

8-th Meeting of the Advisory Committee

Rorøs Norway 10 – 15 May 2003

AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF BATS IN ROMANIA

A. General information:

- *Name of Party:* Romania
- *Date of Report:* March 2003
- *Period covered:* March 2002 – March 2003
- *Competent Authority:* Romanian Ministry of Waters and Environment – Directorate of Biodiversity Protection and Conservation, Protected Areas, Monuments of Nature, Director **Adriana Baz**.

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- *Organization providing support and expertise:*
„Grigore Antipa” National Museum of Natural History (MNINGA) – Bucharest
- *Appointed member of the Advisory Committee:* Dumitru Murariu

B. Status of Bats within the Romanian Territory

1. Summary details of the resident species:

In the Red Book of the Romanian Vertebrates (now in print but postponed because of the financial difficulties) there are 28 bat species included, with most important data: scientific and common names; statute and conservation; geographical distribution; distribution in Romania; biotope; estimated number of the individuals; reproduction; rivals; enemies; diseases; causes of the individual number change; present protection measures and necessary protection measures.

Because of massive declines in the number of individual of some bat species, European Commission Brussels for LIFE-Nature, EUROBATS, and BCT assisted Romanian chiropterologists to develop surveys and monitoring programmes on the specific habitats in different parts of the Romanian Carpathians. The final scope of these initiatives is to put into place an efficient conservation programme to protect endangered species of bats.

2. Status and trends:

In Romania there is a law (No. 5/2000) for protected areas, many of them being specific habitats for bats. In such habitats there are necessary protection measures, starting with initiatives of the local communities and local NGOs; there are many youth Associations with healthy programs for alpinism, tourism and cave explorations. Most of them were implied in the Romanian chiropterological movement, starting with care for habitat protection and continuing with endangered bat species protection. The awareness and educational activities proved to be appropriate ways to increase the efficiency of the existing regulations, to enforce the law in the protected areas.

However, in the reported period more than 50% of the total bat species were surveyed by the specialists of the Institute of Speleology „Emil Racovitza” – Bucharest, University „Babes-Bolyai” – Cluj, „Grigore Antipa” National Museum of Natural History – Bucharest, Group for Underwater and Speleological Exploration, Association „Club Speo Bucovina”, Romanian Bat Protection Association, Transylvanian Museum Association – Cluj, Romanian Federation of Chiropterology etc. Only Transylvanian Museum Association with logistic

background of the Chiropterological Information Center from the Institute of Animal Systematics and Evolution – Krakow, Poland established (and published in February 2003) the status and distribution of cave dwelling bats in western and southern Carpathians. According to this survey, 48 caves were visited in the period April 2002 – February 2003 and for 64 caves a Data Base was built. Visiting more than 85,000 specimens, the team members presented distribution maps and established population status for 19 bat species.

Another team with specialists from the Institute of Speleology „Emil Racovitza” – Bucharest, Faculty of Biology – university „Babes- Bolyai” from Cluj, National Museum of natural History from Bucharest as well as some NGOs developed a monitoring program in order to identify main shelters for bats and to approximate number of individuals of each observed species. One of the conclusions was the attachment of the most bat species to some preferred shelters, even if for some reasons bats were determined to leave them for 2 – 3 - 5 or even 15 years.

The table indicates the distribution in Romania, estimated frequency, IUCN statute and protection needs for 26 bat species.

S p e c i e s	Distribution	Frequency	IUCN status	Prot. needs
<i>Rhinolophus ferrumequinum</i>	Mostly in S & Western Carpathians. Few in Dobrogea	Relatively common	LR:nt	Shelters & foraging areas
<i>R. hipposideros</i>	All over	Rel. common	VU:A2c	Not disturbing
<i>R. euryale</i>	W&S Carp.	Rare	VU:A2c	Habitats
<i>R. blasii</i>	W&S Carp.	Rare	VU:A2c	Maternal colon.
<i>R. mehelyi</i>	Dobrogea	Very rare	VU:A2c	Habitats
<i>Myotis myotis</i>	All over	Common	LR:nt	Maternal col.
<i>M. blythii</i>	All over	Rare	LR:nt	Not disturbing
<i>M. capaccinii</i>	Banat&W Carp.	Rare	VU:A2c	Shelters
<i>M. dasycneme</i>	Only Banat	Very rare	VU:A2c	Shelters(!)
<i>M. daubentoni</i>	All over	Common	LR:lc	Shelters
<i>M. emarginatus</i>	All over	Rare	VU:A2c	Shelters
<i>M. mystacinus</i>	All over	Rare	LR:nt	Foraging areas
<i>M. nattereri</i>	All over	Very rare	VUA2c	Shelters
<i>M. bechsteini</i>	Carpathians	Very rare	VU:a2c	Shelters
<i>Plecotus auritus</i>	All over	Rare	LR:nt	Maternal col.
<i>P. austriacus</i>	Carpathians	Rare	LR:nt	Maternal col.
<i>Vespertilio murinus</i>	All over	Rel. common	LR:lc	Shelters
<i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>	All over	Rare	VU:A2c	Habitats
<i>Eptesicus nilssoni</i>	Only banat	Very rare	VU:A2c	Habitats
<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>	All over	Common	LR:lc	Shelters
<i>N. lasiopterus</i>	Danube Plain	Rare	LR:lc	Foraging areas
<i>N. leisleri</i>	All over	Very rare	VU:A2c	Habitats
<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	All over the country	Common	LR:lc	Foraging areas
<i>P. nathusii</i>	Lower altitude	Rare	LR:nt	Shelters
<i>Barbastella barbastellus</i>	E&W Carp.	Very rare	VU:A2c	Shelters&Forag.
<i>Miniopterus schreibersi</i>	All over Carpathians	Rare	LR:nt	Shelters & Foraging

Three bat species (*Pipistrellus savii*, *P. pygmaeus* and *P. kuhli*) are recently reported from the Romanian fauna and their distribution and evaluation of populations are still in

study. E.g. for *P. savii* was reported only one specimen, in one place, in south-eastern part of Romania; the other two species were reported only on June 2000.

The former reported species *Myotis ikonnikovi* was not refound since 1963 and it must not be considered as a permanent presence.

4. Threats

Free entrance in caves and disturbing of the maternal and hibernating colonies, total deforestation in different areas, demolish of many buildings with suitable roosts for bats and modern construction without access in attics, cellars, eaves as well as different chemical pollutions are the main threats for bats in Romania.

5. Data Collection

The Romanian Ministry of Waters and Environment is in close functional relation with the Nature Monuments Commission on the behalf of the Romanian Academy of Sciences. Regulations are clear but not all explorers of the bats' roosts (especially of caves) ask permission to enter, to observe, even to collect bats. The Romanian good legislation should be enforced in the territories with rangers, guardians and volunteers. Some projects with this aims should create the premises to be continued with efficiency, by local communities a strategy of roosts and bats protection in some specific habitats.

C. Measures taken to implement the Agreement

6. Legal measures taken to prevent the deliberate capture, keeping or killing bats, including details of enforcement actions used to support such measures

In 2002, two licences to enter in caves from Western and Southern Carpathians were issued from the Nature Monument Commission – Romanian Academy of Sciences as well as from the Institutes of Speleology from Cluj and Bucharest. The Group for Exploration of Underground and Underwater habitats has active members in territories who control the legacy of explorations.

This regulations are not applied everywhere in the country where the specific habitats for bats exist.

7. Sites identified and protected which are important to bat conservation

In 2002, on the occasion of a Bat Monitoring Program, more than 30 caves all over the country were established for a census and statute of bat populations, in order to protect the endangered species.

8. Consideration given to habitats which are important to bats

A LIFE – Nature programme for conservation of underground habitats in South-Western Carpathians is underway since July 2002; the co-ordinator is Romanian Green Cross, a young and active NGO.

A survey of the Western and Southern Carpathians' underground bat habitats was developed ten months (April 2002 – February 2003) by Romanian and Polish students in co-operation with Romanian Bat Protection Association and Transylvanian Museum Association – Cluj.

9. Activities carried out to promote the awareness of the importance of the bat conservation

Between May 24 – August 15, 2003 a temporary exhibition („Story about Bats”) was organised by the „Grigore Antipa” National Museum of Natural History – Bucharest in co-operation with Institute of Speleology, Group of Underground and Underwater Explorations and Romanian Green Cross. The exhibition was of special interest for visitors, presenting special adaptations of bats, food, distribution, legends and truth about bats, their representation in art and recent regulations for their conservation.

On the occasion of the International Children Day (June 1st, 2002) in Museum a carnival implying children with suitable costumes was organised, who answered to questions about bats’ role and with awards.

Bat hights were organised in the 2nd half of August, in Bucharest, Suceava and Satu Mare Counties.

In the Natural History Museum from Bucharest four lectures for visitors interested in special topics (hibernation, adaptations to fly, ultrasound communication) in the bats’ world were given.

A Symposium about bats and their habitats was organised in 25 – 26 October 2002 in Drobeta-Turnu Severin city – capital of the Caras-Severin County.

10. Responsible bodies nominated for the provision of advice on bat conservation and management

At the national level, the Ministry of Waters and Environment is the governmental authority in charge with nature conservation and environmental problems. A special department concerns with Biodiversity Protection and Conservation, Protected Areas, Monuments of Nature .

The Department of Forestry in the Ministry of Agriculture.

Institutions assisting the Ministry of the Environment with scientific data are:

- „Grigore Antipa” National Museum of Natural History;
- „Emil Racovitza” Speleological Institute;
- Institute of Biology from the Romanian Academy;
- Faculties of Biology (Universities of Bucharest, Cluj and Iassy);
- NGOs: Romanian Federation of Chiropterology; Romanian Bat protection Association; Transylvanian Museum Association etc.

11. International Co-operation

Between 29th – 31st of May 2002 the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) with financial support of the department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) organised a workshop on A Strategy for Bat Conservation in Romania. The workshop was attended by representatives of the Romanian academic institutions and NGOs from all over the country. The moderators were Tony Hudson, Julia Hanmer and Amy Coyte – all from the BCT, UK.

In September 2002, the Trasylvanian Museum Association and Romanian Bat Protection Association organised the 2nd Workshop in Romania for use of Bat detectors. The trainers were Herman Limpens and Collin ...

In August 2002, two Romanian chiropterologists attended the European Bat Conference in Le Havre – France as well as a Workshop for Bat Detectors use.

D. Functioning of the Agreement

12. Co-operation with other Range States

Different Romanian chiropterologists co-operated in some continetal programs of Bats conservation with specialists from Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Republic of Moldova.