

23rd Meeting of the Standing Committee

Online meeting, 12 June 2024

Secretariat Report



Staff

There have been no changes in the Secretariat staff since AC27. As per decision of MoP9, starting from the 1st of January 2023, the Scientific Officer is working on 80 percent post occupancy. The Administrative Assistants are working alternatively on 80 and 50 percent post occupancy until a long-term equitable solution can be implemented.

Agreement Membership

Spain has informed that all government decisions concerning the accession to the Agreement are in place and remain valid, while the ratification of the accession in both chambers of Parliament had to be initiated again. A motion in this regard was done earlier in 2024.

Outreach

The various volumes of the EUROBATS Publication Series, leaflets – in particular the leaflet on bats and forestry, both language versions of the comic “Bono’s adventures”, as well as the material produced for the anniversaries in 2021 continue to be in high demand (stickers, postcards, and posters). Especially for the celebration of the International Bat Night, which continues to be extremely successful, more information material is being sent out. Reports on the IBN events held during the last years are available on the EUROBATS website. The Secretariat encourages the IBN organisers to make use of the EUROBATS website to announce their events.

Special Projects 2023 - 2024

In 2023 the following projects were implemented:

- “Monitoring of SARS-CoV-2 in European bat species” in Austria conducted by the Research Institute of Wildlife Ecology, University of Veterinary Medicine – continuation of the project from 2022.

- “CHIROHUB: a multi-tool for bat research and conservation in Romania and Moldova” conducted by the Romanian Centre for Bat Research and Conservation, together with several partners in Romania and Moldova. This project continues in 2024.
- “Identification of critical habitats for the conservation of the highly endangered Madeira pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus maderensis*)” conducted by the Madeira Fauna & Flora, Biology & Conservation. This project continues in 2024.
- Bat stronghold II: Keeping the ongoing bat research, education and rehabilitation in Ukraine after the full-scale war invasion (Ukraine, Germany, Switzerland). The project should start in May 2024 and will be funded from the German voluntary contribution.

Three new project proposals were submitted for the year 2024 and ranked by the EPI evaluation group, but funds for their implementation are only partially secured. Descriptions of these projects are given below in the order of ranking.

- Survey and monitoring of bats in abandoned railway tunnels in Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Creation and Implementation of the Informational and Educational Illustrated Assets about Caucasian Bats in Georgia and Armenia
- Bats of Egypt survey and conservation & Bats’ Atlas of Egypt project

The Secretariat encourages the Parties to donate for implementation of the above-mentioned projects and the EPI in general.