



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.

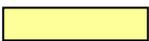
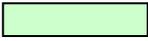
Section 2 is a 'free-text' section in which the Party is invited to provide a summary of various aspects of national implementation progress and recommendations for the future.

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: GERMANY

DESIGNATED RAMSAR ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY

Name of Administrative Authority:	Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB), Division N I 4, International Matters of Biological Diversity
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DESIGNATED NATIONAL FOCAL POINT FOR MATTERS RELATING TO THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL REVIEW PANEL (STRP)

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

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

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Name of organisation:	Dachverband Deutscher Avifaunisten e.V. (Federation of German Avifaunists, DDA)
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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) The fact that information is now available in German concerning the Ramsar Convention and Germany's Ramsar Sites. Also, basic nature conservation requirements on the protection of wading and aquatic birds have been updated and revised (publication of the 5th edition of the Waterbird Population Estimates, Wetlands International 2012). The updating of the threshold values for application of the international 1 % criterion for migratory waterbird species in Germany (WAHL & HEINICKE 2013) and the updating of the Red List for migratory bird species in Germany, 1st edition dated 31 December 2012 (HÜPPOP et al. 2013).

2) During the course of realizing the objectives of NATURA 2000, a management plan for all Ramsar sites in Saxony-Anhalt was completed on 31 December 2013, and protection and conservation targets were formulated and published in accordance with the NATURA 2000 guidelines. In Bavaria, work has begun on drafting management plans for the Ramsar Sites 'Unterer Inn' and 'Salzach' and other important waterbodies, such as the Bavarian part of Lake Constance.

3) Improved situations in various Ramsar Sites - the creation of hunt-free zones on Lake Starnberg and Lake Ammersee, the continuation of site management for Bavaria's Ramsar Sites, and the implementation of LIFE+ projects to improve the situation on the Upper Rhine with cofinancing under the EU LIFE Regulation. Continuation of the successful cooperation in the transboundary German-French Ramsar site 'Oberrhein - Rhin supérieur' with joint events and ongoing public relations work.

4) Within the framework of international reporting obligations to the EU, data on breeding and resting birds at all Ramsar Sites in Saxony-Anhalt was updated and published in a book on the European bird sanctuaries of Saxony-Anhalt, giving information about the site, its importance as a bird sanctuary, including how it meets the relevant criteria, the protection and conservation objectives, and technical information on the site's development (Mammen, K., Mammen, U., Dornbusch, G. & S. Fischer (2013): Die Europäischen Vogelschutzgebiete des Landes Sachsen-Anhalt. Berichte des Landesamtes für Umweltschutz Sachsen-Anhalt, volume 10/2013, 272 pages).

5) Publications to mark the 40th anniversary of the Ramsar Convention (such as Wahl, J., R. Dröschmeister, T. Langgemach & C. Sudfeldt (2011): Vögel in Deutschland – 2011. DDA, BfN, LAG VSW, Münster).

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

1) Within the context of national nature and environmental protection legislation, and also in compliance with EU regulations, Germany does not view implementation of the Ramsar Convention in isolation. Instead, the challenge is to combine this with implementation of the European Directives, i.e. the Natura 2000 network and the Water Framework Directive, in a gainful way. Conflicts of interest can arise with the Water Framework Directive; *inter alia*, the 'good status' aspired to by the WFD requires watercourses to be passable for migratory fish species, and proposes the removal of dam structures and avoidance of impoundment.

2) In compliance with the existing EU regulations, competing demands e.g. on the utilisation of space within and in the immediate vicinity of protected areas must be taken into account. Obtaining the necessary acceptance among stakeholders usually entails a very intensive and time-consuming public information and PR campaign as part of the management plan drafting process. Interest in this topic is often lacking among the general public.

3) The implementation of nature conservation requirements (formulated in the protection and conservation objectives of the sites and/or in the management plans) has proven extremely difficult in terms of gaining the acceptance of those directly affected (users) and the general public. The participation of NGOs in this topic is also extremely heterogeneous.

4) Nationwide measures are also time-consuming to implement, since under the federal system, each Land also has its own nature conservation legislation alongside EU and national German law. The limited availability of human resources in the face of other pressing tasks (e.g. Natura 2000) exacerbates the situation.

5) The lack of information materials in German.

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

1) To continue implementing the Natura 2000 network (by developing site-specific management plans) together with the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), alongside the national strategy on biological diversity. The requirements of the Ramsar Convention play a decisive role within the context of implementing NATURA 2000 and biodiversity strategies.

2) To formulate management plans for wetlands of international importance (WII) that do not yet have them, where applicable within the context of plans for the Natura 2000 Sites, or in the case of designated Ramsar sites with available management, maintenance and development plans and/or formulated protection and conservation objectives, to make a concerted effort to implement these requirements.

3) To use the databases available for Natura 2000 sites to gauge representativeness in terms of size and uniqueness, particularly in the case of under-represented wetland types, and select potential sites for designation as wetlands of international importance.

4) To ensure that Ramsar Sites are protected under national law within the context of the process to protect all EU Special Protection Areas (SPAs), and to maintain or establish site management at all sites.

5) To support international wetland protection by making funds available for development cooperation.

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

Overall, communication between the Ramsar Secretariat and the German federal authorities is considered good.

Apart from early availability of the national reporting format (which would make it easier to incorporate information and coordinate with the Federal Länder; this would not only produce a more in-depth report in the long term, but would also facilitate permanent cooperation and the sharing of content and links between WII and other protected area categories), Germany would also welcome simple, intelligible summaries of the principal developments between the COP and/or the outcomes of the COP.

- 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)

Germany's nature conservation organisations are integrated into the social environment in many different ways, and are active at various different levels. The three IOPs active in Germany (NABU as Birdlife Partner, IUCN, WWF) contribute significantly to implementation of the Convention through their work, but do not function as IOPs in this regard. This NGO work is supported at a national and international level; and its involvement in wetland areas and river basin-related bodies is highly valued.

- 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?

For Germany, EU environmental law represents the closest point of contact with each of these agreements. The EU, as Party to the CBD and CITES, translates these Conventions directly into valid law for all EU Member States by means of an EU Regulation. Decisions relating to national implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) likewise serve to protect wetlands and waterbodies, as well as their habitats and species. One recent example is the national strategy on biological diversity, which incorporates an extensive range of objectives and approaches relating to water protection and wetland conservation.

Furthermore, the majority of Germany's Ramsar Sites and other wetland areas have a close contextual relationship with the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA Agreement), given their importance as breeding, resting and overwintering sites for migratory birds. Other migratory species of the wetlands and waterbodies also have links with the CMS Convention. The wetlands of the coastal and marine region have close ties with work under the Helsinki Convention (Baltic Sea) and the OSPAR Convention (North Sea). In the field of wetland conservation, there are also links with the UNECE Water Convention (UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes) and the UN Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses, both of which have been ratified by Germany. Close ties with conventions such as the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the UNFCCC through the CMD mechanism of the Kyoto Protocol, with its links to the World Commission on Dams (WCD), are also ongoing.

Collaboration with the World Heritage Convention has gained in significance since the Wadden Sea was added to the list of world natural heritage sites. The Wadden Sea contains 5 German Ramsar Sites.

Overall, there is still scope for improving links between biodiversity-related conventions, particularly in the area of CEPA's 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)?

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) and Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) provide the basis for integrated water resources policy in the EU. Implementation of these Directives will lead to sustainable water use and management. River basins, i.e. all rivers with their tributaries, as well as the related coastal waters and groundwater, are viewed as complete ecosystems that transcend national boundaries. As far as possible, the conservation and use of waters should be harmonised with one another. This extends, for example, to areas such as the use of hydropower and the mining industry. The aim of these Directives is to achieve a good status in all waterbodies. In contrast to their earlier counterparts, these two Directives place a major emphasis on water ecology, and also consider other protected areas that are dependent on waterbodies. As such, implementation of these Directives also helps to conserve biodiversity. Within the framework of the joint implementation strategy of the European Commission and EU Member States, the 'Horizontal guidance on the role of wetlands in the WFD' provides practical assistance.

In the international arena, Germany's involvement in a wide range of development cooperation projects helps to establish integrative water resources management policies, which in the long term can help to conserve natural resources and eradicate poverty.

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

In Germany, implementation of the Ramsar Convention entails complex legal regulations and procedures. Corresponding mechanisms are not usually tailored specifically to wetlands but to the handling of nature and the environment and their services and values in general, for which mechanisms have been developed over the course of several decades.

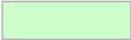
We currently wish to mention in particular the 'Flyway Vision' of the 'Vision Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative' highlighting the transboundary nature of the Wadden Sea's protected areas, which was signed within the framework of the 12th Government Conference on the Protection of the Wadden Sea in 2014. At this conference, the Ministerial Declaration of Tønder also voiced the Parties' intention to designate the Wadden Sea Ramsar Sites as a transboundary Ramsar site and thereby support the Convention's efforts to promote the transboundary aspects of wetland protection and management through improved cooperation along migratory routes.

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

Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB), Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN), Bavarian State Ministry of the Environment and Consumer Protection, Baden-Württemberg Ministry of Rural Affairs and Consumer Protection, Berlin Senate Department for Urban Development and Environment, Brandenburg Ministry of Environment, Health and Consumer Protection, Bremen Senate for the Environment, Building and Transport, Hamburg Ministry of Urban Development and Environment, Hessian Ministry for the Environment, Energy, Agriculture and Consumer Protection, Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Consumer Protection of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Lower Saxony Ministry for the Environment, Energy and Climate Protection, Ministry for Climate Protection, Environment, Agriculture, Nature Conservation and Consumer Protection of North Rhine-Westphalia, Ministry for the Environment, Agriculture, Nutrition, Viniculture and Forestry - Rhineland Palatinate, Saarland Ministry for the Environment and Consumer Protection, Saxon State Ministry of the Environment and Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture and Environment for Saxony-Anhalt, Ministry for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Areas of the Federal State of Schleswig-Holstein, Free State of Thuringia Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Nature Conservation, WWF Germany, Bund für Umwelt und Naturschutz Deutschland e.V. (Friends of the Earth Germany), Naturschutzbund Deutschland e.V. (Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union), Landesbund für Vogelschutz in Bayern (LBV) e. V., Dachverband Deutscher Avifaunisten (Federation of German Avifaunists, DDA), together with various individuals entrusted with site management.

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	A - Yes
<p>1.1.1 Additional information:</p> <p>A National Wetland Inventory exists in Germany; however, this was not developed systematically in a single process, but instead has evolved over the course of several decades. It is comprised of various sub-inventories of wetland types (e.g. peatlands, lakes, watercourses, wet meadows, coastal inlets, Wadden Sea) which are continuously extended, supplemented and updated. The precise number of inventorised wetlands is not known. The specialised authorities of the Federal Länder collate data on the various wetland types (watercourses, lakes, peatlands, wet meadows, alluvial meadows etc.) according to various criteria (biotope protection, waterbody conservation, flood protection, water supply) and methods (e.g. biotope mapping in the site, colour infrared aerial picture or satellite picture evaluation), and prepare the information with the aid of databases and GIS.</p> <p>The total number of wetlands attributable to the individual categories cannot be stated at present, since there has been no such evaluation to date.</p> <p>The wetland habitat types defined by the Habitats Directive are subject to systematic monitoring and reporting, and this is used for development purposes in areas whose territory is largely identical to the Ramsar sites.</p>	
1.1.2 Is wetland inventory data and information maintained and made accessible to all stakeholders? {1.1.2} KRA 1.1.ii	A - Yes
<p>1.1.2 Additional information:</p> <p>All data is available to the authorities and other institutions for the purposes of wetland assessment, the designation of protected areas and plans, as well as management and monitoring of the wetland areas. This information is available in the same way for all interested groups and individuals, both via the Internet websites of the environment, nature conservation, water and other specialised authorities at Länder and Federal Government level, and for viewing directly at the specialised authorities themselves.</p>	

1.1.3 Has the condition* of wetlands in your country, overall, changed since the last triennium? {1.1.3}

a) Ramsar Sites

b) wetlands generally

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).

* 'Condition' corresponds to ecological character, as defined by the Convention

a) - No change

b) - No change

1.1.3 Additional information on a) and/or b):

A - The national report pursuant to the Habitats Directive provides an important basis for monitoring and evaluation, and contains data on the conservation status of species and habitats in areas which are entirely or partially identical to the Ramsar Sites. All German Ramsar Sites overlap with the Natura-2000 network by at least 75%. A second assessment of the conservation status of habitat types and species under the Habitats Directive was undertaken in 2013. This assessment also provided a basis for the development and future adaptation of relevant management plans.

The national report under the Habitats Directive indicates that the conservation status of the inland waters of the Atlantic and Continental zone is bad to inadequate. The conservation status of the peatlands of the Atlantic and Continental zone was likewise assessed as bad to inadequate / unfavourable. In the Alpine zone, both freshwater habitats and peatlands were classed as favourable. For alluvial forest types, the conservation status in the Atlantic to Continental zone is classed as bad to inadequate, and only the Alpine zone has a favourable classification. The corresponding assessments do not refer to individual sites, but to habitat types in those biogeographical regions.

Overall, the picture is a heterogeneous one: in addition to Ramsar Sites without a clear change in status, and those which have shown a positive development, there are also some areas whose ecological status has deteriorated (reasons given: more intensive farming, lowering of the groundwater level, neophytes, more widespread water sports).

B - Information concerning changes in wetland areas is collated, supplemented, updated and administered in databases by the specialised authorities of the Federal Länder for more in-depth analyses, evaluations and reports. It is not possible to hold such information for all wetland areas in Germany; instead, data collation focuses primarily on surface waterbodies and wetlands which are protected / meriting protection.

Greater consideration is given to the ecological status of limnetic habitats as a decisive criterion when implementing the WFD. The measures following on from this generally lead to an improvement in ecological status.

The report compiled by the LfU since 2013 on 'Monitoring of resting aquatic birds' (waterfowl census) in Bavaria was prepared for the 2011/12 season, and will be evaluated after every census season in future.

Joint status descriptions and assessments ('Quality Status Reports', QSR) are prepared at regular intervals for the Wadden Sea, in collaboration with the Netherlands and Denmark, within the framework of trilateral government cooperation to protect the Wadden Sea, which covers the Ramsar Sites located there. For example, in the 2009 QSR, the joint Wadden Sea Secretariat published population trends on migratory waterbirds and breeding birds of the Wadden Sea. This found that for the period 1987/88 to 2006/07, eight species indicated a strong to moderate increase in numbers throughout the Wadden Sea, 12 species a stable population, and 14 species diminishing populations. Reliable population figures are also available for

29 species of breeding birds: between 1991 and 2006, the populations of 13 species decreased, eight species indicated rising population numbers, and seven remained stable.

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.*

1.3.1 Is a National Wetland Policy (or equivalent instrument) in place? {1.3.1} KRA 1.3.i
(If 'Yes', please give the title and date of the policy in the green text box)

A - Yes

1.3.1 Additional information:

In Germany, a national wetlands strategy is part of a comprehensive nature conservation policy at Federal and Land government level. Wetlands protection plays a central role in the nature conservation legislation, protection programmes and projects of the Federal Government, Länder and local governments. There are independent protection strategies in place for certain wetland types, e.g. for the Wadden Sea within the context of the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation and OSPAR Convention, for the Baltic Sea in collaboration with the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM), and for rivers such as the Rhine, Elbe and Danube within the framework of the International Commissions for the Protection of the Rhine (IKSR), the Elbe (IKSE) and the Danube (IKSD). The Länder have regional strategies and action programmes in place to protect watercourses, peatlands, lakes, floodplains, wet meadows and other types of wetland.

Wetlands are also a key aspect of the 2007 National Strategy on Biodiversity, outlining visions, targets and measures for the conservation and development of coastal regions and seas, lakes, rivers, flood plains and peatlands. In October 2009, the Federal Environment Ministry (BMU) and the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) published a Floodplain Status Report based on national floodplain research, providing Germany with a nationwide overview of the loss of flood plains and the status of its alluvial meadows. The Floodplain Status Report is an important database for improving floodplain and flood protection in Germany.

1.3.2 Have wetland issues been incorporated into other national strategies and planning processes, including:

- 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

{1.3.3} KRA 1.3.i

- a) A - Yes
- b) A - Yes
- c) A - Yes
- d) C - Partly
- e) A - Yes
- f) B - No
- g) A - Yes

1.3.2 Additional information:

a) Poverty eradication is a consideration of all development cooperation projects with wetland relevance.

b) Under German water legislation, all programmes and plans for water extraction are designed for the sustainable use and conservation of water resources. Due consideration is given to wetland conservation and protection aspects. Germany's federal structure means that the requirements of waterbodies and wetlands, as a subsection of waterbody and nature conservation, are taken into account at national, regional and local level, in separate sectoral planning procedures, and in plans for the region as a whole.

The integrated management plan for the Elbe estuary of Schleswig-Holstein, Hamburg and Lower Saxony also addresses the issue of conservation status and the measures required to conserve and improve the Ramsar site 'Mühlenberger Loch'.

Wetland interests are addressed in plans for implementation of the Water Framework Directive (WFD), for example since all Ramsar Sites in North Rhine-Westphalia, or at least large parts thereof, are protected areas under the WFD and part of the groundwater-dependent terrestrial ecosystems.

c) The Trilateral Wadden Sea Plan sets out a coordinated, comprehensive management plan for the Wadden Sea region at international level. Within the framework of the 12th Trilateral Government Conference on the Protection of the Wadden Sea in February 2014 in Tønder (Denmark) saw the adoption of a 'Flyway Vision' for the 'Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative' (WSFI). The Lower Saxony regional planning programme states that marine habitats meriting protection are to be preserved and developed. Coastal protection measures in Mecklenburg-West Pomerania include the restoration and improvement of wetland areas.

d) The Forest Programme of the Free State of Thuringia ascribes outstanding importance to the protected natural resource 'water' in selected forest regions.

The government programme 'Long-term ecological forest development in Lower Saxony' includes guidelines aimed, *inter alia*, at the avoidance of drainage measures, the restoration and development of wetland sites, stagnant and running surface waters, and the protection of particularly sensitive areas. The German Government's biodiversity strategy of 2007 aspires to make 5 % of its total forested area exempt from forestry use (including forested upland moors and forested fens, floodplains). Potential areas for natural forest development are currently being selected in Lower Saxony's forests.

e) The 2008 progress report on the National Sustainability Strategy highlights the protection and sustainable management of water resources, waterbodies and waterbody-dependent ecosystems, and relates this to many of the action areas and objectives cited in the strategy. Germany is also committed to implementing the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals to improve access to clean drinking water, and supports these processes in numerous countries.

Motivated by the considerations of climate protection, adapting to climate change, water resources management, and species and landscape conservation, our long-term goal is to restore our peatlands, most of which have been extensively anthropogenically modified, to a semi-natural state as far as possible.

f)

g) Extensive consideration was given to the decisive requirements of the Ramsar Wetlands Convention when formulating a biodiversity strategy, for example in Saxony-Anhalt. Protecting and developing wetland areas is a top priority in the Mecklenburg-West Pomerania 2012 biodiversity strategy.

The Thuringian strategy to conserve biodiversity also calls for significant improvements in the ecological and chemical status of waters in line with the WFD by 2020.

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

A - Yes

1.3.3 Additional information:

The competent authorities of the Federal Government, Länder and regional and local government regularly review any policies, programmes and plans that may impact upon the conservation of wetlands in accordance with the valid legal foundations, such as the regulations on nature conservation intervention, environmental impact assessments (EIA) and strategic environmental assessments (SEA). Within the context of implementing the MSFD, a strategic environmental assessment is undertaken when developing the programmes of measures pursuant to § 45 h of the Federal Water Act (WHG).

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

A - Yes

1.3.4 Additional information:

The prescribed EIA and SEA Directives under European law have been transposed into a number of national laws (Construction Code (BauGB), Environmental Impact Assessment Act (UVPG)). Wetlands covered by Natura 2000 are protected in accordance with §§ 33ff of the Federal Nature Conservation Act (BNatSchG). This states that projects with the potential, either individually or in combination with other projects and plans, to significantly impair the site must be reviewed for their compatibility with conservation objectives before they can be approved or executed.

1.3.5 Have any amendments to existing legislation been made to reflect Ramsar commitments? {1.3.6}

B - No

1.3.5 Additional information:

Current legislation adequately meets Germany's Ramsar Convention commitments.

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

C - Partly

1.4.1 Additional information:

The services provided by the wetland ecosystems have not yet been assessed in the form of a comprehensive analysis. The assessment of individual services, such as drinking and service water supply, flood protection, hydropower, shipping, fishing, bird-watching and fishing or recreational value, is included in area-specific plans, as well as in sectoral plans by the Federal Länder e.g. on the use of raw materials.

The Federal Environment Agency regularly publishes figures on water supply. Information concerning importance to tourism tends to be recorded on a regional basis. In recent years, furthermore, flood protection has become an increasingly important consideration, leading to a growing interest in the retention capacity of wetlands, river meadows and riparian forests.

Extensive socio-economic studies have been carried out in Germany's major Wadden Sea National Parks. For the Ramsar Sites 'Wattenmeer, Elbe-Weser-Dreieck', 'Wattenmeer, Jadebusen & westliche Wesermündung' and 'Wattenmeer, Ostfrisches Wattenmeer & Dollart', the most recent assessment of services was an evaluation report on the UNESCO biosphere reserve Lower Saxony Wadden Sea dated 25 February 2014 (see chapter 3.1 in this report, 'Updated information on ecosystem services and the beneficiaries of these services'). This report is currently at the coordination phase.

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

A - Yes

1.4.2 Additional information:

Developing and promoting the sustainable use of wetlands in Germany is part of a comprehensive nature conservation and environmental policy, large sections of which also serve to enforce EU legislation. Programmes to promote individual projects and utilisation forms therefore originate from various different sectors, including nature conservation (LIFE), flood protection, agriculture (e.g. cultural landscape and extensification programmes) and development of rural regions by the EU and Federal Government, and to an even greater extent by the individual Federal Länder. The Federal Länder have developed specific programmes and funding mechanisms depending on the landscape characteristics. In this context, particular attention is devoted to peatlands. In Bavaria, alongside a number of completed LIFE projects focusing on peatland protection (e.g. Rosenheimer Stammbeckenmoore and Schwäbisches Donautal (which partially overlaps with the Ramsar Site 'Donauauen & Donaumoos'), completed in 2009 and 2010 respectively, the LIFE projects 'Restoration of the Danube river banks and the alluvial floodplain' and 'Upper Main Valley' are currently ongoing. The Federal Government project 'Waldnaabaue', which has representative importance for the country as a whole, was completed in 2011. The large-scale conservation projects 'Allgäuer Moorallianz' and Swabian Danube Valley (partially overlapping with the Ramsar Site 'Donauauen & Donaumoos') and Benninger Ried are also ongoing. The nature conservation and Natura 2000 site Benninger Ried is an area of calcareous fens and calcareous peatlands in the municipality of Benningen. A project to redevelop and control groundwater reserves in Benninger Ried under the Federal Government's fiscal stimulus package II will ensure a permanent supply of groundwater in the quantities needed for long-term survival. During the course of Bavaria's climate programme 2020 (KLIP 2020), around 14 million euros has been made available since 2008 for the renaturation of peatlands as natural carbon dioxide sinks, while at the same time ensuring the species diversity of these threatened habitats. There are currently some 273 projects in Bavaria focusing on wetland protection under the auspices of BayernNetz Natur.

In Brandenburg, projects to develop waterbodies from former mines (e.g. LENAB, SUBICON) contribute to wetland development.

For the Ramsar Sites 'Unterer Niederrhein', 'Rieselfelder Münster' and 'Weserstaustufe Schlüsselburg' in North Rhine-Westphalia, the management plan for the SPA Unterer Niederrhein (LANUV 2011), which is largely overlapping with the WII Unterer Niederrhein, outlines a host of proposed measures to improve the opportunities available for experiencing nature. One key aim of this programme of measures is to harmonise use of the landscape for recreational purposes with the SPA and WII protection objectives.

Concepts for experiencing nature have also been implemented in the wetlands of international importance 'Rieselfelder Münster' and 'Weserstaustufe Schlüsselburg'.

In the new programme for Lower Saxony's peatland landscapes, unveiled to the general public in summer 2014, the state government is planning a raft of protection, development and utilisation concepts dedicated to climate protection, for implementation in the peatlands of Lower Saxony.

With regard to under-represented wetland sites on the Ramsar list, the designation of 'Bayerische Wildalm' as a new site was Germany's first karst region to be added to the Ramsar list.

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

A - Yes

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

Inland wetlands in Germany have been influenced by man for centuries, and shaped by cultural development. Cultural heritage is taken into account when formulating protection strategies and when implementing management plans. As a protected resource, it is a legal requirement to incorporate cultural assets into every environmental impact assessment, and the impacts of any planned impairments are duly taken into account in the decision-making process. By involving various interest groups and public institutions within the framework of existing nature conservation, water and planning legislation, due allowance has been made for the various aspects of cultural importance in the relevant wetland area.

Protecting long-established cultural landscapes is an essential component of the protection objectives of inland wetlands, e.g. protecting the traditional agricultural landscape, which includes elements such as the ancient practice of pollarded willows, and abandoned peat workings.

For the SPA and WII Unterer Niederrhein, the authorities were keen to promote the opportunities for experiencing nature as an important aspect of development.

In Saxony-Anhalt and Mecklenburg-West Pomerania, cultural aspects have likewise been incorporated into the management plans (National Park plans, nature park plans, Natura 2000 management plans). Socio-economic aspects were taken into account in phased specialist management plans, the implementation of which has been largely agreed with users in line with the available funding options (e.g. various funding options for local producers). These are likewise incorporated into renaturation plans within the framework of the peatland protection programme.

The Ramsar Sites 'Wattenmeer, Elbe-Weser-Dreieck', 'Wattenmeer, Jadebusen & westliche Wesermündung' and 'Wattenmeer, Ostfrisches Wattenmeer & Dollart' are located within the Lower Saxony Wadden Sea National Park. One aspect of the National Parks Act is the incorporation of regional requirements. In conjunction with developing the world natural heritage site, a trilateral tourism strategy has also been drawn up for the sustainable use of the Wadden Sea.

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. A - Yes
- b. A - Yes
- c. A - Yes
- d. A - Yes

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. A - Yes

b. A - Yes

c. A - Yes

1.6.1 Additional information:

a) Over the period 2010 to 2013, Mecklenburg-West Pomerania conducted a study of the remediation and restoration of the shallow coastal inlets (Bodden) in Darß-Zingst whilst implementing the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD). The aim of the study was to investigate various scenarios and measures for improving water quality and ecological status in the aquatic zone. Within the context of implementing the WFD, it also drafted a concept to reduce diffuse nutrient emissions from agriculture into surface waters and groundwater. Implementation of the measures and projects is scheduled to continue until 2015.

In Thuringia, there are measures to protect the common crane (*Grus grus*) in the vicinity of the Helmestausee resting place near Kelbra. *Inter alia*, the research project hopes to establish successful measures for diverting common cranes away from newly sown fields. It is hoped that the project will culminate in a crane-friendly management concept with recommended actions for farmers.

b) Regarding climate change, firstly, research is ongoing at national level, e.g. into reducing CO₂ emissions and improving local hydrological regimes through peatland renaturation, and the impacts of climate change on waterways and navigation (KLIWAS, <http://www.kliwas.de>). Secondly, a number of different regions are carrying out research projects in their respective wetlands.

The NRW State Agency for Nature, Environment and Consumer Protection (LANUV) is currently researching the impacts of climate change on sustainably managed groundwater supplies and the hydrological regime of the soil in NRW, which will be completed during 2014.

In Hesse, there is a project into the impacts of climate change on sustainable groundwater management (AnKliG) and a series of research projects by the Center for Environmental Systems Research (CESR) under the heading of 'INKLIM-A' (interdisciplinary research on climate change, impacts and adaptation in Hesse).

In Schleswig-Holstein, research is being carried out in the Wadden Sea within the framework of the task force on Coastal Protection and Sea Level Rise, plus other projects.

In Mecklenburg-West Pomerania, results are now available for the project 'Regional Adaptation Strategies for the German Baltic Sea Coast (RADOST)', completed in 2014.

In Lower Saxony, the climate impacts research alliance KLIFF was set up to create the necessary knowledge base on climate change and its impacts. Key areas of research include the differentiated spatial and temporal analysis of climate change and its effects, taking into account ecological and social references, and building on this, the development of appropriate and feasible adaptation strategies. The consequences of climate change for water resources management in Lower Saxony are currently being assessed within the context of the 'KliBiW' research project (Global Change - Impacts on Inland Water Resources Management). Additionally, Lower Saxony is involved in the cross-Länder research projects KLIMZUG - north and north-west 2050.

c) The results of eco-friendly flood protection measures on the River Elbe have been comprehensively assessed (cf. Grossmann, M., Hartje, V. and Meyerhoff, J. 2010: Ökonomische Bewertung naturverträglicher Hochwasservorsorge an der Elbe. NaBiV 89). Socio-economic monitoring takes place in the Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea (SÖM Watt).

Furthermore, there are plans to evaluate peatlands with a view to reducing CO₂ emissions and the renaturation of wetlands with a view to reducing nitrogen loads in waterbodies, together with other projects under the auspices of TEEB Deutschland. Furthermore, the peatland protection programme evaluated the current status of the peatlands with regard to their storage capacity and emission response in relation to the year 2008, as well as the reduction of emissions and increase in C storage capacity achieved through rewatering projects.

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

A - Yes

1.6.2 Additional information:

The available Natura 2000 field surveys and derived programmes of measures for many wetland protection areas reflect the best available technology. The very latest findings on sites, habitat types and species are applied throughout.

For the Wadden Sea in Schleswig-Holstein and the SPA and WII 'Unterer Niederrhein' in North Rhine-Westphalia, for example, a fundamental analysis of influencing factors (e.g. hydrological regime) was undertaken when designing the concept of measures, and existing scientific studies were also assessed. In Saxony-Anhalt, too, the management, maintenance and development plans for the Ramsar Sites were based on thorough scientific surveys (particularly surveys of species and habitat types), in some cases including hydrological appraisals and studies of watercourse morphology and retention areas.

In Bavaria, in addition to the Natura 2000 field surveys, maintenance and development plans for other projects were also prepared according to the latest findings about those sites based on the relevant nationwide standards.

Generally speaking, however, many of the population trends, for example in the Wadden Sea, cannot be adequately explained because we lack sufficient knowledge about the ecology of species, their population dynamics, and the status of habitats in the breeding, resting and overwintering sites.

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:

The law considers wetlands to be part of the water infrastructure and hence an integral part of water resources management at water catchment area level. The river basin management cycle outlined in Annex Ci to Resolution IX.1 Annex C is structured along similar lines to the basic planning law procedure applicable to land and water use, e.g. in implementing the Water Framework Directive (WFD). In particular, cooperation between regional and local authorities and river basin districts, equivalent to nature conservation and water planning authorities, has been intensified thanks to the WFD. In accordance with the WFD, groundwater-dependent terrestrial ecosystems are viewed as indicators of groundwater status. A good status can only be achieved if there is no groundwater-related significant damage to groundwater-dependent terrestrial ecosystems. Under the new water legislation procedures, groundwater-dependent terrestrial ecosystems are generally taken into account with the aim of excluding ecological damage. All affected habitats are subject to appropriate monitoring. Additionally, surface waters fall under the protection of the WFD.

Programmes of measures and management plans for the respective river basins were prepared for water catchment areas in application of the WFD's holistic approach.

<p>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}</p>	<p>A - Yes</p>
<p>1.7.2 Additional information: In implementing the European Water Framework Directive, the Federal Water Act and the water legislation of the Länder require the information and involvement of the general public in the preparation of management plans for river basins and waterbodies. Additionally, the international river basin commissions, such as the International Commissions for the Protection of the Danube, Elbe, Oder and Rhine, together with a range of environmental protection groups, make valuable contributions to the understanding of such plans through their public relations work and educational courses, as well as by making a range of information materials publicly available.</p>	
<p>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</p>	<p>A - Yes</p>
<p>1.7.3 Additional information: Germany's strategy for adapting to climate change recommends promoting synergetic measures for a variety of climate change impacts, which could include measures to improve the watercourse hydromorphology, for example. The priorities of government support include waterbody, floodplain and peatland protection.</p>	
<p>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</p>	<p>A - Yes</p>

1.7.4 Additional information:

In Hesse, for example, the 'Hessian integrated agri-environmental programme' (HIAP) is applied to wetland areas. The contract-based nature conservation approach adopted by HIAP has succeeded in significantly reducing the levels of fertiliser and pesticide pollution in stagnant waters and watercourses, as well as in groundwater. Extensive grazing projects have also been launched in a number of wet grassland protected areas in Hesse (including grazing with robust cattle breeds, water buffalo, Heck cattle, horses etc.) as part of the management approach for protected areas, aimed at combining extensive agricultural management with the creation of biodiversity.

In the new Lower Saxony peatlands programme, unveiled to the general public in summer 2014, the regional government is drafting protection, development and utilisation concepts centred around climate protection, which will then be implemented in the Lower Saxony peatlands. The inventory of 'Soils with high carbon contents' prepared by the State Authority for Mining, Energy and Geology (LBEG) serves as an important basis by providing an overview of the distribution and land use of carbon-rich soils, on whose basis regional priority areas for climate and peatland protection measures are to be delineated. Greenhouse gas emissions can be effectively reduced by raising the water levels, which inevitably significantly limits or precludes agricultural use of the affected land. This approach to climate protection can only be achieved through cooperation with local farms, since full access to the land is usually required. In the new EU funding period 2014-2020, therefore, plans and measures for the climate-friendly agricultural management of peatland soils are to be supported within the framework of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) measure 'climate protection through peatland development', and are likely to take effect from 2015. Additionally, with effect from 2016, within the context of the measure 'Farmland consolidation for the environment and climate', there are plans to purchase land within and outside of the peatland areas for appropriate reallocation with the involvement of all affected parties, using the available mechanisms. The programme operators are also hoping to use ancillary measures to develop the agricultural structure outside of those peatland areas meriting protection, and to permanently strengthen the region's economic power.

In North Rhine-Westphalia, the aforementioned LIFE projects in the WII 'Unterer Niederrhein' also include selected aspects with the same objective.

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

1.8.1 Additional information:

The programmes of measures by the Länder to implement the Water Framework Directive (WFD) include implementation measures for the respective management units (waterbodies). As a general principle, the results of the nationwide reports on floodplain status (cf. NaBiV 87) and on the system of interlinked biotopes (cf. NaBiV 96) provide overarching foundations, from which recommendations may be derived, but the Federal Government has not designated any priority areas.

Priority areas for the renaturation of wetlands have been identified, for example in the Ramsar site 'Niederung der Unteren Havel / Gülper See / Schollener See', and when extending retention areas along the River Elbe and in all Ramsar Sites in Lower Saxony. Priority areas for renaturation have also been defined within the concept for the protection and use of the peatlands of Mecklenburg-West Pomerania (peatland protection programme), which gives high priority to the coastal peatlands when implementing peatland revitalisation measures. Numerous measures are being implemented within the context of other nature conservation projects, particularly in fen regions (such as the Isar Valley), via land procurement, a contract-based nature conservation programme and the Landscape Maintenance and Nature Parks Policy (LNPR). However, the renaturation of peatlands demands an improvement in the hydrological regime, which is currently only being attempted on a small scale. For example, countless renaturation projects in peatlands are underway within the framework of the climate programme in Bavaria (cf. 1.3.2). There is also a demand for such projects outside of existing Ramsar Sites. Under the auspices of the large-scale conservation project 'Swabian Danube Valley', the maintenance and development plan (PEPL) has identified priority areas for renaturation (primarily rewatering); the relevant measures are scheduled for implementation over the next few years.

The concept of measures for the SPA 'Unterer Niederrhein' (LANUV 2011; overlaps extensively with the wetland of international importance 'Unterer Niederrhein') includes the identification of areas where measures to improve the soil humidity conditions are urgently needed.

1.8.2 Have wetland restoration/rehabilitation programmes or projects been implemented? {1.8.2} KRA 1.8.i

A - Yes

1.8.2 Additional information:

The large number of projects and programmes of the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) mentioned in Germany's previous report, aimed at the protection of nature conservation areas of national importance with a key focus on wetlands (watercourses, alluvial meadows, wetland forests, peatlands and wet meadows), are still ongoing. Large-scale projects for the conservation and renaturation of wetlands are currently ongoing in eight Federal Länder with an average funding period of 10 years, and project budgets of up to 15 million euros. Key objectives of these projects include the restoration and permanent improvement of the ecological functions of wetlands. One such large-scale conservation project supported by the BMUB is the renaturation of the River Havel in the Ramsar Site 'Niederung der Unteren Havel/Gölpersee/Schollener See' in Saxony-Anhalt and Brandenburg.

Numerous projects and funding mechanisms dedicated to the conservation and renaturation of wetlands of regional and local importance exist in the majority of Federal Länder. The following examples are representative of the level of commitment to this topic among the Länder:

In Bavaria, four LIFE projects, three Federal Government projects with representative national importance, a project to redevelop and control the groundwater balance in Benninger Ried and peatland redevelopment as part of the 2020 climate programme (KLIP 2020) are just some examples that pursue these objectives.

In North Rhine-Westphalia, the measures included in the 'Unterer Niederrhein' concept, the LIFE project 'Rieselfelder Münster' and the Schlüsselburg Weser dam are ongoing. In addition to this, various programmes (contract-based nature conservation) make an important contribution to wetland protection, such as the meadow-breeding birds and white stork protection programmes.

In Lower Saxony, nature conservation subsidy programmes make an important contribution towards wetland protection. Programmes particularly worth highlighting at present include the peatland protection programme, which is being integrated into the new programme 'Lower Saxony Peatland Landscapes', the watercourse programme, the programme to support rural regions in Lower Saxony and Bremen (2007-2013) and the LIFE+ project 'Meadow birds' (2011-2020). The latter comprises the 12 most important meadow bird protection areas in Lower Saxony, some of which are also Ramsar Sites. The Lower Saxony wet grassland protection programme cited in the 2011 report has now ended. The nature conservation investment grants provided under the EAFRD also support the objectives of the Ramsar Convention in Lower Saxony by supporting targeted projects for the conservation, development and restoration of watercourses and their floodplains, peatlands and wetland areas. EU nature conservation investment funding focuses on the European system of protected areas Natura 2000, thereby simultaneously implementing the objectives of the Ramsar Convention.

In Saxony Anhalt, within the context of a large-scale conservation project in the Middle Elbe region, the Elbe dyke is being relocated in the Steckby-Lödderitzer Forst nature conservation area. However, the affected areas are currently outside of the reported Ramsar Site but within the NATURA 2000 corridor. A LIFE project has also begun in the Middle Elbe region (duration: 2010-2018): Elbauen near Vockerode, aimed at expanding retention areas and increasing the dynamic development of an alluvial meadow.

In Mecklenburg-West Pomerania, in the period 2000 to 2008, a total of 36 projects for the revitalization of peatlands covering an area of around 6,900 ha were implemented with funds from the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund and from the budget of the state of Mecklenburg-West Pomerania.

In Thuringia, projects have included measures to upgrade the habitat for birds with a focus on wetland areas.

In Baden-Wuerttemberg, funding from EU-LIFE facilitated the optimisation of habitats in two areas. There are currently three LIFE projects ongoing.

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

1.9.1 Additional information:

In 2009 and 2010, there was a comprehensive survey of invasive aquatic species in twelve ports on the North and Baltic Sea coasts, so an assessment is now available for at least some of the potentially invasive species. Since 2012, there have been annual population censuses of grey, Egyptian and Canada geese in North Rhine-Westphalia each summer, which include the SPAs and Ramsar Sites. WFD monitoring of the Rhine and Weser also includes an assessment of macrozoobenthos, and hence of invasive species. Individual surveys of invasive species have taken place in selected areas. Random findings are also documented in the FIS information system for nature conservation.

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

A - Yes

1.9.2 Additional information:

The handling of alien species is regulated in § 40 (non-native, alien and invasive species) in chapter 5 of the Federal Nature Conservation Act on the protection of wild fauna and flora species, their monotoxes and biotopes, which entered into force on 1 March 2010. This states that it is the duty of the Federal Länder (and in the case of the EEZ, of the Federal Government) to take suitable measures to avert any threats to ecosystems, biotopes and species from non-native or invasive fauna and flora species.

The Federal Species Conservation Ordinance (BArtSchV) also prohibits the ownership and marketing of certain invasive species, while the Federal Hunting Act contains provisions on the release and colonisation of alien species.

A superordinate framework is provided by the binding provisions of EU law under Article 22 of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), which states that Member States must ensure that 'the deliberate introduction into the wild of any species which is not native to their territory is regulated so as not to prejudice natural habitats within their range or the wild native fauna and flora' and Article 11 of the Birds Directive (79/409/EEC), which states that 'Member States shall see that any introduction of species of bird which do not occur naturally in the wild state in the European territory of the Member States does not prejudice the local flora and fauna'. The EU legislative framework will be significantly enlarged by the EU Regulation on invasive species, expected to enter into force on January 1, 2015.

The strategy on invasive species drawn up within the framework of the Berne Convention (cf. <http://www.coe.int/de>) provides guidance for Germany but is not binding. The same applies to other international treaties such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (particularly the guiding principles on invasive species) and the Washington Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

Concrete data on the occurrence of invasive species and individual measures to tackle them is not available for all Ramsar Sites. Examples include hunting of the Egyptian goose in the wetland of international importance 'Unterer Niederrhein and Weserstaustufe Schlüsselburg' and predator control in the coastal bird breeding grounds and in the nature conservation area 'Krakower Obersee' (the removal of predators from the coastal bird breeding grounds also concerns the invasive species mink, raccoon dog and raccoon). Several regions have local initiatives, primarily NGOs, which carry out small-scale measures to inhibit neophytes, such as measures to control the giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) in the biosphere reserve 'Thüringische Rhön' on the Ulster south of Pferdsdorf.

In line with the CBD's three-phase approach to handling invasive species, however, the main emphasis is on prevention rather than management. With this in mind, various players (botanical gardens, landscape gardeners) have developed voluntary codes of conduct for dealing with invasive non-native species.

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

A - Yes

1.10.1 Additional information:

As a general principle, activities only refer to those wetlands which do not enjoy absolute protection under the Federal Nature Conservation Act (BNatSchG) and which therefore permit ecosystem-compatible usage.

Individual projects by the private sector in wetland areas – such as industrial plant construction, commercial development or excavations – are subject to the statutory provisions under the Environmental Impact Assessment Act, Construction Code, Excavations Act, mining legislation and Nature Conservation Act. These are designed to prevent or compensate for any adverse ecological impacts that may emanate from such measures.

Application of the wise use principle by agriculture is important for many wetlands; management contracts within the context of EU agricultural funding programmes and the EU structural fund for rural development for extensification, together with special utilisation agreements between nature conservation authorities and farmers, can help to achieve sustainable management practices in wetland areas which are more in tune with nature conservation targets, e.g. salt meadows in the Wadden Sea and on the Baltic Sea coast, extensive use of grassland, and organic farming in alluvial meadows. The Federal Länder have devised specific programmes and mechanisms depending on the landscape characteristics. For example, Bavaria operates a contract-based nature conservation programme, whereby owners and authorised users receive financial compensation for loss of earnings and additional costs associated with voluntary services in the management of valuable wetlands. The North Rhine-Westphalian cultivated landscape programme is organised along similar lines, and provides financial support for the management of agricultural land in accordance with nature conservation principles.

Most of these financial incentives and compensation payments for wise use provide the basis for successful, sustainable wetland management.

Recreational and tourism use impairs the ecological functions and the wild fauna and flora of many wetlands. With the aid of geographical and temporal access restrictions, uninterrupted signposting and other visitor guidance measures designed to provide information and support, Germany is endeavouring to implement the wise use principle in cooperation with tourism organisations and tourism providers.

There are no sustainable approaches as such for the shipping and raw materials mining industries. Uses in this respect are decided by the assessment procedure under the Habitats Directive and/or environmental impact assessments.

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. A - Yes

b. A - Yes

1.10.2 Additional information:

The following projects are provided as examples for Schleswig-Holstein: Brent Geese Days are organised with the involvement of: Halligen biosphere, NABU Schleswig-Holstein e. V., National Parks Administration in the State-Owned Authority for Coastal Protection, National Parks and Marine Conservation, Schutzstation Wattenmeer & WWF Wadden Sea Office. At various locations along the west coast, the Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union (NABU), Jordsand Association, Schutzstation Wattenmeer, WWF, National Parks Service, Katinger-Watt Nature Centre, Wiedingharde Information Center Elpersbüttel conference centre and Multimar Wadden Forum organise a range of excursions, Wadden walks and boat trips for nature lovers and amateur ornithologists under the motto "Westküsten-Vogelkiek" (West Coast Birdwatching).

In Mecklenburg-West Pomerania, the private sector is heavily involved in site management. For example, management of the SPA 'Wismar Bight' has been taken over by 'Regionalvereinigung Segeln Wismar Bucht e.V.', and that of the SPA 'Greifswalder Bodden' by the WWF. The Jordsand Association manages Galenbecker See (Lake Galenbeck). Its management tasks include controlling utilisation, particularly tourism and leisure-related uses. In the Müritz National Park area, visitors can take advantage of a 'crane ticket', based on a collaboration between the National Parks association, a tourism company and a public local transport company.

In the WII 'Unterer Niederrhein', projects are undertaken by the gravel industry, e.g. in Orsoyer Rheinbogen and Diersfordter Waldsee. However, excavations on the Lower Rhine tend to be extremely problematic for the Ramsar Site. In Weseraue (with the wetland of international importance 'Westerstaustufe Schlüsselburg'), excavations play a particular role for selected target species, and are modelled with a view to nature and species conservation after industrial use has been discontinued.

The Kyffhäuser nature park administration regularly holds 'crane days' on the Helmestausee Berga-Kelbra reservoir. NAJU is planning to hold a crane camp there in 2014.

North Rhine-Westphalia has a network of biological stations which manage protected areas, many of which are wetlands, at administrative district level. In many places, contract-based nature conservation is operated by these stations at administrative level on behalf of the lower landscape authorities.

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	A - Yes
<p>1.11.1 Additional information:</p> <p>The existing financing measures for the protection and sustainable management of wetland areas in need of conservation-friendly agricultural use – such as management contracts for water meadows, or hardship compensation – are continuously being adapted in line with recent ecological findings and ecological framework conditions. The EU funding programmes for extensification of agricultural use and the structural fund for rural development have particular significance for wetlands used for agricultural purposes. Fundamental mechanisms are based on economic support (including secondary acquisition uses), tax concessions in certain agricultural operating structures, the realignment of the EU's agricultural premium system at national and Länder level, and the development of biotope type-specific compensation models for viable agricultural land. The MEKA agro-environmental programmes and landscape management policy in Baden-Wuerttemberg include incentives for the protection and balanced used of wetland areas.</p> <p>Occasionally, the benefit from these mechanisms is supplemented by local initiatives dedicated to the conservation or renaturation of certain areas, such as the redevelopment programme for Upper Swabian lakes by the Ravensburg district administrator's office (Baden-Wuerttemberg), the Hallig Programme in the Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea, and the diversion feeding programme for resting cranes in the Ramsar Site 'Helmestausee Berga-Kelbra', which aims to minimise conflict with agricultural cultures.</p>	
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	A - Yes

1.11.2 Additional information:

German nature conservation legislation provides the basis for preventing and eliminating mechanisms with an adverse affect; this also applies to implementation of the relevant EU Directives. In this way, positive developments can be achieved via the designation of nature conservation areas, by prohibiting access and providing visitor and user guidance, as well as through resting zone concepts and other voluntary support mechanisms. This also includes broader-based educational and public relations work, including a focus on user groups. In Germany's Wadden Sea, its status as a National Park, and more recently as a World Cultural Heritage Site, provides additional protection for the region from possible adverse factors.

Based on this legislation, furthermore, the mechanisms of landscape, regional and town planning provide a range of options for defining specific usage restrictions and exclusion areas on the one hand, and priority areas on the other, and for achieving binding commitments throughout every phase of the political agreement process.

In the case of particularly critical utilisation claims or projects in particularly valuable or sensitive nature regions, assessments must be conducted under the intervention provisions prescribed by German law, or in the case of larger projects, an environmental impact assessment or impact assessment under the Habitats Directive.

In the past, particularly problematic uses of wetlands included peat harvesting and the use of river sediment. The requirements and demands of shipping are assessed in environmental impact studies and decided on this basis.

Certain agricultural subsidies continue to adversely affect wetland areas. In particular, promoting the cultivation of bioenergy crops has created new, additional perverse incentives. For example, maize cultivation on the fens is still supported by agricultural acreage premiums for the purpose of biogas extraction (e.g. Friedländer Große Wiese, Mecklenburg-West Pomerania). Agricultural use of the steep slopes on the west bank of Krakower Obersee has recently been intensified for the purpose of maize cultivation, which inevitably leads to increased nutrient emissions into this wetland of international importance. The buffer zones at river banks have been reduced from 7 metres to 3 metres as a result.

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:

Following completion of the nomination process for Natura 2000 sites, we can conclude that 3,077 of the 4,617 Natura Sites of Community Importance (SCI) in Germany contain wetland habitat types. Of these, 125 sites have an area in excess of 5,000 ha. (see Petersen & Ssymank 2007: Die Feuchtgebiete internationaler Bedeutung und das Schutzgebietsnetz Natura-2000 in Deutschland, Natur und Landschaft 11/2007, p. 494 ff).

Based on the site data available, an assessment of potential Ramsar sites is conceivable: As well as overall representativeness and uniqueness, the criteria for such a review would primarily include those wetland types on the Ramsar list, such as peatlands, alluvial waterbodies, alluvial forests and mountain waterbodies, together with a consideration of key fish populations. Some Federal Länder are planning to forge ahead with this type of development within the framework of a strategy for wetland conservation which is consistent with the objectives of the Ramsar Convention's strategic framework plan. For Saxony-Anhalt, for example, in addition to the three existing Ramsar sites, at least nine additional sites have been identified that satisfy the Ramsar Convention criteria (Sudfeldt, C., D. Doer & J. Wahl (2002): Important Bird Areas und potenzielle Ramsar-Gebiete in Deutschland. Berichte zum Vogelschutz 39, 119-132.). These are largely subject to the protective regime set up under NATURA 2000 for such areas, and for this reason, have not yet been explicitly reported as Ramsar Sites. For Bavaria, in 2011 the LfU formulated a proposal for three further sites of international importance to mark the 40th anniversary of the Ramsar Convention and submitted it to the Bavarian State Ministry of the

Environment and Consumer Protection (StMUV):

Mittlere Isarstauseen (Echinger & Moosburger Isarstausee), SPA 7537-401 (nature reserve Vogelfreistätte Mittlere Isarstauseen) with an area of 5.9 km², Donau zwischen Straubing und Vilshofen mit Isarmündung, SPA 7142-471 (Donau zwischen Straubing und Vilshofen) and SPA 7243-402 (Isarmündung) with a total area of 90.5 km²,

Altmühlsee mit Altmühltal und Brombach- /Rothsee, SPA 6728-471 (Altmühltal mit Brunst-Schwaigau und Altmühlsee) with an area of 57.5 km².

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

0 sites

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

There are no plans for specific designations at present. New designations are certainly considered desirable as a way of lending fresh impetus to implementation of the Ramsar Convention in Germany. Deficits do still exist, particularly in areas with criteria other than waterfowl (cf. Wildalm).

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

B - No

2.2.1 Additional information:
Not at present.

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:
During the course of drawing up management plans for the protection of the NATURA 2000 sites under national law, in Saxony-Anhalt, for example, management plans were also drawn up for the sites which meet the criteria of the Ramsar Convention.

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

27 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

sites

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

6 sites

2.4.1 – 2.4.3 Additional information:

Almost all German Ramsar Sites have management and/or maintenance and development plans in accordance with valid nature conservation standards. Other site management plans are currently being drawn up in this way.

An overview of Ramsar sites in seven Federal Länder shows the following picture: Schleswig-Holstein: Trilateral management plan for the Wadden Sea as a whole, management plans for parts of the Ramsar site S-H Wattenmeer within the framework of Natura 2000.

Bavaria: All eight Ramsar sites in Bavaria are simultaneously SPA sites, and some of them are also Sites of Community Importance (SCI) in which the new management plans for these Natura 2000 sites (and in some cases other plans such as waterbody development concepts) will fulfil the required function.

Management plans are currently being drawn up for parts of Ammersee, Lech-Donau-Winkel, Donauauen, Bayerische Wildalm and Unterer Inn. Management plans are currently under preparation for Donaumoos in Swabia. A waterbody development concept was recently completed for the Ramsar Site Ammersee. A special management concept is available for 'Ismaninger Speichersee mit Fischteichen' covering the waterfowl populations.

North Rhine-Westphalia: For the SPA Unterer Niederrhein, which overlaps to a large extent with the WII 'Unterer Niederrhein', a management plan is in place (LANUV 2011), and its implementation is underway. In numerous sub-areas which are simultaneously Sites of Community Importance, the concept of measures for the SPA is fleshed out by more detailed measures. A management plan is currently under preparation for the wetland of international importance (WII) 'Weserstaustufe Schlüsselburg'. The biological station in the WII 'Rieselfelder Münster' operates an intensive site management system.

Hamburg: The Trilateral Wadden Sea Plan forms the basis for management in the 'Hamburgisches Wattenmeer' National Park site. There are currently no specific management plans for Mühlenberger Loch. However, the integrated management plan of Schleswig-Holstein, Hamburg and Lower Saxony for the Elbe estuary also covers Mühlenberger Loch.

Lower Saxony: For the Ramsar Sites 'Wattenmeer, Elbe-Weser-Dreieck', 'Wattenmeer, Jadebusen & westliche Wesermündung' and 'Wattenmeer, Ostfrisches Wattenmeer & Dollart', the Wadden Sea Plan agreed between the Netherlands, Denmark and Germany comprehensively describes the trilateral objectives for the entire Wadden Sea. Plans and management measures also exist for sub-areas or individual components of the Wadden Sea. The Ramsar Site 'Niederelbe Barnkrug - Otterndorf' is covered by the integrated management plan for the Elbe, and included in its implementation. The Ramsar Site 'Elbauen Schnackenburg - Lauenburg' is located in the Niedersächsische Elbtalaue biosphere reserve; the Ramsar Site is included in the biosphere reserve plan.

Mecklenburg-West Pomerania: For the wetlands of international importance 'Ostseeboddengewässer Westrügen-Hiddensee-Zingst' and 'Ostufer der Müritz', the respective National Park plans serve as management plans. Krakower Obersee is part of the Site of Community Importance 'Nebeltal mit Zuflüssen, verbundenen Seen und angrenzenden Wäldern'; a confirmed management plan has existed for this site since 2014. For the WII 'Galenbecker See', a plan of measures has been drawn up within the context of the Life project.

Saxony-Anhalt: In Saxony-Anhalt, management plans are available for all Ramsar Sites. A maintenance and development plan is available for the Ramsar Site 'Niederung der Unteren Havel / Gülper See / Schollener See'. An updated Ordinance on Protected Areas and a revised management plan have existed for the Ramsar Site 'Aland-Elbe-Niederung & Elbaue Jerichow' since 2009. The management plan for the Ramsar Site 'Helmestausee Berga-Kelbra' was completed in 2013.

Ramsar Sites that are part of the NATURA 2000 network will receive new management plans over the next few years in accordance with the relevant guidelines.

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):

In the process of drafting and implementing management plans in Ramsar Sites, in accordance with German law, all departments, land users, interested and affected parties are usually involved in the discussions. In addition to the nature conservation and environmental protection departments, representatives from the water industry, agriculture and tourism sectors are also included in the majority of cases.

Site Management Committees are used by some Ramsar Sites to inform and involve the various interest groups and affected parties in site cultivation and development measures.

Also worth mentioning are the interdisciplinary task forces responsible for drawing up the waterbody development plans (e.g. in the Ramsar sites Chiemsee, Ammersee and Starnberger See).

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

xxx sites

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

Virtually all completed and outstanding management plans incorporate an ecological characterisation. For example, a field survey has been carried out for the bird sanctuaries and Sites of Community Importance (SCI) within the context of Natura 2000 management. The field survey is linked to a comprehensive inventurisation of Natura 2000 habitat types and species, and an assessment of the respective conservation level.

The ecological conditions in selected sites are also described in reports under the Water Framework Directive, site descriptions for nomination as a World Cultural Heritage Site, and in publications (e.g. Mammen et al. (2013) on the European bird sanctuaries of Saxony-Anhalt).

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

C - Some sites

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

To date, there has been no analysis of effective management practices in Ramsar Sites. The monitoring envisaged for Natura 2000 sites identical to or

overlapping with Ramsar Sites allows conclusions to be drawn regarding the success of management, and any corrections that may be needed based on the observed conservation status. Furthermore, in the Wadden Sea National Parks, for example, conclusions regarding management effectiveness may be drawn from the Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Programme (TMAP).

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 specialist authorities of the Federal Länder are tasked with monitoring any ecological changes in the Ramsar sites, and where necessary, reporting them to the Federal Ministry, which then decides whether the impairments merit notification to the Ramsar Secretariat pursuant to Article 3.2. Generally speaking, there are mechanisms at all administrative levels for pursuing any reports of threats or impairments to the site and, where necessary, forwarding them to a higher authority.

In future, compulsory monitoring of and reporting on protected Natura 2000 sites, as well as within the context of the Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Programme (TMAP), Natura 2000, the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and - coming soon - the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), will constitute an important basis for identifying changes in the ecological character of wetlands. Structures such as the Central Command for Maritime Emergencies CCME allow a rapid response in case of unforeseen incidents (such as shipping accidents).

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

B - No

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):

The specialist authorities of the Federal Länder are tasked with monitoring any ecological changes in the Ramsar Sites. Only changes in the ecological character of Ramsar Sites which are classified as being particularly significant at national level are reported to the Federal Government and Ramsar Secretariat by the Federal Länder. In accordance with this procedure, not all impairments have been reported to the Secretariat, because - as described in 2.6.1 - there are other national mechanisms for investigating and assessing such effects and deciding on how to tackle them.

No German Ramsar site has been added to the Montreux Record (MR) recently.

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

A - Yes

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

The damming of part of the Ramsar Site 'Ostfriesisches Wattenmeer mit Dollart' (WII 82), which was approved by a planning decision of 1985 to protect a storm flood-proof dyke, prompted Germany to add the 121,620 ha site to the Montreux Record on 4 July 1990.

A 1991 ruling by the European Court of Justice declared the plans and procedures lawful, because adequate compensation measures had been specified with legally binding effect. In particular, the ECJ asserted that the ecological character of the region would not be degraded as a result of the planned measures, and that rather, the ecological quality of the site would be improved in conjunction with the defined compensation measures.

All measures for the coastal protection project Leybucht and all compensatory and substitute measures were completed by 2005. The dyked site is protected as the nature conservation area 'Leyhorn' and as the EU bird sanctuary DE2508-401 'Krummhörn'. The areas of land outside of the dyke are part of the 'Niedersächsisches Wattenmeer' National Park and simultaneously the EU bird sanctuary DE2210-401 'Niedersächsisches Wattenmeer & angrenzendes Küstenmeer'.

Long-term monitoring of visiting bird populations indicates that Leybucht, as part of the wetland of international importance 'Wattenmeer: Ostfriesisches Wattenmeer mit Dollart', has retained its outstanding function as a resting, migration and overwintering site. Even when considered in isolation, a number of species in Leybucht continuously meet criteria 5 and 6. Species that inhabit the unused salt meadows (such as the redshank) have seen a sharp rise in population numbers, while those species which previously benefited from more intensive use or intermediately from construction work (such as the avocet) indicate declining numbers.

The current assessment of parts of Leybucht from an avifaunist perspective make it clear that Leybucht, as part of the Ramsar Site 'Niedersächsisches Wattenmeer und angrenzendes Küstenmeer', has retained its outstanding importance as a resting, migration and overwintering site for waterfowl.

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

A - Yes

2.7.1 Additional information:

During the course of realizing the objectives of NATURA 2000, the ecological character of internationally important wetlands not yet designated as Ramsar Sites will be maintained. In Hesse, for example, 21% of the territory is covered by the Natura 2000 protective regime.

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:

Coordination between the various different players at national level is performed by the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB).

Until now, the national focal points of other MEAs have not been invited to participate in the National Ramsar Committee. It is conceivable that the focal points of other regional or international MEAs will be invited to participate in future work on thematically relevant issues.

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:

There are no specified mechanisms, but collaboration takes place as and when necessary.

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):

Germany is intensively involved in regional initiatives, which include both wetlands in general and Ramsar Sites, but which are not explicitly under the umbrella of the Ramsar Convention.

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}

A - Yes

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

Various universities and research institutions in Germany are involved in relevant projects.

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.*

<p>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</p>	<p>A - Yes</p>
<p>3.3.1 Additional information (If 'Yes', please indicate the countries supported since COP11):</p> <p>The Federal Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development has its own water division, whose mandate includes the achievement of Millennium Development Goals. Germany is the world's second-largest bilateral donor in the water sector, with an annual funding volume of around 350 million euros for bilateral measures in a total of 28 priority countries. Of these funds, 2% is allocated to water resource conservation, 9% to water resources policy and administration, 0.3% to river development and regulation, 26.7% to the basic supply of drinking water and wastewater disposal, particularly in rural regions, and 1% to education and training on water supply and disposal. Just under half of the funds benefit rural systems, while 56% are awarded to large water and wastewater systems, generally in urban areas (www.bmz.de).</p> <p>Development cooperation is divided into two areas: financial cooperation provided by Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (Reconstruction Loan Corporation, KfW, www.kfw-entwicklungsbank.de) and technical cooperation provided predominantly by Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ, www.giz.de/en/). GIZ supports numerous projects worldwide relating to the protection and sustainable management of wetlands, such as Ramsar Sites, water catchment areas, drinking water supply and management, and integrated water management and wastewater disposal. These projects are based on the principles of sustainable development and give particular consideration to the ecological functions of wetlands (www.giz.de/en).</p> <p>Projects such as TRANSWATER are acquiring particular significance as a way of averting conflict over water resources. TRANSWATER is an example of integrated water resource management in the African river basins of the Nile, Limpopo and Orange Senqu; since 2001, the project has been executed by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and GIZ (see www.giz/transwater).</p> <p>In total, around one-third of the BMZ budget is allocated to multilateral development cooperation, whose objectives include the achievement of MDGs and the eradication of poverty. Within this framework, the BMZ and Germany collaborate closely with international organizations, including the 'Water and Sanitation Program' (WSP) and the Global Environmental Facility (GEF).</p> <p>As well as development work under the direct control of the Federal government, BMZ, KfW and GIZ also allocate project funds to promote the protection of wetlands and develop integrated water resource management mechanisms.</p> <p>Participation is one of the basic principles of Germany's development cooperation. For this reason, all projects supported by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) aimed at the protection of wetland areas attach great importance to the concept of co-management. Alongside the financial aspects of sustainable funding, this is by far the most important aspect for boosting the acceptance of these areas and developing ownership.</p>	

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

A - Yes

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}

Z - Not applicable

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

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}

A - Yes

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

In recent years, Germany has made a particular effort to step up its cooperation with eastern and south-eastern European countries. To this end, the Internationale Naturschutzakademie Insel Vilm of the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) organises seminars, workshops and expert meetings aimed at the exchange of information and experience on mechanisms to protect the Baltic Sea. The nature conservation academies of the Federal Länder are likewise involved in the training of specialist nature conservation personnel in Germany and in eastern Europe, such as the nature conservation academies in Bavaria (ANL), North Rhine-Westphalia (NUA) and Lower Saxony (NNA). The implementation of LIFE nature projects can also contribute to expert exchanges at a regional/local level within the context of conferences and excursions. Cooperation arrangements and multilateral agreements exist in the transboundary Ramsar Sites ('Wattenmeer', 'Oberrhein', 'Unterer Niederrhein', 'Unteres Odertal', 'Unterer Inn', 'Bayerische Wildalm') and other wetland areas (such as Saar-Moselle, Danube, Oder-Neiße, Elbe) and provide a framework for the intensive exchange of information. Examples of transboundary cooperation include Germany's cooperation with Austria in the EuRegio Salzburg/Berchtesgadener Land /Traunstein: 'Moor & Torf' and within the context of the INTERREG project 'Moor & More am Wilden Kaiser'. There are also networks with other wetlands in Europe and other parts of the world which are organised autonomously by individuals, nature conservation

groups and scientific institutions. The existing twinning agreements have been continued:

- Common Waddensea Secretariat (CWSS - www.waddensea-secretariat.org) with The Wash-northern Norfolk and with Guinea Bissau
- Vorpommersche Boddenlandschaft National Park with the Lahemaa National Park in Estonia
- Unteres Odertal National Park with the Biebrza National Park in Poland
- Ramsar Site Rieselfelder Münster with the Donaudelta National Park in Rumania, Kamanos reserve in Lithuania and Djoudj National Park in Senegal (www.rieselfelder-muenster.de).

In 2012, the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative (WSFI) launched two projects focusing on monitoring and capacity building in close collaboration with the 'Conservation of Migratory Birds (CMB)' project. Various seminars on capacity building and monitoring have been held in West Africa (Ghana, Angola, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau, Mauritania & Senegal). In the Netherlands, the 'Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative' is supported by the 'Programma naar en rijke Waddenzee' and in Germany by the BMUB, and coordinated by the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat (CWSS).

German nature conservation groups also support wetlands in Europe and other continents through project work, e.g.:

- EURONATUR (www.euronatur.de) is committed to the protection of wetlands for migratory birds and coastal regions, particularly with projects in the catchment area of the Rivers Save, Drau and Mur, the Narew region (Poland) and Lake Skadar in Montenegro.
- Global Nature Fund carries out projects for the protection and management of wetland areas and lakes in Europe with the support of EU funding. In the past, the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation has supported the annual Living Lakes Conference with BMU funds. (www.livingwetlands.org and www.livinglakes.org).
- At national level, WWF Germany operates primarily in the Elbe river basin, particularly with the large-scale conservation project on the Middle Elbe. At European level, the WWF also plays a supporting role in the development of integrated river basin management and renaturation work. WWF Germany's international priorities are nature conservation and natural resources work, including technical training in various river basin districts (www.wwf.de).

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:

The status of any designated wetland area that is placed under protection in accordance with the protection categories of the Federal Nature Conservation Act is published in the official journal of the Länder / Gesetz- und Verordnungsblatt (Länder Gazette) / Ministerialblatt (Ministerial Gazette) or in the Bundesgesetzblatt (Federal Law Gazette) (in the form of the National Parks Act, the Act on Biosphere Reserves, and Ordinances on the Nature Conservation Act).

For the majority of protected wetlands, including less-protected sites, public relations work entails the publication and circulation of information materials concerning the conservation status, objectives and measures in that area, which are drawn up by the competent institutions or NGOs that manage the sites, either as printed publications

or websites.

Many of Germany's 34 Ramsar sites have their own website, which is maintained either by the site administration or a nature protection group (e.g. www.ramsar-bw.de, www.wattenmeer-nationalpark.de, www.naturschutzring-duemmer.de, www.bskw.de, www.ramsar-ammersee.de, www.nationalpark-mueritz.de, www.unteres-odertal.de, www.nabu-rheinauen.de, www.nabu-wollmatingerried.de, www.lbv-starnberg.de, www.weseraue.de). All Ramsar Sites are presented under various categories, but not always with an explicit reference to their status as wetlands of international importance. There is currently no joint Internet presentation of all Ramsar Sites in Germany. WWF Germany gives an overview of the Convention and Germany's Wetlands of International Importance on its website.

Most of the Federal Länder, who are responsible for implementing nature conservation in Germany, have their own websites on the Natura-2000 Sites, whose territory includes the relevant Ramsar Sites. (e.g. www.ramsar-bw.de, www.natura2000-bw.de, www.umwelt.nrw.de, <http://www.naturschutz-fachinformationssysteme-nrw.de/natura2000-meldedok/de/start> <http://www.mu.sachsen-anhalt.de/start/fachbereich04/schutzgebiete/main.htm>, http://www.nlwkn.niedersachsen.de/naturschutz/natura_2000/downloads_zu_natura_2000/downlo_ads-zu-natura-2000-46104.html). Some Federal Länder provide information on all protected areas and are planning a website presentation of their Ramsar Sites or offer more in-depth information on wetlands, such as the Gutachtliches Landschaftsprogramm Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (<http://ikzm-oder.de/download.php?fileid=456>).

Various publications on protected areas also cover Ramsar sites (e.g. Mammen et al. (2013) on the European bird sanctuaries of Saxony-Anhalt).

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	B - No
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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	A - Yes
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3.5.1 Additional information:

The existing transboundary river basins and water catchment areas in Germany have previously been identified within the context of implementing the WFD. There are ten relevant river basins in Germany, some of which have only a very limited international character. International agreements exist for most of these river basins, within whose framework management is coordinated. Apart from implementing the Water Framework Directive, the fundamental objectives of the International Commissions set up for most of these river basins are general protection from pollution, improving water quality, coordinating flood protection, and making all aquatic and interlinked terrestrial ecosystems as natural as possible, as well as reinforcing the

mutual exchange of information.

As such, transboundary cooperation in waterbody management is one of the most important foundations of an integrative protection strategy and cooperative management mechanism for transboundary river basins.

In the transboundary Ramsar Sites – 'Wattenmeer', 'Unterer Niederrhein', 'Unterer Inn', 'Unteres Odertal' and 'Oberrhein' – intensive relationships have existed for many years to coordinate protective measures and for management of the areas. The Wadden Sea alone has intensive multilateral mechanisms and management plans in place with the trilateral government cooperation, the Joint Declaration on the Protection of the Wadden Sea, a joint Wadden Sea Secretariat, the trilateral Wadden Sea Plan (WSP) and the Trilateral Monitoring & Assessment Programme (TMAP).

Additionally, the maintenance and development requirements of all transboundary protected areas, including those which incorporate inland wetlands or coastal sections, are covered by a BfN project.

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

A - Yes

3.5.2 Additional information (If 'Yes' or 'Partly', please indicate for which wetland systems such management is in place):

For the Wadden Sea and the North and Baltic Seas, together with all major river basins which Germany shares with neighbouring countries, multilateral agreements and river basin district commissions have been signed and set up for protection, management, monitoring and sustainable management. Until now, their effectiveness has been derived primarily from transboundary cooperation, and in some cases also trans-sectoral cooperation.

The German-French Ramsar site 'Oberrhein' is subject to coordinated management.

In the area of international waterfowl counts, there are various efforts aimed at transboundary cooperation in both the north and south of the country.

With the development of management plans for Natura-2000 sites, joint development and conservation concepts will also be devised for the other wetlands of international close to national borders: 'Unterer Niederrhein', 'Unterer Inn zwischen Haiming und Neuhaus', 'Unteres Odertal bei Schwedt' (German-Polish Commission for the River Oder) and 'Bayerische Wildalm'.

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

A - Yes

3.5.3 Additional information:

Wetland-dependent migratory species are taken into account when coordinating regular nationwide (regional) surveys (waterfowl counts) and targeted surveys of specific species (e.g. counts of whooper and Bewick's swans) within the context of bird species monitoring by the specialist Länder authorities.

At regional level, for example in Bavaria, the administration agreement on bird monitoring concluded between the BfN and the Federal Länder specifies the monitoring of resting waterfowl. This is carried out by Dachverband Deutscher Avifaunisten e.V., relevant associations and the ornithological

stations of the Länder.

In Hesse, a number of networks and organisations in the official and/or voluntary nature conservation sector are dedicated to migratory species, aimed at improving the conservation status of such species in Hesse. Guardian networks for species such as beavers, European pond terrapins and the salmon project 'Lachs 2000' are examples worth mentioning in this context.

In Mecklenburg-West Pomerania, there is a project to reintroduce the sturgeon in the Oder river basin as a transboundary network made up of government authorities, NGOs and scientists.

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) A - Yes
- 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):

- a) In 2001, the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) published a study outlining considerations and proposals for a national action plan for CEPA. The German action plan (German Wetland CEPA Action Plan) has been submitted to the Ramsar Secretariat.

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) 56+ centres
- b) +++ centres

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

According to a 2001 publication by Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt, there were more than 500 environmental, nature conservation and educational centres existing in Germany at that time, a large proportion of which are located in wetland areas, particularly on rivers and in peatlands. More accurate figures are not currently available.

In Germany's 34 Ramsar Sites, there are at least 56 permanent information or educational centres, plus project-specific educational work. Ramsar Sites which are located within large conservation areas are supported by the educational and information centres of those areas (such as the National Parks Wattenmeer, Ostufer Müritz, Vorpommersche Boddenlandschaft. Niedersächsische Elbtalaue, Mittlere Elbe, Schaalseegebiet, Peenetal and Stettiner Haff are examples of Ramsar Sites served by the visitor centres of the corresponding biosphere reserves and nature parks).

Various wetlands of international importance operate nature conservation facilities with the support of the respective Federal Land, such as National Parks buildings and centres in the Wadden Sea, nature conservation stations in the Untere Elbe, Dümmer, Steinhuder Meer regions, and the government nature conservation centre Obere Donau - transboundary Ramsar Site 'Oberrhein-Rhin supérieur'.

Nature conservation groups also provide essential educational work, such as the NABU nature conservation station at Kranenburg (WII 'Unterer Niederrhein'), the biological station in the Wesel district (WII 'Unterer Niederrhein'), the BUND nature conservation centre Möggingen, and the NABU nature conservation centre Radolfzell (WII 'Bodensee Wolmatinger Ried & Mindelsee'), the NABU centre Rheinauen (WII 'Rheinauen bei Eltville und Bingen') and the Wartaweil nature conservation and youth centre on Lake Ammersee (WII 'Ammersee').

Educational work is not confined to existing centres, but also includes a wide range of lectures, guided tours and exhibitions for local residents, tourists, schools and other interested groups prompted by renaturation projects, annual conferences (e.g. WWD) and special seasonal events.

4.1.3 Does the Contracting Party:

- a) promote stakeholder participation in decision-making on wetland planning and management
- b) specifically involve local stakeholders in the selection of new Ramsar Sites and in Ramsar Site management?

a) A - Yes

b) ---

{4.1.3} KRA 4.1.iii

4.1.3 Additional information (If 'Yes' or 'Partly', please provide information about the ways in which stakeholders are involved):

The general public is not merely involved in decision-making processes with regard to wetland areas, waterbodies and their protection; this is in fact a legal requirement under German law. The competent authorities are required to notify the general public about the opportunities for participation in a suitable manner.

The state of Lower Saxony is currently working on a nature conservation strategy. Both the nature protection organisations and groups of 'nature users', together with the specialist authorities, are involved in the drafting of this strategy. Once the draft is finished, a public consultation will take place.

4.1.4 Has an assessment of national and local training needs for the implementation of the Convention been made?

{4.1.4} KRAs 4.1.iv & 4.1.viii

B - No

4.1.4 Additional information:

No such assessment has been undertaken to date; furthermore, the structures and capacities of the management institutions and responsibilities in the individual Ramsar Sites are very varied.

A comprehensive German-language information campaign about Ramsar Sites, their implementation and their benefits could inspire fresh interest, for example in the tourism sector.

In the past, a lack of German translations of the relevant resolutions and directives and the related obligations for Ramsar Sites in Germany has

hampered further acceptance of and familiarity with the Convention, both in the individual Federal Länder and among the authorities. Publication of the 'Handbuch der Ramsar-Konvention' (BfN 2010), and 'Ramsar – Feuchtgebietsschutz in Deutschland – Blick über den Tellerrand' (BfN 2011) has improved the situation.

4.1.5 How many opportunities for wetland site manager training have been provided since COP11? {4.1.5} KRA 4.1.iv

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

Number of opportunities:

- a) 0
- b) X

4.1.5 Additional information (including whether the Ramsar Wise Use Handbooks were used in the training):

- a) We have not yet developed any special education and training programmes for the managers of Germany's Ramsar Sites on implementing the targets and tasks of the Ramsar Convention.
- b) Nevertheless, the nature conservation academies of individual Federal Länder regularly stage educational events for the personnel in protected wetland areas, site managers and other interested parties, which tend to focus primarily on management issues relating to the respective regional landscapes. For example, twice a year the National Parks administrations offer educational events for site managers. The teaching of basic ecological knowledge and naturalistic correlations is also a permanent feature of regional-specific certification courses to qualify as a nature and landscape manager (ZNL) in accordance with the uniform nationwide standard (2004 – 2014 approx. 225 ZNL in 9 regions). Certified nature and landscape managers are also required to undergo regular professional development, and the annual curriculum offered by the college 'Landeslehrstätte für Naturschutz und nachhaltige Entwicklung' in Mecklenburg-West Pomerania is a popular choice, as it offers a wide range of specialist events, including some on wetland management. An EAFRD-funded training and professional development course for protected area managers is planned from 2015.

There is also interest in specific events and development opportunities on the Ramsar Convention in German, which could be used to mediate content and approaches in an application-oriented manner.

4.1.6 Do you have an operational cross-sectoral National Ramsar/Wetlands Committee or equivalent body? {4.1.6} KRA 4.3.v

A - Yes

4.1.6 Additional information (If 'Yes', indicate a) its membership; b) number of meetings since COP11; and c) what responsibilities the Committee has):

A National Ramsar Committee has existed in Germany since 1993. It is headed up by the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) and is formally composed of representatives from the BMUB, the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN), the nature conservation ministries of the Federal Länder, and relevant research institutions, nature conservation groups and land user groups.

Given the current priorities in European nature conservation, the national Ramsar Committee plays only a subordinate role at present. Given that, under Germany's federal administrative structure, the Federal Länder are tasked with implementing nature conservation, in future the Ramsar Committee could contribute to communication and help link the networks of Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites together. Approaches for such a platform have been created via the translation and publication of the current Ramsar Handbook 2010. There are also plans to incorporate the river commissions and NGOs operating at a nationwide level.

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:

- a) Ramsar Site managers
- b) other MEA national focal points
- c) other ministries, departments and agencies

{4.1.7} KRA 4.1.vi

- a) A - Yes
- b) C - Partly
- c) A - Yes

4.1.7 Additional information (If 'Yes' or 'Partly', please describe what mechanisms are in place):

Sufficient established communication channels exist between the competent authorities, departments and institutions to facilitate the mutual exchange of information. With the ongoing implementation of the Water Framework Directive (WFD), these are being supplemented by new management work structures, based on river basin districts and new communication channels and working methods.

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:

Some of the Ramsar Sites have organised events for a number of years, including some with a local priority theme and relevance to the Ramsar Wetlands Convention.

For example, these include the events on the Upper Rhine (2011, 2013 and 2014), Lake Starnberg and Lake Ammersee, Unterer Inn and the Mittlere Elbe biosphere reserve, which incorporates the Ramsar Sites 'Aland-Elbe-Niederung' and 'Elbaue Jerichow'.

In recent years, various large organisations and institutions have additionally issued numerous press releases.

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):

A number of examples of recent national and regional information campaigns designed to help raise awareness of wetlands and their significance in Germany are cited below:

- The importance of wetlands for human beings and their ecosystemic services is continuously highlighted within the context of public relations work by the National Parks administrations of the German Wadden Sea.
- Numerous information campaigns were held at Lake Ammersee within the framework of public relations work by the site managers.
- In recent years, the nature conservation and sustainable development college 'Landeslehrstätte für Naturschutz und nachhaltige Entwicklung Mecklenburg-Vorpommern' has organised a number of events relating to wetland protection (themes include water retention and peatland revitalisation in forests - theory and practice, colloquium on the protection of peatlands in Mecklenburg-West Pomerania - status and perspectives, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) - another 10 years until a good status is achieved, waterbody symposium on European marine strategy - clean, healthy oceans by 2020, coastal and meadow bird protection, current developments and predation, species and nature conservation in waterbody maintenance, practical workshop on new approaches to waterbody maintenance, workshops on coastal bird-friendly management of Kirr island, the monetary value of intact versus destroyed nature).
- In the immediate vicinity of the Ramsar Site 'Ismaninger Teichgebiet', areas have been set aside as possible locations for wind farms, and in some cases designated as such (minimum 250 m distance from the Ramsar Site). This prompted an investigation into the spatial-temporal distribution of flight movements of waterfowl and other taxa using fixed beam radar equipment. The studies verify that the recommendations by the Länderarbeitsgemeinschaft der staatlichen Vogelschutzwarten (2007) and Deutscher Rat für Vogelschutz (2012) of wind farm buffer zones of 2,000 m around inland water are the minimum needed in order to significantly reduce the risk of collision with waterfowl and other taxa (Köhler U., H. Stark, K. Haas, A. Gehrold, E. von Krosigk & P. Köhler (2013): Windenergieanlagen und Wasservögel: Eine Radar-ornithologische Pilotstudie zur räumlich-zeitlichen Verteilung der Flugbewegungen von Wasservögeln an einem Binnengewässer. Vogelwarte 51: 345-346).
- A number of wetland protection projects for the peatlands and wet grasslands in the Diepholzer Moorniederung region were initiated and executed via the funding policy of the Niedersächsisches Landesinstitut für schulische Qualitätsentwicklung (State of Lower Saxony Institute for School Quality Development, NLQ).

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	A - Yes
4.2.2 Additional information (If 'Yes' please state the amounts, and for which activities): Travel expenses for delegates.	

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	B - No
4.3.1 Additional information (If 'Yes', please indicate how the Reports have been used for monitoring): The National Report Format is a helpful instrument for the documentation and planning of activities associated with the Ramsar Convention. The drafting process and associated agreements with and between the Federal Länder and Federal Government authorities allows the assessment of activities, but the report does not have a monitoring function.	

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	A - Yes
4.4.1 Additional information (If 'Yes' please name the IOP (or IOPs) and the type of assistance received): Overall, a large number of nature conservation groups in Germany contribute to the protection and conservation of wetland areas and waterbodies through local, regional and national projects. These include the Nature and	

Biodiversity Conservation Union (NABU), which is a Birdlife Partner at international level.

The protection and conservation or renaturation of wetland areas and management of water catchment areas is a key focus of WWF Germany's work. This is visible, firstly, in wide-ranging project work by its offices along the North and Baltic Sea Coasts and in the Wadden Sea, and in innovative large-scale conservation projects on the Middle Elbe and Lake Schaalsee in Schleswig-Holstein. Secondly, the WWF also helps to advance integrated waterbody management at national and European level through its involvement in the River Basin Commissions for the Elbe, Rhine, Danube and Oder, for example.

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

A - Yes

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

By cofinancing projects by NABU and WWF, Germany supports the IOP organisations at national level, and also in the international arena via the provision of development aid (BMZ), e.g. for IUCN, Wetlands International and WWF projects.