

AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF POPULATION OF EUROPEAN BATS

National report on the implementation of the agreement in Lithuania

A. General Information

Name of Party: Lithuania
Date of Report: March 2013
Period covered: 2012
Competent Authorities: The Nature Protection Department of the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania

B. Status of Bats within the Territory of Lithuania

1. Summary Details of Resident Species

15 bat species occur in the territory of Lithuania:

Nyctalus leisleri (Leisler's Bat). It is characterized as a rare species, because only a few observations found during autumn bat migration in the western part of Lithuania.

Nyctalus leisleri is insufficiently studied, but it probably is more frequent than previously thought. New records were discovered during summer time in Aukstadvaris regional park and Vilnius city.

Myotis daubentonii (Daubenton's Bat) and *Pipistrellus nathusii* (Nathusius' Pipistrelle) are confirmed to be common and widespread species.

Plecotus auritus (Brown long-eared Bat) widespread throughout the country, but not abundant species.

Pipistrellus nathusii, *Nyctalus noctula*, *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, *Eptesicus nilssoni*, *Eptesicus serotinus* and *Vespertilio murinus* are common species during autumn bat migration along the Baltic Sea coast.

Myotis mystacinus (Whiskered Bat), presumably it is a rare species, because so far only a single locality has been known (in the northern part of Lithuania where a skull has been found in a limestone cave). It is likely that this species is not so rare as has been thought.

The status of *Myotis dasycneme* (Pond Bat) is vulnerable, because it is quite rare and locally distributed, recorded mostly in the north-eastern, eastern and south-eastern parts of Lithuania. Summer status is known insufficiently, in winter the species is found in the Kaunas fortress and Paneriai tunnel. The most important known hibernation place is Paneriai tunnel (Vilnius), where the winter is spent by about 700 individuals.

The status of *Barbastella barbastellus* is endangered. Previously, all wintering records were known only in the south (till middle part of Lithuania). Now this species is being found in S and SE parts of the country during the summer period. There was observed small numbers of *B. barbastellus*, breeding colonies are not detected.

There are 10 species of bats currently found in Lithuania that winter regularly. In recent years, the first wintering cases of *Nyctalus noctula* and *Vespertilio murinus* have been registered. In particular, there has been an increase in hibernating individuals of *E. murinus*, with more than 20 cases registered in southern, central and western parts of Lithuania.

11 bat species as endangered, vulnerable or of unknown status are protected in Lithuania and listed in the Lithuanian Red Data Book. They are as follows: *Myotis dasycneme*, *Myotis nattereri*, *Myotis brandtii*, *Nyctalus leisleri*, *Nyctalus noctula*, *Barbastella barbastellus*, *Vespertilio murinus*, *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, *Eptesicus nilssoni*, *Eptesicus serotinus*, *Plecotus auritus*.

2. Status and Trends

Species	Status in Lithuania	Apparent Trend
<i>Vespertilio murinus</i>	V/MIG/W	Slowly increasing
<i>Eptesicus nilssonii</i>	I/W	Stable
<i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>	I/W	Stable
<i>Nyctalus leisleri</i>	R/MIG	Unknown
<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>	V/MIG/W	Stable
<i>Barbastella barbastellus</i>	R/W	Endangered
<i>Myotis brandtii</i>	K /W	Unknown
<i>Myotis dasycneme</i>	V/W	Probably stable
<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>	NT/W	Stable
<i>Myotis mystacinus</i>	I	Unknown
<i>Myotis nattereri</i>	R/W	Unknown
<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	I/MIG	Probably stable
<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	I/MIG	Unknown
<i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i>	NT/MIG	Stable
<i>Plecotus auritus</i>	I/W	Unknown

E – endangered, **V** – vulnerable, **R** – rare, **K** – insufficiently known, **I** – indeterminate, **NT** – not threatened, **MIG** – migration species, **W**-wintering

3. Habitats and Roost Sites

There are quite many habitats, which are used by bats in Lithuania, such as former manor houses, widely distributed estates with old parks in small towns and settlements in the countryside, churches, coastal forests, broad-leaved forests and town parks (especially during bats breeding season).

4. Threats

The number of people interested in bats has substantially increased. Scientists find signs of visitors on the hibernation sites. The disturbance is particularly dangerous during the hibernation season. Another problem is martens, rats and cats feeding on bats during the hibernation season.

The renovation of buildings has a negative impact on bats during breeding and wintering periods.

Increasing number of wind turbines can also have a negative influence on the bats, especially during their migrations.

Highly toxic chemicals are not used in Lithuania, but pesticides corresponding to all the EU requirements are used in our country.

5. Data collection and research

Data have been collected and researched by:

Protected Species Database
Nature Research Centre;
Lithuanian Society for Bat Conservation;
Lithuanian Ringing Centre.

Data have been collected by:

State Protected Areas Service under the Ministry of Environment;
Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania.

1. C. Measures Taken to Implement Article III of the Agreement

6. Legal measures taken to protect bats, including details of enforcement actions to support such measures

Several main national laws in the field of nature protection should be mentioned, where issues of wildlife conservation (including the conservation of bats as well) are included:

Law on Protected Areas (1993, (as) amended in December 2001);
Law on Wild Fauna (1997, (as) amended in December 2001 and in June 2010);
Law on Protected Plant, Animal and Fungi Species (1997, (as) amended in December 2001 and in December 2009);
Government Resolution No. 276 of 15 March 2004 on the approval of the General Statutes for SCI and SPA;

Order of Minister of Environment No. D1-144 of March 31, 2006, concerning the amendment of Order No. 159 on the list of the animals and plants species of importance of EU and that are founded in Lithuania;

Order of Minister of Environment No. D1-518 of November 6, 2006, concerning the amendment of Order No. D1-302 on the compilation of the list of the sites that meet PSCI's criteria, and the submission of the list to the EU together with the list of the habitats and species of EU importance found on these sites;

Order of Minister of Environment No. D1-174 of March 23, 2007, concerning the amendment of Order No. 504 on the protected plant, animal and fungi species listed in the Lithuanian Red Data Book.

Order of Minister of Environment No. D1-263 of April 1, 2010, on the approval of the List of Strictly Protected Plant, Animal and Fungi species.

7. Sites identified and protected, which are important for the conservation of bats

6 territories of hibernating sites (Bunker Antakalnis, forts – Julijanava, Milikoniai, Naujoji Freda, Rokai, Žagariškiai) for *Barbastella barbastellus* and 7 territories of feeding (National Park of Aukštaitija, Regional Parks – Kauno marios, Meteliai, Nemuno delta, Nature Reserve Čepkeliai, wetland Rekyva and forest Dzidai) and 2 hibernating sites (Fort Rokai, tunnel Aukštieji Paneriai) for *Myotis dasycneme* are presently nominated.

8. Consideration given to habitats which are important to bats

The situation is similar every year. A lot of the known roosts and habitats important to bats in Lithuania are located in protected areas – national or regional parks, state strict and nature reserves, NATURA 2000 sites, etc. It is hoped that bats will benefit from the general and individual rules applied for protected habitats in these areas.

9. Activities to promote the awareness of the importance of the conservation of bats

Bat night events are organized in regional parks every year. The following events took place in the Renavas Manor, Pavilniai and Verkiiai Regional Park. During public shares more than 100 different types of batboxes were erected. The events were attended by more than 500 people.

The Nature Research Centre and specialists of the State Protected Areas Service are carrying out the monitoring of *Barbastella barbastellus* and *Myotis dasycneme* in their hibernating sites;

More than 20 articles about bats conservation and their life were published in magazines and newspapers, there were developed and presented some promotion information programmes about bats on TV.

Lithuanian Society for Bat Conservation founded the web site www.siksnosparniai.lt

Lithuanian Society for Bat Conservation is an associate member of BatLife Europe

10. Responsible bodies, in accordance with Article III.5 of the Agreement, nominated for the provision of advice on bat conservation and management

The Competent Authority is the Nature Protection Department of the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania.

Scientific Authorities are the Lithuanian Society for Bat Conservation and the Nature Research Centre.

11. Additional action undertaken to safeguard populations of bats

The Institute of Ecology of Vilnius University organized several seminars about bat migration for the ecologists from the regional parks and other protected areas, and for teachers.

The members of Lithuanian Society for Bat Conservation took care of eight *Vespertilio murinus* and one *Eptesicus serotinus* individuals which, during the winter, were found in residential and administrative facilities and then were placed in the right hibernation places.

12. Recent and ongoing programme (including research) related to the conservation and management of bats

The project "Preparation of Actions Plans for Protection of Rare Species and Actions Plans for the Control of Invasive Species" was approved by the Ministerial order.

During this project were developed and approved 3 conservation and 9 management plans for *Myotis dasycneme*, *Pipistrellus nathusii* and *Plecotus auritus*. Management plans for *Pipistrellus nathusii* will be implemented in 2013.

Dūkštų ąžuolyno ir Dūkštos upės slėnio management plan for *Barbastella barbastellus*

C. Consideration being given to the potential effects of pesticides on bats, and efforts to replace timber treatment chemicals which are highly toxic to bats

There was no special consideration on this point in Lithuania.

D. Functioning of the Agreement

14. Cooperation with other parties and range states

There is a cooperation with the bat's experts and scientists from Latvia, Estonia, the Netherlands and other countries. Experts from these countries carried out the consultation and research with Lithuanian specialists.