

**Implementation of the Ramsar Convention in general,
and of the Ramsar Strategic Plan 1997-2002 in particular,
during the period since the National Report prepared in 1995
for Ramsar COP6 and 30 June 1998**

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Contracting Party: Bahrain

Designated Ramsar Administrative Authority

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Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective 1

To progress towards universal membership of the Convention.

- 1.1 Describe any actions your government has taken (such as hosting regional or subregional meetings/consultations, working cooperatively with neighbouring countries on transfrontier wetland sites) to encourage others to join the Convention.

Bahrain government in a number of regional meetings highlighted the importance of being a member to the Ramsar Convention.

Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective 2

To achieve the wise use of wetlands by implementing and further developing the Ramsar Wise Use Guidelines.

- 2.1 Has a National Wetland Policy/Strategy/Action Plan been developed, or is one being developed or planned for the near future? If so:

Yes.

- a. What are/will be its main features?

Developing the mangrove area at Tublibay into a wetland reserve that could be a center for researchers, students and tourism in which it will contains a display area, museum, bird watching towers and research laboratory.

- b. Was it, or is it, intended that the Policy/Strategy/Action Plan be adopted by the whole of Government, the Minister responsible for Ramsar matters or through some other process. Please describe.

The action plan is intended to be developed and adopted by Environmental Affairs, Min. Of Housing, Municipality and Environment.

- c. How does it relate/will it relate to other national environmental/ conservation planning initiatives (e.g., National Environmental Action Plans, National Biodiversity Action Plans, National Conservation Strategies)?

It has a very strong integration relationship to the objectives of environment action plan, biodiversity action plan and conservation action plan.

- 2.2 If a policy is in place, how much progress has been made in its implementation, and what are the major difficulties being encountered in doing so?

There is a proposal to develop the area into a wetland reserve, financial difficulties are likely to be encountered.

- 2.3 If a Policy/Strategy/Action Plan is in place, is the responsibility for implementing it with :
- a single Government Ministry,
 - a committee drawn from several Ministries, or

c. a cross-sectoral committee?

Please provide details.

A cross-sectoral committee. The Ministry of Irrigation is responsible for wetlands and co-operates with the Ministry of State for Environment Affairs in the environment field.

- 2.4 For countries with Federal systems of Government, are there Wetland Policies/Strategies/Plans in place, being developed or planned for the provincial/state or regional levels of Government?
Yes/No

If yes, please give details.

Not applicable.

- 2.5 Has a review of legislation and practices which impact on wetlands been carried out, and if so, has this resulted in any changes which assist with implementation of the Ramsar Convention?
Please describe these.

Yes. A review of practices was carried out the results are reflected in the improved procedure for land reclamation and in the use of lands around Tublibay land.

- 2.6 Describe the efforts made in your country to have wetlands considered in integrated land/water and coastal zone planning and management processes at the following levels:
- a. national
 - b. provincial
 - c. local

- **National level: A committee for wildlife protection (NCWP) was established in Oct. 1993, and works jointly with Environmental Affairs, Min. Of Housing, Municipality and Environment to protect the important ecosystems, including wetlands and other habitats, and vulnerable and endangered animal and plant species.**
- **A law by decree for the protection of wildlife in Bahrain was issued by H. H. the Amir in Jan. 1995.**
- **A decree for the designation of Hawar islands and Tublibay as Ramsar wetlands.**

- 2.7 Have there been any publications produced, or practices documented, which could assist other countries to promote and improve the application of the Ramsar Wise Use of Wetlands Guidelines? Yes/No

No.

If Yes, please provide details and copies.

- 2.8 Noting COP6 Recommendation 6.14 relating to toxic chemicals and pollution, please advise of the actions taken since then "to remedy and to prevent pollution impacts affecting Ramsar sites and other wetlands" (Operative paragraph 9).

- **Industries near the Tublibay site not allowed to discharge waste water which contain chemicals exceeding the standard.**
- **Land Filling And Reclamation Projects have been stopped in Tublibay site.**
- **Sand Washing Plants have been stopped from discharging water containing high amounts of silt in the intertidal area of Tublibay site.**

- 2.9 Describe what steps have been taken to incorporate wetland economic valuation techniques into natural resource planning and assessment actions.

A study has been carried out to evaluate the economical value of the natural resource found at Sanad Mangrove area in Tublibay site.

- 2.10 Is Environmental Impact Assessment for actions potentially impacting on wetlands required under legislation in your country? Yes/No

Yes.

- 2.11 Is wetland restoration and rehabilitation considered a priority in your country? Yes/No.

If Yes, describe the actions that have been taken to identify wetlands in need of these actions and to mobilise resources for restoration or rehabilitation.

Yes.

- **By establishing a Committee(NCWP) aimed at protecting important ecosystems, including wetlands and other habitats, and vulnerable and endangered animal and plant species.**
- **By creating the Tublibay Mangrove Wetland Center, it will be a real chance for restoration and rehabilitation of the mangrove community.**

- 2.12 Describe what actions have been taken to “encourage active and informed participation of local communities, including indigenous people, and in particular women, in the conservation and wise use of wetlands.” (refer to Actions 2.7.1-4 in the Strategic Plan).

Through lectures, site visiting activities, and cleaning campaigns for the public.

- 2.13 Describe what actions have been taken to “encourage involvement of the private sector in the conservation and wise use of wetlands” (refer to Actions 2.8.1-4 in the Strategic Plan). Has this included a review of fiscal measures (taxation arrangements, etc.) to identify and remove disincentives and introduce incentives for wetlands conservation and wise use? Yes/No

Yes.

If yes, please provide details.

- **Through encouraging private sector to join in cleaning campaigns.**
- **Through encouraging the private sector to fund the Tublibay Mangrove Wetland**

Centre

project.

Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective 3

To raise awareness of wetland values and functions throughout the world and at all levels

- 3.1 Is there a government-run national programme for Education and Public Awareness in your country which focuses on, or includes, wetlands? Yes/No? If yes, what are the priority actions under this programme and who are the target groups? (Refer also to question 9.4)

Environmental Affairs has an educational program which focuses on both the Ramsar wetland sites (Hawar islands, Tublibay).

- **Several educational program have been organized, which emphasize the importance of the area.**
- **Public and students' cleaning campaigns taken place regularly.**
- **The national committee for wildlife protection recently produced a documentary film on Tublibay**
- **Various educational films about Hawar islands have been produced, a series of documentary films on the breeding birds.**
- **A plan to establish a wetland reserve at Tublibay.**

3.2 Describe the steps taken to have wetlands issues and Ramsar's Wise Use principles included as part of the curricula of educational institutions. Has this been at all levels of education (primary, secondary, tertiary and adult)? Please give details.

- **The Environmental Affairs has conduct many outdoor classes for students (secondary, tertiary levels)**
- **The Environmental Affairs with the Ministry Of Education have conducted a one day outdoor training course for science teachers to show them the ecological importance of the mangrove site.**

Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective 4

To reinforce the capacity of institutions in each Contracting Party to achieve conservation and wise use of wetlands.

4.1 Describe the mechanisms in place, or being introduced, to increase cooperation between the various institutions responsible for actions which can have an impact on the conservation and wise use of wetlands. If one of the mechanisms is a National Ramsar/Wetlands Committee, please describe its composition, functions and *modus operandi*.

A joint effort between Environmental Affairs, Centre Municipal Council (Park and beautification Directorate), and National Committee For Wildlife Production in preparing the project document for developing SANAD swamp into a wetland reserve.

4.2 Of the following, indicate which have been undertaken:

- a. a review to identify the training needs of institutions and individuals concerned with the conservation and wise use of wetlands Yes/No? If yes, please indicate the major findings of the review.

No.

- b. a review to identify training opportunities for these people both within your country and in other countries. Yes/No?

No.

- c. the development of training modules or a training programme specifically for wetland managers. If yes, please give details.

No.

- d. people from your country have gained wetland-related training either within or outside the country. Yes/No? If yes, please give details.

Yes. One of the professional staff has been trained on wetland-related training (Protected Landscapes Planning And Management Techniques, 10-23 April, 1994, Wales, UK.)

Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective 5

To ensure the conservation of all sites included in the List of Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar List).

- 5.1 Of the Ramsar sites in your country, how many have formal management plans:
- being prepared?
 - fully prepared?
 - being implemented?

Please indicate in the attached table of Ramsar sites which sites these are and what category they fall into.

Tublibay strategic plan being prepared.

	Ramsar site	Area size	Ramsar criteria
1.	Tublibay	2,500ha	1a, 1c, 3b
2.	Hawar islands	5,300ha	1a, 1c, 2a, 2c, 3a, 3c

- 5.2 Of the management plans referred to above, which ones have included a monitoring scheme or programme to allow changes in ecological character to be detected? Please indicate this in the attached table of Ramsar sites also.

Many research programmes have been conducted to study the ecological characteristics of the site:

Tublibay

- mangrove ecology and biology**
- sewage effluents and their effect on marine organisms**
- the importance of wetlands, particularly Tublibay, for fishes**
- a GIS atlas for Tublibay**
- a remote sensing study has been done to study the habitats in the bay**

Hawar islands:

- many research programmes have been conducted to study the ecological characteristics.**
- a remote sensing study has been done to study the habitats surrounding the islands.**

- 5.3 Has there been a change in the ecological character (either positive or negative) at any of your Ramsar sites or is this likely to occur in the near future? Yes/No. If Yes, please give details.

Not applicable.

- 5.4 In the case of Montreux Record Ramsar sites where the Management Guidance Procedure has been applied, what is the status of the implementation of the MGP report recommendations? What is the expected time-frame for removing the site from the Montreux Record?

Not applicable.

- 5.5 For those countries referred to in COP6 Recommendations 6.17.1-4, “Ramsar sites in the Territories of Specific Contracting Parties”, please provide advice on the actions that have been taken in response to the issues raised at that time.

Not applicable.

Ramsar Strategic Plan - 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.

- 6.1 Has a national inventory of wetlands been prepared for your country? Yes/No.

No.

If no, are there plans for this to be done? Yes/No.

Where a national inventory exists please provide details of when it was finalised, where it is kept and what information it contains.

- 6.2 Does there exist a list or directory of “important” wetlands for your country or region? Yes/No.

No.

If yes, please provide details of when it was finalised, where it is kept, what criteria for “important” were used, and the types of information it contains.

- 6.3 If it is known, please provide an estimate of the area of wetlands in your country at present and any information on rates of loss or conversion to other activities.

If this information is available, please indicate what definition of “wetland” was used.

Ramsar site	area size	Ramsar criteria
1. Tublibay	2,500ha	1a, 1c, 3b
2. Hawar islands	5,300ha	1a, 1c, 2a, 2c, 3a, 3c

- 6.4 Have any actions been taken in response to the COP6 Resolutions and Recommendations that Contracting Parties should give priority to listing Wetlands of International Importance which:
- meet the criteria for fish habitat (Resolution VI.2),
 - meet the 1% criterion for waterbird populations using data provided by the International Waterfowl Census (Resolution VI.4),
 - are subterranean karst or cave wetland systems (Resolution VI.5),
 - are peatland ecosystems (Recommendation 6.1)
 - are coral reefs and associated systems (Recommendation 6.7)
 - are under-represented wetland types (which apart from d. and e. above include mangroves and sea grass beds) (Strategic Plan Action 6.2.3)

Yes/No? If yes, please describe these actions.

No action plan has been taken.

- 6.5 If your government indicated at COP6 that it would be proceeding to list further specific sites, please advise of the status of this action.

Our Government did not attend COP6.

- 6.6 Please advise which of the sites included in the Ramsar List from your country are transfrontier wetlands (Refer also to 7.1).

Both the sites:

- 1. Tublibay**
- 2. Hawar islands**

- 6.7 Describe any plans, or actions being taken for further transfrontier sites to be listed (Refer also to 7.1).

Not applicable.

Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective 7
To mobilise international cooperation and financial assistance for wetland conservation and wise use in collaboration with other conventions and agencies, both governmental and non-governmental.

- 7.1 Briefly describe any bilateral or multilateral activities that have been taken, are under way, or are planned for the management of transfrontier wetlands or their watersheds/catchments (Refer also to 6.6 and 6.7).

Not applicable.

- 7.2 Do you have Ramsar sites that are “twinned” with others, either nationally or internationally? Yes/No.

Not applicable.

If yes, please give details.

- 7.3 Where your country is also a signatory of any of the following Conventions, describe what mechanism(s) exist to assist regular dialogue and cooperative actions between the personnel responsible for their implementation and the Ramsar Administrative Authority:

- a. Convention on Biological Diversity
Yes.
- b. Framework Convention on Climate Change
Yes.
- c. Convention to Combat Desertification
Yes.
- d. Convention on Migratory Species
No.
- e. World Heritage Convention
Yes.

7.4 Is your country cooperating as part of any bilateral or multilateral activities directed at the conservation of migratory wetland species? Yes/No.

No.

If yes, please provide details.

7.5 Are there multilateral and/or bilateral donors supporting projects which contribute to implementation of the Ramsar Convention in your country? Yes/No.

Not yet.

If yes, please provide details.

7.6 Does your government make an annual budgetary allocation to support the conservation and wise use of wetlands within your country? Yes/No.

No.

If yes, is this a specific allocation to a wetlands programme or as part of a larger environment or natural resource management budget?

7.7 If your country has a development assistance programme, does it include funds earmarked for wetland conservation and wise use in other countries? Yes/No. If yes, please give details.

No.

7.8 Is there a formal process in place for consultation between the Ramsar Administrative Authority and the development assistance programme in your country, where one exists? Yes/No

To a certain extent, yes.

If yes, what is that process.

Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective 8

To provide the Convention with the required institutional mechanisms and resources.

8.1 Has your government made voluntary financial contributions, other than the invoiced contributions or to the Small Grants Fund, to further the work of the Convention globally? Yes/No.

No.

If yes, please provide details.

8.2 If your country is in arrears with the payment of its annual contributions to the Ramsar Convention, please indicate the reasons for this situation and the prospects for paying these arrears in the near future.

No.

Optional section - Participation of non-government organizations in the implementation of the Convention

These are **optional** questions relating to cooperation with and involvement of non-government organizations in the implementation of the Convention.

At COP6 some 42 NGOs made the “Brisbane NGO pledge of support for the Ramsar Convention”. The Standing Committee agreed that for COP7 there should be an effort made to gauge the level and type of cooperation which is occurring between government Administrative Authorities and the national and international NGOs with an interest in wetlands issues.

In this **optional** section of the National Report, you are asked to describe the nature of the cooperation and relationship with any other international, regional, national and provincial NGOs operating within your country.

9.1 Approximately how many NGOs have wetlands as part of their regular “business” in your country?

Please break this down between international, regional and national/provincial organizations.

- **Bahrain Natural History Society (National Organization)**
- **Al-Reem Environmental Consultation Ecotourism (Private Office)**

9.2 Is there a regular forum or mechanism through which these NGOs express their views on wetland conservation and Ramsar implementation:

a. to each other? Yes/No

There should be.

b. to the government? Yes/No

To some extent yes.

If yes in either case, please give details.

9.3 Does your government include one or more NGO representatives on its official delegation to Ramsar COPs? Yes/No

No.

9.4 Do any of the NGOs run programmes aimed at Education and Public Awareness about wetlands in your country? Yes/No. If yes, please give details (Refer also to question 3.1).

Yes.

The NGO-run programs are aimed at education and public awareness on wetland sites in Bahrain.

- **By conducting lectures**
- **Organising visits to the sites**

9.5 Where they exist, do Ramsar site management advisory committees include NGO representatives? If yes, please give details

Both the NGOs exist in Bahrain.

- 9.6 Describe the themes of the Convention (refer to General Objectives 1-8 of the Strategic Plan) where you perceive the national/provincial NGOs to be most active.

To raise awareness of wetland values.

Final comments:

- 10.1 General comments on implementation of the Ramsar Strategic Plan.
- 10.2 Observations concerning the functioning of, relations with, and services provided by:
- a. The Ramsar Standing Committee
 - b. The Ramsar Scientific and Technical Review Panel
 - c. The Ramsar Bureau
 - d. The Ramsar NGO partners
- 10.3 Any other general observations and/or recommendations for the future.

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