



NATIONAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RAMSAR CONVENTION ON WETLANDS

**National Reports to be submitted to the 12th Meeting
of the Conference of the Contracting Parties,
Uruguay, 2015**

Please submit the completed National Report in Microsoft Word format (.doc, 97-2003), as an electronic file (not a printed copy) and preferably by e-mail, to Alexia Dufour, Regional Affairs Officer, Ramsar Secretariat (dufour@ramsar.org) by **1 September 2014**.

The structure of the COP12 National Report Format

The COP12 National Report Format (NRF) 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.

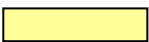
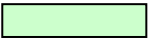
Section 2 is a 'free-text' section in which the Party is invited to provide a summary of various aspects of national implementation progress and recommendations for the future.

Section 3 provides the 66 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.

Section 4 is an optional annex to allow any Contracting Party that so wishes to provide additional information regarding any or all of its Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites).

General guidance for completing and submitting the COP12 National Report Format

IMPORTANT – PLEASE READ THIS GUIDANCE SECTION BEFORE STARTING TO COMPLETE THE NATIONAL REPORT FORMAT

1. All Sections of the COP12 NRF should be completed in one of the Convention's official languages (English, French, Spanish).
2. The deadline for submission of the completed NRF is **1 September 2014**. It will not be possible to include information from National Reports received after that date in the analysis and reporting on Convention implementation to COP12.
3. All fields with a pale yellow background  must be filled in.
4. Fields with a pale green background  are free-text fields in which to provide additional information, if the Contracting Party so wishes. Although providing information in these fields is optional, Contracting Parties are encouraged to provide such additional information wherever possible and relevant, as it helps us understand Parties' progress and activity more fully, to prepare the best possible global and regional implementation reports to COP.
5. The Format is created as a form in Microsoft Word. You are only able to submit replies and information in the yellow or green boxes, as all other parts of the form are locked to ensure that the structure and wording of indicators will remain uniform and comparable for all Parties.
6. To select a yellow or green field you wish to complete, 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.
7. To move down through the sequence of fields, you can also use the 'Tab' key on the computer keyboard.

8. For a 'free-text' field, you can type in whatever information you wish. Note that there is only limited facility within the Microsoft 'form' format to make editorial changes in the 'free-text' box once text has been entered. Therefore, if you wish to amend any of the text you have put in a green or yellow 'free-text' box, you should cut and paste the existing text into a separate document, make all the amendments, and then cut and paste the revised text back into the box.
9. Certain keyboard characters interfere with the automatic entry of data into the Secretariat's database. For that reason, please **do not use double quote marks " "** in the 'free-text' fields. Please **only use single quote marks ' '**. For the same reason, please **only use simple text in the 'free-text' fields: they cannot accept formatting, colours or objects such as tables and images.**
10. 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'. This is necessary so that statistical comparisons can be made of the replies.
11. For each indicator question you can choose only one answer. If you wish to provide further information or clarification, do so in the green additional information box below the relevant indicator question. Please be as concise as possible (**maximum of 500 words** in each free-text box).
12. 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.
13. An NRF is not usually completed by one person alone: for many indicators it is best for the principal compiler to consult with colleagues in their agency and others within the government and, as appropriate, with NGOs and other stakeholders who might have fuller knowledge of aspects of the Party's overall implementation of the Convention. The principal compiler can save the document at any point and return to it later to continue or to amend answers. Compilers should refer back to the National Report submitted for COP11 to ensure the continuity and consistency of information provided.
14. After each session, **remember to save the file** in Microsoft Word, .doc, 97-2003 format. A recommended filename structure is: COP12NRF [Country] [date], for example: COP12NRFSpain13July2014.doc
15. After the NRF has been completed, please **send it in this format to Alexia Dufour, Regional Affairs Officer, Ramsar Convention Secretariat, preferably by e-mail (dufour@ramsar.org).**
16. The completed NRF **must be accompanied by a letter or e-mail message in the name of the Head of Administrative Authority, confirming that this is the Contracting Party's official submission of its COP12 National Report.**
17. If you have any questions or problems, please contact the Ramsar Secretariat for advice (e-mail as above).

NATIONAL REPORT TO RAMSAR COP12

SECTION 1: INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION

Important note: the responses below will be considered by the Ramsar Secretariat as the definitive list of your focal points, and will be used to update the information it holds. The Secretariat's current information about your focal points is available at www.ramsar.org/contacts_en.

NAME OF CONTRACTING PARTY: BHUTAN

DESIGNATED RAMSAR ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY

Name of Administrative Authority:	Watershed Management Division, Department of Forests and Park Services, Ministry of Agriculture and Forests
Head of Administrative Authority - name and title:	Dr. Pema Wangda, Chief Forestry Officer
Mailing address:	P.O.Box 130, Kawangjangsa, Dzong Lam, 11001, Thimphu, Bhutan
Telephone/Fax:	+975-2-323568 (T) , +975-2-321462 (F)
Email:	pemaparop@gmail.com

DESIGNATED NATIONAL FOCAL POINT FOR RAMSAR CONVENTION MATTERS

Name and title:	Dr. Pema Wangda, Chief Forestry Officer
Mailing address:	P.O.Box 130, Kawangjangsa, Dzong Lam, 11001, Thimphu, Bhutan
Telephone/Fax:	+975-2-323568 (T) , +975-2-321462 (F)
Email:	pemaparop@gmail.com

DESIGNATED NATIONAL FOCAL POINT FOR MATTERS RELATING TO THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL REVIEW PANEL (STRP)

Name and title:	.....
Name of organisation:	.....
Mailing address:	.....
Telephone/Fax:	.....
Email:	.....

DESIGNATED GOVERNMENT NATIONAL FOCAL POINT FOR MATTERS RELATING TO THE PROGRAMME ON COMMUNICATION, EDUCATION, PARTICIPATION AND AWARENESS (CEPA)

Name and title:	.....
Name of organisation:	.....
Mailing address:	.....
Telephone/Fax:	.....
Email:	.....

DESIGNATED NON-GOVERNMENT NATIONAL FOCAL POINT FOR MATTERS RELATING TO THE PROGRAMME ON COMMUNICATION, EDUCATION, PARTICIPATION AND AWARENESS (CEPA)

Name and title:	.....
Name of organisation:	.....
Mailing address:	.....
Telephone/Fax:	.....
Email:	.....

SECTION 2: GENERAL SUMMARY OF NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES

REMINDER: Please do not use double quote marks “ ”: use single quotes ‘ ’ instead.

In your country, in the past triennium (i.e., since COP11 reporting):

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

1) Prior to our accession to this Convention, the lack of enabling policy and a legislative framework related to wetland conservation were the greatest challenges to promote wetland conservation. Accession to the Ramsar convention has sensitized the Government of Bhutan including politicians on the importance of wetlands, whereby now wetland conservation is given due importance similarly to other conservation efforts. A section on wetland conservation has been added to the existing Forests and Nature Conservation Act and Rules. In addition, guidelines on the wise use of wetlands have been published with financial support from Government of Japan through the Ramsar Secretariat. These guidelines have been distributed to all the stakeholders.

2) Prior to Bhutan's accession to the Convention and the commencement of wetland conservation, the concept of wetlands were barely understood and the majority of the population considered them as paddy fields. Owing to the nation-wide effort in raising awareness on wetlands and their ecological significance, people have gained better knowledge on wetlands and their conservation value. Publications such as documentaries and brochures were developed in both English and the national language to enhance the understanding of students, local people, policy makers, etc. on wetland conservation.

3) The Watershed Management Division was able to establish relationships and successfully network with various agencies, including NGO and INGOs. Wetland conservation in Bhutan started with WWF and local NGOs, such as the Royal Society for the Protection of Nature, on board, but the Division also collaborated with the Ramsar Secretariat, ICIMOD, IUCN, FAO and GEF. These collective efforts have helped us in leveraging funds and technical assistance, while working on the wetland conservation.

4) The World Wetland Day (2nd February) has become widely known in Bhutan and is celebrated throughout the country, which was not the case prior to 2012. This particular day has been marked as an important occasion in Bhutan with the involvement of Government, NGOs, INGOs, etc.

5) Some local communities are starting to emphasize more on conservation of wetlands and are also willing to declare some of their wetlands for the Convention. Through interaction with the locals, certain obligations and interventions are also raised.

B. What have been the five greatest difficulties in implementing the Convention?

1) Since the wetland conservation program has started a few years ago, there are still no enabling policies and adequate strategies in place, which provide direction on how to embark on appropriate wetland conservation programs.

2) Wetland conservation is a cross-cutting issue, involving a complex set of underlying values. There are many stakeholders with diverse interests and desires, so sometimes it is difficult to get everyone on one platform.

3) The technical capacity of the current designated wetland managers is minimal in terms of wetland management and conservation. Capacity building on how to conduct wetland surveys, assessment, monitoring and management is very crucial to progress wetland conservation in Bhutan.

4) Financial support is very minimal for wetland conservation programs in Bhutan. Although there is a roadmap being developed on how to take ahead conservation programs, given limited financial support, the implementation of these activities have to be prioritized.

5) Apart from the high altitude wetlands, Bhutan still does not have a complete wetland inventory and a comprehensive assessment of their status. The inadequate baseline data has hampered planning of conservation activities.

C. What are the five priorities for future implementation of the Convention?

1) Management plans have not yet been developed for Bhutan's two designated Ramsar sites. The Watershed Management Division (WMD) is currently in discussions with IUCN to request their assistance to formulate these management plans.

2) Technical capacity building in wetland conservation and management is crucial as indicated above. The WMD is currently organising financial assistance to undertake this capacity building program.

3) The two Ramsar sites currently being studied in Bhutan will be designated as Ramsar sites in consultation with the Ramsar Secretariat.

4) Since there is currently no complete wetland inventory for Bhutan, we will embark on compiling such an inventory to facilitate future conservation planning and fundraising activities.

5) The Department will carry out further awareness raising on wetland conservation and will lobby with responsible government agencies to incorporate wetland conservation in future policies and plans. Additionally, the World Wetland Day observation will be continued.

D. Do you (AA) have any recommendations concerning implementation assistance from the Ramsar Secretariat?

We require the following:

1. Increased technical assistance and experts on development of management plans
2. Expert assistance for the institutional adoption of the Ramsar Convention in Bhutan
3. Financial assistance to implement wetland conservation programmes
4. Influence WWF International to support emerging wetland conservation programs in Bhutan, given that WWF has been a pioneer partner from the beginning of wetland conservation in Bhutan.

E. Do you (AA) have any recommendations concerning implementation assistance from the Convention's International Organisation Partners (IOPs)? (including ongoing partnerships and partnerships to develop)

Yes, we request support and direction in terms of establishing international partnership. The wetland programme in Bhutan is quite new and low priority programme, thus there is a lack of expertise and less fund support. Therefore both financial and technical assistance is required.

- F. 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?

There should be proper linkages established to synchronise all activities related to wetland conservation with other conventions to avoid duplication of work.

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

Wetland Committees with representation from relevant agencies will be formed to deal with all aspects of wetland conservation to achieve better wetland conservation and management outcomes across Bhutan. The implementation of the Ramsar Convention could be better linked with other nationwide programs and policies by emphasising its importance for domestic water usage and energy security which are both priorities of the Bhutanese government. Domestic water usage includes cleaner and safer drinking water and water for irrigation for communities and growing townships. Furthermore, most of our wetlands (High Altitude Lakes) are source waters for Bhutan's major rivers, which in turn provide hydropower, one of the country's biggest GDP earners. Hydropower directly contributes to the sustainable development programs in the country as well as energy security through renewable alternatives. The biodiversity inventory nationwide are being carried out by various agencies, which also include wetlands biodiversity inventory. Thus, food security, poverty reduction, sanitation, biodiversity and climate change adaptation could all be directly linked to wetland conservation.

- H. Do you (AA) have any other general comments on the implementation of the Convention?

With economic development progressing quickly in Bhutan, there is an increasing pressure on wetlands and thus greater need for their conservation. There should be frequent communication between the Convention Secretariat and the respective focal person in Bhutan to ensure this issue is being suitably managed.

- I. Please list the names of the organisations which have been consulted on or have contributed to the information provided in this report:

- 1) National Bioersivity Centre under Ministry of Agriculture and Forests
- 2) WWF- Bhutan
- 3) Royal Society for Protection of Nature (NGO)

SECTION 3: INDICATOR QUESTIONS AND FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION INFORMATION

REMINDER: Guidance for completing 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, you should 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.
4. Some characters used in the free text box prevent the automatic data entry into our database National Reports. For that reason, **please do not use double quote marks “ ” in the free text boxes. Use single quotes ‘ ’. Text in the ‘free text’ boxes should be simple text only: they cannot accept formatting, colours or objects such as tables and images.**
5. To help Contracting Parties refer to relevant information they provided in their National Report to COP11, for each appropriate indicator a cross-reference is provided to the equivalent indicator(s) in the COP11 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 implementation 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 1. THE WISE USE OF WETLANDS

STRATEGY 1.1 Wetland inventory and assessment. *Describe, assess and monitor the extent and condition of all types of wetlands as defined by the Ramsar Convention and wetland resources at relevant scales, in order to inform and underpin implementation of the Convention, in particular in the application of its provisions concerning the wise use of all wetlands.*

1.1.1 Does your country have a comprehensive National Wetland Inventory? {1.1.1} KRA 1.1.i

D - Planned

1.1.1 Additional information:

The National Wetland Inventory is one of the programmes reflected in the 11th Five Year Plan for the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, from 2013 till 2018. However the actual implementation of the programme will depend on the availability of funds over this period, either from donor agencies or from the Government.

1.1.2 Is wetland inventory data and information maintained and made accessible to all stakeholders? {1.1.2} KRA 1.1.ii	C - Partly
<p>1.1.2 Additional information:</p> <p>The Inventory of high altitude wetlands in Bhutan has been conducted by Ugyen Wangchuck Institute of Conservation and Environment (UWICE) under the Department of Forests and Park Services. The inventory was conducted using Remote Sensing and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) application which has been published and distributed to all stakeholders.</p>	

<p>1.1.3 Has the condition* of wetlands in your country, overall, changed since the last triennium? {1.1.3}</p> <p>a) Ramsar Sites</p> <p>b) wetlands generally</p> <p>Please comment on the sources of the information on which your answer is based in the green free- text box below. If there is a difference between inland and coastal wetland situations, please describe. If you are able to, please describe the principal driver(s) of the change(s).</p> <p>* 'Condition' corresponds to ecological character, as defined by the Convention</p>	<p>a) <input type="radio"/> - No change</p> <p>b) <input type="radio"/> - No change</p>
<p>1.1.3 Additional information on a) and/or b):</p> <p>.....</p>	

STRATEGY 1.3 Policy, legislation and institutions. *Develop and implement policies, legislation, and practices, including growth and development of appropriate institutions, in all Contracting Parties, to ensure that the wise use provisions of the Convention are being effectively applied.*

<p>1.3.1 Is a National Wetland Policy (or equivalent instrument) in place? {1.3.1} KRA 1.3.i</p> <p>(If 'Yes', please give the title and date of the policy in the green text box)</p>	C - In preparation
<p>1.3.1 Additional information:</p> <p>The Forests and Nature Conservation Act and Rules is currently undergoing review and should be finalised in 2015. One of the components of this legislation relates to conservation of wetlands.</p>	

<p>1.3.2 Have wetland issues been incorporated into other national strategies and planning processes, including:</p> <p>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 Strategy and Action Plans drawn up under the CBD</p> <p>{1.3.3} KRA 1.3.i</p>	<p>a) A - Yes b) A - Yes c) Z - Not applicable d) A - Yes e) A - Yes f) A - Yes g) ---</p>
<p>1.3.2 Additional information: </p>	
<p>1.3.3 Are Strategic Environmental Assessment practices applied when reviewing policies, programmes and plans that may impact upon wetlands? {1.3.4} KRA 1.3.ii</p>	<p>A - Yes</p>
<p>1.3.3 Additional information: </p>	
<p>1.3.4 Are Environmental Impact Assessments made for any development projects (such as new buildings, new roads, extractive industry) that may affect wetlands,? {1.3.5} KRA 1.3.iii</p>	<p>A - Yes</p>
<p>1.3.4 Additional information:</p> <p>Yes, Environmental Impact Assessments are required for many development projects. A permit known as 'Forestry Clearance' is a mandatory requirement for any such developments. Completion of wetland assessment is a part of the Forestry Clearance process.</p>	

1.3.5 Have any amendments to existing legislation been made to reflect Ramsar commitments? {1.3.6}	C - In progress
<p>1.3.5 Additional information: No, there have not been any amendments as such.</p> <p>Although there is currently no national law in Bhutan specifically aimed at maintaining and restoring wetlands, there is other important legislation developed prior to Bhutan's accession to the Ramsar Convention that directly and indirectly supports wetland protection and management. Those acts and policies that include such provisions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The Water Act of Bhutan (2011) specifies that the responsibility for wetland protection and management rests with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests. <input type="checkbox"/> The National Forest Policy (2011) requires Bhutan's forested watersheds to be actively managed to achieve the sustainability of rural livelihoods and to ensure a reliable supply of high quality water for domestic use, irrigation and hydropower generation. The policy also identifies the indirect benefits of such management, which include not only i) a reliable supply of high quality water for domestic use, irrigation and hydropower, but also ii) increased income from ecotourism and iii) environmental services. <input type="checkbox"/> The Forest and Nature Conservation Act of Bhutan (1995) prohibits the blocking, storing or diverting of any river, stream, irrigation channel, waterfall, underground water source or any other water source or water course in the Government Reserved Forests. <input type="checkbox"/> The National Land Act of Bhutan (2007), while not explicit on the protection or management of natural wetlands in Bhutan, does provide for the protection of artificial wetlands such as paddy fields. <input type="checkbox"/> The Bhutan Water Policy (2003), which is a reflection of the Royal Government's commitment to the conservation, foresees the development and management of the country's water resources, and provides for all forms of waters, including wetlands. <p>In any case, Bhutan is currently in the process of amending its Forests and Nature Act and Rules. In it, a section on the conservation of Wetlands is included which will form the main guiding rules for wetland management in Bhutan.</p>	

STRATEGY 1.4: Cross-sectoral recognition of wetland services. *Increase recognition of and attention in decision-making to the significance of wetlands for reasons of biodiversity conservation, water supply, coastal protection, integrated coastal zone management, flood defence, climate change mitigation and/or adaptation, food security, poverty eradication, tourism, cultural heritage, and scientific research, by developing and disseminating methodologies to achieve wise use of wetlands.*

1.4.1 Has an assessment been made of the ecosystem benefits/services provided by Ramsar Sites? {1.4.1} KRA 1.4.ii	B - No
<p>1.4.1 Additional information:</p>	
1.4.2 Have wetland programmes or projects that contribute to poverty alleviation objectives or food and water security plans been implemented? {1.4.2} KRA 1.4.i	B - No

1.4.2 Additional information:

.....

1.4.3 Have socio-economic and cultural values of wetlands been included in the management planning for Ramsar Sites and other wetlands? {1.4.4} KRA 1.4.iii

1.4.3 Additional information (If 'Yes' or 'Partly', please indicate, if known, how many Ramsar Sites and their names):

.....

STRATEGY 1.5 Recognition of the role of the Convention. *Raise the profile of the Convention by highlighting its capacity as a unique mechanism for wetland ecosystem management at all levels; promote the usefulness of the Convention as a possible implementation mechanism to meet the goals and targets of other global conventions and processes.*

1.5.1 Since COP11, have you brought the 'Changwon Declaration' (Resolution X.3) to the attention of your:

- a. head of state
 - b. parliament
 - c. private sector
 - d. civil society
- {1.5.2}

a. ---

b. ---

c. ---

d. ---

1.5.1 Additional information:

.....

STRATEGY 1.6 Science-based management of wetlands. *Promote successful implementation of the wise use concept by ensuring that national policies and wetland management plans are based on the best available scientific knowledge, including technical and traditional knowledge.*

1.6.1 Has research to inform wetland policies and plans been undertaken in your country on:

- a. agriculture-wetland interactions
- b. climate change
- c. valuation of ecosystem services

{1.6.1} KRA 1.6.i

a. B - No

b. A - Yes

c. B - No

1.6.1 Additional information:

.....

1.6.2 Have all wetland management plans been based on sound scientific research, including research on potential threats to the wetlands? {1.6.2} KRA 1.6.ii

Z - Not applicable

1.6.2 Additional information:

.....

STRATEGY 1.7 Integrated Water Resources Management. *Ensure that policies and implementation of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), applying an ecosystem-based approach, are included in the planning activities in all Contracting Parties and in their decision-making processes, particularly concerning groundwater management, catchment/river basin management, coastal and nearshore marine zone planning and climate change mitigation and/or adaptation activities.*

1.7.1 Do your country's water governance and management systems treat wetlands as natural water infrastructure integral to water resource management at the scale of river basins? {1.7.2} KRA 1.7.ii

A - Yes

1.7.1 Additional information:

.....

1.7.2 Have Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness (CEPA) expertise and tools been incorporated into catchment/river basin planning and management (see [Resolution X.19](#))? {1.7.3}

A - Yes

1.7.2 Additional information:

The Watershed Management Division (within the Department of Forests and Park Services) is mandated to develop all watershed management plans. The assessment and planning are done in consultation with all the sector heads, local leaders and other relevant stakeholders of the watershed.

1.7.3 Has your country established policies or guidelines for enhancing the role of wetlands in mitigating or adapting to climate change? {1.7.5} KRA 1.7.iii

C - Partly

1.7.3 Additional information:

.....

1.7.4 Has your country formulated plans or projects to sustain and enhance the role of wetlands in supporting and maintaining viable farming systems? {1.7.6} KRA 1.7.v

B - No

1.7.4 Additional information:

.....

STRATEGY 1.8 Wetland restoration. *Identify priority wetlands and wetland systems where restoration or rehabilitation would be beneficial and yield long-term environmental, social or economic benefits, and implement the necessary measures to recover these sites and systems.*

1.8.1 Have priority sites for wetland restoration been identified? {1.8.1} KRA 1.8.i	A - Yes
<p>1.8.1 Additional information:</p> <p>Only one site 'Peling tsho' (wetland) under Pemagatshel District (South-east Bhutan) The community residing around the wetland area raised the issue that the wetland is degrading and has to be restored. The community along with the local leader and district officers proposed some activities for restoration.</p>	
1.8.2 Have wetland restoration/rehabilitation programmes or projects been implemented? {1.8.2} KRA 1.8.i	A - Yes
<p>1.8.2 Additional information:</p> <p>GEF Small Grants Programme- Community based watershed preservation and rehabilitation project for the protection of Peling tsho. Duration of the project: 3 years from January 2013 till December 2015.</p>	

STRATEGY 1.9 Invasive alien species. *Encourage Contracting Parties to develop a national inventory of invasive alien species that currently and/or potentially impact the ecological character of wetlands, especially Ramsar Sites, and ensure mutual supportiveness between the national inventory and IUCN's Global Register on Invasive Species (GRIS); develop guidance and promote procedures and actions to prevent, control or eradicate such species in wetland systems.*

1.9.1 Does your country have a comprehensive national inventory of invasive alien species that currently or potentially impact the ecological character of wetlands? {1.9.1} KRA 1.9.i	C - Partly
<p>1.9.1 Additional information:</p> <p>The Invasive Alien Plant Species inventory is currently being carried out nationwide by the National Biodiversity Centre and other research institutions but no comprehensive national inventory of invasive species that impact the ecological character of wetlands has been carried out so far.</p>	
1.9.2 Have national policies or guidelines on invasive species control and management been established for wetlands? {1.9.2} KRa 1.9.iii	D - Planned
<p>1.9.2 Additional information:</p> <p>The National Biodiversity Centre has plans to develop management guideline for prioritized invasive plant species once the inventory is completed as outlined in the 11th FYP- this could include wetlands through prioritization exercise.</p>	

STRATEGY 1.10 Private sector. *Promote the involvement of the private sector in the conservation and wise use of wetlands.*

1.10.1 Is the private sector encouraged to apply the Ramsar wise use principle and guidance (Ramsar handbooks for the wise use of wetlands) in its activities and investments concerning wetlands? {1.10.1} KRA 1.10.i

C - Partly

1.10.1 Additional information:

The private sector is mandated to comply with the relevant Forestry Clearance process, and the associated wetland impact assessment, as part of any EIA submission for new developments in and around wetlands.

In addition, local environmental NGOs like the Royal Society for Protection of Nature (RSPN) have been actively involved in the conservation and protection of wetlands in Bhutan. We collaborate with RSPN in most of our wetland activities.

1.10.2 Has the private sector undertaken activities or actions for the wise use and management of:

- a. Ramsar Sites
- b. Wetlands in general

{1.10.2} KRA 1.10.ii

- a. B - No
- b. B - No

1.10.2 Additional information:

.....

STRATEGY 1.11: Incentive measures. *Promote incentive measures that encourage the application of the wise use provisions of the Convention.*

1.11.1 Have actions been taken to implement incentive measures which encourage the conservation and wise use of wetlands? {1.11.1} KRA 1.11.i

B - No

1.11.1 Additional information:

.....

1.11.2 Have actions been taken to remove perverse incentive measures which discourage conservation and wise use of wetlands? {1.11.2} KRA 1.11.i

Z - Not applicable

1.11.2 Additional information:

.....

GOAL 2. WETLANDS OF INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE

Note: An optional Annex (Section 4) to this COP12 National Report Format is provided so that a Contracting Party, if it so wishes, can also provide additional information separately on each of its designated Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites).

REMINDER: In 'free-text' boxes please do not use double quotes “ ”; use single quotes ‘ ’ instead.

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 *Strategic Framework for the Ramsar List?* {2.1.1} KRA 2.1.i

D - Planned

2.1.1 Additional information:
.....

2.1.2 How many Ramsar Site designations are planned for the next triennium (2015-2018)? {2.1.4} KRA 2.1.iii

2 sites

2.1.2 Additional information (If possible, please indicate the name(s) of the Site(s) and anticipated year of designation):

1). Phobjikha Wetland area:

One of the largest high-altitude wetlands in Bhutan is located in Phobjikha valley in Wangdue Phodrang District in Western Bhutan. The wetland area falls under two administrative blocks i.e. Phobji and Gangtey geogs/blocks. The wetland has an area of about 1,370 Ha which falls within an area leased to the Royal Society for Protection of Nature (RSPN) by the Royal Government of Bhutan for conservation of vulnerable species (esp. Black-necked Cranes) as well as the protection of the wetland area itself.

2). Peling Tsho (lake):

This is a marshy area located in Pema Gatshel District in the South East of Bhutan and is an example of a low altitude wetland that is exposed to critical threat. The lake is the water source for a stream that flows through the heart of the main villages of Pema Gatshel District. Although water from the stream is not used for human consumption, it is used for irrigation and for livestock watering. More survey/study needs to be carried out on the fish species (both migratory and non-migratory) and any other species within the wetland, which might fulfil the Ramsar criteria.

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? {2.2.1} KRA 2.2.ii

A - Yes

2.2.1 Additional information:

.....

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? {2.3.1} KRA 2.3.i

B - No

2.3.1 Additional information:

.....

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? {2.4.1} KRA 2.4.i

0 sites

2.4.2 For how many of the Ramsar Sites with a management plan is the plan being implemented? {2.4.2} KRA 2.4.i

0 sites

2.4.3 For how many Ramsar Sites is a management plan currently being prepared? {2.4.3} KRA 2.4.i

0 sites

2.4.1 – 2.4.3 Additional information:

In collaboration with IUCN, we would be developing a proposal for the development of the management plan for the Ramsar sites.

2.4.4 How many Ramsar Sites have a cross-sectoral management committee? {2.4.6} KRA 2.4.iv

0 sites

2.4.4 Additional information (If at least 1 site, please give the name and official number of the site or sites):

.....

2.4.5 For how many Ramsar Sites has an ecological character description been prepared? {2.4.7} KRA 2.4.v

0 sites

2.4.5 Additional information (If at least 1 site, please give the name and official number of the site or sites):

.....

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 the effectiveness of Ramsar Site management been made? {2.5.1} KRA 2.5.i

B - No

2.5.1 Additional information (If 'Yes' or 'Some sites', please indicate the year of assessment and the source of the information):

.....

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 mechanisms 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? {2.6.1} KRA 2.6.i

A - Yes

2.6.1 Additional information (If 'Yes' or 'Some sites', please summarise the mechanism or mechanisms established):

The Forests and Nature Conservation Rules of Bhutan states that Forestry Clearance has to be obtained in case any adverse effect to forests may arise. The Forestry Clearance is carried out by field officers and further reported to the head office of the Department of Forest and Park Services. Therefore, the national mechanism foresees that any negative human-induced changes in the Ramsar Sites shall be reported by the responsible field officer to the Administrative Authority through the Forestry Clearance.

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? {2.6.2} KRA 2.6.i

Z - No negative change

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

.....

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? {2.6.3} KRA 2.6.ii

Z - Not applicable

2.6.3 Additional information (If 'Yes', please indicate the actions taken):

.....

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? {2.7.1} KRA 2.7.i

B - No

2.7.1 Additional information:

.....

GOAL 3. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Note: in 'free-text' boxes please do not use double quotes “ ”: use single quotes ‘ ’ instead.

STRATEGY 3.1 Synergies and partnerships with MEAs and IGOs. *Work as partners with international and regional multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and other intergovernmental agencies (IGOs).*

3.1.1 Are the national focal points of other MEAs invited to participate in the National Ramsar/Wetland Committee? {3.1.2} KRAs 3.1.i & 3.1.iv

D - Planned

3.1.1 Additional information:

.....

3.1.2 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)? {3.1.3} KRA 3.1.iv

B - No

3.1.2 Additional information:

.....

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

3.2.1 Have you (AA) been involved in the development and implementation of a Regional Initiative under the framework of the Convention? {3.2.1} 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):

.....

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

B - No

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

.....

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 a development assistance agency only ('donor countries')]: Has the agency provided funding to support wetland conservation and management in other countries? {3.3.1} KRA 3.3.i

Z - Not applicable

3.3.1 Additional information (If 'Yes', please indicate the countries supported since COP11):

.....

3.3.2 [For Contracting Parties with a development assistance agency only ('donor countries')]: Have environmental safeguards and assessments been included in development proposals proposed by the agency? {3.3.2} KRA 3.3.ii

Z - Not applicable

3.3.2 Additional information:

.....

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? {3.3.3}

A - Yes

3.3.3 Additional information (If 'Yes', please indicate from which countries/agencies since COP11):

World Wildlife Fund Bhutan has provided support in the assessment of high altitude wetlands (lakes) in one of Bhutan's major river basins, as well as for the assessment and designation of Ramsar sites and additional studies for potential future Ramsar sites.

The Government of Japan through the Ramsar Secretariat has provided funds for the implementation of a project related to wetlands. One of the major achievements of the project is the increasing awareness among communities regarding the conservation and importance of wetlands and the significance of being a member of the Ramsar Convention. The documentary title "Conservation of Wetlands in Bhutan" was published and distributed to schools and relevant agencies in Bhutan. The project also funded the development of the Guideline for the Wise Use of Wetlands in Bhutan.

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? {3.4.1}	B - No
3.4.1 Additional information (If 'Yes' or 'Partly', please indicate the networks and wetlands involved):	

3.4.2 Has information about your country's wetlands and/or Ramsar Sites and their status been made public (e.g., through publications or a website)? {3.4.2} KRA 3.4.iv	A - Yes
3.4.2 Additional information: Yes, mostly through posters, brochures, documentaries, local media and also websites (www.rspnbhutan.org, http://www.wwfbhutan.org)	

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

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 wetland systems been identified? {3.5.1} KRA 3.5.i	B - No
3.5.1 Additional information:	

3.5.2 Is effective cooperative management in place for shared wetland systems (for example, in shared river basins and coastal zones)? {3.5.2} KRA 3.5.ii	B - No
3.5.2 Additional information (If 'Yes' or 'Partly', please indicate for which wetland systems such management is in place):	

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

GOAL 4. IMPLEMENTATION CAPACITY

Note: in 'free-text' boxes please do not use double quotes “ ”: use single quotes ‘ ’ instead.

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 and awareness (CEPA) and work towards wider awareness of the Convention's goals, mechanisms, and key findings.*

4.1.1 Has an action plan (or plans) for wetland CEPA been established? {4.1.1} KRA 4.1.i

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

- a) B - No
- b) B - No
- c) B - No
- d) B - No

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

4.1.1 Additional information (If 'Yes' or 'In progress' to one or more of the four questions above, for each please describe the mechanism, who is responsible and identify if it has involved CEPA NFPs):

There is no action plan established for CEPA but we do incorporate CEPA objectives in all the assessment and will continue to incorporate CEPA in the management of wetlands

4.1.2 How many centres (visitor centres, interpretation centres, education centres) have been established? {4.1.2} KRA 4.1.ii

- a) at Ramsar Sites
- b) at other wetlands

- a) 0 centres
- b) 1 centres

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

There is a centre in the Bumdeling Ramsar site (site no. 2032) but its not functional. The centre is not equiped with instruments. However there is a centre in site which will be designated as Ramsar site in future i.e. Phobjikha wetland area in western Bhutan. It is a popular site which attracts many international tourists every year.

<p>4.1.3 Does the Contracting Party:</p> <p>a) promote stakeholder participation in decision-making on 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) D - Planned</p> <p>b) A - Yes</p>
<p>4.1.3 Additional information (If 'Yes' or 'Partly', please provide information about the ways in which stakeholders are involved):</p> <p>.....</p>	
<p>4.1.4 Has an assessment of national and local training needs for the implementation of the Convention been made?</p> <p>{4.1.4} KRAs 4.1.iv & 4.1.viii</p>	<p>B - No</p>
<p>4.1.4 Additional information:</p> <p>.....</p>	
<p>4.1.5 How many opportunities for wetland site manager training have been provided since COP11? {4.1.5} KRA 4.1.iv</p> <p>a) at Ramsar Sites</p> <p>b) at other wetlands</p>	<p>Number of opportunities:</p> <p>a) 0</p> <p>b) 0</p>
<p>4.1.5 Additional information (including whether the Ramsar Wise Use Handbooks were used in the training):</p> <p>.....</p>	
<p>4.1.6 Do you have an operational cross-sectoral National Ramsar/Wetlands Committee or equivalent body? {4.1.6} KRA 4.3.v</p>	<p>D - Planned</p>
<p>4.1.6 Additional information (If 'Yes', indicate a) its membership; b) number of meetings since COP11; and c) what responsibilities the Committee has):</p> <p>.....</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 Administrative Authority and:</p> <p>a) Ramsar Site managers</p> <p>b) other MEA national focal points</p> <p>c) other ministries, departments and agencies</p> <p>{4.1.7} KRA 4.1.vi</p>	<p>a) A - Yes</p> <p>b) C - Partly</p> <p>c) C - Partly</p>
<p>4.1.7 Additional information (If 'Yes' or 'Partly', please describe what mechanisms are in place):</p> <p>The Ramsar Administrative authority (Watershed Management Division)</p>	

communicate with the Site Manager through telephone and emails. The Site managers needs to report to the Administrative Authority regarding any ecological changes in the Ramsar sites. The site managers are invited for capacity building and meetings and participate in wetland awareness programme.

Watershed Management Division communicates with MEA national focal points through email exchanges, telephone.

Representatives from other agencies from other ministries, departments, NGOs are invited to participant in Convention implementation activities, for instance, World wetland day Awareness raising activities, wetland related workshops etc. Other means of communication are through email exchanges, telephone

4.1.8 Have Ramsar-branded World Wetlands Day activities (whether on 2 February or at another time of year), either government and NGO-led or both, been carried out in the country since COP11? {4.1.8}

A - Yes

4.1.8 Additional information:

Bhutan celebrated its first World Wetland Day on 2 February 2012 after the country became a contracting party to the Ramsar Convention. To date, the country has celebrated this event every year on 2 February in various locations to increase awareness among local communities and the nation at large. The Watershed Management Division celebrates jointly with local NGOs, government agencies and other relevant stakeholders.

4.1.9 Have campaigns, programmes, and projects (other than for World Wetlands Day-related activities) been carried out since COP11 to raise awareness of the importance of wetlands to people and wildlife and the ecosystem benefits/services provided by wetlands? {4.1.9}

A - Yes

4.1.9 Additional information (If these and other CEPA activities have been undertaken by other organizations, please indicate this):

.....

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 2012, 2013 and 2014? {4.2.1} 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? {4.2.2} KRA 4.2.i

B - No

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

.....

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 Have you (AA) used your previous Ramsar National Reports in monitoring implementation of the Convention? {4.3.1} KRA 4.3.ii

Z - Not applicable

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

.....

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? {4.4.1} KRA 4.4.iii

B - No

4.4.1 Additional information (If 'Yes' please name the IOP (or IOPs) and the type of assistance received):

.....

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

B - No

4.4.2 Additional information (If 'Yes' please name the IOP (or IOPs) and the type of assistance provided):

.....