

**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**

Contracting Party: Romania

Designated Ramsar Administrative Authority

Ministry of Waters, Forests and Environmental Protection

Full name of the institution:

**Ministry of Waters, Forests and Environmental Protection
Department for Environmental Protection**

Name and title of the head of the institution:

dr. Romica TOMESCU, Minister of Waters, Forests and Environmental Protection

Mailing address for the head of the institution:

B.-dul Libertatii No. 12, Bucharest - 70542, ROMANIA

Telephone: **+040-1-4100246**

Fax: **+040-1-3124227**

Name and title of the designated contact officer for the Ramsar Convention matters:

**Adriana BAZ, Directory of Biodiversity Conservation and Protected Areas Management
Ministry of Waters, Forests and Environmental Protection
B.-dul Libertatii No. 12, Bucharest - 70542, ROMANIA
Telephone: **+040-1-4100215** Fax: **+040-1-4100282****

**Romulus Stiuca, DANUBE DELTA RESEARCH AND DESIGN INSTITUTE
165 Babadag street, TULCEA - 8800, ROMANIA
Telephone: **040 40 524546** Fax: **040 40 524547**
E-mail: **icpdd@tlx.ssitl.ro****

Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective 1
To progress towards universal membership of the Convention

1.1. In the frame of the *National Wetland Inventory* project we are working together with the Hungarian authorities to designate the wetlands from “Cefa” area (in the western part of Romania) as transboundary protected wetland and as part of a Romanian-Hungarian Natural Park and an other one “Valea Tisei” Natural Reserve, with Ukraine authorities in order to create a transboundary biosphere reserve (Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve and Dunavskie Plavni Nature Reserve) with Yugoslavian authorities for “Iron Gates” Natural Park and “Djerdap” National Park, with Moldavia authorities in case of transboundary reserve “Valea Prutului”.

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. YES, Romania has a National Wetland Strategy and Action Plan, developed in 1996 as part of the *National Strategy for Biodiversity Conservation*.

a) The National Wetland Strategy and Action Plan

- gives a synthetically overview on the actual status of the wetlands from Romania;
- gives an overview on the educational, institutional and legislative aspects of the wetland protection in Romania;
- identified the main problems faced by the wetlands (endangered species and habitats);
- established the national objectives and the actions to be taken in order to implement the National Strategy, as follows:
 - improvements of the wetland protection policy and legislation;
 - necessary in-situ and ex-situ conservation actions;

b). The National Wetland Strategy and Action Plan was adopted in 1996 by the Minister responsible for Ramsar matters (Ministry of Waters, Forests and Environmental Protection), as part of the *National Strategy for Biodiversity Conservation*.

c). The National Wetland Strategy and Action Plan is part of the *National Strategy for Biodiversity Conservation and Action Plan*, adopted in 1996 by the Ministry of Waters, Forests and Environmental Protection, and its objectives are included in the National Strategy for Environment Protection.

2.2. This policy is in progress, being developed the National Wetland Inventory in the 1997 - 2002 period. Scarcity of the available funds and institutional capacity shortcoming are the major difficulties encountered by this national project.

National Reports form, page 3

2.3. The implementation of the National Wetland Strategy and Action Plan is the responsibility of:

a. a single Government Ministry: the Ministry of Waters, Forests and Environmental Protection;

The institution of the above mentioned Ministry are responsible for providing data on the status of the wetlands of Romania, as follows:

- the Danube Delta Research and Design Institute have projects focused on diversity, sustainable use, ecological reconstruction, impact assessment, of the Danube Delta, on characterization of the wetlands and identification of new sites to be included in the national network of protected areas from Romania and on detailed description of the potential Ramsar sites from Romania.
- the Environmental Protection Agencies (there is one EPA in each of the 40 counties of Romania) have monitoring programs for certain lakes and sections of several rivers

2.4. Romania hasn't got a Federal system of Government.

2.5. The technical compartments of the Ministry of Waters, Forests and Environmental Protection have carried out the details of implementing the new laws focused on environmental issues, adopted by the Romanian Parliament. The changes which assist with implementation of the Ramsar Convention consist in the existence of a national project focused on identification of new Ramsar Sites and the beginning of the cooperation between the Department for Environmental Protection and the NGOs focused on environmental issues.

2.6. **a.** At national level there are the followings:

- Legislation, Strategies and the Action Plans, including Physical Planing.
- the National Wetland Inventory project which select unprotected wetlands for the national network of protected areas.

b. At provincial level

- EPAs provide the protection and conservation of the wetlands through the permitting provisions with respect to the activities with environmental impact.
- there are efforts made in the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve, to implement the management plan for wise use of the natural resources of this Ramsar Site. Some projects are carried out by NGOs, e.g.: ECOS (wetlands from North-western Dobrogea), ECOTUR (Olt river), SOR - Romanian Ornithological Society (important avifaunistical areas from Romania).

c. At local level there are the EPA are responsible for taking place of the measures for environmental protection and conservation; EPA programmes and several NGO projects to assess the ecological status of the aquatic environments. We can mention some of the NGO which will carry out projects in the 1998 - 1999 period: "AI. BORZA" Foundation (Danube floodplain at Braila city), "NERA" Ecological Group (Danube tributaries in Caras-Severin county), AMONIT (wetlands from Neamt county).

2.7. NO.

2.8. There are legislatures measures includes in Law 137/1995 on Environmental Protection and Governmental Decision 172/1997 and set-up of National Register of Potential Toxic Chemicals

2.9. In case of the Danube Delta there are periodical fish stock, reed stock, touristic and therapeutically value assessments and economic evaluations of the pastures and reeds, and of the eco-touristical possibilities in the Danube Delta.

National Reports form, page 4

2.10. YES.

2.11. YES.

A survey is ongoing aiming to establish the data of each wetland. For some wetlands e.g. the Danube Floodplains ecological reconstruction provision have been set, but which due to the lack of finance, hadn't been applied.

2.12. There have been undertaken some actions e.g. those in Danube Delta or those indicated at 2.6.

On non-governmental level there is a project carried out by the Youth Organization ECOS (fund provided by the Regional Environmental Center) which is focused on the potential involvement of the local communities in the conservation and wise use of the wetlands from North-western Dobrogea (where there is a potential Ramsar Site).

To Romania, the active taking part of local communities to the conservation of wetlands, is not yet much relevant.

2.13. Partially.

For Instant, in the Danube Delta Reserve, all the inhabitants have the right to fish without any taxes for own home consumption. Private people involved in the green-tourism (including the green-tourism in the Danube Delta) have taxation arrangements (first 10 years of activity without taxes).

Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective 3

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

3.1. NO, there is no government-run national program for Education and Public Awareness in Romania.

3.2. There are some wetland issues as part of the curricula of primary and secondary education institutions. Curricula of Faculties of Biology (of several Universities) contain lectures on features of aquatic systems (e.g. "Hidrobiology") or lectures that contain wetland protection issues, as part of the general environmental protection issues.

National Reports form, page 5

Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objectives 4

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

4.1. In the frame of the National Wetland Inventory project, the leading team from the Danube Delta Research and Design Institute has permanent contact with governmental institutes involved in local projects focused on wetlands (Biological Institute of the Romanian Academy; Institute of Geography of the Romanian Academy; biological institutes from Cluj, and Iasi; Ecological Departments of Universities from Bucharest, Cluj, Iasi, Constanta, etc; EPA from several counties on which territory there are notable wetlands). At the same time the leading team is in contact with several NGOs developing programs on wetland issues (Romanian Ornithological Society; ECOS - Tulcea, ECOTUR - Sibiu, Ecological Department of PRO EUROPA LIGA - Tirgu Mures; OSS SILVA - Brasov; ECO CLUB - Odorhei, etc.).
There is **NO** National Ramsar / Wetland Committee.

4.2. a. There have **NOT** been undertaken a review to identify the training needs of institutions and individuals concerned with the conservation and wise use of wetlands.
b. There have **NOT** been undertaken a review to identify the training opportunities.
c. There have **NOT** been undertaken the development of training modules or training program specifically for wetland managers.
d. **YES**, people from Romania have gained wetland-related training within and outside the country. There are periodically organized training for employees of the EPAs. Those who have gained wetland-related training, were invited by institutions from USA (Conservation Training Consortium - Aquatic Systems), Holland (Directorate General for Water and Wastewater Management - RIZA), Germany (WWF - Institute for Floodplain Ecology), etc.

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. c. The Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve (at the time being the only one Ramsar Site in Romania) has a management plan which is implemented.

5.2. The management plan of the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve includes a monitoring program to allow changes in ecological character to be detected.

5.3. **YES**, there has been a change in the ecological character of the Danube Delta. Several abandoned polders were rehabilitated or they are under ecological reconstruction. Colonies of the birds are protected, there is a slide increase in the number of nesting pelicans (*Pelecanus crispus*, *Pelecanus onocrotalus*), cormorants (*Phalacrocorax pygmeus*) and white-tailed eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*). Industrial exploitation of green frogs decreased, industrial exploitation of the sand-dunes from the proper delta was stopped, industrial reed cutting hasn't got long-term negative effects on the reed-beds.

5.4. In Romania there are not Montreaux sites

5.5. More information needed.

National Reports form, page 6

Ramsar Strategies Plan - General Objective 6
To designate for the Ramsar List those wetlands which meet the Convention's criteria, especially types still under-represented in the List and transfrontier wetlands.

6.1. **NO**, there has not been prepared yet a national wetland inventory.
In the 1997 - 2002 period is carried out the National Wetlands Inventory project

6.2. **YES**, there is a list of "important" wetlands of Romania. It was finalized in 1997 and it is kept at the Ministry of Waters, Forests and Environmental Protection and at the Danube Delta Research and Design Institute. The criteria for "important" were:
- the wetland is part of the national network of protected areas or
- the wetland is proposed to be included in the national network of protected areas: unic places, natural habitats where there are notable species, important fauna (ihtiofauna, herpetofauna, ornitofauna) areas, etc.

6.3. There are **1,100,000** ha surfaces covered by waters in Romania: this estimation takes into account natural and artificial lakes, river courses, canals and channels, the Danube Delta and Razim-Sinoe lagoony system and the coastal marine water.

6.4. **YES**, there are action taken in response to the COP6 Resolutions and Recommendations:
a. along the lower Danube river there were identified spawning sites of sturgeons, species highly endangered in the Danube catchment area;
f. study of the peatland ecosystems is part of the National Wetland Inventory project.

6.5. In the frame of the National Wetland Inventory project there have been carried out detailed floristical and faunistical studies on about 30 wetlands, being selected **8 sites** which meet the criteria of Wetlands of International Importance. Final report will be prepared in June 1999.

6.6. **Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve.**

6.7. In the 1997 - 1998 period there were contacts with Hungarian authorities in order to establish a transfrontier protected area that will include Cefa fishponds (Romania) and Biharugra fishponds (Hungary). In the same period there were contacts between the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority (Romania) and representatives from Dunaiskie Plavni Nature Reserve (Ukraine).

Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective 7

To mobilize 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. In 1997 and 1998 there were several meetings on the Romanian-Hungarian border area. People of all levels (State Secretary, EPA, mayors, scientists, etc.) discussed the possibility of establishing of a transboundary Romanian-Hungarian National Park, which will include Cefa fishponds (Romania) and Biharugra fishponds (Hungary). In case of Romanian - Ukrainian joint program there were organized training courses for wardens.

7.2. **YES.** Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve (Romania) is "twinned" with Rhone Delta (Camargue, France).

7.3. Romania is a Party of all this Conventions: Convention on Biological Diversity, Convention on Climate Change, Convention to Combat Desertification, Convention on Migratory Species, World Heritage Convention. MWFEF is the official body in charge with the enforcement of these Conventions. Thus it provides the observance of the measures undertaken to enforce these Conventions with RAMSAR provision.

7.4 Romania is signatory of African-Eurasian Migratory Water Bird Agreement.

7.5 **YES.**
The biggest part the expenses necessary for the detailed description of the potential Ramsar Sites is provided by the Romanian Ministry for Research and Technology, supplementary funds being provided by the Ramsar Small Grant Fund, the World Bank - GEF and funds provided by the Holand's government.

7.6 **YES,** the Romanian Government makes an annual budgetary allocation to support the conservation and wise use of wetlands in Danube Delta.

7.7 **NO.**

7.8 **NO.**

Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective 8

To provide the Convention with the required institution mechanisms and resources

8.1. **NO.**

8.2. **NO.**

These are **optional** questions relating to cooperation with 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 wetland issues.

In the **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. There are about 50 NGOs that have wetlands as part of their "business" in Romania.

Number of International NGOs: **2**

National/provincial organizations: **cca 50**

9.2. a. **NO.**

b. **YES.** At the Romanian Ministry of Waters, Forests and Environmental Protection, Department for Environmental Protection, there is a special Office for relation with the NGOs responsible for organizing workshops on conservation issues (including wetland conservation issues).

9.3. Not decided yet.

9.4. **YES.** The Regional Environmental Center provides for the 1998 - 1999 period grants for the following NGO that have projects aimed at Education and Public Awareness about wetlands in Romania:

AMONIT - Piatra Neamt (raising awareness for protected aquatic systems)

ECOS Youth Organization (projects focused on involvement of local communities in developing a management plan for wise use of potential Ramsar sites);

EXPLORATORII Speologica Association (raising public awareness for conservation of floodplains from the Danube's Iron Gate area)

9.5. **NO.**

9.6. The national/provincial NGOs seem to be most active in the themes of the:

General Objective 3 (Raise awareness of wetland values)

General Objective 5 (especially "To obtain regularly updated information on wetlands of international importance");

General Objective 6 (To designate for the List new sites)

Final comments:

10.1. General comments on implementation of the Ramsar Strategic Plan.
At the time being there are two scientific project focused on implementation of the Ramsar Strategic Plan. Both of the projects are carried out by the Danube delta Research and Design Institute.

10.2. Observation 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

The Ramsar Convention Bureau
Rue Mauverney 28
CH-1196 Gland, Switzerland
tel +41 22 / 999 01 70
fax +41 22 / 999 01 69
e-mail ramsar@hq.iucn.org