



Report on the implementation of AEWA for the period 2021-2024

The format for reports on the implementation of the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) for the period 2021-2024 was approved by the 8th Session of the Meeting of the Parties (MOP8, 26-30 September 2022, Budapest, Hungary) through Resolution 8.3 and modified by the Standing Committee at its 23rd and 24th meetings (June 2023 and July 2024, respectively) as mandated by the MOP. This format has been compiled following the AEWA Annex 3 (Action Plan), the AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027 and resolutions of the MOP.

In accordance with article V(c) of the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds, each Party shall prepare to each ordinary session of the MOP a National Report on its implementation of the Agreement and submit that report to the Agreement Secretariat. Through Resolution 8.3 the deadline for submission of national reports to the 9th Session of the Meeting of the Parties (MOP9) was set at 180 days before the opening of the meeting. MOP9 is scheduled to take place on 10-14 November 2025; therefore, the deadline for submission of National Reports is **13 May 2025**.

As per Resolution 7.1 of the MOP, Chapter 3 of the National Report Format on the numbers and trends of native and non-native species of waterbirds was developed as a stand-alone online reporting module, which is due for submission to every second MOP session. The next submission of this module is scheduled for delivery to MOP10 and will take place in 2026-2027 through a stand-alone reporting process. Therefore, the current Report on the implementation of AEWA for the period 2021-2024 does not contain Chapter 3.

As per the decision of the 23rd meeting of the Standing Committee (26-27 June 2023), reporting of waterbird harvest data for the period 2019-2023 was undertaken as a stand-alone module of the national report and administered through a separate reporting process in the course of 2024.

The AEWA National Reports 2021-2024 were compiled and submitted through the AEWA Online National Reporting System, which is part of the broader CMS Family Online Reporting System. The CMS Family Online Reporting System was developed by the UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) in close collaboration with and under the guidance of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat.

1. General Information

Name of reporting Contracting Party

>>> Croatia

Date of entry into force of AEWA in the Contracting Party

>>> 01.09.2000

List any reservations that the Contracting Party has made (if any) in respect of any population(s) listed in Table 1 of Annex 3 or any specific provision of the AEWA Action Plan - either upon deposition of its instruments of accession (per AEWA, Article XV) or subsequent to any amendment of Table 1 or the AEWA Action Plan, as adopted by a session of the Agreement's Meeting of the Parties (per AEWA, Article X.6).

EU member states should list also all reservations entered by the European Commission on behalf of the European Union.

>>> For the Republic of Croatia as the EU Member State the reservation submitted by the European Commission on 22 March 2019 regarding nine AEWA species is relevant. The species under reservation are: The Common Eider (*Somateria mollissima*), the Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*), the Common Pochard (*Aythya farina*), the Eurasian Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*), the Northern Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*), the Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*), the Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*), the Red Knot (*Calidris canutus*) and the Spotted Redshank (*Tringa erythropus*).

2. Institutional Information

Please update information on the National AEWA Administrative Authority, the National Focal Points, the Designated National Respondent and the other contributors to this report.

Designated National AEWA Administrative Authority

Full name of the institution

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Name and title of the head of institution

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Designated National Focal Point (NFP) for AEWA matters

Name and title of the NFP

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Affiliation (institution, department)

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Designated National Focal Point for AEWA Technical Committee (TC NFP) matters

Name and title of the TC NFP

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Designated National Focal Point for Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA NFP) matters

Name and title of the CEPA NFP

>>> CEPA NFP has not been designated

Affiliation (institution, department)

>>> N/A

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Designated National Respondent (DNR) in charge of the compilation and submission of the AEWA National Report 2021-2024

Please select from the list below as appropriate.

The National Focal Point (NFP) has been designated as the National Respondent

Other contributors to the AEWA National Report 2021 - 2024

Please list the names and affiliations (institution, organisation) of the other contributors to this report. For Contracting Parties in which nature conservation is not an exclusive competence of national/federal government, Designated National Respondents are encouraged to seek input from other relevant levels of government.

>>> 1. Ms. Vlatka Dumbović-Mazal, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Green Transition, Institute for Environmental and Nature Protection; 2. Ms. Lea Barić, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery, Directorate for Forestry, Hunting and Wood Industry; 3. Ms. Ivana Petrina, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery, Fishery Directorate; 4. Ms. Ivana Vukov, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery, Fishery Directorate; 5. Ms. Jelena Kralj, PhD, Institute of Ornithology; 6. Mr. Vladimir Savić, PhD, Poultry Centre of the Croatian Veterinary Institute;

Pressures and Responses

4. Species Conservation

4.1 Legal Measures

1. Following MOP8, was a review undertaken in your country of the relevant domestic legislation against the provisions of the latest version of the Agreement text and its annexes, including Table 1 in Annex III, taking into account all amendments adopted by MOP8? (AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Actions 1.1 (a), 1.1 (b), 2.2(a) and 2.2(b))

Yes

Please indicate the outcome of this review

Relevant national legislation was fully in line with the Agreement text and its annexes

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

2. Was your country's national legislation reviewed following the Guidance on Measures in National Legislation for Different Populations of the Same Species, Particularly with Respect to Hunting and Trade (Resolution 6.7)?

See Appendix 1 / Appendix 2 / Appendix 3

Notice: Before clicking on the above hyperlink, please keep pressing the **Ctrl button** on your keyboard to open the link in a new tab.

Yes

Did this require adjusting your national legislation?

No

Please describe how your current national legislation is compatible with the advice provided in the Guidance

>>> The only species with populations overlap in Croatia that is listed as a game species according to the national legislation is the Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*). In Croatia, W Mediterranean wintering population (column C category 1) overlaps with Black Sea-E Mediterranean wintering population (column B category 2c). However, national legislation applies measures that correspond to the provisions for column B populations universally for all game species.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

3. Please confirm the protection status under your country's national legislation of each population listed in the Excel file linked below. This list contains all the AEWA Table 1, Column A populations that are regularly occurring in your country (AEWA Action Plan, paragraph 2.1.1; AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Target 1.1).

Guidance on responding to this question:

1- Please click here and download the Excel file starting with your country's name.

(**Notice:** before clicking on this hyperlink, please keep pressing the Ctrl button on your keyboard to open the link in a new tab.)

2- Fill in the Excel template comprehensively;

3- Upload the completed Excel file as an attachment here. For uploading please click on the little blue icon below containing a paper clip.

I confirm that I have downloaded the Excel file with my country's name, filled it in as necessary and uploaded the completed file as an attachment to this question.

You have attached the following documents to this answer.

[Croatia_Q3_AEWA_NR_2021-2024_PopCoIA_fin.xlsx](#) - Protection status in Croatia of populations listed in AEWA Table 1, Column A

4. Please confirm for each population, listed in the Excel file linked below, whether there is an open hunting season (birds and/or eggs) in your country. This list contains all the AEWA Table 1, Column A, category 2 or 3 with an asterisk or category 4 that are regularly occurring in your country (AEWA Action Plan, paragraph 2.1.1; AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Target 1.1).

Guidance: Open hunting season in the context of this inquiry means that the waterbird population is allowed to be hunted for a certain period in the year in accordance with the respective domestic legislation of the country. Some populations, even if huntable according to the legislation, in certain circumstances may be subject to a year-round closed season for management reasons.

Guidance on responding to this question:

1- Please click here and download the Excel file starting with your country's name.

(**Notice:** before clicking on this hyperlink, please keep pressing the Ctrl button on your keyboard to open the link in a new tab.)

2- Fill in the Excel template comprehensively;

3- Upload the completed Excel file as an attachment here. For uploading please click on the little blue icon below containing a paper clip.

I confirm that I have downloaded the Excel file with my country's name, filled it in as necessary and uploaded the completed file as an attachment to this question.

You have attached the following documents to this answer.

[Croatia_Q4_AEWA_NR_2021-2024_PopColA-Cat2_3_4_fin.xlsx](#) - Protection status in Croatia of populations listed in AEWA Table 1, Column A category 2 or 3 with asterisk or 4

5. Please confirm for each population, listed in the Excel file linked below, whether taking is regulated in your country. This list contains all the AEWA Table 1, Column B populations that are regularly occurring in your country (AEWA Action Plan, paragraph 2.1.2; AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Target 1.1).

Guidance on responding to this question:

1- Please click here and download the Excel file starting with your country's name.

(**Notice:** before clicking on this hyperlink, please keep pressing the Ctrl button on your keyboard to open the link in a new tab.)

2- Fill in the Excel template comprehensively;

3- Upload the completed Excel file as an attachment here. For uploading please click on the little blue icon below containing a paper clip.

I confirm that I have downloaded the Excel file with my country's name, filled it in as necessary and uploaded the completed file as an attachment to this question.

You have attached the following documents to this answer.

[Croatia_Q5_AEWA_NR_2021-2024_PopColB_fin.xlsx](#) - Protection status in Croatia of populations listed in AEWA Table 1, Column B

6. Please indicate which modes of taking are prohibited in your country (AEWA Action Plan, paragraph 2.1.2(b); AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Target 1.1)

One or more modes of taking have been prohibited

Please provide details to each mode of taking in the list below:

Snares

Yes, fully

Please indicate the legislation under which the mode of taking is prohibited

>>> Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19,127/19 and155/23) and Hunting Act (OG 99/18, 32/19, 32/20 and 127/24)

Limes

Yes, fully

Please indicate the legislation under which the mode of taking is prohibited

>>> Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19,127/19 and155/23) and Hunting Act (OG 99/18, 32/19, 32/20 and 127/24)

Hooks

Yes, fully

Please indicate the legislation under which the mode of taking is prohibited

>>> Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19,127/19 and155/23) and Hunting Act (OG 99/18, 32/19, 32/20 and 127/24)

Live birds which are blind or mutilated used as decoys

Yes, fully

Please indicate the legislation under which the mode of taking is prohibited

>>> Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19,127/19 and155/23) and Hunting Act (OG 99/18, 32/19, 32/20 and 127/24)

Tape recorders and other electronic devices

Yes, fully

Please indicate the legislation under which the mode of taking is prohibited

>>> Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19,127/19 and155/23) and Hunting Act (OG 99/18, 32/19, 32/20 and 127/24)

Electrocuting devices

Yes, fully

Please indicate the legislation under which the mode of taking is prohibited

>>> Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19,127/19 and155/23) and Hunting Act (OG 99/18, 32/19, 32/20 and 127/24)

Artificial light sources

Yes, fully

Please indicate the legislation under which the mode of taking is prohibited

>>> Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19,127/19 and155/23) and Hunting Act (OG 99/18, 32/19, 32/20 and 127/24)

Mirrors and other dazzling devices

Yes, fully

Please indicate the legislation under which the mode of taking is prohibited

>>> Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19,127/19 and155/23) and Hunting Act (OG 99/18, 32/19, 32/20 and 127/24)

Devices for illuminating targets

Yes, fully

Please indicate the legislation under which the mode of taking is prohibited

>>> Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19,127/19 and155/23) and Hunting Act (OG 99/18, 32/19, 32/20 and 127/24)

Sighting devices for night shooting comprising an electronic image magnifier or image converter

Yes, fully

Please indicate the legislation under which the mode of taking is prohibited

>>> Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19,127/19 and155/23) and Hunting Act (OG 99/18, 32/19, 32/20 and 127/24)

Explosives

Yes, fully

Please indicate the legislation under which the mode of taking is prohibited

>>> Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19,127/19 and155/23) and Hunting Act (OG 99/18, 32/19, 32/20 and 127/24)

Nets

Yes, fully

Please indicate the legislation under which the mode of taking is prohibited

>>> Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19,127/19 and155/23) and Hunting Act (OG 99/18, 32/19, 32/20 and 127/24)

Traps

Yes, fully

Please indicate the legislation under which the mode of taking is prohibited

>>> Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19,127/19 and155/23) and Hunting Act (OG 99/18, 32/19, 32/20 and 127/24)

Poison

Yes, fully

Please indicate the legislation under which the mode of taking is prohibited

>>> Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19,127/19 and155/23) and Hunting Act (OG 99/18, 32/19, 32/20 and 127/24)

Poisoned or anaesthetic baits

Yes, fully

Please indicate the legislation under which the mode of taking is prohibited

>>> Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19,127/19 and155/23) and Hunting Act (OG 99/18, 32/19, 32/20 and 127/24)

Semi-automatic or automatic weapons with a magazine capable of holding more than two rounds of ammunition

Yes, fully

Please indicate the legislation under which the mode of taking is prohibited

>>> Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19,127/19 and155/23) and Hunting Act (OG 99/18, 32/19, 32/20 and 127/24)

Hunting from aircraft, motor vehicles, or boats driven at a speed exceeding 5 km p/h (18 km p/h on the open sea)

Yes, fully

Please indicate the legislation under which the mode of taking is prohibited

>>> Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19,127/19 and155/23) and Hunting Act (OG 99/18, 32/19, 32/20 and 127/24)

Other non-selective modes of taking

Yes, fully

Please specify which other non-selective modes of taking have been prohibited

>>> Crossbows and gassing or smoking out

7. Has your country granted exemptions from any of the above prohibitions in order to accommodate livelihoods uses? (AEWA Action Plan, paragraph 2.1.2(b); AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Target 1.1)

No

8. Has a review of enforcement of and compliance with the domestic legislation relevant for AEWA implementation, [in particular the legislation which caters for the obligations under paragraphs 2.1 and 4.1 of the AEWA Action Plan], been undertaken in your country after MOP8? (AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Actions 1.1(c) and 2.2(c))

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> Croatia, as the EU member state, has aligned the Nature Protection Act and Hunting Act with the EU Birds Directive and for that reason there was no need for review of enforcement and compliance after AEWA MOP8.

Was a review undertaken before MOP8?

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> Although the full review was not deemed necessary, some analysis has been done. Namely, after MOP7 Croatia, due to the change of status of the Common Pochard (*Aythya fuligula*), reviewed the hunting legislation and the closed season for this species was in 2019 changed to permanent (from 1st January-31st December) (Ordinance on closed season (OG 94/19)). Since then, the Common Pochard is not hunted in Croatia.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

9. Has your country used the AEWA Conservation Guidelines on National Legislation for the Protection of Species of Migratory Waterbirds and their Habitats?

Notice: Before clicking on the above hyperlink, please keep **Ctrl button** on your keyboard to open the link in a new tab.

Not Applicable

Please explain.

>>> Croatian legislation is aligned with relevant EU directives, e.g. the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive and it also takes into account obligations arising from international treaties to which Croatia is a party. Although Guidelines on National Legislation for the Protection of Species of Migratory Waterbirds and their Habitats were not used per se, its principles are used in the process of preparation and implementation of national nature protection legislation.

Optionally you can provide additional information on section 4.1. Legal Measures

>>> -

4.2. Species Action and Management Plans

10. Please report on the progress of turning the International Single Species Action and Management Plans (ISSAP and ISSMP), as well as International Multi-species Action Plans (IMSAP), listed below, into National Action or Management Plans. If no action or management plan is listed below, this is because your country is not considered to be a Principal Range State for any species currently covered by an AEWA plan. In such a case, please proceed to the next question. (AEWA Action Plan, paragraph 2.2; AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Action 1.2 (d))

Please report on all listed ISSAP, ISSMP and IMSAP

Ferruginous Duck / *Aythya nyroca*

National Plan for Ferruginous Duck / *Aythya nyroca*

No NP, but actions implemented

Please explain the reasons for having no NP in place

>>> It is a strictly protected species throughout the entire country according to the Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19 and 127/19) and the Ordinance of strictly protected species (OG 144/13 and 73/16). All important breeding sites are on carp fishponds that are designated as Natura 2000 sites. The most important site - Crna Mlaka is designated also as the Ramsar site and is protected as ornithological reserve according to the Nature Protection Act. Available human resources and funds were allocated in the development and implementation of specific conservation actions already recognized and defined in ISSAP.

Please provide a description of the actions implemented

>>> All key sites for the species were identified and designated as sites of the Natura 2000 (SPAs), including the ornithological reserve Crna Mlaka as the most important site for this species. According to the Nature Protection Act in ornithological reserve Crna Mlaka hunting is forbidden. On other carp fishponds that are included in the ecological network Natura 2000, projects and plans can be approved only after appropriate assessment has been conducted. Legal protection for Ferruginous Duck including the general protection of its habitat outside of protected areas was provided. Information about conservation of the Ferruginous Duck and its habitat was communicated to relevant policy makers and interest groups (e.g. hunters, fishermen, site managers). Management activities to regulate human activities at key sites, with special regard to fishing and boating, to reduce causes of disturbance and direct mortality, and increase breeding success were implemented on the key sites. National financial subsidy for 'wise use' of fishponds and incentives for maintaining/ reverting to extensive fishpond management is available and used on all key sites for the

species. The use of lead shot for hunting over wetlands is banned. Most of the key sites are monitored annually during the winter International Waterbird Census.

Please rate the degree of current implementation of the plan taking into account the time schedule of the ISSAP

Moderate implementation - some of the actions are underway as per the time schedule of the ISSAP

Please provide details and reasons for the lower degree of implementation.

>>> Main reason is lack of administrative and financial resources, especially for wardening of key sites and enforcement of hunting regulations. Some foreseen activities are irrelevant, as the control and eradication of the Grass Carp, as the Ferruginous Duck is breeding almost exclusively at carp fishponds where the Grass Carp is among the most numerous species. Not all Natura 2000 sites important for birds (SPAs) have management plans. Public awareness schemes to promote conservation of the Ferruginous Duck and its habitat and circulation of this information to relevant policymakers, interest groups (e.g. hunters, fishermen, reserve managers) and local people was not implemented. Strict spatial and temporal hunting regulations that reduce the probability of hunting mortality were not promoted. A system to monitor fishing bycatch and fishing activity in relation to Ferruginous Duck distribution was not introduced. Most of the key sites are not adequately monitored annually during the passage and the breeding season. Specific research to study migratory movements, factors affecting survival and reproductive rates, habitat requirements and feeding ecology were not implemented.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

Great Snipe / Gallinago media National Plan for Great Snipe / Gallinago media

No NP and no action implemented

Please explain the reasons

>>> Great Snipe is an irregular species in Croatia during migration. There were no identified sites that would be regularly used by this species. However, Great Snipe is strictly protected throughout the entire country according to the Ordinance of strictly protected species (OG 144/13 and 73/16). Furthermore, according to the Ordinance on closed hunting season (OG 94/19) hunting of look-alike Common Snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*) is forbidden in the period from 1st February to 15th October, covering also pre-nuptial migration of the Great Snipe. This ordinance applies for the whole territory of Croatia.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

Black-tailed Godwit / Limosa limosa National Plan for Black-tailed Godwit / Limosa limosa

No NP and no action implemented

Please explain the reasons

>>> It is a regular passage bird, although always present in low numbers (usually up to few dozen birds). Therefore, there were no important stopover sites identified. It is not a strictly protected species, nor a game species. The species and its habitat are protected by the Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19 and 127/19).

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

Eurasian Spoonbill / Platalea leucorodia National Plan for Eurasian Spoonbill / Platalea leucorodia

No NP, but actions implemented

Please explain the reasons for having no NP in place

>>> Eurasian Spoonbill is a strictly protected species throughout the entire country according to the Ordinance of strictly protected species (OG 144/13 and 73/16). Since some actions for its conservation are implemented, development of an action plan is not considered as a priority.

Please provide a description of the actions implemented

>>> All colonies are designated as Natura 2000 sites (SPAs). Basic conservation measures are defined in the Ordinance on conservation objectives and conservation measures for birds in Natura 2000 sites (OG 25/20 and 38/20). Key measure is preservation of carp fishponds and extensive fish production. Monitoring of breeding colonies are continuously undertaken. Implementation of the ISSAP is regularly assessed at ESIEG Workshops. Croatian representative is the coordinator of ESIEG, and the Xth ESIEG Workshop took place in Croatia in 2022 (https://storkibisspoonbill.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Special_Publication_2023.pdf).

Please rate the degree of current implementation of the plan taking into account the time schedule of the ISSAP

Moderate implementation - some of the actions are underway as per the time schedule of the ISSAP

Please provide details and reasons for the lower degree of implementation.

>>> Lack of resources and cooperation.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

11. Has your country provided assistance for the coordination and implementation of International Species Action or Management Plans through funding of AEWA International Species Working and Expert Groups? (Resolution 7.5)

Yes

Please provide details, including amount of funds donated

>>> Croatian representative is the coordinator of the Eurasian Spoonbill International Expert Group.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

12. Has your country provided financial or in-kind assistance for the development of new International Species Action or Management Plans? (Resolution 7.5)

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> Main reason is the limitation of the national budget. Also, there was no new International Species Action or Management Plan developed for species relevant to Croatia.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

13. Has your country been involved in the development and/or implementation of any flyway-scale projects to implement Single or Multi-Species Action Plans? (AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Action 1.2(f))

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> Lack of human and financial resources.

14. Has a review and prioritization been undertaken in your country of the resources needed to develop national action plans in response to ISSAPs, implement those plans and coordinate their implementation? (AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Action 1.2(g))

Yes

When was this review and prioritization completed?

>>> In general, the review and prioritization of the development of national management and action plans for strictly protected species was made in 2017. However, due to the lack of financial and administrative capacities the priorities for development and adoption of national management and action plans did not include species that are covered by the AEWA ISSAPs.

Please attach the review and prioritization or provide a weblink to it. If not available, please summarise the main points.

>>> The prioritization made in 2017 did not include species covered by AEWA ISSAPs.

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

Management plans and conservation measures - List of priority species for development and adoption of national management and action plans

Has a corresponding national resource mobilization plan been established?

No

Please explain the reasons.

>>> There was no need for such a plan. The preparation of priority species national management and action plans was included in the scope of the Operational Programme Competitiveness and Cohesion 2014-2020.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

15. Does your country have in place or is your country developing a National Single Species Action Plan for any species/population for which an AEWA ISSAP has not been developed? (AEWA Action Plan, paragraph 2.2.2)

No

16. Has your country used the AEWA Guidelines for the preparation of National Single Species Action Plans for migratory waterbirds?

Notice: Before clicking on the above hyperlink, please keep pressing **the Ctrl button** on your keyboard to open the link in a new tab.

No

Please explain the reasons. What has been used instead as a basis for the preparation of NSSAPs?

>>> Although the national single species action plans (NSSAPs) are not developed yet preparations for their development were made and in this process AEWA Guidelines were used and will be used in the future because they correspond to principles and methods used in preparation of action plans for other species (e.g. large carnivores).

Optionally you can provide additional information on section 4.2. Single Species Action Plans

>>> -

4.3 Emergency Measures

18. Please report on any emergency situation that has occurred in your country over the past triennium and has threatened waterbirds. (AEWA Action Plan, paragraph 2.3)

Please indicate whether an emergency situation threatening waterbirds, such as botulism, chemical pollution, earthquake, extreme weather, fire, harmful algal bloom, infectious disease, introduction of alien species, lead poisoning, nuclear accident, oil spill, predation, volcanic activity, war or other emergency (please specify), has occurred in the country over the past triennium.

No emergency situation has occurred

19. Are there any other emergency response measures, different from the ones applied in response to the emergency situations reported above, that were developed and are in place in your country so that they can be used in future in emergency cases?

No

20. Has your country used the AEWA Conservation Guidelines on identifying and tackling emergency situations for migratory waterbirds?

Notice: Before clicking on the above hyperlink, please keep pressing the **Ctrl button** on your keyboard to open the link in a new tab.

Not applicable

Please explain

>>> In the reporting period 2021-2024 there was no emergency situations for migratory waterbirds.

Optionally you can provide additional information on section 4.3. Emergency Measures

>>> -

4.4 Re-establishments

21. Is your country maintaining a national register of re-establishment projects occurring or planned to occur wholly or partly within your country? (Resolution 4.4)

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> Until now no re-establishment project was proposed, approved or undertaken. Nevertheless, according to the Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19, 127/19 and 155/23) and Ordinance on the method of preparing and implementing risk assessment studies with respect to introduction, reintroduction and breeding of wild taxa (OG 34/08), the ministry responsible for nature protection is obliged to keep the records of granted authorisations for introduction, reintroduction or breeding.

22. Is there a regulatory framework for re-establishments of species, including waterbirds, in your country (AEWA Action Plan, paragraph 2.4)?

Yes

Please provide details

>>> Re-introduction of extinct wild species and repopulation of wild species is regulated with the Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19, 127/19 and 155/23) and Ordinance on the method of preparing and implementing risk assessment studies with respect to introduction, reintroduction and breeding of wild taxa (OG 34/08). It is important to stress that provisions related to re-introduction and re-population of wild species are in force since 2005 and were a part of the former Nature Protection Act (OG 70/05, 139/08, 57/11).

23. Has your country considered, developed or implemented re-establishment projects for any species/population listed on AEWA Table 1? (AEWA Action Plan, paragraph 2.4)

No

24. Has your country used the AEWA conservation Guidelines on the translocation of waterbirds for conservation purposes?

Notice: Before clicking on the above hyperlink, please keep pressing the **Ctrl button** on your keyboard to open the link in a new tab.

No

Please explain the reasons. What was used instead as a basis for dealing with the issue?

>>> No translocation was done in the reporting period 2021-2024.

Optionally you can provide additional information on section 4.4. Re-establishments

>>> -

4.5 Introductions

25. Does your country have legislation in place, which prohibits the introduction into the environment of non-native species of animals and plants which may be detrimental to migratory waterbirds? (AEWA Action Plan, paragraph 2.5.1)

Yes, and being enforced

Please provide the following details: title of legislation, year of adoption, institution that adopted it, institution that enforces it. Please clarify whether legislation applies to/is consistent throughout the entire country or only to particular states/provinces.

>>> Introduction into the environment of non-native species is prohibited by provisions of the Act on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of alien and invasive alien species (OG 15/18 and 14/19) and before adoption of that act in 2018 the prohibition was prescribed with provisions of the Nature Protection Act since 2005. The Act on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of alien and invasive alien species took over all provisions on alien species from the Nature Protection Act and serves as framework for implementation of the Regulation (EU) No 1143/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2014 on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species. This Act was adopted by the Croatian Parliament and is enforced by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Green Transition, together with the Ministry of Finance – Customs Directorate and the State Inspectorate. This Act applies to the entire country. According to Article 14 of this Act, in the case of the introduction of non-native bird species into the environment of the Republic of Croatia, the Ministry shall also submit to the European Commission the application and the opinion of the expert body that the non-native bird species do not pose a risk to the environment, i.e. the invasion risk assessment. In accordance with the provisions of Article 9(6) of this Act, the list of invasive alien species of concern in the Republic of Croatia (Black list) is established. The Black list is published in Annex I of the Ordinance on the Black and White list of alien species (OG 13/24), which entered into force on 10 February 2024. The Black list, currently, includes one bird species – *Psittacula krameri* (Scopoli, 1769). In accordance with Article 10(1), for

species included on the Black list it is prohibited to: introduce them into the territory of the Republic of Croatia, except in cases of transit under customs supervision, place them on the market in the Republic of Croatia, exchange them, keep them, including keeping them under controlled conditions, breed and/or reproduce them, including breeding under controlled conditions, or release them into the wild.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

26. Does your country impose legislative requirements on zoos, private collections, etc. in order to avoid the accidental escape of captive animals belonging to non-native species which may be detrimental to migratory waterbirds? (AEWA Action Plan, paragraph 2.5.2)

Yes, and being enforced

Please provide the following details: title of the document, year of adoption, institution that adopted it, institution that enforces it. Please clarify whether legislation applies to/is consistent throughout the entire country or only to particular states/provinces.

>>> According to the Act on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of alien and invasive alien species (OG 15/18 and 14/19), the owner of alien species must prevent the escape and/or unauthorised release of alien species into the natural environment and is liable for any damage that may occur, as well as for the costs of removing the alien species from the natural environment and the costs of restoration, in accordance with the principle of fault. The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Green Transition is responsible for this Act, and the State Inspectorate is responsible for actions related to violations of the provisions of this Act. This Act applies to the entire country.

The Ordinance on establishing and licensing of the ZOOs (OG 67/05) requires a plan to prevent the escape of animals from the zoo and the intrusion of animals from outside the zoo. This regulation applies to the whole country and was adopted on the basis of the Animal Protection Act (OG 102/17, 32/19 and 78/24). This Act was passed by the Croatian Parliament and is enforced by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery, together with the Ministry of Finance – Customs Directorate and the State Inspectorate.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> ZOO licensing is regulated with Animal Protection Act and Ordinance on establishing and licensing of the ZOOs (OG 67/05). According to Article 6 of this Ordinance, a plan for preventing the escape of animals from the ZOO and preventing intrusion from outside, must be a part of the application for ZOO licence.

27. Has your country considered, developed or implemented programmes to control or eradicate non-native species of waterbird so as to prevent negative impacts on indigenous species? (AEWA Action Plan, paragraph 2.5.3)

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> There are currently no established populations of invasive alien bird species in Croatia, so eradication is not considered necessary at this time. However, we are considering the development of a rapid eradication programme for bird species on Black list (Ordinance on the Black and White list of alien species (OG 13/24)) and on the Union list, in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 1143/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2014 on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species.

28. Has your country considered, developed or implemented programmes to control or eradicate other non-native species (in particular aquatic weeds and terrestrial predators) so as to prevent negative impacts on migratory waterbirds? (AEWA Action Plan, paragraphs 2.5.3 and 4.3.10 and Resolution 5.15)

Yes

Please list the non-native species for which relevant action has been undertaken

>>> In the framework of the EU financed project Development of the system for management and control of invasive alien species (2017-2021) implemented by the former Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development (now the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Green Transition) five management plans are being developed to control widespread invasive alien species: the Signal Crayfish (*Pacifastacus leniusculus*), the Small Indian Moongose (*Herpestes javanicus auro-punctatus*), the Pond Slider (*Trachemys scripta*), the Himalayan Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) and the Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*). There, implementation is underway and, to prevent negative impacts on migratory waterbirds, the most important programme is for the the Small Indian Moongose (*Herpestes javanicus auro-punctatus*).

More information regarding IAS management plans can be found on the web page of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Green Transition: <https://mzozt.gov.hr/o-ministarstvu-1065/djelokrug/uprava-za-zastitu-prirode-1180/strane-i-invazivne-strane-vrste/projekt-razvijanje-sustava-upravljanja-i-kontrola>

Please provide further information for each relevant programme

>>> -

29. Has your country used the AEWA Guidelines on avoidance of introductions of non-native waterbird species?

Notice: Before clicking on the above hyperlink, please keep pressing the **Ctrl button** on your keyboard to open the link in a new tab.

No

Please explain the reasons. What was used instead as a basis for dealing with the issue?

>>> No, due to the fact that there was no record on non-native waterbirds in Croatia. However, certain elements of the AEWA Guidelines are implemented through the provisions of the former Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13) and now the Act on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of alien and invasive alien species (OG 15/18 and 14/19). Also, some elements are implemented through the Animal Protection Act (OG 102/17, 32/19 and 78/24) and Ordinance on establishing and licensing of the ZOOs (OG 67/05), where there is an obligation for ZOOs to have a plan for preventing the escape of animals from the ZOO and preventing intrusion from outside.

Optionally you can provide additional information on section 4.5. Introductions

>>> -

4.6 Seabirds

The country has maritime territories and the AEWA seabird conservation priorities are relevant for the country:

Yes

30. Does your country have comprehensive data on seabird by-catch? (Resolution 7.6)

Yes

Please provide details (for example, but not limited to, the scale of by-catch and species affected), including references or attach a file, if available.

>>> Systematic data collection on seabird by-catch remains limited but has improved through the implementation of the national PETS BYC study (2022-2024), carried out under the EU Data Collection Framework (DCF). The study includes observer-based monitoring of by-catch events across various gear types, with confirmed interactions involving several seabird species.

By-catch reporting is integrated into national logbooks; reported events are rare and sporadic. In addition, the national RECFISH study (2022-2024, DCF) covered by-catch in recreational and sport fisheries. Final reports for 2022 and 2023 have been published; 2024 data are currently being processed.

Periodic educational activities targeting fishers in commercial sector to improve awareness and reporting have been implemented as from 2023 while recreational sector is planned to be included from 2026 onwards.

As for the other activities planned, it is worth mentioning that systematic reporting in recreational and sport fisheries is planned on a voluntary basis from 2026, with full implementation foreseen by 2030. Data validation and expert collaboration are envisaged through the scientific observer programme (including training on handling and identification of seabirds) and within ongoing PETS BYC by-catch assessments.

Further broadening of monitoring scope by scientific observers is planned from 2026.

31. Have you assessed the impact of by-catch by artisanal fisheries to AEWA-listed seabirds? (Resolution 7.6)

No

Please explain the reasons.

>>> The impact of artisanal fisheries on AEWA-listed seabirds has been partially assessed through the PETS BYC study (2022-2024), implemented under the EU Data Collection Framework (DCF) and LIFE Artina.

Although full spatial and seasonal coverage has not yet been achieved, interactions with vulnerable seabird species have been documented. Due to limited sample size and challenges in observer access to small vessels, the overall by-catch rate is still difficult to estimate accurately due to very rare and sporadic events. However, the study has identified certain gear types, seasons and areas where interactions are more likely, which provides a useful basis for future targeted assessments. Further efforts are needed to improve data coverage and establish population-level impact assessments.

When and how do you plan to do that?

>>> Further assessment of by-catch impacts on AEWA-listed seabirds is planned through the continued implementation and expansion of the national PETS BYC monitoring programme under the EU Data Collection Framework (DCF).

From 2025 onward, efforts will focus on increasing observer coverage in small-scale fisheries, improving data on species identification and condition of birds caught, and integrating findings with seabird population data and conservation priorities.

Collaboration with ornithological experts and targeted training of scientific observers will support improved data quality, while additional risk-based analyses and species-specific assessments are planned for the 2025–2027 period.

32. Have you assessed the impact of artisanal/recreational fisheries on seabirds' prey? (Resolution 7.6)

No

Please explain the reasons.

>>> There has been no systematic assessment of the impact of artisanal or recreational fisheries on the prey availability for AEWA-listed seabirds, primarily due to limited financial and administrative capacity.

Although some preliminary data exist on seabird by-catch (e.g. *Gulosus aristotelis desmarestii*) and prey interactions, they are scattered and mostly anecdotal, with no integrated analysis at the national level. A structured assessment would require coordinated ecological monitoring of seabird feeding behaviour and prey stocks, which has not yet been implemented.

When and how do you plan to do that?

>>> The issue will be further addressed by 2027, as part of the broader implementation of the EU Data Collection Framework and the upcoming EU multiannual financial framework (2028–2034).

Additionally, integration with ongoing seabird monitoring and habitat-based conservation initiatives (e.g. Natura 2000 sites, LIFE projects) is foreseen. Initial steps will include identifying priority species and sites for impact assessment and exploring opportunities for cross-sectoral collaboration between fisheries, biodiversity, and scientific stakeholders.

33. Has your country undertaken steps towards the adoption/application of measures to reduce the incidental catch of seabirds and combat Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing practices in the Agreement Area? (Resolution 3.8)

Yes

Please provide short description of all actions

>>> Croatia has implemented several measures to reduce seabird bycatch and combat IUU fishing:

- National Monitoring and Data Collection: Since 2022, the PETS BYC study under the EU Data Collection Framework (DCF) has enhanced monitoring of sensitive species, including seabirds. The scientific observer program has been expanded, with 40 trained observers since 2022, and includes specific protocols for bycatch recording and species identification.

- Fishermen Reporting and Education: Logbooks have been updated to include fields for reporting 11 seabird species. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries has issued detailed guidance for species identification and handling. Educational materials and awareness campaigns, such as guides for proper handling of sensitive species, have been distributed to all active fishers.

- Mitigation Measures Testing: The LIFE Artina project (2018–2023) tested various mitigation measures in collaboration with local fishers, including:

- LED lights on stationary nets to deter seabirds.

- Additional weights on gillnets to increase sinking speed and reduce bait exposure time.

- Hookpods for underwater hook release on floating longlines.

Results indicated that additional weights were the most effective and well-received by fishers due to their simplicity and cost-effectiveness. No seabird bycatch occurred during gear testing.

- Mitigation measures implemented:

- Ban to discharge offal and discards during setting and lifting pelagic longlines in the entire Croatian fishing sea

- Prohibiting of commercial fisheries or reducing effort in commercial fisheries in areas protected for birds

- Reducing gear quantities in terms of number of hooks or net length per vessel in entire Croatian fishing sea

- IUU Fishing Controls: Croatia maintains strict Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) oversight, especially for large pelagic fleets.

- Regional Cooperation: Croatia participates in the regional GFCM ByCatch project to expand monitoring in coastal fisheries and test mitigation measures, integrating collected data into the national PETS BYC database.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

34. Does your country have data on illegal killing and egg harvesting of AEWA-listed seabirds? (Resolution 7.6)

Not Applicable

Please explain the reasons.

>>> Hunting of AEWA-listed seabirds is not allowed as well as egg harvesting. Illegal hunting of AEWA-listed seabirds was not recorded.

36. Have you identified those seabird colonies at risk from invasive non-native species? (Resolution 7.6)

Yes

Please provide details, including references or attach a file, if available.

>>> Seabird colonies (Audouin's Gull (*Larus audouinii*) and Mediterranean Shag (*Gulosus aristotelis desmarestii*) at risk from invasive non-native species (Small Indian mongoose (*Herpestes javanicus auro-punctatus*)) were identified on small islands surrounding the island of Mljet.

In the framework of the project LIFE Artina - future for seabirds, seabird colonies (Yelkouan Shearwater, Scopoli's Shearwater and Audouin's Gull) at risk from invasive non-native species (in this case - rats) were identified in the Lastovo Arcipelago. More details can be found on the web page of the project:

<https://www.lifeartina.eu/en/results/>

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

Results of project LIFE Artina - Report recommending rat eradication/control techniques on Sušac and Feasibility study for the removal of black rats *Rattus rattus* from the island of Sušac, Croatia

Have you prioritised them for action?

Yes

Please provide details, including references or attach a file, if available.

>>> The project "Removal of the Small Indian mongoose (*Herpestes javanicus auro-punctatus*) from the uninhabited islets of Kobrava, Tajnik, and Moračnik in Mljet National Park" aims to eliminate the Small Indian mongoose. The project of total value of 161.312 euros was contracted in 2023 by the Public Institution for management of the Mljet National Park and will be implemented until 30th September 2027.

37. Have you identified the key coastal and at-sea areas where responses to oil spills would be most urgently required in relation to the presence of AEWA-listed seabirds? (Resolution 7.6)

No

Please explain the reasons.

>>> This activity was not considered as a priority.

When and how do you plan to do that?

>>> This will be done through the regular monitoring of the target features of the Natura 2000 sites.

38. (Applicable only to countries bordering the North or Baltic Sea) Has your country undertaken a program of data-collection to validate models of population level impacts of offshore windfarms in the North and Baltic Seas on AEWA seabirds? (Resolution 7.6)

Not Applicable

Please explain the reasons.

>>> Not applicable to Croatia.

39. Have you identified priority sites by filling gaps in the Critical Site Network for seabirds (breeding, non-breeding, pelagic and coastal areas)? (Resolution 7.6)

Yes

Please provide details, including references or attach a file, if available.

>>> By amendments of the Regulation on ecological network and competences of the public institution for management of ecological network areas (OG 80/19 and 119/23) new sites important for feeding of the Yelkouan Shearwater (in the EEZ in the Northern Adriatic) and for feeding of both the Yelkouan Shearwater and the Scopoli's Shearwater (Lastovo Chanel in territorial sea) will be designated. Adoption of the amendments is planned for II. quarter of 2025.

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

LIFE Artina project - Link to the web page of the LIFE Artina project (LIFE17 NAT/HR/000594)

Optionally you can provide additional information on section 4.6 Seabirds

>>> -

Pressures and Responses

5. Habitat Conservation

5.1 Habitat Inventories

40. Has your country identified the network of all sites of international and national importance for the migratory waterbird species/populations listed on Table 1? (AEWA Action Plan, paragraph 3.1.2)

Yes

Please provide full reference, e.g. title, year, authors, etc. or a web link

>>> No specific publication contains the list of sites, but the list was submitted to AEWA as indicated in the MOP8 National report; https://www.unep-aewa.org/sites/default/files/document/aewa_national_report_2018_2020_croatia.pdf

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

41. If your country has identified or is currently identifying the networks of sites of international and national importance, were the AEWA Conservation Guidelines on the preparation of site inventories for migratory waterbirds used?

Notice: Before clicking on the above hyperlink, please keep pressing the **Ctrl button** on your keyboard to open the link in a new tab.

Yes

Please provide details

>>> The list of sites of international and national importance for migratory waterbird species/populations was submitted to AEWA, as noted in the MOP8 National Report. The report was prepared in accordance with AEWA Conservation Guidelines and relevant official EU guidelines for identifying important bird areas.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

42. Has your country reviewed and confirmed to the AEWA Secretariat its inventory of the known nationally and internationally important sites through the process developed by the Technical Committee and launched by the Secretariat in August 2020? (AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Action 3.1(a))

YES, but it is still being clarified with the Secretariat/Technical Committee and is not concluded

Please indicate when it was submitted and when it is expected to be concluded

>>> Inventory was submitted on December 29th 2020.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

Optionally, you can provide additional information on section 5.1. Habitat Inventories

>>> -

5.2. Conservation of Areas and Habitats

43. Has your country assessed the future implications of climate change for protected areas and other sites important for waterbirds (i.e. resilience of sites to climate change)? (Resolution 5.13)

For one or more single sites

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> Croatia adopted the "Climate change adaptation strategy in the Republic of Croatia until 2040 with a view on 2070" in April 2020 (OG 46/20)(more information on available on <http://prilagodba-klimi.hr/>) but the specific assessment of the future implication of climate change for sites important for waterbirds has not been done yet. The main reason for that is the fact that even though this issue was not considered as a priority, administrative and financial resources were spent on other activities that were considered as a priority, like the development of a comprehensive management framework for Natura 2000 sites and establishing of

effective monitoring for species and habitats types of EU importance.

For the national protected area network

No

Please explain the reasons.

>>> Croatia has drafted national "Climate change adaptation strategy in the Republic of Croatia until 2040. with a view on 2070" (more information on available on <http://prilagodba-klimi.hr/> and on <https://climateadapt.eea.europa.eu/countries-regions/countries/croatia>) but the specific assessment of the future implication of climate change for sites important for waterbirds has not been done yet. The main reason for that is the fact that this issue was not considered as a priority so administrative and financial resources were spent on other activities that were considered as a priority, as the development of a comprehensive management framework for Natura 2000 sites and establishing of effective monitoring for species and habitats types of EU importance.

44. Which sites that were identified as important, either internationally or nationally, for Table 1 migratory waterbird species/populations have been designated as protected areas under the national legislation and have management plans that are being implemented, including with the aim to increase resilience to the effects of climate change? (AEWA Action Plan, paragraph 3.2.1, AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Target 3.3)

Please report separately on internationally important sites, nationally important sites and buffer zones.

Reporting on designation and management of internationally important sites

All sites of international importance

(sites recognized as having international importance for migratory waterbirds following criteria of, for instance, the AEWA Critical Site Network, the Ramsar Convention, the EU Birds Directive (SPAs), the Bern Convention Emerald Network, the BirdLife International's Important Bird Areas)

Total number

>>> 38

Total area (ha)

>>> 1814900

Number of internationally important sites under national protection designation

>>> 38

Area of international importance under national protection designation (ha)

>>> 1814900

Please rate the effectiveness of the national protection designation

High

Please provide details and reasons for the high level of effectiveness.

>>> 38 Special Protected Areas (SPAs) were designated under the EU Birds Directive as the most suitable sites for bird conservation and are part of the EU ecological network Natura 2000. The identification and delimitation of Croatian SPAs were entirely based on scientific criteria, such as the "1% of the population of listed vulnerable species" or "wetlands of international importance for migratory waterfowl," as well as other BirdLife criteria for Important Bird Areas in Europe.

5 Ramsar sites are within the area of the SPAs as mentioned above.

This scientific approach resulted in highly effective coverage of important bird habitats that support significant populations at the national level.

Internationally important protected sites with a management plan in place which is being implemented

Number of sites

>>> 35

Area (in ha)

>>> 1370136

Please rate the effectiveness of the management measures

Moderate

Please provide details and reasons for the lower level of effectiveness.

>>> To effectively implement management measures, protected area staff and other stakeholders need to

develop a diverse set of skills and access relevant knowledge and information. Their skills are continuously improving. In addition to gaps in expertise and experience, a lack of funding also hinders the implementation of effective conservation management.

Internationally important sites with a management plan in place which is being implemented and includes management objectives related to maintaining or increasing the resilience of existing ecological networks, including resilience to climate change

Number of sites

>>> 0

Area (in ha)

>>> 0

Please rate the effectiveness of the climate resilience measures

Low

Please provide details and reasons for the low level of effectiveness.

>>> Maintaining or increasing resilience to climate change is not specifically addressed within management plans.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

Examples of best practice (optional)

If any site, in your opinion, represents an outstanding process of management planning or implementation, please highlight it as an example of best practice (alternatively provide a web link or attach a file)

>>> -

DESIGNATION GAP FILLING

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> Croatia designated its Natura 2000 ecological network in 2013, based on the best available knowledge at the time. In 2015, the network was revised in line with the outcomes of the EU Biogeographical Seminar, with a focus primarily on habitat types listed in Annex I and species listed in Annex II of the Habitats Directive. Should new scientific or expert data emerge confirming that a certain area meets BirdLife International's criteria for Important Bird Areas, the designation of that site will be considered. A similar approach is applied when new data support the revision of site conservation objectives, such as the inclusion of additional species or updates to population estimates.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

MANAGEMENT GAP FILING

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> In accordance with the Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19, 127/19 and 155/23), management plans for ecological network sites must be developed and implemented by public institutions responsible for managing protected areas and ecological network sites. The Operational Programme Competitiveness and Cohesion 2014–2020 provided the framework for the EU-funded project “Development of the Management Framework for the Ecological Network Natura 2000.” Completed in 2023, the project resulted in the development of management plans for 30 Special Protection Areas (SPAs) under the EU Birds Directive, including key areas for waterbirds such as carp fishponds. Management plans for the remaining areas will be developed based on the experience gained from the aforementioned project, within the capacities of the institutions responsible for managing these areas. Therefore, a separate national action plan to address management gaps in internationally and nationally significant sites is deemed unnecessary.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

46. Is the network of nationally and internationally important sites for migratory waterbirds integrated into your country's water- and land-use policies and planning and decision-making processes? (AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Target 3.4)

Yes, fully

Please provide details

>>> All important sites for migratory waterbirds are part of the ecological network Natura 2000. According to the Croatian Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19, 127/19 and 155/23) any plan or project likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall undergo an appropriate assessment procedure to determine its implications for the site. The competent authorities can only agree to the plan or project after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned. Consequently, the impact of all water- and land-use policies, planning and decision making must not endanger the achievement of the conservation objectives defined for important sites for migratory birds designated as Natura 2000 sites.

If available, please provide best practice examples of integration of the flyway site network into your country's water- and land-use policies and planning and decision-making processes

>>> N/A

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

47. Has your country used the AEWA Conservation Guidelines on the management of key sites for migratory waterbirds?

Notice: Before clicking on the above hyperlink, please keep pressing the **Ctrl button** on your keyboard to open the link in a new tab.

No

Please explain the reasons. What guidance has been used instead?

>>> Existing management plans were prepared based on general IUCN guidelines for management planning of protected areas as well as on objectives of the Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19, 127/19 and 155/23)). These are compatible with 8 steps proposed in AEWA Guidelines.

48. Has the Critical Site Network (CSN) Tool for the AEWA area been accessed and used in your country? (Resolution 7.9)

Notice: Before clicking on the above hyperlink, please keep pressing the **Ctrl button** on your keyboard to open the link in a new tab.

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> Although CSN Tool has been used for other purposes, it has not been used directly in habitat conservation.

49. Has your country identified priority measures required to maintain or increase the extent and quality of waterbird habitats in the wider environment? (AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Action 4.3(a))

Yes

Please provide details, alternatively attach a file or a link to a resource presenting the outcomes of the prioritisation

>>> The key habitats for waterbirds are located within ecological network sites, which are part of the Natura 2000 network in Croatia. Most of these sites are covered by management plans, and all are subject to mandatory conservation activities as outlined in the Regulation on Conservation Objectives and Measures for the Preservation of Target Bird Species in Ecological Network Areas (OG 25/2020, 38/2020). These documents also define priority conservation measures.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

50. Following MOP7, has your country been involved in the establishment of innovative, international, multi-stakeholder partnerships to guide the development and implementation of habitat management, creation and restoration projects in the wider environment? (AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Action 4.4(a))

Yes

Please provide details on each partnership arrangement your country has been involved in (add links to relevant online resources or attach other available materials)

>>> The LIFE Artina project – “Seabird Conservation Network in the Adriatic” [LIFE17 NAT/HR/000594] – was

launched to tackle the challenges faced by seabirds, including Audouin's Gull, and to improve their conservation status in the Adriatic Sea. Its primary objective was to designate new marine protected areas critical for seabird conservation. The project also focused on identifying, reducing, and mitigating threats to seabirds, such as the removal of invasive species—particularly ship rats—from nesting colonies. Additionally, LIFE Artina addressed other threats by studying the interactions between fisheries and seabirds, monitoring marine litter, and raising public awareness about seabird conservation among tourists and local communities, with a special focus on children. The project was coordinated by the Association Biom, in partnership with the Association for Nature, Environment and Sustainable Development, the Public Institution Nature Park Lastovsko otočje, and BirdLife Malta. It was co-financed by the LIFE Programme of the European Union, which supports environmental, nature conservation, and climate action initiatives. (<https://www.lifeartina.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Artina-Layman-report-EN.pdf>)

The MedPAN Network focuses on the management of marine protected areas (MPAs), which also encompass Mediterranean wetlands among other habitats. The study titled "Marine Protected Area Management in the Mediterranean Sea - The Case of Croatia" examined the MPA management model in Croatia, highlighting its strengths and weaknesses. For the analysis, three MPAs were selected: Brijuni National Park, Telašćica Nature Park, and the Pakleni Islands Significant Landscape. The applied methodology evaluated 26 specific indicators to assess the condition of four key components: the management body, the planning process, public participation, and the implementation process. Based on this evaluation, five potential management scenarios were identified: proactive (1), learning (2), interactive (3), centralized (4), and formal (5). (Source: Maestro et al., 2022, Marine Protected Area Management in the Mediterranean Sea - The Case of Croatia, Diversity 14:448; link).<https://medpan.org/en/resource-center/marine-protected-area-management-mediterranean-sea-case-croatia>).

Please indicate which other countries have been involved in each of the partnership arrangements
>>> Malta

Have a specific project or projects been established under the partnership arrangement(s) for the implementation of habitat management, creation and restoration in the wider environment?

Yes

Please provide description and details on each project

For each project separately, please provide an account of what surface (in hectares) of what habitat type has been (1) placed under improved management, (2) restored and/or (3) created.

>>> The LIFE Artina project - "Seabird Conservation Network in the Adriatic" [LIFE17 NAT/HR/000594] - Rats were permanently eradicated from six islands, and rat population control measures were implemented on five additional islands

Placed under improved management

>>> 150 ha

Restored

>>> -

Created

>>> -

Please indicate which AEWA-listed species have benefitted from each project and in which way, e.g. increased breeding population, increased breeding success. Please provide metrics for each kind of recorded impact (add links to relevant online resources or attach other available materials)

>>> Audouin's gull (*Ichthyaetus audouinii*) - increased breeding success from 2% in 2019. to 27% in 2023. (Zrnčić, V. & Engelen, D. 2023. Layman's Report - LIFE Artina (LIFE 17 ANAT/HR/000594). Report for action E2. Croatia. 34 pp.; <https://www.lifeartina.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Artina-Layman-report-EN.pdf>)

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

Optionally you can provide additional information on section 5.2. Conservation of Areas and Habitats

>>> -

Pressures and Responses

6. Management of Human Activities

6.1. Hunting

51. Does the legislation of your country implement the principle of sustainable use of waterbirds, as envisaged in the AEWA Action Plan, taking into account the full geographical range of the waterbird populations concerned and their life history characteristics? (AEWA Action Plan, paragraph 4.1.1; AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Target 2.2)

Yes

Please provide details on how this is achieved and reference to the relevant legislation

>>> Croatian hunting legislation implements the principle of sustainable use of waterbirds considered as game species by The Hunting Act (paragraph 9), as envisaged in AEWA Action Plan, paragraph 4.1.1 (and listed in Table 1) following relevant legislation:

The Hunting Act (OG 99/18, 31/19, 32/20 and 127/24.): this Law transposes the provisions contained in the Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora; and Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds. The principal aim of this Law is to impose the controlled, safe and rational use of natural resources, with a significant purpose in the function of protecting and preserving biodiversity and the ecological balance of natural habitats, wildlife and wild fauna and flora on the territory of the Republic of Croatia; to ensure the sustainable management of game populations and their habitats in a manner that permanently improves the vitality of the game population, the production capacity of the habitat and biodiversity.

Ministry of Agriculture, forestry and fisheries (Directorate of Forestry, Hunting and Wood Industry) runs SLE (Central Hunting Register - national database), database of all hunting grounds in Croatia. SLE also contains informations about the annual harvest of all game populations (annual take for each population in accordance to valid hunting management plan), including above mentioned waterbird species. Protection measures are determined in The Provisions of Chapter V of the Act (also measures to reduce and eliminate illegal taking). The Hunting Act is implemented by all other regulated acts, and the most relevant ones are:

Ordinance on the use of hunting weapons and ammunition (OG 37/19) - Article 11. prohibits use of lead shot for hunting in wetlands (hunt on small feathery game)

Ordinance on hunting season closure (OG 94/19) - this Ordinance determines the period of prohibition of hunting (hunting ban) in according with different species of game, depending on their biological properties and ecological conditions in which they live.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> Ordinance on hunting season closure (OG 94/19) - this Ordinance determines the period of prohibition of hunting (hunting ban) in according with different species of game, depending on their Other relevant legislation (considering proficiency test for hunters:

Ordinance on hunters (OG 108/19) - this Ordinance prescribes the conditions and manner of training of hunters and defines the necessary hunters duties.

Ordinance on the certificate of origin of wild game and their parts and on the manner of marking of game (OG 15/19) - this Ordinance prescribes the correct form of the game certification (certification of origin, possible certification of game parts), and further sets the manner of marking large game, the manner of issuing such logs and keeping records on issued and used game markings. This Ordinance transposes the Annex III, part A and B of the Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds biological properties and ecological conditions in which they live.

52. Has your country phased out the use of lead shot for hunting in wetlands? (AEWA Action Plan, paragraph 4.1.4; AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Action 2.2(d))

Fully

When was lead shot use in wetlands banned?

>>> It was banned since 2013. According to the Article 2 of the Ordinance on the use of hunting weapons and ammunition (OG 66/10) only the use of steel shot for hunting in wetlands (hunt on small feathery game) (Article 2 entered into force on the 1st of July 2013 on the day when Croatia joined the EU). Ordinance on the use of hunting weapons and ammunition (OG 37/19) took over this provision in Article 11.

Furthermore, since 15 February 2023 the use of lead in gunshot, in or within 100 metres of wetlands, was forbidden on the EU level with provisions of the Commission Regulation (EU) 2021/57 of 25 January 2021 amending Annex XVII to Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) as regards lead in gunshot in or around wetlands. Commission regulation is directly applicable in all EU member states.

What legislation is in place?

>>> Since 15 February 2023 - the Commission Regulation (EU) 2021/57 of 25 January 2021 amending Annex XVII to Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) as regards lead in gunshot in or around wetlands. This EU regulation is implemented in Croatia by the Law on implementation of the Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH).

Who enforces this legislation?

>>> The Ministry of Health is responsible for the implementation of the Law on implementation of the Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH). However, implementation is carried out in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries which is responsible for hunting. Enforcement is carried out by the State Inspectorate.

Has assessment of compliance with the legislation been undertaken?

No

If appropriate, please explain the reasons for not doing this.

>>> The Hunting Act complies with the EU legislation, and provisions of the Act were implemented by Ordinance on the use of hunting weapons and ammunition (OG 37/19). The Commission Regulation (EU) 2021/57 of 25 January 2021 amending Annex XVII to Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) as regards lead in gunshot in or around wetlands, came into force on 15th February 2023 and the impacts if its implementation will be known in the upcoming period. It should be mentioned that the area of the country affected by the prohibition based on the Commission Regulation (EU) 2021/57 is much larger than the area that was under prohibition according to the Ordinance on the use of hunting weapons and ammunition (OG 37/19), due to the definition of the term "wetlands" in the Commission Regulation (EU) 2021/57.

Has measurement of impact of the legislation been undertaken i.e. where there was a problem of lead poisoning in waterbirds, has this been reduced?

No

If appropriate, please explain the reasons for not doing this.

>>> Measurement of impact of the legislation has not been undertaken, because Croatian legislation does not allow use of lead shot for hunting in wetlands.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

53. Are there measures in your country to reduce/eliminate illegal taking? (AEWA Action Plan, paragraph 4.1.6; AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Action 2.2(e))

Yes

How would you rate the effectiveness of the measures?

Moderate

Please provide details and reasons for the lower level of effectiveness.

>>> Measures for protection and breeding of game are stipulated by the Chapter V of The Hunting Act (OG 99/18, 32/19, 32/20,127/24). Also, they are additionally specified by the hunting management plans, game breeding programmes or game protection programmes (Ordinance on the content, method of preparation and the

process of adoption or approval for hunting grounds, wildlife breeding programs and wildlife protection programs; OG 40/06, 92/08, 39/11 and 41/13). Preventing illegal hunting is obligatory for hunting right holders. However, Croatia does not yet have a National action plan for combat illegal killing of birds that will help to address this issue more systematically. Also, there is a lack of on-the-ground actions made by law enforcement officials to tackle illegal killing of birds mostly due to the lack of topic-specific training, capacities with regard to numbers of available officers and equipment, as well as a single procedure protocol.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

54. Is legally binding proficiency testing for hunters, including amongst other things bird identification, in place in your country? (AEWA Action Plan, paragraph 4.1.8; AEWA Strategic

Plan 2019-2027, Target 2.2)

Yes

Please provide details and reference to the relevant legislation

>>> There is legally binding proficiency testing for hunters, the hunting exam, that can be taken by legal persons, authorized for mentioned exams by the Ministry of Agriculture, forestry and fisheries. Game may be hunted by a person who passed the hunting exam and is in possession of the hunter card, with a prior written approval by the user/owner of hunting ground. Potential hunter must pass adequate education(theoretical and practical courses about hunting legislation, game diseases, hunting management, cynology, morphology, weapons and ammunition, hunting ethics, ecology and nature protection), before becoming a hunter in terms of law. Most of parties included in hunting management must have formal formal education (like professional service for implementation of hunting management plans, hunters etc).

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> Ordinance on hunters (OG 108/19): This Ordinance prescribes the conditions and manner of training of hunters and defines the necessary hunters duties. This text further determines the form of certificates of competence, and sets out the physical appearance of official hunter cards. Hunter duties are listed as follows: hunt planning and organizing; group hunting management; coordination of individual hunts; implementation of preventive, diagnostic, curative, hygienic-health and bio-technical measures; harmless removal of parts of the game that has been killed. Conditions and method of training are stipulated in Section II. Ordinance on the professional service for the implementation of hunting management plans (OG 108/19): The professional service organizes, performs and supervises all professional hunting activities and activities regarding the breeding and protection of game and other animal species, game habitats, hunting and hunting facilities, hunting dogs, hunting weapons and ammunition, hunting of wildlife, hunting ethics, game damage, game counts and nutrition, game health and fitness, business documentation, analysis of hunting conditions or areas where hunting grounds are prohibited, as well as other professional activities in hunting sector where hunting grounds are prohibited, as in accordance with the provisions of laws and regulations governing hunting, hunting management plans and hunting contract or concession issues.

55. Are best practice codes and standards for hunting in place in your country in support of enforcement of hunting laws and regulations? (AEWA Action Plan, paragraph 4.1.7; AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Target 2.3)

Yes

What do these cover?

Club Affiliation

Emergency closure of hunting in cases of exceptionally unfavourable or endangering conditions

Please provide details on each item selected above

>>> Club affiliation: HLS (Hrvatski lovački savez - Croatian Hunting Federation) represent association of Croatian hunters (hunters are on local levels organized in hunting clubs/societies), operating through County associations and Zagreb hunting association. It gathers over 60000 hunters (members), representing their interests in country and abroad. The objectives of Federation are nature protection, game breeding and preservation, hunting in accordance with legislation, education of hunters, hunting exams, issue of hunter cards etc.

Emergency closure of hunting in cases of exceptionally unfavourable or endangering conditions: Ordinance on the conditions and methods for hunting, carrying of hunting weapons, form and manner for the issuing of hunting cards, permission to hunt and records on the completed hunt or hunting sessions (OG 70/10) - Articles 3 - 7

Ordinance/Regulation on the use of hunting weapons and ammunition (OG 37/19) Article 7

The Hunting Act (OG 99/18, 32/19, 32/20, 127/24) Articles 54, 55.

Optional [Please upload links or examples]

>>> -

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

[Hrvatski lovački savez - Croatian Hunting Federation](#) - Association of hunting clubs/societies in Croatia; member of FACE (European Federation for Hunting and Conservation)

Please rate the degree of application of these best practice codes and standards:

High (almost always applied)

Please provide details and reasons for the high degree of application

>>> Explained in previous answers.

Please rate the effectiveness of these best practice codes and standards in supporting enforcement of

hunting laws and regulations:

High (very effective in supporting enforcement of hunting laws and regulations)

Please provide details and reasons for the high degree of effectiveness

>>> Explained in previous answers.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

56. Has your country used the AEWA Conservation Guidelines on sustainable harvest of migratory birds?

Notice: Before clicking on the above hyperlink, please keep pressing the **Ctrl button** on your keyboard to open the link in a new tab.

No

Please explain the reasons. What other guidance has been used instead?

>>> Elements and provisions of AEWA Conservation Guidelines on sustainable harvest of migratory birds are implemented by (national) hunting legislation in force.

Optionally, you can provide additional information on section 6.1. Hunting

>>> -

6.2. Ecotourism

57. Is wetland- and waterbird-related ecotourism integrated into your country's national tourism development strategies or other relevant national strategies? (AEWA Action Plan, paragraph 4.2.1; AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Action 2.5(c))

Yes

Please describe and provide details

>>> According to the Strategy on Development of Sustainable Tourism until 2030 (OG 2/23), the ecotourism is not specifically mentioned. However, the Strategy in its Priority Area 2.1. for Strategic Goal 2 „Tourism with a Preserved Environment, Space, and Climate“: Reducing the Environmental and Nature Impact of Tourism, recognises the need to reduce the pressure of current tourism activity in both the coastal and the terrestrial zone. The Strategy says: „By implementing integrated coastal zone management, as well as development-oriented integration of less developed tourist areas and the continental region with the Adriatic area, the pressure on coastal zones will be reduced. Activities aimed at achieving the multiplying positive effects of tourism in synergy with other sectors—such as fisheries and agriculture through the development of special forms of tourism—will be supported. In line with global, EU, and national policies in the field of environmental and nature protection, and with the need for more efficient use and conservation of natural resources, measures for the protection and preservation of the environment and nature will be supported, with particular emphasis on protected areas and Natura 2000 sites, both along the coast and in the continental region.“

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

58. Are there existing ecotourism initiatives in your country specifically based on migratory waterbirds and their habitats? (AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Target 2.5)

Yes

Please describe how many initiatives are in place and provide details for each of them (add links to relevant online resources or attach other available materials)

>>> These initiatives are mostly promoted by the public institutions for management of protected areas and Natura 2000 sites and NGOs specialized for nature protection.

Some of the examples are given below:

<https://www.vranalake.hr/hr/kamp-pakostane-biograd-dalmacija/bird-watching>

In 2024 - <https://www.biom.hr/tag/promatranje-ptica/>

2023 - <https://www.bojezemlje.hr/novosti/medunarodni-dan-vlaznih-stanista/>

In 2022 - <https://www.antenazadar.hr/clanak/2022/01/promatranje-ptica-zimovalica-povodom-svjetskog-dana-mocvarnih-stanista/>

In 2021 - <https://pp-kopacki-rit.hr/2021/01/27/zimsko-prebrojavanje-ptica-mocvarica/>

Were any of the initiatives described above launched after 2018?

Yes

Please indicate which are those initiatives

>>> See answer above

Please rank the degree to which these initiatives are designed to deliver both conservation and community benefits:

High

Please provide details

>>> Most of the initiatives are undertaken by the public institutions responsible for management of protected areas and Natura 2000 areas and NGOs which are highly competent for the issue.

Please rank the degree to which these dual benefits are being delivered in practice:

Medium

Please provide details and the reasons for successful delivery and barriers to fuller delivery

>>> The reason for success is explained in answer to previous question. However, most of the initiatives are undertaken in conjunction with the specific events like International Wetlands Day or World Migratory Bird Day and are not of the permanent character, mostly due to the lack of resources.

Do you consider that any of these initiatives can serve as a strong model or an example for developing future ecotourism initiatives that beneficial for both waterbirds and local communities?

Yes

Please clarify which initiative(s) and why do you consider them as strong model(s)/example(s)

>>> For example the bird watching in the Eco-camp Crkvine in the Nature Park Vransko Jezero:
<https://www.vranalake.hr/hr/kamp-pakostane-biograd-dalmacija/bird-watching>

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

Optionally you can provide additional information on section 6.2. Ecotourism

>>> -

6.3. Other human activities

59. Have restrictions on use of lead fishing weights been introduced in your country? (AEWA Action Plan, paragraph 4.3.12). When answering this question please also consider question 80 in chapter 7 - Research and monitoring.

No

If appropriate, please provide further details.

>>> Not yet, but the ban on use of lead fishing weights is under consideration on the EU level under the framework of the Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH)

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

60. Does your country have legislation in place, which provides for Strategic Environmental Assessment/Environmental Impact Assessment (SEA/EIA) of activities potentially negatively affecting natural habitats or wildlife? (AEWA Action Plan, paragraph 4.3.1; AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Target 3.5)

Yes and being implemented

Does this legislation apply to the entire country or only to particular states/provinces thereof?

Entire country

Please provide details

>>> Current SEA and EIA procedures in Republic of Croatia are prescribed by the Environmental Protection Act (OG 80/13, 153/13, 78/15, 12/18 and 118/18) and are harmonized with relevant EU directives. Both procedures are applicable for the whole territory of the Republic of Croatia.

Do the SEA/EIA processes consider waterbirds and habitats on which they depend?

Yes

Please provide details

>>> Please provide details : Both, the SEA and the EIA consider waterbirds and their habitats. Current SEA and EIA procedures in Republic of Croatia are prescribed by the Environmental Protection Act (OG 80/13, 153/13, 78/15, 12/18 and 118/18) and are harmonized with relevant EU directives. Evaluation of impact on nature of strategies, plans, programmes or projects is undertaken according to the Environmental Protection Act, Regulation on strategic environmental assessment of plans and programs (OG 3/17) and Regulation on environmental impact assessment (OG 61/14 and 3/17).

The Appropriate Assessment of the impact of strategies, plans, programmes or projects on the Natura 2000 ecological network (e.g. its target features – species and/or habitats) is carried out, either in the scope of the SEA/EIA procedures (strategies, programmes and large scale plans/projects), or as stand-alone procedure according to provisions of the Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19 and 127/19). The Nature Protection Act is harmonized with the EU Habitats Directive and Birds Directive.

Regulation on strategic environmental impact assessment (OG 3/17): https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/full/2017_01_3_117.html

Regulation on environmental impact assessment (EIA) (OG 61/14 and 3/17):

https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2014_05_61_1138.html

https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2017_01_3_118.html

Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19, 127/19 and 155/23): <https://www.zakon.hr/z/403/zakon-o-zastiti-prirode>

Do the SEA/EIA processes include cumulative impact assessment?

Yes

Please provide details

>>> Both the SEA and EIA include cumulative impact assessment. Also assessment of cumulative impacts is part of the Appropriate Assessment of strategies, plans, programmes and project on the ecological network Natura 2000 according to the Nature Protection Act.

Do the SEA/EIA processes include public participation?

Yes

Please provide details

>>> The obligation of public information and participation of the public, as well as the public concerned in the SEA and the EIA procedures is determined by the provisions of Articles 160-166 of the Environmental Protection Act (OG 80/13, 153/13, 78/15, 12/18 and 118/18). By the provisions of these Article, public authorities responsible for the strategic environmental assessment, environmental impact assessment, evaluation of the need for environmental impact assessment and for establishing the content of the environmental impact study prior to its preparation, are obliged to inform the public about those procedures. According to the Environmental Protection Act, in the cases of the EIA procedure or the procedure for evaluating the need for EIA, the public has to be informed on the submitted request and the issued act stating the decision on the request. By the provision of Article 161, Paragraph 2 of the Environmental Protection Act it is determined that the deadline which is set for informing the public in such cases may not be shorter than 30 days. The manner of informing the public and the public concerned in the aforementioned procedures is prescribed in details by the Regulation on information and participation of the public and public concerned in environmental matters (OG 64/08). More information on legal provisions can be found on the web page of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Green Transition.

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

[Access to Information - Ministry of Environmental Protection and Green Transition](#)

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

61. Are there any other legal and/or administrative measures in your country to avoid, mitigate and compensate for adverse impacts of development activities on the sites of national and international importance for migratory birds? (AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Target 3.5)

Yes

Please describe each measure and provide details for each of them

>>> According to the Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19, 127/19 and 155/23) the Appropriate Assessment of the impacts of strategies, plans, programmes or projects or their amendments is carried out for any strategy, plan, programme or project that can alone or in combination with other strategies, plans, programmes or projects have a significant adverse effect on the conservation objectives and the integrity of the Natura 2000 ecological network sites. The Appropriate Assessment procedure is a legal measure that is used to avoid, mitigate and compensate for adverse impacts of development activities on the Natura 2000

sites designated for birds according to the EU Birds Directive, including the sites of national and international importance for migratory birds.

Please rank the effectiveness of these measures:

High

Please provide details and the reasons for the high effectiveness

>>> The Appropriate Assessment procedure is a robust and detailed procedure under which impacts of strategies, plans, programmes or projects on ecological network Natura 2000 can be assessed for 36,8 % of Croatian land territory and 9,3 16% of the sea under national jurisdiction.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

62. In the last three years, has your country used SEA/EIA for all relevant projects, including energy sector projects such as renewable energy developments and power lines installation, to assess the impact of proposed projects on migratory waterbird species listed on Table 1 and/or habitats/sites on which they depend? (AEWA Action Plan, paragraph 4.3.1, Resolution 5.11 and Resolution 5.16; AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Action 3.5(b))

Yes, all proposed projects

Please provide information on the outstanding cases

>>> Having in mind that all migratory waterbird species listed in Table 1 to the AEWA Action Plan occurring on the territory of the Republic of Croatia are either strictly protected according to the Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19, 127/19 and 155/23) or managed in a controlled way and thus also protected according to the Hunting Act (OG 99/18, 32/19, 32/20 and 127/24), the impact of projects on population of these species or their habitats must be assessed (as well as for all other protected birds in Croatia) as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment or as part of the stand-alone Appropriate Assessment procedure. For that reason all relevant projects falling into the scope of Environmental Protection Act (OG 80/13, 153/13, 78/15, 12/18 and 118/18) and/or Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19, 127/19 and 155/23) having impact on migratory waterbird populations, including energy sector projects such as renewable energy developments and power lines installations, were assessed in last three years.

Where an SEA/EIA has identified a likelihood of significant negative impacts on migratory waterbirds, have steps been taken to avoid these impacts, including avoidance of protected areas and other sites of importance for migratory waterbirds?

Yes

Please describe the measures put in place

>>> In such cases the alternatives have been investigated and/or mitigation measures were prescribed related to the operating regime of the installations, painting the obstacles, warning obstacles on overhead power lines, administrative measures such as permitted operating time in a day/month/season, use of non-destructive construction methods, noise control etc.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

63. Do you maintain a record of the cases of adverse impacts of development activities and other pressures on sites of national and international importance for migratory waterbirds in your country? (AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Action 3.5(a))

Yes

Number of sites

>>> zero (0)

Please list those sites with their names, central geographic coordinates and observed impacts.

>>> -

Number of sites avoided

>>> On all 38 Special Protected Areas - SPAs (important bird areas) many different development activities are being implemented, but for all of them the Appropriate Assessment procedure as well as the EIA procedures (where appropriate) are conducted and mitigation measures are applied. Throughout these procedures and with implementation of the mitigation measures, adverse impacts of the project/development activity are avoided and also the long-term goal to maintain the habitats of species for which the site has been designated in favourable condition, is achieved

Number of sites mitigated

>>> On all 38 Special Protected Areas - SPAs (important bird areas) many different development activities are being implemented, but for all of them the Appropriate Assessment procedure as well as the EIA procedures (where appropriate) are conducted and mitigation measures are applied. Throughout these procedures and with implementation of the mitigation measures, adverse impacts of the project/development activity are avoided and also the long-term goal to maintain the habitats of species for which the site has been designated in favourable condition, is achieved

Number of sites compensated

>>> zero (0)

Please list those sites with their names, central geographic coordinates and the impacts that have been addressed.

>>> -

Number of sites

>>> Zero (0)

Please list those sites with their names, central geographic coordinates and observed impacts.

>>> -

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

64. Has your country used the AEWA Conservation Guidelines on how to avoid, minimize or mitigate impact of infrastructural developments and related disturbance affecting waterbirds?

Notice: Before clicking on the above hyperlink, please keep pressing the **Ctrl button** on your keyboard to open the link in a new tab.

Yes

Please provide details

>>> Although AEWA Guidelines on how to avoid, minimize or mitigate impact of infrastructural developments and related disturbance affecting waterbirds, have not been directly used, its elements are already implemented through the SEA and EIA procedures under the Environmental Protection Act (OG 80/13, 153/13, 78/15, 12/18 and 118/18).

65. Please report on the implementation of Resolution 5.11 on Power Lines and Migratory Waterbirds.

65.1. Are relevant stakeholders, including government agencies, scientific bodies, nongovernmental organisations and the energy sector, being regularly consulted in order to monitor jointly the impacts of power lines on waterbirds and to agree on a common policy of action?

Partially

Please provide details.

>>> In general the above mentioned stakeholders (national agencies, national energy distribution company, NGOs etc.) are usually consulted through the EIA or SEA procedure where public consultations and public insight into the EIA or SEA studies are carried out. There is a quite long cooperation between ministry responsible for nature protection and national energy distribution company (HEP) on mitigation of electrocution problems for white storks breeding on electricity poles. Since November 2020, Croatia is participating in the European project for the prevention of electrocution and collision of thousands of birds with transmission lines "The LIFE Danube Free Sky -Transnational conservation of birds along the Danube river". This project is targeting the problem of electrocution and collisions of wild birds with power lines along one of the most important migration corridors, stop-over sites and wintering places for many bird species in Europe - the Danube river. In Croatia, the LIFE Danube Free Sky project is implemented by three partners - the Kopački rit Nature Park Public Institution, HEP-Distribution System Operator and the Croatian Transmission System Operator. During the planned five years of project implementation, 15 partners from seven countries are developing strong cooperation and implement the most effective solutions to prevent these threats to birds. After this period, the visibility of more than 245 km of top priority power lines will be increased. Also, more than 3200 of the most dangerous poles within the project area will be adjusted to ensure birds' safety. The Biom Association began conducting bird electrocution monitoring back in 2018, in cooperation with HEP - the Distribution System Operator, with the aim of identifying critical areas where birds are most at risk of electrocution. As part of this activity, surveys were carried out around 509 power poles in the areas of Rab, Cres, Krk, the Senj-Karlobag corridor, and the Neretva Delta. By 2022, a total of 84 electrocuted birds had been found. In locations identified as so-called "black spots," insulated cables were installed starting in

September 2019. As a result, for example, Griffon vulture mortality on the island of Cres was reduced by 60 percent. Implementation of activities for prevention electrocution of the Griffon vulture is carried out in the framework of the project LIFE SUPport – Securing future for Griffon vultures in Croatia.

65.2. Has a baseline of waterbird distribution, population sizes, migrations and movements (including those between breeding, resting and feeding areas) been established as early as possible in the planning of any power line project, over a period of at least five years, and with particular emphasis on those species known to be vulnerable to electrocution or collision?

Yes

Please provide details

>>> All important sites for waterbirds are part of ecological network Natura 2000 therefore any power line project must have SEA and EIA procedure with emphasis on those species known to be vulnerable to electrocution or collision. Each and every site in the ecological network Natura 2000 designated for waterbirds has a baseline data on waterbirds distribution, population size, migration and movements and they are taken into concern while assessment of the impact of the power line project.

65.3 If such studies, as described in the question above, have identified any risks, has every effort been made to ensure these are avoided?

Yes

Please provide details.

>>> If there is reasonable doubt that some project could represent a danger concerning the collision or electrocution mitigation measures can be applied (for example enhancing visibility of power lines or fitting the insulators on killer poles). Those mitigation measures are obligatory for the investor since they are prescribed in the building permit

65.4. Have the location, route and direction of new power lines been designated on the basis of national zoning maps?

Yes

Please provide details

>>> Location, route and direction of a power lines are defined in relevant spatial plans. County spatial plans are subject to the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) procedure according to the Environmental Protection Act (OG 80/13, 153/13, 78/15, 12/18 and 118/18). Spatial plans of lower order (e.g. municipal plans, city plans etc.) have to be in line with the county plan according to the Physical Planning Act (OG 153/13, 65/17, 114/18, 39/19, 98/19 and 67/23). Furthermore, projects for construction of the power lines are subject to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedure according to the Environmental Protection Act. For power lines of the voltage of 220 kV and more, or length more than 10 km the EIA procedure is obligatory. For the power lines of the voltage of 110 kV and more and which are part of the transmission network, the evaluation of the need for environmental impact assessment has to be carried out. However, for all power lines that can have a negative impact on birds that are target features of the Natura 2000 sites (e.g. the Special Protection Areas – SPAs), including the waterbird migratory species, the Appropriate Assessment (AA) has to be carried out according to the provisions of the Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19, 127/19 and 155/23). If needed, in the scope of the AA procedure, the mitigation measures that minimize negative impacts on migratory waterbird species can be defined.

65.5. Has, wherever possible, the construction of power lines along major migration flyways and in habitats of conservation importance* been avoided, where such construction is likely to have significant effects on waterbirds?

* such as Special Protection Areas under the EU Birds Directive, Important Bird Areas, protected areas, Ramsar sites, the West/Central Asian Site Network for Siberian Crane and other waterbirds and other critical sites as identified by the Critical Site Network (CSN) Tool for the African-Eurasian region.

Yes

Please provide details.

>>> For all power lines that can have a negative impact on birds that are target features of the Natura 2000 sites (e.g. the Special Protection Areas – SPAs), including the waterbird migratory species, the Appropriate Assessment (AA) has to be carried out according to the provisions of the Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19, 127/19 and 155/23). If needed, in the scope of the AA procedure, the mitigation measures that minimize negative impacts on migratory waterbird species can be defined.

65.6. Are bird-safe designs in the construction of new power infrastructure, including measures designed to reduce electrocution and collisions being used in your country?

Partially

Please provide details

>>> Bird safe designs are used, whenever possible and in line with financial limitations.

65.7. Have those sections of existing power lines that are causing relatively high levels of waterbird injury and/or mortality due to electrocution and/or collision been identified?

No

Please explain the reasons. What are the constraints preventing implementation of this activity?

>>> Up to now, there are no sections of existing power lines, recognized as ones causing relatively high levels of waterbird injury and/or mortality due to electrocution and/or collision.

65.8. Where sections of existing power lines have been identified to cause relatively high levels of waterbird injury and/or mortality due to electrocution and/or collision, have they been modified as a matter of priority?

Partially

Please provide details.

>>> The sections of existing power lines identified to cause relatively high levels of waterbird injury and/or mortality due electrocution and/or collision are modified whenever possible and in line with financial limitations.

65.9. Is there in your country regular monitoring and evaluation of the impact of power lines on waterbird populations at the national scale?

No

Please explain the reasons. What are the constraints preventing implementation of this activity?

>>> Post-construction monitoring is performed based on the EIA decision issued for the power line construction projects for which the EIA procedure has been conducted according to provisions of the Environmental Protection Act (OG 80/13, 153/13, 78/15, 12/18 and 118/18). Upon expiration of the obligatory monitoring period defined in EIA decision, for the moment, there is no established regular monitoring at the national scale of impacts of power lines on bird populations, including waterbird populations. However, since July 2009 national distribution company "HEP- Operator distribucijskog sustava d.o.o." has begun collecting data about bird electrocution on distribution lines. In case of frequently transient faults on overhead lines, monitored by SCADA system, they send fieldworkers to check the reason of noted problems. Notes on date and place of electrocution (part of the power line) and bird species (if possible) are sent to central office. Bird electrocution reporting is a standard procedure during overhead lines inspections in "HEP - Operator distribucijskog sustava d.o.o. Parts of distribution network with highest bird causalities and with causalities of endangered bird species are rated as priorities for retrofitting or changes for bird conservation.

65.10. Is there in your country regular monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of mitigation measures put in place to minimise the impact of power lines on waterbird populations?

Partial

Please provide details.

>>> Post-construction monitoring is performed based on the EIA decision issued for the power line construction projects for which the EIA procedure has been conducted according to provisions of the Environmental Protection Act (OG 80/13, 153/13, 78/15, 12/18 and 118/18). Upon expiration of the obligatory monitoring period defined in EIA decision, for the moment, there is no established regular monitoring at the national scale of impacts of power lines on bird populations, including waterbird populations.

65.11. Have the measures contained in Resolution 5.11. been included in your country's National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans and relevant legislation?

Yes

Please provide details

>>> Measures contained in Resolution 5.11 on Power Lines and Migratory Waterbirds are not directly included in Croatian NSAP. However, the current Strategy and Action Plan for Nature Protection of the Republic of Croatia for period 2017-2025 (OG 72/17) includes strategic objectives, specific objectives and concrete actions (action plans) that support implementation of the Resolution 5.11. Furthermore, the legal framework consisting of the Environmental Protection Act (OG 80/13, 153/13, 78/15, 12/18 and 118/18) and the Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19, 127/19 and 155/23) are in line with the Resolution 5.11. Namely the Environmental Protection Act gives a legal framework for SEA and EIA procedure, including public participations based on the provisions of the Aarhus Convention, while the Nature Protection Act gives a legal framework for the Appropriate Assessment procedure for plans and projects, including the implementation of mitigation measures, designation of Natura 2000 sites as well as for research and monitoring of waterbird

populations.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

66. Has your country used the AEWA Conservation Guidelines on how to avoid or mitigate impact of electricity power grids on migratory birds in the African-Eurasian region?

Notice: Before clicking on the above hyperlink, please keep pressing the **Ctrl button** on your keyboard to open the link in a new tab.

No

Please explain the reasons. What other guidance has been used instead?

>>> Although the Guidelines have not been used directly, its elements are implemented and used in practice. As mentioned previously the location, route and direction of power lines are defined in relevant spatial plans. County spatial plans are subject to the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) procedure according to the Environmental Protection Act (OG 80/13, 153/13, 78/15, 12/18 and 118/18) while spatial plans of lower order (e.g. municipal plans, city plans etc.) have to be in line with the county plan according to the Physical Planning Act (153/13, 65/17, 114/18, 39/19, 98/19 and 67/23).

67. Please report on the implementation of Resolution 5.16 on Renewable Energy and Migratory Waterbirds.

67.1. Has a national sensitivity and zoning mapping to avoid overlap of renewable energy developments with areas of importance for migratory waterbirds been developed in your country?

Yes

Please provide details

>>> In 2024 Ministry of Environmental Protection and Green Transition finalized the project through which the sensitivity maps of the Croatian territory to the development of solar (SE) and wind power plants (VE) were developed and published. The maps are the result of collaboration between the Institute for Environmental and Nature Protection, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and the Hrvoje Požar Energy Institute, using advanced machine learning models and expert analysis. The maps reflect the relative sensitivity of selected natural elements to non-integrated solar photovoltaic power plants larger than 1 MW and to wind farms, and are intended as a quick and pragmatic tool for assessing the described sensitivity. They enable precise risk assessments and informed decision-making regarding potential locations for solar photovoltaic plants over 1 MW and wind farms, with minimal impact on nature. Sensitivity maps were made for sensitive species like birds, bats and large carnivores.

Sensitivity maps can be found here: <https://bioportal.hr/gis/> under the layer "Karte osjetljivosti RH za VE i SE).

67.2. Have any international environmental guidelines, recommendations and criteria been followed in your country for impact assessment of renewable energy developments and the utilization of renewable energy sources?

Yes

Please describe which guidelines, recommendations and criteria have been followed.

>>> The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Green Transition follows (within the process of evaluation the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and the Appropriate Assessment (AA) studies) among others: "EU Guidance on wind energy development in accordance with the EU nature legislation" (available at http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/Wind_farms.pdf) and AEWA Guidelines - Renewable Energy Technologies and Migratory Species: Guidelines for Sustainable Deployment (Resolution 6.11), as well. There is a recommendation of Croatian authorities for investors and planners to follow the guidelines and recommendation for assessment of the impact of windfarms on birds developed and regularly updated by Schottish Natural Heritage (www.snh.org).

67.3. Is post-construction monitoring being undertaken of the renewable energy installations and associated infrastructure in your country?

Yes

Please share information and lessons learnt from the post-construction monitoring (attach files or add weblinks, if available)

>>> Post-construction monitoring is part of the most licenses of renewable energy projects, but application of mitigation measures to mitigate the post-construction impacts revealed by monitoring still represents challenge for the authorities and for investors.

Has adverse effect on migratory waterbirds and their habitats been identified?

No

67.4. Where damage cannot be avoided or mitigated, has compensation for damages to biodiversity been provided?

Not applicable

Please explain

>>> There were no cases where compensation of damage was needed

Operate wind farms in ways that minimise bird mortality, for example by introducing shortterm shutdowns during peak migration and minimising lighting in wind farms.

Yes

Please provide details

>>> Minimizing lighting in wind farms is measure regularly prescribed in positive appropriate assessment opinion issued by the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development

Dismantling of wind turbines in existing installations, should waterbird mortality have an effect on the population status of a species and other mitigation measures have proved insufficient.

Not applicable

Please explain the reasons

>>> Up to today we didn't have such adverse impact on waterbirds i.e. the one that should be followed with dismantling of wind turbines.

Focusing research efforts on alleviating the negative effects on waterbirds from wind farms, such as the mapping of the main migration corridors and migration crossings for waterbirds also allowing the optimising of wind farm layouts.

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> Insufficient resources have been allocated for such focused research in Croatia

67.6. Have any specific measures been put in place to assess, identify and reduce potential negative impacts of biofuel production on migratory waterbirds and their habitats?

No

Please explain the reasons. What are the constraints preventing implementation of this activity?

>>> There was no projects conducted in the reporting period on impact of biofuel production on migratory water birds and their habitats.

67.7. Have the measures contained in Resolution 5.16. been included in your country's National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans and relevant legislation?

No

Please explain the reasons. What are the constraints preventing implementation of this activity?

>>> Measures contained in the Resolution 5.16. on Renewable Energy and Migratory Waterbirds are not part of the existing Strategy and Action plan for Protection of Nature of the Republic of Croatia for period 2017-2025 (OG 72/2017). However, recent legislation, specifically the Environmental Protection Act (OG 80/13, 153/13, 78/15, 12/18 and 118/18) and the Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19, 127/19 and 155/23) already gave a framework for effective implementation of the Resolution 5.16.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> Two new guidelines for environmental assessment of wind farms and powerlines in Croatia have been compiled through a multi-stakeholder process that was facilitated by Association Biom and included relevant government institutions, ornithologists and EIA consultancies, as well as international experts from NatureScot (formerly Scottish Natural Heritage) and others.

Guidelines for assessing the impact of wind farms on birds and are available here: https://www.biom.hr/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/BROS%E2%95%A0iURA_VJETRENJACE_web.pdf

Guidelines on assessing the impact of power lines on birds are available here: <https://www.biom.hr/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Smjernice-dalekovodi-HR.pdf>

68. Has your country used the following AEWA Conservation Guidelines - Renewable Energy Technologies and Migratory Species: Guidelines for Sustainable Deployment (Resolution 6.11)?

Notice: Before clicking on the above hyperlink, please keep pressing the **Ctrl button** on your keyboard to open the link in a new tab.

Yes

Please provide details

>>> The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Green Transition follows, within the process of evaluation the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and the Appropriate Assessment (AA) studies, among others, the AEWA Guidelines - Renewable Energy Technologies and Migratory Species: Guidelines for Sustainable Deployment (Resolution 6.11).

69. Is by-catch of waterbirds in fishing gear taking place in your country? (Resolution 3.8) (Please respond to this question only with respect to species, which are NOT considered seabirds. Seabird by-catch is dealt with in section 4.6 Seabirds)

No Information

When and how do you intend to fill this information gap?

>>> The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery is responsible for coordination of activities in relation to monitoring and collection of data on by-catch.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

71. Has any project / initiative been implemented in your country that promotes the integration of cultural and provisioning ecosystem services of migratory waterbirds into policy and decision-making affecting them or their habitats? (AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Target 2.6)

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> For the moment this is not considered to be the priority. Project priorities are focused on the development of Natura 2000 management plans and setting up of the comprehensive monitoring system of species and habitat types of EU importance.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

Optionally you can provide additional information on section 6.3. Other Human Activities

>>> -

Pressures and Responses

7. Research and Monitoring

72. Does your country have in place waterbird monitoring schemes for the AEWA species? (AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Actions 1.4(a) and 1.4(b))

Yes

Covering the breeding period

Guidance: Including pre- and post-breeding sites of concentration, such as moulting sites close to breeding areas

Partially

Please provide details. (incl. list the species covered OR not covered (whichever list is shorter))

>>> The Operational Programme Competitiveness and Cohesion 2014–2020 provided the framework for the project “Development of a Monitoring System for the Conservation Status of Species and Habitat Types”, implemented by the Institute for Environment and Nature within the Croatian Ministry of Environmental Protection and Green Transition.

As part of this project, two monitoring programmes for wetland birds were developed in 2022: the Monitoring Programme for the Conservation Status of Wetland Songbirds and the Monitoring Programme for the Conservation Status of Non-songbird Wetland Birds. While both programmes are currently operational, they are not yet fully implemented, as some monitoring sites could not be included due to limited resources.

Both programmes encompass all populations —breeding, wintering, and migratory (passage) birds. Croatia does not have a monitoring program for breeding populations of nocturnally active, secretive bird species such as *Botaurus botaurus* and *Porzana/Zapornia* species.

Is information on drivers of population trends also being collected? (Resolution 8.5; ref. document AEWA/MOP 8.27)

Yes

Please provide details

>>> As part of the monitoring program, in addition to recording species abundance, habitat conditions and on-site threats are also documented

Are demographic data (age and sex classes) also being collected? (Resolution 8.5; ref. document AEWA/MOP 8.27)

Yes

Please provide details

>>> Demographic data are gathered during field bird censuses whenever it is feasible to determine them through visual observation on site.

Covering the passage period

Partially

Please provide details. (incl. list the species covered OR not covered (whichever list is shorter))

>>> The Operational Programme Competitiveness and Cohesion 2014–2020 provided the framework for the project “Development of a Monitoring System for the Conservation Status of Species and Habitat Types”, implemented by the Institute for Environment and Nature within the Croatian Ministry of Environmental Protection and Green Transition.

As part of this project, two monitoring programmes for wetland birds were developed in 2022: the Monitoring Programme for the Conservation Status of Wetland Songbirds and the Monitoring Programme for the Conservation Status of Non-songbird Wetland Birds. While both programmes are currently operational, they are not yet fully implemented, as some monitoring sites could not be included due to limited resources.

During monitoring, all species are recorded; however, some species that live secretly in wetland vegetation remain undetected. Currently, we cannot conduct monthly counts due to limited resources.

Is information on drivers of population trends also being collected?(Resolution 8.5; ref. document AEWA/MOP 8.27)

Yes

Please provide details

>>> As part of the monitoring program, in addition to recording species abundance, habitat conditions and on-site threats are also documented

Are demographic data (age and sex classes) also being collected? (Resolution 8.5; ref. document AEWA/MOP 8.27)

Yes

Please provide details

>>> Demographic data are gathered during field bird censuses whenever it is feasible to determine them through visual observation on site.

Covering the non-breeding/wintering period

Partially

Please provide details. (incl. list the species covered OR not covered (whichever list is shorter))

>>> The Operational Programme Competitiveness and Cohesion 2014–2020 provided the framework for the project “Development of a Monitoring System for the Conservation Status of Species and Habitat Types”, implemented by the Institute for Environment and Nature within the Croatian Ministry of Environmental Protection and Green Transition.

As part of this project, two monitoring programmes for wetland birds were developed in 2022: the Monitoring Programme for the Conservation Status of Wetland Songbirds and the Monitoring Programme for the Conservation Status of Non-songbird Wetland Birds. While both programmes are currently operational, they are not yet fully implemented, as some monitoring sites could not be included due to limited resources. All species are covered.

Is information on drivers of population trends also being collected? (Resolution 8.5; ref. document AEWA/MOP 8.27)

Yes

Please provide details

>>> As part of the monitoring program, in addition to recording species abundance, habitat conditions and on-site threats are also documented

Are demographic data (age and sex classes) also being collected? (Resolution 8.5; ref. document AEWA/MOP 8.27)

Yes

Please provide details

>>> Demographic data are gathered during field bird censuses whenever it is feasible to determine them through visual observation on site.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

73. Have you undertaken after MOP8 a brief assessment of existing monitoring activities in your country against the priorities set out in document AEWA/MOP 8.27 in order to help identify ways in which they can best implement those recommendations? (Resolution 8.5)

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> All monitoring activities were consolidated into two programmes: the Monitoring Programme for the Conservation Status of Wetland Songbirds and the Monitoring Programme for the Conservation Status of Non-songbird Wetland Birds.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

74. Are data collected through the International Waterbird Census or other relevant monitoring schemes being actively used in your country to inform national-level implementation of AEWA? (AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Action 1.5(a))

Yes

Please provide details

>>> Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) conducting the International Waterbird Census (IWC) provide annual count data to the Institute for Environment and Nature within the Croatian Ministry of Environmental Protection and Green Transition. These results are entered into the Ministry’s database, supporting nature

conservation efforts and being shared with relevant stakeholders, particularly for use in Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedures. The IWC methodology is fully integrated into the national Monitoring Program for the Conservation Status of Non-songbird Wetland Birds. During the implementation of the program, coordination is carried out to ensure that the basic IWC methodology aligns with the one prescribed by the national Monitoring Program, thus avoiding the duplication of field efforts.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

75. Has your country supported, technically or financially, through bilateral or multilateral initiatives, other Parties or Range States requiring assistance and support in designing appropriate monitoring schemes, developing their capacity and overall strengthening of waterbird monitoring and population data collection? (Resolutions 5.2 and 8.5)

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> In period 2021-2024 Croatian experts were engaged with the implementation of the project of national importance "Development of a Monitoring System for the Conservation Status of Species and Habitat Types", so bilateral or multilateral initiatives were not in the focus.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

76. Has your country used the AEWA Conservation Guidelines on waterbird monitoring?

Notice: Before clicking on the above hyperlink, please keep pressing the **Ctrl button** on your keyboard to open the link in a new tab.

Yes

Please provide details

>>> In Croatia, there is a longstanding tradition of using the International Waterbird Census (IWC) methods to monitor sites that are important for non-breeding waterbirds. The monitoring is coordinated by the Croatian NGO Association for the Protection of Birds and Nature, and it continues to expand, with an increasing number of volunteers and more sites being covered. The principles outlined in the "AEWA Guidelines for a Waterbird Monitoring Protocol" are applied in the development of national monitoring programs.

77. Has your government provided over the past triennium funds and/or logistical support for the International Waterbird Census and/or other waterbird monitoring scheme at international or national level? (Resolution 6.3)

Yes

Nationally

Yes

Please provide details

>>> National programs for monitoring the conservation status of wetland birds are financed through a variety of sources, primarily the governmental budget and EU funds.

Internationally

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> A shortage of resources and the absence of targeted initiatives.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

78. Has your country donated funds to the African-Eurasian Waterbird Fund in the past triennium (Resolution 6.3, 7.7 and 8.5)?

Notice: Before clicking on the above hyperlink, please keep pressing the Ctrl button on your keyboard to open the link in a new tab.

No

Please explain the reason

>>> Not considered as priority.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

80. Has the impact of lead fishing weights on waterbirds been investigated in your country? (AEWA Action Plan, paragraph 4.3.12). When answering this question please also consider question 59 in chapter 6. Management of human activities.

No

Are there plans to investigate the impact of lead fishing weights on waterbirds in your country?

No

Please provide reason(s)

>>> This will be done on the EU level in the scope of the REACH Regulation.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

81. Has your country established partnerships and initiated joint research programmes at any level, with clear timeframes for delivery, to fill priority knowledge gaps as identified in document AEWA/MOP 8.30? (AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Action 5.1(a)).

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> Lack of funds and capacity.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

82. In this reporting period, have results of conservation and management interventions, whether successful or unsuccessful, been published in your country so as to inform future conservation and management actions? (Article III.2(k), Resolution 8.7)

Yes

Please provide details and reference to each publication or attach a copy

>>> LIFE Artina project:

Varnham, K., Austad, M. (2019). Report recommending rat eradication/control techniques on Sušac. LIFE Artina (LIFE17 NAT/HR/000594) Action A5 report. BirdLife Malta.

Austad, M., Varnham, K., Engelen, D., Ječmenica, B., Kapelj, S. (2020). Feasibility study for the removal of black rats *Rattus rattus* from the island of Sušac, Croatia. LIFE Artina (LIFE17 NAT/HR/000594): Action A5 report. BirdLife Malta. 66 pp.

Posimo P. (2022). Trip Report. Sušac Island, Croatia: Feasibility of black rat (*Rattus rattus*) eradication by means of areal baiting. Prepared for Assoc. Biom. Project: LIFE ARTINA – LIFE17 NAT/HR/000594 “Seabird Conservation Network in the Adriatic”. Nemo Ltd., Italy. 10 pp.

Austad, M., Taylor, L., Engelen, D. (2022) On site cliff access assessment on Sušac island for the purposes of potential ground-based eradication of black rats *Rattus rattus*. LIFE Artina (LIFE17 NAT/HR/000594): Action A5 report: Feasibility study for invasive mammals. BirdLife Malta. 5 pp.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

Optionally you can provide additional information on section 7. Research and Monitoring

>>> -

Pressures and Responses

8. Education and Information

8.1. Communication, Education and Public Awareness

83. Has your country developed and implemented programmes for raising awareness and understanding on waterbird conservation and about AEWA specifically? (Strategic Plan 2009-2017, Objective 4, Target 4.3 and AEWA Action Plan, paragraphs 6.1-6.4, Resolution 3.10, Resolution 5.5; Resolution 6.10)

Guidance: Such programmes should consist of a series of established, long-term communication activities, which are guided by clearly defined goals, target audiences and communication channels. A programme does not constitute a single, one-off communication activity, product or event. In other words, an established national programme to raise awareness and understanding on waterbird conservation and about AEWA would ideally be a number of targeted communication activities which are guided by a communication plan and are backed by sufficient human and financial resources.

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> Lack of human resources and funds.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

84. Has a National AEWA Focal Point for Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) been designated by your country? (Resolution 5.5; Resolution 6.10)

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> Lack of human resources and funds.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

85. Have measures been taken by your country to implement the provisions related to “Education and Information” in the AEWA Action Plan over the last triennium? (AEWA Action Plan, Paragraphs 6.1-6.4)

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> Lack of human resources and funds.

86. Have World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) activities been carried out in your country during this reporting cycle? (Resolution 5.5)

Yes

Please describe the activity/activities briefly and upload any sample materials, links or photos available related to the activity/event.

>>> WMBD activities were organised every year by public institutions responsible for management of protected areas and areas of ecological network, NGOs, ZOOs etc. Some examples are given below:

Nature Park Lonjsko polje (2024): <https://pp-lonjsko-polje.hr/svjetski-dan-ptica-selica/>

Osijek-Baranja County (2024): <https://www.obz-zastita-prirode.hr/index.php/aktualno/obiljezen-svjetski-dan-ptica-selica-2024>

NGO Biom (2024): <https://www.biom.hr/2024/10/08/obiljezimo-svjetski-dan-ptica-selica-u-sinju/>

National Park Plitvička jezera (2023): <https://np-plitvicka-jezera.hr/svjetski-dan-ptica-selica-listopad2023/>

ZOO Zagreb (2022): <https://zoo.hr/program-u-povodu-dana-ptica-selica-ptice-selice-potrebno-zastiti-od-svjetlosnog-oneciscenja/>

87. Has your country provided funding and/or other support, as appropriate (e.g. expertise, network, skills and resources) towards the implementation of the AEWA Communication Strategy and/or towards priority CEPA activities in the AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027? Please consider both national and international funding and different types of support provided. (Resolution 6.10)

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> Lack of human resources and funds.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

Optionally you can provide additional information on section 8.1. Communication, Education and Public Awareness

>>> -

Pressures and Responses

9. Implementation

88. Have you undertaken a national assessment of the resources needed for the delivery of the AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027? (AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Action 5.6.(b))

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> No specific national assessment has been undertaken. However, delivery of the activities foreseen by the AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027 targeting AEWA Parties, in case of Croatia, is overlapping with majority of activities that are planned to fulfil obligations coming from the EU Birds Directive. For the Multi-annual Financial Framework 2021-2027 all crucial activities are planned within the Programme Competitiveness and Cohesion 2021-2027.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

89. Has your country provided resources to address the resource needs as identified in document AEWA/MOP 8.43, for enabling and strengthening the international-level coordination and delivery of the Strategic Plan? (Resolution 8.3)

Yes

Please provide more information on the specific resources provided and which specific resource need they are addressing

>>> Croatia regularly pays its annual contributions and makes a voluntary contribution every year.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

90. Has your country approached non-contracting party range states to encourage them to accede to the Agreement? (Resolution 3.10; AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Target 5.2)

Report only on activities over the past triennium

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> There was no actions in that regard in the reporting period. The most important reason for no action was lack of administrative and financial resources.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

91. Does your country have in place a national coordination mechanism for implementation of AEWA, possibly linking to national coordination mechanisms for other biodiversity Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)? (Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Action 5.3(b))

Guidance: Such mechanism can be a dedicated cross-institutional working group, involving representatives of the civil society and other relevant stakeholders, aimed at planning, coordinating and reporting the implementation of the Agreement in the country. Alternatively, the implementation of AEWA at national level can be coordinated as an extension of larger national coordination mechanisms for other MEAs, such as National Ramsar Committees or CBD NBSAPs coordination.

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> National coordination mechanism per se, does not exist. However, AEWA implementation is coordinated by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Green Transition (former Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development) on case by case basis, including through the implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan for Nature Protection of the Republic of Croatia for period 2017-2025 (OG 72/17). This Strategy has 5 strategic objectives: (1) Increase the effectiveness of basic nature protection mechanisms (2) Reduce direct pressures on nature and encourage sustainable use of natural resources (3) Strengthen the capacities of the nature protection system (4) Increase knowledge and availability of data on nature (5) Raise the level of knowledge, understanding and public support for nature protection. Mentioned strategic objectives are divided into 20 specific objectives and 107 actions. Although the Strategy is still relevant, the new one is planned to be

drafted in 2025, taking into account the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 and the Kunming- Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

92. Have you undertaken a national assessment of the capacity needs for AEWA implementation? (AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Action 5.3.(e))

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> National assessment of capacity needs made particularly for the AEWA implementation was not made. However, assessment of the needs to fulfil obligations arising from the EU Habitats Directive and EU Birds Directive has been made and strengthening of capacities is important part of several strategic projects implemented by the former Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development (now the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Green Transition) within the Operational Programme Competitiveness and Cohesion 2014-2020. These projects were focused on setting the comprehensive management framework for Natura 2000 sites (including SPAs designated in accordance to the EU Birds Directive) and on development of monitoring and reporting framework for species (including migratory waterbirds) and habitat types of the EU importance. Also, further implementation is planned within the new Programme Competitiveness and Cohesion 2021-2027. Capacity needs that were and will be filled by implementation of the before mentioned projects, will also cover most of the needs regarding AEWA implementation.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

93.1. Cooperate in launching regional initiatives, particularly in Africa, to address the implementation of capacity priorities, linking to the African Initiative, including scientific collaboration as well as a “younger generations” component, and including provision for actions to be further informed through country-specific needs assessments.

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> The most important reason was lack of administrative and financial resources.

93.2. Establish procedures for ensuring continuity of succession and transfer of knowledge and skills, when there are changes in personnel responsible for AEWA national implementation.

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> There are no specific procedures in place. However, transfer of knowledge has to be made in every situation where the changes in personnel occur, including changes regarding AEWA personnel.

93.3. Hold regional or sub-regional preparatory meetings before each ordinary session of the MOP, in particular for African Range States, and for such meetings to include an enhanced capacity-building component targeting priority needs identified by the Parties concerned.

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> -

93.4. (For AEWA National Focal Points in the European Union (EU) only)

To cooperate with African National Focal Points, partner organisations and other stakeholders to explore opportunities for incorporating aspects of AEWA implementation capacity support in relevant existing projects and programmes in Africa, including the EU-funded NaturAfrica initiative and the Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial/EU-funded RESSOURCE sub-Saharan Africa project, as well as projects under the auspices of the wider CMS Family, Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and UNEP.

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> Lack of administrative and financial capacities.

94. Has your country concluded, or considered concluding, twinning schemes between sites with other countries, the sites of which share common migratory waterbirds or conservation

issues? (Resolution 5.20)

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> Lack of human and financial resources.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

95. Are those officers in your country's government responsible for AEWA implementation coordinated and engaged with national processes contributing towards the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework? (AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Action 5.4(a))

Yes

Please provide details

>>> Officers responsible for AEWA implementation work closely with officers responsible for implementation of the CBD and its Strategic Plan 2011-2020. Implementation of both the AEWA and CBD is coordinated by the Nature Protection Directorate of the former Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development (now the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Green Transition).

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

96. Are those officers in your country's government responsible for AEWA implementation coordinated and engaged with national processes contributing towards the relevant Sustainable Development Goals and the assessment of achieving these goals? (AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Action 5.4(a))

Yes

Please provide details

>>> Officers responsible for AEWA implementation are engaged with national processes contributing towards the relevant SDGs. Former Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development (now the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Green Transition) is responsible for the AEWA implementation and also for implementation of the active sustainable development policy by promoting sustainable production and consumption, low-carbon development and adaptation to climate change, etc. The minister of environmental protection and green transition is a member of the National Council for Sustainable Development. The National Council for Sustainable Development was (re)formed in 2025 and is chaired by the Prime Minister, while its work is coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

97. Are those officers in your country's government responsible for AEWA implementation coordinated and engaged with national processes to implementation and assess the delivery of the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2024-2032? (AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Action 5.4(a))

Yes

Please provide details

>>> The former Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development (now the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Green Transition), Nature Protection Directorate is responsible for implementation of both the AEWA and CMS.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

98. Are those officers in your country's government responsible for AEWA implementation coordinated and engaged with national processes contributing towards the Ramsar Convention Strategic Plan 2016-2024? (AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027, Action 5.4(a))

Yes

Please provide details

>>> The former Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development (now the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Green Transition), Nature Protection Directorate is responsible for implementation of Ramsar Convention.

99. Are the AEWA priorities integrated into your county's National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan (NBSAP) and/or other similar national implementation mechanisms/processes for other international strategic plans and policies (Resolution 6.3; AEWA Strategic Plan, Targets 5.4 and 5.5)?

99.1 The new generation of NBSAPs related to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (as adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in December 2022)

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> AEWA implementation is coordinated by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Green Transition (former Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development) and is done also in the framework of the implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan for Nature Protection of the Republic of Croatia for period 2017-2025 (OG 72/17). This Strategy has 5 strategic objectives: (1) Increase the effectiveness of basic nature protection mechanisms (2) Reduce direct pressures on nature and encourage sustainable use of natural resources (3) Strengthen the capacities of the nature protection system (4) Increase knowledge and availability of data on nature (5) Raise the level of knowledge, understanding and public support for nature protection. Mentioned strategic objectives are divided into 20 specific objectives and 107 actions. Although the Strategy is still relevant, the new one is planned to be drafted in 2025, taking into account the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 and the Kunming- Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

99.2 The relevant Sustainable Development Goals

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> Strategy and Action Plan for Nature Protection of the Republic of Croatia for period 2017-2025 (OG 72/17) is still relevant and in force. This Strategy has 5 strategic objectives: (1) Increase the effectiveness of basic nature protection mechanisms (2) Reduce direct pressures on nature and encourage sustainable use of natural resources (3) Strengthen the capacities of the nature protection system (4) Increase knowledge and availability of data on nature (5) Raise the level of knowledge, understanding and public support for nature protection. Mentioned strategic objectives are divided into 20 specific objectives and 107 actions. Although the Strategy is still relevant, the new one is planned to be drafted in 2025, taking into account the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 and the Kunming- Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and all other relevant international strategic documents. In relation to SDGs, namely the SDG 14 "Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development", Croatia is planning to protect 30% of the sea under national jurisdiction (including in the EEZ) in the 2nd quarter 2025 by designation of new marine Natura 2000 sites. Some of them will be for protection of the Yelkouan shearwater and the Scopoli's shearwater. By this, Croatia will contribute directly to the SDG 14 and to the AEWA's objectives.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

99.3 The Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2024-2032

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> Strategy and Action Plan for Nature Protection of the Republic of Croatia for period 2017-2025 (OG 72/17) is still relevant and in force. This Strategy has 5 strategic objectives: (1) Increase the effectiveness of basic nature protection mechanisms (2) Reduce direct pressures on nature and encourage sustainable use of natural resources (3) Strengthen the capacities of the nature protection system (4) Increase knowledge and availability of data on nature (5) Raise the level of knowledge, understanding and public support for nature protection. Mentioned strategic objectives are divided into 20 specific objectives and 107 actions. Although the Strategy is still relevant, the new one is planned to be drafted in 2025, taking into account the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 and the Kunming- Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and all other relevant international strategic documents.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

99.4 The Ramsar Convention Strategic Plan 2016-2024

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> Strategy and Action Plan for Nature Protection of the Republic of Croatia for period 2017-2025 (OG 72/17) is still relevant and in force. This Strategy has 5 strategic objectives: (1) Increase the effectiveness of basic nature protection mechanisms (2) Reduce direct pressures on nature and encourage sustainable use of natural resources (3) Strengthen the capacities of the nature protection system (4) Increase knowledge and availability of data on nature (5) Raise the level of knowledge, understanding and public support for nature protection. Mentioned strategic objectives are divided into 20 specific objectives and 107 actions. Although the Strategy is still relevant, the new one is planned to be drafted in 2025, taking into account the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 and the Kunming- Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and all other relevant international strategic documents.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

99.5 Other international strategic plans and policies

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> Strategy and Action Plan for Nature Protection of the Republic of Croatia for period 2017-2025 (OG 72/17) is still relevant and in force. This Strategy has 5 strategic objectives: (1) Increase the effectiveness of basic nature protection mechanisms (2) Reduce direct pressures on nature and encourage sustainable use of natural resources (3) Strengthen the capacities of the nature protection system (4) Increase knowledge and availability of data on nature (5) Raise the level of knowledge, understanding and public support for nature protection. Mentioned strategic objectives are divided into 20 specific objectives and 107 actions. Although the Strategy is still relevant, the new one is planned to be drafted in 2025, taking into account the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 and the Kunming- Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and all other relevant international strategic documents.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

Sustainable Development Goals

Yes

Please provide details

>>> In 2024 the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Green Transition prepared and communicated with all other relevant ministries the national goals of the future (new) Strategy and Action Plan for Nature Protection of the Republic of Croatia for period 2026-2035. These goals are based on the goals and targets of the Kunming- Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, as well as on the goals of the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030.

Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

Yes

Please provide details

>>> In 2024 the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Green Transition prepared and communicated with all other relevant ministries the national goals of the future (new) Strategy and Action Plan for Nature Protection of the Republic of Croatia for period 2026-2035. These goals are based on the goals and targets of the Kunming- Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2024-2032

Yes

Please provide details

>>> In 2024 the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Green Transition prepared and communicated with all other relevant ministries the national goals of the future (new) Strategy and Action Plan for Nature Protection of the Republic of Croatia for period 2026-2035. These goals are based on the goals and targets of the Kunming- Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

Ramsar Convention Strategic Plan 2016-2024

Yes

Please provide details

>>> In 2024 the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Green Transition prepared and communicated with all other relevant ministries the national goals of the future (new) Strategy and Action Plan for Nature Protection of the Republic of Croatia for period 2026-2035. These goals are based on the goals and targets of the

Kunming- Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

101. How would your country suggest promoting further links between the biodiversity MEAs to which your country is a Contracting Party, so as to make your work more efficient and effective?

>>> The Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development (now the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Green Transition), Nature Protection Directorate is responsible for implementation of all the MEAs relevant for nature and biodiversity conservation.

102. Has your country donated funds to the AEWA Small Grants Fund over the past triennium? (Resolutions 7.1 and 8.3)

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> Lack of financial resources.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

103. Has your country donated other funding or provided in-kind support to activities coordinated by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat?

Yes

Please provide details, including amount of funds donated

>>> In period 2021-2024 Croatia paid 8000 euros of voluntary contributions (2000 per year).

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

104. Has your country prioritised and allocated a Junior Professional Officer (JPO) to the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat for Technical Committee support or for any other area of work? (Resolutions 7.11, 7.12, 8.11 and 8.12)

No and has not been prioritised

Please explain the reasons

>>> Lack of human and financial resources.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

105. Please report on the implementation of Resolution 6.21 on Resource mobilization for the implementation of AEWA.

105.1 Did your country's government provide in the last triennium financial and/or in-kind resources to support national activities which are intended to achieve the objectives of this Agreement, particularly those in line with the AEWA Strategic Plan including the AEWA Plan of Action for Africa, and in accordance with your national plans, priorities and programmes?

Yes

Please describe the resources provided

>>> In period 2021-2024 Croatia paid 8000 euros of voluntary contributions (2000 per year).

105.2 Does your country's government have unpaid dues to the AEWA Trust Fund (annual assessed contributions to the Agreement's budget as approved by each session of the Meeting of the Parties)?

No

105.3 Has your country's government provided funding to support developing countries, in particular least developed countries and small island developing States, as well as countries with economies in transition, to meet their obligations under AEWA, and the implementation of the AEWA Plan of Action for Africa 2019-2027? Under this question please report for support provided outside of formal and established intergovernmental cooperation. For the latter, please refer to the next question 105.4.

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> Lack of financial resources for such activities.

105.4 Does your country's government participate in any South-South, North-South or triangular cooperation to enhance financial and technical support for the successful implementation of AEWA activities?

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> Lack of human and financial resources.

105.5 Does your country's government use innovative financing mechanisms for implementing the AEWA Strategic Plan such as a (national) Migratory Waterbirds Fund?

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> Lack of human resources.

105.6 Does the implementation of AEWA in your country benefit from synergies between biodiversity-related conventions at national level, amongst others, through information sharing on potential funding opportunities and sharing of financial resources such as the Desertification Fund, Green Climate Fund, the Adaptation Fund, and the Global Environmental Facility?

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> Croatia as the EU member state can not benefit from mentioned funds.

Optionally you can provide additional information on section 9. Implementation

>>> -

Pressures and Responses

10. Climate Change

106. Please outline relevant climate change research, assessments and/or adaptation measures that are relevant to migratory waterbirds and which have been undertaken or planned in your country. (Resolution 5.13)

a. Research and studies of climate change impacts on waterbirds

No relevant activities

Please explain the reasons

>>> Up to now no such research was undertaken. Bird species listed in the AEWA Conservation Guidelines on measures needed to help waterbirds to adapt to climate change do not occur in the Republic of Croatia

b. Assessment of the potential vulnerability to climate change of key habitats used by waterbird species (including those outside protected area networks) (Please note that the question asks about habitats, rather than sites. Question 43 in Section 5, sub-section 5.2 investigates vulnerability of sites to climate change)

No relevant activities

Please explain the reasons

>>> As stated above, bird species listed in the AEWA Conservation Guidelines on measures needed to help waterbirds to adapt to climate change do not occur in the Republic of Croatia, For that reason habitats used by waterbird species in Croatia are not yet recognized as potentially vulnerable to climate change.

c. Assessment of the potential vulnerability of waterbird species to climate change.

No relevant activities

Please explain the reasons

>>> As explained above

d. Review of relevant national conservation policies relevant to waterbirds and climate change.

No relevant activities

Please explain the reasons

>>> As explained above

e. National Action Plan for helping waterbirds adapt to climate change (as a separate implementation process or as part of a larger national framework for biodiversity adaptation to climate change. Please note that Question 44 in Section 5, sub-section 5.2 investigates national measures for increasing resilience of the ecological network for waterbirds to climate change).

No relevant activities

Please explain the reasons

>>> As explained above

f. Other undertaken or planned relevant activities.

No

107. Has your country used the AEWA Conservation Guidelines on measures needed to help waterbirds to adapt to climate change?

Notice: Before clicking on the above hyperlink, please keep pressing the Ctrl button on your keyboard to open the link in a new tab.

Not applicable

Please explain

>>> Bird species listed in the AEWA Conservation Guidelines on measures needed to help waterbirds to adapt to climate change do not occur in the Republic of Croatia.

108. Has your country used the complementary Guidelines on climate change adaptation measures for waterbirds?

No

Please explain the reasons. What other guidance has been used instead?

>>> Not yet. However, Croatia as the EU member state will have to implement the Regulation (EU) No. 2024/1991 on nature restoration that came into force on 18 August 2024 and prepare, adopt and implementation the National Restoration Plan. Through this plan many measures and activities will contribute to restoration of wetlands, removal of obsolete river barriers, restoration of grasslands etc. and thus will be beneficial also for waterbird populations.

Optionally you can provide additional information on section 10. Climate Change

>>> -

Pressures and Responses

11. Avian Influenza

109. What issues have proved challenging in responding nationally to the spread of the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in the last triennium and what further guidance or information would be useful in this respect?

List challenges

>>> None

List required further guidance or information

>>> None

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> During 2021, 110 wild birds of 25 different species were tested. Three mute swans were found H5N8 HPAI positive. Further, 16 cases of H5N1 HPAI were found in mute swans, grey herons and a gadwall during 2021. In 2022, out of 70 wild birds belonging to 15 different species tested, 12 were H5N1 HPAI positive. All of them were mute swans except greater white-fronted goose. In 2023, out of 53 wild birds belonging to 14 different species tested, seven birds, mute swans and common terns, were H5N1 HPAI positive. During 2024, a total of 185 wild birds belonging to 38 different species were submitted for testing. Twenty-seven tested H5N1 HPAI positive, all of them mute swans except three Eurasian spoonbills and one black-crowned night heron. The spoonbills and the heron were captive birds. There is a national program for detection of avian influenza viruses in wild birds since 2005. The program is laid down by the State veterinary administration and conducted by the Poultry Centre of the Croatian Veterinary Institute in collaboration with ornithologists.

110. Does your country have in place surveillance and rapid testing programmes for HPAI of dead birds so as to inform: any enhancements to monitoring of the species populations (Resolutions 8.2 and 8.7) and site-related management and biosecurity measures as needed (Resolution 8.15)?

Yes

Please provide more information

>>> National program for detection of avian influenza viruses in wild birds is operational since 2005. All data on the surveillance and programmes are submitted to the competent ministry - now the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery who then transfers the data to the European Commission. All positive results, eg. results of presence of the avian influenza are reported to the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) and recorded in the World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS).

Has this information been submitted to international databases, e.g. the WOAH WAHIS system <https://wahis.woah.org/#/home>, which strive to improve understanding of the epidemiology of the disease and its impacts across borders (as called for by the CMS/FAO Co-convened Scientific Task Force on Avian Influenza and Wild Birds: see paragraph 2.3.1.6 of the 2023 statement of the Scientific Task Force on Avian Influenza and Wild Birds on H5N1 high pathogenicity avian influenza in wild birds - unprecedented conservation impacts and urgent needs (available here)?

Yes (please clarify)

>>> See the answer above.

111. Has your country adapted/changed in the last triennium monitoring and assessment of those species affected by avian influenza, particularly HPAI H5N1 outbreaks, as well as other diseases, as the basis for potentially implementing emergency measures envisaged by paragraph 2.3 of the AEWA Action Plan? (Resolutions 8.2 and 8.7)

Not Applicable

Please explain why

>>> It was not necessary to change the monitoring and assessment of species in the reporting period.

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

112. Have you established HPAI contingency plans nationally and at sites of significant importance to waterbirds, including coastal seabirds? (Resolution 8.15)

No

Please explain the reasons

>>> -

Field for additional information (optional)

>>> -

Optionally you can provide additional information on section 11. Avian Influenza

>>> -

12. Confirmation

Confirmation of information verification and approval for submission

Please confirm:

In addition a scanned copy of an official letter from the relevant state institution, approving the report for submission, can be attached.

I declare that the information provided in the Report on the implementation of AEWA for the period 2021-2024 has been verified and the report has been approved for submission by the appropriate state institution in the country.

You have attached the following documents to this answer.

[HR_confirmation_letter_NR_2021-2024.pdf](#) - Confirmation letter

Date of submission

>>> 12/05/2025