

**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: CZECH REPUBLIC**

**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.

No such action.

**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:

The State Programme on the Conservation of Nature and Landscape of the Czech Republic has been adopted by the Czech Government on June 17, 1998. There is no specific part concerning wetlands, only sub-chapters dealing with water management. The wetland policy is planned to be a part of the National Biodiversity Strategy ( just at the very beginning of preparation).

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

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.

By the whole Government.

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 might be a part of the National Biodiversity Strategy.

- 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 has been no time since the adoption of the Programme mentioned above for the evaluation of results.

- 2.3 If a Policy/Strategy/Action Plan is in place, is the responsibility for implementing it with :

a. a single Government Ministry,

b. a committee drawn from several Ministries, or

**c. a cross-sectoral committee?**

Ten ministries are co/responsible for fulfilling tasks of the Programme in addition to the Ministry of the Environment.

- 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? No.

If yes, please give details.

- 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.

New acts (Wastes Act, Water Act Amendment, Forestry Act) have been adopted since the Brisbane Conference. All of them improved the quality of wetlands (in a different fields and scales). E.g., the Forestry Act prefers the extra-productional functions of the forests, in comparison with timber production.

- 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

In 1996, the Ministry for Local Development and the Ministry of Environment approved the document called „Territorially-technical basis for supra-regional and regional territorial systems of ecological stability“ (TSES) which serves during the regional planning at the level of regions (such plans are approved by the Government) as a guideline for the authors for including ecological aspects into this (in the past purely technical) kind of planning. Many of supra-regional as well as regional biocenters are represented by important wetlands, many biocorridors accompany valuable rives and/or brook systems.

b. regional, local

At the level of local planning, local territorial systems of ecological stability became an integrated part (since 1992) of local plans. These plans are approved by municipal council and are valid for particular municipalities. Prior to the approval, positive statements of nature protection authorities must be given.

- 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.**

If Yes, please provide details and copies.

2.7.A. Eiseltoová M. (ed.) 1996: Obnova jezerních ekosystémů - holistický přístup. Wetlands International publ. 32. 190 pp. (translation from English: Eiseltoová M. (ed.) 1994: Restoration of lake ecosystems - a holistic approach. IWRB Publ. 32. 182 pp.

2.7.B. IUCN (1996): The importance of fishponds for the Central Europe landscape. Sustainable use of fishponds in the Třeboňsko Protected Landscape Area and Biosphere Reserve. The Czech Coordination Centre of IUCN, Prague, and IUCN Gland, Switzerland. 189 pp. (in Czech, Summary in English, German and Russian).

2.7.C. Fošumová P., Hakr P. Husák Š. (eds.) 1996: The wetlands of the Czech Republic. The proceedings from the Conference on 25th Anniversary of the Ramsar Convention. Třeboň. 167 pp.

2.7.D. Prach K., Jeník J., Large A.R.G. 1996: Floodplain Ecology and Management. SPB Academic Publishing bv, Amsterdam. 285 pp.

P.S. All the copies are already available at Ramsar Secretariat in Gland.

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).

The adoption of Water Act Amendment and Wastes Act were the most important actions since Brisbane Conference.

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

2.10 Is Environmental Impact Assessment for actions potentially impacting on wetlands required under legislation in your country? **Yes.**

2.11 Is wetland restoration and rehabilitation considered a priority in your country? **Yes.**

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.

Since 1992, the Government established the Programme of Revitalization of River Systems. The resources increase obviously: from 1 mil. USD in 1992 to 13 mil. USD in 1998. The Programme runs through Regional Advisory Boards, these are directed by the governmental Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection. Particularly protected wetlands (and mainly those listed as Ramsar sites) are the priorities. Another resources are state Programme of Landscape Care, and the finances of river catchment authorities and state forest enterprise (both underlying the Ministry of Agriculture).

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).

All the programmes mentioned above require active participation of local people/communities. Also the 25th anniversary of Ramsar Convention has been used for wider public information concerning wetlands, their importance, functions etc. (radio, newspaper articles, seminars on wetlands). No special action concerning women (as the equal right of women are integrated part of our culture as well as legislation).

- 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.**

If yes, please provide details.

The Programme of Revitalization of River Systems is realized through agreements with involved person/community. This agreement set out the obligations for realization and successive conservation and wise use of revitalized wetland, and also the percentage of money which will be used for the whole project from the Programme. One of such obligations can be for instance the possible maximum fish stock for the revitalized wetland. The Programme does not include any fiscal measures (taxation arrangements etc).

### **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? **No.**  
If yes, what are the priority actions under this programme and who are the target groups? (Refer also to question 9.4)
- 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.

### **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*.

This theme is one of the most important activity of the Czech Ramsar Committee. Its present composition are 9 persons: chairman (= director of Nature Protection Department of the Ministry of Environment), secretary (= zoologist of Biosphere Reserve Pálava, nowadays working as Ramsar secretary for 50% load (capacity), two other persons from the Nature Protection Department, one person from the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Ministry of Environment, one person from the Ministry of Environment - Water Research Institute, one person from the Agency for Nature Conservation and

Landscape Protection, and two persons from the most important NGOs interested in wetlands: the Czech Union for Nature Conservationists and the Czech Society for Ornithology.

The main function of the Czech RC is to be an advisory board for the Minister of Environment in the field of conservation (including legislation) and wise use of wetlands.

Modus operandi: regular meetings, at least twice a year, nearly always together with the scientific and research panel. This panel has nowadays 27 members from Universities, Academy of Science and also the representatives from all Czech Ramsar sites. The members for CRC are designated by the Minister of Environment, the members of panel are designated by the meeting of CRC.

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**. If yes, please indicate the major findings of the review.

The Wetland Training Centre in Třeboň (WTC - established by WETLANDS INTERNATIONAL) together with its Steering Committee prepared an overview of training strategy for future, which include:

- organizing short-term advanced training courses for professionals in relevant sectors
- producing and disseminating relevant training materials
- initiating model (pilot) demonstration projects

WTC sets out two fundamental training courses (A1. Sustainable management of river basins. A2. Wetland management planning - the cooperation with RIZA in the Netherlands) and following themes of the specialized courses were proposed:

- B1. Wetland restoration
- B2. Constructed wetlands and nutrient re-cycling
- B3. Sustainable management of fishponds
- B4. Monitoring techniques
- B5. Reedbed management.

b. a review to identify training opportunities for these people both within your country and in other countries. **Yes**.

c. the development of training modules or a training programme specifically for wetland managers. If yes, please give details. Please, see above 4.2.a.

d. people from your country have gained wetland-related training either within or outside the country. **Yes**. If yes, please give details.

1. Wetland management training course - Central and Eastern Europe. Šumava Nat. Park, 26 May-1 June 1996. In total, 25 participants, including 12 from Czech Republic.
2. Stream Restoration - Central and Eastern Europe. Třeboň Biosphere Reserve, 20 participants, including 8 from Czech Republic.
3. Eurosite training course focused on wetlands: April 27 - May 1, 1998, South and Central Moravia, 28 participants, two of them from the Czech Republic.

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Note: The Water Management Training and Information Centre at TGM Water Research Institute exists, but there are no connections between it and the Czech Ramsar Committee. This Centre is supported by Phare Partnership Programme. Key topics for 1998 training are:  
I. Development of modern water management practices for the decision-makers.  
II. Economic and legal tools for the control of pollution resources.

**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.

- 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.

- 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.

5.3.1. The intention of construction of aquaduct at Litovelské Pomoraví and the planned construction of dry polder just above the north boundary of RS LP (upstream of the Morava River) can cause a change in the ecological character in this RS.

5.3.2. Positive changes: July 1997 floods had positive influence at RS Litovelské Pomoraví, Poodří and Floodplain of Lower Dyje River.

5.3.3. Large bark beetle gradation at Šumava National Park in the last four years had negative influence on RS Šumava Peatlands (large-scale deforestation in close surroundings of peat bogs) and could cause change in their ecological character.

- 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?

There is no RS where Management Guidance Procedure has been applied. Removing of Břežský and Novozámecký fishpond from the MR can be expected within two years, the other two still remain at the list.

- 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. -----

### **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.

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

The enlarged and revised second version of the inventory of the Czech Republic has been published in 1995. The book has been distributed to all relevant bodies, offices and persons. The inventory has 8 foreword chapters, and the proper list of wetlands divided into Ramsar sites and wetlands of national, regional, and local importance. The first three categories include the code of locality, name, area, type of conservation, type of wetland, literature sources, author of the text, geogr. coordinates, cadaster, district and the basic text concerning type of wetland and the most important plant and animal species.

By the end of 1998, the final inventory of wetlands is planned to be published.

- 6.2 Does there exist a list or directory of "important" wetlands for your country or region? Yes.

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.

Under "important" wetlands we understand those of national (regional) importance - see 6.1. National importance: the wetlands included in the highest category of special protected areas (National Nature Reserves) and/or wetlands listed in any of international lists (but outside Ramsar!). Also wetlands with unique ecosystems, unique plant/animal communities and wetlands with the fundamental importance for given bioregion. Also wetlands with the occurrence of critically endangered species/communities, with endangered species from European point of view and wetlands with fundamental importance for the whole river catchment area..

Regional importance: wetlands important for given bioregion, mainly Nature Reserves, National Nature Monuments, wetlands with the occurrence of endangered species and wetlands important for the catchment functions in given region.

Local importance: all other listed wetlands, important for given district or National Park/Protected Landscape Area. Also all the wetlands registered as so-called Important Landscape Elements according to the law on nature and landscape protection.

- 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.

Present area: ca 65 000 ha. No exact information on rates of loss or conversion is available, but our estimation is surely under 1% of the total area of wetlands.

- 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:
- a. meet the criteria for fish habitat (Resolution VI.2),
  - b. meet the 1% criterion for waterbird populations using data provided by the International Waterfowl Census (Resolution VI.4),
  - c. are subterranean karst or cave wetland systems (Resolution VI.5),
  - d. are peatland ecosystems (Recommendation 6.1)
  - e. are coral reefs and associated systems (Recommendation 6.7)
  - f. 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.

- ad d. - The first version of suggested Ramsar sites "Peatlands of Žďarske vrchy hills" has been sent back to Institute of Botany for basic redraft. However, the official proposal has yet not been planned.  
- Re-zoning of Šumava Peatlands is going on.

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

Only one: Floodplain of Lower Dyje River.

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

#### **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).

The bilateral Biosphere Reserve Krkonoše NP/Karkonoszki NP (Czech - Poland) concerns also Wetlands of international importance in the Czech Republic (Krkonoše mires),

and under preparation is the suggestion to proclaim Polish sub-arctic mires as Ramsar site.

Various negotiations and meeting, focused mainly on exchange of experience concerning management, monitoring, restoration etc. Probably the most important activities concerning management are artificial floods on Morava/Dyje river which influence RS in the Czech Republic (Floodplain of Lower Dyje River), Slovakia (Morava floodplains) and Austria (Donau-March-Auen).

7.2 Do you have Ramsar sites that are "twinned" with others, either nationally or internationally? No.

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
- b. Framework Convention on Climate Change
- c. Convention to Combat Desertification
- d. Convention on Migratory Species
- e. World Heritage Convention

There is one person (also a member of the Czech Ramsar Committee) responsible at the Department of Nature Conservation (Head of Division for International Conventions) at the Ministry of Environment for all the international conventions (except CITES) - so the coordination is simple. There are good contacts among persons who are responsible for single conventions, mainly from their positions as secretaries.

7.4 Is your country cooperating as part of any bilateral or multilateral activities directed at the conservation of migratory wetland species? Yes.

7.4.1. Regular participation at International Waterfowl Census

7.4.2. Regular monitoring of reedbed migratory birds (within the Baltic Operation)

7.4.3. Regular monitoring of wader migration (within Wader Study Group of WI)

7.5 Are there multilateral and/or bilateral donors supporting projects which contribute to implementation of the Ramsar Convention in your country? Yes.

1994-1997 World Bank within GEF-Biodiversity Programme allocated USD 2 mil. for three various Biosphere Reserves (Krkonoše NP, Šumava NP, Pálava Protected Landscape Area), and part (ca USD 400,000) of these money was used directly in wetlands (Ramsar sites).

7.6 Does your government make an annual budgetary allocation to support the conservation and wise use of wetlands within your country? Yes.

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

Both. The Programme of Revitalization of River System (see also 2.11) is a specific allocation to wetlands, while Programme of Landscape Care and the means of State

Fund for Environment could be also used for wetlands. Landscape Care Programme is focused mainly on management of particularly protected areas, State Fund for Environment has much broader orientation.

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

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?  
No.
- 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. ----

## 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.

2/7/?

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? No  
b. to the government? Yes.

If yes in either case, please give details. Two representatives of the most important NGOs are directly members of the Czech Ramsar Committee.

9.3 Does your government include one or more NGO representatives on its official delegation to Ramsar COPs? 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).

Czech Union for Nature Conservation produced more informational materials about wetlands and their importance (leaflets, posters). The Union for the Morava River aims at Education and Public Awareness in the case of Morava river (there are two Ramsar sites on the Morava river!).

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

Yes, the most common examples are these, where persons responsible for Ramsar sites in the field of state authority are also a members of any NGOs. If no, very close cooperation exists between Ramsar site authorities and NGOs (quite often, NGOs are responsible for management of wetlands, or they participate on it), too.

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.

General Objectives: 3, 4, 7 and 2.

## **Final comments:**

### 10.1 General comments on implementation of the Ramsar Strategic Plan.

The Czech Republic wants to implement the whole Strategic plan into life in the country.

There are some activities which are running quite well (General Objectives 4, 5, 6, partly also 2), on the other hand the National Wetland Policy and much more intensive international cooperation are probably the main gaps.

### 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

10.2.a. No comments - good work dealing with preparation of Riga meeting. The Czech Republic has not any personal opinion with RSC meetings yet, the first participation is planned for October 1998. Personally, Louise Lakos is an excellent person as chairperson for any meeting!

10.2.b. Not so many detail information about their work.

10.2.c. Good work as through mail contacts as personal ones (e.g. Riga meeting, first official visit of Tim Jones in our country). Very helpful (a lot of very interesting and up-to-date information) is the contact through e-mail Ramsar forum!

Thanks also for the financial support, which allow the developing countries and those with their economy in transition to participate at CoP meetings.

10.2.d. Very close cooperation with BirdLife International - within the Czech Ramsar Committee (and panel), there are more people with their background of ornithology, the member of the Czech Soc. Orn. is directly a member of the Czech Ramsar Committee. The closer cooperation with WWF, particularly through the Green Danube Programme, is increasing.

### 10.3 Any other general observations and/or recommendations for the future.

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