

# 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)

> Germany

### Designated Ramsar Administrative Authority

#### Name of Administrative Authority

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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)

› Another Ramsar Site was designated in Germany ('Rosenheim Basin Bogs').

2)

› The only German Ramsar Site on the Montreux Record ('Wadden Sea, East Frisia Wadden Sea, Dollart') was removed from the record on 3 March 2020 by the Secretariat. There and in the 'Lower Elbe, Barnkrug, Otterndorf' site, extensive reparcelling through land purchases with rewetting was carried out.

3)

› A management plan was completed for the SPA 'Inn & Salzach', which contains large sections of the 'Lower Inn between Haiming and Neuhaus' Ramsar Site. Furthermore, programmes of bird protection measures for the Special Protection Areas (SPA) were issued for all Ramsar Sites in North Rhine-Westphalia in accordance with the requirements of the EU Birds Directive: already in 2011 for the SPA 'Lower Rhine' (which is largely identical with the Ramsar Site of the same name), in 2018 for the SPA 'Weser floodplains' (which includes the Ramsar Site 'Weser barrage') and in 2019 for the SPA 'Wastewater irrigation fields Münster' (which includes the Ramsar Site). Several EU LIFE projects have been carried out or are ongoing in the SPA 'Lower Rhine' to improve habitat types pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the habitats of trigger bird species. A management plan is being drawn up in Lower Saxony for the 'Duemmer' Ramsar Site.

4)

› In the area of environmental education, in Baden-Württemberg alone an average of 7 Ramsar events with approx. 420 participants were held each year that had a direct connection to the 'Rhin Supérieur' Ramsar Site (e.g. French-German school pupil meetings in the Ramsar Site, expert meeting for World Wetlands Day etc.). On top of this, there were 60 events held in the 'Rhin Supérieur' Ramsar Site on the topic of floodplain habitats attended by approx. 500 adults and 1,000 children and further events within the framework of the site management of the Ramsar Site 'Lake Constance: Wollmatinger Ried - Giehrenmoos & Mindelsee'

5)

› Several projects to develop biodiversity were implemented. For example in the 'Rhin Supérieur' Ramsar Site with funding of around 2 million euros ('Ramsar Biodiversität': project duration from 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2021 <https://www.interreg-oberrhein.eu/projet/schutz-von-sechs-gefahreneten-tierarten-im-ramsargebiet-rhin-supérieur-oberrhein/> and 'Ramsar Rhinature/ Rams'artenschutz' project duration from 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2018 <https://www.interreg-oberrhein.eu/projet/ramsartenschutz-erhaltung-bedrohter-zielarten-und-ihre-habitate-im-ramsargebiet-oberrhein/>). In the 'Lower Elbe, Barnkrug, Otterndorf' Ramsar Site on the Taube Elbe with the Penkefitzer Lake and the Dannenberg meadows, water retention measures were carried out and were highly successful for waterbirds and meadow waders. Extensive hedgehog-free zones were created on the islands of the 'Wadden Sea, East Frisia Wadden Sea, Dollart' Ramsar Site. Hedgehogs are alien species on the islands and the main predators of meadow- and shore-breeding birds.

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

3)

› It has proven extremely difficult to implement nature conservation-related requirements (as formulated in the protection and conservation objectives of the sites and/or in the management plans) in terms of gaining the acceptance of those directly affected (users) and the general public. In addition, there are wide variations in the participation of NGOs.

4)

› In compliance with existing EU regulations, competing demands e.g. for the utilisation of space within and in the immediate vicinity of protected areas must be taken into account accordingly. Gaining stakeholder acceptance usually entails a very intensive and time-consuming public information and PR campaign as part of the management plan drafting process. There is often little public interest in this topic.

5)

› It is often extremely difficult to implement measures to protect breeding waterbirds, and attempts to manage predatory mammals are not always sufficiently successful. Furthermore, discharges of nutrients and pesticides are adversely impacting the status of wetlands due to a lack of buffer strips along riverbanks.

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

2)

> To continue implementing the Natura 2000 network by developing site-specific management plans and creating synergies with the implementation of the Water Framework Directive (WFD), the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), the EU Floods Directive and the National Strategy on Biological Diversity. The requirements of the Ramsar Convention are pivotal to the implementation of Natura 2000 and biodiversity strategies. Specific examples include plans for further peatland renaturation projects, surveys and peatland conservation, as part of the Bavarian government's 2050 climate programme.

3)

> To draw up the remaining management plans for the Ramsar Sites. For those Natura 2000 sites and designated Ramsar Sites which already have management, maintenance and development plans and/or formulated protection and conservation objectives in place, to make a more concerted effort to implement these plans.

4)

> In Lower Saxony a new integrated LIFE project is starting for meadows and wetlands (LIFE19 IPE/DE/000004, project duration until 2030).

5)

> With management plans complete, the focus turns to implementation. For example, programmes of bird protection measures have been completed for the SPAs 'Weser floodplains' and 'Wastewater irrigation fields Münster' (which include the Ramsar Sites 'Weser barrage' and 'Wastewater irrigation fields Münster'), and attention is now focussed on the implementation process. Regular implementation meetings are held with the authorities, biological stations, land owners, land users and nature conservation associations to assess the status of implementation and agree implementation priorities. Other habitat-improving measures, such as the development of reed beds, small waterbodies and flood channels, are also under preparation.

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

> Overall, communication between the Ramsar Secretariat and the German federal government authorities is considered to be very good.

We would appreciate early availability of the national reporting format (to make it easier to incorporate information and coordinate with the Federal Länder; this would not only facilitate a more detailed report in the long term, but would also allow sustained communication and the sharing of content and links between Wetlands of International Importance and other types of protected areas).

## 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)

> The work of the IOPs plays an important role in the implementation of the Convention. Germany's environmental organisations are integrated into the social environment in numerous different ways, and are active at many different levels. However, in Germany the three IOPs active in this regard (NABU as Birdlife Partner, IUCN, WWF) do not serve as IOPs in this context. NGO work is supported at a national and international level by the German government and its involvement in wetland and river basin-related bodies is highly valued.

## F. How can national implementation of the Ramsar Convention be better linked with implementation of other multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), especially those in the 'biodiversity cluster' (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)?

> Close links with other agreements such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the World Heritage Convention (WHC), the Washington Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement with its goal to address the global response to the threat of climate change in the context of sustainable development are desirable, and should be coordinated via the Biodiversity Liaison Group. Overall, Germany favours even closer links between the biodiversity-related conventions, particularly in the area of harmonised reporting and CEPA work.

In Germany, the links between the UNESCO World Heritage Convention and the Ramsar Convention are reflected, in particular, in the Wadden Sea trilateral World Heritage Site / Ramsar Site. The conservation of this wetland site is an integral part of the management of the joint World Heritage Site. Designation as Ramsar Sites is taken into account in the identification of sites for potential UNESCO World Heritage or UNESCO biosphere reserve nomination.

Through EU environmental law, Germany is closely connected with the relevant international agreements. As a party to the CBD and CITES, for example, the EU transposes these conventions directly into valid law for all EU Member States by adopting EU Regulations.

With regard to CMS, there is mutual involvement in projects concerning wetland-dependent species e.g. within the framework of AEWA.

The future Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework of the CBD will be important for the implementation of the Ramsar Convention and better linking it with other biodiversity-related MEAs globally and nationally. Furthermore, the majority of Germany's Ramsar Sites and other wetlands have close ties with AEWA, given their importance as breeding, resting and overwintering sites for migratory birds. Further links can be established with CMS for migratory species that inhabit our wetlands and waterbodies. Coastal and marine wetlands are closely interlinked with the Helsinki Convention (Baltic Sea) and the OSPAR Convention (North Sea). Wetland conservation is also intertwined with the UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, now a global convention, and the UN Convention on the Law of Non Navigational Uses of International Watercourses, both of which have been ratified by Germany.

**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?**

> The Water Framework Directive (WFD), the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) and the river basin-related EU Floods Directive provide the basis for an integrated water policy in the EU. Implementation of these directives ensures that water is used and managed sustainably. River basins, i.e. all rivers with their tributaries, coastal waters, groundwater and marine waters, are viewed as complete ecosystems that transcend national boundaries. Wherever possible, the conservation and use of water should be harmonised. Unlike their earlier counterparts, the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) prioritise water ecology and also consider other protected areas that rely on waterbodies. Implementing these directives therefore helps to conserve and restore biodiversity. The joint WFD implementation strategy of the European Commission and EU Member States offers practical assistance in the form of 'Horizontal guidance on the role of wetlands in the WFD'.

In the international arena, Germany's involvement in a wide range of development cooperation projects is helping to develop integrative water resources management (WRM) policies, which in the long term can help to conserve natural resources and reduce poverty.

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

> Implementation of the Ramsar Convention in Germany entails complex legal regulations and procedures. Corresponding instruments are not usually tailored to wetlands specifically, but instead focus on the relationship with nature and the environment in general and their services and values for which mechanisms have been developed over several decades.

In this context, we would also like to mention the 'Flyway Vision' of the 'Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative' highlighting the transboundary nature of the Wadden Sea's protected areas, which was signed at the 12th Trilateral Government Conference on the Protection of the Wadden Sea in 2014. This formed the basis for cooperation between the three Wadden Sea states (Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands) on the transboundary Wadden Sea Ramsar Site. The main objectives of the trilateral Wadden Sea cooperation are the protection and joint management of the Wadden Sea.

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

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

## 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 type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" 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 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
h) National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans drawn up under the CBD	<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

i) National policies on energy and mining	<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
j) National policies on tourism	<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
k) National policies on urban development	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y=Not Relevant
l) National policies on infrastructure	<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
m) National policies on industry	<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
n) National policies on aquaculture and fisheries {1.3.3} KRA 1.3.i	<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
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

### 1.1 Additional information

› The Federal Government's planned 2035 Arable Farming Strategy, the draft of which is currently in the official discussion process, addresses the problem of mineralisation and drainage of moor soils under the area of action 'climate protection' (BMEL 2019). In this context, the general goal to extend climate action in arable farming is set. This can be achieved by preserving and further building up the humus content in organic soils in order to store carbon. Management concepts for organic soils are to be developed as a suitable measure to this end. However, the strategy does not adequately take account of the conservation and use of wetlands in agriculture as the climate goals and measures in the Arable Farming Strategy discussion paper are not quantified.

Furthermore, the EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) opens up the possibility to fund wetland conservation measures under Pillar II via the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). The Länder are responsible for the development and programming of corresponding conservation and support measures. The Federal Government supports the Länder through the Joint Task for the Improvement of Agricultural Structures and Coastal Protection (GAK).

Germany is committed to implementing the United Nations' global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including goal 6 (clean water and sanitation) and goal 14 (life below water), and also supports their achievement in several countries.

The Trilateral Wadden Sea Plan sets out a coordinated, comprehensive management plan for the Wadden Sea region at multilateral level.

Germany is a party in 6 international river basin commissions which advance the transboundary protection of water bodies and water-dependent ecosystems. The commissions also serve as platforms to coordinate the

implementation of the Water Framework Directive and the EU Floods Directive across the entire river basins. For instance, the International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine (ICPR), based in Koblenz (Germany), is tackling the challenges of the future in the areas mentioned. The 'Rhine 2040' programme was adopted during the Conference of Rhine Ministers in February 2020. An important goal that continues to be pursued relates to the continuity of the Rhine and its tributaries for fish. After some successes that enabled the migration of fish to their spawning habitats, the countries of the Rhine river basin are continuing to work together to eliminate obstructions to migration or to restore passage in these areas. Many Ramsar Sites are located along the Rhine: 'Rhin Supérieur', 'Rhine Floodplains between Eltville and Bingen' and 'Lower Rhine'. Among others, the ICPR published the report "Waterbirds in the international Rhine Valley: numbers, distribution and trends" in 2020. The report highlights the importance of waterbirds as visible and good indicators of the ecological quality of the habitats they use.

Germany's federal structure means that the requirements of waterbodies and wetlands, as a subsection of water protection and nature conservation, are addressed at national, regional and local level, both in separate sectoral planning procedures and in plans for the region as a whole. Most Ramsar Sites are entirely or predominantly Natura 2000 sites, and therefore generally require the preparation of Natura 2000 management plans.

Poverty eradication is a factor in all development cooperation projects relevant for wetlands.

National level: Germany has a National Strategy on Biological Diversity aimed at conserving different habitats such as oceans and coastlines, lakes and ponds, rivers, floodplains and peatlands.

Under German water legislation, programmes and plans for water extraction are aimed at the sustainable use and conservation of water resources. Due consideration is given to wetland conservation and protection aspects. For example, plans to implement the Water Framework Directive (WFD) take wetlands into consideration. Germany has a National Strategy Plan for Aquaculture. The Climate Action Programme 2020 and the Climate Action Plan 2050 envisage an agreement between the Federation and Länder on climate action through peatland conservation targets, which determine how peatlands in Germany are managed. The drafting of this agreement is already underway. A peatland conservation strategy of the Federal Government is currently being developed. Furthermore, the Climate Action Plan 2050 also stipulates the drafting and implementation of a strategy to "preserve peatlands (organic soils)".

The National Forest Programme and the Forest Strategy 2020 safeguard the function of forests as the last refuge of species, whose habitats outside of forests are being increasingly damaged (e.g. wetland species). The Federal Government's Action Programme for Insect Protection takes account of the needs and protection of insects across all habitats.

In addition, the BMU is currently working on a national water strategy with the goal of highlighting ways to achieve sustainable water management by 2050. The intention is to develop guiding principles for a near-natural, area-specific hydrological regime which take account of climate change and adequately reflect use requirements.

Federal Länder: The Lower Saxony regional planning programme includes the conservation and development of marine habitats worthy of protection. The programme 'Long-term ecological forest development in Lower Saxony' (LÖWE) includes guidelines aimed, among other things, at avoiding drainage measures, restoring and developing wetlands, stagnant and flowing waters, and protecting particularly sensitive areas. As a contribution to the National Strategy on Biological Diversity, 10% of the Länder forest area was permanently allocated to natural forest development (natural forest development on 10% of Lower Saxony's area covered by forest (NWE10) as a contribution to the National Strategy on Biological Diversity — (pursuant to joint circular order of the Lower Saxony Ministry of Agriculture and the Lower Saxony Ministry for the Environment from 1 July 2018)). A total of 333 square kilometres of the Lower Saxony state forest, including the "waldfähige Naturentwicklungszone" (potential forest natural development zone) of the Harz National Park and areas under state and peatland management, has been left to their natural development. One of the most valuable criteria for these areas of natural forest development within closed forest areas is the condition of other near-natural areas such as peatlands or floodplains.

Coastal protection measures in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania include the restoration and improvement of wetlands. The Thuringian biodiversity strategy also calls for significant improvements to the ecological and chemical status of waters in line with the WFD by 2020. The rural development initiative in Thuringia sets out framework conditions for agri-environmental measures relating to the conservation of humid grassland and populations of meadow waders.

Motivated by the need for climate action, adaptation to climate change, water resources management, and species and landscape conservation, the long-term goal is to restore peatlands, most of which have undergone extensive anthropogenic changes, to a near-natural state wherever possible. All peatland-rich Länder have programmes and strategies for peatland conservation, which generally also include a reference to climate change mitigation.

Both the Federal Government and the Länder have given due consideration to the relevant requirements of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands in the formulation of their biodiversity strategies; Saxony-Anhalt is a typical example. The conservation and development of wetlands is also a top priority in the Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania 2012 biodiversity strategy.

A key goal of the Lower Saxony nature conservation strategy is to draw up and implement measures promoting the good status of inland waters including floodplains, coastal and transitional waters, and groundwater in cooperation with the water management, agriculture and forestry sectors. The Master Plan

Ems 2050 is dedicated to the ecological and economic further development of the Ems region, and also addresses the conservation status of and measures needed to preserve and improve the Ems estuary as part of the Ramsar Site 'Wadden Sea, East Frisia Wadden Sea, Dollart'. One of the aims of the integrated management plan for the Weser is to preserve the Weser estuary as part of the Ramsar Site 'Wadden Sea, Jade Bight, western Weser estuary' in harmony with the region's economic, cultural and social interests. The integrated management plan for the Elbe estuary aspires to coordinate and harmonise the needs of endangered species and habitats, including in the Ramsar Site 'Lower Elbe, Barnkrug, Ottendorf', with the interests of comprehensive sustainable and economic development.

The Lower Saxony law on the promotion of climate action and adaptation to the effects of climate change (NKlimaG) of 10 December 2020 stipulates that natural carbon sink capacities are to be preserved and increased (section 3(4)).

## 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.

C=Partially

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

2.3 Additional Information

> no change

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. )

A=Yes

2.5 Percentage of households linked to sewage system?

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

> 100

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

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

E=Exact number (percentage)

> 100

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

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

F=Less than (percentage)

> 1

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

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

C=Partially

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

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

G=More than (plants)

> 12400

2.10 How is the functional status of the wastewater treatment plants? If relevant to your country

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

A=Good

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

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

C=Functioning

2.12 Additional Information

> The implementation of Regulation (EU) 2020/741 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 May 2020 on minimum requirement for water use is currently being discussed in Germany. There are very few cases in which treated wastewater is reused.

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

SDG 6 Target 6.3.1.

R=Agriculture

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

B=No

### **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

> In Lower Saxony, voluntary eco-friendly management practices for agricultural land are eligible for grants under selected agro-environmental and climate mitigation schemes.

The management of the national parks has a wide range of measures in place to ensure the well-balanced use of the Wadden Sea in Schleswig-Holstein, Lower Saxony and Hamburg by the private sector. Examples include the planned revision of the North Sea maritime navigation ordinance (Nordsee-Befahrensverordnung) and salt marsh management measures.

As a rule, activities are confined to those wetlands not under the absolute protection of the Federal Nature Conservation Act (BNatSchG), where ecosystem-compatible uses are permitted.

Individual private-sector projects in wetland regions – such as industrial plant construction, commercial estates or excavations – are subject to the statutory provisions under legislation on environmental impact assessments, construction law, excavation law, mining legislation, water legislation and nature conservation law, which are designed to prevent or compensate for any adverse environmental impacts.

Application of the wise use principle in agriculture is crucial for many wetlands; management contracts under EU agricultural funding programmes and the EU structural funds for rural development aimed at extensification, alongside special usage contracts between nature conservation authorities and farmers, can help to achieve sustainable, eco-friendly management practices in wetlands. Examples include salt marshes in the Wadden Sea and on the Baltic Sea coast, extensive use of grassland and organic farming in flood plains. The Länder have devised targeted programmes and mechanisms for specific landscape characteristics.

For example, Bavaria operates a contract-based nature conservation programme, whereby owners and authorised users receive financial compensation for loss of earnings and the additional costs associated with providing voluntary services in managing valuable wetlands. The North Rhine-Westphalian cultivated landscape programme is organised along similar lines, providing financial support for the management of agricultural land in accordance with conservation principles.

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

At times, recreational and tourism use impairs the ecological functions and the wild fauna and flora of many wetlands. Germany is collaborating with tourism organisations and providers to implement the wise use principle with the aid of geographical and temporal access restrictions, improved signposting to avoid disturbances and other visitor guidance measures designed to provide information and support.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes

### 3.2 Additional information

> The following projects are cited as examples for Schleswig-Holstein: Brent Geese Days are organised with the involvement of the Hallig Islands Biosphere Reserve, NABU Schleswig-Holstein e. V., the national park administration in the coastal defence, national park and marine conservation agency (LKN.SH), Schutzstation Wadden Sea & the WWF Wadden Sea Office. At various locations along the west coast, the Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union (NABU), Jordsand Association, Schutzstation Wadden Sea, the WWF, National Park Service, Katinger Watt Nature Centre, Wiedingharde Information Centre, Elpersbüttel conference centre and Multimar Wadden Forum organise a range of excursions, tidal flat (wadden) walks and boat trips for nature lovers and amateur ornithologists under the heading "Westküsten-Vogelkiek" (West Coast Birdwatching). Similarly, 'Geese Weeks' are held in the Hamburg Wadden Sea National Park, organised by the Jordsand Association in collaboration with the Hamburg Wadden Sea National Park Administration. Each year since 2009, the Lower Saxony Wadden Sea National Park Administration has organised Migratory Bird Days in the Lower Saxony Wadden Sea National Park, comprising more than 250 events spread over nine days, highlighting the importance of the Wadden Sea for the East Atlantic Flyway. See: <http://www.zugvogeltage.de/>. The 'Migratory Bird Days' are a joint collaboration between private and government agencies and NGOs. In Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, the private sector is extensively involved in site management. For example, management of the SPA 'Wismar Bucht' has been taken over by "Regionalvereinigung Segeln Wismar Bucht e.V.", and management of the SPA 'Greifswalder Bodden' by the WWF. Management includes controlling use, particularly for tourism and leisure purposes. In the Müritz National Park area, visitors can take advantage of a 'crane ticket', thanks to a collaboration between the National Park Administration, a tourism company and a local public transport company.

In the Wetland of International Importance (WII) 'Lower Rhine', the gravel industry is undertaking such projects, e.g. in Orsoyer Rheinbogen and Diersfordter Waldsee. However, excavations on the Lower Rhine should generally be considered problematic for the Ramsar Site. In the Weser floodplains (with the WII 'Weser barrage'), excavations have an important function for selected target species, and are purposely remodelled to encourage nature and species conservation after industrial use has been discontinued.

The Kyffhäuser nature park administration regularly organises 'crane days' at the 'Helme water reservoir, Berga-Kelbra' site.

North Rhine-Westphalia has a network of biological stations which operate at district level and are tasked with managing protected areas, many of which are wetlands. In many places, they engage in contract-based nature conservation at administrative district level on behalf of the regional landscape authorities. Lower Saxony is also establishing a network of ecological stations to manage protected areas (primarily wetlands and three Ramsar Sites) at administrative district level. Existing ecological stations are recruiting additional staff and stepping up their training programmes, including the Wetlands of International Importance 'Duemmer', 'Elbe meadows Schnackenburg-Lauenburg' and 'Lake Steinhude'. The stations are involved in the on-site management of protected areas and contribute to their maintenance and development.

Two substrate manufacturers in Lower Saxony are developing and testing methods to cultivate and grow peat moss in peatland areas (particularly in areas where peat had previously been extracted). The goal is to establish the sound management of peat moss, after rewetting peatland areas, and use it, for example, as a peat substitute.

### 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

A=Yes

### 3.3 Additional information

> The existing financing measures to ensure that wetlands are conserved and sustainably managed through eco-friendly farming practices – such as management contracts for wet meadows, or hardship compensation – are continually updated to reflect the latest ecological findings and economic situation. The EU funding programmes for agricultural extensification and the structural funds for rural development are particularly relevant where wetlands are used agriculturally.

The Federal Government peatland conservation strategy currently under development also envisages incentivising the rewetting of drained peatlands. The principal mechanisms are based on financial support

(including support for sideline uses), tax concessions for selected agricultural holding structures, the realignment of the EU system of farming subsidies at national and Länder level, and the development of compensation models for specific biotope types on agricultural land.

The MEKA agri-environmental programmes and landscape management guidelines in Baden-Württemberg include incentives for the conservation and balanced use of wetlands.

Occasionally, the benefits from these mechanisms are supplemented by local initiatives for the conservation or renaturation of certain areas, such as the redevelopment programme for Upper Swabian lakes in Ravensburg, Baden-Württemberg, the Hallig Islands programme in the Wadden Sea, Schleswig-Holstein, and the diversion feeding programme for resting cranes in the Ramsar Site 'Helme water reservoir, Berga-Kelbra', designed to minimise damage to agricultural crops.

Lower Saxony has incorporated wetland conservation incentives into two of its action programmes, one for aquatic and one for peatland landscapes. The Lower Saxony peatland landscapes programme (Programm Niedersächsische Moorlandschaften) launched in 2016 supports sound peatland management practices.

Funding options for such practices were created under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) scheme to support climate change mitigation through peatland development (Klimaschutz durch Moorentwicklung). Under the projects supported, model approaches to sound peatland management were tested e.g. targeted water management on grasslands and the cultivation of peatland moss on raised bogs. The realisation that wetlands on organic soils rely on high water levels to preserve the peat, necessitating sustainable wet management, prompted the development of the 'paludiculture' concept (wet cultivation of organic soil to preserve peat and mitigate climate change). Having explored the opportunities and risks of cultivating paludiculture in wetlands, the nature conservation authorities of the Länder and Federation published a joint position paper. However, the framework conditions will need to be adjusted and suitable incentives created if paludiculture is to become established on a significant scale in wetlands.

Each year, farmers from North Rhine-Westphalia in the Ramsar Site and SPA 'Lower Rhine' receive compensation from the state government for feeding damage on grassland caused by goose species breeding in the northern/arctic regions (mainly greater white-fronted geese, taiga bean geese, barnacle geese). Payments amount to between 2.5 and 6 million euros per year. In return for the compensation payments, the geese must be left alone.

### 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

A=Yes

#### 3.4 Additional Information

> Germany's nature conservation legislation provides the basis for preventing and eliminating perverse incentive mechanisms; this also applies to implementation of the relevant EU directives. For Natura 2000 sites, Article 6 (2) of the Habitats Directive prohibits the deterioration of natural habitats, and obliges the Member States to actively prevent deterioration where necessary.

The designation of nature conservation areas, restricted walkways, visitor and user guidance systems, as well as quiet zone concepts and other voluntary support mechanisms, can all achieve positive effects. Educational and public relations work should also be as broad as possible, including a focus on user groups. In Germany, the Wadden Sea's status as a National Park, and since 2009 and 2014 as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, also helps protect the region from possible adverse factors.

Based on this legislation, furthermore, landscape, regional and town planning instruments offer various options for defining specific usage restrictions, exclusion zones and priority areas, and allow for binding commitments at every stage of the political coordination process. Furthermore, the German intervention regulation and the regulation on legally protected biotopes apply throughout Germany. In addition, Natura 2000 sites must undergo an impact assessment in accordance with the Habitats Directive. Furthermore, environmental impact assessments must be carried out for larger projects.

Protected areas ordinances, instruments of the German intervention regulation and the impact assessment under the Habitats Directive help avoid or offset adverse effects in the case of critical uses and projects in particularly valuable or sensitive natural environments.

In the past, peat harvesting and the use of river sediment, such as sand and gravel, have been particularly problematic in wetlands. The peatland conservation strategy of the Federal Government currently under development aims to eliminate counterproductive support which create perverse incentives.

Certain agricultural subsidies continue to adversely affect wetland areas. In particular, the incentives for cultivating bioenergy crops have created new, additional perverse incentives. For example, maize cultivation in fenlands for biogas extraction (e.g. Friedländer Große Wiese, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania) is still incentivised with acreage premiums. Agricultural use of the steep slopes on the west bank of Krakower Obersee has recently been intensified for maize cultivation, leading to increased nutrient emissions into this WII and reducing the river bank buffer strips from 7 to 3 metres.

## 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

C=Partially

### 4.1 Additional information

> Additional information: In implementing Regulation (EU) No. 1143/2014 on invasive alien species, which entered into force on 2 February 2015, the competent authorities have either established a system for monitoring invasive alien species of Union concern, or integrated it into their existing system by February 2018, thereby preventing the spread of invasive alien species into or within the European Union. A description of the monitoring system in the individual Länder can be found in the first national report on the implementation of the EU Regulation for the 2015-2018 reporting period, also published as BfN Skripten 567 (<https://www.bfn.de/fileadmin/BfN/service/Dokumente/skripten/Skript567.pdf> - in German only). The relevant list of (currently 66 as of 31 December 2020) invasive alien species of Union concern (Union list), includes several invasive species which could influence the ecological conditions of wetlands (such as Nuttall's waterweed (*Elodea nuttallii*), the spinycheek crayfish (*Orconectes limosus*), the American bullfrog, the common slider (*Trachemys scripta*), the Egyptian goose and the raccoon). Invasive alien species on the Union list occurring in a Member State which are in an early invasion phase have to be eradicated. All relevant proof of wild individuals, immediate measures taken and success monitoring must be documented and notified to the European Commission. Where invasive species on the list are already widespread, measures must be devised and implemented to minimise impacts and prevent the further spread of these species.

By way of example, data recorded on animal and plant species in Lower Saxony also partially covers data on invasive species. The focus here is on invasive species of Union concern that are subject to reporting requirements. The process of establishing a monitoring system based on decentralised data records from different fields and authorities has started. Apart from that, systematic surveys are currently only conducted in Lower Saxony for fish in inland waters. The three Lower Saxony Ramsar Sites in the Wadden Sea also carry out monitoring under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive in multiple ports, as well as monitoring marine and terrestrial species throughout the entire area.

The International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine (ICPR) also monitors invasive species in its Rhine Monitoring Programme Biology e.g. gobiidae. The reports are published on the ICPR website [www.iksr.org](http://www.iksr.org). Other international river basin commissions have similar monitoring programmes. Along the entire coastline, populations of invasive or potentially invasive species of waterbirds are recorded in the two-week spring tide censuses (this includes the Egyptian goose that is on the Union list and the Canada goose, which is classified as a naturally occurring European bird species under the EU Birds Directive (included in Annex II) and thus not on the Union List). The Wadden Sea Quality Status Report 2017 includes a report on invasive species.

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

A=Yes

### 4.2 Additional information

> The provisions necessary for implementing Regulation (EU) No. 1143/2014 in Germany can be found under Article 40a et seqq. of the Federal Nature Conservation Act (BNatSchG). Furthermore, Article 40 BNatSchG contains general provisions on the export of plants and animals. The Länder and the Federation (in this case the EEZ) are responsible for taking suitable measures to counteract any threats to ecosystems, biotopes and species from non-native or invasive animal and plant species. In accordance with the three-phase CBD approach to address invasive species, the emphasis is on the precautionary principle (preventing the introduction of species by imposing comprehensive bans) and the early detection of new invasive species, with an obligation to eradicate them immediately. For invasive species on the Union list that are already widespread, the competent authorities in accordance with Regulation (EU) No. 1143/2014 must have effective management measures in place to minimise their impacts on biodiversity and the associated ecosystem services, as well as to prevent any potential effects on human health and the economy, and further spread of the species. Various eradication measures were taken by the Länder in recent years for invasive species on the Union list. These measures are available in consolidated form in the first national report (see section 4.1). At least for invasive species on the Union list in an early invasion phase, the specific immediate action taken in each case and the success of these measures is successively and promptly documented in the largely publicly available EASIN notification system of the European Commission (<https://easin.jrc.ec.europa.eu/notsys>) (see sections 4.3 and 4.4). As part of the implementation of the EU Regulation, an action plan is being drawn up that will contain measures to address the priority pathways aimed at preventing the unintentional introduction and spread of invasive alien species into or within the Union.

The German Federal Ordinance on the Conservation of Species (BArtSchV) also prohibits the ownership and marketing of certain invasive species, while the Federal Hunting Act contains provisions on the release and introduction of alien species. Article 22 of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), which states that Member States must ensure that "the

deliberate introduction into the wild of any species which is not native to their territory is regulated so as not to prejudice natural habitats within their range or the wild native fauna and flora" and Article 11 of the Birds Directive (79/409/EEC), which states that "Member States shall see that any introduction of species of bird which do not occur naturally in the wild state in the European territory of the Member States does not prejudice the local flora and fauna", serves as the superordinate legal framework.

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

Specific data is not available on the occurrence of or concrete measures to combat invasive species for all Ramsar Sites. As examples, we would like to mention hunting of the Egyptian goose in the WILs 'Lower Rhine' and 'Weser barrage', and predator control in the coastal bird breeding grounds and the nature conservation area 'Krakower Obersee' (which includes eradication of the invasive species mink, raccoon dog and raccoon from coastal bird breeding grounds). Several regions have local initiatives, primarily NGOs, which carry out small-scale measures to fight the spread of neophytes such as the giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) in the 'Thüringische Rhön' biosphere reserve on the River Ulster, south of Pferdsdorf. Various stakeholders (botanical gardens, landscape gardeners) have also developed voluntary codes of conduct for dealing with invasive species.

Control and management measures have been established for the Ramsar Sites in the Lower Saxony Wadden Sea. In Ramsar Site 84 'Elbe meadows Schnackenburg-Lauenburg', the measures focus on selected occurrences of neophytes and raccoons, which are particularly invasive there.

A transnational 'Management and Action Plan Alien Species' (MAPAS) for the entire Wadden Sea region is currently being prepared with the participation of the national park administrations of Lower Saxony, Schleswig-Holstein and Hamburg as part of the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation together with the Netherlands and Denmark. Extensive up-to-date information on alien species in the Wadden Sea can be found in the 2017 Wadden Sea Quality Status Report: <http://qsr.waddensea-worldheritage.org/reports/alien-species>.

#### 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

> Due to the requirements laid down in Regulation (EU) No. 1143/2014, initial findings on invasive species are available, at least for species on the Union list. The outcome of immediate eradication measures for each individual case is documented promptly in the EASIN notification system of the European Commission (see section 4.2). In recent years, with a view to protecting wetland ecosystems specifically, an occurrence of the common water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*) near Biederitz, Saxony-Anhalt, the floating primrose-willow (*Ludwigia peploides*) near Gerbrunn, Bavaria, the ruddy duck (*Oxyura jamaicensis*) in Beltringharder Koog, Schleswig Holstein, and several African sacred ibises (*Threskiornis aethiopicus*) in the Aalbeek Niederung, Schleswig-Holstein, were successfully eradicated. The immediate action undertaken to address three notified occurrences of the carolina fanwort (*Cabomba caroliniana*) near Höchstädt, Bavaria, in the Rohrkolbensee, North Rhine-Westphalia, and in the Am Grubenkopf nature conservation area, Rhineland-Palatinate, is still ongoing. The same is true for the notified proof of ruddy ducks on the Ober-Moosteich, Hesse, and on the Hainspitzer See, Thuringia, and of African sacred ibises on the Ruppertsdorfer See, Schleswig-Holstein. Coypus (*Myocastor coypus*) are being controlled and eradicated under the EU-LIFE project 'Lebendige Röhrrichte — Reeds for LIFE' in the SPA and Ramsar Site 'Lower Rhine', which is being carried out by the nature conservation centre of the Kleve administrative district. The coypus are now very common and damage reed beds.

Since 2019 in the EU special protection area under the Birds Directive 'Innerstetal von Langelsheim bis Groß Düngen' and the nature conservation area 'Mittleres Innerstetal mit Kanstein' in Lower Saxony, coypus and racoons are being managed through systematic trapping to prevent the settlement of the aforementioned species to protect the clutches of eggs of local trigger bird species and water construction works (dams and ponds). In 2020, measures to manage racoons and racoon dogs were initiated in the EU special protection area under the Birds Directive 'Lucie' and the 'Gewässersystem der Jeetzel und Quellwälder' site protected under the Habitats Directive to support the occurrence of high priority meadow bird species such as the lapwing and Eurasian curlew. These management measures are carried out by means of trapping and trap reporting with the aim of reducing the population density of racoons and racoon dogs to a level that will enable successful breeding of meadow birds to maintain, or where possible increase, meadow bird populations. Hunting using traps will help prevent the reproduction of the aforementioned species and their migration into freed up areas in the breeding grounds of meadow birds. In 2020 in the EU special protection area under the Birds Directive 'Heerter See' and the nature conservation area 'Heerter See und Waldgebiet Heerter Strauchholz', measures were introduced to contain populations of racoons, racoon dogs and coypus using live animal traps fitted with radio detectors.

#### 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

> A complete overview of unsuccessful management actions is not available. For invasive species on the Union list, which are in an early invasion phase, failures in connection with obligatory immediate actions for each individual case are promptly documented in the EASIN notification system of the European Commission (see section 4.2). For example, measures taken in recent years to eradicate several ruddy ducks (*Oxyura jamaicensis*) on Lake Steinhude, Lower Saxony, the Reeser Meer, North Rhine-Westphalia, near Ismaning, Bavaria, and on the Postsee, Schleswig-Holstein, and several African sacred ibises (*Threskiornis aethiopicus*) near Schlüchtern, Hesse, and near Mermerath, North Rhine-Westphalia, with a view to protecting wetland ecosystems were unsuccessful, despite numerous attempts in some cases.

It is furthermore possible that there are areas in which the hunting of invasive species is not sufficient. It is therefore not possible to conclusively answer the question of whether widespread semi-aquatic neozoans such as muskrats and coypus can be successfully controlled through management measures. These species are very adaptable and even inhabit waters in the areas they colonise.

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

D=Planned

#### 4.5 Additional Information

> One of the aims of national marine neobiota monitoring is to assess the measures implemented. However, the programme has not yet been running long enough to be able to make a definitive statement. There is no information available as to whether the competent authorities of the Länder evaluated the effectiveness of the control programmes for invasive species in wetlands.

Due to the requirements laid down in Regulation (EU) No. 1143/2014 on invasive species, improved findings are expected in future for species on the Union list. For instance, Member States have to monitor the effectiveness of immediate actions to eradicate invasive species on the Union list, which are in an early invasion phase, and notify the European Commission of the outcome. Furthermore, for those invasive species on the Union list that are already widespread, the monitoring system to be implemented must be able to gauge the effectiveness of eradication, population control and containment measures with regard to minimising the impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services, and where applicable, human health and the economy. Where appropriate, monitoring should also assess the impacts on non-target species.

### **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

D=Planned

#### 5.1 Additional information

> Having completed the nomination process for Natura 2000 sites, we can conclude that 3,077 of the total 4,617 sites protected under the Habitats Directive in Germany contain wetland habitat types. Of these, 125 sites cover an area in excess of 5,000 ha (see Petersen & Ssymank 2007: Die Feuchtgebiete internationaler Bedeutung und das Schutzgebietsnetz Natura-2000 in Deutschland, Natur und Landschaft 11/2007, p. 494 ff). This existing site data could be used to assess potential Ramsar Sites. As well as their representativeness for the country as a whole and their uniqueness, the main criteria would be to prioritise wetland types which are under-represented on the Ramsar List, such as peatlands, alluvial waterbodies, alluvial forests and mountain waterbodies, as well as considering important fish populations. Some Länder are intending to pursue this with a wetland conservation strategy which reflects the objectives of the Ramsar Convention's strategic plan. In Saxony-Anhalt, for example, in addition to the three existing Ramsar Sites, at least nine further sites have been identified that satisfy the Ramsar Convention criteria (Sudfeldt, C., D. Doer & J. Wahl (2002): Important Bird Areas und potenzielle Ramsar-Gebiete in Deutschland. Berichte zum Vogelschutz 39, 119-132). Most of them are already protected under the Natura 2000 regime, and for this reason, have not yet been explicitly registered 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

B=No

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

E=Exact number (sites)

> 27

### 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

F=Less than (sites)

> 27

### 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

F=Less than (sites)

> 27

#### 5.3 – 5.5 Additional information

> Almost all German Ramsar Sites have management and/or maintenance and development plans which reflect current nature conservation standards. Similar management plans are currently being drawn up for other sites.

An overview of Ramsar Sites in seven Länder shows the following picture:

Schleswig-Holstein (SH): A trilateral management plan exists for the Wadden Sea as a whole, together with management plans for parts of the Ramsar Site 'Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea and adjacent areas' within the framework of Natura 2000.

Bavaria: All eight Ramsar Sites in Bavaria are simultaneously SPA sites, and some of them are also sites protected under the Habitats Directive, whose new management plans as Natura 2000 sites (and in some cases, other plans such as waterbody development concepts) fulfil this function. Management plans are currently being developed for the sites 'Lake Ammersee', 'Bavarian Wildalm' and 'Donauauen and Donaumoos'.

The management plan for the SPA 'Donauauen zwischen Lechmündung und Ingolstadt' (DE 7231-471), which includes the Ramsar Site 'Lech-Donau-Winkel', was completed in 2015. A management plan from 2017 is available for the SPA 'Donauauen' and a management plan from 2015 for the SPA 'Salzach & Inn' (Ramsar Site 'Lower Inn between Haiming and Neuhaus').

North Rhine-Westphalia: A management plan is in place (LANUV 2011) for the SPA 'Lower Rhine', large parts of which overlap with the WII 'Lower Rhine'. In many sub-areas, which are also protected under the Habitats Directive, the package of measures for the SPA was substantiated with more detailed concepts of measures. In accordance with the requirements of the EU Birds Directive, programmes of bird protection measures were drawn up for the Special Protection Areas (SPA) 'Weser floodplains' and 'Wastewater irrigation fields Münster' (LANUV 2018, 2019). Two of the three Ramsar Sites in North Rhine-Westphalia are located in SPAs: 'Wastewater irrigation fields Münster' (in the SPA of the same name) and 'Weser barrage' (in the SPA 'Weser floodplains').

Hamburg: The Trilateral Wadden Sea Plan forms the basis for management in the Hamburg Wadden Sea National Park. The integrated management plan of Schleswig-Holstein, Hamburg and Lower Saxony for the Elbe estuary, which also forms part of the Mühlenberger Loch, has existed since 2012.

Lower Saxony: For the Ramsar Sites 'Wadden Sea, Elbe-Weser-Triangle' 'Wadden Sea, Jade Bight, western Weser estuary' and 'Wadden Sea, East Frisia Wadden Sea & Dollart', the Wadden Sea Plan agreed between the Netherlands, Denmark and Germany includes a comprehensive definition of the trilateral objectives for the entire Wadden Sea. Additionally, management plans also exist for sub-areas or individual components of the Wadden Sea. The Ramsar Site 'Lower Elbe, Barnkrug, Otterndorf' is covered by the integrated management plan for the Elbe, and included in its implementation. The Ramsar Site 'Elbe meadows Schnackenburg-Lauenburg' is located in the Niedersächsische Elbtalaue biosphere reserve, and covered by the biosphere reserve plan. Management plans have not been drawn up for the SPAs 'Duemmer', 'Lake Steinhude' and 'Elbe meadows Schnackenburg-Lauenburg', however, effective area management streamlined to the bird species takes place.

Mecklenburg Western Pomerania For the WIIs 'Baltic Sea Lagoons of Westrügen-Island Hiddensee-Peninsula Zingst' and 'Eastern shore of Lake Müritz', the respective national park plans function as management plans. Krakower Obersee is part of the 'Nebeltal mit Zuflüssen, verbundenen Seen und angrenzenden Wäldern' site protected under the Habitats Directive, for which a confirmed management plan has existed since 2014. A programme of measures for the WII 'Lake Galenbeck' was drawn up as part of the Life project.

Brandenburg: The national park plan functions as a management plan for the 'Lower Oder Valley, Schwedt'.

Hesse/Rhineland-Palatinate: The Ramsar Site 'Rhine Floodplains between Eltville and Bingen' overlaps with the SPAs 'Inselrhein' in Hesse and 'Rheinaue Bingen Ingelheim' in Rheinland Palatinate. Management plans exist for both SPAs ('Inselrhein': for sub-areas since 2016, plans are being prepared for further sub-areas; 'Rheinaue Bingen-Ingellheim': management plan since 2012).

Saxony-Anhalt: In Saxony-Anhalt, management plans are available for all Ramsar Sites. A maintenance and development plan is available for the Ramsar Site 'Lowland of the lower Havel/Gülper Lake/Schollener Lake'. For the Ramsar Site 'Aland-Elbe-Lowland and Elbe-wetland Jerichow' an updated protected areas ordinance and management plan have existed since 2009. The management plan for the Ramsar Site 'Helme water reservoir, Berga-Kelbra' was completed in 2013.

Baden-Württemberg The Ramsar Site 'Lake Constance' overlaps with several SPAs. A management plan from 2014 is available for this site.

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

A=Yes

## 5.6 Additional information

> The available Natura 2000 field surveys and derived programmes of measures for many protected wetlands reflect the latest state of the art of science and technology, and consistently apply the very latest findings on sites, habitat types and species.

For the Wadden Sea in Schleswig-Holstein and the SPA and WII 'Lower Rhine' in North Rhine-Westphalia, for example, the various influencing factors (e.g. hydrological regime) were analysed in depth when designing the concept of measures and existing scientific studies in this field were also reviewed. Management, maintenance and development plans for Ramsar Sites in Saxony-Anhalt were likewise based on thorough scientific data surveys (particularly regarding species and habitat types), including a number of hydrological appraisals and studies of watercourse morphology and retention areas.

Alongside the Natura 2000 field surveys, maintenance and development plans for other projects in Bavaria drew on the latest findings for those sites in line with regional standards.

UNESCO biosphere reserves are reviewed every 10 years to verify compliance with the designation criteria and assess how the area has developed. In 2005 and 2015, the Wadden Sea in Schleswig Holstein passed the reviews, and was found to have made positive progress, particularly thanks to the extension of the transition area. The review team explicitly praised collaboration between the various stakeholders in the region. Within the framework of the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation, a new Wadden Sea Quality Status Report was published in 2017.

However, many of the population trends in the Wadden Sea, for example, cannot be adequately explained, due to a lack of sufficient knowledge on the species ecology, their population dynamics, and the status of habitats in the breeding, resting and overwintering sites.

## 5.7 Additional information

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

> In accordance with German law, all departments, land users, interested and affected parties are generally involved in the process of drafting and implementing management plans in Ramsar Sites. Alongside nature conservation and environmental departments, representatives from the water resources management, agriculture and tourism sectors are also consulted in most cases.

Site management committees are used by some Ramsar Sites to involve and inform the various interest groups and affected parties about site maintenance and development measures. In North Rhine-Westphalia, the local nature conservation authorities in the administrative districts are responsible for the implementation of the programmes of bird protection measures in the respective SPAs. The authorities hold regular meetings (in one case less often) with the official and voluntary stakeholders on the implementation of the programme of measures.

There are also a number of interdisciplinary task forces responsible for drawing up waterbody development plans (e.g. in the Ramsar Sites 'Lake Chiemsee', 'Lake Ammersee' and 'Lake Starnberg').

## 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

> The competent authorities of the Länder are tasked with monitoring any ecological changes in the Ramsar Sites, and where necessary, reporting them to the Federal Ministry, which then decides whether they should be notified to the Ramsar Secretariat pursuant to Article 3.2. Generally speaking, there are mechanisms in place at all administrative levels for pursuing any reports of threats or degradations to the site and, where

necessary, forwarding them to a higher authority.

Compulsory monitoring of and reporting on protected Natura 2000 sites, also within the context of the Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Programme (TMAP), Natura 2000, the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) provide an important basis for identifying changes in the ecological character of wetlands. Structures such as the Central Command for Maritime Emergencies (CCME) enable a rapid response in cases of unforeseen incidents (such as shipping accidents).

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

C=Some Cases

## 7.2 Additional information

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

> The competent authorities of the Länder are tasked with monitoring any ecological changes in the Ramsar Sites. The Länder only report changes in the ecological character of Ramsar Sites which are considered particularly significant at national level to the Federal Government and Ramsar Secretariat. In accordance with this procedure, not all ecological degradations were reported to the Secretariat, because – as described in 2.6.1 – there are other national mechanisms in place for investigating, assessing and counteracting such effects.

No German Ramsar Site has been added to the Montreux Record (MR) in recent years.

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

> The damming of part of the Ramsar Site "East Frisia Wadden Sea, Dollart" (WII 82), approved by a planning decision in 1985 to protect a storm surge-proof dike, prompted Germany to add the 121,620 ha site to the Montreux Record on 4 July 1990. A 1991 ruling by the European Court of Justice declared the plans and procedures lawful, because adequate compensation measures had been adopted with legally binding effect. In particular, the ECJ asserted that the ecological character of the region would not be degraded as a result of the planned measures; rather, the ecological quality of the site would be improved in conjunction with the defined compensation measures. All measures for the coastal protection project 'Leybucht' and all compensatory and substitution measures were completed by 2005. The diked site is protected as the nature conservation area 'Leyhorn' and as the DE2508-401 'Krummhörn' special protection area under the EU Birds Directive. Land outside of the dike is included in the Lower Saxony Wadden Sea National Park and simultaneously in the DE2210-401 'Lower Saxony Wadden Sea & adjacent areas' special protection area under the EU Birds Directive. Long-term monitoring of visiting bird populations indicates that Leybucht, as part of the WII 'Wadden: 'East Frisia Wadden Sea & Dollart'', has retained its outstanding function as a resting, migration and overwintering site. Even when considered in isolation, a number of species in Leybucht continuously meet criteria 5 and 6. Populations of species that inhabit the unused salt marshes (such as the redshank) have risen sharply, while those species which used to benefit from more intensive use or intermediately from construction work (such as the avocet) are in decline. The current assessment of the sub-areas of the Leybucht shows that from an avian-fauna perspective, the Leybucht, as part of the Ramsar Site 'Lower Saxony Wadden Sea & adjacent areas', has retained its outstanding importance as a resting, migration and overwintering site for waterbirds.

The Ramsar Site was thus removed from the Montreux Record in 2020.

## 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

> A National Wetland Inventory exists in Germany; however, it was not developed systematically in a single process, but rather has evolved over several decades. Today, it comprises various sub-inventories of wetland types (e.g. peatlands, lakes, watercourses, wet meadows, coastal inlets, Wadden Sea) which are continuously

extended, supplemented and updated. The precise number of inventoried wetlands is unknown. The competent Länder authorities collate data on the various wetland types (watercourses, lakes, peatlands, wet meadows, alluvial meadows etc.) using a range of criteria (biotope protection, water protection, flood protection, water supply) and methods (e.g. on-site biotope mapping, colour infrared aerial picture or satellite image evaluation), and process the information with the aid of databases and geographical information systems (GIS).

The total number of wetlands in each category cannot be stated at present, since there has been no such evaluation to date.

The wetland habitat types defined by the Habitats Directive are systematically monitored in selected random sample areas, and reporting is used to develop those areas whose territory is largely identical to the Ramsar Sites.

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

A=Yes

#### 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

#### 8.4 Additional information

> All data is available to the authorities and other institutions for the purposes of wetland assessment, the designation of protected areas and plans, as well as management and monitoring of the wetland areas. This information is also accessible to all interested groups and citizens, both via the websites of the environmental, nature conservation, agricultural, water and other competent authorities at Land and Federation level, and for viewing directly at the premises of the relevant authorities themselves.

#### 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

#### 8.5 Additional information on a) and/or b)

> The national report required by the Habitats Directive provides an important basis for monitoring and evaluation, and outlines the conservation status of species and habitats in areas which are entirely or partially identical to the Ramsar Sites. All Ramsar Sites in Germany overlap with the Natura 2000 network by at least 75%. The second evaluation of the conservation status of the habitat types and species listed under the Habitats Directive was carried out in 2013. This evaluation serves as the basis for the development and later adaptation of the relevant management plans.

The national report required by the Habitats Directive indicates that the inland waters of the Atlantic and Continental zone are classed as having a bad to inadequate conservation status. The peatlands of the Atlantic and Continental zone were likewise assessed as bad to inadequate. The inland waters and peatlands of the Alpine zone were predominately assessed as favourable, some as inadequate. For alluvial forest types, the conservation status in the Atlantic to Continental zone is classed as bad, and only the Alpine zone has a favourable assessment. These assessments do not refer to individual sites, but to habitat types in those biogeographical regions. There were no major changes in the 2019 national report.

Overall, the picture is a heterogeneous one. As well as those Ramsar Sites whose status has not noticeably changed, and those which have shown a positive development, there are also some areas whose ecological status has deteriorated (reasons given — more intensive farming, lowering of the groundwater level, neophytes, the growing popularity of water sports).

b) Information concerning changes in wetlands is collated, supplemented, updated and managed in databases by the specialised authorities of the Länder to enable more in-depth analyses, evaluations and reports. This information cannot be held for all wetlands in Germany; instead, data collation focusses primarily on surface waterbodies and wetlands which are protected and which merit protection.

The ecological status of limnetic habitats is considered a decisive criterion when implementing the WFD. Associated measures tend to lead to an improvement in ecological status. The LfU report on the monitoring of resting aquatic birds (waterbird census) in Bavaria, compiled since 2013, continues to be prepared and will be evaluated after every future census season. Joint status descriptions and assessments ('Quality Status Reports', QSR) are prepared at regular intervals for the Wadden Sea and the Ramsar Sites it contains, in collaboration with the Netherlands and Denmark within the context of trilateral government cooperation to protect the Wadden Sea. The latest Wadden Sea Quality Status Report from 2017 was published and made available on an online portal.

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.

X=Unknown

## 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

> In Germany, a national wetlands strategy is part of a wider nature conservation policy at federal and Länder level. Wetland conservation plays a central role in nature conservation legislation, conservation programmes and projects at national, regional and local government level. There are stand-alone conservation strategies in place for certain wetland types, such as the Wadden Sea within the context of the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation and OSPAR Convention, the Baltic Sea in collaboration with the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM), and for rivers such as the Rhine, Elbe and Danube within the framework of the International Commissions for the Protection of the Rhine (ICPR), the Rivers Moselle and the Saar (IKPMS), the Elbe (ICPER), the Oder River (ICPO) and the Danube River (ICPDR), the International Commission for the River Maas and in the Ems river basin in cooperation with the Netherlands, for instance in international WFD management plans developed there and other strategic approaches. The Länder have regional strategies and action programmes in place to protect watercourses, peatlands, lakes, floodplains, wet meadows and other types of wetland, for example there is an action programme for wetland landscapes in Lower Saxony (since 2016).

Wetlands are also a key aspect of the 2007 National Strategy on Biological Diversity, outlining Germany's visions, targets and measures for the conservation and development of coastal regions and seas, lakes, rivers, floodplains and peatlands. In October 2009, the BMU and the BfN published a national status report on floodplains, summarising the loss of floodplains and the status of river floodplains nationwide. This report is an important source of data for improving floodplain and flood protection in Germany.

The Federal Government is currently working on a peatland conservation strategy and, for example, since 2016 a programme for peatland landscapes has been in place in Lower Saxony.

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

> By law, wetlands are considered part of the water infrastructure and hence an integral part of water resources management at river basin level. The river basin management cycle outlined in Annex C to Resolution IX.1 is structured along similar lines to the basic planning law procedure applicable to land and water use, e.g. in implementing the Water Framework Directive (WFD). In particular, the WFD has encouraged more intensive cooperation between regional and local authorities and river basin districts, equivalent to nature conservation and water planning authorities. In line with the WFD, for example, groundwater-dependent terrestrial ecosystems are viewed as indicators of the quantitative groundwater body status. A good status depends on the absence of significant groundwater related damage to groundwater-dependent terrestrial ecosystems. Procedures under water management law for the authorisation of water abstraction generally include groundwater-dependent terrestrial ecosystems with a view to excluding environmental

damage. All affected habitats are subject to appropriate monitoring. Furthermore, good ecological and chemical status is to be achieved for surface waters in line with the WFD. The ecological status covers, in particular, the typical flora and fauna living in these waters. The WFD calls for the development of programmes of measures and management plans for river basin districts which includes the main channel, the tributaries and their groundwater bodies, coastal waters and estuaries beyond national and state (Länder) boundaries. Watercourses are understood as connecting corridors for migratory fish and other aquatic organisms.

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

> In implementing the European Water Framework Directive, the Federal Water Act and the water legislation of the Länder stipulate that the general public should be informed and involved in the preparation of river basin management plans.

Additionally, the international river basin commissions, such as the International Commissions for the Protection of the Danube, Elbe, Oder and Rhine, as well as many environmental organisations, make valuable contributions to the understanding of such plans through public consultations, their public relations work and educational courses, as well as by making a range of information material publicly available.

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

> Germany's strategy for adapting to climate change advocates the use of measures with synergy effects for a variety of climate change impacts, such as measures to improve watercourse hydromorphology. Waterbody, floodplain and peatland conservation are among the government's funding priorities.

In Lower Saxony, a peatland landscapes programme integrates the objectives of climate change mitigation into existing peatland conservation policy, thereby reflecting the requirements of climate change mitigation and adaptation in matters concerning raised bogs and fens. The Lower Saxony law on the promotion of climate action and adaptation to the effects of climate change (NKlimaG) of 10 December 2020 stipulates in Article 6 that a strategy for adapting to the consequences of climate change is to be developed which takes into account a "description on the impacts of climate change on Lower Saxony, particularly the consequences for [...] soils, nature and biodiversity and a list of appropriate measures to adapt to the consequences of climate change [...]."

The adaptation strategies of the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) and the International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine (ICPR) deal with similar aspects.

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

> As part of the CAP reform from 2023 and the preparation of the national strategic plan, various (basic) requirements will be put in place in order for farmers to receive direct payments (Pillar I) and funding (EAFRD Pillar II) that will be tied to the provision of environmental, climate and biodiversity services. The basic requirements for such services will be governed by conditionality, which will be the prerequisite for all eligible parties to receive direct payments. The protection of wetlands and peatlands will be defined under the conditionality system as a standard for good agricultural and environmental condition (abbreviation GAEC, here GAEC 2). A binding and ambitious definition of GAEC 2 would address many environmental and climate targets equally and make an important contribution to achieving these through adapted land management. However, a conclusive definition has not yet been agreed as negotiations on the national CAP strategic plan are still ongoing. Consequently, there is currently no information or evaluation as to whether wetlands will be strengthened and promoted more effectively through the CAP in future in relation to viable agriculture. The targeted promotion of wetlands and peatlands under Pillar II of the CAP (agri environment-climate measures – AECD) is regulated under the rural development programmes of the Länder. Support for wetlands under Pillar II in line with actual environmental needs is not expected due to the lack of financial resources of the EAFRD. The agreement between the Federation and Länder on climate action through peatland conservation targets and the peatland conservation strategy of the Federal Government thus play a key role in this context. Here, the stated goal is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the use of peatlands for agricultural and forestry uses by 5 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents by 2030 (BMU 2020b). To achieve this, at least some of the 1.24 million hectares of peatland soils used for agriculture will have to be managed in a climate-compatible manner (BMU 2020a). This is also in line with the relevant target set out in the Climate Action Plan 2050 (BMU 2016).

In Hesse, for example, the HIAP (integrated agri-environmental programme) applies a contract based nature conservation approach to wetlands, which has succeeded in significantly reducing the levels of fertiliser and pesticide pollution in stagnant waters, watercourses and groundwater. Extensive grazing projects have also been introduced in a number of protected humid grassland areas in Hesse (including grazing with robust cattle breeds, water buffalo, Heck cattle, horses etc.) as part of a management approach aiming to combine extensive agricultural management with the creation of biodiversity.

As part of a peatland landscapes programme unveiled to the general public in summer 2016, the government of Lower Saxony is pursuing a raft of protection, development and utilisation approaches in its peatlands to mitigate the effects of climate change. An inventory of soils with high carbon contents prepared by the Lower Saxony state authority for mining, energy and geology (LBEG) is an important basis for this and provides an overview of the distribution and land use of carbon-rich soils in the state, which will be used to delineate regional priority areas for climate action and peatland conservation measures. Greenhouse gas emissions can be effectively reduced by raising the water levels, but this inevitably either heavily restricts or prevents agricultural use of the affected land, which so far entailed draining the land. This approach to climate action relies on cooperation with local farmers, since it usually necessitates full access to the land. In the EU funding period 2014-2020, therefore, plans and measures for the climate-friendly agricultural management of peatland soils are supported under the ERDF regional funding measure 'climate change mitigation through peatland development'. A new measure, 'land management for climate and environment', has also been introduced and is aimed at preserving carbon-rich soils in conjunction with farmland consolidation. With the involvement of local farmers, the measure aims to identify peatlands with the capacity to store large quantities of carbon. The farmers benefit from structural improvements to improve their financial position, and the climate benefits from the rewetting of selected peatlands. This participatory tool can make an important contribution to rural development approaches geared towards climate change mitigation.

In North Rhine-Westphalia, the aforementioned LIFE projects in the WII 'Lower Rhine' also include aspects with the same objective. In addition, there are programmes of bird protection measures for the SPAs in the three Ramsar Sites concerned, which address in detail the role of securing a favourable conservation status for trigger bird species. This includes identifying support instruments for agriculture (in particular contract-based nature conservation).

## 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

## 9.7 Additional information

> A) In Thuringia, there are measures in place to protect the common crane (*Grus grus*) in the vicinity of the Helme water reservoir resting site near Kelbra. One of the aims of the research project is to successfully divert common cranes away from newly sown fields. It is hoped that it will culminate in a crane-friendly management concept with a list of recommendations for farmers.

Practice-oriented model projects for the conservation and climate-friendly use of peatlands are also underway in Lower Saxony. These are to include developing and trialling options for peatland management while retaining conventional agricultural use. Paludiculture is also being trialled and promoted at peatland sites, and suitable use concepts developed.

b) Firstly, regarding climate change, research is ongoing at national level, e.g. into reducing carbon emissions and improving local hydrological regimes through peatland renaturation, and into the impacts of climate change on waterways and shipping (KLIWAS, <http://www.kliwas.de>). Secondly, a number of regions are involved in wetland research projects. The North Rhine Westphalia State Agency for Nature, Environment and Consumer Protection (LANUV) conducted research into the impacts of climate change on sustainably managed groundwater supplies and the hydrological regime of the soil in the state.

In Hesse, research includes a project on the impacts of climate change on sustainable groundwater management (AnKliG) and a series of projects by the Centre on Climate Change and Adaptation under the heading "INKLIM-A" (interdisciplinary research on climate change, impacts and adaptation in Hesse).

In Schleswig-Holstein, various activities and other projects were carried out in the Wadden Sea under the auspices of the Coastal Protection and Sea Level Rise (CPSL) trilateral working group.

In Lower Saxony, the climate impact research alliance KLIF was set up to create a vital knowledge base on

climate change and its impacts. Key areas of research include a differentiated spatial and temporal analysis of climate change and its effects, taking into account ecological and social references, and building on this, the development of appropriate and feasible adaptation strategies. The consequences of climate change for water resources management in Lower Saxony are currently being researched as part of the "KliBiW" project (Global Change — Impacts on Inland Water Resources Management). Lower Saxony is also involved in the cross-Länder research projects KLIMZUG — north and north-west 2050.

In summer 2015, as part of the research project "Bavaria's still waters in climate change – influence and adaptation", the Chair of Aquatic Systems Biology at TU Munich undertook a survey of the underwater vegetation of Lake Chiemsee on behalf of the Bavarian State Ministry of the Environment and Consumer Protection, with a view to recording any changes along its shoreline.

c) A case study on ecological flood protection on the Middle Elbe showed that the macroeconomic benefits of dike relocation and the renaturation of floodplains were three times higher than the costs (cf. Grossmann, M., Hartje, V. and Meyerhoff, J. 2010: Ökonomische Bewertung naturverträglicher Hochwasservorsorge an der Elbe. NaBiV 89). Furthermore, as part of the study 'Natural Capital Germany – TEEB DE', an estimation of the costs and benefits of the various uses of drained fens was carried out, which showed that there were clear advantages to rewetting compared to the cultivation of crops for biogas production and to dairy farming. There is also a socio-economic monitoring programme in the Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea (SÖM Watt). The peatland conservation programme also evaluated the current status of peatlands vis-à-vis their storage capacity and emission response compared with 2008, as well as the success of rewetting projects with regard to reducing emissions and increasing carbon storage capacity. The BfN also supported the research and development project 'peatland conservation in Germany – optimising peatland management with a view to protecting biodiversity and ecosystem services' (BfN Skripten 462, 2017). Its aim was to develop practical tools and indicators for optimising peatland management in terms of protecting biodiversity and ecosystem services.

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

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)

A=Yes

### 10.1 Additional information

If yes please indicate the case studies or projects documenting information and experiences concerning culture and wetlands

> For example, the '50 farms' project (50-Höfe-Projekt) of the Allgäuer Moorallianz.

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 type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
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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 type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A=Yes
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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)

C=In Preparation

## 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

> To date there has been no comprehensive analysis of the services provided by wetland ecosystems. The assessment of individual services, such as drinking and industrial water supply, flood protection, climate change mitigation, hydropower, shipping, fishing, bird-watching and recreational value, is included in area-specific plans, as well as in sectoral plans by the Länder e.g. on the use of raw materials.

The Federal Environment Agency regularly publishes data on water supply. Information on the significance of tourism tends to be recorded on a regional basis. In recent years, furthermore, flood protection has become an increasingly important consideration, prompting a growing interest in the retention capacity of wetlands, river floodplains and alluvial forests.

Research and documentation of ecosystem services is taking place in some LIFE projects in the Special Protection Area and Ramsar Site 'Lower Rhine' in North Rhine-Westphalia.

Extensive socio-economic studies have been carried out in Germany's major Wadden Sea National Parks. For the Ramsar Sites 'Wadden Sea, Elbe-Weser-Triangle', 'Wadden Sea, Jade Bight, western Weser estuary' and 'Wadden Sea, East Frisia Wadden Sea, Dollart', the most recent assessment of services was included in the 'Report for the Periodic Review of the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Wadden Sea of Lower Saxony' of 25 February 2014 (see chapter 3.1 in this report, "Update on ecosystem services and the beneficiaries of these services"). See: <http://www.waddensea-secretariat.org/sites/default/files/downloads/whs-final-dossier08-01-16.pdf> and <http://www.waddensea-secretariat.org/management/whs/whs.html>.

The achieved or anticipated reductions in greenhouse gas emissions have been calculated for some rewetting projects in peatlands. Against the background of climate reporting and the anticipated inclusion of the LULUCF (Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry) source category in EU climate policy (LULUCF credits can be offset against agreed EU-wide emission reduction targets), the peatland-rich Länder are currently considering a systematic survey of greenhouse gas emission reductions achieved through peatland conservation projects.

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

Y=Not Relevant

### 11.2 Additional information

> Developing and promoting the sustainable use of wetlands in Germany is part of a comprehensive nature conservation and environmental policy, large parts of which also serve to implement EU legislation.

Programmes to promote individual projects and forms of use therefore originate from various sectors, including nature conservation (LIFE), flood protection, agriculture (e.g. cultural landscape and extensification programmes) and rural area development by the EU and Federal Government, and to an even greater extent by the individual Länder. The latter have devised targeted programmes and support mechanisms for specific landscape characteristics. Special attention is given to peatlands in this context.

In Bavaria, a number of LIFE projects focussing on peatland conservation have already been completed, together with the LIFE projects "Donautal mit Hängen" and "Aue und Oberes Maintal", completed in 2014.

Bavaria's climate programme 2020 (KLIP 2020) has made approximately 14 million euros available since 2008 to restore the function of peatlands as natural carbon sinks, while at the same time ensuring the species diversity of these threatened habitats. There are currently some 273 projects in Bavaria focussing on wetland conservation under the auspices of BayernNetz Natur.

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

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

> For centuries, inland wetlands in Germany have been influenced by humans and shaped by cultural development. For the SPA and WII 'Lower Rhine', the promotion of opportunities for experiencing nature was considered an important aspect of the area's development.

In Saxony-Anhalt and Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, socio-economic aspects were also incorporated into phased management plans and coordinated with users in line with the available financing options (e.g. various funding options for local producers). These are likewise incorporated into renaturation plans within the framework of the peatland conservation programme. Peatland renaturation projects in Germany generally allow for the aforementioned aspects at the planning stage, provided they are relevant.

The Ramsar Sites 'Wadden Sea, Elbe-Weser-Triangle', 'Wadden Sea, Jade Bight, western Weser estuary' and 'Wadden Sea, East Frisia Wadden Sea, Dollart' are located in the Lower Saxony Wadden Sea National Park. As in Schleswig-Holstein, the National Park Act includes the incorporation of regional requirements. A trilateral strategy for sustainable tourism was drawn up with a view to developing the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site

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

> The cultural heritage of inland wetland areas is considered when formulating conservation strategies and implementing management plans. As protected resources, cultural assets must by law be included in every environmental impact assessment, and the significance of any planned impairments is considered in the decision making process. Participation of various stakeholders and public institutions under existing legislation on nature conservation, water and planning, ensures that aspects of cultural importance are duly taken into account in the relevant wetland area.

The protection of long-established cultural landscapes is a key objective for protecting inland wetlands — e.g. elements in the agricultural sector such as pollarded willows, old tree forms determined by use and abandoned peat-cutting sites.

For the SPA and WII 'Lower Rhine', the promotion of opportunities for experiencing nature was considered an important aspect of the area's development.

Cultural aspects have likewise been incorporated into the management plans for Saxony-Anhalt and Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania (National Park plans, nature park plans, Natura 2000 management plans). The Ramsar Sites 'Wadden Sea, Elbe-Weser-Triangle', 'Wadden Sea, Jade Bight, western Weser estuary' and 'Wadden Sea, East Frisia Wadden Sea, Dollart' are located in the Lower Saxony Wadden Sea National Park. The incorporation of regional interests is one aspect of the National Park Act. Furthermore, a trilateral strategy for sustainable tourism was drawn up with a view to developing the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site.

## 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

> Programmes of measures by the Länder to implement the Water Framework Directive (WFD) include measures relating to wetlands for the respective river basins and sub-basins. The overarching technical foundations are generally drawn from the national floodplain status reports (cf. NaBiV 87) and biotope network (cf. NaBiV 96), from which recommendations may be derived, but the Federal Government does not designate priority sites. The planning of bird protection measures for the Natura 2000 network also entails a degree of prioritisation.

Priority sites for wetland renaturation have been identified, for example in the Ramsar Site 'Lowland of the lower Havel/Gülper Lake/Schollener Lake', and for the extension of retention areas along the River Elbe, as well as in all Ramsar Sites in Lower Saxony. Priority sites for renaturation measures were defined within the

framework of the peatlands conservation and use concept in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania (peatland conservation programme) which prioritises coastal flood mires for revitalisation measures. Numerous measures are implemented as part of other nature conservation projects, particularly in fen regions (such as the Isar Valley), including land procurement, a contract-based nature conservation programme, and the landscape management and nature parks policy (LNPR). However, peatland renaturation relies on improvements to the hydrological regime, and these are currently only being attempted on a small scale. Examples include the climate programme in Bavaria (cf. 1.3.2), which incorporates countless renaturation projects in peatlands. There is a demand for such projects outside of existing Ramsar Sites. In the maintenance and development plan (PEPL) for the large-scale conservation project 'Schwäbisches Donautal' (Swabian Danube Valley), priority areas for renaturation (primarily rewetting) were identified and measures scheduled for implementation over the next few years.

The concept of measures for the SPA 'Lower Rhine' (LANUV 2011; largely overlaps with the WII 'Lower Rhine') includes identifying areas where action is urgently needed to improve the soil humidity conditions e.g. rewetting wet meadows.

Salt marshes in Ramsar Sites in Schleswig-Holstein were rewet during the course of coherence measures.

## 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

> As mentioned in Germany's previous report, the BMU has numerous projects and programmes designed to protect nature conservation areas of national importance, predominantly in wetlands (watercourses, alluvial meadows, moist forests, peatlands and wet meadows), which are still ongoing. Large-scale projects for the conservation and renaturation of wetlands are currently ongoing in 8 Länder, with an average funding period of 10 years and project budgets of up to 15 million euros. Their main aim is to restore and permanently improve the ecological functions of wetlands. One such large-scale conservation project supported by the BMU as part of the programme "chance.natur-Bundesförderung Naturschutz" is the renaturation of the River Havel in the Ramsar Site 'Lowland of the lower Havel/Gülper Lake/Schollener Lake' in Saxony-Anhalt and Brandenburg.

The majority of the Länder have numerous projects and funding mechanisms dedicated to the conservation and renaturation of wetlands of regional and local importance. Below are a few examples indicative of the level of commitment to this topic among the Länder:

In Bavaria, examples include various LIFE projects, peatland renaturation schemes under KLIP 2050, and peatland redevelopment under the 2020 climate programme.

In North Rhine-Westphalia, the measures included in the 'Lower Rhine' concept, the former LIFE project 'Wastewater irrigation fields Münster' and measures on the 'Weser barrage' are being continued. In addition, various programmes (contract-based nature conservation) make an important contribution to wetland conservation; meadow-breeding birds and white stork conservation programmes are just two examples. In the LIFE projects in the SPA and Ramsar Site 'Lower Rhine', the renaturation of wetlands, in particular, plays an important role e.g. rewetting of wet meadows.

In Lower Saxony, programmes to promote nature conservation make an important contribution towards the conservation of wetlands. Current highlights include the peatland conservation programme, which is being integrated into the new Lower Saxony peatland landscapes programme, the watercourse programme, and the LIFE+ project 'Meadow birds' (2011-2020). The latter covers the top 12 meadow bird protection areas in Lower Saxony, some of which are also Ramsar Sites. Nature conservation funding instruments under the EAFRD also support the objectives of the Ramsar Convention in Lower Saxony by supporting targeted projects for the conservation, development and restoration of watercourses and their floodplains, in peatlands and wetlands. EU nature conservation funding focusses on the Natura 2000 network of protected areas, and therefore also implements the objectives of the Ramsar Convention. The measures for the renaturation of salt marshes in the Lower Saxony Wadden Sea National Park, which have been ongoing for many years, are being continued. These measures include the opening/removal of summer dikes, deactivation of drainage systems and/or removal of topsoil to restore the natural hydrodynamics and vegetation structure in floodplains with tidal flows. Approximately 135 ha of salt marshes were restored during the reporting period. Renaturation projects were carried out in the following regions of Ramsar Site 82 'Wadden Sea, East Frisia Wadden Sea, Dollart': Borkum island (35 ha), Juist island (70 ha), Krummhörn mainland region (30 ha). Monitoring results confirm the highly positive effects of the renaturation measures for migratory bird species in the national park.

In Saxony-Anhalt, the Elbe dike is being relocated in the 'Steckby-Lödderitzer Forst' nature reserve as part of a large-scale conservation project in the Middle Elbe region financed by the BMU under the 'chance.natur' programme. The affected areas are currently outside of a Ramsar Site but within the Nature 2000 corridor. A LIFE project was also launched in the Middle Elbe region (duration: 2010-2018) at the Elbe floodplains near Vockerode, aimed at expanding retention areas and increasing the dynamics of a river floodplain.

Projects in Thuringia include measures to upgrade bird habitats with a focus on wetland areas.

## 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> D=Planned <input type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> C=Partially <input type="checkbox"/> B=No <input type="checkbox"/> A=Yes

## 12.3 Additional Information

If 'Yes' or 'Partially', please indicate the progress in implementation

> An agreement between the Federation and Länder on climate action through peatland conservation targets and a Federal Government peatland conservation strategy are currently being developed. Both will contain targets, instruments and measures on peatlands, climate action and wise use.

The publication and subsequent implementation of the Lower Saxony peatland landscapes programme is aimed at conserving and improving the wide variety of natural functions and services of peatlands as characteristic components of the landscape in Lower Saxony. The climate change mitigation function of peatlands is very important in this regard. The programme also encompasses information, public relations work, communication, research activities, the promotion of sound peatland management practices and the practical implementation of various peatland conservation projects.

### **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

> The competent authorities of the Federation, Länder and regional and local governments review any policies, programmes and plans that may impact the conservation of wetlands in accordance with the valid legal foundations, such as the strategic environmental assessment (SEA) obligation. Within the context of implementing the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), a strategic environmental assessment is undertaken when developing programmes of measures pursuant to section 45h of the Federal Water Act (WHG). The same applies for programmes of measures pursuant to the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (WFD), and for risk management plans pursuant to the EU Floods Directive.

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

> The EIA and SEA Directives under European law have been transposed into a number of national laws (including the Environmental Impact Assessment Act (UVPG) and the Federal Building Code (BauGB)). Wetlands covered by Natura 2000 are protected in accordance with Article 34 et seqq. of the Federal Nature Conservation Act (BNatSchG), which states that “[p]rior to the approval or the implementation of projects, their compatibility with the conservation objectives [...] shall be assessed, if they, either individually or in combination with other projects or plans, have the potential to affect the site significantly”.

## 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

B=No

### 15.1 Additional information

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

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

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}

A=Yes

### 15.2 Additional information

If 'Yes', please indicate the name(s) of the centre(s)

> In October 2003, the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation joined forces with nature conservation associations to celebrate 25 years of international cooperation and launched the International Wadden Sea School (IWSS, <http://www.iwss.org>) which still exists today. The aim and task of the IWSS is to inspire appreciation for the Wadden Sea as part of our shared natural and cultural heritage among visitors to the Wadden Sea and coastal residents, and to broaden understanding of long-term, transboundary protection. The IWSS offers a platform for networking of environmental education providers, prepares educational material and carries out environmental education activities and workshops.

### 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 type="checkbox"/> B=No <input checked="" 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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> B=No <input 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

> The German Wetland CEPA Action Plan was forwarded to the Ramsar Secretariat.

## 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)

> 56

## 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

X=Unknown

## 16.2 Additional information

If centres are part of national or international networks, please describe the networks

> A 2001 publication by the German Federal Environmental Foundation (DBU) identified more than 500 environmental, nature conservation and education centres in Germany, many of them in wetlands, particularly on rivers and in peatlands. We do not have any more precise figures at present.

Germany's 35 Ramsar Sites are home to at least 56 permanent information and education centres, and educational work is also carried out on a project-specific basis. Ramsar Sites within large nature reserves are supported by the education and information centres of those areas (e.g. the Wadden Sea national parks, 'Ostufer Müritz' and 'Vorpommersche Boddenlandschaft' national parks, the 'Niedersächsische Elbtalaue', 'Middle Elbe', 'Schaalseegebiet', 'Peenetal' and 'Stettiner Haff' are examples of Ramsar Sites served by the visitor centres of the relevant biosphere reserves and nature parks).

Various WIIs operate nature conservation facilities with the involvement of the respective Land government, such as national park buildings and centres in the Wadden Sea, nature conservation stations in the Lower Elbe, Barnkrug, Otterndorf, Duemmer and Lake Steinhude regions, and the government nature conservation centre Obere Donau in the transboundary Ramsar Site 'Rhin Supérieur'.

Nature conservation organisations also carry out essential educational work, such as the NABU nature conservation station at Kranenburg (WII 'Lower Rhine'), the biological station in Wesel (WII 'Lower Rhine'), the BUND nature conservation centre Mögglingen, the NABU nature conservation centre Radolfzell (WII 'Lake Constance: Wollmatinger Ried - Giehrenmoos & Mindelsee'), the NABU centre Rheinauen (WII 'Rhine Floodplains between Eltville and Bingen') and the Wartaweil nature conservation and youth centre at Lake Ammersee (WII 'Lake Ammersee').

Educational work is not confined to existing centres, but also includes a range of lectures, guided tours and exhibitions for the public, tourists, schools and other interested groups prompted by restoration projects, during celebrations of the international World Wetlands Day and special seasonal events.

The International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine (ICPR) set up a network of visitor centres for the

Rhine river basin. A map showing the visitor centres (<https://www.iksr.org/en/public-relations/visitor-centres/where>) and a flyer were published.

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

*Please select only one per square.*

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

- > The general public is not just involved in decision-making processes affecting wetlands and waterbodies, this is in fact generally envisaged under German law. The respective participation procedures are legally binding under German law and require that the competent authority inform the public about the possibilities for participation in an appropriate manner.

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

A=Yes

### 16.4 Additional information

If 'Yes', indicate a) its membership; b) number of meetings since COP13; and c) what responsibilities the Committee has

- > a) A national Ramsar Committee has existed in Germany since 1993. It is headed by the BMU and is formally composed of representatives from the BMU, the BfN, the nature conservation ministries of the Länder, relevant research institutions, nature conservation associations and land user groups.
- b) Given the current priorities in European nature conservation, the national Ramsar Committee only plays a minor role at present. As the Länder are tasked with implementing nature conservation under Germany's federal structure, in future the Ramsar Committee could help advocate wetlands conservation and link the networks of Natura 2000 and Ramsar Sites.

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

Y=Not Relevant

### 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

- > An adequate number of established communication channels exist between the competent authorities,

departments and institutions to facilitate information sharing.

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

> Selected Ramsar Sites have been organising events for many years, some of which have a local theme and are relevant to the Ramsar Convention. Examples include events on the Upper Rhine, where a specialist annual conference to mark Ramsar World Wetlands Day is hosted in alternate years by France and Germany, addressing current issues in the French-German Ramsar Site 'Rhin Supérieur'. The Middle Elbe biosphere reserve, which includes the Ramsar Site 'Aland-Elbe-Lowland and Elbe-wetland Jerichow', likewise regularly holds events to mark World Wetlands Day. In recent years, numerous press releases have also been published by various large organisations and institutions.

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

> Other examples of recent national and regional information campaigns designed to raise awareness of wetlands and their significance in Germany include the following:

The BfN initiated a synergy process with a specific reference to synergies in peatland conservation. A workshop was held on Vilm in May 2019 entitled "Exploring Synergies for Peatlands - Detecting and Enhancing the Global Importance of Peatlands in Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals" which brought together representatives of international conventions (e.g. the Ramsar Convention and conventions on climate change, biodiversity and migratory species) to discuss the important role of peatlands in climate change mitigation, biodiversity conservation, water pollution control and the minimisation of flood damage. One concrete outcome of the workshop was a roadmap for joint peatland conservation activities in the coming years. This also includes strengthening international cooperation with the aim of providing coherent information and policy recommendations for the parties. This will affect, in particular, the planned global inventory of peatlands.

In addition, a meeting was held in October 2019 with MEA representatives, initiated by the Global Peatlands Initiative with the goal of sharing experiences on existing and planned peatland conservation strategies. Representatives of government and non-governmental organisations from 11 EU Member States and other European countries came together in Bonn for the two day workshop 'European Peatlands Strategies'. The workshops focussed on identifying common key content and success factors in the development and implementation of peatland conservation strategies. A joint declaration of intent of the MEAs on this topic is planned for the future.

The following principles were formulated for peatland conservation strategies:

Comprehensive strategies should take account of all the relevant forms of use and functions of peatlands and peatland soils, including agriculture, forestry, peat extraction, recreation and tourism, nature conservation and climate action, water resources management etc. Representatives of all affected sectors and competent authorities should be involved in strategy development.

Strategies should contain clear, tangible goals that are transparently communicated to the public. Appropriate tools are needed to implement the strategies as well as reliable support mechanisms designed for the long term. A programme to monitor implementation progress must be in place to demonstrate the success of the strategies and enable necessary modifications to be made.

The outcomes of the workshop are summarised in the policy brief 'Peatland Strategies in Europe - Why and how to develop national strategies for peatlands' ([www.tinyurl.com/BfN-peatland-strategies](http://www.tinyurl.com/BfN-peatland-strategies)).

The significance of peatland (soil) conservation and associated ecosystem services was a topic covered in elements of the educational and public relations work in various projects supported by the Federal Government. There is also an urgent need to continue and intensify such activities.

In North Rhine-Westphalia, the biological stations, which manage the three Ramsar Sites (or the SPAs), regularly hold different events for this purpose.

There were also a number of publications in recent years which referred to the importance of wetlands, for example:

In 2017, the report "Vögel in Deutschland - Erfassung rastender Wasservögel" (birds in Germany - survey of resting waterbirds, in German) jointly published by the Federation of German Avifaunists (DDA), the BfN and the Working Group of German State Bird Conservationists (LAG VSW) ([www.dda-web.de/vid](http://www.dda-web.de/vid)).

In 2020, "Vögel in Deutschland - Übersicht zur Bestands situation" (birds in Germany — overview of populations) was published which outlines population sizes and trends of breeding and resting/wintering waterbird species and analyses an overview of the population shares of individual waterbird populations in

Germany.

“Vögel in Deutschland - Erfassung von Brutvögeln” (birds in Germany — survey of breeding birds) was also published in 2020. This report focusses on the monitoring of bird species in wetlands and, from 2021, aims to improve monitoring with targeted data collection programmes.

The ICPR published the report “Waterbirds in the international Rhine Valley: numbers, distribution and trends” in 2020, which in various ways outlines the significance of intact wetlands for resting and wintering waterbirds ([www.iksr.org](http://www.iksr.org)).

## 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

17.3 [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

A=Yes

### 17.3 Additional information

If 'Yes', please indicate the countries supported since COP12

> The BfN carried out a project aimed at identifying, assessing and preserving the ecosystem services of wetlands in Africa as a contribution to achieving the SDGs and implementing the biodiversity and Ramsar conventions. Various planning- and management-relevant parameters can be presented using freely available satellite images with very high resolution and the information can be used more as a basis for the sustainable management and associated planning of wetlands in Africa. This in turn contributed to the conservation of ecosystem services and sustainable use ('wise use' in the context of the Ramsar Convention) of wetlands. Among the winners of the UN Climate Solution Awards, which were presented to 19 projects during UNFCCC COP23, is a German-Russian project being carried out by Wetlands International and the Succow Foundation. The aim of this project was the conservation and rewetting of peatlands, initially in the Moscow region — this was then extended to include other regions e.g. Tver Oblast. With over 35,000 hectares of rewetted peatlands, it is now one of the most successful projects of its kind.

The BMU's International Climate Initiative (IKI) has funded or is funding a number of projects in Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Mali, Ethiopia, Panama and South-East Asia.

The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) has its own water division, tasked with achieving the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and more.

The water sector is one of the BMZs most significant areas due to the volume of funding commitments and number of partner countries with a clear focus on the water sector: between 2014 and 2018 development assistance amounted to approximately 722 million euros annually in the water sectors — placing Germany among the three largest bilateral donors for achieving SDG 6. Germany is currently supporting partner countries, predominantly in sub-Saharan Africa and the MENA region, in the context of government development cooperation.

As part of its commitment to biodiversity conservation, the BMZ also supports numerous projects worldwide for the conservation and sustainable management of wetlands.

Development cooperation is divided into two areas: financial cooperation provided by Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) and technical cooperation provided mainly by the Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). The projects, such as the "Management of the Sundarbans" project to support biodiversity and improve climate change adaptation in the Sundarbans Mangrove Forests in Bangladesh, which encompass an area of over 10,000 square kilometres and are designated both a UNESCO World Heritage and Ramsar Site, support sustainable development and the conservation of the ecological function of wetlands (<https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/37949.html>). Germany supports 5,468 km<sup>2</sup> of wetlands worldwide through financial cooperation. Projects such as "Transboundary water cooperation in the Nile Basin" are becoming more and more important as a means of avoiding conflict over water resources. The project aims to strengthen the Nile Basin Initiative as an example of integrated, transboundary water resources management. Another example is the KfW project to support marine and coastal protection in Madagascar. With over 17 million euros, the project supports the local population to promote the more sustainable use of their resources and protect the mangrove forests. Alternative sources of income are also being created for the coastal inhabitants.

In total, around one third of the BMZ budget is allocated to multilateral development cooperation, one of the aims of which is to achieve the SDGs and eradicate poverty. The BMZ / Germany works closely together with international organisations in this context. These include, for example, the Water and Sanitation Program (WSP) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

As well as directly government-led development work, the BMZ, KfW and GIZ also fund projects to promote

wetland conservation and develop integrated water resource management mechanisms. Participation is a basic principle of Germany's development cooperation. For all projects supported by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) relating to wetland conservation, co-management is an important consideration. To ensure that protected wetlands remain relevant to politics, society and biodiversity conservation in future, they need to be managed effectively and in a socially compatible manner, and ecologically and socio-economically integrated into the surrounding landscape. Co-management of these areas is an important element for the comprehensive promotion of social equity in nature conservation.

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

A=Yes

#### 17.4 Additional information

> Since 2011, it has been compulsory to carry out an environmental and climate assessment (Umwelt und Klimaprüfung — UKP) in the planning and implementation of development policy strategies and measures at the BMZ. The goal of the assessment is to ensure that the planning and implementation of strategies and measures either avoid or minimise adverse effects on the environment or climate, that (additional) potential to improve environmental quality and avoid greenhouse gases in all sectors/programmes is exploited, the impacts on climate change considered and adaptation capacities increased. The procedural guide for the assessment and consideration of environmental and climate aspects must be used in the development of country strategies and sectoral strategies of partners and bilateral programmes relevant to development cooperation.

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

### 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

D=Planned

#### 18.1 Additional information

> The BMU coordinates the various activities at national level. Until now, the national focal points of other MEAs have not been invited to participate in the National Ramsar Committee. It is possible that the focal points of other regional or international MEAs will be invited to participate in future work on thematically relevant issues.

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

B=No

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).

A=Yes

#### 18.3 Additional information

If 'Yes' please name the agency (es) or IOP (s) and the type of assistance received

> Germany has not received any support from any of the UN or other global and regional bodies and agencies mentioned. Germany is a member of IUCN and Wetlands International and financially supports their work on wetlands conservation.

Many nature conservation organisations in Germany help to protect and conserve wetlands and waterbodies through local, regional and national projects. These include the Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union (NABU), which is a Birdlife Partner at international level. WWF Germany also focusses on the protection and conservation or renaturation of wetlands, and the management of water catchment areas. This is evident

from the range of projects carried out in its offices along the North and Baltic Sea coast and in the Wadden Sea, and in innovative large scale conservation projects on the Middle Elbe and Lake Schaalsee in Schleswig-Holstein. The WWF also supports integrated waterbody management at national and European level, for instance, through its involvement in the river basin commissions for the Elbe, Rhine, Danube and Oder.

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

> Since reunification, Germany has made a particular effort to step up its cooperation with eastern and south-eastern European countries in the field of nature conservation. To this end, the BfN's International Academy for Nature Conservation on the island of Vilm organises seminars, workshops and expert meetings to encourage the exchange of information and experiences. The nature conservation academies of the Länder, including those in Bavaria (ANL), North Rhine-Westphalia (NUA) and Lower Saxony (NNA), are likewise engaged in training specialist conservation personnel in Germany and in eastern Europe. The implementation of LIFE nature projects encourage expert exchanges at regional/local level through conferences and excursions. Cooperation arrangements and multilateral agreements exist in the transboundary Ramsar Sites ('Wadden Sea', 'Rhin Supérieur', 'Lower Rhine', 'Lower Oder Valley', 'Lower Inn between Haiming and Neuhaus' 'Bavarian Wildalm') and other wetlands (such as Saar-Moselle, Danube, Oder-Neisse, Elbe) and provide a framework for the intensive exchange of information. Examples of transboundary cooperation include Germany's cooperation with Austria in the EuRegio Salzburg/Berchtesgadener Land/Traunstein: "Moor & Torf" and the Interreg project "Moor & More am Wilden Kaiser". Networks also exist with other wetlands in Europe and further afield that are organised autonomously by individuals, nature conservation associations and scientific institutions. The following twinning arrangements are still ongoing:

The Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation coordinated by the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat (CWSS CWSS – [www.waddensea-secretariat.org](http://www.waddensea-secretariat.org)) with the Wash/Northern Norfolk Coast, Guinea Bissau, Mauritania and the Republic of Korea.

The Interreg project PROWAD highlighted the opportunities and prospects of sustainable socio economic development in the Danish-German-Dutch Wadden Sea region associated with its recognition as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The project also analysed the potential for sustainable tourism, and stakeholders from the nature conservation and tourism sectors attended regional workshops to develop a vision, shared goals and principles for sustainable tourism in the Wadden Sea ([www.prowad.org](http://www.prowad.org)).

The 'Vorpommersche Boddenlandschaft' National Park with the 'Lahemaa' National Park in Estonia

The 'Lower Oder Valley' National Park with the 'Biebrza' National Park in Poland

The Ramsar Site 'Wastewater irrigation fields Münster' with the 'Danube Delta' National Park in Romania, the 'Kamanos' reserve in Lithuania and 'Djoudj' National Park in Senegal ([www.rieselfelder-muenster.de](http://www.rieselfelder-muenster.de)).

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

German nature conservation associations also continue to support wetlands in Europe and other continents through their project work, e.g.:

EURONATUR ([www.euronatur.de](http://www.euronatur.de)) is committed to the conservation of wetlands for migratory birds and coastal regions, with projects primarily in the Save, Drau and Mur river basins, the Narew region (Poland) and Lake Skadar in Montenegro.

The Global Nature Fund is involved in a number of projects to conserve and manage European wetlands and lakes assisted by EU funding ([www.livingwetlands.org](http://www.livingwetlands.org) and [www.livinglakes.org](http://www.livinglakes.org)).

- At national level, WWF Germany operates primarily in the Elbe river basin, particularly in the large-scale conservation project on the Middle Elbe. At European level, the WWF also assists with the development of integrated river basin management and renaturation work. WWF Germany's international priorities are to promote nature conservation and natural resources work, including technical training in various river basin districts ([www.wwf.de](http://www.wwf.de)).

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 status of all designated wetland areas with protected status, as defined by the protection categories of the Federal Nature Conservation Act, is published in the official journal of the Länder / the Gazette of Laws and Ordinances / Ministerial Gazette) or in the Federal Law Gazette (in the form of the National Park Act, the biosphere reserve act or ordinance, and Ordinances on the Nature Conservation Act).

For the majority of protected wetlands, including less-protected sites, public relations work includes publishing and distributing information material about their conservation status, objectives and measures, drawn up by the competent institutions or NGOs that manage them, either as printed publications or online.

Many of Germany's 35 Ramsar Sites have their own website, which is maintained either by the site administrative bodies or a nature conservation association (e.g. [www.ramsar-bw.de](http://www.ramsar-bw.de), [www.wattenmeer-nationalpark.de](http://www.wattenmeer-nationalpark.de), [www.naturschutzring-duemmer.de](http://www.naturschutzring-duemmer.de), [www.bskw.de](http://www.bskw.de), [www.ramsar-ammersee.de](http://www.ramsar-ammersee.de), [www.nationalpark-mueritz.de](http://www.nationalpark-mueritz.de), [www.unteres-odertal.de](http://www.unteres-odertal.de), [www.nabu-rheinauen.de](http://www.nabu-rheinauen.de), [www.nabu-wollmatingerried.de](http://www.nabu-wollmatingerried.de), [www.lbv-starnberg.de](http://www.lbv-starnberg.de), [www.weseraue.de](http://www.weseraue.de)). All Ramsar Sites are presented under various categories, but not always with an explicit reference to their status as Wetlands of International Importance. There is currently no joint website for all Ramsar Sites in Germany. WWF Germany's website provides an overview of the Convention and Germany's Wetlands of International Importance.

Most of the Länder, which are responsible for implementing nature conservation in Germany, have their own websites for the Natura 2000 sites, whose territories include the relevant Ramsar Sites (e.g. [www.ramsar-bw.de](http://www.ramsar-bw.de), [www.natura2000-bw.de](http://www.natura2000-bw.de), [www.umwelt.nrw.de](http://www.umwelt.nrw.de), <http://www.naturschutz-fachinformationssysteme-nrw.de/natura2000-meldedok/de/start>, <http://www.mu.sachsen-anhalt.de/start/fachbereich04/schutzgebiete/main.htm>, [http://www.nlwkn.niedersachsen.de/naturschutz/natura\\_2000/downloads\\_zu\\_natura\\_2000/downlo ads-zu-natura-2000-46104.html](http://www.nlwkn.niedersachsen.de/naturschutz/natura_2000/downloads_zu_natura_2000/downlo ads-zu-natura-2000-46104.html)).

Some Länder provide information on all protected areas and are planning a dedicated website for their Ramsar Sites, or offer more in-depth information on wetlands, such as the landscape programme "Gutachtliches Landschaftsprogramm" in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania (<http://ikzm-oder.de/download.php?fileid=456>).

Various publications on protected areas also cover Ramsar Sites (e.g. Mammen et al. (2013) on European special protection areas under the Birds Directive in Saxony-Anhalt).

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

A=Yes

### 18.6 Additional information

> The transboundary river basins relevant for Germany were determined within the context of implementing the Water Framework Directive. There are 10 relevant river basins in Germany, 8 of which have an international character. International agreements exist for the vast majority of these river basins, and their management is coordinated within this framework. Apart from implementing the Water Framework Directive, the international commissions set up for most of these river basins have established fundamental objectives: general protection from pollution, improving water quality, coordinating flood protection, and making all aquatic and interlinked terrestrial ecosystems as natural as possible, as well as reinforcing the mutual exchange of information.

As such, transboundary cooperation in waterbody management is a key foundation of an integrative protection strategy and cooperative management mechanism for transboundary river basins.

Strong relationships have existed for many years in the transboundary Ramsar Sites - 'Wadden Sea', 'Lower Rhine', 'Lower Inn between Haiming and Neuhaus', 'Wildalm', 'Lower Oder Valley' and 'Rhin Supérieur' - to coordinate conservation measures and facilitate management. The Wadden Sea has a range of strong multilateral mechanisms and management plans, including the trilateral government cooperation, the Joint Declaration on the Protection of the Wadden Sea, a Common Wadden Sea Secretariat, the Trilateral Wadden Sea Plan (WSP) and the Trilateral Monitoring & Assessment Programme (TMAP). Since 2016, the Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea National Park has been part of a transboundary Ramsar Site. The Toender Declaration of 2014 laid the foundations for developing one large, transboundary Wadden Sea Ramsar Site.

The maintenance and development requirements of all transboundary protected areas, including those with inland wetlands or coastal sections, are also covered by a BfN project.

## 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

A=Yes

### 18.7 Additional information

If 'Yes' or 'Partially', please indicate for which wetland systems such management is in place

> Multilateral agreements and conventions and river basin district commissions have been established for the protection, management, monitoring and sustainable management of the Wadden Sea, the North Sea and the Baltic Sea, together with all major river basins which Germany shares with neighbouring countries. They owe their effectiveness primarily to transboundary, and in some cases cross-sector, cooperation. See also answer to question 18.6.

A coordinated management arrangement is in place for the French-German Ramsar Site 'Rhin Supérieur'.

Transboundary cooperation exists in the Wadden Sea, the Upper Rhine, Lake Constance and the Lower Inn for international waterbird censuses.

In developing management plans for Natura 2000 sites, joint development and conservation concepts will also be devised for other WIIs near national borders: 'Lower Rhine', 'Lower Inn between Haiming and Neuhaus',

'Lower Oder Valley, Schwedt' (German-Polish Oder river commission) and 'Bavarian Wildalm'.

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

> Wetland-dependent migratory species are taken into account when coordinating regular nationwide (and regional) surveys (waterbird censuses) and targeted surveys of specific species (e.g. censuses of whooper and Bewick's swans, northern lapwings and golden plovers, cormorants) as part of bird species monitoring by the competent Länder authorities.

At regional level, the bird monitoring administrative agreement between the BfN and the Länder includes the monitoring of resting waterbirds, which is carried out by the Federation of German Avifaunists (DDA) relevant associations, and the ornithological stations of the Länder.

In Hesse, a number of official and/or voluntary conservation networks and organisations are dedicated to migratory species and improving their conservation status. Examples include guardian networks for species such as beavers, European pond terrapins and the salmon project "Lachs 2000".

In Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, a transboundary network of government authorities, NGOs and scientists are involved in a project to reintroduce the sturgeon in the Oder river basin.

The Wadden Sea region is covered by the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation.

### 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

#### 19.1 Additional information

> No such assessment has been undertaken to date; the structures and capacities of the management institutions and responsibilities in the individual Ramsar Sites also vary considerably.

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

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

B=No

#### 19.2 Additional information

If you answer yes to the above please provide information on which mechanisms and materials

> Not systematically. However, this topic is often addressed in schools, for example in project weeks etc.

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

X=Unknown

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

X=Unknown

#### 19.3 Additional information

including whether the Ramsar Wise Use Handbooks were used in the training

> a) There are currently no education and training programmes for the managers of Germany's Ramsar Sites specifically dedicated to implementation of the Ramsar Convention's tasks and targets. However, each year, various organisations hold events relating to the Ramsar Convention.

b) Furthermore, the nature conservation academies of individual Länder regularly organise educational events for personnel working in protected wetlands, site managers and other interested parties. These tend to focus primarily on management issues in the relevant landscapes. For example, twice a year the national park administrations hold training events for site managers. Regional certification courses for nature and landscape guides (ZNL), based on the uniform nationwide standard, include basic knowledge of ecology and environmental correlations. Certified nature and landscape guides must also practice regular continuing

professional development (CPD). The annual curriculum offered by the “Landeslehrstätte für Naturschutz und nachhaltige Entwicklung” college in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania is a popular choice, as it offers a wide range of specialist events, including some on wetland management. There is also interest in specific events and courses on the Ramsar Convention in German, which could be a way of sharing content and approaches for particular applications.

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

B=No

#### 19.4 Additional information

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

> The National Report Format is a helpful instrument in documenting and planning activities associated with the Ramsar Convention. The drafting process and associated agreements with and between the Länder and federal government authorities facilitate the assessment of activities. However, the report does not have a monitoring function.

