

Summary Report on the Outcomes of EPI projects conducted in 2015

1. Capacity building for bat species monitoring in Northwest Africa (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia)

Grantee: Laboratoire d'écologie des systèmes terrestres et aquatiques (**EcoSTAq**), Université Badj Mokhtar, Annaba. Project coordinator: Prof. Zihad Bouslama.

EPI funding in 2015: Final instalment of EUR 2,795 from the German voluntary contribution.

The main aim of this workshop was to enhance skills in bat calls identifications within the community of bat researchers in Northwest Africa. In addition, this workshop was intended to encourage wildlife biologists to expand their knowledge on advanced technologies and good practices in bat research in order to apply such knowledge in bat conservation in their countries. The workshop was held at the University of Badji Mokhtar, Annaba. The national park of el Kala and Edough (project partner) was used for the field training courses. Several sets of necessary monitoring equipment (bat-detectors, mist-nets etc.) were purchased and distributed among the participants. Dino Scaravelli (San Marino) was invited to lead the workshop with 15 participants.



2. Let's all be Bat-men! (Bulgaria)

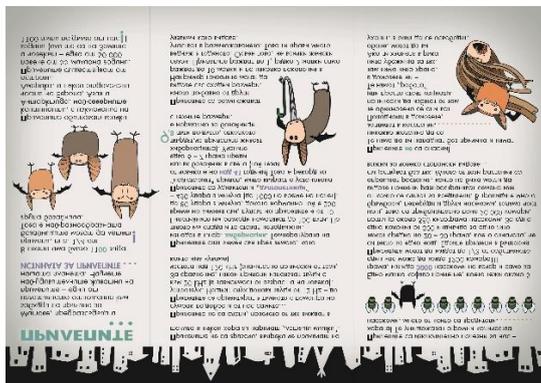
Grantee: Federation of Nature Conservation NGOs "the Green Balkans". Project coordinator: Elena Stoeva. EPI funding: EUR 5,000 (EUR 3,000 from the regular budget and EUR 2,000 from the voluntary contribution of Germany).

The funds were used to secure the implementation of educational and information activities aimed at promoting bats, their conservation significance, and the need for their conservation in Bulgaria.

The project provided support for the production of a series of publications aimed at promoting bats throughout the country, including the reprint of 500 posters on bat conservation. The posters were designed for kids and widely distributed among tens of schools, kindergartens, children, and citizens involved in the Bat Night.



A total of 1000 brochures and a children's book were published as a part of the project.



The painter Elena Kmetova developed 20 author's illustrations for the book. These illustrations present bats in an interesting and funny manner, thus contributing to its major messages. The book was translated into English and is now disseminated electronically.



Защо една прилепна майка би кръстила сина си Божидар?
 Кои са племето на Ръждивите и защо хората зависят от тях?
 Как прилепчето Дарки искаше да стане човек и защо реши,
 че да си прилеп е по-важно?
 Къде се раждат прилепите и грижовни ли са техните майки?
 Защо мъжките ръждиви вечерници летуват сами и
 какво правят в отсъствието на "жените си"?
 Защо хората не мислят доброто на Дарки и правилно ли е това?
 „научете повече в "Приключенията на прилепа Дарки".



Настоятелство издава на името на Европейския съюз от Комисията на Европейските общности. Издание на български език по проект "Два обичайни прилепа" - Let's do it Better



Издава "Зелени Балкани" 2015 г.

The project envisaged the production of 10 information boards on bats that were used as a rolling exhibition to be arranged at public events related to bat conservation, presenting the topics "bats in forests", "bats in caves", "bats in settlements", as well as general information on bats. These boards were used during the International Bat Night 2015, supporting the celebration of the event in different towns and cities.

200 poster-like information boards were disseminated among tens of schools and kindergartens throughout the country, as their presentation was an integral part of the events related to the celebration of the International Bat Night. In 2015, the campaign did not receive funding from the Ministry of Environment and Water, so the only resources that could be used were those attracted by Green Balkans and other NGOs, including the EPI support. In September and October over 20 events took place as part of the national campaign. In this year record number of towns and villages joined the campaign – 17 in total. Among them are: Sofia, Stara Zagora, Plovdiv, Burgas, Pomorie, Knezha, Plevan, Lovech, Blagoevgrad, Ruse, Veliko Tarnovo, Shumen, Sliven, Pazardzhik, Vratsa, Belyakovets village, Mezdra.

The Bat night event was covered by the national television, BBC Knowledge magazine, a lot of national and many regional media. Database was created about the media coverage and was applied to the current report. In general, the Bat night was one of the most successful environmental campaigns in Bulgaria for 2015 for which the contribution of the current project is significant.

3. *Plecotus sardus* on Sardinia (Italy)

Grantee: Trier University, Faculty of Regional and Environmental Sciences, Dept. of Biogeography. Project coordinator: Gaetano Fichera, Italy. EPI funding in 2015: EUR 4,998 (Germany and Luxembourg's voluntary contributions).

Started in 2014, the project foresaw an extensive bat survey on Sardinia in order to collect data on different aspects of ecology, biology and conservation of *Plecotus sardus*, an endemic endangered species (it was assessed as Vulnerable B2ab by IUCN in 2008). Only 4 nurseries with an estimated population of less than 1.000 individuals had been known before. Two new roost of this species were discovered using radio-tracking technique; one of these, a cave in the "Lago Omodeo" area, is the first known hibernaculum for *P. sardus*. The first data on foraging habitats of the species was also obtained. Preliminary results on the analyses of DNA show that there are at least two mitochondrial haplogroups of *P. sardus* on Sardinia. This may be a result of ongoing separation of two populations, or caused by a historic split. Further molecular analyses are needed, including nuclear DNA's data, to prove the occurrence of two separated populations. With these data the implementers are going to elaborate a conservation guideline for this highly endangered species. The project covers three years and will be continued in 2016.



4. Workshop for conservationists and foresters: improving forest management for bats, phase 1 (the Netherlands)

Grantee: Peter Twisk, a consultant. EPI funding: EUR 3,330 (regular budget and Luxembourg's voluntary contribution).

The workshop with 11 participants from 9 EU countries was organised from 11 - 13 November 2015 in Bennekom, The Netherlands. The aim of the entire project is to give guidelines for the management of forests with regards to bats on a scientific basis. The impression of batworkers in many European countries is that at the moment bats are not taken into account sufficiently in forest management, as is underlined in Eurobats resolutions 4.4, 7.7 and 7.8 (see below). Especially on the aspect of roosts in trees, forest management probably has a negative effect on bat populations. There have been several initiatives to enhance awareness of the importance of forests for bats, including roosts in trees. Even so, problems still exist and may have increased in some countries or regions. A proposal for the broad-scale project devoted to resolve these issues was developed during the workshop and is followed up concerning funding opportunities.

