



NATIONAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RAMSAR CONVENTION ON WETLANDS

**National Reports to be submitted to the 11th Meeting
of the Conference of the Contracting Parties,
Romania, June 2012**

Please submit the completed National Report, in electronic (Microsoft Word) format, and preferably by e-mail, to the Ramsar Secretariat by **15 September 2011**.

National Reports should be sent to: Alexia Dufour, Regional Affairs Officer, Ramsar Secretariat (dufour@ramsar.org)

Introduction & background

1. This National Report Format (NRF) has been approved by the Standing Committee in Decision SC41-24 for the Ramsar Convention's Contracting Parties to complete as their national reporting to the 11th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties of the Convention (Bucharest, Romania, June 2012).
2. Following Standing Committee discussions at its 40th meeting in May 2009, and its Decision SC40-29, this COP11 National Report Format closely follows that used for the COP10 National Report Format, which in turn was a significantly revised and simplified format in comparison with the National Report Formats provided to previous recent COPs.
3. In addition to thus permitting continuity of reporting and implementation progress analyses by ensuring that indicator questions are as far as possible consistent with previous NRFs (and especially the COP10 NRF), this COP11 NRF is structured in terms of the Goals and Strategies of the 2009-2015 Ramsar Strategic Plan adopted at COP10 as Resolution X.1, and the indicators speak to relevant Key Result Areas (KRAs) for each Strategy in the Strategic Plan.
4. The COP11 NRF indicators include, with the agreement of the Standing Committee, certain indicators specifically requested to be included by the Convention's Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) in light of its work on assessing effectiveness indicators, and by the CEPA Oversight Panel, in order to facilitate their information gathering and reporting on key aspects of scientific, technical and CEPA implementation under the Convention. The format also includes indicator questions concerning the use of the "Changwon Declaration on human well-being and wetlands", as requested in Resolution X.3 (2008).
5. This COP11 NRF includes 82 indicator questions. In addition, for each Strategy the option is provided for a Contracting Party, if it so wishes, to supply additional information concerning its implementation under each indicator and, more generally, on implementation of other aspects of each Strategy.
6. The COP11 Format also now includes an additional, optional, section (section 4) to permit a Contracting Party to provide additional information, if it wishes to, on indicators relevant to individual Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites).

The purposes and uses of national reporting to the Conference of the Contracting Parties

7. National Reports from Contracting Parties are official documents of the Convention and are made publicly available through their posting on the Convention's website.
8. There are six main purposes for the Convention's National Reports. These are to:
 - i) provide data and information on how the Convention is being implemented;
 - ii) capture lessons and experience to help Parties develop future action;
 - iii) identify emerging issues and implementation challenges faced by Parties that may require further attention from the Conference of the Parties;
 - iv) provide a means for Parties to be accountable for their commitments under the Convention;

- v) provide each Party with a tool to help it assess and monitor its progress in implementation, and to plan its future priorities; and
 - vi) provide an opportunity for Parties to draw attention to their achievements during the triennium.
9. The data and information provided by Parties in their National Reports have another valuable purpose as well, since a number of the indicators in the National Reports on Parties' implementation provide key sources of information for the analysis and assessment of the "ecological outcome-oriented indicators of effectiveness of the implementation of the Convention" currently being further developed by the Scientific and Technical Review Panel for Standing Committee and COP11 consideration.
10. To facilitate the analysis and subsequent use of the data and information provided by Contracting Parties in their National Reports, once received and verified by the Ramsar Secretariat all information is entered and held by the Secretariat in a database, which then facilitates extraction and analysis of the information for a number of purposes.
11. The Convention's National Reports are used in a number of ways. These include:
- i) providing the basis for reporting by the Secretariat to each meeting of the Conference of the Parties on the global and regional implementation, and the progress in implementation, of the Convention. This is provided to Parties at the COP as a series of Information Papers, including:
 - the Report of the Secretary General on the implementation of the Convention at the global level (see, e.g., COP10 DOC. 6);
 - the Report of the Secretary General pursuant to Article 8.2 (b), (c), and (d) concerning the List of Wetlands of International Importance (see, e.g., COP10 DOC. 7); and
 - the reports providing regional overviews of the implementation of the Convention and its Strategic Plan in each Ramsar region (see, e.g., COP10 DOCs 8-13);
 - ii) providing information on specific implementation issues in support of the provision of advice and decisions by Parties at the COP. Examples at CO9 and COP10 included:
 - Resolution IX.15 and X.13, *The status of sites in the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance*, and
 - Information Papers on *Issues and scenarios concerning Ramsar Sites or parts of sites which cease to meet or never met the Ramsar Criteria* (COP9 DOC. 15), *Implementation of the Convention's CEPA Programme for the period 2003-2005* (COP9 DOC. 25), *Overview of the implementation of the Convention's CEPA Programme for the period 2006-2008* (COP10 DOC. 16, and *Background and rationale to the Framework for processes of detecting, reporting and responding to change in wetland ecological character* (COP10 DOC. 27);
 - iii) providing the source data for time-series assessments of progress on specific aspects in the implementation of the Convention included in other Convention products. An example is the summary of progress since COP3 (Regina, 1997) in the development

of National Wetland Policies, included as Table 1 in Ramsar Wise Use Handbook 2 (4th edition, 2010); and

- iv) providing information for reporting to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) on the national-level implementation of the CBD/Ramsar Joint Work Plan and the Ramsar Convention's lead implementation role on wetlands for the CBD. In particular, the COP10 NRF indicators have been used extensively in 2009 in the preparation by the Ramsar Secretariat and STRP of contributions to the in-depth review of the CBD programme of work on the biological diversity of inland water ecosystems that was being considered by CBD SBSTTA14 and COP10 during 2010 (see UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/14/3).

The structure of the COP11 National Report Format

- 12. The COP11 National Report Format is in four sections.

Section 1 provides the Institutional Information about the Administrative Authority and National Focal Points for the national implementation of the Convention.

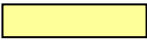
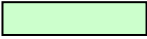
Section 2 is a “free-text” section in which the Party is invited to provide a summary of various aspects of national implementation progress and recommendations for the future.

Section 3 provides the 82 implementation indicator questions, grouped under each Convention implementation strategy in the Strategic Plan 2009-2015, and with an optional “free-text” section under each indicator question in which the Contracting Party may, if it wishes, add further information on national implementation of that activity; and a further “free-text” section for adding further information on other aspects of implementation of that Strategy.

Section 4 ([www.Ramsar.org/doc/cop11/cop11_nrform_e_sec4.doc](http://www Ramsar.org/doc/cop11/cop11_nrform_e_sec4.doc)) is an optional Annex to the National Report Format to allow any Contracting Party that wishes to do so to provide additional information separately for any or all of its Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites). This has been included at the request of a number of Parties.

Guidance for filling in and submitting the COP11 National Report Format

IMPORTANT – PLEASE READ THIS SECTION OF GUIDANCE BEFORE STARTING TO FILL IN THE NATIONAL REPORT FORMAT

- 13. All of the first three Sections of the COP11 National Report Format should be completed in one of the Convention's official languages (English, French, Spanish).
- 14. The deadline for submission of the completed NRF is **15 September 2011**. It will not be possible to include information from National Reports received after that date in the analysis and reporting on Convention implementation to COP11.
- 15. All fields with a pale yellow background  must be filled in.
- 16. Fields with a pale green background  are optional free-text fields in which to provide additional information, if the Contracting Party so wishes. Although providing information in these fields in the NRF is optional, Contracting Parties are encouraged to provide such additional information wherever possible and relevant, since experience

shows that such explanatory information is very valuable in ensuring a full understanding of implementation progress and activity, notably in informing the preparation of global and regional implementation reports to COP.

17. In order to assist Contracting Parties in providing such additional information, for a number of indicator questions some particularly helpful types of such information are suggested. However, of course, Parties are free to add any other relevant information they wish in any of the “Additional implementation information” fields.
18. The Format is created as a “Form” in Microsoft Word. You are only able to move to each of the yellow or green boxes to give your replies and information, as all other parts of the form are locked to ensure that the form and wording of indicators will remain uniform and comparable for all Parties. If you need to work with an unlocked version of the Format, please contact Alexia Dufour, Regional Affairs Officer (dufour@ramsar.org), who will advise on how that can be done.
19. To go to a yellow or green field you wish to fill in, move the cursor over the relevant part of the form and left-click the mouse. The cursor will automatically move to the next field available.
20. To move down the sequence of fields to fill in, you can also use the “Tab” key on the computer keyboard.
21. For a “free-text” field, you can type in whatever information you wish. If you wish to amend any of the text you have put in a green or yellow “free-text” box, it is recommended that you cut-and-paste the existing text into a separate file, make the amendments, and then cut-and-paste the revised text back into the green box – this is because within the Microsoft “Form” format there is limited facility to make editorial changes in the “free-text” box once text has been entered.
22. Certain keyboard characters interfere with the automatic data entry into our database for handling and analysing National Reports. For that reason, please do not use the characters “ ”, [] °°°° in the “free text” fields.
23. For each of the “Indicator questions” in Section 3, a drop-down menu of answer options is provided. These vary between indicators, depending on the question, but are generally of the form: “Yes”, “No”, “Partly”, “In progress”, etc. This is necessary so that statistical comparisons can be made of the replies.
24. For each indicator question you can choose only one answer. If you wish to provide further information or clarifications concerning your answer, you can do so in the green additional information box below the relevant indicator question.
25. To select an answer to an indicator question, use the Tab key, or move the cursor over the relevant yellow box and left-click the mouse. The drop-down menu of answer options will appear. Left-click the mouse on the answer option you choose, and this will appear in the centre of the yellow box.
26. The NRF is not intended normally to be filled in by one person alone – for many indicators it would seem best for the principal compiler to consult with colleagues in the same and other agencies within the government who might have fuller knowledge of the Party’s overall implementation of the Convention. The principal compiler can save the

work at any point in the process and return to it subsequently to continue or to amend answers previously given. When filling in this form, it is also advised to refer back to the National Report submitted for COP10 for purposes of continuity and consistency.

27. After each session working on the NRF, remember to save the file! A recommended filename structure is: COP11NRF [Country] [date].
28. After the NRF has been completed, please send the completed National Report to the Ramsar Secretariat, preferably by e-mail, to Alexia Dufour, Regional Affairs Officer, Ramsar Convention Secretariat, e-mail: dufour@ramsar.org. The Secretariat must receive your completed National Report in this electronic (Microsoft Word) format.
29. When the completed National Report is submitted by the Party, **it must be accompanied by a letter or e-mail message in the name of the Administrative Authority, confirming that this is that Contracting Party's official submission of its COP11 National Report.**
30. If you have any questions or problems concerning filling in the COP11 NRF, please contact the Ramsar Secretariat for advice (e-mail as above).

SECTION 1: INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION

NAME OF CONTRACTING PARTY: THE NETHERLANDS, PART A: THE EUROPEAN PART OF THE KINGDOM	
DESIGNATED RAMSAR ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY	
Name of Administrative Authority:	Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture & Innovation
Head of Administrative Authority - name and title:	Drs. Rob P. van Brouwershaven, Director of the Department of Nature, Landscape and Rural Affairs, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture & Innovation (EL&I)
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DESIGNATED NATIONAL FOCAL POINT FOR RAMSAR CONVENTION MATTERS	
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Name and title of focal point:	vacancy
Name of organisation:	Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture & Innovation (EL&I)
Mailing address:	P.O. Box 20401, 2500 EK The Hague, The Netherlands
Telephone/Fax:	
Email:	
DESIGNATED GOVERNMENT NATIONAL FOCAL POINT FOR MATTERS RELATING TO THE CEPA PROGRAMME ON COMMUNICATION, EDUCATION, PARTICIPATION AND AWARENESS	
Name and title of focal point:	M. van Meerloo MSc., Policy Officer, Department of Nature, Landscape and Rural Affairs
Name of organisation:	Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture & Innovation (EL&I)
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Telephone/Fax:	+31 70 3784364; fax +31 70 3786120
Email:	m.van.meerloo@minlnv.nl
DESIGNATED NON-GOVERNMENT NATIONAL FOCAL POINT FOR MATTERS RELATING TO THE CEPA PROGRAMME ON COMMUNICATION, EDUCATION, PARTICIPATION AND AWARENESS	
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SECTION 2: GENERAL SUMMARY OF NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES

In your country, in the past triennium (i.e., since COP10 reporting):

A. What new steps have been taken to implement the Convention?

Introduction:

Nature conservation in the Netherlands is primarily based on the national policy on the Dutch Ecological Network and the implementation of the EU Birds and Habitats Directives (resulting in, inter alia, the ecological network Natura 2000 with altogether 164 sites (to be) designated) and the EU Water Framework Directive. All important wetlands are part of the Dutch Natura 2000 network which is almost completely part of the National Ecological Network. Therefore this report has been written against the background of the above-mentioned general (not wetland-specific) Dutch nature policy. Where appropriate and possible, special attention is given to Ramsar sites.

Steps taken to implement the Convention:

48 wetlands in the Netherlands have been designated as Ramsar sites, 6 of which being located in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom (see Part B; 1 on the island of Aruba and 5 on the island of Bonaire). Since the previous report of 2008, no new sites have been added to the list. All Ramsar sites (excluding the Caribbean sites) are Natura 2000 sites under the Birds and/or Habitats Directives.

Since 2005 the following progress has been made with the Natura 2000 process. The designation procedure has started in the Netherlands in December 2006. By the end of 2010 56 out of 166 Natura 2000 sites were designated and of 104 sites designation was under preparation. Within 3 years after final designation, the competent authority has to complete a management plan for each site. In these plans will be laid down how the conservation objectives will be reached and how the relationship with economic activities in and around the site will be addressed. Monitoring will be performed in order to follow the developments. Most of these plans are under preparation.

Since the Ramsar sites are part of the Natura 2000 network, they benefit from the conservation status and management provisions that result from this status.

The Dutch government has amended the Nature Conservation Act some years ago. This act has been approved by Parliament in 2005. The Nature Conservation Act is a complete transposition of the provisions of the EU Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive as far as relevant for the network Natura 2000 (species policies are implemented through the Flora and Fauna Act). The Dutch Nature Conservation Act requires an appropriate assessment of the implications of every new plan or project in a Natura 2000 area if relevant effects are expected. This assessment is also necessary when a proposed plan outside a Natura 2000 site might have an effect on this site. In addition there are obligations on monitoring of the ecological status of the protected areas. Because all Ramsar sites are also Natura 2000 sites their legal protection is adequate.

Currently a new integrated nature act is under preparation. This act will replace the Fauna and Flora Act and the Nature Conservation Act.

Integrated Water Resource Management is more and more included in water management practice in the Netherlands. This is reflected both in policy developments at the national level (government paper 'The Water Policy for the 21st Century') and the EU

level (the EU Water Framework Directive - WFD). Currently the implementation and the transposition of the WFD is in full progress in the Netherlands.

To develop effective measures to achieve a Good Ecological Status in the sense of the WFD, it is important to understand the relationships between the hydromorphological state of water bodies and the ecological targets. The functional role of wetlands within larger water bodies or river basins is particularly relevant for WFD implementation. This applies not only to the WFD objectives on protection, development and restoration of water bodies, but also to the relations with groundwater.

In the Netherlands the national and European nature and biodiversity policy developments are an ongoing process. The national Nature Conservation Act and the Flora and Fauna Act, together with the EU WFD and EU Birds and Habitats Directives provide a good legal basis for protection of nature areas, including all Ramsar sites.

B. What have been the most successful aspects of implementation of the Convention?

In the Netherlands wetland policy is a prominent but integrated part of its general nature and biodiversity

policy. Below some examples are given of national developments and international projects.

- The Netherlands has established the 'Waddenfonds', a fund (established by law) of approximately 680 million Euro for nature development, management and sustainable economic development in the Wadden Sea area.

- Another important development was the ban on mechanical cockle fisheries in the Wadden Sea, starting on the 1st of January 2005. Also in 2005 and 2008 the Council of State judged that the permit for mussel seed fishing in the Wadden Sea, provided by the Ministry of EL&I, was in conflict with the Bird- and Habitat Directives. Since 2008 the fishermen were only allowed small scale mussel seed fishing, under the condition that innovation of the sector will lead to a sustainable harvesting method by 2020.

- Complementary to this arrangement, a nature rehabilitation programme for the Wadden Sea named 'Naar een rijke Waddenzee' ('Towards a healthy Wadden Sea Ecosystem for nature and man') has been agreed by the ministry of EL&I.

- In the Netherlands many restoration and rehabilitation projects of wetlands are implemented, e.g.

in the field of addressing lowered ground water tables (e.g. in peatlands), improvement of water quality of

wetlands, reduction of the impact of dykes/dams for coastal protection on the wetlands and in the field of

habitat restoration. Large scale wetland restoration usually consists of a series of actions that address the degradation of ecosystems. Problems of ecosystem degradation often occur at the scale of catchment

areas. Visions and restoration schemes that attempt to integrate various restoration projects at a national, regional or transboundary scale have been developed, for example on the Rhine.

- The Netherlands is actively involved in international cooperation. This is accomplished through bilateral cooperation with partner countries, project funding and through international organisations and

fora that are active in water related activities. These latter include:

- Global Water Partnership (GWP);
- World Water Council (WWC);
- Consultative Group of International Agricultural Research CGIAR
- Ramsar Convention IOPs
- Trilateral cooperation on the Wadden Sea with Germany and Denmark, including the UNESCO

World Heritage Convention (Marine World Heritage).

- Bilateral cooperation was implemented with several countries. In Europe MoU's with Russia, Ukraine, Poland and Hungary in conjunction with the BBI-MATRA programme have led to a series of wetland conservation projects in CEE countries, Turkey and Morocco. The BBI Matra programme (managed by the former Ministry of Agriculture, Nature & Food Quality, funded by the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs) has now expired but several projects were still being implemented in this reporting period. On

a

more modest scale projects were still funded within the (broad) general MATRA programme of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and by some embassies.

BBI-Matra projects in Central and Eastern Europe - excluding small embassy projects - in the reporting

period (between brackets: lead partner; always with local partners):

- Dnipro river corridor in Ukraine: promoting of public awareness and participatory approach in biodiversity conservation and ecological network development (Wetlands International).
- The development of an indicative ecologically coherent network of sub-tidal Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in Bulgaria and Romania (EUCC)
- Establishing the foundations for the launch of a Black Sea Regional Initiative for the wise use of coastal wetlands (BlackSeaWet; Wetlands International)
- Making the Network Reality: Natura 2000 and Lower Danube Green Corridor (WWF-NL)
- Habitat restoration and tourism development in Kopacki Rit (ARK Natuurontwikkeling)
- Establishment of Ramsar Sites in the Danube-Carpathian region of Ukraine (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)
- SPRING staging areas Upper Volga (Alterra; on staging areas for wild geese)
- Towards integrating wetland biodiversity conservation with water and agricultural management in Ukraine. A pilot in the South Bug River Basin.
<http://www.wetlands.org/Whatwedo/Ouractions/tabid/59/mod/601/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/2117/Default.aspx>.
- Promoting integrated peat lands management and conservation in the Russian Federation (Wetlands International)
- Towards sustainable water bird hunting in the Azov-Black Sea wetlands, Ukraine (Bureau Waardenburg)
- Putting PEEN to Practice in Marine and Coastal Areas. A demonstration project ensuring the ecological resilience, coherence and sustainable future of Gokova Bay SPA in Turkey (Stichting Rubicon)
- The long journey. Demonstrating a practical approach to flyway conservation: a Russian – Dutch collaboration (on the Bewick's swan; including drafting an AEWA SSAP) (DLG with Wetlands International)
- Development of a programme for trans boundary wetland conservation along the border of the Russian Federation with Belarus and Ukraine (Wetlands International)
- Stop over Black Sea: the importance of the Black Sea region in the migratory systems of water birds in the African Eurasian Flyway (Wetlands International)
- Protection and Management of Zasavica Special Nature Reserve as a tool Sustainable Rural Development. A pilot project for the integration of wetland management and rural development in Serbia.
(DLO/ Centre for Development Innovation = former Wageningen International=former IAC)

Outside Europe several projects have been implemented by Wetlands International with financial

support

from the Dutch government, usually the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DGIS). Except where other donors are

explicitly mentioned. We can mention, inter alia, the following projects:

- Wetlands and Poverty Reduction project
- Wetlands and Livelihoods Project
- Global Peatland Fund (former Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning & Environment)
- Central Kalimantan Peatland Project
- several smaller projects in West Africa, funded by the Dutch embassy in Dakar, Senegal

By funding the lead partner Wageningen University & Research Centre the Netherlands have supported

the GAWI partnership that contributed to Ramsar's work on the development of Guidelines for Agriculture-Wetland Interactions. The first phase was completed with the publication of the FAO-Ramsar

report (FAO Water Reports 33) 'Scoping agriculture-wetland interactions- Towards a sustainable multiple

response strategy ' The last chapter 'From analysis to guidance' gives guidance for practical application

and further work in this field. The report was presented at Ramsar COP10 in Changwon. After the COP a

testing phase started. Case studies to test the approach were completed in India and Malawi (by Wetland

Action, one of the consortium partners). Due to lack of funding, no further work could be done and the

project had to stop in 2010. Although the outcome is different from the specific guidelines mentioned by

Ramsar COP resolution VIII34, it gives a useful basis for dealing with agriculture-wetland interactions.

The Netherlands supports capacity building in a range of countries. This includes inter alia the Training

of Trainers programme of the Centre for Development Innovation (formerly Wageningen International,

part of the Wageningen University & Research Centre).

The Netherlands supports capacity building and development initiatives in a range of countries. This includes inter alia the International Training of Trainers on Wetland Management, a course focusing on

the facilitation of multi-stakeholder processes and curriculum development organised by the Centre for

Development Innovation (formerly Wageningen International, part of the Wageningen University & Research Centre).

Participants come from all over the world. This training is in fact a successor of the former (successful)

RIZA courses on wetland management. Both courses focused on training 'mid-career professionals'. In

2008 the programme included 21 participants from 10 countries. In 2009, 42 professionals from 22 countries participated (which resulted in two parallel programmes in that year). The 2010 training

included 21 participants from 14 countries, and in 2011 there were 18 participants from 15 countries. The ToT was held in cooperation with the Ramsar secretariat and next to that, the training is endorsed by the Ramsar Secretariat.

The Netherlands also hosts the secretariat of the Advisory Board on Capacity Building for the Ramsar convention. It is expected that the work of the board can be completed in 2011 or 2012 with the finalisation of a 'Framework for capacity building'.

In 2009 the World Water Forum 5 (WWF5) was held in Istanbul. The Netherlands took the initiative to organise, in cooperation with host country Turkey, Switzerland, the Ramsar secretariat, IUCN, Wageningen University & Research (WUR) and others, to organise sessions on the ecological aspects of water management and wetlands.

DLG, the Dutch Government Service for Land and Water Management, has taken over the secretariat of the European Centre for River Restoration (ECRR). In the reporting period the ECRR with the host country has started the preparation of the seminar 'Forging Targets and Solutions for Rivers and Water Ecosystem Restoration'. The seminar will take place on 16-18 November, 2011 in Ljubljana, Slovenia.

DLG is also involved in bilateral cooperation on water issues with some countries:

- Morocco: support for the development of a wetland strategy & action plan (following Ramsar format).
- Senegal: dialogue with OMVS in the framework of the twinning between OMVS and the Dutch water Board Rivierenland and exploring possibilities for wetland restoration in the Ramsar site Ndiel (Senegal delta), currently subject to dessication.
- Turkey: support for the Ministry of Water and Forestry in the development of a strategy for the implementation of Natura 2000 in Turkey.

The Department of Nature, Landscape & Rural Affairs of the former ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (now part of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture & Innovation) had to reduce its active involvement in bilateral cooperation with Central and East European countries due to capacity restrictions, but several BBI MATRA projects on wetlands (see above) were still being implemented in the reporting period. The Dutch government also supported a workshop in Moscow in 2010 in order to explore the issues related to a possible accession of Russia to AEWA (a complementary MEA for Ramsar). A detailed overview of the work carried out in the bilateral cooperation between Russia and the Netherlands since 1991 was reported in the 2008 National Report. Recent wetland projects can be mentioned for notably Ukraine and the Black Sea region also.

Apart from the above-mentioned Training of Trainers, the Centre for Development Innovation (former Wageningen International, earlier IAC) of Wageningen University & research (WUR) was also involved in

the following bilateral wetland relevant activities (inter alia)

Turkey:

- EU Twinning Water Framework Directive
- Government to government projects: ToT on EU Water Framework Directive
- G2G: Strategy for Natura 2000 implementation in Turkey
- Exploring options for development of a Wetland Centre
- Training on River Basin Management for Doga Dernegi
- Evaluation of Ramsar Wetland Management Plan voor Ministry of Environment and Forestry and

Doga Dernegi

Algeria: Quick Scan Wetland Management Lake Ayata

Croatia: EU Twinning on River Restoration of the Mirna

Ukraine: Ecological Network Development

Five North African-Middle East countries: for IUCN: training and supporting multi-stakeholder learning

and institutional development for Climate Change Adaptation

Partners for Water

In the reporting period the programme Partners for Water II was implemented and Partners for Water III

was prepared. Whereas several wetland projects were funded from Partners for Water I, the conditions

had changed under PfW II. Nevertheless a project was carried out in Mali: Operational decision support

on IWRM in the upper Niger Basin. Partners were Royal Haskoning, WI, DLG, the former RIZA and Altenburg & Wymenga. The new PfWIII programme has the possibility to support projects on IWRM and

'Water for Food and Ecosystems' under certain conditions.

Sustainable trade chains: the peat chain

In the current Biodiversity Policy Plan of the Netherlands one of the themes is enhancing the sustainability

of trade chains, with priority for wood, soy, palm oil (relevant for Asian peat lands) biomass (EU REDD

regulation protects wetlands) and peat.

In the reporting period a multi stakeholder process was carried out on enhancing the sustainability of the

trade in peat, under the coordination of Alterra and with several project partners, including RHP (certification organisation), Wetlands International, Plant Research International and the Centre for Development Innovation. The project team further included WUR experts and consultants and cooperated with the International Peat Society and EPAGMA.

The final report of this first project, commissioned by the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture & Innovation, was published in 2011 under the title 'Sustainable Peat Supply Chain' (see <http://www.alterra.wur.nl/NL/publicaties+Alterra/Alterra+rapporten/>; scroll to report nr 2167). The

annexes

include (1) the Wetlands International paper 'Legislation and Impacts of peat extraction on nature.' (2) the

RHP paper 'Peat Production for Growing Media' and (3) the PRI – Alterra paper 'Peat Balance' dealing

with the carbon footprint of the use of peat.

A follow up project, dealing with transparency and criteria, started in 2011, jointly funded by the government and the private sector.

Overview of peatlands in CEE

In 2009 at the start of the project, the 'Quick scan of peat lands in Central and Eastern Europe' (an overview of peat lands in Central and Eastern Europe and Siberia) by Wetlands International, separately

commissioned (for different purposes) by the Dutch government, came also available. The purpose was

to have a background when dealing with subsidy applications for BBI-Matra projects.

Research on wetlands & migratory birds in Africa

In 2009 the book 'Living on the Edge (Wetlands and birds in a changing Sahel)' by Leo Zwarts et al. was

a major publication in the field of ecology of wetlands and their birds in West Africa. The book was promoted on various occasions, such as the AEWA-symposium mentioned below and the Members Meeting of Wetlands International in Scotland early 2011.

In the field of the conservation of migratory waterbirds, the symposium to celebrate 15 years with AEWA,

in The Hague in June 2010, was an important event. The main outcome was the 'The Hague Action Statement on the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats, land use changes and development cooperation'.

See: http://www.unep-aewa.org/meetings/symposium/docs/the_hague_action_statement.pdf

C. What have been the greatest difficulties in implementing the Convention?

The Netherlands is a small and densely populated country, this results in many, often conflicting, claims on the available space, like between nature and farming, fisheries, shipping, water recreation etc. Examples are:

- In the Wadden Sea, the process of making shellfish fisheries sustainable turns out to be a long and difficult one. Mechanical cockle fishing has been banned since 2005, while mussel fisheries as well as shrimp fisheries are currently looking for innovative, sustainable harvesting methods.
- The Dutch government is preparing nature restoration measures in the Westerschelde estuary.
- A challenge for the conservation and restoration of a number of wetlands in the country is the impact of nitrogen, acidification and /or dessication. These problems are being addressed in Natura 2000 context. As a whole, eutrophication has decreased strongly in surface waters compared with the 1970s.

D. What are the priorities for future implementation of the Convention?

Partnerships and synergies with other bodies, including especially the IOPS, are essential for the implementation of the convention as far as the secretariat is involved. The implementation is primarily dependent on the Contracting Parties, for which circumstances can differ considerably. For the Netherlands the synergy between the Ramsar Convention on the one hand and the EU Habitats and Birds Directive, and also the Water Framework Directive, is a strong point in the implementation of the convention, as all Ramsar sites are also Natura 2000 sites.

Dutch national priorities:

Natura 2000 is a priority within the Netherlands and as Ramsar sites in the European part of the kingdom are also Natura 2000 sites, protection of the Ramsar sites can be seen as a priority.

Dutch international priorities:

The Dutch Biodiversity Policy Programme was approved by the Dutch Cabinet on 14 March 2008. The current programme will expire at the end of 2011. The next programme is expected to be prepared in the near future.

The current programme includes the conservation of flyways and related wetlands under the theme 'ecological networks'. Coastal sites are (also) included under the theme on the marine environment. In addition the theme on 'sustainable trade chains' includes the objective of making trade flows sustainable for wood, soy, palm oil, peat and bio fuels, all of them (partly) having some relation to wetlands and water management. Furthermore the theme 'Payments for biodiversity' is closely related to Payments for Ecosystem Services and hence potentially also the PES for wetland services.

E. Does the Contracting Party have any proposals concerning adjustments to the 2009-2015 Strategic Plan?

This is satisfying as far as the Netherlands is concerned.

F. Does the Contracting Party have any recommendations concerning implementation assistance from the Ramsar Secretariat?

The secretariat always provided the necessary advice quickly and adequately.

G. Does the Contracting Party have any recommendations concerning implementation assistance from the Convention's International Organisation Partners (IOPs)?

There is already a good cooperation with Wetlands International and Birdlife International (including Vogelbescherming Nederland). There is a close cooperation with the Dutch Birdlife partner Vogelbescherming Nederland, e.g. as a member of the National Ramsar Committee and a NGO CEPA focal point.

The Dutch government has provided financial support to several wetland projects, both in Europe and in developing countries.

In addition the Netherlands cooperate with these and other IOPs, on wetlands and other issues.

H. How can national implementation of the Ramsar Convention be better linked with implementation of other multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), especially those in the "Biodiversity cluster" (Ramsar, Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), CITES, and World Heritage Convention), and UNCCD and UNFCCC?

- CBD: The cooperation between CBD and Ramsar is satisfying. The Netherlands is happy with existing synergies and the role of Ramsar according to the joint work programme.
 - CMS and daughter agreements Flyway policies under the CMS and AEWA are of utmost importance because of their synergies with Ramsar.
 - WHC: In June 2009 the German-Dutch Wadden Sea was added to the UNESCO World Heritage List. The site covers existing protected areas, in Germany the Lower Saxony Wadden Sea National Park and the Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea National Park; in the Netherlands it covers the area under the corresponding key planning decision (PKB). In 2010, the WH-property Wadden Sea was extended with the National Park Hamburg.
 - CITES: No direct relationship for Dutch species, but there may be links with foreign wetland species. Increased cooperation (world wide) between CITES focal points and focal points of other MEA's, including Ramsar, may lead to further enhanced synergies in the case of inter alia wetland species.
 - UNCCD: The Dutch international policy on the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification is in line with the Ramsar convention and its 10 year's strategy (UNCCD National Action Programme - NAPs and Regional Environmental Centres - RECs).
- UNFCCC: No direct relationship between Ramsar and UNFCCC in the Netherlands, although, developments on coastal protection and river forelands to adapt to climate change (sea level rise and increased river flows) are related to climate change (adaptation measures). Furthermore rewetting certain peatland areas is a modest contribution to mitigation (less oxydation). At UNFCCC COP16 Parties were invited to develop national adaptation plans, so that the mentioned adaptation measures are also related to UNFCCC.

I. How can Ramsar Convention implementation be better linked with the implementation of water policy/strategy and other strategies in the country (e.g., sustainable development, energy, extractive industries, poverty reduction, sanitation, food security, biodiversity)?


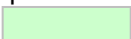
- The Netherlands is striving to implement Natura 2000 and the Water Framework Directive jointly in order to enhance the quality of ecosystems, including wetlands.
 - The Water Boards in the Netherlands (Waterschappen) combine water quality and water quantity management. The links between wetlands and the Dutch Policy programme on Biodiversity (Beleidsprogramma Biodiversiteit) were mentioned in part D of this section.
 - The discussions on climate change stimulates the Netherlands to further increase the focus on issues such as sustainable energy production and biodiversity, which is reflected both in Dutch national and international policies. Furthermore, possibilities for alternative methods of coastal defence, including restoration of salt/freshwater gradients are currently under serious consideration.
- Nature conservation in the Netherlands is largely based on policies on the National Ecological Network, Natura 2000 and the WFD. In addition to this, the Ramsar Convention has an added value. This includes, besides national aspects, the role of Ramsar to protect networks of wetlands on the flyway (and global) level, which is essential for the quality of European sites as well. This role of Ramsar, but mutatis mutandis also of CMS and AEWA, can hardly be overestimated.

J. Does the Contracting Party have any other general comments on the implementation of the Convention?

No further comments.

SECTION 3: INDICATOR QUESTIONS & FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION INFORMATION

Guidance for filling in this section

1. For each “indicator question”, please select one answer from the “drop-down” list in the yellow box. 
2. If you wish to add any additional information on a specific indicator, please provide this information in the green “free-text” boxes below the indicator questions. 
3. If you wish to amend any of the text you have put in a green “free-text” box, it is recommended that you cut-and-paste the existing text into a separate file, make the amendments, and then paste the revised text back into the green box.
4. Some characters used in the free text box prevent the automatic data entry into our database designed for handling and analysing National Reports. For that reason, please do not use the characters “ ”, [], °°°° in the free text box.
5. To assist Contracting Parties in referring to relevant information they provided in their National Report to COP10, for each indicator below (where appropriate) a cross-reference is provided to the equivalent indicator(s) in the COP10 NRF, shown thus: {x.x.x}
6. Where appropriate, a cross-reference is also provided to the relevant Key Result Area (KRA) relating to Contracting Parties in the Strategic Plan 2009-2015.
7. Only Strategic Plan 2009-2015 Strategies and KRAs for which there are significant implementation actions for Contracting Parties are included in this reporting format; those parts of the Strategic Plan that do not refer directly to Parties are omitted.

GOAL 2. WETLANDS OF INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE

Note. An optional Annex (Section 4) to this COP11 National Report Format is provided so that a Contracting Party, if it so wishes, can also provide additional information separately on any of its designated Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites).

STRATEGY 2.1 Ramsar Site designation. Apply the “Strategic Framework and guidelines for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance” (Handbook 14, 3rd edition).

2.1.1 Have a national strategy and priorities been established for the further designation of Ramsar Sites, using the <i>Strategic Framework for the Ramsar List</i> ? {2.1.1} KRA 2.1.i	B - No
2.1.1 Additional information: At the time of designation of the last series of Ramsar sites, analysis showed that all wetlands of international importance had been included.	
2.1.2 Have all required updates of the Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands been submitted to the Ramsar Secretariat? {2.2.1} KRA 2.1.ii	D - Planned
2.1.2 Additional information: Not yet, but they are in the final steps of preparation. They will be sent in as soon as possible.	
2.1.3 How many Ramsar Site designations in your country have been submitted to the Secretariat but are not yet placed on the List of Wetlands of International Importance? KRA 2.1.iii	0 sites
2.1.3 Additional information: All Ramsar sites of The Netherlands, including the ones in the Dutch Caribbean are listed on the List of Wetlands of International Importance. The Ramsar site Griend however has been merged with the Ramsar site Wadden sea, while the Ramsar site Boschplaat has been merged with the Ramsar site Waddensea Islands/North sea coastal zone/Breebaart.	
2.1.4 If further Ramsar Site designations are planned for the next triennium (2012-2015), please indicate how many sites (otherwise indicate 0) KRA 2.1.iii	0 sites
2.1.4 Additional information (please indicate the anticipated year of designation): No more Ramsar sites are planned between 2012-2015. In the Netherlands the wetlands of international importance have already been proposed or designated under Natura 2000.	

Additional information on any other aspects of Strategy 2.1 implementation:

STRATEGY 2.2 Ramsar Site information. *Ensure that the Ramsar Sites Information Service . . . is available and enhanced as a tool for guiding the further designation of wetlands for the List of Wetlands of International Importance and for research and assessment, and is effectively managed by the Secretariat.*

2.2.1 Are the Ramsar Sites Information Service and its tools being used in national identification of further Ramsar Sites to designate? {2.2.2} KRA 2.2.ii

B - No

2.2.1 Additional information:

No further designations are planned (see answers in the previous section)

Additional information on any other aspects of Strategy 2.2 implementation:

STRATEGY 2.3 Management planning - new Ramsar Sites. *While recognizing that Ramsar Site designation can act as a stimulus for development of effective site management plans, generally encourage the philosophy that all new Ramsar Sites should have effective management planning in place before designation, as well as resources for implementing such management.*

2.3.1 Have all sites being prepared for Ramsar designation (2.1.2 above) had adequate management planning processes established? KRA 2.3.i

B - No

2.3.1 Additional information:

Not Applicable; no further designations planned.

Additional information on any other aspects of Strategy 2.3 implementation:

STRATEGY 2.4 Ramsar Site ecological character. *Maintain the ecological character of all designated Ramsar Sites, through planning and management.*

2.4.1 How many Ramsar Sites have a management plan? {2.3.2} KRA 2.4.i

42 sites

2.4.2 For those Ramsar Sites with a management plan, for how many is the management plan being implemented? KRA 2.4.i

42 sites

2.4.3 How many Ramsar Sites have a management plan in preparation? KRA 2.4.i

42 sites

2.4.4 For those Ramsar Sites with a management plan, for how many is the management plan being revised or updated? KRA 2.4.i

42 sites

2.4.1 – 2.4.4 Additional information:

Management plans or strategies of the site managing organisations are in place and applied in the Ramsar sites. However, these are not all uniform, since different nature and water management organisations usually have their own kind of management plan.

But next to this, for all the Ramsar sites - being also Natura 2000 sites - Natura 2000 management plans are under preparation. E.g. the Natura 2000 management plan for the Delta in the Southwest of the Netherlands includes no less than eight Ramsar sites!

The Trilateral Wadden Sea Plan has been further developed into a management plan in accordance with the requirements of the relevant EU Directives.

2.4.5 Do the Ramsar Site management plans establish the maintenance of the ecological character as a management objective? KRA 2.4.ii

A - Yes

2.4.5 Additional information:

The management plans for Natura 2000 objectives are set to maintain or improve the ecological character of the sites.

2.4.6 How many sites have a cross-sectoral management committee? {2.3.3} KRA 2.4.iv

some sites

2.4.6 Additional information (If at least "1 site", please name the site(s)):

Some sites have cross-sectoral management committee, but at this point, not all the sites, however The Netherlands do have cross-sectoral advisory committees for the Natura 2000 management plans. And therefore for all the Ramsar sites.

2.4.7 For how many sites has an ecological character description been prepared? KRA 2.4.v

42 sites

2.4.7 Additional information (If at least "1 site", please give the site(s) name and official number):

This was done under Natura 2000 and can very well be used for Ramsar purposes.

Additional information on any other aspects of Strategy 2.4 implementation:

STRATEGY 2.5 Ramsar Site management effectiveness. *Review all existing Ramsar Sites to determine the effectiveness of management arrangements, in line with the "Strategic Framework and guidelines for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance".*

2.5.1 Have any assessments of Ramsar Site management effectiveness been carried out? {2.3.4} KRA 2.5.i

A - Yes

2.5.1 Additional information (if "Yes" or "Some sites", please indicate the year of assessment and from whom, or from where, the information is available):

Also the site managing organisations have an internal quality assessment system. These programmes were not set up especially for Ramsar, but they are supportive to the Ramsar objectives.

Additional information on any other aspects of Strategy 2.5 implementation:

STRATEGY 2.6 Ramsar Site status. *Monitor the condition of Ramsar Sites and address negative changes in their ecological character, notify the Ramsar Secretariat of changes affecting Ramsar Sites, and apply the Montreux Record, if appropriate, and Ramsar Advisory Mission as tools to address problems.*

2.6.1 Are arrangements in place for the Administrative Authority to be informed of negative human-induced changes or likely changes in the ecological character of Ramsar Sites, pursuant to Article 3.2? {2.4.1} KRA 2.6.i

A - Yes

2.6.1 Additional information (if "Yes" or "Some sites", please summarise the mechanism(s) established):

The Netherlands has an intense and broad ecological monitoring and research framework. Rijkswaterstaat & Deltares among others reported in 2010 about the ecological changes in the 'IJsselmeergebied' (IJssel lake district), which includes no less than eight Ramsar sites: IJsselmeer, Markermeer, IJmeer, Wolderwijd & Nuldernauw, Veluwemeer, Drontermeer, Ketelmeer & Vossemeer and Zwarte meer.

Intense monitoring schemes are also implemented for the estuaries of the Westerschelde (www.scheldemonitor.org) and Eems-Dollard.

For the Waddensea one is referred to the Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Programme. <http://www.waddensea-secretariat.org/TMAP/Monitoring.html>

2.6.2 Have all cases of negative human-induced change or likely change in the ecological character of Ramsar Sites been reported to the Ramsar Secretariat, pursuant to Article 3.2,? {2.4.2} KRA 2.6.i

B - No

2.6.2 Additional information (if "Yes" or "Some cases", please indicate for which Ramsar Sites Article 3.2 reports have been made by the Administrative Authority to the Secretariat, and for which sites such reports of change or likely change have not yet been made):

Any changes observed have been recorded in the updated Ramsar Information sheets to be sent in. However, the Netherlands has protected all its Ramsar sites under Natura 2000. By implementing Natura 2000, the conservation obligations under the Ramsar convention are considered to be fulfilled as well.

2.6.3 If applicable, have actions been taken to address the issues for which Ramsar Sites have been listed on the Montreux Record, including requesting a Ramsar Advisory Mission? {2.4.3} KRA 2.6.ii

Z - Not applicable

2.6.3 Additional information (if "Yes", please indicate the actions taken):

Additional information on any other aspects of Strategy 2.6 implementation:

STRATEGY 2.7 Management of other internationally important wetlands. *Appropriate management and wise use achieved for those internationally important wetlands that have not yet been formally designated as Ramsar Sites but have been identified through domestic application of the Strategic Framework or an equivalent process.*

2.7.1 Has the ecological character of internationally important wetlands not yet designated as Ramsar Sites been maintained? KRA 2.7.i

2.7.1 Additional information:

Not applicable. The wetlands of international importance were designated as Ramsar sites in the Netherlands.

Additional information on any other aspects of Strategy 2.7 implementation:

GOAL 3. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION
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STRATEGY 3.1 Synergies and partnerships with MEAs and IGOs. <i>Work as partners with international and regional multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and other intergovernmental agencies (IGOs).</i>
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3.1.1 Are mechanisms 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} KRAs 3.1.i & 3.1.ii	A - Yes
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3.1.1 Additional information:

There is close and frequent contact with focal point of CITES, SPAW, CMS, AEWA, Bern convention, WHC and, indirectly, UNFCCC and CBD through their coordinators in the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture & Innovation.

3.1.2 Are the national focal points of other MEAs invited to participate in the National Ramsar/Wetland Committee? {3.1.2} KRA KRAs 3.1.i & 3.1.iv	B - No
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3.1.2 Additional information:

No, this not necessary, because most focal points work in the same department (Department of Nature, Landscape & Rural Affairs of EL&I; one in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - CBD and one in the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment - UNFCCC) and therefore have a regular contacts.

3.1.3 Are mechanisms in place at the national level for collaboration between the Ramsar Administrative Authority and the focal points of UN and other global and regional bodies and agencies (e.g. UNEP, UNDP, WHO, FAO, UNECE, ITTO, etc)? KRA 3.1.iv	A - Yes
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3.1.3 Additional information:

These mechanisms are in place to a certain extent, depending on the nature of the issues at stake, e.g. with permanent representation with FAO on the GAWI project and on the GIAHS project; ITTO issues are coordinated in the same department of EL&I. In addition all government positions regarding MEAs are coordinated among the ministries.

3.1.4 [For African Contracting Parties only] Has the Contracting Party participated in the implementation of the wetland programme under NEPAD? {3.1.3} KRA 3.1.iii	Z - Not applicable
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3.1.4 Additional information: Not applicable for the Netherlands.

However, the Netherlands have supported several wetland projects in Africa, mostly implemented by Wetlands International. A project in the Inner Niger Delta (follow-up of 'the Niger a Lifeline'), developed by a consortium, has been implemented under the facility 'Partners for Water'. (See also Section 2).

Additional information on any other aspects of Strategy 3.1 implementation:

See our detailed information on international cooperation in Section 2.

STRATEGY 3.2 Regional initiatives. *Support existing regional arrangements under the Convention and promote additional arrangements.*

3.2.1 Has the Contracting Party been involved in the development and implementation of a Regional Initiative under the framework of the Convention? {2.6.1} KRA 3.2.i

B - No

3.2.1 Additional information (If "Yes" or "Planned", please indicate the regional initiative(s) and the collaborating countries of each initiative):

The Netherlands is not involved in one of these official initiatives in the framework of the Convention, with exclusion of the Caribbean part of the Kingdom (see Caribbean part of the national report).

Furthermore the BBI MATRA subsidy of the Dutch government to Wetlands International's project BLACKSEAWET helped to pave the way to a regional initiative.

3.2.2 Has your country provided support to, or participated in, the development of other regional (i.e., covering more than one country) wetland training and research centres? {4.10.1}

A - Yes

3.2.2 Additional information (If "Yes", please indicate the name(s) of the centre(s):

Internationally:

Training of Trainer courses are run by the Centre for Development Innovation (formerly known as Wageningen International or before that as the IAC), part of Wageningen University & Research (WUR). Funding is drawn from different sources, inter alia research funds of the ministry of EL&I and Dutch embassy funds and external funds as well. More information in Section 2.

The former RIZA used to be in charge of the secretariat of the Advisory Board on Capacity Building for the Ramsar Convention. More information in Section 2.

The International Course on African Wetland Management (ICAWM) is a Ramsar Convention endorsed training initiative for Wetland Practitioners. It is designed within the premise of the current Guidelines for Management Planning for Ramsar Sites and other Wetlands. ICAWM is internationally instituted and collaboratively executed, in the past amongst others with the support of the Centre for Water Management of Rijkswaterstaat of the Netherlands. The training is aimed at enhancing capacity among wetland practitioners to enable them to deal with contemporary environmental as well as societal challenges of wetlands management in Africa.

Additional information on any other aspects of Strategy 3.2 implementation:

STRATEGY 3.3 International assistance. *Promote international assistance to support the conservation and wise use of wetlands, while ensuring that environmental safeguards and assessments are an integral component of all development projects that affect wetlands, including foreign and domestic investments.*

3.3.1 [For Contracting Parties with development assistance agencies only ("donor countries")]: Has funding support been provided from the development assistance agency for wetland conservation and management in other countries? {4.5.1} KRA 3.3.i

A - Yes

3.3.1 Additional information (If "Yes", please indicate the countries supported since COP10):

The Netherlands supported many projects. A list with projects in the period 2005-2007 was attached to the 2008 report (see for more information: www.proforis.nl) and see Section 2 for the period from 2008 on.

3.3.2 [For Contracting Parties with development assistance agencies only (“donor countries”): Have environmental safeguards and assessments been included in development proposals proposed by your development assistance agency? KRA 3.3.ii

A - Yes

3.3.2 Additional information:

Such assessments have been included in development cooperation for over 20 years.

3.3.3 [For Contracting Parties that have received development assistance only (“recipient countries”): Has funding support been received from development assistance agencies specifically for in-country wetland conservation and management? {4.5.2}

Z - Not applicable

3.3.3 Additional information (If “Yes”, please indicate from which countries/agencies since COP10):

Additional information on any other aspects of Strategy 3.3 implementation:

STRATEGY 3.4 Sharing information and expertise. *Promote the sharing of expertise and information concerning the conservation and wise use of wetlands.*

3.4.1 Have networks, including twinning arrangements, been established, nationally or internationally, for knowledge sharing and training for wetlands that share common features? {3.2.1}

A - Yes

3.4.1 Additional information (If “Yes” or “Partly”, please indicate the networks and wetlands involved):

A number of Ramsar sites are twinned, for instance through EUROSITE, such as:

- ‘De Boschplaat’ (part of ‘Waddeneilanden/Noordzeekustzone/Breebaart’) to ‘Spiekeroog Ostplate’ (Germany);
- ‘Dollard’ (part of ‘Wadden Sea’ site) to ‘Elisabeth-Außengroden’ (Germany);
- ‘Zwanenwater’ to ‘Titchwell Marsh’ (UK) and ‘Platier d'Oye’ (France);
- ‘Schiermonnikoog’ (belongs partly to ‘Wadden Sea’ and partly to ‘Waddeneilanden/Noordzeekustzone/Breebaart’) to ‘Slowinski National Park’ (Poland);
- ‘Bargerveen’ to ‘Clara Bog’ (Ireland)

Bilateral cooperation on nature conservation (including wetland conservation) was implemented with several countries, but most of this cooperation was stopped or reduced by 2010. For the cooperation with Central and East European countries see Section 2. Furthermore there was some cooperation between The Netherlands and South Korea for the Wadden Sea and Yellow Sea respectively, on the Semangeum project and on the Changwon declaration (presentation at the meeting in 2010).

Outside Europe several projects have been implemented by Wetlands International with financial support from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Vogelbescherming Nederland (the Dutch partner of Birdlife International) has set up partnerships with (BirdLife)partners in e.g. Morocco, Burkina Faso, Indonesia and Sierra-Leone to work on organisation development and capacity building, as well as supporting conservation projects in wetlands important for migratory birds, using a flyway perspective.

Furthermore a programme is under construction for visitor centres along the East-Atlantic Flyway called : ‘Migratory Birds for People’. Coordinating partners are Wetland Link International and Wetlands International. This programme aims at informing the public about the dependence of migratory water birds on European and African wetlands through a network of wetland visitor centres situated across Western Europe and Western Africa. At this stage eighteen visitor centres at Ramsar-sites are involved in Western Europe and three in Western Africa. So far this programme includes the visitor centre at the Ramsar-site Oostvaardersplassen in the Netherlands. ‘The European centres share and provide each other with information on the location of migratory water birds using webcams, satellite tracking, films and other information sources. This information is helping to improve understanding of the international dimension of nature conservation and fits in the CEPA-programme.

Other bilateral activities are mentioned in Section 2.

3.4.2 Has information about your country’s wetlands and/or Ramsar Sites and their status been made publicly available (e.g., through publications or a website)? {3.2.2}

C - Partly

3.4.2 Additional information: Information about the Ramsar sites is collected in the EU Natura 2000-database. The National Authority for data concerning nature (Gegevensautoriteit Natuur, <http://www.gegevensautoriteitnatuur.nl/>) will act as a broker in nature data within the Netherlands.

This authority has the following tasks:

- it has to make sure that companies and (local) governments have relevant data available in time,

to be able to make the proper decisions,

- to strengthen the data infrastructure for quick use in practice, for this purpose a national database

flora and fauna is developed

- to coordinate the cooperation between parties involved in the field of data collecting and using.

In addition, every citizen can find information on (protected) species on two websites:

- The Dutch Species Catalogue provides a current and comprehensive overview of Dutch

biodiversity. It is based on the data gathered by experts in various aspects of flora and fauna: <http://www.nederlandsesoorten.nl/nlsr/nlsr/english.html>

- The ministry of EL&I has a website on which the status of protection of species (which rules,

acts and laws are applicable on which species) can be found:

<http://www.minInv.nederlandsesoorten.nl/Inv.db/Inv.db/home.html>.

For protected areas another website is available

<http://www.synbiosys.alterra.nl/natura2000/gebiedendatabase.aspx>

Here also the protection under Ramsar can be found. As an example the following links lead to the

Ramsar Information Sheet for the Oostelijke Vechtplassen:

<http://www.synbiosys.alterra.nl/natura2000/gebiedendatabase.aspx?subj=gebwetlands&groep=7&id=3NL036>; <http://www.wetlands.org/reports/index.cfm?siteref=3NL036>;
<http://www.wetlands.org/reports/ris/3NL036en.pdf>

The 'Balans van de Leefomgeving' (Balance of the Living Environment, known as Nature Balance before

2010; see <http://www.rivm.nl/bibliotheek/rapporten/500206001.pdf>), is a.o. an annual assessment

of the natural environment and landscape in The Netherlands. It monitors policy developments in the

field of landscape and natural environment and gives a view on emerging perspectives. It is produced

by the Netherlands Assessment Agency for the Living Environment (PBL). The conclusions of the annual

Balance of the Living Environment are taken into account when drafting new nature and water

related policy documents.

The Ministry of EL&I is also working with a system called 'Wettelijke Onderzoeks Taken Informatievoorziening Natuur' (Legal Research Tasks Information provision Nature under development)

to carry out the obligations within the framework of national and international legislation and requirements.

3.4.3 Has information about your country's wetlands and/or Ramsar Sites been transmitted to the Ramsar Secretariat for dissemination? KRA 3.4.ii	C - Partly
3.4.3 Additional information:	

Additional information on any other aspects of Strategy 3.4 implementation:

STRATEGY 3.5 Shared wetlands, river basins and migratory species. *Promote inventory and cooperation for the management of shared wetlands and hydrological basins, including cooperative monitoring and management of shared wetland-dependent species.*

3.5.1 Have all transboundary/shared wetland systems been identified? {2.5.1} KRA 3.5.i	A - Yes
3.5.1 Additional information: Four Ramsar sites: Westerschelde (Scheldt estuary), Wadden Sea (including Eems-Dollard), North Sea Coastal Zone, Bargerveen, and furthermore the rivers: Rhine and Meuse.	

3.5.2 Is effective cooperative management in place for shared wetland systems (for example, in shared river basins and coastal zones)? {2.5.2} KRA 3.5.ii	A - Yes
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3.5.2 Additional information (if "Yes" or "Partly", please indicate for which wetland systems such management is in place):

In 1982, the Joint Declaration on the Protection of the Wadden Sea was signed, which established the cooperation between Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands. The Cooperation aims to promote the coordination of the activities and measures of the three countries with regard to the protection of the Wadden Sea region as a whole including its fauna (marine, terrestrial and avian) and flora. Special special emphasis is put on resting and breeding areas for seals, and on areas important as resting, feeding, breeding, or moulting grounds for water birds. To support this cooperation, the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat was established in 1987.

As a result of this long-term cooperation and the subsequent establishment of harmonised counting and analysing programmes for migratory waterbirds, reports on trend analyses are becoming available (<http://cwss.www.de>).

At the 11th Trilateral Wadden Sea Governmental Conference (Sylt, March 2010), a refreshed Joint Declaration on the Protection of the Wadden Sea was signed, which replaces the old one from 1982 and new Governance Arrangements were adopted. Also an updated Wadden Sea Plan 2010 was adopted at this conference.

<http://www.waddensea-secretariat.org/tgc/TGC-Sylt-2010.html>

The Dutch German Wadden Sea was included on the UNESCO World Heritage List on June 2009, and the Danish Wadden Sea was inaugurated as a National Park in autumn 2010.

North Sea Coastal Zone

The North Sea Coastal Zone north of the Wadden Sea forms part of the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation Area. It has been elaborated in the framework of the trilateral cooperation for management purposes.

River Meuse

Please see: IRC Meuse, International Commission for the Protection of the Meuse
<http://www.cipm-icbm.be/> (in French; in Dutch: <http://www.cipm-icbm.be/page.asp?id=35&langue=NL>)

3.5.3 Does your country participate in regional networks or initiatives for wetland-dependent migratory species? KRA
 3.5.iii

A - Yes

3.5.3 Additional information:

Rijkswaterstaat Centre for Watermanagement in The Netherlands was leadpartner for the European HARBASINS project (2005-2008) which is an acronym for Harmonised River Basins Strategies North Sea. The aim of the HARBASINS project was to enhance the compatibility of management strategies and international cooperation for the North Sea's coastal waters, estuaries and river basins. The focus is on harmonisation of the EU Water Framework Directive and the international cooperation on integrated management of estuaries and coastal waters in the North Sea Region, ultimately leading to ecosystem restoration and compatible instruments which ensure sound environmental management of interconnected coastal zones.

Furthermore, the Netherlands provided financial support to the Wings over Wetlands project through Wetlands International and to the International Waterbird Census (IWC).

The Caribbean part of the Kingdom actively participated in regional networks, see for more information the Caribbean part of this report.

Additional information on any other aspects of Strategy 3.5 implementation:

GOAL 4. IMPLEMENTATION CAPACITY

STRATEGY 4.1 CEPA. *Support, and assist in implementing at all levels, where appropriate, the Convention's Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness Programme (Resolution X.8) for promoting the conservation and wise use of wetlands through communication, education, participation awareness (CEPA) and work towards wider awareness of the Convention's goals, mechanisms, and key findings.*

4.1.1 Has/have an Action Plan/Plans for wetland CEPA been established?
{4.4.2} KRA 4.1.i

- a) At the national level
- b) Sub-national level
- c) Catchment/basin level
- d) Local/site level

(Even if no CEPA plans have been developed, if broad CEPA objectives for CEPA actions have been established, please indicate this below in the Additional information section below)

A - Yes
B - No
B - No
A - Yes

4.1.1 Additional information (if “Yes” or “In progress” to one of the four questions above, please describe the mechanism, and identify if it has involved CEPA NFPs):

In the Netherlands most CEPA-activities are nature-related in general, not wetland-specific, except in site-related information centres.

One of the relevant activities is the programme ‘Jeugd, Natuur, Voedsel en Gezondheid’ (Youth, Nature, Food and Health) which, under the name ‘Youth’, comes to an end in 2011. This program was not especially developed for Ramsar, but it does support the Ramsar objectives. This programme is designed to improve the youth awareness of the value of food and a green environment. Activities within the framework of this programme include:

- A policy on Natuur en Milieu Educatie (NME, ‘Nature and Environmental Education’): The NME-policy is one of the most important pillars to enhance the awareness for nature and the environment among the youth.
- Maatschappelijke stages (‘social internships’): the Dutch government aims to provide 10,000 ‘green’ social internships for secondary education.
- Staatsbosbeheer (large site-managing GO), Natuurmonumenten (largest site-managing NGO) and the National Parks provide information and education on nature. See (in Dutch):
<http://www.staatsbosbeheer.nl/activiteiten/zoekresultaten.aspx?activitycategory=Voor+kinderen>;
<http://www.natuurmonumenten.nl/kinderactiviteiten>;
<http://www.kids.nationaalpark.nl>

Furthermore, the International Wadden Sea School (IWSS) is initiated and supported by the governments of the three states working together in the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation. The overall goal of the IWSS is to enhance the awareness on the Wadden Sea as a shared natural and cultural heritage and to support the understanding for a long-term protection and sustainable management of the Wadden Sea as a whole by translating the ideas behind the cooperation on the Wadden Sea into the education of the future generation.

Vogelbescherming Nederland, Dutch partner of Birdlife International, has a system of so-called Wetland Guardians. Wetland Guardians are comparable to Birdlife Internationals IBA-care takers: volunteers for Vogelbescherming, being their eyes and ears in their own wetland. Vogelbescherming Nederland trains and guides these volunteers so that they can participate in processes regarding wetlands. In total, approximately 90 Wetland Guardians are active across the Netherlands.

4.1.2 How many centres (visitor/interpretation/education) have been established at Ramsar Sites and other wetlands?
{4.4.6} KRA 4.1.ii

19 centres

4.1.2 Additional information (If centres are part of a national or international network, please describe the network(s)):

Current Education centres at Ramsar sites:

The Netherlands: Oosterschelde (2), Wieden, Weerribben, Verdrongen land van Saeftinghe, Wadden Sea together with Waddeneilanden / Noordzee kustzone / Breebaart (location Schiermonnikoog, Texel, Terschelling, Vlieland, Ameland), Biesbosch (3), Alde Feanen, Lauwersmeer, Groote Peel, Grevelingen, Oostvaardersplassen.

Dutch Caribbean: Washington Slagbaai (Bonaire).

<p>4.1.3 Does the Contracting Party:</p> <p>a) promote public participation in decision-making with respect to wetland planning and management</p> <p>b) specifically involve local stakeholders in the selection of new Ramsar Sites and in Ramsar Site management?</p> <p>{4.1.3} KRA 4.1.iii</p>	<p>A - Yes</p> <p>A - Yes</p>
<p>4.1.3 Additional information (if "Yes" or "Partly", please provide information about the ways in which local communities are involved):</p> <p>The Natura 2000 management plans have to be developed in close cooperation with the stakeholders. This is not developed especially for Ramsar, but will support the Ramsar objectives.</p>	
<p>4.1.4 Has an assessment of national and local training needs for the implementation of the Convention been made?</p> <p>{4.10.2} KRAs 4.1.iv & 4.1.viii</p>	<p>B - No</p>
<p>4.1.4 Additional information:</p>	
<p>4.1.5 How many opportunities for wetland site manager training have been provided since COP10? {4.10.3} KRA 4.1.iv</p>	<p>some opportunities</p>
<p>4.1.5 Additional information (including whether the Ramsar Wise Use Handbooks were used in the training):</p> <p>No specific number of training opportunities. However, regarding the wetlands in the Netherlands themselves, the nature managers are well trained by education (Wageningen University, Larenstein University of Professional Education), which are financially supported by The Ministry of EL&I (green education). The nature management organisations have their own well equipped education opportunities. The same goes for other organisations in the field of water management.</p> <p>Vogelbescherming Nederland also provides courses for IBA-caretakers bound to wetlands, about the Dutch Nature Conservation Act and Natura 2000.</p>	
<p>4.1.6 Do you have an operational National Ramsar/Wetlands Committee (or equivalent body)? {4.8.2}</p>	<p>A - Yes</p>
<p>4.1.6 Additional information (If "Yes", indicate a) its membership; b) its frequency of meetings; and c) what responsibilities the Committee has):</p> <p>a) In the Netherlands the National Ramsar Committee includes delegates from different NGO's and members from the government.</p> <p>b) The frequency of meetings differs form 1-4 meetings a year.</p> <p>c) The subjects in the meeting discussed included the National Ramsar Report, the SC and CoP –agenda and World Wetlands Day.</p>	

<p>4.1.7 Are other communication mechanisms (apart from a national committee) in place to share Ramsar implementation guidelines and other information between the Ramsar Administrative Authority and</p> <p>a. Ramsar Sites managers?</p> <p>b. other MEA national focal points?</p> <p>c. relevant ministries, departments and agencies?</p> <p>{4.4.3} KRA 4.1.vi</p>	<p>B - No</p> <p>B - No</p> <p>A - Yes</p>
<p>4.1.7 Additional information (If "Yes" or "Partly", please describe what types of mechanism are in place):</p> <p>Within the Natura 2000 implementation process extensive communication and sharing of information amongst relevant ministries, departments and agencies and other stakeholders on wetland issues takes place. For Ramsar issues the Dutch National Ramsar Committee was established for this purpose.</p>	
<p>4.1.8 Have World Wetlands Day activities, either government and NGO-led or both, been carried out in the country since COP10? {4.4.5}</p>	<p>A - Yes</p>
<p>4.1.8 Additional information:</p> <p>Vogelbescherming Nederland, Staatsbosbeheer, Natuurmonumenten, de 12Landschappen and the Ministry of EL&I have celebrated the 40th birthday of Ramsar by organizing a special week in October 2011, called World Wetland Week. In this week, several field excursions were organized in wetlands, with a special focus on Ramsar and its goals. A leaflet was be handed out to the participants. Next to that, during this week information was spread via visitor centers in wetlands. Social media were used to announce and advertise activities.</p> <p>In the previous years World Wetlands Day was also celebrated, although on a modest level, In 2010 success was hampered by unfavourable weather conditions.in February.</p>	
<p>4.1.9 Have campaigns, programmes, and projects (other than for World Wetlands Day) been carried out since COP10 to raise awareness of the importance of wetlands to people and wildlife and the ecosystem benefits/services provided by wetlands? {4.4.4}</p>	<p>A - Yes</p>
<p>4.1.9 Additional information (including, if support has been provided for the delivery of these and other CEPA activities by other organisations, please indicate this):</p>	

Additional information on any other aspects of Strategy 4.1 implementation: Apart from many projects, programmes and websites a public awareness campaign 'Nederland leeft met water' (The Netherlands Lives with Water) was developed and is still operative. See: <http://www.nederlandleeftmetwater.nl/>, in Dutch.

As part of the Wadden Sea World Heritage communication and awareness strategy, many communication activities were launched. Just recently, in summer 2011 a so-called 'Story Hunter Campaign' was executed throughout the region.

For more information, see:

<http://www.waddensea-worldheritage.org/>

STRATEGY 4.2 Convention financial capacity. *Provide the financial resources necessary for the Convention's governance, mechanisms and programmes to achieve the expectations of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, within the availability of existing resources and by the effective use of such resources; explore and enable options and mechanism for mobilization of new and additional resources for implementation of the Convention.*

4.2.1

a) Have Ramsar contributions been paid in full for 2009, 2010, 2011? {4.6.1} KRA 4.2.i

A - Yes

b) If "No" in 4.2.1 a), please clarify what plan is in place to ensure future prompt payment:

4.2.2 Has any additional financial support been provided through voluntary contributions to non-core funded Convention activities? {4.6.2} KRA 4.2.i

B - No

4.2.2 Additional information (If "Yes" please state the amounts, and for which activities):

However, considerable project support has been given to IOP activities on wetlands.

Apart from Wetlands International, also some other organisations received project support. See Section 2.

Additional information on any other aspects of Strategy 4.2 implementation:

For an overview of funded projects see Section 2.

STRATEGY 4.3 Convention bodies' effectiveness. *Ensure that the Conference of the Contracting Parties, Standing Committee, Scientific and Technical Review Panel, and Secretariat are operating at a high level of efficiency and effectiveness to support the implementation of the Convention.*

4.3.1 Has the Contracting Party used its previous Ramsar National Reports in monitoring its implementation of the Convention? {4.7.1} KRA 4.3.ii

A - Yes

4.3.1 Additional information (If "Yes", please indicate how the Reports have been used for monitoring):

The whole former report has been checked and the answers have been updated.

4.3.2 Has the Secretariat been updated on any appointments and changes in Administrative Authority focal points and daily contacts (including CEPA and STRP National Focal Points)? KRA 4.3.i

A - Yes

4.3.2 Additional information:

The Co-NFP Mrs. M van Meerloo will change jobs from the 1st of November 2011. If it is clear who will take over her tasks, the Ramsar Secretariat will get this information as soon as possible.

Additional information on any other aspects of Strategy 4.3 implementation:

STRATEGY 4.4 Working with IOPs and others. *Maximize the benefits of working with the Convention's International Organization Partners (IOPs*) and others.*

* The IOPs are: BirdLife International, the International Water Management Institute (IWMI), IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature), Wetlands International, and WWF International.

4.4.1 Has your country received assistance from one or more of the Convention's IOPs in its implementation of the Convention? {4.9.1} KRA 4.4.iii

A - Yes

4.4.1 Additional information (If "Yes" please provide the name(s) of the IOP(s) and the type of assistance provided):

There is a good cooperation with the (Dutch branches of) IOPs; Vogelbescherming (the Dutch partner of Birdlife International), IUCN and National Committee for IUCN, WWF and with Wetlands International HQ.

4.4.2 Has your country provided assistance to one or more of the Convention's IOPs? {4.9.2} KRA 4.4.iii

A - Yes

4.4.2 Additional information (If "Yes" please provide the name(s) of the IOP(s) and the type of assistance provided):

The cooperation mentioned in the previous question is mutual.

Assistance to IOPs: The Netherlands has funded many nature conservation projects implemented by NGO's. Most wetland projects were implemented by Wetlands International but a number also by other IOPs such as Birdlife International. Wetlands International in turn has contributed to activities of the Dutch government also.

See also section 2.

Additional information on any other aspects of Strategy 4.4 implementation:

Section 4 (www.ramsar.org/doc/cop11/cop11_nrform_e_sec4.doc) is an optional Annex to the National Report Format to allow any Contracting Party that wishes to do so to provide additional information separately for any or all of its Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites).