

Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats

Report on the implementation of the agreement in Estonia 2006-2010

A. General Information

Name of Party: Estonia
 Date of report: August 2010
 Period covered: September 2006-July 2010
 Competent authority: Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Estonia
 Administrative focal point: Üllar Rammul, Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Estonia
 (Former administrative focal point Riinu Rannap)
 Scientific focal point: Triinu Tõrv, Tallinn University
 (Former scientific focal point Kaja Lotman)

B. Status of bats within the territory of Party

1. Summary Details of Resident Species

12 species of bats have been identified in Estonia:

nr		Est	Eng
1	<i>Myotis dasycneme</i>	Tiigilendlane	Pond bat
2	<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>	Veelendlane	Daubentons bat
3	<i>Myotis brandtii</i>	Tõmmulendlane	Brandt's bat
4	<i>Myotis mystacinus</i>	Habelendlane	Whiskered bat
5	<i>Myotis nattereri</i>	Nattereri lendlane	Natterer's bat
6	<i>Plecotus auritus</i>	Pruun-suurkõrv	Brown long-eared bat
7	<i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i>	Pargi-nahkhiir	Nathusius pipistrelle
8	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	Kääbus-nahkhiir	Common pipistrelle
9	<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	Pügmee-nahkhiir	Soprano pipistrelle
10	<i>Eptesicus nilssonii</i>	Põhja-nahkhiir	Northern bat
11	<i>Vespertilio murinus</i>	Hõbe-nahkhiir	Parti-coloured bat
12	<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>	Suurvidevlane	Noctule

Pipistrellus pygmaeus was recorded in Estonia by Matti Masing in July 2006 in West-Estonia on the bases of sonar (Masing, 2007).

2. Status and Trends

The status *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* is not known, this species is rare in Estonia and probably does not hibernate here

Changes in trends have not been discovered.

One has to take into consideration that the data obtained through monitoring and independent sources is statistically insufficient for estimating status and trends covering whole Estonia.

Estonia is giving an effort towards applying a new national monitoring plan to get more information about status and trends of the 12 species present.

3. Habitats and Roost Sites

Most important habitat sites include old forests, parks with old trees, areas with wooden buildings, surroundings of lakes and ponds. Important wintering sites are abandoned mines, artificial military underground spaces and limestone cellars all over the country.

The big hibernation sites are listed and monitored (A new site in Tallinn, Astangu has been added to the list in 2009). List of important hibernation sites has been forwarded to EUROBATS.

Piusa underground space was renovated for better conditions for hibernation and to avoid threats from visitors in 2007 by State Nature Conservation Centre (SNCC).

An inventory project of parks around manor houses is being carried out (2008-2011), which should indicate the parks, which will be considered as important bat habitats.

4. Threats

Intensive real estate development, lack of information, negligence of hibernation sites (cellars), lack of capacity.

Estonia is in need of capacity building for bat monitoring.

Capacity building will be covered in the new action plan for protection of bats (coming into force in 2011) as a separate task.

5. Data collection, analysis, interpretation and dissemination

2006-2009 State Nature Conservation Centre (SNCC) organized its work in 8 regions covering the country, where the data collection, interpretation and dissemination was provided. SNCC had 8 species protection specialists who were equipped with bat detectors and sound analyses programs.

In 2009 SNCC was reorganized to Environmental Board under the Ministry of Environment. The work of EB is organized in 6 regions. The detectors were redistributed to the centers of the region offices.

The system of official data collection of protected species in Estonia is EELIS. EELIS is being developed constantly to better suit also the data obtained from bat species.

Data analysis and interpretation is done also by several NGO-s.

NGO-s active in bat work are:

Estonian Fund for Nature (Bat working group, Lauri Lutsar *MSc*)

NGO Sicista Developmental Centre (Bat research group, Matti Masing *PhD*)

NGO Suurkõrv (Active members Triinu Tõrv *MSc*, Oliver Kalda *BSc*, Rauno Kalda *BSc*)

Several other persons are also included in data collection through Environmental Board (Kaja Lotman, Head of Hiiu-Lääne-Saare region) and through NGO-s.

Restructuring of monitoring system is planned to fulfill better the aims in estimating trends

Volunteer network is not yet established, but it is considered as an aim in the next action plan for protection of bats (coming into force in 2011).

Through the years 2006-2010 growth in capacity and gathered data can be seen.

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

Following Species Protection sites have been established in 2006-2010.

Ülgase nature reserve (Ülgase looduskaitseala), which is the second biggest hibernation site for bats in Estonia.

Came into force in 8.05.2006

<https://www.riigiteataja.ee/ert/act.jsp?id=13295112>

Species protection Sites in Vääna-Viti, Vääna-Posti and Laagri in Harjumaa County (Nahkhiirte Vääna-Viti, Vääna-Posti ja Laagri püsielupaigad), which are important hibernation sites for bats in Estonia.

Came into force in 29.07.2006

<https://www.riigiteataja.ee/ert/act.jsp?id=13299879>

Hanila Species Protection Area in Läänemaa County (nahkhiirte Hanila püsielupaik), which is a *Myotis dasycneme* maternity colony and Räpina Species Protection Area in Põlvamaa County, which is an important roosting and feeding site for *Myotis nattereri*, *Myotis dasycneme*, *Myotis daubentonii*, *Plecotus auritus*, *Eptesicus nilssonii*, *Nyctalus noctula* in Räpina old park.

Came into force in 12.07.2009

<https://www.riigiteataja.ee/ert/act.jsp?id=13300084>

Nature Reserve of the Piusa Caves (Piusa koobastiku looduskaitseala) in Põlvamaa County, which is the most important bat hibernation site in Estonia.

Came into force in 7.08.2009

<https://www.riigiteataja.ee/ert/act.jsp?id=13291236>

Action plan for protection of bats in Estonia is in the process of renewal (comes into force in 2011).

Newly discovered (in 2009) bat hibernation site in Tallinn (Astangu) is being considered as an important hibernation site and action is taken in order to establish a new species protection area there.

Bats are being more and more recognized as one part of research needed for EIA.

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

The most important sites have been described in the Action plan for protection of bats in Estonia.

Reviewed list will be published in the next Action plan for protection of bats in Estonia (Comes into force in 2011), which will be added also to national report after acceptance on national level.

8. Consideration given to habitats, which are important to bats

Several surveys have been ordered from bat experts in different habitats (including, parks, hibernating sites, etc) during 2006-2010.

In 2006 a house with an important *Myotis dasycneme* maternity colony in Palupõhja was successfully renovated according to instructions of bat experts.

In winter 2006-2007 the house of Endla Nature Reserve visitor center was renovated according to instructions of bat experts to maintain the bat maternity colony roosting there.

The underground hibernation site at Piusa was successfully renovated in 2007.

In 2007 Project involving surveys in old parks across Estonia was started. The project is still active in 2010.

In 2007 a complete survey and risk assessment of Laagri hibernation site was carried out, which will improve possibilities of bat protection

In 2009 Counts were carried out in a newly discovered hibernation site for bats in Tallinn (Astangu). The establishment of a species protection area is being planned for that area in near future.

Important habitats in towns are under study in Tallinn fauna projects (SEI Tallinn centre in cooperation with NGO Suurkõrv) 2009-2010.

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

NGOs, which are active in promoting awareness on bats amongst public:

Estonian Fund for Nature, NGO Sicista Developmental Centre, NGO Suurkõrv, Matsalu Nature Centre.

Bat experts towards whom people can turn to, in case of bat related questions, are:

Matti Masing, Lauri Lutsar, Kaja Lotman, Triinu Tõrv, Oliver Kalda, Rauno Kalda.

Contacts are openly available through web-pages:

<http://www.hot.ee/sicista98/index.htm>

<http://www.hot.ee/sicista/> (eng)

<http://www.elfond.ee/>

<http://nahkhiired.blogspot.com/>

The email list for people interested in bats (nahkhiirehuvilised nhh@elfond.ee) is working. Information on bat conservation is being distributed by bat experts on occasion when possible by means of media (TV, radio, Internet).

The International Batnight is celebrated every year by means of several organized batwalks around Estonia in July and August. Interest from public is increasing year by year.

2006

Tallinn Zoo prepared the gallery of protected species including a separate information poster for bats with help of Matti Masing and Kaja Lotman. The opening of the gallery was in September 2006.

2007

leaflet: Nahkhiirte kaitse, 2007 Riiklik Looduskaitsekeskus K.Lotman, P.Saak.A.Saare/Bat protection, State Nature Conservation Centre 2007

Masing, M. & Lutsar, L. 2007. Hibernation temperatures in seven species of sedentary bats (Chiroptera) in northeastern Europe. -- Acta Zoologica Lituana, 17 (1): 47—55.
http://www.ekoi.lt/uploads/docs/AZL_2007_01_47-55%20psl.pdf

Masing, M. & Lutsar, L. 2007. New age records of bats from Estonia. - Myotis, 43, Bonn: 63-65. (Masing-Lutsar-2007-new-age.pdf)

2008

Bat detector seminars were held for the Environmental Board members in order to carry out surveys.

Presentations concerning bat research in Estonia were held in several international conferences during the year 2008.

A special session was dedicated to bats in Baltic Theriological Conference, held in Lepanina, Estonia, in October 2008.

2009

A presentation about bats was held in Autumn meeting of Estonian Theriological Society of Bats in Tallinn.

2010

Estonian Fund For Nature (ELF) has launched a donation campaign: <http://www.elfond.ee/en/help-bats> . With the donations ELF will organize clean-up drives in the bats' hibernation sites.

The Boreal bat identification book material is gathered and is waiting for publishing.

Biggest bat event since was organized in Tallinn as a Batweek. Preliminary to the batweek lectures were offered for schools in Tallinn in cooperation with the bat drawing competition for schoolchildren (all the works can be seen in the following gallery (<http://picasaweb.google.com/115856744025255073176/Joonistusvoistlus#>)). Batweek included an exhibition of the best works from the drawing competition with information posters of Estonian bats, open lectures were held and several batwalks were organized. The event was highly successful and showed a great interest from the public.

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

2006-2008

Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Estonia, Department of Nature Protection and SNCC
2008-2010

Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Estonia, Department of Nature Protection and Environmental Board, which continues the tasks of State Nature Conservation Centers.

11. Additional actions undertaken to safeguard population of bats

Surveys have been ordered from experts in areas of wind turbines through the years 2006-2010.

Investigations at the wind turbine areas at Virtsu by Matti Masing 2007 ordered by Skinest Energia, also Lauri Lutsar has lead surveys in windparks.

Seminars in order to renew the Action plan for protection of bats in Estonia are being carried out.

In 2007 in Otepää Landscape Reserve bat boxes were erected in forest sites

12. Recent and ongoing programs (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)

Since 1994 the project “Bats” is annually carried out under the National Environment Monitoring Program (NEMP). Funded by the government.

Inventory of old parks covering whole Estonia 2008-2011. Funded by government and KIK.

The monitoring of bat hibernation in small cellars of West-Estonia and summer surveys in Lääne county were continued by Kaja Lotman (funded by the government).

Project involving also estimation of Tallinn Bat fauna, in cooperation with NGO Suurkõrv and SEI Tallinn centre, funded by KIK, was held in 2009-2010.

Bat migration studies in Kabli, in West-Estonia are progressing. Project started in 2008 and is continuing. Lead by Meelis Leivits

Several Surveys in Nature protection areas have been ordered by SNCC and EB, carried out by local bat experts and funded mostly by KIK (Environmental Investment Centre).

Surveys in windparks have been ordered by developers in several areas in Estonia.

Ongoing research at Laagri bat hibernation area in the Tallinn University connected with multiple thesis (funded by Tallinn University and KIK)

In 2008 Dutch Mammal Society inventories of bats in Matsalu National Park were carried out. Summer camp was organized on the basis of voluntary work. The costs for accommodation and organized reporting seminar for Estonian nature conservation staff was paid by the SNCC.

Local publications and reports of the research done are available in aforementioned NGO-s or the Environmental Board offices.

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

Several Estonian bat experts are involved in cooperation with range states. Active cooperation is held between Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Finland.

Dutch Mammal Society summer camp in Matsalu National Park in July 2007

Visit to Tallinn University and an open lecture given by dr. D. Scaravelli, Italy, concerning bats and habitats in Mediterranean area in 2008.

An informational CD about bats is being prepared in cooperation with Latvia (2009-2011).

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

Resolution 2.2 Consistent monitoring methodologies

Reorganization of the official database EELIS in order to include monitoring data has continued.

Renewing the program in the Matsalu Ringing Centre where the data about bat ringing is also in progress.

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

The important hibernation sites in Estonia are Piusa, Vääna-Posti, Vääna-Viti, Humala, Laagri, Ülgase and Astangu. All but Astangu are under protection. Piusa, Posti, Viti and Humala are partly with closed exits to the public. Further management plans are being made. Astangu hibernation place is currently under process of being taken under protection. Monitoring is carried out in all important hibernation places.

Resolution 4.6. Guidelines for the Issue of Permits for the Capture and Study of Captured Wild Bats

EB is giving the licenses for bat ringing activities keeping in mind the resolution. Although catching bats does not require still a license.

Resolution No. 4.9 Implementation of the Conservation and Management Plan (2003 – 2006)

Automatic boxes are used now for migration studies. Project based studies are continuing in following years and the amount of automatic boxes used should be increasing.

Resolution 4.11 Recognizing the Important Role of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Bat Conservation

NGOs which are dealing with bat protection are developing in Estonia and are raising Estonia's capacity for public awareness and monitoring schemes.

Resolution 5.10 Implementation of the Conservation and Management Plan (2007- 2010)

Bat monitoring scheme of Estonia is under renewal process to better estimate trends of Estonian bat populations.

Through the project of bats in manor parks important knowledge of the range and status of bat populations in Estonia is being acquired.

Efforts to raise public awareness and to improve education considering bats are being made. More and more projects aimed for public are being carried out. The response from the public has been positive and further projects are being planned.

The new bat action plan for Estonia is being compiled taking into consideration the resolutions adopted by the MoP, giving extra attention for tasks brought out in the resolutions of the implementation of the Conservation and Management plan.

Resolution 5.6 Wind Turbines and Bat Populations

Communication between wind park developers and bat experts is advancing. Bat surveys have been ordered by developers from bat experts. National guidelines are under preparation.