

**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: Republic of TURKEY

Designated Ramsar Administrative Authority

Full name of the institution:

Ministry of Environment-General Directorate of Environmental Protection.

Name and title of the head of the institution:

Fahri AKBEN- General Director

Mailing address for the head of the institution:

Eskişehir Yolu 8.km. 06530 Ankara / TURKEY

Telephone: +903122879963

Fax: +903122862271

Email:

Name and title (if different) of the designated contact officer for Ramsar Convention matters:

Mailing address (if different) for the designated contact officer:

Telephone:

Fax:

Email:

Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective 1

To progress towards universal membership of the Convention.

1.1 Turkey has ratified Ramsar Convention in 1994. In 1995, an International Wetland Conference that covered current problems as well as policies and strategies on protection and improvement of wetlands was organized at Cappadocia. Representatives from Europa, North Africa, Black Sea shoreline countries, Turkish Republic, and The Federal Republic of Northern Cyprus attended the conference. Additionally, international institutions, MedWet, Station Biologique de la Tour du Valat and International NGOs, Bird life, WWF and National NGOs attended the conference.

In 1997, a Council of Europe seminar on Action Plans for European Globally Threatened Birds was hold in İzmir collaboration with Bern Convention. The seminar was attended by representatives from European countries, Bonn Convention, international institutions, international and national NGOs.

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 Turkey has not developed a National Wetland Policy. It is being planned for the near future.

a. Its main features will be providing the co-ordination between related governmental and non-governmental organisations on the subjects of conservation and wise use of wetlands, their rehabilitation, and restoration.

b. It will be adopted by the Ministry of Environment responsible for Ramsar matters and it will be presented to all related Governments, academic institutions and NGOs in order to take their opinions. It will come into force after finishing this procedure.

c. National Wetland Strategic Plan will be prepared by taking into consideration National Environmental Action Plan, National Bio-diversity Action Plan and 97-2002 Ramsar Strategy Plan.

2.2 As it was indicated at 2.1.a, Turkey has not a policy focused on wetlands. On the other hand, Turkey has accepted and implemented the wise use principle of Ramsar Convention after being contracted Party of Convention. For instance, although there are some judgements in the National Legislation of Turkey on swamps drying, these applications have been given up since 1994.

The major difficulty is the lack of co-ordination between related institutions in implementation of Ramsar Convention principles, because Turkey has not had a National Ramsar Committee yet.

2.3 As it was indicated in the previous question, Turkey has not a policy. However the activities mentioned at 2.2 have been carried out by the Ministry of Environment in collaboration with related institutions and NGOs.

2.4 -

2.5 The practices which impact on wetlands have been examined in the scope of Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations. The evaluation of the Ministry of Environment has to be taken for activities in the Ramsar Sites or near the Ramsar Sites.

Ramsar Convention has become very important and main assistant on this type of activities for Turkish Government since has been ratified.

As a result of such work:

- 1) Impact on ongoing irrigation and drainage activities on wetland ecosystem of Kızılırmak Delta, the most important wetland on the Black Sea coast, was assessed and after a number of field trips and meetings, the planned drainage and irrigation activities on 12.000 ha area was canceled.
- 2) In order to conserve and maintain the ecological integrity of Lake Beyşehir, the largest freshwater lake of the country, the Konya Plain Irrigation Project was re-evaluated, and the irrigation of a 48.000 ha large area was canceled.
- 3) The Mucur-Seyfe Watershed Ecological Protection Project was prepared by DSI (State Water Hydraulic Works) in 1990, was re-evaluated by the Ministry of Environment and it was concluded that the project would destroy the ecological integrity of Lake Seyfe. Following this finding, under the co-ordination of the Ministry of Environment and with the contribution of relevant institutions and organizations, a revision of the project was proposed and accepted by the implementing institution.
- 4) With the involvement of relevant institutions and organizations, and under the coordination of the Ministry of Environment, the flow of salty drainage water into the reedbeds at another Ramsar Site, the Sultan Marshes, was considered, and its redirection instead into Lake Yay was accomplished.
- 5) In order to prevent likely negative impacts to the Gediz Delta, the planned international harbour and dockyard were assessed and construction of them were canceled. Additionally, taking the sludge from deep scanning of İzmir Bay to the Delta was prevented.
- 6) In order to return the water regime of Lake Kuş (Manyas) to its natural situation, the required works and their implementations have been started with the involvement of relevant institutions and organizations under the coordination of the Ministry of Environment.

2.6 An Urban Surrounding Planning for the Kızılırmak Delta, the largest and most intact wetland of the Turkish Black Sea coast, was completed. Its zonation and usage principles were developed under the guidance of Ministry of Environment and it was enforced by the Ministry of Public Works. The planning regulates all land use in the delta by considering the balance of conservation-use. The plan decisions were written on the 25.000 scale of map.

- In order to integrate all sectors within economical, ecological and socio-economical wholeness, two management planning projects have been started by the Ministry of Environment in collaboration with the universities for Lake Burdur and the Gediz Delta which are already in Ramsar List since 1997.
- Project for Ecological Risk Assessment and Management Planning at Lake Kuş has been awarded support by European Union Life-Third Countries Programme. The project is coordinated by the Ministry of Environment and is implemented in collaboration with the Faculty of Agriculture (Ankara University) and the Ministry of Forestry. 50 % of the financing of this project will be provided by Life Programme.
- The project Integrating Development and Conservation in the Göksu Delta which is the most important wetland on the Turkish Mediterranean coast, was executed by the Society for the Protection of Nature in collaboration with National and International partners. The project was completed at the end of 1997. The long term objective of the project was the sustainable development and conservation of biodiversity in the Göksu Delta through integrated management.

2.7 No.

- 2.8 The Regulation for Water Pollution Control came into force in 1988 under the Environmental Law. With the Regulation, the direct release of non-treated waste waters to the receiving water is banned and the criterias for the discharge of waste waters to the receiving water after treatment are determined. Accordingly, all implementations are evaluated in this scope. Turkish Government observes more sensitively the activities around the wetlands of international importance. A project was started for determination of Bor pollution and developing recommendations for its solution in Lake Kuş (Manyas) was started by the Ministry of Environment In 1997.
- 2.9 Wetland economic valuation has been taken for potentially impacting on wetlands in the step of planning. Before becoming a party to the Convention, the functions of wetlands were not considered sufficiently. As for the present, the evaluations have been made more carefully and ongoing investments have been reviewed by considering the wise use principle of the Convention.
- 2.10 Yes, Environmental Impact Assessment for actions potentially impacting on wetlands required under the legislation come into force in 1993.
- 2.11 Wetland restoration and rehabilitation is not considered a priority due to lack of financial sources. With the existing limited financial sources have been given to the activities for the conservation and wise use of wetlands. However these sources are not sufficient for mentioned works. For instance, in 1994 the pre-feasibility study was realised for restoration and rehabilitation of Lake Amik but this study was not done as the required financial sources were not found.
- 2.12 Although there are not any systematic or planned activities focused on indigenous people and women to inform during the field studies some interviews have been made with indigenous people and stakeholders. On the other hand, educational studies have been carried out more actively by NGOs in Turkey. As a matter of fact Turkey needs more systematic educational programme focused on target groups.
- 2.13 The studies to provide cheaper electricity for treatment plants have been started on the legislative basis. In Turkey, some of the NGOs' efforts supported by private sectors.

Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective 3

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

- 3.1 Although there is not a national programme for Education and Public Awareness, some improvements have been provided as a result of Ministry of Environment and NGOs efforts. Many publications related to importance and functions of wetlands of Environment and NGOs and many documentary films have been prepared for TV. Additionally, some meetings for decision-makers, managers and stakeholders have been arranged.
- 3.2 No.

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 The working group consists of related governmental and non-governmental institutions, experts have been established under the coordination of Ministry of Environment in order to find solutions for any actions which can have an impact on the conservation and wise use of wetlands.
- 4.2
- a. No.
 - b. No.
 - c. The internal service training programmes have been arranged for the staffs of the Ministry of Environment and of the provincial organizations every year.
 - d. Yes.
If the required financial supports are found, the opportunities on wetland related training can be provided for people outside of Turkey.
Besides, people join in training programmes which have been realised by NGOs, universities, and governmental institutions in Turkey.

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 One.
- a. The management plans have being prepared for Lake Kuş (Manyas), Lake Burdur and Gediz Delta.
 - b. -
 - c. The management plan of the Göksu Delta has being implemented.
- 5.2 Yes.
- 5.3 After the management plans mentioned on 5.1.a are finished and implemented, some positive changes in ecological characters are expected at these sites.
- 5.4 Turkey has no any Montreux Record Ramsar sites.
- 5.5 -

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 No.
In 1992, the Ministry of Environment has started the Research Project for Determination of Biological and Ecological Properties of the Internationally Important Wetlands.
This study will have been completed for 21 sites by the end of 1998 and for more 17 sites by the end of 1999.
It is planned that the project will be completed for whole sites of Turkey until 2002.
The researches include the natural environmental characteristics (Geological, meteorological, hydrological, biological, topographic parameters), physical and chemical characteristics (water quality parameters), and natural property use (water use, agriculture, aqua-culture, forestry, tourism, hunting, grazing, reed production and other products, salt, soda) of the sites.
- 6.2 Yes, Turkey has a list of important wetlands. The list was finalised in 1993 and revised in 1996. It is kept in the Wetland Section of the Ministry of Environment.
The specific criteria based on waterfowl adopted by the 4th and 6th Meetings of the Conferences of the Convention.
- 6.3 It is not known.
- 6.4 The study for determination of The Important Bird Areas in Turkey was realised by the Society for Nature Protection (DHKD) between 1990 and 1997. It was supported by Garanti Bank, RSPB, Birdlife International and Vogel bescherming Nederland. Although this document is not a full list of Turkish Important Bird Areas, it includes the current inventory of the most of the important large wetlands in Turkey.
- 6.5 A project for Identification of Potential Ramsar Sites in Turkey has been started in 1998 supported by Ramsar Small Grants Fund for Wetland Conservation and Wise Use.
- 6.6 -
- 6.7 -

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 -
- 7.2 The question is not understood well.
- 7.3 Turkey has already ratified Convention on Biological Diversity, Convention to Combat Desertification and World Heritage Convention.

The Ministry of Environment General Directorate of Environmental Protection is responsible to carry out Convention on Biological Diversity and Convention on Combat Desertification as focal point and also Ramsar Convention. Accordingly, the dialogues and cooperative actions between the personnel responsible for their implementation and the Ramsar Administrative Authority have been carried out regularly.

The Administrative Authority for World Heritage Convention is the Ministry of Culture and Turkey has not any area included in the list of the Convention yet.

7.4 No.

7.5 No.

7.6 A portion of the annual budget of the Ministry of Environment is used for conservation and wise use of wetlands.

7.7 No.

7.8 No.

Ramsar Strategic Plan - General Objective 8
To provide the Convention with the required institutional mechanisms and resources.

8.1 No.

8.2 No.

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

9.1 Only one. National.

9.2

a. No.

b. No.

9.3 No.

9.4 Yes.

a. Organizing wetland training course on Ramsar / IUCN Management
Guideline.

b. Publications; awareness materials, films, posters, etc.

c. Campaigns and press trips to sites.

9.5 No.

9.6 Wise use planning, awareness, education. (Obj. 2, 3)

Final comments:

10.1 It is a good prepared plan. If the plan can be implemented, it will be a very valuable tool for reaching its targets.

The problems during implementation of the plan:

- Lack of experts having adequate qualification to prepare wetland management plans,
- Lack of sufficient financial sources for preparation and implementation of wetland management plans, restoration and rehabilitation of wetlands,
- Contradictions between protection policy, decision makers, and stakeholders,
- Lack of training activities,
- Lack of legislative and administrative measures.

In order to solve these problems we need more financial sources. Consequently it should be endeavoured to increase financial possibilities at the international level.

10.2 The Ramsar Bodies' are sufficient and the services provided by them are very helpfull and positive.

10.3

- The Ramsar Bureau should encourage countries in establishment of their own national committees. Therefore making of necessary legislative arrangements and providing of coordination and cooperatiom between related institutions are getting easier.
- The educational possibilities for especially decisionmakers and planners should be increased.
- Exchange of knowledge on the implementation of the Convention and the strategic plan should be increased.
- The repetitions in the Ramsar Site Information Sheet should be omitted.

The Ramsar Convention Bureau

Rue Mauverney 28

CH-1196 Gland, Switzerland

tel +41 22 999 0170

fax +41 22 999 0169

e-mail ramsar@hq.iucn.org