND RESOURCES**

Operational Objective 8.1: To maximize achievement of Ramsar's mission and objectives by evaluating and, if necessary, modifying the Convention's institutions and management structures.

Actions - Global and National Targets
8.1.9 Promote the establishment of National Ramsar Committees to provide the opportunity for input from, and representation of, governmental and non-governmental organizations, key stakeholders, indigenous people, the private sector and interest groups, and land use planning and management authorities (Recommendation 5.13). [CPs, Bureau, Partners]
Refer to 4.1.2.
8.1.10 Review the designated national focal point in each Contracting Party, with a view to increasing involvement in the work of the Convention from all agencies concerned with the conservation and wise use of wetlands. [CPs]
Refer to 4.1.1

Operational Objective 8.2: To provide the financial resources required to carry out Ramsar activities.

Actions - Global and National Targets
8.2.1 Pay invoiced contributions to the Convention's core budget in full, and promptly at the beginning of each calendar year. [CPs]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global Target - During this triennium to achieve full and timely payment of all dues by all CPs. The SC to prepare a proposal on sanctions for non-payment for consideration at COP8 (COP7 Resolution VII.28).
Is your country completely up to date with its annual contributions to the core budget of the Convention? Yes
If No , what is the impediment to this being done? Please elaborate.
Proposed national actions and targets: To continue to pay contributions promptly.
Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action:

8.2.4 Give priority to funding for training programmes, education and public awareness work, development of the Ramsar Database, and the Convention's Communications Strategy. [CPs, Bureau, Partners]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global Target - To secure the resources needed to establish regional training

initiatives (like *Wetlands for the Future*) in other regions, to allow the Bureau to progress the implementation of the Outreach Programme, and to support the proposed developments for the Ramsar Sites Database into a fully online and Web-based promotional and planning tool of the Convention.

Refer to 3.3.1 (Convention Outreach Programme), 4.2.4 (Wetlands for the Future).

Operational Objective 8.3: To maximize the benefits of working with partner organizations.

Actions - Global and National Targets

8.3.1 Strengthen cooperative planning mechanisms with the partners and improve communications and information exchange, including exchange of staff. [CPs, Bureau, Partners]

Refer to 3.2.1 and 4.1.2. Does your country include representatives of the Convention's official International Organisation Partners (BirdLife International, IUCN, WWF, Wetlands International) on its National Ramsar Committees or similar bodies, where they exist? **No**

If **No**, what prevents this from occurring? **A National Ramsar Committee has not yet been established.**

Proposed national actions and targets: **Set up National Committee in the next triennium**

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Dept. of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands**

Operational Objective 8.4: To secure at least one million US dollars per annum for the Ramsar Small Grants Fund for Wetlands Conservation and Wise Use (Resolutions 5.8 and VI.6) and to allocate these funds effectively.

Actions - Global and National Targets

8.4.1 Develop a strategy for securing at least one million US dollars annually for the Ramsar Small Grants Fund, to be approved by the first full meeting of the Standing Committee after the 6th COP (1996) and proceed immediately to its implementation. [Bureau, SC, CPs, Partners]

- **Global Target - To establish a mechanism to ensure one million US dollars annually for the Ramsar Small Grants Fund (COP7 Resolution VII.28).**

Refer also to 8.2.4. For developed countries, do you provide additional voluntary contributions to support the Small Grants Fund? **No**

If **No**, what prevents this from happening? **No extra funds available.**

If **Yes**, is an irregular or regular voluntary contribution?

Proposed national actions and targets: **Explore the possibility of contributing to this fund**

in the next triennium

Ministry, agency/department, or organization responsible for leading on this action: **Dept. of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and Islands**

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