

# Ramsar National Report to COP14

## 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 <https://www.ramsar.org/search?f%5B0%5D=type%3Aperson#search-contacts>

Name of Contracting Party

The completed National Report **must be accompanied by a letter** in the name of the Head of Administrative Authority, confirming that this is the Contracting Party's official submission of its COP14 National Report. It can be attached to this question using the "Manage documents" function (blue symbol below)

> Bulgaria

You have attached the following documents to this answer.

[Submission-letter-2021.pdf](#) - Submission letter

### Designated Ramsar Administrative Authority

Name of Administrative Authority

> Ministry of Environment and Water

Head of Administrative Authority - name and title

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### Designated National Focal Point for Matters Relating to The Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP)

Name and title

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Name of organisation

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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)**

Name and title

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Name of organisation

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## **Section 2: General summary of national implementation progress and challenges**

In your country, in the past triennium (i.e., since COP13 reporting)

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

1)

> Mapping of the wetlands ecosystems' boundaries all over the Republic of Bulgaria. Their total number is 5374, incl. wetlands with minimum size of 0.01 ha. Bulgarian wetlands cover area of 133 189.86 ha. The number of small wetlands (with an area <8 ha) is 4 104 (covering 11 252 ha, representing 8.5 % of the total wetlands area in the country). The mapping was implemented in the frame of project: "Improving the conservation effectiveness of wetlands (WetMainAreas)". The project was funded by EU in the frame of TNCP Balkan-Mediterranean 2014-2020.

The Ramsar type of all mapped wetlands was defined. The biggest share of the wetlands area is covered by type: 6. Water storage areas; reservoirs/barrages/dams/impoundments (generally over 8 ha) - 54 398.98 ha. Their total number is 870. The smallest share of the wetlands area is covered by Ramsar type 9. Canals and drainage channels, ditches- 32.50 ha.

During the wetlands mapping a database corresponding with the MedWet inventarization data forms was developed. This database is public available via Spatial Data Infrastructure (Geoportal):

<http://185.17.146.157>.

The surface water dynamics in wetlands ecosystems is monitored using Sentinel-2 satellite. A Geoportal, connected with database, monitors systematically the wetlands with unprecedented level of information and scientific value. For each wetland a series of seven (7) spectral indices related to the status of the wetland are calculated for every Sentinel-2 satellite scene available from 2017 until today -

<https://extrema.space/WetMainAreas/dashboard.html>.

An ecological landscape connectivity analysis was implemented. The purpose was to map well connected or isolated land favourable for biodiversity and then to examine spatial relationships between wetlands, Natura 2000 and connected lands favourable for biodiversity. This analysis tackles the lack of assessments on the contribution of wetlands ecosystems in the spatial connectivity of protected networks. It demonstrates the important role that wetlands can play in preserving biodiversity in Natura 2000 sites. At national level 81 ecologically connected areas were defined. Numerous wetlands are found as connected units outside the National Ecological Network. Still a considerable area of wetlands is located in unprotected territories with very high value for biodiversity. Layers of structural wetlands connectivity are available on the created geoportal: <http://185.17.146.157>.

2)

> Update of RIS for Ramsar sites - Durankulak Lake, Lake Shabla, Atanasovsko Lake, Vaya Lake, Poda, Ropotamo Complex and Dragoman Marsh Karst Complex

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

1)

> Insufficient administrative capacity for implementation of the Convention;

2)

> Insufficient economical incentives to wetlands conservation and wise use;

3)

> Wetlands management is carried out in various institutional levels. The management goals and approaches have to be coordinated with all stakeholders the actions of which may affect the natural territories. The main coordinative mechanism on local level is the forthcoming Natura 2000 sites management planning.

4)

> A continuously improvement of the capacity of the responsible administrations for efficient management and protection of the wetlands is needed. This process should be integrated in the setting of the management bodies of the Natura 2000 sites.

5)

> Development or update of management plans. The measure is relevant for all wetlands of high significance for the coming 10 years due to the fact that the most of the wetlands do not have management plans, the period of validity of part of the approved management plans has expired (for example the Durankulak lake) and for the rest update on a later stage has to be made.

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

1)

> Priorities of the Republic of Bulgaria concerning wetlands are formulated in accordance to the goals of the Ramsar Convention and the Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016–2024, the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020 and as well as on the basis of the relevant national strategic documents:

Priority 1 – Limitation of the unfavorable anthropogenic factors that affect wetlands ecosystems. The general tools for the protection of wetlands are the various legislative protection status (according to the Protected Areas Act and the Biodiversity Act) and related regimes and management measures.

2)

> Maintenance of the good ecological status of the wetlands described in the National Action Plan for Conservation of Wetlands of High Significance in Bulgaria 2013 - 2022 .

3)

> Restoration of wetlands with deteriorated status as a result of various anthropogenic impacts. Restoration and maintenance of the water regime which is often related to designing and construction of hydro technical facilities.

4)

> Wise use of the country's wetlands in relation with the long-term protection of their ecosystem services.

5)

> Public awareness raising and public support for wetland conservation, maintenance and restoration.

D. Do you (AA) have any recommendations concerning priorities for implementation assistance and requirements for such assistance from the Ramsar Secretariat?

> No

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)

> No

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' (Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), World Heritage Convention (WHC), and United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)?

> The current National Action Plan for Conservation of Wetlands of High Significance in Bulgaria 2013 – 2022 takes into account a number of strategic documents that formulate the environmental and sustainable development policy on European and International level such as:

- European strategy "Europe 2020" – an EU fundamental strategic document for intelligent, sustainable and affiliate growth;
- EU Biodiversity strategy 2020 – an ambitious strategy setting out 6 targets and 20 actions to halt the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the EU by 2020;
- Global Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011 – 2020, including Aichi Biodiversity Targets.
- Strategic plan of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands;

G. How is the Ramsar Convention 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) and how this could be improved?

> Institutional (cross sectoral) coordination in relation to the implementation of the Protected Areas Act, Biological Diversity Act, management of Natura 2000 sites and implementation of the requirements of the Ramsar Convention and Strategic Plan of the Convention.

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

> No

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

> Ministry of Environment and Water (MOEW)

Executive Environment Agency

Regional Inspectorates of Environment and Water (RIEW) under MOEW

River Basin Directorates (RBD) under MOEW

Persina Nature Park Directorate

Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Research - Bulgarian Academy of Science (IBER-BAS)

Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds (BSPB)  
Bulgarian Biodiversity Foundation (BBF)  
Via Pontica Foundation  
Green Balkans NGO  
Balkani Wildlife Society NGO  
WWF Bulgaria

## Section 3: Indicator questions and further implementation information

### Goal 1. Addressing the drivers of wetland loss and degradation

[Reference to Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, 6, 8, 11, 13, 14, 15]

#### Target 1

Wetland benefits are featured in national/ local policy strategies and plans relating to key sectors such as water, energy, mining, agriculture, tourism, urban development, infrastructure, industry, forestry, aquaculture, fisheries at the national and local level.

[Reference to Aichi Target 2]

1.1 Have wetland conservation and the identification of wetlands benefits been integrated into sustainable approaches to the following national strategies and planning processes, including: {1.3.2} {1.3.3} KRA

1.3.i

*Please select only one per square.*

a) National Policy or strategy for wetland management	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
b) Poverty eradication strategies	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
c) Water resource management and water efficiency plans	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
d) Coastal and marine resource management plans	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
e) Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
f) National forest programmes	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
g) National policies or measures on agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
h) National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans drawn up under the CBD	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant

i) National policies on energy and mining	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
j) National policies on tourism	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
k) National policies on urban development	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
l) National policies on infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
m) National policies on industry	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
n) National policies on aquaculture and fisheries {1.3.3} KRA 1.3.i	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
o) National plans of actions (NPAs) for pollution control and management	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
p) National policies on wastewater management and water quality	<input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant

## Target 2

Water use respects wetland ecosystem needs for them to fulfil their functions and provide services at the appropriate scale inter alia at the basin level or along a coastal zone.

[Reference to Aichi Targets 7 and 8], [Sustainable Development Goal 6, Indicator 6.3.1]

2.1 Has the quantity and quality of water available to, and required by, wetlands been assessed to support the implementation of the Guidelines for the allocation and management of water for maintaining the ecological functions of wetlands (Resolution VIII.1, VIII.2) ? 1.24.

A=Yes

### 2.1 Additional Information

> Bulgaria applies the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and the Council to achieve and maintain the good ecological status of water in the country. The WFD was transposed into the Bulgarian Water Law as well as the guidelines that have been developed for its implementation.

Bulgaria recognizes the importance of the management of rivers and their water resources at the basin scale for the maintenance of the ecological character of wetlands, and that many wetlands provide vital goods and services in the management and provision of water supplies.

2.2 Have assessments of environmental flow been undertaken in relation to mitigation of impacts on the ecological character of wetlands (Action r3.4.iv)

C=Partially

## 2.2 Additional Information

> In the River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) there are concrete measures and relevant actions concerning the wetlands, such as watering of wetlands, creation and rehabilitation of wetlands, raising of water level with the aim of expanding of existing or rehabilitated wetlands etc.

There are also concrete measures in the Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMP) in relation with wetlands, e.g. creation of manageable polders and small buffering basins in river bank flooded strips.

In the procedure of issuing permits for water abstraction there is a procedure to assess the significance of the pressure from the abstraction requested and above a certain limit the abstraction quantity is reduced or denied at all. This is a way to save the water resources and water dependant habitats and environment.

2.3 What, if any, initiatives been taken to improve the sustainability of water use (or allocation of water resources) in the context of ecosystem requirements across major river basins (Resolutions VIII.1 and XII.12 )? (Action 3.4.6.)

A=Yes

## 2.3 Additional Information

> There is a procedure of issuing permits for water abstraction and allocation of water resources from one river basin to another river basin under which the assessment of the significance of the pressure from the abstraction is requested.

2.4 Have projects that promote and demonstrate good practice in water allocation and management for maintaining the ecological functions of wetlands been developed (Action r3.4.ix. )

B=No

2.5 Percentage of households linked to sewage system?

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

> 90

## 2.5 Additional Information

> The relevant data are taken from the EUROSTAT

2.6 What is the percentage of sewerage coverage in the country?

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

G=More than (percentage)

> 90 %

2.7 What is the percentage of users of septic tank/pit latrine if relevant to your country?

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

X=Unknown

2.8 Does the country use constructed wetlands/ponds as wastewater treatment technology?

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

A=Yes

## 2.8 Additional Information

> There is no information in the Water Management Directorate on the precise number of constructed wetlands/ponds as wastewater treatment technology. A pilot site is constructed.

2.9 Number of wastewater treatment plants (or volume treated exist at national level)?

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

E=Exact number (plants)

> 112

## 2.9 Additional Information

> 112 plants for urban waste water from agglomerations above 2000 p.e. exist at national level. Several UWWTP for smaller settlements also exist but the exact number could not be provided.



2.10 How is the functional status of the wastewater treatment plants? If relevant to your country  
SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

C=Functioning

2.11 The percentage of decentralized wastewater treatment technology, including constructed wetlands/ponds is?

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

X=Unknown

2.12 Number of wastewater reuse systems (or volume re-used) and purpose?

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

> 0

2.12 Additional Information

> No information for wastewater reuse systems is available.

2.13 What is the purpose of the wastewater reuse system if relevant to your country ?

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

T=Industrial

2.13 Additional Information

Please indicate if the wastewater reuse system is for free or taxed or add any additional information.

> The industry could reuse the waste water and no additional tax is required.

2.14 Does your country use a wastewater treatment process that utilizes wetlands as a natural filter while preserving the wetland ecosystem?

A=Yes

2.14 Additional information: If Yes, please provide an example

> Case Study Vidrare

[https://www.wecf.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/WECF\\_Constructed\\_Wetlands.engl\\_..pdf](https://www.wecf.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/WECF_Constructed_Wetlands.engl_..pdf)

The Home of Handicapped People in Vidrare, part of the municipality in Pravets, Bulgaria, wanted to build a treatment plant for the domestic wastewater produced by the centre (from the kitchen, toilets and laundry) in order to improve the existing situation.

Together with the municipality of Pravets, the non-governmental organisations WECF and EcoWorld2007 of Bulgaria started the activities in 2008. A water meter was installed in the Home in order to estimate the quantity of wastewater produced. The stakeholders in Vidrare and Pravets were informed about constructed wetlands as a suitable low-tech option for improved wastewater treatment. After a meeting on-site, the decision was made to build a constructed wetland for wastewater treatment in the yard of the Home; designed to be attractive in appearance. The municipality agreed to permit the installation of the first constructed wetland in Bulgaria, hoping that it would also serve as a demonstration plant that could be replicated by other municipalities. The German Federal Environment Foundation (DBU) approved the proposal submitted by WECF and EcoWorld2007 and ensured the main funding. The planning and design was carried out by Otterwasser (Lübeck/Germany) and Ecoproject (Bulgaria). The tender was won by the Bulgarian Interstroy group, and construction began in October 2010 to be finished in April 2011 (a break of three months was required due to harsh winter conditions). The site will also be surrounded by a fence. The director of the Home agreed that there should be an appointed staff member responsible for the maintenance of the constructed wetland. This staff member will be instructed by Otterwasser.

### Target 3

Public and private sectors have increased their efforts to apply guidelines and good practices for the wise use of water and wetlands. {1.10}

[Reference to Aichi Targets 3, 4, 7 and 8]

3.1 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

3.1 Additional Information

> Introduction of and support for economic mechanisms for wetland conservation:

The EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020 as well as other international key strategic documents underline that the

biodiversity loss leads to tremendous economic losses for the public and especially for the economic subjects of various economic sectors that depend directly on the ecosystem services.

Mapping and biophysical assessment of the ecosystems and the services they provide was performed within seven projects financed under the BG03 “Ecosystems and biodiversity” program, under the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism, outside Natura 2000. Additionally, the typology of ecosystems in Bulgaria, the methodologies for mapping and assessment of their condition, as well as their ecosystem services have been developed under the project “Methodological support for mapping of ecosystem services and biophysical assessment” (MetEcoSMap). As a result, nine types of ecosystems have been mapped and assessed: agroecosystems, grass ecosystems, shrub and ericoid ecosystems, marine, ecosystems in areas with sparse and no vegetation, freshwater, wetlands, forest and urban ecosystems.

“MAYA” project financed under “Horizon 2020” Programme developed pilot accounts for the environment, forest and freshwater ecosystems.

Agri-environmental measures and compensation mechanisms for sustainable biodiversity management of farmlands has been applied as part of Rural Development Program 2014-2020. Aquaculture holdings also received public financial support for development and implementation of aqua-ecological plans.

Private investments Mechanism has been developed and introduced as “Payments for ecosystem services in wetlands” in Persina Nature Park (Belene Islands Complex Ramsar site).

### 3.2 Has the private sector undertaken activities or actions for the conservation, wise use and management of {1.10.2} KRA 1.10.ii

Please select only one per square.

a) Ramsar Sites	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not relevant <input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
b) Wetlands in general	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not relevant <input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes

### 3.2 Additional information

#### > a) Ramsar sites

The main economic activity in the Atanasovsko Lake Ramsar site (1995,06 ha) is salt production. Black Sea Salinas Ltd. has been producing salt in the traditional manner and thus protecting and preserving the Ramsar site Atanasovsko Lake for 110 years. For the needs of salt extraction, Atanasovsko Lake was divided into basins with different sizes through the use of earth dykes and wooden barriers, and channels. The dykes and barriers create the unique structure of the lagoon with a rich variety of micro-habitats and higher biological productivity of the ecosystem, presenting the priority habitat Coastal Lagoons (1150\*). They create suitable conditions for nesting of various birds, while the sea water with different concentrations – necessary for the production of salt is inhabited by specific species that serve as food for the birds.

The restoration of 15 km wooden barriers and earth dykes by BS Salinas for the last years has a direct positive impact on bird species and increased with 7.7 ha suitable areas for nesting, resting and roosting of different bird species. Notably, the significant increase of the number of the nesting Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*) in Atanasovsko Lake was observed - 469 pairs (2016) or 345 pairs more than in 2011.

Restoration of the 22,930 m Bypass channel and the Protection dyke by BS Salinas contribute to the improved flood protection and decreased pollution from surface water inflow at the whole water body of Atanasovsko Lake with a total area of 7,208 ha. 17 km from the top and slope of the Protective dyke and the Bypass channel were cleaned from the undesired vegetation until April 2017, which increased the clearance and conductivity of the channel. The access to the channel was improved with 17 km earth road, which reduced the response time in crisis and emergency situations. At this stage, the Bypass channel can be characterized as a water body with moderately good ecological status, which creates suitable habitats for feeding, roosting and breeding of associated with fresh water species.

The BS Salinas Ltd. have implemented with own contribution limited actions on maintenance and restoration of the water supply facility – fixing the shore part, taking out sediments in the water discharging area and securing water conductivity. BS Salinas Ltd. monitor the sea water quality annually to guarantee pure water inflow into the habitat 1150\*.

Since 2016 a private company Via Pontica Foundation has restored the fishfarming in the Ramsar Site Vaya Lake. Following the national regulations for this protected site, only extensive fishbreeding is practiced. A visitor centre for birdwatching is developed, broadened with ecological education, environmental protection and raise of awareness by events organization and informational activities.

As part of the project “Promoting PES and other related sustainable financing schemes in the Danube river

basin”, carried out with the financial support of the GEF through UNEP, WWF Danube-Carpathian Programme implemented the project “Market payments for wetland restoration in Persina Nature Park” in Bulgaria. Persina Nature Park is the biggest Ramsar protected wetland in Bulgaria.

Following years of conservation experience in this park, WWF decided to focus its intervention in the area of the Kaikusha marsh. This 155,4 ha wetland faces quick degradation due to infrastructural development, contamination from pesticides and most importantly, reed overgrowth. Nowadays, even in springtime, there is no open water surface in the marsh, as the whole area of Kaikusha is occupied with reeds and ruderal species, which could lead to disappearance of this habitat in the coming years. Experts identified that a balanced reed-cutting is a desirable way to regulate the water regime and stimulate the restoration of the open water surface in Kaikusha marsh. In this framework, WWF introduced an innovative market payment scheme in order to achieve sustainable financing of the restoration, due to a lack of available funding. WWF proposed local entrepreneurs to harvest and use the biomass from reed-cutting to produce and market pellets and briquettes.

WWF developed a complete framework to support a safe long-term commitment for a green entrepreneur. A business plan was designed to assess the costs and benefits of running a company in the new market of biomass energy from reed. Moreover, tests were conducted to ensure the energy efficiency of pellets and briquettes produced out of reed and confirm that such a product would be attractive on the local energy market. Regarding the environmental challenges, a management plan was drafted to guide the harvesting practice so that that amount and timing of operations are in line with conservation objectives. A monitoring procedure was also put in place to check that the reed harvesting delivers expected results and is conducted in agreed conditions.

Thanks to these solid foundations, a local entrepreneur joined the project and signed a partnership agreement on the maintenance and protection of ecosystem services in Persina Nature Park. He received further support to access public funding for the purchasing of machineries, which were bought at the end of 2013.

Since the installation of his workshop, first tests of processing biomass were conducted so that production of pellets and briquettes can start. Local public institutions are the most likely and appropriate customers for his products, as they can reduce their costs on electricity and heating and could support the awareness raising at local level of the importance of these products, which could widen the market.

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

C=Partially

#### 3.3 Additional information

> The BS Salinas company has an experience in two LIFE projects with a partnership with the biggest NGOs in Bulgaria (Bulgarian Biodiversity Foundation and Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds). It is an example of a sustainable business that supports biodiversity of the lake.

BS Salinas, as a partner in the Salt of Life project (LIFE11NAT/BG/000362) developed its own “100% natural salt product”, an upmarket alternative to table salt for the Bulgarian market.

Salt extraction is done through solar evaporation of concentrated seawater. Although the annual yield depends on weather and annual rainfalls and can vary from 0 to 50 000 tonnes, the salt production is considered industrial activity. Study for options the inclusion of sea salt production in the Agro-environment Program was made by the same project but these are in consultation with Agriculture Ministry and it is not likely to be approved since salt mining is not declared agricultural activity.

Lush, UK based cosmetics company that focuses on ethical and sustainable practices bought first 24t salt from Atanasovsko Lake Ramsar site following their policy for sustainable ingredient sourcing in September 2017. In 2016 they supported construction of the biggest artificial island for Dalmatian pelicans in Bulgaria with area 144m<sup>2</sup>.

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

D=Planned

## Target 4

Invasive alien species and pathways of introduction and expansion are identified and prioritized, priority invasive alien species are controlled or eradicated, and management responses are prepared and implemented to prevent their introduction and establishment.

{Reference to Aichi Target 9}

4.1 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

A=Yes

#### 4.1 Additional information

> The East and South European Network for Invasive Alien Species (ESENIAS) was established in 2011 to facilitate solving invasive alien species (IAS) issues in the Balkan countries. Currently 12 member countries

and three invited countries have been involved in the ESENIAS activities: exchange and sharing of IAS information, capacity building, research, policy development and harmonisation. In 2014 the Danube Region Invasive Alien Species Network (DIAS) was established within the frames of Priority Area 06 of the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region, International Association of Danube Research (IAD), and ESENIAS. Countries from the Upper, Middle and Lower Danube River basin, as well as adjacent Black Sea region participate in the network. Since 2015 a joint project: East and South European Network for Invasive Alien Species - A tool to support the management of alien species in Bulgaria (ESENIAS-TOOLS) has been implemented. The project is funded by the Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area 2009-2014, and aims at networking and development of IAS tools (harmonisation of definitions and standards, listing and prioritisation of alien species, data collection, database development, education) within the frame of ESENIAS to support the management of alien species in Bulgaria and in the overall region. The project provides essential data about alien species distribution, population status, etc., in Bulgaria and neighboring countries. The main outputs of the project are: (1) joint standardised and harmonised methodology for data collection, analysis, dissemination and further outreach; (2) database of alien species in the region, IAS experts and responsible institutions, IAS projects and publications; (3) analysis of IAS legislation and management practices. (4) early warning tool including species alerts were developed in order to increase awareness of experts, public administration and managers and to facilitate the IAS early detection and rapid response. In the frame of the Information system for biodiversity monitoring, Executive Environmental Agency developed a module for collecting data for invasive alien species. The module contain templates for each species for gathering data from the field and questionnaire for risk assessment.

4.2 Have national policies or guidelines on invasive species control and management been established or reviewed for wetlands? {1.9.2} KRA 1.9.iii

C=Partially

#### 4.2 Additional information

> Bulgaria implements the requirements of the EU Regulation No 1143/2014 on Invasive Alien Species (IAS) entered into force on 1 January 2015. It provides a set of measures to be taken across the EU in relation to invasive alien species included in the list of Invasive Alien Species of Union concern. Specific national legislation on IAS is forthcoming to be developed.

4.3. Has your country successfully controlled through management actions invasive species of high risk to wetland ecosystems?

A=Yes

#### 4.3 Additional Information

If 'Yes', please provide examples, including the species name and the successful management action  
> The Regional Inspectorate of Environment and Water - Ruse is a beneficiary of project under the Operational Program "Environment" - "Limitation of the negative impact of invasive species and restoration of natural habitats through afforestation with native species in the maintained reserve "Srebarna". To limiting the negative impact of invasive species the following actions were realized:  
- defined and marked invasive tree species to be broken / ringed;  
- implemented activities for ringing / breaking of the marked trees;  
The refraction method was applied on an area of 64 decares and the ringing on an area of 343 decares. The following invasive species were removed by the ringing and refraction method - Red ash /*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*/ and Boxelder maple /*Acer negundo*/.

4.4 Are there invasive species of high risk to wetland ecosystems that have not been successfully controlled through management actions?

A=Yes

#### 4.4 Additional Information

If 'Yes', please provide examples, including the species name and the challenges to management  
> *Amorpha fruticosa*  
*Ailanthus altissima*  
*Gleditsia triacanthos*  
*Robinia pseudoacacia*

4.5 Have the effectiveness of wetland invasive alien species control programmes been assessed?

B=No

## Goal 2. Effectively conserving and managing the Ramsar Site network

[Reference to Sustainable Development Goals 6, 11, 13, 14, 15]

### Target 5

The ecological character of Ramsar Sites is maintained or restored through effective, planning and integrated management {2.1.}

[Reference to Aichi Targets 6,11, 12]

5.1 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

A=Yes

#### 5.1 Additional information

> The scope of the National Action Plan for Conservation of Wetlands of High Significance in Bulgaria 2013 - 2022 includes 11 wetlands as priority wetlands which at present are part of the List of Wetlands of International Importance of the Ramsar Convention (Ramsar sites). The descriptive part of the National Plan describes in details 28 additional wetlands that cover one or more of the Ramsar Convention criteria or have significant potential for protection and restoration but have not designated as Ramsar sites.

5.2 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

D=Planned

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

E=Exact number (sites)

> 3

5.4 Of the Ramsar Sites with a formal management plan, for how many of these is the plan being implemented? {2.4.2} KRA 2.4.i

E=Exact number (sites)

> 3

5.5 Of the Ramsar sites without a formal management plan, for how many is there effective management planning currently being implemented through other relevant means e.g. through existing actions for appropriate wetland management? {2.4.3} KRA 2.4.i

E=Exact number (sites)

> 5

#### 5.3 – 5.5 Additional information

> 5.3 Ramsar sites “Belene Islands Complex”, “Srebarna” and “Ibisha Island” - have an effective, implemented management plans;

5.4 For Ramsar sites “Atanasovsko Lake”, “Poda” and “Ropotamo Complex” - Updated management plans are in process of adoption;

5.5 Ramsar sites – “Atanasovsko Lake”, “Durankulak Lake”, “Lake Shabla”, “Poda” and “Ropotamo Complex” - effective management planning currently is implemented within the current management plan until the adoption of updated management plan ;

5.6 Have all Ramsar sites been assessed regarding the effectiveness of their management (i.e. sites with either a formal management plan or management via other relevant means where they exist e.g through existing actions for appropriate wetland management)? {1.6.2} KRA 1.6.ii

C=Partially

#### 5.6 Additional information

> Ramsar sites with updated and adopted management plans and those in the process of updating:

Srebarna

Belene Islands Complex

Ibisha Island

Poda

Atanasovsko Lake

Ropotamo Complex

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

E=Exact number (sites)

> 3

#### 5.7 Additional information

If at least 1 site, please give the name and official number of the site or sites

> 1226 Belene Islands Complex

292 Atanasovsko Lake

64 Srebarna - In June 2017 Srebarna Biosphere Reserve joined to the requirements of the UNESCO Man and Biosphere Program. In this regard to fulfil the commitment under the program which requires the establishment of advisory board, the advisory board with representatives of all stakeholders is established.

## Target 7

Sites that are at risk of change of ecological character have threats addressed {2.6.}.

[Reference to Aichi Targets 5, 7, 11, 12]

7.1 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

### 7.1 Additional information

If 'Yes' or 'Some sites', please summarise the mechanism or mechanisms established

> • One of the mechanisms is the EIA and EA - All projects and investment proposals affecting wetlands are proceeded in line with the Bulgarian legislation and are subject of Environmental Assessment (EA) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedures.

• Another mechanism is the Appropriate Assessment (AA) according to Article 6 of the Habitats Directive of the EU, to be provided on investment proposals, plans and programmes, which are planned to be held in potential Natura 2000 sites, in order to avoid any negative effects.

All significant wetlands in Bulgaria are Natura 2000 sites. As far as Natura 2000 sites are concerned, the Biological Diversity Act envisages a particular assessment according to Article 6 of the Habitat Directive of the EU, to be provided on investment proposals, plans and programmes, which are planned to be held in potential Natura 2000 sites, in order to avoid any negative effects on the particular habitats and habitats of species, for which preservation the respective site was proposed as Natura 2000 site.

According to the Article 31, para (1) of the Biological Diversity Act any plans, programmes, projects and building-development proposals that are not directly related or necessary for the management of the Natura 2000 sites and that, either individually or in interaction with other plans, programmes, projects or building-development proposals, are likely to have a significant negative impact on the Natura 2000 sites, shall be assessed as to the compatibility thereof with the protection purposes of the relevant site.

There are special regulation under the Biological Diversity Act for the AA procedure - Regulation on the Conditions and Procedures for Assessment of the Compatibility of Plans, Programs, Projects and Investment Proposals with the Scope and Objectives of Conservation of the Protected sites (Natura 2000 sites), 2007 (Appropriate Assessment Regulation).

• Management of the wetlands that are protected areas. According to the Bulgarian Protected Areas Act The Ministry of Environment and Water and its regional bodies – Regional Inspectorates of Environment and Water carry out the management and control in the wetlands that are protected areas (Ramsar sites), the assigning of the activities on the maintenance and restoration, the assigning of tourist activities, the guarding and the control in the forests, the lands and the water areas in the protected areas.

• National monitoring systems related to wetland status:

- Monitoring of the environmental status of water in compliance with the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EEC. The monitoring is planned and controlled by the River Basin Management Directorates and includes a range of biological, physical and chemical, and hydromorphological quality elements approved by the Minister of Environment and Water. Some wetlands belong in or are covered by surface water monitoring points (for status, chemical and ecological monitoring). On-site monitoring is carried out by specialized authorities - the Regional laboratories of Executive Environment Agency. It is recommended that the next updating of the monitoring network (during the post 2015 river basin management planning work) in or of the most significant wetlands in Bulgaria, that waterbody status monitoring points be established/included in the cases where the waterbodies include or comprise wetlands.

- National Biodiversity Monitoring System: The system has been developed during the recent decade and although not fully functional (although forthcoming), is expected to provide the main information required for informed biodiversity related decision making. The main list of monitoring subjects includes: 252 invertebrate species; 51 fish species; 21 amphibian and reptilian species; 310 bird species; 18 mammal species (excluding bats); 13 bat species; 16 mushroom species; 13 moss species; 194 vascular plant species (5 ferns, 1 clubmoss, 1 gymnosperm and 187 angiospermous plant species); Habitats - 65 types of the Habitats Directive and 16 other types according to the Palearctic classification without corresponding codes in the Habitats Directive. The monitoring points for all sites have been identified. There are observation methodologies for most sites and data gathering forms as well.

- Hydrological and meteorological monitoring carried out by the National Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology. Specific parameters and monitoring data may be crucial for wetland management (mainly with regard to the hydrological regime).

- National monitoring schemes carried out by governmental and non-governmental organizations for specific reasons. One example of such monitoring is the mid-winter counting of waterfowl carried out by the BSPB in

the entire country on an annual basis and covering all wetlands of importance for the birds.

- Determination of the favourable nature conservation status (NCS) of species and habitats. At present, this process is carried out in Bulgaria for Natura 2000 management purposes. The initial NCS determination will allow determination of the management objectives of individual Natura 2000 sites (including wetlands) and, using follow-on monitoring, following of the trends in the condition of key species/habitats.

- Specialized monitoring schemes – monitoring schemes elaborated in the management plans for indicators at the local level.

7.2 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

O=No Negative Change

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

A=Yes

### 7.3 Additional information

If 'Yes', please indicate the actions taken

> A new Management Plan (MP) for Srebarna for the period 2016 - 2026 was developed and approved by the Minister of Environment and Water with an Ordinance № RD-565/13.10.2016, published in State Gazette No. 87/2016. The new MP has been prepared according to the recommendations of the Secretariat laid in the final report of the Ramsar Advisory Mission № 47, Srebarna, Bulgaria, 2001. The MP includes measures to improve the ecological conditions of the wetland listed in the Montreux Record, the implementation of these measures is financed by the "Implementation of priority measures in wetlands", DIRECT AWARD PROCEDURE UNDER PRIORITY AXIS 3 OF OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME ENVIRONMENT 2014-2020. The projects are currently in implementation.

## Goal 3. Wisely Using All Wetlands

[Reference to Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15]

### Target 8

National wetland inventories have been either initiated, completed or updated and disseminated and used for promoting the conservation and effective management of all wetlands {1.1.1} KRA 1.1.i

[Reference to Aichi Targets 12, 14, 18, 19]

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

A=Yes

### 8.1 Additional information

> 1. Michev, T., M. Stoyneva (eds). 2007. Inventory of Bulgarian Wetlands and their Biodiversity. Publ. House Elsi-M, Sofia, 364 pp. + CD supplement.

2. National Wetland Inventory within the project: Improving the conservation effectiveness of wetlands, Acronym: WetMainAreas, funded in the frame of Transnational Cooperation Programme Balkan-Mediterranean 2014-2020, Subsidy Contract: MP1/2.1/2342/2017 in the period 2017-2018.

8.2 Has your country updated a National Wetland Inventory in the last decade?

A=Yes

### 8.2 Additional information

> National Wetland Inventory within the project: Improving the conservation effectiveness of wetlands, Acronym: WetMainAreas, funded in the frame of Transnational Cooperation Programme Balkan-Mediterranean 2014-2020, Subsidy Contract: MP1/2.1/2342/2017 in the period 2017-2018.

8.3 Is wetland inventory data and information maintained? {1.1.2} KRA 1.1.ii

A=Yes

8.4 Is wetland inventory data and information made accessible to all stakeholders? {1.1.2} KRA 1.1.ii

A=Yes

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

Please describe on the sources of the information on which your answer is based in the 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

Please select only one per square.

a) Ramsar Sites	<input type="checkbox"/> P=Status Improved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> O=No Change <input type="checkbox"/> N=Status Deteriorated
b) Wetlands generally	<input type="checkbox"/> P=Status Improved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> O=No Change <input type="checkbox"/> N=Status Deteriorated

8.6 Based upon the National Wetland Inventory if available please provide a figure in square kilometres for the extent of wetlands (according to the Ramsar definition) for the year 2020 and provide the relevant disaggregated information in the box below. This Information will also be used to report on SDG 6, Target 6.6, Indicator 6.6.1, for which the Ramsar Convention is a co-custodian.

E=Exact Number (km2)

> 1331,9

### 8.6 Inland Wetlands

	Square kilometers (km2)
L -- Permanent inland deltas.	
M -- Permanent rivers/streams/creeks; includes waterfalls.	
N -- Seasonal/intermittent/irregular rivers/streams/creeks.	
O -- Permanent freshwater lakes (over 8 ha); includes large oxbow lakes.	
P -- Seasonal/intermittent freshwater lakes (over 8 ha); includes floodplain lakes.	
Q -- Permanent saline/brackish/alkaline lakes.	75,08 Km2
R -- Seasonal/intermittent saline/brackish/alkaline lakes and flats.	
Sp -- Permanent saline/brackish/alkaline marshes/pools.	
Ss -- Seasonal/intermittent saline/brackish/alkaline marshes/pools.	
Tp -- Permanent freshwater marshes/pools; ponds (below 8 ha), marshes and swamps on inorganic soils; with emergent vegetation water-logged for at least most of the growing season.	406,81 Km2



Ts -- Seasonal/intermittent freshwater marshes/pools on inorganic soils; includes sloughs, potholes, seasonally flooded meadows, sedge marshes.	
U -- Non-forested peatlands; includes shrub or open bogs, swamps, fens.	
Va -- Alpine wetlands; includes alpine meadows, temporary waters from snowmelt.	
Vt -- Tundra wetlands; includes tundra pools, temporary waters from snowmelt.	
W -- Shrub-dominated wetlands; shrub swamps, shrub-dominated freshwater marshes, shrub carr, alder thicket on inorganic soils.	
Xf -- Freshwater, tree-dominated wetlands; includes freshwater swamp forests, seasonally flooded forests, wooded swamps on inorganic soils.	35,49 Km2
Xp -- Forested peatlands; peatswamp forests.	
Y -- Freshwater springs; oases.	
Zg -- Geothermal wetlands.	
Zk(b) - Karst and other subterranean hydrological systems, inland.	

## 8.6 Inland Wetlands total (km2)

> 575,4

## 8.6 Human-made wetlands

	Square kilometers (km2)
1 -- Aquaculture (e.g., fish/shrimp) ponds.	41,04 Km2
2 -- Ponds; includes farm ponds, stock ponds, small tanks; (generally below 8 ha).	91,91 Km2
3 -- Irrigated land; includes irrigation channels and rice fields.	
4 -- Seasonally flooded agricultural land (including intensively managed or grazed wet meadow or pasture).	

5 -- Salt exploitation sites; salt pans, salines, etc.	
6 -- Water storage areas; reservoirs/barrages/dams /impoundments (generally over 8 ha).	543,99 Km2
7 -- Excavations; gravel/brick/clay pits; borrow pits, mining pools.	
8 -- Wastewater treatment areas; sewage farms, settling ponds, oxidation basins, etc.	
9 -- Canals and drainage channels, ditches.	
Zk(c) - Karst and other subterranean hydrological systems, human-made.	

8.6 Human-made wetlands total (km2)  
> 756,5

### 8.6 Additional information

Additional information: If the information is available please indicate the % of change in the extent of wetlands over the last three years. Please note: For the % of change in the extent of wetlands, if the period of data covers more than three years, provide the available information, and indicate the period of the change.

> The % of change in the extent of wetlands is 18.9 % increased compared to the extent of wetlands in 2007 (1 120,1 Km 2 ). The % of change in the extent of wetlands is due to more accurate measurements in the inventory during the period 2017-2018 compared to 2007. In general we can consider that there is no significant change in the extent of wetlands in Bulgaria.

Date of the inventory: 2017 - 2018

Reference or link: Project "Improving the conservation effectiveness of wetlands" (WetMainAreas)  
<http://185.17.146.157>

## Target 9

The wise use of wetlands is strengthened through integrated resource management at the appropriate scale, inter alia, within a river basin or along a coastal zone {1.3.}.

[Reference to Aichi Targets 4, 6, 7]

9.1 Is a Wetland Policy (or equivalent instrument) that promotes the wise use of wetlands 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

### 9.1 Additional information

> With a Protocol № 16 of the meeting of the National Biodiversity Council held on 08.10.2013 at the Ministry of Environment and Water, the developed National Action Plan for the Conservation of Wetlands of High Significance in Bulgaria for the period 2013 - 2022 was adopted as the basis for planning and implementation of activities for conservation and sustainable management of the most important wetlands in Bulgaria, both at national level and at the level of wetland. Also the plan is approved as a strategic document and the basis for the implementation of national commitments under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands in the period 2013 - 2022.

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

B=No

9.3 Are wetlands treated as natural water infrastructure integral to water resource management at the scale of river basins? {1.7.1} {1.7.2} KRA 1.7.ii

A=Yes

### 9.3 Additional information

> All protected areas (Natura 2000 sites), where maintenance or improvement of the water status (wetlands) is an important factor in their protection, are identified in the River Basin Management Plans (RBMP). These are available in the RBMP as detailed lists.

River Basin Management Plans are elaborated by the Director of the relevant River Basin Directorate for each river basin district in the country: Danube River Basin District, Black Sea River Basin District, East Aegean River Basin District and West Aegean River Basin District. River Basin Management Plans are elaborated pursuant to Article 155(1), (para 2) of the Water Act (WA) and Article 13 of the Water Framework Directive (WFD, Directive 2000/60/EC) which has been transposed into the Bulgarian Water Act.

RBMPs are strategic documents governing water management in RBDs; they are developed in parallel with Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs) covering the same period of time. This is done to ensure consistency between the two strategic documents as elements of integrated river basin management.

Pursuant to Article 14 WFD and Article 159(1) WA, RBMPs have to be reviewed and updated every six years after their initial publication.

RBMPs comprise the following sections:

- Section 1. Description of RBD characteristics: information on the identified surface and groundwater bodies, types of surface waters, reference conditions, heavily modified and artificial water bodies (WB)
- Section 2. Brief overview of significant pressures and impact from human activity on the status of surface and ground waters: an overview of the pressure on waters caused by human activity from point and diffuse sources of pollution, water abstraction, impoundments, alterations in the physical characteristics of rivers etc.
- Section 3. Updates to the Register of Protected Areas: a Register of Protected Areas (PAs) which includes:
  - PAs designated for the abstraction of water intended for human consumption (Directive 75/440/EC)
  - areas designated for the protection of economically significant aquatic species
  - PAs bodies of water designated as recreational waters, including areas designated as bathing waters (Directive 76/160/EC)
  - PAs - vulnerable zones (Directive 91/676/EC)
  - PAs - sensitive areas (Directive 91/271/EC) PAs - areas designated for the protection of habitats or species where the maintenance or improvement of the status of water is an important factor in their protection (including relevant Natura 2000 sites designated under Directive 92/43/EEC and Directive 79/409/EEC
- Section 4. Monitoring and assessment of the status of surface water, groundwaters, and water protection areas: information on the status of surface and ground waters and monitoring programmes
- Section 5. List of environmental objectives: objectives and exceptions concerning surface and ground water bodies and objectives for water protection areas pursuant to Art.156a(1) of WA
- Section 6. Brief overview of the economic analysis of water use: assessment of the economic and social importance of water use, assessment of developments compared to the situation described in the first RBMPs and the level of cost recovery of water services.
- Section 7. Brief overview of Programmes of Measures to achieve environmental objectives: measures envisaged in order to achieve RBMPs objectives, including funds planned and responsible authority.
- Section 8. Update of the register of all other plans and programmes within the scope of RBDs for individual basins, sectors, problems or water types: national, regional, district and municipal plans and programmes, including management plans for protected areas and water protection areas and regional master plans on water supply and collecting systems prepared by water operators
- Section 9. List of measures for public consultation, the results achieved in their implementation and relevant amendments to the plan (public consultation): information on the consultation process with the public and stakeholders at the various stages of RBMP development, including information on the consultation methods used and results thereof.
- Section 10. Transboundary coordination in updating RBMPs (2016 – 2021): information on transboundary consultations and exchange of information to develop RBMPs.
- Section 11. Competent authorities in water management: This section indicates the competent authorities in water management.
- Section 12. Contact persons and procedures for obtaining documentation and information on Programmes of Measures and monitoring data
- Section 13. Strategic environmental assessment of the draft RBMP.

Measures in the Programme of Measures and Driving forces:

The Programmes of Measures in RBMPs include measures to control and reduce the impact on water and ecosystems from various human activities which are related to the driving forces that cause them: urbanization, industry, agriculture, forestry, climate change, energy – hydropower plants, Energy - other than hydropower plants, fisheries and aquaculture, flood protection, tourism and recreation, transport, and unknown driving force (other). There are cases where a given measure is planned to deal with more than one driving force. Each measure provides for concrete action to achieve the relevant environmental objectives in response to the specific pressure. The measures and concrete actions in the Programmes of Measures in the four RBMPs comply with the catalogue of measures prepared at national level:

1. Urban areas: construction, reconstruction or modernization of collecting systems and urban wastewater treatment plants, construction, recultivation and closure of municipal waste landfills, efficiency in water use;
2. Industry, incl. mining and old pollution sources: construction or modernization of waste water treatment plants for industrial waste water, reduction and prevention of pollution by persistent organic pollutants/priority substances, remediation of contaminated sites, efficiency in water use;
3. Agriculture: limiting the pollution with nitrates and pesticides from agricultural sources, raising farmers'

- awareness, reducing water losses in irrigation, improving the flow regime;
4. Forestry: improving forest management in the watershed of surface water bodies intended for drinking water supply (DWS), implementation of projects related to increasing forest cover and restoring forestry potential and similar actions for drinking water protection;
  5. Energy: improving the hydro-morphological conditions of water bodies, improving the longitudinal continuity of rivers, protection and improving of protection areas etc., improving the flow regime;
  6. Management: research to identify the pollution of surface and groundwater, improve monitoring, adopt/update legislation in the field of water protection, use and management etc.;
  7. Transport: improve the longitudinal continuity of rivers, actions for prevention or control of pollution from transport activities, control on the collection and transport of ship waste, elaboration and application of instructions and measures to prevent the pollution of water from cargo loading and unloading activities etc.
  8. Climate Change: measures for adaptation to climate change; elaboration and implementation of a Drought Management Plan; exploring the options for the construction of facilities to capture and use biogas in waste water treatment plants etc.
  9. Water protection areas in the Natura 2000 network: improve water management in water protection areas by setting the requirements for the quantity and quality of water in the process of elaboration of management plans for protected areas and territories dependent on surface or groundwater etc.
  10. Flood protection: improve longitudinal continuity, actions for natural water retention, scientific research, improving the knowledge base to reduce uncertainty, improve the hydromorphological conditions of water bodies etc.
  11. Tourism and recreational activities: improve the longitudinal continuity of rivers, scientific research, improve the knowledge base to reduce uncertainty;
  12. Fisheries and aquaculture: reduce the nutrient pollution from agriculture, improve longitudinal continuity, research, improve the knowledge base to reduce uncertainty, actions for prevention or control the adverse impacts of invasive alien species or imported diseases, improve management;

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

A=Yes

#### 9.4 Additional information

- > River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) are elaborated and updated in stages, each stage involves consultations with the public and stakeholders:
  - a timetable and work programme for the production of the plan, including a statement of the consultation measures to be taken
  - interim overview of significant water management issues
  - draft RBMP and Programme of Measures

A key point in this consultation is the information in Section 5 on determining the objectives of environmental protection and the terms for achieving them, and the information in Section 7 on the designated measures to achieve these objectives. In more detail the activities within the public consultation and the results are given in Section 9 of the RBMPs.

Reports on the assessment of compliance with Natura 2000 sites were prepared for all RBMPs, together with environmental assessment reports which were also published for consultation.

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

A=Yes

#### 9.5 Additional information

- > Third National Action Plan on Climate Change for the period 2013-2020 ([http://www5.moew.government.bg/?wpfb\\_dl=17756](http://www5.moew.government.bg/?wpfb_dl=17756)) includes specific measures in two sectors:
  1. LAND USE, LAND USE CHANGE AND FORESTRY SECTOR - According to the Good Practice Guidance the sector covers six major categories of land: "Forests", "Arable land", "Pastures and meadows", "Wetlands", "Settlements" and "Other land". Each of these categories is divided into subcategories: "Land remaining in the same category of land use" and "Lands converted to other land uses". The determination of removals or emissions of greenhouse gases is based on carbon stocks in soil and plant biomass on the area covered by the relevant category of land use. Within this sector the following specific measure is included in the plan: "RESTORATION AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF WETLANDS. PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION OF WETLANDS IN FOREST AREAS, PEATLANDS, MARSHLANDS" with indicator of implementation - 200 ha restored / preserved wetlands and inventory and assessment of 1300 ha peatlands in forest areas. The expected effect (total reduction in tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> eq. by 2020) of the implementation of the measure is calculated to 4 681 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>.
  - AGRICULTURE SECTOR - Within the sector the following specific measure is included in the plan: "IMPROVEMENT OF THE MANAGEMENT OF PADDY FIELDS AND TECHNOLOGIES FOR PRODUCTION OF RICE" with indicator of implementation - Number of supported rice producers. The expected effect (total reduction in tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> eq. by 2020) of the implementation of the measure is calculated to 10 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>.

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

A=Yes

9.6 Additional information

> The main part of contribution for financing this type of projects for the programming period 2014-2020 is from the EU funds. These are:

- European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD): the Fund has a key role in financing activities in the field of biodiversity. Due to the nature of the contribution from the EAFRD (direct payments), this instrument support biodiversity-friendly practices for land management by complementing the one-time investment from the ERDF or CF.

- European Fund for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (EFMAF): financial support from this Fund for the purpose of biodiversity conservation is related to the promotion of a sustainable fishery sector and efficient use of resources by „reducing the impact of fishing on the marine environment” and by „protection and recovery of marine biodiversity and ecosystems and the services they provide, and promotion of the “aquaculture” sector for the implementation of practices with a high level of environmental protection”.

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

{1.6.1} KRA 1.6.i

Please select only one per square.

a) agriculture-wetland interactions	<input type="checkbox"/> C=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
b) climate change	<input type="checkbox"/> C=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
c) valuation of ecosystem services	<input type="checkbox"/> C=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes

9.8 Has your country submitted a request for Wetland City Accreditation of the Ramsar Convention, Resolution XII.10 ?

B=No

9.9 Has your country made efforts to conserve small wetlands in line with Resolution XIII. 21?

B=No

**Target 10**

The traditional knowledge innovations and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities relevant for the wise use of wetlands and their customary use of wetland resources, are documented, respected, subject to national legislation and relevant international obligations and fully integrated and reflected in the implementation of the Convention with a full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities at all relevant levels.

[Reference to Aichi Target 18]

10.1 Have case studies, participation in projects or successful experiences on cultural aspects of wetlands been compiled. Resolution VIII.19 and Resolution IX.21? (Action 6.1.6)

B=No

10.2 Have the guidelines for establishing and strengthening local communities’ and indigenous people’s participation in the management of wetlands been used or applied such as (Resolution VII. 8) (Action 6.1.5)

Please select only one per square.

a) stakeholders, including local communities and indigenous people are represented on National Ramsar Committees or similar bodies	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=In Preparation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
--	---

b) involvement and assistance of indigenous people's and community-based groups, wetland education centres and non-governmental organizations with the necessary expertise to facilitate the establishment of participatory approaches	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=In Preparation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
--	---

10.3 Traditional knowledge and management practices relevant for the wise use of wetlands have been documented and their application encouraged (Action 6.1.2)

A=Yes

### 10.3 Additional information

> Management plans:

The Protected Areas Act (PAA) requires the elaboration of management plans for protected areas. Besides the Act there is also a special regulation which determines a comprehensive procedure related to the elaboration of management plans (MP) for protected areas. Management plans are obligatory for the categories of National parks, Nature parks, Reserves and Maintained reserves. For the other two categories – Protected areas and Natural landmarks management plans could be also developed if there is an interested institution, for example NGO or Municipality, but only after the written approval by the Ministry of Environment and Water.

Management plans are developed on the basis of comprehensive socio-economic information, information about cultural and historical heritage, data about the infrastructure within and around the protected areas. Management plans provide zoning of the territories and define specific regimes for use and utilization of the separate zones according to their conservation value.

They are agreements between the interested parties, namely the protected area's managers and local population. They are tools for development of opportunities for sustainable development and use of natural resources.

Management plans are developed for a period of 10 years. For the National parks on every 4 years from the MP entry into force a special public hearing is held which aims to assess the management plan implementation.

MPs are being developed with priority for those sites which are internationally recognized such as Ramsar sites, Biosphere reserves, World Heritage Sites, etc.

### Target 11

Wetland functions, services and benefits are widely demonstrated, documented and disseminated. {1.4.} [Reference to Aichi Targets 1, 2, 13, 14]

11.1 Have ecosystem benefits/services provided by wetlands been researched in your country, recorded in documents like State of the Environment reporting, and the results promoted? {1.4.1} KRA 1.4.ii

C1=Partially

### 11.1 Additional information

If 'Yes' or 'Partially', please indicate, how many wetlands and their names

> The project "Wetland Ecosystem Services Mapping and Assessment in Bulgaria (WEMA)" was implemented in Bulgaria during the period September 2015 - April 2017. The main goal of the project was to provide ecological and biodiversity scientific basis for assessment of ecosystem services of wetlands in Bulgaria, which are not directly associated with freshwater bodies, do not belong to the coastal marine areas and are situated outside of the Natura 2000 network. These include three types of wetlands (further referred to as target wetlands). The project objectives include: (1) Identification and mapping of target wetlands on the territory of the entire country. (2) Accumulation of data on abiotic heterogeneity and biotic diversity in the target wetlands. (3) Assessment of ecological status and ecosystem services (detected or potential) of the targeted wetlands. As a result of the implementation of the project all wetlands on the territory of Bulgaria, outside of the Natura 2000 and protected areas were mapped. Ecosystems conditions and quantity of the services that they provide were assessed. The main results of the project are:

- 285 "Inland Wetlands" ecosystems were identified and mapped through GIS and field studies;
- The condition of identified ecosystems is assessed by direct measurement or analysis of available data on plant and animal diversity, soils, water, fires, dumping sites and invasive species;
- Assessed provisioning, regulating/maintenance and cultural ecosystem services;
- Individual maps of sub-types of ecosystems, their condition and the ecosystem services they provided are prepared;
- The information gathered and the assessments made are entered in a database.

The project "Wetland Ecosystem Services Mapping and Assessment in Bulgaria (WEMA)" was funded under

the Programme BG03 "Biodiversity and Ecosystems", financed by the Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area (FM of EEA 2009-2014) and implemented by the Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Research, Bulgarian Academy of Science.

The project "Freshwater Ecosystem Services Mapping and Assessment in Bulgaria" (FEMA), funded under the Programme BG03 "Biodiversity and ecosystems", financed by the Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area (FM of EEA 2009-2014) was also implemented in Bulgaria. The main goal of the project was the assessment of the freshwater ecosystems in Bulgaria by following the national methodology for assessment and by developing maps corresponding to the technical requirements of the National Information System for Biodiversity in freshwater basins, which are located outside of the Natura 2000 network and/or other protected areas. The overall goal of the project was to improve the integration of biodiversity into sectoral policies, in particular in the management of water resources, including an assessment of ecosystem goods/benefits and services that freshwater ecosystems provide to people and society.

As a result of the implementation of the project all fresh water and marine ecosystems on the territory of Bulgaria, outside of the Natura 2000 and protected areas were mapped. Ecosystems conditions and quantity of the ecosystem services that they provide were assessed. The project beneficiary was the Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Research, Bulgarian Academy of Science.

The next stage of the projects - Wetland and Freshwater Ecosystem Services Mapping and Assessment in Natura 2000 sites and protected areas is forthcoming to be implemented, after the implementation of which the results will be incorporated in one common national database.

11.2 Have wetland programmes or projects that contribute to poverty alleviation objectives or food and water security plans been implemented? {1.4.2} KRA 1.4.i

B=No

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

A=Yes

### 11.3 Additional information

If 'Yes' or 'Partially', please indicate, if known, how many Ramsar Sites and their names

> Management plans:

The Protected Areas Act (PAA) requires the elaboration of management plans for protected areas. Besides the Act there is also a special regulation which determines a comprehensive procedure related to the elaboration of management plans (MP) for protected areas. Management plans are obligatory for the categories of National parks, Nature parks, Reserves and Maintained reserves. For the other two categories – protected areas and natural landmarks management plans could be also developed if there is an interested institution, for example NGO or Municipality, but only after the written approval by the MOEW.

Management plans are developed on the basis of comprehensive socio-economic information, information about cultural and historical heritage, data about the infrastructure within and around the protected areas. Management plans provide zoning of the territories and define specific regimes for use and utilization of the separate zones according to their conservation value.

They are agreements between the interested parties, namely the protected area's managers and local population. They are tools for development of opportunities for sustainable development and use of natural resources.

Management plans are developed for a period of 10 years. For the National parks on every 4 years from the MP entry into force a special public hearing is held which aims to assess the management plan implementation.

MPs are being developed with priority for those sites which are internationally recognized such as Ramsar sites, Biosphere reserves, World Heritage Sites, etc.

11.4 Have cultural values of wetlands been included in the management planning for Ramsar Sites and other wetlands including traditional knowledge for the effective management of sites (Resolution VIII.19)? {1.4.3}{1.4.4} KRA 1.4.iii

A=Yes

### 11.4 Additional information

If 'Yes' or 'Partially', please indicate, if known, how many Ramsar Sites and their names

> Please see additional information in point 11.3

## Target 12

Restoration is in progress in degraded wetlands, with priority to wetlands that are relevant for biodiversity conservation, disaster risk reduction, livelihoods and/or climate change mitigation and adaptation. {1.8.} [Reference to Aichi Targets 14 and 15].

12.1 Have priority sites for wetland restoration been identified? {1.8.1} KRA 1.8.i

A=Yes

## 12.1 Additional information

> The National Action Plan for Conservation of Wetlands of High Significance in Bulgaria for the period 2013 - 2022 includes horizontal measures for protection and wise use of wetlands.

Point 7.3. of the Plan includes a list of specific priority measures / projects for protection and improvement the ecological status of wetlands included in the Plan.

## 12.2 Have wetland restoration/rehabilitation programmes, plans or projects been effectively implemented?

{1.8.2} KRA 1.8.i

A=Yes

## 12.2 Additional information

If 'Yes' or 'Partially', please indicate, if available the extent of wetlands restored

> <https://lagoon.biodiversity.bg/our-work-at-the-moment-3-44>

Project title: Maintain the Man-Lake Symbiosis for the Benefit of Species and Habitats of EU conservation concern / LIFE17 NAT/BG/000558

Short name: The Lagoon of Life

Main objectives of the Project:

1. To ensure full-scale restoration of the ecological processes supporting the unique biodiversity of Atanasovsko Lake;
2. To establish a self-sustaining and financially viable mechanism to allow for the long-term conservation management of Atanasovsko Lake;
3. To promote the benefits generated by Natura 2000 site Atanasovsko Lake.

## 12.3 Have the Guidelines for Global Action on Peatlands and on Peatlands, climate change and wise use (Resolutions VIII.1 and XII.11) been implemented including?

Please select only one per square.

a) Knowledge of global resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not relevant <input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
b) Education and public awareness on peatlands	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not relevant <input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
c) Policy and legislative instruments	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not relevant <input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
d) Wise use of peatlands	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not relevant <input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
e) Research networks, regional centres of expertise, and institutional capacity	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not relevant <input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
f) International cooperation	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not relevant <input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes



g) Implementation and support	<input type="checkbox"/> Y=Not relevant <input type="checkbox"/> X=Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
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### Target 13

Enhanced sustainability of key sectors such as water, energy, mining, agriculture, tourism, urban development, infrastructure, industry, forestry, aquaculture and fisheries when they affect wetlands, contributing to biodiversity conservation and human livelihoods

[Reference to Aichi Targets 6 and 7]

13.1 Are Strategic Environmental Assessment practices applied when reviewing policies, programmes and plans that may impact upon wetlands? {1.3.3} {1.3.4} KRA 1.3.ii

A=Yes

#### 13.1 Additional information

> Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) procedure is provided for plans and programmes in the field of forestry, agriculture, fishery, transport, energetics, tourism, territory development, management of waters, management of wastes, etc. in the implementation of which considerable impact on the environment is possible.

13.2 Are Environmental Impact Assessments made for any development projects (such as new buildings, new roads, extractive industry) from key sectors such as water, energy, mining, agriculture, tourism, urban development, infrastructure, industry, forestry, aquaculture and fisheries that may affect wetlands? {1.3.4} {1.3.5} KRA 1.3.iii

A=Yes

#### 13.2 Additional information

> For all investment proposals (for construction of new transport infrastructure - roads, highways, railways, mining projects, building projects, urban development, projects in the field of energy sector, industry, forestry, aquaculture, fisheries) during the EIA procedure the competent authorities require extensive research and analysis, in cases where of direct or indirect effects on wetlands are exist. Special attention is given to the protection of the hydrological regime and the risk of collision with the moving species. In the course of the EIA procedures in order to minimize the negative impact specific mitigation measures are envisaged to be implemented.

### Goal 4. Enhancing implementation

[Reference to Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, 6, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 17]

### Target 15

Ramsar Regional Initiatives with the active involvement and support of the Parties in each region are reinforced and developed into effective tools to assist in the full implementation of the Convention. {3.2.}

15.1 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

A=Yes

#### 15.1 Additional information

If 'Yes' or 'Planned', please indicate the regional initiative(s) and the collaborating countries of each initiative

> • Ramsar Regional Initiative on Black Sea and Azov Sea Coastal Wetlands - BlackSeaWet. The Initiative is supported by Contracting Parties in the region - Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Turkey and Ukraine have supported the initiative.

• Ramsar Regional Initiative on Mediterranean wetlands - MedWet. The Initiative is supported from Governments of countries: Albania, Algeria, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Syrian Arab Republic, The FYR of Macedonia, Tunisia, Turkey, Palestinian Authority.

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

B=No

### Target 16

Wetlands conservation and wise use are mainstreamed through communication, capacity development,

education, participation and awareness {4.1}  
 [Reference to Aichi Targets 1 and 18]

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

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  
*Please select only one per square.*

a) At the national level	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> C=In Progress
b) Sub-national level	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> C=In Progress
c) Catchment/basin level	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> C=In Progress
d) Local/site level	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes <input type="checkbox"/> C=In Progress

16.1 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  
 > Management plans for wetlands include part with CEPA actions and programme on local/site level.

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

a) at Ramsar Sites  
 E=Exact Number (centres)  
 > 9

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

b) at other wetlands  
 E=Exact Number (centres)  
 > 2

16.2 Additional information

If centres are part of national or international networks, please describe the networks  
 > 1. Belene Islands Complex - Persina Nature Park Visitor Centre  
 2. Durankulak Lake - Nature Conservation centre  
 3. Dragoman Marsh Karst Complex - Dragoman marsh Wetland Conservation Centre  
 4. Site Poda - Poda Ecological Centre  
 5. Pomorie Lake - Pomorie Lake Visitor Centre  
 6. Complex Ropotamo - Ropotamo Reserve Visitor Centre  
 7. Atanasovsko Lake - Atanasovsko Lake Visitor Centre  
 8. Srebarna - The Nature Museum in Srebarna village  
 9. Vaya Lake - Vaya Ecopark for Biodiversity and Alternative Tourism

16.3 Does the Contracting Party {4.1.3} KRA 4.1.iii

*Please select only one per square.*

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a) promote stakeholder participation in decision-making on wetland planning and management	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
b) specifically involve local stakeholders in the selection of new Ramsar Sites and in Ramsar Site management?	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes

### 16.3 Additional information

If 'Yes' or 'Partially', please provide information about the ways in which stakeholders are involved  
 > All most important wetlands in Bulgaria are part of the National Natura 2000 Network. Pursuant to the Ordinance on the conditions and procedures for the development and approval of management plans for protected zones (Natura 2000 sites), prior to final approval by the Minister of Environment and Water Management plans are subject to public consultation with the affected community and all stakeholders. Also, according to the current Ordinance on the development of management plans for protected areas, Draft management plans for national parks, nature parks and maintained reserves are subject to mandatory public hearing.

In the process of developing of management plans for reserves, natural monuments and protected areas public hearings are being held only:

1. if it is explicitly pointed out in the assignment;
  2. in the case of a positive decision of the Ministry of Environment and Water in connection with a request of municipalities, NGOs or owners of land, forests and water areas within the protected area - subject of the plan.
- Also out of these specific cases, according to the Ordinance, assigners or contractors can organize public hearings, seminars, informal meetings and other forms of public participation for public authorities interested in the development of the management plans.

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

B=No

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

B=No

### 16.6 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), b) or c) below? {4.1.7} KRA 4.1.vi:

*Please select only one per square.*

a) Ramsar Site managers	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
b) other MEA national focal points	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
c) other ministries, departments and agencies	<input type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes

### 16.6 Additional information

If 'Yes' or 'Partially', please describe what mechanisms are in place  
 > Focal points of the other MEA in the field of biodiversity and all relevant stakeholders always participate in working groups on wetlands issues.

### 16.7 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 COP13? {4.1.8}

A=Yes

### 16.7 Additional information

> Traditionally, each year the World Wetlands Day in Bulgaria is celebrated with campaigns over the country, organized by the regional structures of the Ministry of Environment and Water and directed to kindergartens, schools and universities, and including open lessons, exhibitions, presentations, activities of different environmental school clubs, competition, birdwatching tours.

16.8 Have campaigns, programmes, and projects (other than for World Wetlands Day-related activities) been carried out since COP13 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

### 16.8 Additional information

If these and other CEPA activities have been undertaken by other organizations, please indicate this

> CEPA activities related wetlands under different projects have been undertaken by:

Bulgarian Biodiversity Foundation (BBF) under project:

- LIFE17 NAT/BG/000558 The Lagoon of Life - Main objectives of the Project are:

1. To ensure full-scale restoration of the ecological processes supporting the unique biodiversity of Atanasovsko Lake;

2. To establish a self-sustaining and financially viable mechanism to allow for the long-term conservation management of Atanasovsko Lake;

3. To promote the benefits generated by Natura 2000 site Atanasovsko Lake.

Green Balkans NGO

Regularly provides CEPA activities for Red-breasted geese at Durankulak and Shabla Lakes; at Pomorie Lake the campaign is on-going at the visitor centre.

Balkani Wildlife Society NGO

The necessity for out-of-school environmental practice bred the idea for establishing the Wetlands conservation educational centre "Dragoman marsh". Due to the lack of awareness of these nature territories and the low support for their wise and sustainable use, today they are still being destroyed. Education activities are the long-term solution for the lack of responsible attitude of society to the environment.

Participation of young people and locals in conservation of these valuable territories is one of the main goals of Balkani Wildlife Society.

WWF Bulgaria

LIFE12 NAT/BG/001011 Project title: Conservation and restoration of Natura 2000 rheophilic fish species and their migratory routes in key SCIs in Bulgaria -

Apart from field work, one of the goals of the "Free Fish" project was to reach as many people as possible and tell them the stories about the rivers and their inhabitants, the problems and their solutions.

The Nature Conservation Centre (NCC) Poda was created by the Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds / BirdLife Bulgaria (BSPB) :

Main activities of the BSPB Poda Centre include:

- preservation of Poda Protected Site and the protected areas around Burgas;
- improving the breeding, feeding and staging conditions of the birds in the area;
- monitoring of the birds of Poda and the rest of the Burgas Wetlands Complex;
- preventing and halting unfavourable for birds human activities;
- providing information and facilitating the visitors in observing birds and the natural values of Burgas region;
- development of the ecotourism as a mean for sustainable Nature conservation;
- educational activities aiming in increase the conservation culture of the youth;
- training and courses in ecology, biodiversity conservation and ecotourism with university students, including internship;
- attracting people from Burgas to participate in the conservation activities of the Nature Conservation Centre Poda;
- participation in local, national and international projects of BSPB;
- organising and hosting workshops, lectures, presentations and other in the hall of the centre

### Target 17

Financial and other resources for effectively implementing the fourth Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016 – 2024 from all sources are made available. {4.2.}

[Reference to Aichi Target 20]

17.1a Have Ramsar contributions been paid in full for 2018, 2019 and 2020? {4.2.1} KRA 4.2.i

A=Yes

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

B=No

17.3 [For Contracting Parties with a development assistance agency only ('donor countries')]: Has the

agency provided funding to support wetland conservation and management in other countries? {3.3.1}  
KRA 3.3.i

Z=Not Applicable

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

Z=Not Applicable

17.5 [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

17.6 Has any financial support been provided by your country to the implementation of the Strategic Plan?

Z=Not Applicable

## Target 18

International cooperation is strengthened at all levels {3.1}

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

B=No

18.2 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)? {3.1.2} {3.1.3} KRA 3.1.iv

A=Yes

### 18.2 Additional information

> With Ordinance № РД-444/23.06.2015 г. of the Minister of Environment and Water a working group between competent authorities has been established on the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity, chaired by the Deputy Minister of Environment and Water. All focal points of the conventions related to biodiversity are members of the working group.

18.3 Has your country received assistance from one or more UN and other global and regional bodies and agencies (e.g. UNEP, UNDP, WHO, FAO, UNECE, ITTO) or the Convention's IOPs in its implementation of the Convention? {4.4.1} KRA 4.4.ii.

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

B=No

18.4 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

### 18.4 Additional information

If 'Yes' or 'Partially', please indicate the networks and wetlands involved

> Project: Improving the conservation effectiveness of wetlands

Project acronym: WetMainAreas

[https://wetmainareas.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Final\\_Publication.pdf](https://wetmainareas.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Final_Publication.pdf)

Partnership:

- LP (PP1) University of Forestry - Bulgaria
- PP2 Goulandris Natural History Museum/ Greek Biotope-Wetland Centre - Greece
- PP3 Faculty of Economics, South-West University "Neofit Rilski" - Bulgaria
- PP4 National Observatory of Athens - Greece
- PP5 National Environmental Agency - Albania
- PP6 Macedonian Academy of Science and Arts, Investigation centre for environment and materials, RNM
- PP7 Thessaly Region - Greece
- PP8 Municipality of Gotse Delchev - Bulgaria

Observer partners:

- PP9 Ministry of Environment and Energy, Department of Biodiversity and protected areas - Greece
- PP10 State Environmental Inspectorate - RNM

18.5 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

#### 18.5 Additional information

> The most of the Ramsar sites have their own web page on which there are information about the wetlands and their biodiversity.

18.6 Have all transboundary wetland systems been identified? {3.5.1} KRA 3.5.i

A=Yes

#### 18.6 Additional information

> Project: Improving the conservation effectiveness of wetlands

Project acronym: WetMainAreas

[https://wetmainareas.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Final\\_Publication.pdf](https://wetmainareas.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Final_Publication.pdf)

Result: BalkanMed wetland connectivity indicators and information graphics - Layers of structural wetlands connectivity are available on the created within the project Balkan-Mediterranean Wetland Geoportal:

<http://185.17.146.157>

18.7 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

D=Planned

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

A=Yes

#### 18.8 Additional information

> Bulgaria is a contracting party in the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA).

## Target 19

Capacity building for implementation of the Convention and the 4th Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016 – 2024 is enhanced.

[Reference to Aichi Targets 1 and 17]

19.1 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

19.2 Are wetland conservation and wise-use issues included in formal education programmes?

D=Planned

19.3 How many opportunities for wetland site manager training have been provided since COP13? {4.1.5} KRA 4.1.iv

a) at Ramsar Sites

E=Exact number (opportunities)

> 0

19.3 How many opportunities for wetland site manager training have been provided since COP13? {4.1.5} KRA 4.1.iv

b) at other wetlands

E=Exact number (Opportunities)

> 0

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

A=Yes

#### 19.4 Additional information

If 'Yes', please indicate how the Reports have been used for monitoring

> The previous Ramsar National Reports have been used for monitoring of implementation of the Convention in process of implementation of priorities and measures included in the National Plan for the Conservation of

the Most Important Wetlands in Bulgaria for the period 2013 - 2022.

