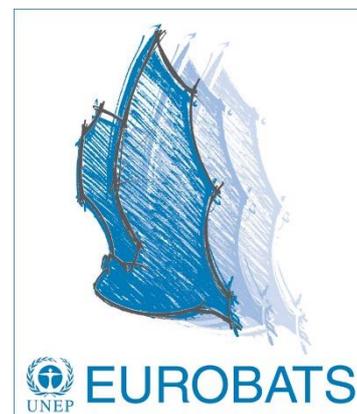


# Press Release



## **25 years of International Bat Night - significant for bat conservation in Europe**

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the International Bat Night! Since 1997, the last weekend in August has been reserved for bats. At public events in museums, at universities, at specialised institutes, in clubhouses or simply out in nature, biologists as well as volunteers raise awareness about fascinating ecological features of these mammals. Did you know that a female bat may consume up to 3,000 mosquitoes in one night to provide her young with milk? Or that some bat species migrate throughout Europe because their summer and winter habitats are 1,500 km apart? Communication of such amazing facts invalidates superstitions and fears these silent hunters of the night are often linked to. Chiroptophobia or fear of bats spread among Europeans since ancient times, whereas they often associated with positive traits in many Asian cultures. Cultural prejudice is one of the important reasons why bats were (and still are) ill-treated. However, the main threat to them is habitat loss due to human activities. To dispel myths and enlighten the general public on the natural value of bats, the EUROBATS Secretariat called for the first International Bat Night in 1997. While in 1997 only 14 countries took part in this event, by 2021 there are over 46 participating states from Europe, Americas, Africa and the Middle East. The EUROBATS Secretariat has been supporting the activities of local enthusiasts ever since. This annual event and the commitment of the species conservationists are integral parts of the conservation efforts for bats in Europe and beyond the continent.

The international Agreement on the Conservation of European Bat Populations. (EUROBATS) was concluded in 1991, thus celebrating its 30th anniversary this year. EUROBATS protects all 51 European bat species through legislation, education, conservation measures and international co-operation with Agreement members and with those who have not yet joined. The Agreement provides a framework of co-operation for the conservation of bats throughout Europe, Northern Africa and the Middle East. Meanwhile, 38 states have acceded to the Agreement.

