

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 2009
Period covered:	March 2008–March 2009
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.

However, several of them are very rare:

- *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).
- *Nyctalus leisleri* (Leisler's bat). It is characterised as a rare species, because only a few observations found during autumn bat migration in the western and eastern parts of Lithuania.

Several of them are common:

- *Plecotus auritus* (Brown long-eared bat), *Myotis daubentonii* (Daubenton's bat) and *Pipistrellus nathusii* (Nathusius' pipistrelle) are confirmed to be common and widespread species.
- *Pipistrellus nathusii*, *Nyctalus noctula*, *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, *Eptesicus nilssonii*, *Eptesicus serotinus* and *Vespertilio murinus* are common species during autumn bat migration along the Baltic Sea coast.
- *Myotis dasycneme* (Pond bat). The status 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 Vilnius hibernating sites and Kaunas fortress.

Eleven (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*, *Barbastella barbastellus*, *Nyctalus leisleri*, *Vespertilio murinus*, *Myotis nattereri*, *Myotis brandtii*, *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, *Plecotus auritus*, *Eptesicus nilssonii*, *Nyctalus noctula*, *Eptesicus serotinus*.

2. Status and Trends

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

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

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, 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.

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:

- Institute of Ecology of Vilnius University;
- Veterinary Institute of Lithuanian Veterinary Academy;
- Society for Lithuanian Bat Survival;
- 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.

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);
- Law on Protected Plant, Animal and Fungi Species and Communities (1997, (as) amended in December 2001);
- Government Resolution No. 130 of 7 February 2005 on the approval of the National Biodiversity Monitoring Programme for 2005-2010;
- 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.

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, 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

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

Bat night events are organized in regional parks every year;

The Environmental Information Center gave a lecture on bats conservation and protection;

The Lithuanian Society for Bat Survival and the Institute of Ecology carried out investigations into the intensity of the use of nesting-boxes by bats in the protected areas;

More than 7 articles about bats conservation and their life were published in magazines and newspapers, some promotional information programmes about bats were developed and presented on TV.

The scientific articles and books:

Baranauskas K., Vėlavičienė N., Makavičius D., Riauba G. 2008. [Using of bat boxes by Nathusius' pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus nathusii*, Chiroptera) in regional park of Verkiai (Vilnius, Lithuania). Lietuvos biologinė įvairovė: būklė, struktūra, apsauga. III tomas. 58-64. VPU, Lututė.

Baranauskas K. 2008. Šikšnosparniai Lietuvoje ir jų apsauga. (Mokymo priemonė). P. 36. VPU, Vilnius.

Masing M., Baranauskas K., Siivonen Y., Wermundsen T. 2008. Bats hibernating in the Kaunas Fortress, Southern Lithuania. 7th Baltic theriological conference. P. 57-58. Tartu, Estonia.

Baranauskas K., Makavičius D., Vėlavičienė N., Jusys V., Lina P.H.C. 2008. Use of bat boxes by nathusius' pipistrelle, *Pipistrellus nathusii*, in Lithuania 2007. 11th European Bat Research Symposium. p. 16. Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

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 Institute of Ecology of Vilnius University.

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.

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

The project "Preparation of Action Plans for Protection of Rear Species and Regulation of Invasive Species' Abundance" was approved by the Ministerial order.

During this project will be developed and implemented management plans for *Myotis dasycneme* (5 management plans), *pipistrellus nathusii* (2 management plans) and *plecotus auritus* (2 management plans).

The Lithuanian Society for Bat Survival and the Institute of Ecology carried out the identification of the migration of *Pipistrellus nathusii* in Lithuania. EUROBATS and DEFRA supported this project financially.

Lithuanian bat experts assisted the scientists from Estonia and Finland in carrying out bats monitoring in main Kaunas hibernation sites.

The Veterinary Institute of the Lithuanian Veterinary Academy is working on bat rabies in Kaunas district.

13. 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, Finland, the Netherlands and other countries. Experts from these countries carried out the consultation and research with Lithuanian specialists.