

**AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF BAT IN EUROPE**  
**Report on the implementation of the agreement in Estonia**  
2003-2006

A. General Information

Name of Party: Estonia

Date of report: August 2006

Period covered: July 2004-Aug 2006

Competent authority:

Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Estonia  
Department of Nature Protection  
Narva mnt 7A 15172 Tallinn

Appointed Member of the Advisory Committee:

Kaja Lotman

Membership of other committees/working groups:

Intersessional Working Groups:

Transboundary Programme – Habitats: Data Compilation Matti Masing

Review of Guidelines for the issue of Permits for the Capture and Study of Captured Wild Bats – Matti Masing, Lauri Lutsar

Bat migration – Kaja Lotman

Wind Turbines and Bat Populations – Lauri Lutsar

Conservation and Management of Critical Feeding Areas and Commuting Routs – Kaja Lotman, Lauri Lutsar

B. Status of bats within the Territory of Party

**1. Summary Details of Resident Species**

11 species of bat fauna have been found in Estonia so far: *Myotis dasycneme*, *Myotis daubentonii*, *Myotis brandtii*, *Myotis mystacinus*, *Myotis nattereri*, *Plecotus auritus*, *Pipistrellus nathusii*, *Eptesicus nilssonii*, *Vespertilio murinus*, *Nyctalus noctula*. Some more species found in adjacent areas can probably occur in Estonia as occasional immigrants.

**2. Status and Trends**

Table.1. Bat species and rough estimates of their population in Estonia (The Action Plan for Protection Bats in Estonia 2005-2009)

<b>Species</b>	<b>Population size (thousands)</b>
<i>M. dasycneme</i>	1-3
<i>M. daubentonii</i>	8-20
<i>M. brandtii</i>	1-5
<i>M. mystacinus</i>	0,1-0,5

<i>M. nattereri</i>	3-10
<i>P. auritus</i>	8-20
<i>P. nathusii</i>	4-20
<i>P. pipistrellus</i>	0,1-0,5
<i>E. nilssonii</i>	100-250
<i>V. murinus</i>	0,3-1
<i>N. noctula</i>	0,3-1

The number of *Pipistrellus nathusii* is growing in the monitoring routes. The others are stable but the data of rare species (*M. mystacinus*, *M. nattereri*, *P. pipistrellus*, *V. murinus*, *N. noctula*) is scarce to make generalisations.

### 3. Habitats and Roost Sites

Table.2. Roosts of bats in summer (The Action Plan for Protection Bats in Estonia 2005-2009)

Species	Trees	Buildings	Caves	Cellars
<i>M. dasycneme</i>	rare	often	rare	
<i>M. daubentonii</i>	very often	rare	rare	rare
<i>M. brandtii</i>	rare	often	rare	
<i>M. mystacinus</i>	rare	rare		
<i>M. nattereri</i>	rare	rare		
<i>P. auritus</i>	often	often	rare	rare
<i>P. nathusii</i>	often	often		
<i>P. pipistrellus</i>		rare		
<i>E. nilssonii</i>	rare	often	rare	rare
<i>V. murinus</i>	rare	often		
<i>N. noctula</i>	often			

Table 3. Roosts of bats in winter (The Action Plan for Protection Bats in Estonia 2005-2009)

Species	Trees	Buildings	Caves	Cellars
<i>M. dasycneme</i>			often	rare
<i>M. daubentonii</i>			often	rare
<i>M. brandtii</i>		often	often	rare
<i>M. mystacinus</i>		rare	rare	rare
<i>M. nattereri</i>		rare	rare	rare
<i>P. auritus</i>		often	often	often
<i>E. nilssonii</i>		often	often	often

Table. 4. Feeding sites.

Species	Forest, parkland	Forest openings, edges	Large parks	Waterbodies
<i>M. dasycneme</i>	rare	rare	rare	often
<i>M. daubentonii</i>	often	often	rare	very often
<i>M. brandtii</i>	rare	rare	rare	rare
<i>M. mystacinus</i>	rare	rare		rare
<i>M. nattereri</i>	rare	rare		rare
<i>P. auritus</i>	often	often	very often	rare
<i>P. nathusii</i>	often	often	often	often
<i>P. pipistrellus</i>	rare	rare	rare	

<i>E. nilssonii</i>	often	very often	very often	very often
<i>V. murinus</i>		rare		rare
<i>N. noctula</i>	rare	rare	often	often

#### 4. Threats

New threats are as follows:

- The intensive building activity is becoming most important threat for bat roosts near cities.
- Juridical problems in the legislation of bats underground roosts.

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

Data has been collected by Estonian Bat Group and Estonian Fund for Nature and several interpretations have been published about recent and ongoing projects (see Appendix 1). Data has been collected for EELIS (Estonian Nature Infosystem)

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

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

According to the Nature Conservation Act (Passed 21 April 2004), all 11 bat species which occur in Estonia, are taken under the protection Category II. According to the Nature Conservation Act the protection of at least 50 % of known habitats or growth sites of species of protection Category II registered in the environmental register shall be ensured by establishing protected areas or special conservation areas or designating species protection sites, based on the representativity of the areas. The compilation of the regulation for designating protection sites for bats is in the process.

*Looduskaitse seadus. Vabariigi Presidendi otsus nr 620, 26. aprillist 2004. – Riigi Teataja I, 38, 258; 53, 373. (Nature Conservation Act)*

*I ja II kaitsekategooriana kaitse alla võetud liikide loetelu. Keskkonnaministri 20. mai 2004. a määrus nr 195. – Riigi Teataja Lisa, 21.05.2004, 44, 313. (Regulation establishing lists of protected species)*

- 12. 11. 2004.a the minister of environment signed the executive order nr 1082 endorsing conservation management plan for bats. The plan forms the basis for bat conservation in Estonia.

*Masing, M., Keppart, V. & Lutsar, L. 2004. Tegevuskava nahkhiirte kaitse korraldamiseks aastaiks 2005-2009. Sicista Arenduskeskus, 33 lk. (ministri käskkiri nr 1082, 12.11.2004)*

([http://www.envir.ee/looduskaitse/NAHKHIURED\\_tegevuskava.pdf](http://www.envir.ee/looduskaitse/NAHKHIURED_tegevuskava.pdf))

- There are prepared new proposed regulations for most important wintering sites of underground tunnels of Peter the Great Sea Fortress around Tallinn (Laagri, Väana-Viti, Väana-Posti, Ülgase, Humala)

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

In 2005 Väana-Viti and Laagri hibernation site new areas were measured by Lauri Lutsar. 2004-2005

Pond Pat sites were registered in in official nature protection database EELIS in 2003.

### **8. Consideration given to habitats which is important to bats**

Habitats associated with important roosts and vulnerable species such as *Myotis dasycneme*. Most important wintering roosts are protected as nature reserve or protected habitat.

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

The educational workshop on bats, their habitats and protection measures was held for Environmental Departments, Environmental Inspections and Administrations of Protected Areas in 2004. The programme of the workshop includes lectures and also the practical work in the field. The participants could recognize the bat species with detectors.

Bat conservation information has been distributed on the Internet and in paper press and TV. Bat experts constantly informed the public about major threats to bats (e.g. the destruction of old forest and parks, visitation of underground sites in winter, erection of wind turbines etc.), often using e-mail correspondence.

A special Internet list (nahkhiirehuvilised [nhh@elfond.ee](mailto:nhh@elfond.ee)) was launched for people interested in bats in April 2004

The booklet "Bats in Forests" was translated into Estonian.

Dedicated to the 11 December 2004 event when Estonia joined the EUROBATs, several e-mail letters were distributed on the Internet explaining the threats to bats and the measures of bat conservation, the presentation was made on the seminar of outdoors education in Kubija for 60 participants.

The exhibition about bats was created in Nature Museum in Tallinn in 2005.

The Bats conservation management plan public version was compiled and printed and it was translated also to English in the beginning of 2006.

Species Protection Gallery at Tallinn Zoo is under preparation, where bats protection has got a separate poster.

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

15 County Environmental Departments of Ministry of Environment are responsible for the permissions and provision of advices and public awareness. State Nature Conservation Centre is responsible for provision of advice and information from 2006. Also people are getting advice from Tallinn Zoo, Animal Health Centre and from experts working for NGOs: Matti Masing (Sicista Developmental Centre) and Lauri Lutsar (Estonian Fund for Nature).

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

General public, environmental authorities and the companies planning wind turbines were informed about the necessity to carry out a bat-detector study before establishing wind turbines on the coast. A presentation was made and an article prepared about this matter in 2005.

### **12. Recent and ongoing programmes (including research and policy initiatives) relating to the conservation and management of bats. In the case of research, summaries of completed projects should be provided, giving references where possible and acknowledging the sources of funding**

During 2003—2004 bat conservation projects were carried out in four counties. In Läänemaa the door to an important bat-cellar was restored at Vatla. In Raplamaa large-scale inventory of bat sites was carried out both in summer and in winter (Masing, 2004). Summer habitats of bats were studied in Võrumaa, and underground sites were studied in some places in Lääne-Virumaa (Masing, 2004). In the two last-mentioned counties the work has been completed only partly, as the funding was not enough to receive the planned results. The Fund for Environmental Investments partially funded these studies.

I In addition, a project on Pond Bat was carried out to establish the Natura 2000 areas for this species (Lutsar, 2003), and another project was carried out to reveal bat species and important bat sites in Haanja Nature Park (Lutsar, 2003).

Since 1994 the project “Bats” is annually carried out under the National Environment Monitoring Programme (NEMP) (Masing, 2003, 2004). It is funded by the government.

In 2004 two issues of “Eptesicus” (2 and 3) were released on the Internet ([www.hot.ee/eptesicus](http://www.hot.ee/eptesicus)).

In August 2004 two presentations on bat sound study were made at the 13<sup>th</sup> International Bat Research Conference at Mikolajki, Poland (Masing, 2004, 2004). The Ministry of the Environment supported participation in this event.

In October 2005 Lauri Lutsar completed the work „Proposals to specify conservation measures for winter quarters of bats in Harjumaa“ (Lutsar, 2005). This work was funded by the Ministry of the Environment.

Triinu Tõrv and Lauri Lutsar proposed new regulation of Laagri, Vääna-Viti, Vääna-Posti and Humala protected areas which are important wintering sites for bats.

In December 2005, a 3-year-long research into the underground hibernation sites of bats in Lääne-Virumaa, partly funded by the Centre of Environmental Investments, was finally completed, covering about 50% of potential habitats in old manors, castles and mines (Masing & Muru, 2005). This event marked the end of a 7-year period during which bat experts made efforts to improve bat conservation in Estonian counties, both during winter and summer. Such work could not be continued due to lack of resources. Review of wildlife conservation work done in Estonian countries, as well as information on other branches of conservation research, is presented on Sicista DC's homepage indicated above in paragraph 9.

In 2005 the homepage of “Eptesicus” was improved, including in it new articles on boreal bats, and releasing “Eptesicus, 4”. ([www.hot.ee/eptesicus](http://www.hot.ee/eptesicus)).

Bat-related works carried out in 4 out of 5 windmill parks were funded by companies involved in the development of these areas. As resources for bat-work were small, and as the work was funded in late summer, fieldwork covered only about one month, instead of 6 months required to get sufficient data for appropriate expert decisions. Therefore, bat experts recommended to continue fieldwork in in these areas in 2006.

2004/2005 and 2005/2006 the hibernation monitoring of wintering bats in small cellars of Lääne county was held by Kaja Lotman.

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

There are no activities and no information of such treats in Estonia.

C. Functioning of the Agreement

**14. Co-operation with other Range States**

Members of Estonian Bat Group carried out joint bat research with Bat Group Finland and with colleagues from Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia and the Netherlands in 2004. Bat experts from France and Sweden have helped us in analyzing bat sounds to learn bat species in 2004.

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In June 2005 Matti Masing compiled and presented to EUROBATS a review of bat monitoring methods, in this review outlining important aspects that should be considered if long-term bat monitoring is planned.

Among the discussed methods, counting flying bats with bat-detectors in summer proved to be the most reliable and most effective one, which can be recommended for many countries (Masing, 2005).

In August 2005 Matti Masing visited Lithuania, where he conducted detector-based research within three conservation areas. In this study bat scientists from three countries (Estonia, Finland, Lithuania) participated. After fieldwork scientific articles were planned and partly accomplished on Lithuanian bats.

**15. Measures taken to implement Resolutions adopted by Meeting of Parties**

**Resolution 2.1 Consistent Monitoring Methodologies**

There have been worked out route counting method for bat which has been used successfully for state nature monitoring programme ( M. Masing, L. Lutsar, K. Lotman, 2002).

**Resolution 2.3 Transboundary Programme: Species proposals**

Species status and trends have been described in the Action Plan of Protection Bats 2005-2009.

**Resolution 2.4 Transboundary Programme: Habitat Proposal**

Most important habitats for bats have been listed in the Action Plan for Protection Bats 2005-2009 and also registered in EELIS (Estonian Nature Infosystem – central national database which includes registered habitats of protected species)

**Resolution 4.3 Guidelines for the protection and Management of Important Underground habitats**

So far only one underground site for about 1000 bats have been closed for visitors mechanically.

**Resolution 4.4 Bat Conservation and Sustainable Forest Management**

The new Forest Act safeguards the key biotopes of forest, which could be of great importance also for bats. The booklet “Bats in the forest” has been translated to Estonian language.

#### **Resolution 4.6 Guidelines for the Issue of Permits for the Capture and Study of captured Wild Bats**

The Resolution has been translated into Estonian and State Nature Protection Center is working out the procedure for licenses for bat ringing and research.

#### **Resolution 4.7 Wind Turbines and Bat populations**

In the frame of EIAP the place of proposed wind turbines have to be inspected from point of view of importance for bats. There have been several inspections beginning from 2004.

#### **Appendix 1. References and recent publications, including some articles promoting awareness on bats in Estonia.**

Reports to the EUROBATS Secretariat

Masing, M. 2003. Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats. National report on the implementation of the Agreement in Estonia during 2002—2003. Tartu, 12 pp. (Inf.EUROBATS.AC8.16)

Masing, M. 2003. New estimates and a possible decline in bat populations in Estonia. Tartu, 3 pp. (Inf.EUROBATS.Mop4.24)

Masing, M. 2003. Trying to improve bat conservation in Europe. Presentation to the 8th Meeting of the Advisory Committee, 12—14 May 2003, Røros, Norway. Sicista leaflet no. 25E. Tartu, 6 pp.

Masing, M. 2003. Trying to improve bat conservation in Europe. Presentation to the 4th Meeting of Parties of the EUROBATS, 22—24 September 2003, Sofia, Bulgaria. (Ref: Sicista leaflet no. 25Ea) Tartu, 4 pp.

Masing, M. 2005. Comments on bat monitoring methods. 3 pp.(15 June 2005)

#### Scientific and educational publications (2005)

Ilisson, A. 2003. Turistid ohustavad nahkhiiri. – Eesti Päevaleht, 17.2. [threats to bats posed by tourists due to information on the Internet related to the bat habitats]

Ilisson, A. 2004. Tallinna külje all magab unustatud fosforiidikaevandus. – Eesti Päevaleht, 21.6. [threats to bats due to tourism]

Masing, M. 2003. Loodusesõbrad Lätimaa piiril (ehk meeldejääv matk lossivaimude seltsis). – Tartu Valla Kuukiri, 9 (82). [nahkhiirte leide Lõuna-Eestis]

Masing, M. 2003. Looduskaitse võimalikkusest Kuressaares ja Eestis. – Meie Maa, 19.11.

Masing, M. 2003. Nahkhiireaasta 2003. – Hiiumaa, 18.11.

Masing, M. 2003. NAHKHIIREPÄEV! (ning muu huvitav seoses nahkhiirte uurimise ja õpetamisega Eestis). – Sicista voldik nr. 27. Sicista Arenduskeskus, Tartu, 6 lk.

Masing, M. 2003. Pimedas lendavad loomad. – Virumaa Teataja, 11.6.

Masing, M. [2003]. Tiigilendlane/ Pond bat (*Myotis dasycneme*). [Miniposter, Keskkonnaministeerium]

- Masing, M. 2003. Ärgates looduskaitsele? – Hiiumaa, 18.12.
- Masing, M. 2004. A boreal bat calls differently at midnight! – Eptesicus, 2. (www.hot.ee/eptesicus)
- Masing, M. 2004. Bats over the sea, and over the Townhall Square. – Eptesicus, 2. (www.hot.ee/eptesicus)
- Masing, M. 2004. [LA:131] Esimene päev (fwd). Teetähised nahkhiirte uurimises ja kaitsmises Eesti alal (enne 11. detsembrist 2004); Euroopa nahkhiirte kaitse leping (EUROBATS); Nahkhiirte Uurimise Töörühma (NUT) tegevuskava 2004-2008. (loodusaeg@lists.ut.ee, 12 Dec 2004 01:42:21)
- Masing, M. 2004. Estimates of bat populations in Estonia. – Eptesicus, 2. (www.hot.ee/eptesicus)
- Masing, M. 2004. Estonian Bat Group – the story. – Eptesicus, 3. (www.hot.ee/eptesicus)
- Masing, M. 2004. Example of a bat sound study. – Eptesicus, Navigation. (www.hot.ee/eptesicus) [Bats from Sauka, southern Latvia, August 2003]
- Masing, M. 2004. Kutsun inimesi kaitsma Eestimaa püsiväärtusi. – Linnaleht/Tartu, 19.11.
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- Masing, M. 2004. Nahkhiired keldrites. – Koit/Nädal, 27.11.
- Masing, M. 2004. Nahkhiire-nädal veebruaris. – Nädaline, 21.2.
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- Masing, M. 2004. *Pipistrellus nathusii*? – a strange “August bat” calling along the coast. – Eptesicus, 2. (www.hot.ee/eptesicus)
- Masing, M. 2004. Pisiimetajad – kaitset vajavad pisiimetajad Eestis (raamatu e-versioon). (www.hot.ee/pisiimetajad)
- Masing, M. 2004. The single pulse analysis – a method for quick identification of “peak frequency bats” (*Chiroptera, Vespertilionidae*) based on their ultrasound. In: Bogdanowicz, W., Lina, P.H.C., Pilot, M. & Rutkowski, R. (eds.) Programme and abstracts for the 13th International Bat Research Conference. Poland, Mikolajki, 23—27 August 2004. Museum and Institute of Zoology PAS, Warszawa, p. 96.
- Masing, M. 2004. The types of ultrasound calls of boreal “peak frequency bats” (*Chiroptera, Vespertilionidae*). In: Bogdanowicz, W., Lina, P.H.C., Pilot, M. & Rutkowski, R. (eds.) Programme and abstracts for the 13th International Bat Research



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Masing, M. & Möller, T. 2004. How long should point counting last? – Eptesicus, 3. ([www.hot.ee/eptesicus](http://www.hot.ee/eptesicus))

Mägi, R. 2004. Hiired ja inimesed Luua öös. – Vooremaa, 17.6

Määrits, M. 2003. Piusa koobaste külastamine võib muutuda tasuliseks. – Koit, 09.10.

Seil, L. 2004. Nahkhiir sätib end oktoobris unenägude lainele. – Sakala, 21.10.

Silm, S. 2004. Haruldane nahkhiir läks talvituma pank. – Roheline Värav, 11.11

Keppart, V., Masing, M. & Lutsar, L. 2005. Nahkhiired Luual. Rmt.: Belials, V. (koost.) Luua Metsanduskool. Artiklid ja uurimused, 4. Luua: 77—88.

Lotman, K. 2005. Tiigilendlane. Euroopa haruldused Eestis. Eesti Loodus nr.10

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Möller, T. & Masing, M. 2005. Implementation of the point counting method to monitor foraging bats in Estonia. – Le Rhinolophe, 17: 141.

## Manuscripts

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Lutsar, L. (koostaja) 2003m. Tiigilendlane Eestis. Eestimaa Looduse Fond, Tartu, 10 lk (+ lisad). (Eestimaa Looduse Fond)

Masing, M. 2003m. Seireprojekti "Nahkhiired" 2003. aasta töö kokkuvõte. Nahkhiirte Uurimise Töörühm. Tartu, 48 lk.

Masing, M. 2003m. Ülevaade Loode tammiku nahkhiirtest. MTÜ Sicista Arenduskeskus, Tartu, 27 lk. (Pärandkoosluste Kaitse Ühing)

- Masing, M. (koostaja) 2004m. Nahkhiirte elupaigad Võrumaal. MTÜ Sicista Arenduskeskus, Tartu, 96 lk. (Võrumaa keskkonnateenistus)
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- Masing, M. 2005. Nahkhiirte detektor-eeluuring Kunda tuulepargi piirkonnas, septembris 2005. Tartu, 15 lk. (käsikiri)
- Masing, M. 2005. Nahkhiirte detektor-eeluuring Lüganuse tuulepargi piirkonnas, septembris 2005. Tartu, 13 lk. (käsikiri)
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