

AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF POPULATIONS OF EUROPEAN BATS

National report on the implementation of the Agreement in Estonia during 2002—2003

A. General information

Country: Republic of Estonia.

Period covered by this report: 1st January 2002 — 31st March 2003.

Place and date of report: Tartu, 12 April 2003.

Competent authorities: Department of Nature Conservation of Estonian Ministry of the Environment in co-operation with the Estonian Bat Group of Siciasta Development Centre.

Composer of the present report: Dr. Matti Masing, member of the Agreement Panel.

B. Status of bats and their habitats in Estonia

11 species of bat have been found in Estonia so far (table). 2—4 more species found in adjacent areas can probably occur in Estonia either as rare inhabitants or occasional immigrants.

Most bat species found in Estonia live in habitats that include trees. Extensive logging of old forest during the past 12 years, caused by economic reasons, has obviously effected bat populations, especially species depending on forest. Hollow trees, providing roosting sites for bats at least during three seasons, are scattered in patches of old forest, old parks and old alleys connected to the parks.

During the privatization process of the past 12 years large areas of the forest as well as many parks have got new owners who often destroy old trees. The situation with hollow trees is poor also in human settlements, especially in towns like Tartu and Tallinn, where business people in power consider cutting down old parks and alleys a “good design” and like to build department stores or private houses on those “cheap lands”.

These are the reasons why the roosting sites and nearby feeding grounds of forest dwelling bat species are “melting up”. Consequently, those species should be considered vulnerable in Estonia. In the cool boreal climate, where most bat species are low in numbers, the destruction of key habitats can have a devastating effect on bat populations.

Table. Bat species and rough estimates of their populations in Estonia
(ref. Masing 2001, with recent corrections)

Species	Estonian name	Distribution pattern	Frequency estimate	Population size (thousands)	Season of occurrence in Estonia
M. dasycneme	tiigilendlane	local	relatively rare	3—7*	All year round
M. daubentonii	veelendlane	widespread	common	20—40	All year round
M. brandtii	brandti lendlane	local	relatively rare	5—15*	All year round
M. mystacinus	habelendlane	local	rare	1—3	All year round
M. nattereri	nattereri lendlane	local	rare	1—3*	All year round
P. auritus	pruun-suurkõrv	widespread	common	30—50	All year round
P. nathusii	pargi-nahkhiir	widespread **	common	10—30*	From May till September
P. pipistrellus	kääbus-nahkhiir	local	very rare	0.3—1*	From May till September
E. nilssonii	põhja-nahkhiir	widespread	very common	100—300	All year round
V. murinus	hõbe-nahkhiir	local	rare	1—3	From May till September
N. noctula	suurvidevlane	local	rare	1—3*	From May till September

* estimate corrected by Matti Masing in March 2003

** mostly in southern and western parts

C. Progress in Estonia towards joining the Agreement

Recently the law about ratification of the Agreement, as well as translation of the Agreement text, has been sent to ministries for references. After that it should be sent to the parliament for voting.

D. Measures to implement Article III of the Agreement

Legislation

Legislation about nature conservation, incl. bats and their habitats, can be found at the following Internet sites (mostly in Estonian):

<http://www.envir.ee/ministeerium/kontakt.html>,

<http://www.envir.ee/loodus/>,

<http://www.envir.ee/looduskaitse/natura2000.html>,

<http://www.envir.ee/euro/konventsioonid/konventsioonid.html>,

<http://seadus.ibs.ee/aktid/rk.s.19950628.48.1996aktid/rk.s.19940601.376.19940709.html>,

<http://seadus.ibs.ee/aktid/rk.s.19981118.105.19981221.html>,

<http://www.miksike.ee/lingid/Oppematerjal/Uhiskond/Seadused/Lingid/>,

<http://www.ee/www/Riik/Seadused/>,
<http://lex.andmevara.ee/estlex/index.jsp>.

All species of bat are legally protected in Estonia since 1958. Larger hibernation colonies of bats in artificial caves (underground parts of underground fortifications and abandoned mines) are specially protected at Piusa, southeastern Estonia since 1981 and around Tallinn since 1989. Summer habitats of bats are only protected as habitats in general in nature reserves.

According to the law animal species whose protection level is not satisfactory require special **conservation management plans** (CMP-s, *kaitsekorralduskava*). In 2002 Estonian Ministry of the Environment ordered such plan from Estonian Bat Group. In March 2003 a detailed and comprehensive version (no. 3) of **CMP for bats** (all species found in Estonia) was presented to the ministry. However, because this document is so large (including ca 200 pages), it is very hard to embrace. Therefore a new shorter version of it (no. 4) is currently under preparation.

Implementation of bat conservation measures

The level of implementation of bat conservation measures is still poor in Estonia. In most places the practical measures undertaken are insufficient to support hibernation colonies of bats. In 2002 bat conservation research, funded by the Centre for Environmental Investments, has been carried out in three counties, while in one county an important bat-cellar was renovated (see the list of projects below).

Since 1993 wildlife experts have proposed Estonian government to include **nature conservation examination** (NCE, *looduskaitse-ekspertiis*) into the plans of human activities planned in nature. As a result of this, and also because of similar demands coming from EU, the so-called **environmental examination** (EE, *keskkonna-ekspertiis*) was started in Estonia in 1994 with several companies specializing on that issue.

However, protected animals like Flying Squirrel, bats, birds, amphibians etc. have been rarely treated as necessary objects in EE. Despite the well-grounded proposals from wildlife experts, NCE is not an issue in Estonia even today! This situation has been one of the largest problems in animal conservation in Estonia through decades.

In fact, protection of wildlife is mainly meaningful in the places that are vulnerable because of human activities. If conservation measures are not implemented in those places, the so-called “animal conservation issue”, discussed among officials and magnified through media, simply becomes pure bluff.

Because the structures in power (who should be responsible for animal conservation in Estonia) have not implemented the brilliant NCE method, proposed by wildlife scientists already 10 years ago, the habitats of animals declared as protected are now largely destroyed. And nobody is estimating which habitats and where are lost every single year, month, week or day!

Consequently, the above-mentioned lack of monitoring of the **actual losses in nature** (ALN) is yet another big problem; because this situation provides the opportunity for many to just

“sit and do nothing” (because no detailed information is available about what is going on in habitats!)

The situation with bat research in Estonia

Between 1996 and 1999 there has been almost no support from the government and no support at all either from private sector or other potential supporters for bat research in Estonia. Since 2000 the situation has somewhat improved, although the shortage of resources is still a major obstacle in gaining bat-related knowledge. Bat scientists are traditionally not paid for their work in accordance with their contribution to bat science and bat conservation.

Zoological science as a whole is not considered worth surviving in Estonia. Bat experts and researchers of other protected animals have extremely limited opportunities to order modern equipment for high quality research needed for species conservation (e.g. radio-telemetry equipment, expensive bat detectors, laptops, sound cards, analysis programs, mapping software etc.). With old equipment and no serious possibility to carry out modern research it is almost impossible to participate on scientific arena!

In 2002 the members of Estonian Bat Group had a rare opportunity to attend European bat research symposium and bat detector workshop in France, where they presented their scientific studies. The publication of these studies, however, is impossible because scientific journals have their strict rules about which Estonian bat workers have no experience (for more look below in “Scientific presentations and human rights”).

Such a peculiar situation in bat research (in a sense meaning non-research) is probably widespread in many eastern countries where zoological research is considered something marginal and therefore not significantly supported by governments or other institutions.

Some logical questions appear from here. First, how long will such situation last? Second, how is it possible to implement animal conservation measures if neither the animals nor their habitats are effectively studied? And yet another question arises: **can EUROBATS, an international body who declares itself as protector of bats throughout Europe, act as a partner in the topic of bat conservation implementation in Europe?**

Conservation proposals to Estonian government and Estonian society

Since 1992 proposals were presented to Estonian government to modernize nature conservation in Estonia, i.e. to make it more effective via implementing the important proposals made by experts during several years and even decades – i.e. to re-establish it on the basis of zoological science and modern ideas of wildlife conservation.

Since 1996 electronic media is widely used to inform the society about all aspects of nature conservation in Estonia.

In May 1996 a special project “Modernization of nature conservation in the Baltic States” (The BANCO Project) was proposed for funding and implementing via new structures in the society.

Since 1996, each and every year, animal conservation experts send reminders to Estonian government about the necessity to re-establish the scientific grounds of wildlife conservation in Estonia, which also means re-establishment of permanent funding of the work of animal conservation expert groups from the country's budget.

In March 2003 the following proposals were presented (some of them as repetition) to Estonian government:

- 1) to establish and distribute via Internet a simple form for accepting nature conservation proposals, which everyone could easily fill and send it back to the government for consideration, discussion and implementation;
- 2) to deliver licenses for researchers of bats and other protected animals, which these experts can use when carrying out conservation research on protected animals in Estonia;
- 3) to establish nature conservation examination (NCE) as a common tool for wildlife experts to protect the habitats of endangered and legally protected animals in Estonia;
- 4) to prohibit public visitation of underground rooms in winter (from 1st of September till 1st of May); such as abandoned mines, fortifications etc. that are established by the experts as important hibernation sites of bats (During winter only the experts that have valid licenses could visit those sites.);
- 5) to ban public presentation of the names and maps of vulnerable bat sites (like abandoned mines, underground fortifications etc.) in Internet; and to explain why this is necessary.

Information about the current situation in underground bat habitats in Estonia

In 2002 so-called **Internet-based tourism** was born in Estonia. In this activity young people visit underground sites, take photos and later advertise their explorations on Internet pages. In some cases exact maps of underground sites, protected as hibernation sites of bats, have been advertised via Internet. Sometimes this information is presented in foreign languages attracting attention of people from abroad who know nothing about Estonian laws and nature conservation practices. It is hard to fight this new threat!

Conservation proposals to EUROBATS

1. Guidelines for bat monitoring as well as developing the network of important bat sites in Europe, both for conservation and monitoring purposes, seem continuously important (March 2003).
2. Establishment of the list (or network) of bat sites of international importance in Europe; and development of means for their effective protection (proposed since 1995).
3. Development of international projects on bats (proposed since 1995).
4. Proposals for governments to establish/re-establish both scientific and funding facilities as permanent grounds for voluntary bat conservation work (proposed since 1998).

5. Proposals for governments to fight the threats to bats caused by advertising vulnerable bat sites (especially caves, mines and other underground rooms) in Internet (March 2003).

E. Bat-related events in Estonia in 2002/2003

1. Meeting of the Commission for Estonian Names of Mammal Species in Tartu on which the Estonian names of European bat species were discussed and confirmed (10 January 2002).
2. Regular bat counts in winter and summer monitoring sites under project “Bats” of the National Environmental Monitoring Program (Vello Keppart, Kaja Lotman, Lauri Lutsar, Matti Masing & Tiia Möller).
3. “On the hibernation of bats in Harjumaa county” – a short film of Estonian TV “Osoon” program (27 March 2003).
4. “Public Bat Night” in Tartu, event in the program of “Supilinna Days” (28 April 2002; guided by Matti Masing).
5. “Bat Day” and “Public Bat Night” in Türi (9 May 2002; guided by Matti Masing).
6. Observation of amphibians and bats during the “Workshop on Amphibians” within and near Karula National Park: Ähijärve, Sibulajärv, Ödri järv, Haabsaare, Pähni, Lüütsepa, Saverna, Lõõdla järv, Võru (12—15 May 2002; Matti Masing, Andres Miller, Hille Tammela et al.).
7. Observation of bats at Paljassaare in Tallinn (24 May 2002; Matti Masing et al.).
8. Observation of amphibians and bats at Pokumaa (02 June 2002; Arne Ader & Matti Masing).
9. Observation of bats at Järvelja (17—20 June 2002; Hille Tammela et al.).
10. Fieldwork of the project “Bats in Harjumaa county” (March, May, June, July and October 2002; Lauri Lutsar, Matti Masing & Angelika Versh).
11. “Bat Days at Matsalu” (incl. lectures, bat identification training, “Public Bat Nights” at Penijõe and Matsalu, and visiting a bat cellar at Kloostri; 4—7 July 2002); extended by bat research trips to Hanila, Puhtu, Häädemeeste, Sooküla, Kuressaare, Loode, Paatsalu, Kärevere, Kirna and Puurmani between 7—12 July 2002). Participants: Kaja Lotman, Lauri Lutsar, Matti Masing, Tiia Möller, Mikk Ott, Yrjö Siivonen, Agne Tamm, Hille Tammela, Angelika Versh, Terhi Wermundsen et al.).
12. Fieldwork of the project “Bats in Hiiumaa Island” (August 2002; Lauri Lutsar, Matti Masing, Hille Tammela et al.).
13. Listening to the bats on a ship crossing the Baltic Sea (17 August 2002; Lauri Lutsar, Matti Masing & Eve Roos).

14. Renovation of an important bat cellar at Kloostri, Läänemaa county (September 2002; Kaja Lotman & *Lihula Maaparandus*).
15. “Estonian bats” – a lecture at Lihula Secondary School (September 2002; Kaja Lotman).
16. Presentation of the study “On the hibernation of bats in the area south of Matsalu Bay” by a schoolboy of 10th degree Peeter Paabo at Lihula Secondary School (10 November 2002).
17. International expedition to bat hibernation sites in Estonia, and discussing joint bat conservation projects (10—12 November 2002; Mikko Jokinen, Matti Masing et al.).
18. Fieldwork of the project “Hibernation sites of bats in Rapla county” (October—November 2002, February 2003; Raul Aalde, Lauri Lutsar & Matti Masing).
19. Bat-related presentation on a meeting of the Estonian Naturalists’ Society in Tartu: “Masing, M. On the study of small mammals in Estonia” (28 November 2002).
20. Discussion about bat conservation management plan in Tallinn, 13 December 2002 (Vello Keppart, Kaja Lotman, Matti Masing & Riinu Rannap).
21. Visiting Piusa caves to make a short film of Estonian TV “Osoon” program about the hibernation of animals (bats and insects) (22 January 2003).
22. International expedition to bat hibernation sites in Estonia, and discussing joint bat conservation projects (20—22 February 2003; Matti Masing, Yrjö Siivonen & Terhi Wermundsen).
23. Workshop at Jõelähtme (Rebala Museum) and discussion on a tourism-related project at an important bat hibernaculum near Tallinn (11 March 2003; guided by Lauri Lutsar & Matti Masing).
24. Fieldwork of the project “Hibernation sites of bats in Lääne-Viru county” (March 2003; Matti Masing & Tõnis Muru).

F. Bat-related projects in Estonia in 2002/2003

1. Project “Bats” of the National Environmental Monitoring Program (Estonian Bat Group of Siciasta Development Centre). Fieldwork was carried out in winter and summer of 2002, and the report was presented to Estonian Naturalists’ Society in November 2002.
2. “Bats in Harjumaa county” (Estonian Bat Group). Fieldwork was carried out in winter and summer of 2002, and the report was presented to Harjumaa environment department in November 2002.
3. “Phare Finnish-Estonian bat Project 2002--2005”. Proposals were presented but Phare refused implementation. Therefore only initial work has been carried out, and then everything stopped.

4. International “Life Starter” project about Pond Bat. Proposals were presented but implementation was refused by Life. Therefore only initial work has been carried out, and then everything stopped.
5. “Fauna of Pokumaa”. Small animals were studied at Pokumaa (southern Estonia) and report was presented to Pokumaa Institution.
6. “Habitats of bats in Läänemaa county” (Estonian Bat Group). Public event “Bat Days in Matsalu” was carried out in July 2002, and renovation of an important bat cellar at Kloostri was completed in September 2002. The report about those was presented to Läänemaa environment department in November 2002.
7. “Bats in Hiiumaa Island” (Estonian Bat Group). Fieldwork was carried out in August 2002 and the report was presented to Hiiumaa environment department in December 2002.
8. “Hibernation sites of bats in Rapla county” (Estonian Bat Group). Fieldwork was carried out in October—November 2002, and the report was presented to Raplamaa environment department in December 2002. Additional fieldwork was carried out in February 2003.
9. “Bat conservation management plan” (BCMP) (Estonian Bat Group). Basing on the available data about bats, and long term experience of bat workers, the comprehensive BCMP (draft 3) was presented to the Department of Nature Conservation of Estonian Ministry of the Environment on 30 January 2003. BCMP includes all known important aspects of bat conservation in Estonia, incl. lists of important habitats.
10. “Hibernation sites of bats in Lääne-Viru county” (Estonian Bat Group). Fieldwork was started in March 2003.
11. “Small animals in Naissaare Island, 1999—2000” (Sicista Development Centre). The report was presented to Estonian Fund for Nature in March 2003.
12. “Protected small mammals in Estonia”. A project was started with the aim to compile and publish an illustrated book on 20 species of protected small mammals, incl. 11 species of bat, found in Estonia (Estonian Naturalists’ Society).

G. Bats in Radio and on TV in Estonia in 2002/2003

03 January 2002: About bats and bat conference held in Tartu (Vikerraadio).

03 April 2002: “On the hibernation of bats in Harjumaa county” (Estonian TV, “Osoon”).

05 February 2003: “On the hibernation of bats in Piusa caves” (Estonian TV, “Osoon”).

H. Manuscripts in 2002/2003

Masing, M. (koostaja) 2002. Nahkhiired. Kaitsekorralduskava aastaiks 2003—2007. Variant 1. Tartu, oktoober 2002, 90 lk. (käsikiri)

Masing, M. (koostaja) 2002. Nahkhiired Hiiumaal (looduskaitse uurimistöökokkuvõte). – Nahkhiirte Uurimise Töörühm, Sicista Arenduskeskus. Tartu, 108 lk. (käsikiri)

Masing, M. (koostaja) 2002. Nahkhiirte talvituspaigad Harjumaal, 1947—2002. – Nahkhiirte Uurimise Töörühm, Sicista Arenduskeskus. Tartu, 87 lk. (käsikiri)

Masing, M. (koostaja) 2002. Nahkhiirte talvituspaikade inventeerimine Raplamaal 2002. aastal. – Nahkhiirte Uurimise Töörühm, Sicista Arenduskeskus. Tartu, 117 lk. (käsikiri)

Masing, M. 2002. Pokumaa loomastik: kahepaiksed, roomajad, imetajad. – Sicista Arenduskeskus. Tartu, 1 lk. (käsikiri)

Masing, M. (koostaja) 2002. Seireprojekti "Nahkhiired" 2002. aasta töö kokkuvõte. Riiklik Keskkonnaseire Programm, Tartu, 39 lk. (käsikiri)

Masing, M. & Keppart, V. 2002. Nahkhiired. Kaitsekorralduskava aastaiks 2003—2007. Variant 2. Tartu, detsember 2002, ca 120 lk. (käsikiri)

Masing, M. & Keppart, V. 2003. Nahkhiired. Kaitsekorralduskava aastaiks 2003—2007. Variant 3. Tartu, jaanuar 2003, ca 200 lk. (käsikiri)

Masing, M. (koostaja) 2003. Väikeloomad Naissaarel, 1999—2000 (looduskaitse uurimistö kokkuvõte). – Sicista Arenduskeskus. Tartu, 16 lk. (käsikiri)

I. Publications in 2000/2003

I-1. Abstracts of the 5th European Bat Detector Workshop (Foret de Troncais, August 2002)

Masing, M., Lutsar, L. & Lotman, K. 2002 Line counting and point counting of foraging bats in Estonia, a comparison. (oral) – 5th European Bat Detector Workshop, 21—25 August 2002, Troncais, France. Abstracts, p. 3.

Roos, E. 2002. Experience with bat counting in Tartu (Estonia). (oral) – 5th European Bat Detector Workshop, 21—25 August 2002, Troncais, France. Abstracts, p. 3.

Möller, T. & Masing, M. 2002 Implementation of the point counting method to monitor foraging bats in Estonia. (poster) – 5th European Bat Detector Workshop, 21—25 August 2002, Troncais, France. Abstracts, p. 6.

I-2. Abstracts of the 9th European Bat Research Symposium (Le Havre, August 2002)

Masing, M., Lutsar, L. & Lotman, K. 2002. The improved route counting method to monitor boreal bats. (oral) – 9th European Bat Research Symposium, 26—30 August 2002. University of Le Havre, France. Abstracts, p. 13.

Masing, M. & Lotman, K. 2002. The results of testing the route counting method to monitor boreal bats. (poster) – 9th European Bat Research Symposium, 26—30 August 2002. University of Le Havre, France. Abstracts, p. 18.

Möller, T. & Masing, M. 2002. Implementation of the point counting method to monitor foraging bats in southern Tartumaa, Estonia. (poster) – 9th European Bat Research Symposium, 26—30 August 2002. University of Le Havre, France. Abstracts, p. 32.

Roos, E. & Masing, M. 2002. Implementation of the improved route counting method to monitor foraging bats in Tartu, Estonia. (poster) – 9th European Bat Research Symposium, 26-30 August 2002. University of Le Havre, France. Abstracts, p. 33.

I-3. Leaflets of Sicista Development Centre

Masing, M. 2002. Phare Soome-Eesti nahkhiireprojekt, 2002—2005. Sicista voldik nr. 20, Tartu, 6 lk.

- Masing, M. 2002. Phare Finnish-Estonian Bat Project, 2002—2005. Sicista leaflet no. 20E, Tartu, 6 pp.
- Masing, M. 2002. Põhjala nahkhiirte määramine heterodüün-detektoriga. I osa: sonari tutvustus ja perekondade määramistunnused. Sicista voldik nr. 21, Tartu, 6 lk.
- Masing, M. 2002. Identification of boreal bats using heterodyne detectors. Part 1: the description of bat sonar and identification characters of genera. Sicista leaflet no. 21E, Tartu, 6 pp.
- Masing, M. 2002. Põhjala nahkhiirte määramine heterodüün-detektoriga. II osa: liikide määramistunnused. Sicista voldik nr. 22, Tartu, 6 lk.
- Masing, M. 2002. Identification of boreal bats using heterodyne detectors. Part 2: identification characters of species'. Sicista leaflet no. 22E, Tartu, 6 pp.
- Masing, M. 2002. Pisiimetajate uurimisest Eestis. Pisiimetajate uurimise perspektiividest Eestis. Sicista voldik nr. 23, Tartu, 6 lk.
- Masing, M. 2002. On the study of small mammals in Estonia. On the perspectives of study of small mammals in Estonia. Sicista leaflet no. 23E, Tartu, 6 pp.
- Masing, M. 2002. Sicista Arenduskeskuse voldikud 1998—2002 (nimestik). Sicista voldik nr. 24, Tartu, 6 lk.
- Masing, M. 2002. Leaflets of Sicista Development Centre 1998—2002 (list). Sicista leaflet no. 24E, Tartu, 6 pp.

I-4. Other publications on paper

- Ader, K. 2002. Katusepragudes tulevad ilmale nahkhiirebeebid. – Maaleht/ Roheline värav, 13.6.
- MacDonald, D.W. & Barrett, P. 2002. Euroopa imetajad. Tõlge eesti keelde. Eesti Entsüklopeediakirjastus, [Tallinn], 314 lk.
- Masing, M. 2002. Eestimaa pargid väärivad hoidmist. – Postimees, 18.7.
- Masing, M. 2002. Kaitstavaid metsi olgu rohkem. – Maaleht, 28.3.
- Masing, M. 2002. Linnahaljastus Tartu moodi. – Linnaleht/Tartu, 12.4.
- Masing, M. 2002. Loodusesõbrad Järvamaal ja Raplamaal. – Tartu Valla Kuukiri, 12 (73), lk. 8—9.
- Masing, M. 2002. Loodusesõbrad kevadel ja suvel. – Tartu Valla Kuukiri, 8 (69), lk. 10—13.
- Masing, M. 2002. Loodusesõprade ringi kalender 2001, II poolaasta. – Tartu Valla Kuukiri, 1 (62), lk. 11—12.
- Masing, M. 2002. Loodusmetsade kaitseks. – Linnaleht/Tartu, 05.4.
- Masing, M. 2002. Loomariigi uudiseid Tartust: aprilli lõpp 2002. – Linnaleht/Tartu, 03.5.
- Masing, M. 2002. Vanade puude suur väärtus. – Postimees, 15.7.
- Vabariigi Valitsus. 2002. II kategooria kaitsealuste liikide ja kivististe kaitse alla võtmine. Vabariigi Valitsuse 31. juuli 2002. a määrus nr 245 (RT I 2002, 68, 413).
- Viiron, K. 2002. Teadlane uurib nahkhiirte talvitumist.— Nädaline, 17.12.
- Anonymus? 2003. Tiigilendlane [Pond Bat]. A small poster. Estonian Ministry of the Environment, Tallinn.
- Ilisson, A. 2003. Turistid ohustavad nahkhiiri. – Eesti Päevaleht, 17.2, lk1.

Masing, M. 2003. Kui nahkhiired ärkavad. – Maaleht, 23.1, lk. 22.

Masing, M. 2003. Külma tapab ärkvel olevaid nahkhiiri. – Õhtuleht, 11.1, lk. 12.

Masing, M. 2003. Oskate nahkhiiri aidata! – Linnaleht/Tartu: 10.1.

J. Internet homepages and electronic newsletters concerning the research of bats and other wildlife in Estonia

Sicista Development Centre (dealing with society matters, education, wildlife research and nature conservation): www.hot.ee/sicista.

Fauna Protection Group (dealing with wildlife research, education and conservation in specified fields): www.hot.ee/fpgroup.

Eptesicus no. 1, January 2001 (boreal bats): www.hot.ee/sicista/eptesicus.

K. Institutions and organisations dealing with bat research and bat-related education in Estonia in 2002/2003 and earlier

Tartu University (*Tartu Ülikool*): occasional lectures and field observations on bats are carried out since 1978.

Estonian Fund for Nature (*Eestimaa Looduse Fond*): bat-related projects since 1991.

The Estonian Bat Group of Sicista Development Centre (*Nahkhiirte Uurimise Töörühm*): since 1992 carries out main activities on bat-related research and education throughout the year; incl. planning and executing of scientific work in all its stages, lectures on bats, bat detector training, “public bat nights”, “bat days”, conferences, expeditions, project discussions, bat conservation etc.

Luua Forestry School (*Luua Metsanduskool*): since 1994 bats are included in the annual “nature conservation learning plan”.

Lihula Secondary School (*Lihula Gümnaasium*): occasional lectures and small projects on bats since 1997.

Lähte Naturalists' Circle (*Lähte Loodusesõprade Ring*): the topic of bats is included in the annual “four seasons learning program” since 1997.

L. The attempts of bat experts to gain results in 2002/2003

Project proposals and strict rules established by the funding bodies – experience of 2002

During the past decade a widespread tradition has been implemented in Europe to ask proposals from the experts who wish to gain results. According to this tradition the experts must write proposals to certain EU structures or funding organizations, which have gathered resources from the society and deliver them according to special, often very strict, rules. Among those rules there are specified forms, different in every funding body, in which the experts have to describe in great detail about all the aspects (known and yet unknown) concerning the proposed topic.

By now the experts have revealed that very often such rules are “to the bones” bureaucratic, and that there are no grounds for the funds to demand such things from the experts. The

experts spend long time and lot of money to find potential partners, to consult, to fill the forms, to collect supporting letters, to send post and fax etc. If the result of all this is only a rejected proposal, then huge part of best resources of the society have been taken away without giving anything back!

Two such cases are known from 2002, covering 100% of international bat-related proposals prepared in Estonia.

First, bat experts sent an international bat conservation proposal to the Phare Program in this proposal presenting everything relevant to the project. After several months the experts received a short note from the Phare office telling that, because the office workers did not like some documents, they even did not read through the proposal!

Second, in the same year bat experts sent a comprehensive international proposal to the Life Starter Program to start a special Pond Bat conservation project in northern Europe. After long waiting the experts finally received a reply telling that this proposal is not good enough because it does not involve some countries where Pond Bat lives. But the aim of the Starter project was to establish a group of bat experts working with Pond Bat in those countries! Consequently, the Life Starter office workers either did not understand what had been written in the proposal or they did not want to support Pond Bat conservation! For this they bear full responsibility and must answer for their fail!

Consequently, both Phare and Life Starter have demonstrated their incapability to gain results in the fields in which they declare themselves experts. Bat experts now want to know who are responsible for such “bureaucratic games”, and whom to apply next time to carry out basic bat conservation work. Unfortunately, there exist no addresses in Europe whom to contact in cases of clear bureaucracy, corruption and robbery in Europe! (Open Society Movement has carried out special investigation on this topic.)

Scientific presentations and human rights

If there are (and there are!) strict rules for scientific presentations/publications, then the following question arises: who will organize all the learning and training of scientists in each country to fulfill those rules? It seems to happen quite often among the demanders that, although establishing the rules, they do not take steps to implement those rules. As a result of such invalid behavior scientists, of course, turn away from those “poor and discriminating” rules.

(end of report)