



11th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

“Wetlands: home and destination”

Bucharest, Romania, 6-13 July 2012

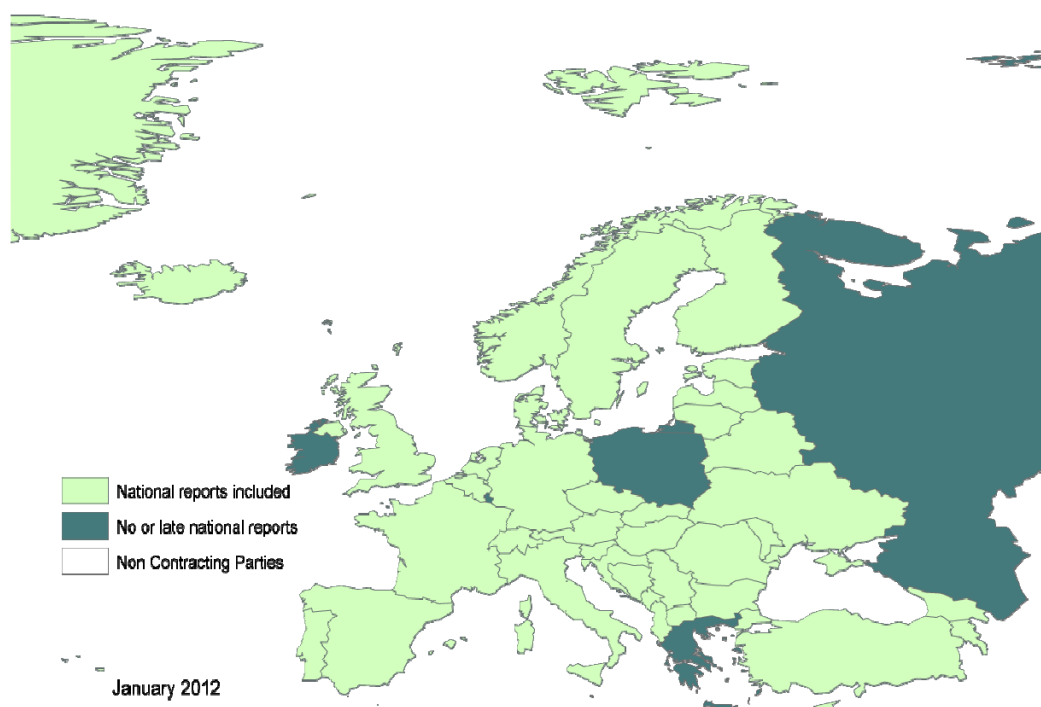
Ramsar COP11 DOC. 11

Regional overview of the implementation of the Convention and its Strategic Plan in Europe

National Reports upon which this overview is based can be consulted at:

www.ramsar.org > Documents > National Reports to the COP

http://www.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-documents-natl-rpts-national-reports-2012/main/ramsar/1-31-121%5E25327_4000_0



1. This overview is based on the National Reports submitted by **39 European Parties** (of 45) in time for analysis: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark (with a separate report for Greenland), Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands (with a separate report for its Caribbean territories, included in the analysis provided in Ramsar COP11 DOC. 8), Norway, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, and United Kingdom.

2. European Parties with no National Report submitted in time for analysis are (6): Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, and Russian Federation.
3. European countries not yet Parties are (3): Andorra, Holy See, and San Marino.
4. The number (and percentage) of European Parties submitting National Reports in time for analysis for each of the four latest meetings of the Conference of the Parties (COP) varied with 39 (87%) reports analyzed for COP11 in 2012, 36 (80%) for COP10 in 2008, 40 (91%) for COP9 in 2005, and 40 (95%) for COP8 in 2002. European Parties not included in these analyses were Albania (in 2008), Czech Republic (2005), Georgia (2008), Greece (2012, 2008, 2005), Ireland (2012, 2008, 2005), Luxembourg (2012, 2008, 2002), Malta (2012, 2008, 2002), Monaco (2008, 2005), Poland (2012), Russian Federation (2012, 2008), and Serbia (2008).

Summary and ways forward

5. The current administrative context is not particularly supportive, nor does it provide additional means for increased Ramsar implementation capacities in many European countries. Most of us are struggling to keep up with increasing pressures on wetlands stemming from rapidly spreading urbanisation and land use for tourism, infrastructures and exploitation of natural resources (water, oil, gas, peat and others). Ongoing climate change increases environmental stress and the frequency of disasters, such as droughts, floods, storms and earth slides. The financial crisis that started at the time of COP10 (2008) continues. Many European countries, including some of the wealthiest ones, have now to fight relative poverty with large-scale unemployment and economic standstill. This is a time to think differently, and to elaborate innovative models for sustainable ways of dealing with our human environment, taking into account in a coordinated way its natural, social and economic resources.
6. Ramsar experts should be at the forefront of such new thinking and new acting, i.e., to make ourselves the advocates of an inclusive understanding of all wetland ecosystems (rivers, lakes, inland, coastal, human-made, etc.) and of a comprehensive valuation of the services they provide to humanity, particularly to our societies in this highly industrialized part of the world. Unfortunately still too often, a narrow picture of wetlands prevails in the day-to-day work of many of us. Focusing mainly on protected areas and species conservation underestimates the importance of wetlands and their ecosystem services as key assets for conservation and development, and seriously weakens in turn the work and the recognition of the Convention.
7. Ramsar actors within our national Administrative Authorities, and within NGOs, being part of the business sector and the civil society at large, all have a unique opportunity to contribute now to increase public awareness and the understanding of the crucial roles that wetland ecosystems play in the water cycle, in climate change adaptation and mitigation, and in biodiversity conservation. We need to illustrate the benefits that our societies can reap from wetlands, as long as they continue to exist. With nearly 1,000 European Ramsar Sites, we have a solid base to demonstrate how to integrate our needs for local (green) development with water resources management at the river basin scale, and how to curb the continuing loss of global biodiversity, its products and values.

8. Still too often, short-term economic gains are guiding ill-fated development and investment decisions. Governments and investors still do not take fully into account the manifold wetland ecosystem services, their maintenance costs and their long-term benefits for our well-being. In this situation, where perverse economic incentives prevail over sustainable thinking about the use and recycling of natural resources, we are left with one major solution to overcome our current constraints and our limited capacities: to share our concerns and to work increasingly with partners, to communicate, coordinate and cooperate with other sectors of our domestic administration and our societies at large. This concerns the water management sector in the first place, but also any other parts of the public and private sectors.
9. The 40th anniversary year 2011 of the Ramsar Convention provided us with an opportunity to look back to the period at the beginning of the 1970s, when for the first time after the rapid industrial development following World War II, the world acknowledged a growing concern for environmental problems and their repercussions for humanity, and when in 1971 the meeting of 18 pioneering Parties in the city of Ramsar was the first to create a modern global environmental agreement. Now, at the beginning of our fifth decade, real life starts for Ramsar. The time has come to concentrate on real wetland assets, on our liquid resources to find solutions for problems that have not vanished, but need to be resolved in an increasingly pressing context. We need to better appreciate all different wetland types, to understand the cultural and socio-economic interconnections inside the river basins, and to find sustainable solutions together with our partners and allies.

Main achievements since 2010 and priorities for 2013-2015

10. The European Parties provided a general summary of progress and the challenges they experienced with national implementation of the Convention during the years 2009-2012 in section 2 of the National Report. The main points are summarized according to the specific questions A-J:

New steps undertaken to implement the Convention (A)

11. Parties report most frequently about their steps to develop management plans for Ramsar Sites and the implementation of their provisions, on their further development of national policies for conservation, biodiversity and wetlands, the preparation and designation of new Ramsar Sites, wetland monitoring and inventory activities, the development of strategies and policies for protected areas in a more general context, work related to water policies (including the EU Water Framework Directive), and others.
12. New and innovative steps undertaken were the organization of a major national Ramsar conference in Austria in 2009, the construction of a national Ramsar wetland training centre in Finland, the development of a multi-stakeholder action plan and operational guidance for its implementation and an Internet portal in France, and the preparation of a regional CEPA strategy and action plan for the Nordic-Baltic countries under the NorBalWet regional initiative.

The most successful aspects of implementation of the Convention (B)

13. Parties mention most frequently the successful execution of specific wetland projects, mainly for the improved management of particular sites, the preparation and designation of new Ramsar Sites, CEPA-related activities, wetland restoration work, the development of national strategies for protected areas, and others.
14. Particular highlights were the organization of a national conference on wetlands and climate change in the Czech Republic in 2011, the elaboration of national strategies for alien invasive species in Finland and Montenegro, and the national policy of environmental quality objectives that guides Ramsar implementation successfully in Sweden with a focus on conservation, sustainable use and restoration.

The greatest difficulties in implementing the Convention (C)

15. Problems mentioned most frequently are over-use of wetland resources by fisheries, agriculture, the peat industry, and others – and the difficulty of establishing the intersectoral cooperation needed to find sustainable solutions for these problems. The lack of human and financial resources remains a difficulty which is perceived widely – not only in the poorer countries, but also in the richer ones. Further difficulties mentioned are the slow administrative processes to put effective policies in place and the lack of sufficient coordination between wetland, water, and river basin management authorities. Other difficulties are the lack of political interest, of economic incentives (in the absence of wetland valuations), and of sufficient wetland inventories.

Priorities for the future implementation of the Convention (D)

16. The priorities for action mentioned most frequently reflect answers to the difficulties listed above, focusing first and foremost on wetland and Ramsar Site monitoring and management, including the necessary update of Ramsar Site information. The second priority is the designation of new Ramsar Sites, followed by wetland site restoration and finding solutions to problems causing ecological change at specific wetlands, undertaking more CEPA activities, and developing national policies through a truly intersectoral cooperative process.
17. In particular, raising awareness about the Convention and its image is a priority in Austria. Finalizing river basin management plans is a priority in Belgium. And maximizing the opportunities for synergies between the steps to implement Ramsar and to implement national, EU and other international policies is a priority for the United Kingdom.

Proposals for adjustments to the Strategic Plan 2009-2015 (E)

18. European Parties did not make many concrete proposals about how to adjust the Strategic Plan during the second half of its target period. They stress the value of their Ramsar work to contribute to reaching the 2020 Aichi biodiversity targets and insist on the need to use synergies with existing EU policy and financial instruments for better Ramsar implementation.
19. Finland asks that the importance to cooperate with the water management sector be included as an indicator. So does Belgium, emphasizing the importance of taking into

account hydrological wetland ecosystem services. Several Parties request that the Strategic Plan be more practical, that it spell out more concrete tasks for the Parties and explain the coordination needed to link the work of different Ramsar actors most effectively (Parties, Secretariat, the Scientific and Technical Review Panel, National Focal Points, and others).

Recommendations for improved Ramsar Secretariat assistance (F)

20. Most Parties are generally content with the assistance provided by the Secretariat. Issues for which they would like to receive additional assistance are: support for the development and governance of Regional Initiatives and cooperation between neighbouring countries, advice on the development of national wetland inventories and policies, designation of new Ramsar Sites, development of projects and others. Germany mentions that having the format for the National Report to the next COP available already early in the triennium facilitates its use as an instrument for planning and assessment. Finland requests support to transfer the *Changwon Declaration* into a European context.

Recommendations for better assistance from the Convention's IOPs (G)

21. Several Parties report that they work well with national branches of Ramsar's International Organization Partners (IOPs) on different projects, and that this cooperation could be increased to include other countries as well, notably to work on issues such as Ramsar Site designation, wetland management, hunting, wetland inventory and monitoring techniques. IOPs are invited to participate more actively in Regional Initiatives, following the Mediterranean example, where the IOPs and other NGOs are formal members of the MedWet Initiative. And Parties regret the absence of IWMI in Europe.

How to link national Ramsar implementation better with other MEAs (H)

22. Most of the answers stress the need for increased exchange of information and cooperation between the focal points of different Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) at national level, possibly also through the establishment of trans-sectoral national committees. Suggestions include the development of common programmes for national implementation of several conventions and common CEPA activities that involve the IOPs more. Parties consider that a potential for common projects between MEAs exists at national and regional level. And they mention in particular the potential for increased cooperation with the European Union and UNESCO.

How to link Ramsar better with national water policies and other national strategies (I)

23. Ramsar aspects have to be incorporated into other national policies, and this requires increased cooperation between different ministries and administrations, possibly through the establishment of inter-agency committees to draft new policies. The importance of EU policies, and notably the Water Framework Directive, is mentioned. In general, more communication and education efforts are needed. Work should focus on practical issues to facilitate intersectoral cooperation, such as on Strategic Environmental Assessments, site management, land-use planning, and the valuation of ecosystem services.

General comments on the implementation of the Ramsar Convention (J)

24. In many European Parties, national environmental regulations do not specifically address wetland issues. This is a reason why Ramsar has often little (or no) visibility at national level. To remedy this situation, national wetland and Ramsar committees should be established where they are missing, or be used as national platforms for the development and coordination of integrated environmental policies where they exist. It is important to translate CEPA materials into national languages and to adapt them to the national context. More communication about how the EU Natura 2000 programme and Ramsar can complement each other would be helpful. Greenland considers that the fact that a recent Ramsar Advisory Mission did not only focus on the problems of a single Ramsar Site, but addressed wider themes, was particularly helpful to trigger a national dialogue on nature protection issues.

Implementation activities undertaken since COP10

25. The topics are presented following the structure of the Ramsar Strategic Plan 2009-2015 (adopted through Resolution X.1), available at www.ramsar.org/pdf/key_strat_plan_2009_e.pdf. As far as possible, the evolution of the implementation of the Convention is analyzed by comparing Strategies and Indicators provided in National Reports to earlier meetings of the COP with information provided for COP11.

GOAL 1: The wise use of wetlands

National wetland inventories and assessment (*Strategy 1.1*)

26. Already in 1980, the first Conference of the Parties (COP1) recommended establishing wetland inventories “as an aid to the formulation and implementation of national wetland policies” (Recommendation 1.5). Finally, the adoption of a *Ramsar Framework for Wetland Inventory* (through Resolution VIII.6 in 2002 at COP8) triggered many activities, reflected by the fact that the number of European Parties with a national wetland inventory rose during the following years from 11 to 20. But since COP9 in 2005, the process has stagnated, as can be seen in the comparative table of **Annex 2**.
27. However, Estonia and Turkey now report that they have completed their inventories, and the United Kingdom is preparing a national inventory. Bulgaria, Moldova and Slovakia report regress with national wetland inventories, when compared to their earlier report to COP10. Overall 21 European Parties have completed a national wetland inventory (*Indicator 1.1.1*, cf. **Annex 1**), and 19 of them report that inventory data and information is maintained and made accessible to all stakeholders (*Indicator 1.1.2*). These are higher percentages of European Parties than the global average, but the current situation still leaves a substantial number of European Parties without a comprehensive national wetland inventory. Given the importance of inventories as a baseline for National Wetland Policies, the remaining Parties are strongly encouraged to prepare, complete and regularly update national wetland inventories.
28. The Ramsar Secretariat would appreciate receiving more detailed information on existing national inventories, if possible with a copy of inventory site lists or an indication of how such inventories are accessible through the Internet.

29. It is important to work with, and to use, wetland inventory data and to make them available to all stakeholders as a baseline for assessing the status and trends of the ecological character of wetlands. Doing so, eight European Parties report in 2011 (*Indicator 1.1.3*) that the overall status of their Ramsar Sites has improved, and four that the status of wetlands in general has improved, including Albania, Austria, Belarus, Denmark, Germany, Iceland, Lithuania, Romania, and Serbia. Possibly they could summarize their “recipes for success” and share them with other Parties? – most notably with those Parties that report a deterioration of Ramsar Sites and/or wetlands generally, the Czech Republic, Finland, Latvia, Moldova, Slovenia, and Ukraine. The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia reports a deterioration of its first Ramsar Site while the status of other wetlands in the country has improved since COP10. Possibly a Ramsar Advisory Mission could look *in situ* for the reasons for this?

Policy, legislation and institutions (*Strategy 1.3*)

30. Ramsar Handbook 2 (4th edition, 2010) provides guidelines for reviewing laws and institutions to promote the conservation and wise use of wetlands (adopted through Resolution VII.7) that should lead to the adoption of a *National Wetland Policy* or a similar legal instrument. For COP11, 24 European Parties report that they have such a national policy in place (*Indicator 1.3.1*, cf. **Annex 1**). This is a higher percentage of Parties than the global average. Substantial progress in putting national policies in place since COP10 is reported by Belarus, Croatia, Czech Republic, Greenland (Denmark), Latvia, Montenegro, Norway and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; while Moldova reports regress. The number of Parties with a *National Wetland Policy* is increasing since COP8 (cf. **Annex 2**), but still about one third of all European Parties do not seem to have such a policy in place yet.
31. Wetland issues are increasingly incorporated into other national strategies and planning processes (*Indicator 1.3.3*). Wetland issues are nearly always incorporated into National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAP) elaborated under the Joint Work Programme between Ramsar and the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD), cf. Figure 1. In many countries wetland issues are also incorporated into national strategies for sustainable development and water resource management, as well as into water efficiency plans.
32. More integration of wetland issues into agriculture, forest, coastal and marine policies is still required. Few European Parties focus on domestic “poverty eradication strategies”. However, when this term is understood in the sense of “socio-economic development strategies”, particularly for less-favoured regions, one would conclude that many European Parties could still incorporate wetland issues better into such strategies.

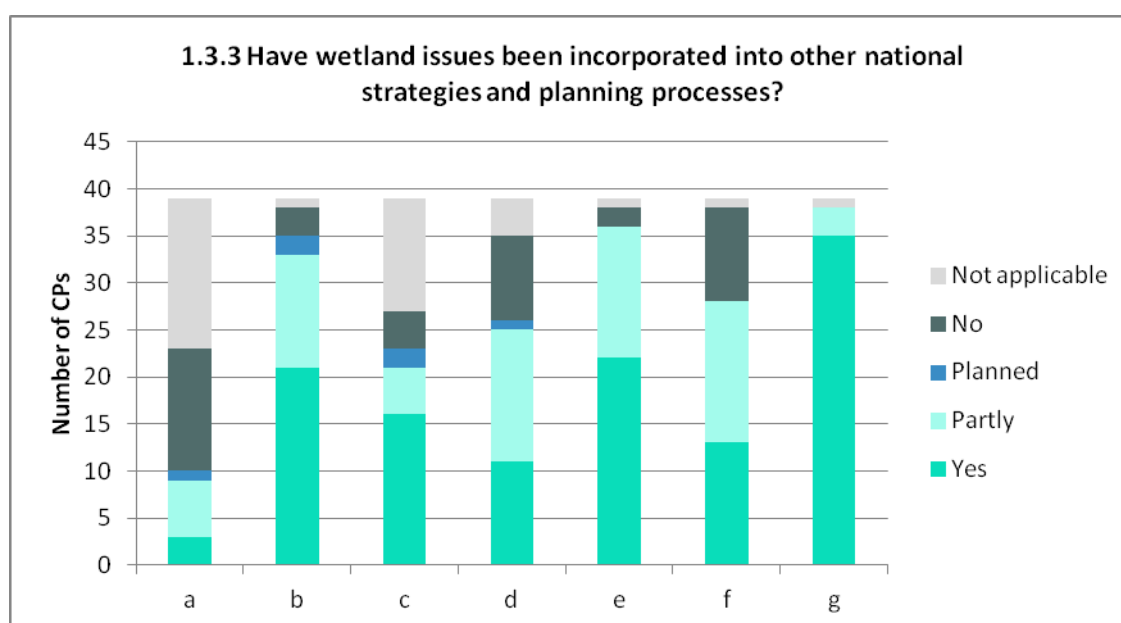


Figure 1: Number of Parties with wetland issues incorporated into other strategies:

- a – poverty eradication strategies,
- b – water resource management and water efficiency plans,
- c – coastal and marine resource management plans,
- d – national forest programmes,
- e – national strategies for sustainable development,
- f – national policies or measures on agriculture,
- g – National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans.

Cross-sectoral recognition of wetland services (*Strategy 1.4*)

33. Fewer European Parties than the global average report that wetland services are recognized across different sectors. Only Austria, Croatia, Cyprus, Finland, France, Slovenia, Switzerland and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia report that they made progress with assessing the ecosystem services provided by their Ramsar Sites (*Indicator 1.4.1*, cf. **Annex 1**). Iceland and Latvia regress on that matter, compared to their reports to COP10.
34. Few (10) European Parties report on national action taken to apply guiding principles on cultural values of wetlands (*Indicator 1.4.3*). At least 19 Parties report that socio-economic and cultural values of wetlands are included in the management planning for their Ramsar Sites and other wetlands (*Indicator 1.4.4*), but the European Parties should make increased efforts, not least in order to catch up with the global average of recognition of cross-sectoral wetland services.

Recognition of the role of the Convention (*Strategy 1.5*)

35. Many (23) European Parties report that they have taken steps to ensure that national focal points of other environmental conventions are also contributing to the application of Ramsar Convention implementation mechanisms. A good start, but more efforts are needed.

36. COP10 adopted the *Changwon Declaration* to highlight positive actions for ensuring human well-being and security through crosscutting activities that are needed to link wetland issues with water governance, climate change adaptation and mitigation, maintaining ecosystem services for human health and livelihoods, and taking into account the costs of land-use changes and biodiversity loss.
37. The responses by European Parties show that they have hardly disseminated the declaration, as shown in Figure 2 (*Indicator 1.5.2*). Only three countries report that they have used the *Changwon Declaration* to inform their positions at external UN and multilateral processes (*Indicator 1.5.4*). Still, six Parties translated the declaration into national languages: Belarus, Germany, Liechtenstein, Slovakia, Turkey and Ukraine (*Indicator 1.5.4*).

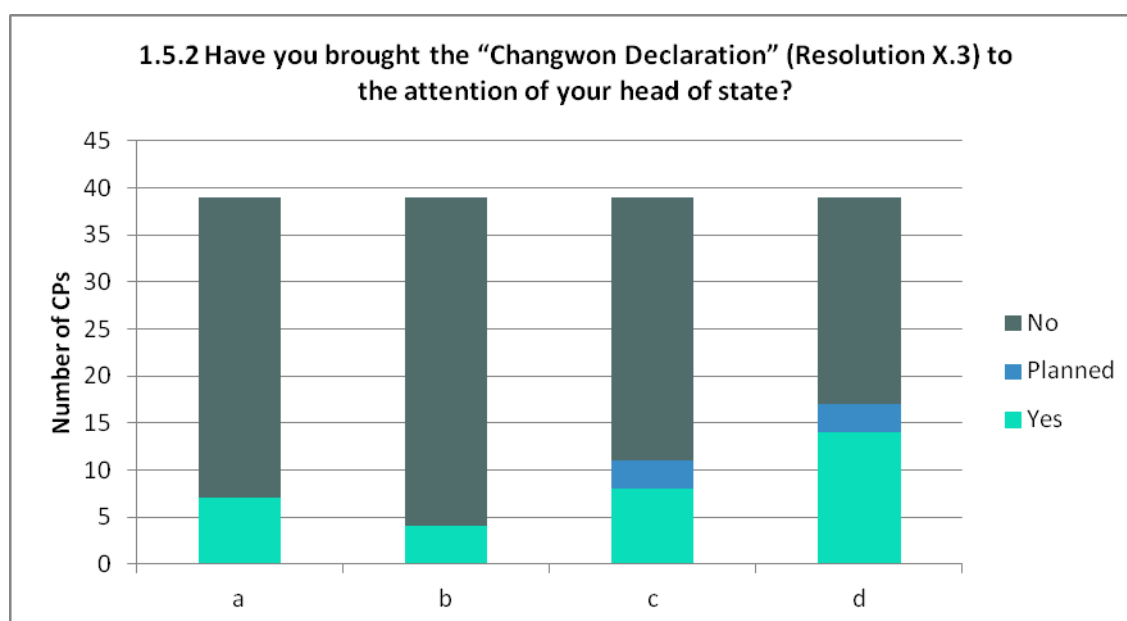


Figure 2: Number of Parties that have brought the Changwon Declaration to the attention of: a – the head of state, b – the parliament, c – the private sector, d – the civil society.

Science-based management of wetlands (*Strategy 1.6*)

38. In order to succeed, Ramsar’s Wise Use concept needs to profit from the integration of the best available scientific knowledge, including traditional techniques, into national policies and wetland management plans. Research to inform wetland policies and management plans is particularly important in the fields of agriculture, climate change and valuation of ecosystem services (cf. Figure 3). The percentage of European Parties having undertaken research in agriculture-wetland interactions and on climate change is above the global average. But European Parties are lagging behind with the valuation of their wetland ecosystem services.

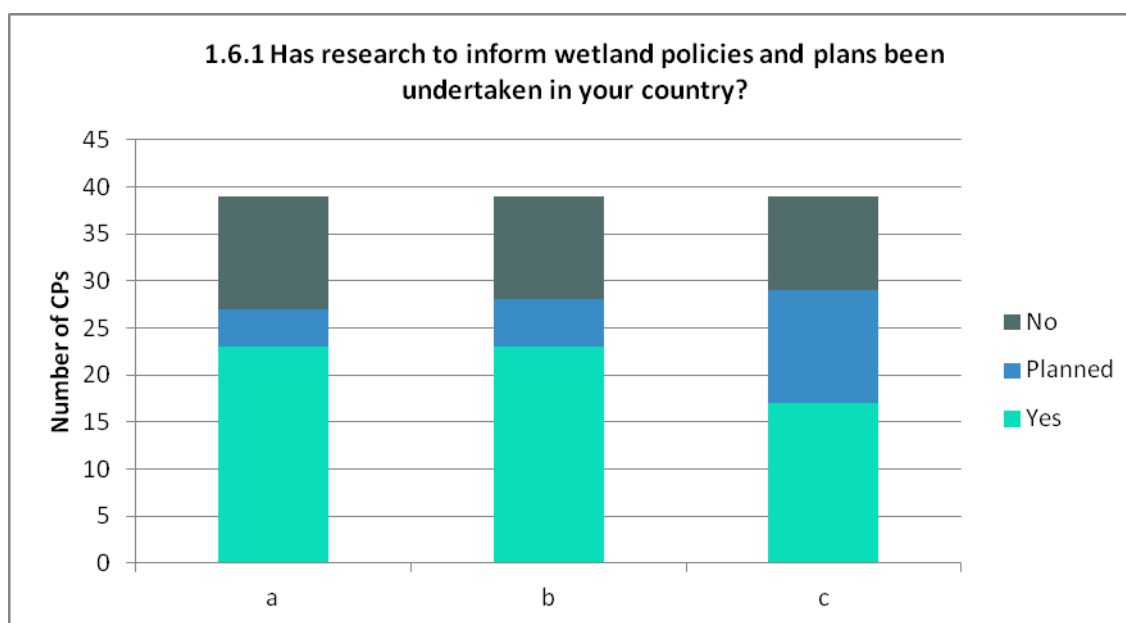


Figure 3: Number of Parties having undertaken research in agriculture (a), climate change (b), and valuation of ecosystem services (c).

Integrated Water Resources Management (*Strategy 1.7*)

39. The critical linkage between wetlands, water, and river basin management is emphasized in the preamble to the Convention (“considering the fundamental ecological functions of wetlands as regulators of water regimes”) and was developed into detail since COP6 (1996), to the point that COP10 was able to adopt consolidated guidance on the subject (Resolution X.19). During recent years, the recognition has grown that Ramsar is in a unique position to provide its know-how of the ecosystem approach to the water management sector. Such intersectoral cooperation with the water management sector started in Europe in 2008 through Ramsar’s expert contribution to the elaboration of the *Second Assessment of transboundary rivers, lakes and groundwaters* by the UNECE Water Convention (UN document ECE/MP.WAT/33).
40. Since COP9 in 2005, the European Parties report on a slowly increasing understanding, exchange and cooperation with the water sector (cf. Annex 2). Currently a third of all European Parties use Ramsar’s water-related guidance to inform decision-making related to water resource planning and management (*Indicator 1.7.1*, cf. Annex 1). Austria, Belgium, Estonia, Germany, Latvia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey and Ukraine report that intersectoral cooperation at national level is progressing since COP10. The answers of Finland, Lithuania, Romania and Switzerland, however, seem to report regress with this matter.
41. Unfortunately, the analysis shows that European Parties include Ramsar’s water-related guidance less frequently into decision-making processes and practical aspects of water resources management than is done globally on average. This seems to be an indicator of missed opportunities for cooperation and synergies in a region where a majority of the Parties are implementing the European Union Water Framework Directive, providing a practical legal framework for the integration of wetland ecosystem considerations into water resources management planning.

Wetland restoration (*Strategy 1.8*)

42. Many (30) European Parties report that they have implemented wetland restoration programmes, and 16 of them have used the Ramsar guidance to this end (*Indicator 1.8.3*). The Ramsar guidance on how to design restoration programmes is not well known, because it is hidden in a chapter of Handbook 19 (4th edition 2010) on *change in ecological character of wetlands*. The implementation of wetland restoration programmes has progressed in Europe over the past ten years (1.8.2, cf. **Annex 2**), but slowed down recently. However, European Parties are more active in this field than the global average. With the loss of more than half of Europe's wetlands since World War II, and the now growing recognition of the value of these ecosystem services lost, rehabilitating wetlands is becoming an economically interesting option. Parties are encouraged to consider this more widely.

Invasive alien species (*Strategy 1.9*)

43. Invasive alien species are increasingly becoming a problem in European wetlands. Some (14) Parties have a comprehensive national inventory of invasive alien species (1.9.1), and ten Parties have established control and management policies for wetlands (1.9.2). This reflects a higher percentage of engagement than the global average. All Parties are encouraged to develop national inventories of invasive alien species, to ensure mutual supportiveness between such inventories and the Global Invasive Species Database of the IUCN Species Survival Commission's Invasive Species Specialist Group, and to develop guidance and promote procedures and actions to prevent, control or eradicate such species in wetland ecosystems.

Private sector (*Strategy 1.10*)

44. At COP10 the Parties adopted principles for partnerships between the Ramsar Convention and the business sector (Resolution X.12), recognizing the role that businesses can play in improving the management of water and wetland resources and reducing the risk of unsustainable environmental management. Parties were asked to encourage the private sector to apply the Ramsar Wise Use guidance. Twelve European Parties report that they have done so (1.10.1). In 21 Parties the private sector has undertaken specific activities for the sustainable management of Ramsar Sites or wetlands in general (1.10.2). In 16 Parties awareness-raising materials were made available to enable wetland-friendly consumer choices (1.10.3). This is encouraging information, but the percentages of European Parties active in these fields are below the global average.

GOAL 2: Wetlands of International Importance**Ramsar Site designation** (*Strategy 2.1*)

45. At COP7 in 1999, the Contracting Parties adopted a *Strategic Framework and guidelines for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance* (Resolution VII.11). Handbook 17 (4th edition 2010) provides detailed guidance on how to implement this. However, only 15 European Parties report that they have a national strategy and have established priorities for the further designation of Ramsar Sites (*Indicator 2.1.1*). Unfortunately, ten Parties report regress with this matter since COP10 (cf. Annex 1). This

indicates that in many countries, no satisfactory use is being made of the *Strategic Framework* and no plans exist for future Ramsar Site designations. Over the past ten years (since COP8), the number of European Parties using the *Strategic Framework* has stagnated and remains below the global average (cf. Annex 2).

46. All 45 European Parties have together designated 976 Ramsar Sites (49%) for the global List, which stands at 2006 sites as of 22 March 2012 (i.e., on World Water Day). The European sites are rather small and cover together hardly 14% of the global area of all Ramsar Sites. Since COP10, 16 European Parties have designated 45 new Ramsar Sites (covering 1.6 million ha); they are listed in Annex 3. In addition, Belarus, Czech Republic, France, Iceland, Spain, Ukraine and the United Kingdom have submitted to the Secretariat the necessary documents (i.e., designation letter, information sheet RIS, and map) for the listing of another 25 Ramsar Sites (2.1.3). These are currently being reviewed and will be added to the List as soon as the remaining questions are clarified. This is a comparable number to the 56 new Ramsar Site designations by European Parties between COP9 and COP10.
47. At global level, all Parties together are still well below the target they set for 2500 designated sites, covering 250 million hectares, by the year 2015. Additional designations, based on national designation strategies, are therefore highly encouraged. In their National Reports for COP11, 23 European Parties announce another 128 new Ramsar Site designations planned for the triennium 2013-2015 (2.1.4, cf. Annex 3), an impressive number indeed. The Secretariat looks forward to working with these Parties to facilitate these new designations and will report on them to COP12.

Updating information on Ramsar Sites

48. Armenia, Cyprus and Monaco have submitted all required updates for their five Ramsar Sites to the Secretariat (2.1.2). Congratulations. The Secretariat is currently finalizing updated information for another 208 Ramsar Sites (21% of all European Ramsar Sites) with 14 Parties: Austria, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Russian Federation and Ukraine. This shows that the need to update information is taken seriously by many Parties and is progressing, despite the fact that updates for another 334 (34%) European Ramsar Sites are still needed (cf. Annex 4).
49. The public database of the Ramsar Sites Information Service (<http://ramsar.wetlands.org>) is providing analytical tools that can respond to many individual enquiries and questions. However, the results to be so obtained are only as accurate and up-to-date as the original data submitted by the Parties. To ease the work of updating Ramsar Site information, the European Parties have repeatedly clarified at European meetings that updating Ramsar Site data and maps should be done whenever a particular change occurs, and simply be submitted via e-mail to the Secretariat. The Parties agreed not to wait until the six year-deadline for updating Ramsar Site information, but argued that this should be done by submitting a partially revised Ramsar Information Sheet whenever an individual change occurs.

Ramsar Site ecological character (*Strategies 2.3 - 2.5*)

50. Parties commit themselves to formulate and implement their planning so as to promote the conservation of the Ramsar Sites, to maintain their ecological character, to prevent their deterioration as a result of technological developments, pollution or other human interferences, and to consider their international responsibilities, in particular for shared sites, water catchments and wetland-dependent species. Arguably the most tangible indicator for how well armed Parties are to deal with these challenges is the development and implementation of management plans (or strategies) for *all* Ramsar Sites.
51. While recognizing that Ramsar Site designation can act as a stimulus for the subsequent development of effective site management, particularly in Europe, the current philosophy is rather that all Ramsar Sites should have effective management planning in place before Ramsar designation, as well as resources for implementing such management. However, only 13 European Parties responded that this was the case for all their Ramsar Sites (2.3.1).
52. Two thirds (or 531) of the Ramsar Sites designated by the 39 European Parties that reported to COP11 (and are analyzed here) have a management plan (2.4.1). The plan is being implemented at 93% of them (493 sites, 2.4.2). For 189 sites (36% of the sites with a management plan), the plan is being revised or updated (2.4.4). This indicates an ongoing active management planning process. A management plan is in preparation for an additional 161 sites in these countries (2.4.3). The Parties report that 149 Ramsar Sites (one sixth of all sites) have a cross-sectoral management committee (2.4.6). Nine Parties report that assessments of the management of Ramsar Sites have been carried out. They are invited to disseminate the lessons they learnt through these assessments.

Ramsar Site status (*Strategy 2.6*)

53. Many European Ramsar Sites are under pressure, especially in densely populated areas with conflicting land-use demands, but also in less populated regions with significant natural resources and those that are strategically located along transport routes. Since COP10 (November 2008), the Secretariat has been informed about ecological change occurring or likely to occur because of planned developments at 93 (10%) European Ramsar Sites as listed below.
54. Despite the fact that Article 3.2 commits the Ramsar Administrative Authorities (AA) to make arrangements to be informed at the earliest possible time of such changes and to pass such information without delay to the Ramsar Secretariat, only nine European Parties reported that they have such arrangements in place (2.6.1), and only eight Parties stated that all such cases were reported to the Secretariat (2.6.2) and that they have taken actions for Ramsar Sites listed on the Montreux Record (2.6.3).
55. Only in one third (32) of the cases (shown in bold in the table below), the AA was first to inform the Secretariat about the purported change. In the other 60 cases, such reports were sent to the Secretariat by concerned individuals and stakeholders living close to Ramsar Sites or knowing them well, or by Ramsar's International Organization Partners or national NGOs. The Administrative Authorities of all Parties are strongly encouraged to establish arrangements to be rapidly informed about changes at Ramsar Sites and to pass such information without delay to the Secretariat.

Ramsar Sites where ecological change is reported as occurring or likely to occur (Article 3.2) since COP10 (“Open Files” as at 22 March 2012)

Party (bold, where information was first received from the AA)	Ramsar Site	Montreux Record	Ramsar Advisory Mission
Albania	1290 Butrint		
Albania	1598 Lake Shkodra and River Buna		
Armenia	620 Lake Sevan		
Austria	272 Donau-March-Thaya-Auen	1990	1991
Austria	273 Untere Lobau		
Belarus	1217 Osveiski		
Belarus	1218 Yelnya		
Belgium	329 De Ijzerbroeken te Diksmuide en Lo-Reninge	1999	
Belgium	331 Marais d'harchies		
Belgium	327 Schorren van de Beneden Schelde	1990	1988
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1105 Hutovo blato		
Bulgaria	239 Durankulak Lake	1993	
Bulgaria	64 Srebarna	1993	1992, 2001
Croatia	585 Delta Neretve		
Croatia	583 Kopacki Rit	1993	2005
Czech Republic	638 Litovelské Pomoraví	1997	
Czech Republic	635 Mokrady dolního Podyjí (Floodplains of Lower Dyje River)	2005	
Czech Republic	639 Poodří	2005	
Czech Republic	494 Sumavská raseliniste (Sumava peatlands)		
Czech Republic	495 Trebonská rybníky (Trebou Fishponds)	1994	
Denmark	143 Nissum Fjord		
Denmark	141 Ringkøbing Fjord	1990	1996
Denmark	146 Ulvedybet & Nibe Bredning		
Denmark	356 Vadehavet (Wadden Sea)		
Denmark (Greenland)	389 Heden (Jameson Land)		2009
France	346 Camargue		
Georgia	893 Wetlands of Central Kolkheti		2005
Germany	561 Mühlenberger Loch		2001
Germany	82 Wattenmeer, Ostfriesisches Wattenmeer & Dollart	1990	1990
Greece	61 Amvrakikos gulf	1990	1988, 1989
Greece	58 Artificial Lake Kerkini		1988, 1989
Greece	59 Axios, Loudias, Aliakmon delta	1990	1988, 1989
Greece	63 Kotychi lagoons	1990	1988, 1989
Greece	60 Lake Mikri Prespa		1988, 1989
Greece	55 Lake Vistonis, Porto Lagos, Lake Ismaris & adjoining lagoons	1990	1988, 1989
Greece	57 Lakes Volvi & Koronia	1990	1988, 1989
Greece	62 Messolonghi lagoons	1990	1988, 1989
Greece	56 Nestos delta & adjoining lagoons	1990	1988, 1989
Greece	54 Evros Delta		1988, 1989
Iceland	854 Grunnafjörður		
Iceland	167 Myvatn-Laxá region (part)		
Iceland	460 Thjörðsárver		
Moldova	1029 Lower Prut Lakes		
Montenegro	784 Skadarsko Jezero		2005
Netherlands	581 Bargerveen		
Netherlands	194 Naardermeer		
Norway	13 Åkersvika		2010

Norway	809 Froan Nature Reserve & Landscape Protection Area		
Norway	805 Giske Wetland System		
Norway	308 Ilene & Pesterødskilen		
Norway	307 Nordre Øyeren		
Poland	756 Biebrzanski National Park		
Portugal	827 Ria de Alvor		
Portugal	212 Ria Formosa		
Romania	521 Danube Delta		
Romania	1074 Small Island of Braila		
Russian Federation	691 Berezovye Islands, Gulf of Finland		
Russian Federation	695 Moroshechnaya River		
Russian Federation	682 Selenga Delta		
Russian Federation	683 Torey Lakes		
Russian Federation	111 Volga Delta		
Serbia	1737 Gornje Podunavlje		
Serbia	1392 Slano Kopovo		
Serbia	819 Stari Begej/Carska Bara Special Nature Reserve		
Slovenia	1600 Cerknjsko jezero z okolico (Lake Cerknica and its environs)		
Slovenia	991 Škocjanske jame (Škocjan Caves)		
Slovenia	586 Secoveljske soline (Secovlje salt pans)		
Spain	454 Albufera de Valencia		2006
Spain	234 Doñana	1990	2002, 2011
Spain	599 Laguna y Arenal de Valdoviño		
Spain	235 Las Tablas de Daimiel	1990	1988
Spain	708 Marjal de Pego-Oliva		
Spain	706 Mar Menor		
Spain	705 Ria del Eo		
Spain	1262 Saladar de Jandia		
Spain	449 S'Albufera de Mallorca		2010
Spain	1264 Txingudi		
The FYR of Macedonia	1735 Dojran Lake (Dojransko Ezero)		
The FYR of Macedonia	726 Prespa Lake		
Turkey	945 Gediz Delta		
Turkey	659 Lake Seyfe (Seyfe Gölü).		
Turkey	944 Lake Uluabat		
Turkey	661 Sultan Marshes		
Ukraine	113 Kyliiske Mouth		2003,2005,2008
Ukraine	765 Northern Part of the Dniester Liman		
Ukraine	762 Sasyk Lake		
Ukraine	768 Tendrivska Bay and		
Ukraine	116 Yagorlytska Bay		
United Kingdom	1077 Diego Garcia		
United Kingdom	77 Ouse Washes	2000	2001
United Kingdom	1043 South East coast of Jersey, Channel Islands		
United Kingdom	1025 Thames Estuary and Marshes		
United Kingdom	298 The Dee Estuary	1990	1993, 1994

56. Since COP10, only one European Ramsar Site, Stagno di Calgiari in Italy, has been removed from the Montreux Record. Despite repeated requests from the Secretariat, only Bulgaria, Denmark, Germany and the United Kingdom have provided some information about the updated status and considerations for the possible removal of Ramsar Sites remaining on the Montreux Record.

57. When the Parties established the Montreux Record as a management instrument at COP4 in 1990, they believed that the voluntary inclusion of a site on the record is a useful tool (as explained in the Ramsar Convention Manual) to:

- demonstrate national commitment to resolve adverse changes,
- highlight particularly interesting cases for demonstration purposes at international level,
- benefit from positive international conservation attention, and
- provide guidance on how best to allocate resources to solve the issues affecting the ecological character of the site.

58. Many of the 24 European Ramsar Sites on the Montreux Record are among the longest listed ones, dating back to 1990 when the record was established (cf. the tables above and below). This leads to the conclusion that solving their problems either demands more sophisticated procedures, and these should be prepared without further delay, or that the problems evoked when putting the sites on the Record have been solved or mitigated since, in which case it is time to remove these sites from the Record, following the procedure outlined in the Annex to Resolution VI.1. European Parties are requested to make more systematic use of the Montreux Record by listing sites that deserve to be included, and to use this tool in a coherent way by addressing the problems of listed sites, finding solutions, and then asking for the removal of these sites from the Record without unnecessary delay.

Status of European Ramsar Sites on the Montreux Record (as of 22 March 2012)

Contracting Parties	Ramsar Sites with ongoing removal process from the MR	Ramsar Sites where the change in ecological character is actively addressed	Ramsar Sites in need of clarification if they should be removed, or if the causes of their ecological change need to be addressed
Austria		Donau-March-Thaya-Auen	
Belgium			De Ijzerbroeken te Diksmuide en Lo-Renige, Schorren van de Beneden Schelde
Bulgaria	Srebarna		Durankulak Lake
Croatia			Kopacki Rit
Czech Republic		Litovelske Pomoravi, Floodplain of lower Dyje River, Poodří, Trebon fishponds	
Denmark		Ringkøbing Fjord	
Germany	Wattenmeer, Ostfriesisches Wattenmeer & Dollart		
Greece			Amvrakikos gulf, Axios Luidas Aliakmon delta, Kotychi lagoons, Lake Vistonis Porto Lagos Lake Ismaris & adjoining lagoons, Lakes Volvi & Koronia, Messolonghi lagoons, Nestos delta & adjoining lagoons
Spain		Doñana, Las Tablas de Daimiel	

United Kingdom		The Dee Estuary, Ouse Washes	
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GOAL 3: International cooperation

Synergies and partnerships with MEAs and IGOs (*Strategy 3.1*)

59. At COP7 in 1999, the Parties recognized the usefulness of working as partners with global and regional multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and other intergovernmental organizations (IGOs). It is becoming more of a necessity than ever. COP10 adopted two Resolutions focusing on improved cooperation at national level (Resolution X.11 and X.29). Now, 29 European Parties report that they have mechanisms in place at national level for such cooperation (3.1.1). This shows substantial progress since COP8 (cf. Annex 2). Notably Austria, Greenland (Denmark), Estonia, Italy, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey and Ukraine report on progress with establishing such cooperation since COP10 (cf. Annex 1). The remaining Parties are invited also to establish relevant cooperation mechanisms at national level.

Regional Initiatives (*Strategy 3.2*)

60. The Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative (MedWet, www.medwet.org) started independently in 1991 and became formally part of the Ramsar Convention at COP7 in 1999 with the adoption of Resolution VII.22. In early 2012, it celebrated twenty years of operation, produced a comprehensive *Mediterranean Wetlands Outlook* on wetland status and trends, and discussed strategic ways forward for the next twenty years (<http://agadir2012.medwet.org>). The success of MedWet triggered the development of other Ramsar Regional Initiatives. In Europe, the Nordic-Baltic Wetlands Initiative (NorBalWet) was started by nine cooperating Ramsar Parties (plus Greenland) in 2005 and has been active since. The seven Parties to the Carpathian Convention decided to develop a Carpathian Wetland Initiative (CWI) in 2004 (www.cwi.sk). This provided a useful link for wetland-focused cooperation between the regional Carpathian and the global Ramsar Conventions. In 2006, Wetlands International revived a proposal for a Black Sea Wetlands Initiative (BlackSeaWet) focusing on the coastal areas of seven countries around the Black and Azov Seas (www.blackseawet.org). So far, some of the countries concerned have actively participated in its work. Two of them, Bulgaria and Turkey, are also members of the MedWet Initiative. Thus, there exists a potential for exchanges, transfer of know-how, cooperation and synergies – and possibly even a fusion, in the longer term, between these two Regional Initiatives.
61. Regular contacts by the Ramsar Secretariat with the governing bodies of the Regional Initiatives, including a rapid evaluation of their performance and outputs, as requested by Resolution X.3 and submitted to COP11 in DOC. 13, indicate that Ramsar regional networks for cooperation and regional centres for capacity building and training could become more efficient by working increasingly with Ramsar National Focal Points for scientific and technical matters (STRP) and for communication, education, participation and awareness (CEPA). The Secretariat remains at the disposal of active Regional Initiatives to facilitate their further development in order to align their activities more with the Ramsar Strategic Plan and to most effectively support the implementation of the Convention on the ground at regional level.

International assistance (*Strategy 3.3*)

62. Parties are requested to promote international assistance to support the conservation and wise use of wetlands, and to ensure that environmental safeguards and assessments are an integral component of all development projects that affect wetlands, including foreign and domestic investments. Three out of four (14 out of 20) responding European Parties with development assistance agencies (“donor countries”) report that they provided funding for wetland conservation and management in other countries (3.3.1). Eleven of them report that environmental safeguards and assessments have been included in the development projects proposed to their funding agencies (3.3.2). Two out of three European Parties (7 out of 12 “recipient countries”) report that they have received funding from other countries’ development assistance agencies, specifically for in-country wetland conservation and management projects (3.3.3). This shows substantial progress since COP10, with a higher percentage of donor countries providing specific wetland-related funding than the global average (cf. Annex 2). Above this impressive European effort for cooperation and solidarity, hopefully even more European countries, the European Union and other multilateral organizations, can join the donor group for wetland-related projects.

Shared wetlands, river basins and migratory species (*Strategy 3.5*)

63. European Parties are pioneering the implementation of the requests formulated in Article 5 of the Convention and have established transboundary cooperation procedures for many shared Ramsar Sites. Many (29) European Parties report that they have identified all transboundary wetland systems in their countries. This number remained stable since COP10, cf. Annex 1. Bulgaria and Ukraine indicated in 2008 that they have done so, but seem to be less sure about it in 2011? Those Parties that have not yet concluded their work are invited to do so rapidly.
64. Ramsar work in shared river basins and wetland ecosystems was part of the assessment process of the UNECE Water Convention, where 25 transboundary wetland ecosystems (and Ramsar Sites) were evaluated in the final publication (cf. above). Currently 13 shared wetland ecosystems are formally designated as *Transboundary Ramsar Sites*, 12 of them in Europe. They include three Transboundary Ramsar Sites that have been declared since COP10: the peatbogs on top of the Giant Mountains (composed of Ramsar Sites in the Czech Republic and Poland), lake Neusiedl-Fertö in the Pannonian plain (Austria, Hungary), and the wetlands along the Kotra border river (Belarus, Lithuania). Recent European meetings have focused on mutual exchange of experiences gained in transboundary cooperation and identified remaining challenges. Another 20 or so shared wetland ecosystems in Europe would merit formal designation as *Transboundary Ramsar Sites* in order to facilitate their long-term ecosystem-based management.

GOAL 4: Institutional capacity and effectiveness**CEPA** (*Strategy 4.1*)

65. Progress with establishing national action plans for Communication, Education, Participation, and Awareness (CEPA) in European countries is slow. The main responses by Parties prior to COP11 are summarized in Figure 3 and indicate that very few of them have indeed undertaken specific planning of activities (4.1.1). However, 31 out of the 39 reporting European Parties have established visitor or education centres at 349 Ramsar

Sites and other wetlands. In addition Germany and Italy have established an unspecified number of additional centres at many of their wetlands (4.1.2). Overall a rather impressive number of visitor centres, big and small. So far, only five Parties: Armenia, France, Georgia, Turkey and the United Kingdom made an assessment of national and local training needs for the implementation of the Convention (4.1.4).

66. A specific analysis of all activities for communication, education, participation and awareness in support of the implementation of the Ramsar Convention at national level is provided in Ramsar COP11 DOC. 14. Increasingly, communication with – and outreach to – other sectors and the public at large is seen as a significant step to make the Convention and its concerns more widely understood, followed and applied.

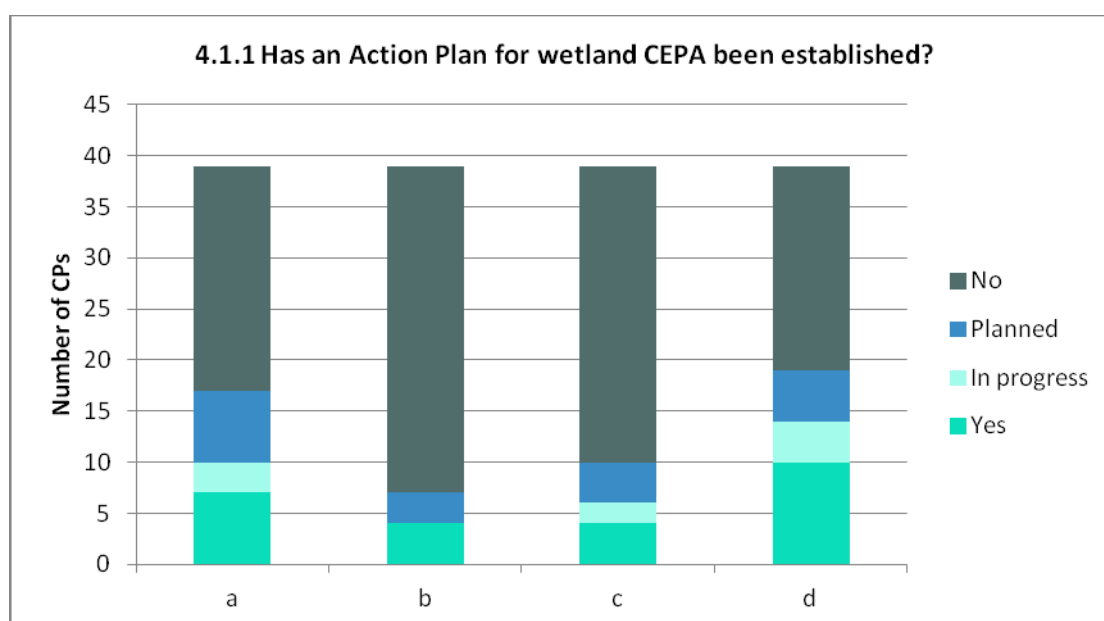


Figure 3: Number of European Parties reporting having established a CEPA action plan:
a) at national level, b) at subnational level, c) at catchment basin level, d) at local site level.

Convention financial capacity (*Strategy 4.2*)

67. In March 2012, all European Parties except Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Slovenia, and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia have paid their annual contributions in full since COP10, up to and including 2011 (4.2.1). During this period, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Greenland, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Norway, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom have made additional voluntary contributions to the operating budgets of Ramsar Regional Initiatives, the work of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP), the Ramsar Small Grants Fund (SGF), the Swiss Grant for Africa, and the costs of Ramsar Advisory Missions and the 7th European Ramsar Meeting in 2011 (4.2.2). This is an encouraging list of voluntary contributions. It hopefully augurs well for the long list of activities in need of voluntary financial contributions during the years 2013-2015 (cf. COP11 DOC. 16).

Convention bodies' effectiveness (*Strategy 4.3*)

68. Since COP8, National Reports are designed in such a way as to help Parties with the planning and monitoring of their implementation of the Convention's Strategic Plan at national level. Earlier formats also included a section to identify national targets, intended to allow regular checks and updates on progress with the implementation. As only a very small minority of the Parties used this section as a planning tool, it was abandoned at COP10.
69. Planning at national scale, monitoring the implementation of tasks, reporting on progress with work, identifying gaps, and defining new targets are crucial steps of an efficient working cycle. Ramsar Parties encapsulated this already in 1984 in Recommendation 2.1, stating that they are "aware that the submission of timely and detailed national reports is of vital importance for the purpose of monitoring implementation of the Convention and for the purpose of sharing information on wetland conservation measures taken, on any problems which have arisen and on appropriate methods of dealing with them".
70. Increasingly Parties have been using National Reports to this end, and now, 23 Parties report doing so (4.3.1). For 15 of them this reflects progress compared to what they reported prior to COP10, though eight other Parties reported regress compared to COP10 on this matter (cf. Annex 1). Still, too many Parties only started compiling their National Reports at the end of the triennium close to (or only after) the deadline for submission on 15 September 2011. The challenge therefore remains to have a simple-to-use National Report tool that allows all Parties to monitor progress with their implementation at national level, across a suite of succeeding periods between COPs.
71. Many European Parties have made substantial progress since COP10 with the designation of national focal points for scientific and technical matters (STRP) and for the planning and development of national programmes on communication, education, participation and awareness (CEPA). Many updated the Secretariat through their National Reports on changes and new appointments of National Focal Points (4.3.2), cf. the names listed in the table below. Some persons fulfill the role of focal point in more than one area. This may create synergies and be a necessity for smaller countries with limited capacities, but it might also limit the person's capacity to fully execute each of the roles, and should rather be avoided whenever possible. Parties are encouraged to designate missing focal points, as shown by the shadowed boxes in the table below.

Party	Administrative Authority focal point	STRP focal point	CEPA governmental focal point	CEPA non-governmental focal point
Albania	S. Hoxha	S. Hoxha		
Armenia	K. Jenderedjian	K. Jenderedjian	A. Avalyan	S. Hakobyan
Austria	G. Schwach	G.M. Steiner	G. Schwach	G. Neuwirth
Belarus	T. Trafimovich	A.V. Kozulin	N. Minchenko	Y.V. Solovjev
Belgium	G. Raeymaekers	E. Martens		W. van den Bossche
Bosnia-Herzegovina	J. Vego			
Bulgaria	A. Hasan	G.K. Hiebaum	A. Hasan	N. Arabadzhieva
Croatia	E. Draganovic			
Cyprus	A. Savvidou		E. Stylianopoulou	
Czech Republic	L. Vlasáková	D. Pithart	L. Vlasáková	
Denmark	L.L. Dinesen	L.L. Dinesen	I. Thaulow	K. Flensted

(incl. Greenland)				
Estonia	H. Fridolin	K. Kimmel	M. Kivistik	M. Kose
Finland	T. Niikkonen	J. Penttinen	S. Airas	H. Ahponen
France	E. Thiry	P. Triplet	E. Thiry	
Georgia	A. Rukhadze	G. Sopadze		I. Butkhuzi
Germany	J. Schmitz	B. Hedden-Dunkhorst	K.H. Erdmann	S. Stübing
Greece	C. Ververis			M. Katsakiori
Hungary	A. Schmidt	S. Göri	A. Böhm	L. Musicz
Iceland	H. Vésteinsdóttir			
Ireland	G. McAvey	J. Ryan		K. Dubsky
Italy	M.C. Giarratano			
Latvia	J. Jatnieks	A. Urtans	S. Ruskule	
Liechtenstein	H. Frick	H. Frick	H. Frick	
Lithuania	D. Sungaila	V. Bezaras		
Luxembourg	S. Cellina	S. Cellina	S. Cellina	
Moldova	V. Josu	A. Andreev		I. Trombitsky
Monaco	J. Carles	J. Carles	J. Carles	
Montenegro	J. Muric			
Netherlands	G. van Dijk			L. Hoogenstein
Norway	J.P. Huberth Hansen	J.P. Huberth Hansen	M.S. Aaronaes	
Poland	P. Stawiarz			
Portugal	J.C. Farinha	J.C. Farinha		
Romania	R. Ionescu	G. Baboianu		
Russian Federation	L.P. Belov	A. Sirin		I. Kamennova
Serbia	J. Ducic	P.Lazarevic, N. Stojnic	N. Panic	
Slovakia	J. Janecova	E. Stloukal	J. Janecova	M. Janák
Slovenia	G. Beltram	M. Naglic	M. Vicar	M. Vogrin
Spain	M. Bernués Sanz	R. Sánchez Navarro		F. Ramos Garía
Sweden	J. Lonnstad	L. Tranvik	J. Lonnstad	L. Gladh
Switzerland	O. Biber	O. Biber		
TFYR of Macedonia	A. Nastov	B. Micevski	P. Kirovski	B. Micevski
Turkey	M. Gölge	E. Okumus	S. Cagirankaya	B.B. Divrak Durmaz
Ukraine	V. Kantsurak	V. Kostyushin	I. Ivanenko	G. Marushevskiy
United Kingdom	A. Delgado	D. Stroud	A. Delgado	C. Rostron

Working with IOPs and others (*Strategy 4.4*)

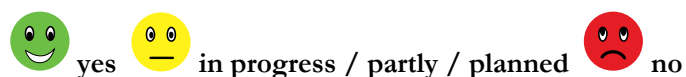
72. The Ramsar Convention is the only multilateral treaty that works formally with a selected group of international nongovernmental organizations, known as its International Organization Partners (IOPs). This mutually beneficial cooperation has developed over time, and it still offers a large potential for further development towards more planned, structured, consequent and far-reaching achievements. This cooperation should not only happen at international level, concerning the work of the Secretariat, STRP, and Standing Committee – an enormous potential exists at national and local levels as well for cooperation to produce beneficial outcomes very efficiently, and this seems to be largely untapped as yet.
73. Austria, Belarus, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and the United Kingdom report about mutually beneficial work on specific topics with IOPs, receiving assistance from (4.4.1) and providing assistance to national organizations of the IOPs (4.4.2). Denmark, France, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Switzerland and the United Kingdom report that they support international

programmes of the IOPs and their projects in third countries. Surely, more opportunities exist for additional European Parties to profit from cooperation with IOPs at national and international level.

Annex 1

European Parties' responses to selected indicators

Three response categories are used:



Evolution between COP10 (2008) and COP11 (2012):

The table shows the Parties' responses prior to COP11 to selected indicators according to the three categories above. The responses are compared to those provided for the respective indicators prior to COP10 (Annex 1 of Ramsar COP10 DOC.10), except for those countries with an asterisk (*) who did not report to COP10.

- white boxes:** no significant progress reported since COP10, i.e. the indicator remained in the same category
- shadowed boxes:** indicator moved one category up between COP10 and COP11, e.g. from *no* to *in progress*, or from *partly* to *yes*
- black boxes:** indicator is now (2011) reported in a lower category than for COP10 (2008)

Indicators compared:

- 1.1.1 Party has a comprehensive National Wetland Inventory (*COP10 Indicator 1.1.1*)
- 1.3.1 Party has a National Wetland Policy or equivalent instrument in place (*1.2.1*)
- 1.4.1 Party has assessed the ecosystem services provided by Ramsar Sites (*1.2.1*)
- 1.7.1 Party uses Ramsar's water-related guidance in decision-making related to water resource planning and management (*1.4.1*)
- 2.1.1 Party has a strategy and priorities for further Ramsar Site designations, using the Strategic Framework for the Ramsar List (*2.1.1*)
- 3.1.1 mechanisms are in place at the national level for collaboration between the Ramsar Administrative Authority and the focal points of other multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) (*3.1.1*)
- 3.5.1 all transboundary/shared wetland systems in the country have been identified (*2.5.1*)
- 4.1.1 an action plan for wetland CEPA has been established (*4.4.1*)
- 4.3.1 Party used previous National Report to monitor implementation of the Convention (*4.7.1*)

<i>COP11 Indicator:</i>	1.1.1	1.3.1	1.4.1	1.7.1	2.1.1	3.1.1	3.5.1	4.1.1	4.3.1
Albania*									
Armenia									
Austria									
Belarus									
Belgium									
Bosnia-Herzegovina									
Bulgaria									

Croatia									
Cyprus							n.a.		
Czech Republic									
Denmark									
(Greenland)							n.a.		
<i>COP11 Indicator:</i>	1.1.1	1.3.1	1.4.1	1.7.1	2.1.1	3.1.1	3.5.1	4.1.1	4.3.1
Estonia									
Finland									
France									
Georgia*									
Germany									
Hungary									
Iceland							n.a.		
Italy									
Latvia									
Liechtenstein									
Lithuania									
Moldova									
Monaco*							n.a.		
Montenegro									
Netherlands									
Norway									
Portugal									
Romania									
Serbia*									
Slovakia									
Slovenia									
Spain									
Sweden									

Switzerland									
TFYR of Macedonia									
Turkey									
Ukraine									
United Kingdom									

Annex 2

Summary overview of the evolution between COP8 (2002) and COP11 (2012)

Where indicator questions were reasonably similar, the table compares information provided in the National Reports to COP8, COP9 and COP10 with those provided to COP11 in order to assess progress during these ten years, covering the period of the Strategic Plan 2003-2008 and the first period of the Strategic Plan 2009-2015.

The table also shows whether particular actions reported for COP11 were more (or less) widely addressed in the European region, compared to the global average, based on the percentages of Parties having answered positively.

Strategy	Indicator	Affirmative Parties at COP8	Affirmative Parties at COP 9	Affirmative Parties at COP10	Affirmative Parties at COP11	Affirmative at COP11 globally	10 years progress
1.1	Party has a comprehensive national wetland inventory (1.1.1)	11	20	20	21 (54%)	43%	 little since 2005
1.3	Party has a national wetland policy in place (1.3.1)	15	18	17	24 (62%)	51%	 significant
1.7	Party has used or applied Ramsar water-related guidance (1.7.1)	n.a.	5	10	14 (36%)	40%	 substantial
1.8	Party implemented wetland restoration and rehabilitation programmes (1.8.2)	11	24	29	30 (77%)	69%	 little since 2008
2.1	Party uses the Strategic Framework for Ramsar Site designations (2.1.1)	n.a.	15	18	15 (38%)	42%	none

3.1	Administrative Authority collaborates with focal points of other MEAs (3.1.1)	21	23	22	28 (72%)	66%	 since 2008
4.5	Development assistance agencies provided funds for wetland projects (4.5.1)	15	12	11	14 (36%)	17%	 stagnant

Annex 3

New European Ramsar Sites designated since COP10

Including new designations submitted between 1 November 2008 and 22 March 2012.

The right-hand column lists the number of further Ramsar Site designations planned for the triennium 2013-2015.

*Numbers and areas in parentheses refer to sites (included in the overall number) not yet added to the List, for which the Secretariat is currently clarifying remaining questions with the Administrative Authority.

	Country	number of new sites submitted 2008-2012	area of new sites (ha) 2008-2012	new sites announced for 2012- 2015 (<i>Indicator 2.4.1</i>)
1	Albania	-	-	1
2	Armenia	1	50	-
3	Austria	1	48	3
4	Belarus	3 (2*)	223,648 (138,499*)	3
5	Belgium	-	-	-
6	Bosnia & Herzegovina	-	-	-
7	Bulgaria	1	14,967	-
8	Croatia	-	-	1
9	Cyprus	-	-	-
10	Czech Republic	2 (2*)	5,526 (5,526*)	2
11	Denmark (i.e. Greenland)	1	218,000	-
12	Estonia	5	64,488	9
13	Finland	-	-	11
14	France	6 (2*)	215,082 (208,797*)	10
15	Georgia	-	-	1
16	Germany	-	-	-
17	Greece	-	-	-
18	Hungary	1	9,483	-
19	Iceland	2 (2*)	66,270 (66,270*)	1
20	Ireland	-	-	-
21	Italy	1	171	8
22	Latvia	-	-	-
23	Liechtenstein	-	-	-
24	Lithuania	2	8,283	-

25	Luxembourg	-	-	
26	Malta	-	-	
27	Moldova	-	-	1
28	Monaco	-	-	-
29	Montenegro	-	-	1
30	Netherlands	-	-	-
31	Norway	14	721,759	-
32	Poland	-	-	
33	Portugal	-	-	2
34	Romania	3	141,269	15
35	Russian Federation	-	-	
36	Serbia	1	8,292	2
37	Slovakia	-	-	1
38	Slovenia	-	-	-
39	Spain	10 (5*)	14,344 (11,387*)	4
40	Sweden	-	-	15
41	Switzerland	-	-	-
42	The FYR of Macedonia	-	-	6
43	Turkey	1	416	17
44	Ukraine	9 (9*)	9,350 (9,350*)	10
45	United Kingdom	6 (3*)	358,955 (1262*)	4
	Total	70 (25*) sites	2,080,401 (441,091*) ha	128

Annex 4

Number of European Ramsar Sites for which information is out of date

(Information missing or more than six years old, as of March 2012)

* Numbers in parentheses refer to the number of sites (included in the overall number) for which the Administrative Authorities have submitted updated information and are currently revising it, based on comments by the Secretariat.

	Country	Ramsar Sites with outdated information	Total number of Ramsar Sites
1	Albania	3	3
2	Armenia	all updated	3
3	Austria	15 (6*)	20
4	Belarus	7	9
5	Belgium	8	9
6	Bosnia & Herzegovina	1 (1*)	3
7	Bulgaria	10 (2*)	11
8	Croatia	3	4
9	Cyprus	all updated	1
10	Czech Republic	10 (7*)	12
11	Denmark (incl. Greenland)	38 (38*)	39
12	Estonia	6	17
13	Finland	49	49
14	France	19 (12*)	40
15	Georgia	1	2

16	Germany	30 (1*)	34
17	Greece	10	10
18	Hungary	1 (1*)	29
19	Iceland	3	3
20	Ireland	45	45
21	Italy	44 (44*)	52
22	Latvia	3	6
23	Liechtenstein	1	1
24	Lithuania	1 (1*)	7
25	Luxembourg	2	2
26	Malta	2	2
27	Moldova	3	3
28	Monaco	all updated	1
29	Montenegro	1	1
30	Netherlands	49 (16*)	49
31	Norway	26 (26*)	51
32	Poland	5	13
33	Portugal	12	28
34	Romania	5	8
35	Russia	35 (20*)	35
36	Serbia	4	10
37	Slovakia	7	14
38	Slovenia	3	3
39	Spain	47	68
40	Sweden	32	51
41	Switzerland	10	11
42	The F.Y.R. of Macedonia	1	2
43	Turkey	2	13
44	Ukraine	33 (33*)	33
45	UK	163	169
	Totals	542 (56%) (208 21%*)	976 (100%)