

## AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF POPULATIONS OF EUROPEAN BATS

### National Implementation Report

ALBANIA

July 2010

#### **A. General Information**

**Name of Party:** Albania

**Date of report:** 1<sup>st</sup> July 2010

**Period covered:** July 2006 – July 2010

**Competent authority:** Biodiversity Directorate / General Directorate of Policies  
Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water Administration  
Rruga e Durrësit, no.27, Tirana – ALBANIA

**Appointed member of the Advisory Committee:** MSc. Elvana Ramaj – Senior expert/  
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**Contribution for the preparation of the national report:**

- Museum of Natural Sciences – Ass. Prof. Ferdi Bego

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#### **B. Status of Bats in Albania**

##### **1. Summary details of resident species**

So far in Albania have been identified 25 bat species (1 new species discovered since last report of 2006, by K. Sachanowitz 2010 - field trip). However it must be underlined that bats species are not very well studied in the country yet.

The Museum of Natural Sciences in the framework of biodiversity monitoring program carries out some monitoring trips, but it is not comprehensive and it is done only for some selected sites as the budget is also limited.

##### **2. Status and trends**

As the result of the monitoring work as well as other studies in the state of bat species by the Agency of Environment and Forests conclusions are drawn for the general state and trends of bats species.

According to legal provisions of the Law “On biodiversity” no. 9587 of 20.7.2006 the Red Book of the Albanian Fauna should be updated every 5 years. The last update took place in 2007 and the list of Protected Fauna Species in Albania was approved by the

Order of the Minister of Environment, Forests and Water Administration no. 146, dated 8.5.2007 "On the approval of the Red List of Albanian fauna and flora". Actually there are 16 bat species included in this list.

**Summary table for the status and trends of bats species in Albania**  
(Source: Museum of Natural Sciences)

Species	Nationally protected	Status	Trend
<i>Rhinolopus blasii</i>	Yes	Rare	Declining
<i>Rhinolopus euryale</i>	Yes (Vu)	Widespread	Common
<i>Rhinolopus ferrumequinum</i>	Yes	Widespread	Declining
<i>Rhinolopus hipposideros</i>	Yes	Rare	Declining
<i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>	No	Restricted	Stable
<i>Miniopterus schreibersi</i>	Yes	Widespread	Stable
<i>Myotis blythi</i>	No	Widespread	Stable
<i>Myotis bechsteinii</i>	Yes	Restricted	Unknown
<i>Myotis capaccinii</i>	Yes	Widespread	Stable
<i>Myotis daubentoni</i>	Yes	Restricted	Declining
<i>Myotis emarginatus</i>	Yes	Restricted	Data deficient
<i>Myotis myotis</i>	No	Widespread	Stable
<i>Myotis mustacinus</i>	No	Restricted	Unknown
<i>Myotis nattereri</i>	Yes	Restricted	Unknown
<i>Nyctalus leisleri</i>	Yes	Restricted	Unknown
<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>	Yes	Restricted	Unknown
<i>Pipistrellus kuhli</i>	No	Restricted	Declining
<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	No	Restricted	Common
<i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i>	No	Restricted	Declining
<i>Hypsugo savii</i>	No	Widespread	Stable
<i>Plecotus auritus</i>	Yes	Restricted	Unknown
<i>Plecotus austriacus</i>	Yes	Restricted	Rare
<i>Vespertilio murinus</i>	Yes	Restricted	Rare
<i>Tadarida teniotis</i>	Yes	Restricted	Rare

### 3. Habitats and Roosts sites

Albania, as a Mediterranean country rich in limestone and caves is offering a variety of habitats that can be used as hibernacula and nursery roosts. Almost half of the reported species are known as cave-dwelling bats. Tunnels build in the past decades for the military purposes and most of the mines that are out of operation represent new potential roosts available for bats. Some of them are already occupied by colonies of bats.

### 4. Threats

Main threats to bat species in Albania include: the habitat loss and fragmentation, the human disturbance, roost destruction as well as the lack of action plans including management plan in order to ensure their favorable conservation status.

Habitat loss and fragmentation: This is especially relevant for the case of bats using old-growing forest as feeding and/or roosting places. Forests that were over-exploited in the past starting from 1990 for timber and fire woods and those damaged by illegal logging in the last 15 years are likely to have strong impacts on bat species linked with forests. However it must be pointed out that the phenomena of illegal timber logging

has been limited and the forests are recovering quickly. Therefore a improvement in the bats species state should be noticed shortly.

**Human disturbance:** In the last decade there was evidence of an increased number of people involved in outdoor activities, including visiting and illegal exploration of caves. In many caves we have found signs of the human disturbance inside caves, such as fires, killed and burned animals. Disturbance is particular high during hibernation and reproduction season. Due to low environmental public awareness in general, particularly on bats and their role in nature, the attitude and behavior of local people towards bats is very negative. To change this, it is important to undertake awareness raising campaigns and activities in schools and local communities.

**Roost destruction:** Some of the caves, military tunnels and mine tunnels, are blocked and used for other purposes by the local people. Some other caves are used as storage for solid wastes produced in urban and rural areas. During summer time, most of the caves that are easily accessed are used by shepherds as enclosures, causing disturbance and damage of the roosts for bats.

## **5. Data collection, analysis, interpretation and dissemination**

The Museum of Natural Sciences dependent from the Faculty of Natural Sciences at the University of Tirana in the framework of biodiversity monitoring program carries out some monitoring trips, but it is not comprehensive and it is done only for some selected sites as the budget is limited. This programme is funded by the state budget.

### **C. Measures Taken to Implement Article III of the Agreement**

#### **6. Legal measures taken to protect bats, including enforcement actions**

During the period 2006-2010 the legal framework on wild fauna protection in general including the bat species protection has undergone a major reform. This is due to the European Integration process of the country and the implementation of the Stabilization and Association Agreement signed in June 2006 between Albania and the EU. Therefore the approximation of the national legislation with the EU "*acquis communautaire*" for nature protection has been a priority for the Ministry of Environment. As the result the following Laws have been drafted and approved during the reporting period:

- The Law "On Biodiversity Protection" no.9587 of 20.7.2006;
- The Law "On Wild Fauna Protection" no.10006 of 23.10.2008;
- The Law "On the rules and procedures for international trade of endangered species of wild fauna" no. 9867 of 31.1.2008;
- The Law "On hunting" no.10253 of 11.3.2010;
- Order "On the approval of the red list of wild fauna and flora" no. 146 of 8.5.2007;

Other laws of the environment field also amended include:

- The law On Protected Areas no.8906 of 6.6.2002, amended in 2008;
- The law "On environment protection" no.8934 of 5.9.2002, amended in 2008.

However it must be pointed out that a new Law on Environment Protection has been drafted and is actually being discussed with stakeholders.

Also a number of by-laws for the implementation of the above-mentioned laws have been approved.

#### **7. Sites identified and protected which are important to the conservation of bats**

A number of main caves identified as important for the conservation of bats are included inside the protected areas and given the status of nature monument. As for non cave-dwelling bats, roosts are very poorly known. Surveys for underground roosts should be conducted in a near future in order to have a more complete list of sites important for bats.

#### **8. Consideration given to habitats which are important for bats**

There is no research or other activities for the period under report related as habitats important for bats.

#### **9. Activities carried to promote the awareness of the conservation of bats**

For the period 2006-2010 awareness raising activities consist in the promotion of protected wild fauna species in general with little emphasis on the bat species specially.

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

Museum of Natural Sciences - Faculty of Natural Sciences at Tirana University, Address: Rruga e Kavajes, no. 132, Tirana, Albania.

#### **11. Additional action undertaken to safeguard population of bats**

N/A

#### **12. Recent on-going programs (including research) related to the conservation and management of bats.**

The completion of the Emerald network project in Albania in November 2008 included as mentioned in the previous report the detailed study of all wild fauna species in 11 new selected sites as potential Emerald sites. The presence and assessment of bat species was part of the filling of the standard Emerald data sheets.

As mentioned above a research project is being carried out by Dr. Sachanowitz from Poland in cooperation with the Museum of Natural Sciences – fauna sector headed by Ass. Prof. Ferdi Bego.

#### **13. Considerations being given to the potential effects of pesticides on bats, and efforts to replace timber treatment chemicals which are highly toxic to bats**

There are no developments of this issue for the reporting period.

### **D. Functioning of the Agreement**

#### **14. Cooperation with other Range States**

No real progress on this field. The cooperation with neighboring states such as Montenegro, FYROM and Greece in the framework of nature protection activities can be used to increase collaboration on bat species as well.

#### **15. Measures taken to implement Resolutions adopted by the Meetings of Parties.**

The new legal framework in place will ensure the fulfillment of obligations deriving by Resolutions adopted by the meetings of Parties.