

**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:** *SWEDEN*

**Designated Ramsar Administrative Authority** *Swedish Environmental Protection Agency*

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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 co-operatively with neighbouring countries on transfrontier wetland sites) to encourage others to join the Convention.

*No action taken*

**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:

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

*No National Wetland Policy has been developed, but a National Mire Conservation Plan is being implemented.*

- 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 Mire Conservation Plan is endorsed by the 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)?

*The Mire Conservation Plan is included as one element in the National Biodiversity Action Plan. Another objective in the Action plan concerns a nation-wide survey of lakes and watercourses.*

- 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?

*Not relevant.*

- 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?

Please provide details.

*Not relevant*

- 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 relevant*

- 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.

*As a result from reviews, the following decisions have been taken recently: (i) To introduce a general ban of further drainage in southern Sweden and parts of middle Sweden. The ban is likely to be geographically expanded to the north in the near future. (ii) To introduce a general ban of further drainage in all Ramsar sites. (iii) To have a stricter interpretation and enforcement in relation to further drainage, resulting in a situation where further drainage is not accepted in the most valuable areas according to the National Wetland Inventory. (iv) To forbid the use of lead shots when hunting ducks and geese as of 1 July 1998. The ban is expected to be formally widened in the coming years if not carried out on a voluntary basis.*

- 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

*On a national and regional basis, a nation-wide survey is made on coastal areas including shallow waters, shore meadows and small islands in co-operation with the other Nordic countries. The purpose is i.a. to facilitate integration of nature conservation into coastal planning.*

- 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

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).

*There is a general ambition to reduce the use of polluting substances in industry and land use practices. A nation-wide programme on liming lakes and watercourses in order to reduce effects from acid rain has been carried out for several years, which improves a large number of water habitats throughout Sweden. A majority of Swedish Ramsar sites have a status as Nature Reserves.*

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

*This has not been done in a general way. In the case of the restoration of Lake Hornborga, an effort has been made to estimate the collected costs and benefits for the society.*

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

*Measures taken under the Water Resources Act always need an EIA. In other cases the permitting authority, on a case by case basis, decides whether an EIA is needed or not.*

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

*Restoration comes second to conservation of natural or semi-natural areas. Nevertheless a few restoration projects are always being carried out, often based on joint actions by authorities,*

*municipalities and WWF-Sweden. In recent years a small number of wetlands have been restored successfully, mainly targeted at improving biological diversity, notably birds. There is no National Restoration Plan in Sweden. Research in the field of mire restoration is desirable.*

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.

- 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).

*Nothing in particular has been done, except when carrying out restorations projects, when local people are always approached in order to achieve full understanding of the project.*

- 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  
*Within the European CAP programme, however, farmers are encouraged to restore or create small wetlands on agricultural land. In the period October 1997 - April 1998, a total number of 445 Swedish farmers presented applications that were approved in this field. Incentives for drainage activities have been removed.*

If yes, please provide details.

### **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)
- 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.  
*No major activities have taken place but information material on wetlands is frequently used in case studies at higher educational institutions.*

### **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*.  
*The Swedish Ramsar Committee consists of a mixture of authorities (Swedish EPA, Royal Academy of Sciences, Swedish Museum of Natural History, Centre for Biological Diversity) and NGO’s (WWF-Sweden, Swedish Society for Nature Conservation, Swedish Ornithological*

*Society and Swedish Hunters' Association). It meets normally 2 times a year and acts as an advisory body to the government and Swedish EPA in different international matters including Ramsar.*

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.
- b. a review to identify training opportunities for these people both within your country and in other countries. Yes/No?
- c. the development of training modules or a training programme specifically for wetland managers. If yes, please give details.

*In some years, the Swedish EPA in co-operation with other authorities, arrange courses for management people and other personnel involved in wetlands. WWF-Sweden also arranges seminars on wetland issues on a regular basis.*

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

*One person has participated in the international training course at Lelystad, the Netherlands.*

## **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:

- a. being prepared? *Not known, but a few is added each year.*
- b. fully prepared? *Swedish Ramsar (30 in all) includes 56 protected areas, 41 of which have a management plan.*
- c. being implemented? *41*

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

*Cf. enclosed overview of Swedish Ramsar sites, page 16-17.*

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.

*Generally, the monitoring part of the management plans is weak.*

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.

*Gradual changes take place in most sites on a long-term perspective, mainly due to natural processes and changes in land-use practices (such as discontinuation of grazing). Recent significant changes due to exploitations or other important encroachments are not known. Local drainage activities which have taken place in Persöfjärden Ramsar site are subject to administrative processes. In Lake Östen, the water regime was damaged in the 1980s due to enlargement of the outlet. Current discussions include proposals to restore the earlier situation.*

*Major restoration measures or enhancement activities has taken place in the last three years in some of the Ramsar sites, such as River Helgeån, Lake Hornborga, Kvismaren, Hjälstaviken, and Lake Åsnen.*

- 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 relevant.*

- 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 relevant.*

## **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.

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.

*The National Wetland Inventory started in 1981 and will be complete by about 2000. Today it covers 20 out of 21 counties and includes information on c. 28 000 sites, divided into c. 70 000 sub-sites. It covers more than 2 million hectares and contains information on e.g. size, wetland type, different evaluation criteria (naturalness, natural richness, rareness etc) as well as biological diversity.*

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

*No Directory exists, but the sites identified in the wetland inventory are classified into one of four classes ranging from Very high conservation value to No existing conservation value. In addition to that, according to the Natural Resources Act, a large number of Nationally Important Areas are identified in Sweden. Many of those include wetlands that have been given a high priority in the inventory.*

- 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.

*It is estimated that the total wetland area in Sweden in early 1800 was about 12 million hectares (according to the Wetland Inventory definition, see below). In all about 2.7 million hectares have been lost, corresponding to 23 %. About 50 % is affected by various antropogenic activities, the rest (24 % equivalent to about 2.9 million hectares) being in a natural or near-natural state (apart from the fact that large areas are influenced by acidification).*

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

*In the National Wetland Inventory a somewhat more narrow definition of the wetland concept has been applied compared to the Ramsar Convention definition. Lakes, coastal and running waters are not included unless they contain aquatic vegetation.*

- 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.

*Current planning include the selection of further Ramsar sites based on mainly criteria a, b, and d.*

- 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.  
*It is anticipated that the government will confirm an additional number of Ramsar sites in early 1999, based on proposals from regional authorities. A tentative list will be circulated for consultation in the near months and hopefully at least 20 new sites will be classified as new sites.*
- 6.6 Please advise which of the sites included in the Ramsar List from your country are transfrontier wetlands (Refer also to 7.1).  
*At present none.*
- 6.7 Describe any plans, or actions being taken for further transfrontier sites to be listed (Refer also to 7.1).  
*One such site (bordering southern Norway) has been proposed and is included in the tentative list.*

## **Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective 7**

**To mobilise international co-operation 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).  
*None so far.*
- 7.2 Do you have Ramsar sites that are “twinned” with others, either nationally or internationally?  
Yes/No.  
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
- b. Framework Convention on Climate Change
- c. Convention to Combat Desertification
- d. Convention on Migratory Species
- e. World Heritage Convention

*There are only informal internal contacts between people responsible for the running of the different conventions in questions related to more than one convention.*

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, but a few Swedish ornithologists are involved in various foreign research projects in this field. 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.

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, but as part of a temporary major allocation to municipalities, a restricted number of wetland-related projects have been supported in recent years.*

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.  
*Occasionally Sida (and the government) have contributed to the Small Grants Fund.*

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  
*However, some governmental money allocated to the Swedish EPA, are spent on wetland-related issues within the Baltic states.*

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.

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.

*Not relevant*

## 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 co-operation 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?

*Four (WWF-Sweden, the Hunters’ Association, the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation, the Swedish Ornithological Society).*

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

- 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
- b. to the government? Yes/No

If yes in either case, please give details.

*Mainly through the meetings in the National Ramsar Committee. In addition they spread their messages through various media sometimes by launching campaigns.*

- 9.3 Does your government include one or more NGO representatives on its official delegation to Ramsar COPs? Yes/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).  
*See 9.2. The Swedish Hunters’ Association has created a Wetlands Fund to promote wetland conservation.*

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

*Where advisory committees exist, which is far from everywhere in protected areas, they normally include the presence of one or more NGOs.*

- 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.

*It is felt that the main inputs are made in the following areas:*

*Objective 2.6 Restoration and creation of wetlands (mainly WWF-Sweden and the Swedish Hunters’ Association)*

*Objective 3 To raise awareness (all NGOs)*

*Objective 7 To promote international cooperation (mainly WWF-Sweden)*

*Objective 8 - Institutional mechanisms and resources (mainly WWF-Sweden)*

## **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.

*No comments given apart from the fact that the staff at the Bureau always has been very service-minded, co-operative and devoted.*

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