



IUCN Countdown 2010

Progress in 2007



Hungary

Hungarian Progress in 2007

1. Enhancing the network of designated sites:

- Similarly to previous years, the proportion of state-owned protected areas in the management of state nature conservation bodies (National Park Directorates) continued to increase in order to achieve one of the main strategic objectives of state nature conservation.
- During 2007 the extension of the area managed by the National Park Directorates increased by 10,953 ha, the smaller part of that (2186 ha) due to land purchase, the larger part (8767 ha) as a result of taking over the land management right. Most of the latter item is constituted by the forest areas taken over from state forestry companies as a result of governmental decision. The sites thus acquired by the National Park Directorates have high nature conservation value and/or have strategic importance for nature conservation and this is why most of them belong to the Natura 2000 network, furthermore they are protected or will be protected by national law in the near future.
- 11 new protected areas in 2007 (a total of 3936.6 ha)
 - **Érdi Kakukk-hegy Nature Conservation Area**
 - **Mura-menti Landscape Protected Area**
 - **Bükkhát Nature Conservation Area and declared to forest reserve**
 - **Kelemér-Serényfalva Nature Conservation Area and declared to forest reserve**
 - **Belsőbárándi-tátorjános Nature Conservation Area**
 - **Bölcskei-nószirmos Nature Conservation Area**
 - **Tardi-legelő Nature Conservation Area**
 - **Márkházapusztai fás legelő (wooded pasture) Nature Conservation Area**
 - **Csombárdi-rét Nature Conservation Area**
 - **Sümegei Fehér-kövek Nature Conservation Area and declared to forest reserve**
 - **Abaújkéri Aranyos-völgy Nature Conservation Area**
- 3 new forest reserve sites (a total of 1092 ha)
 - **Bükkhát forest reserve**
 - **Kelemér-Serényfalva forest reserve**
 - **Sümegei Fehér-kövek forest reserve**

2. Complying with EU legislation and international conventions signed by Hungary concerning nature conservation:

- The report under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive was submitted in 2007. It contains the main steps of the implementation of the directive: developing the Natura 2000 network, furthermore the nature conservation status of the habitats in Annex I. and the species in Annex II, IV, V.
- A memorandum of understanding known as 'Inaccessible Sky', as far as we know unprecedented in Europe, was also drafted and prepared for signature (signed early 2008). It provides a frame for co-operation among state nature conservation bodies, NGOs (represented by BirdLife Hungary) and electricity suppliers to reduce mortality risks of birds along power lines. Species protection actions launched earlier with EU co-financing were continued, e.g. for Great bustard (*Otis tarda*) and Red-footed Falcon (*Falco vespertinus*), and the Saker (*Falco cherrug*) LIFE project was also started.

- The European Commission adopted the sites of Community Importance of the Pannonian Biogeographic Region according to Habitats Directive (92/43/EGK) with its decision 2008/26/EK on 13th November 2007. Thereby on the basis of Article 4 (2) of the Habitats Directive the proposed SCIs in Hungary became approved Natura 2000 sites.
- In the beginning of 2007 the government decree concerning the Natura 2000 sites was amended because of the accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the EU, transposing the ensuing amendments of the Birds and Habitats Directive into Hungarian legislation.

3. Strengthening financial and legislative capacities for nature conservation:

- A government decree was passed on the land use rules to maintain Natura 2000 grasslands and another on the conditions of subsidies funded by the European Agricultural Rural Development Fund in co-operation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, establishing the legal backgrounds of the payment of subsidies in Natura 2000 grasslands. The granting of subsidies begins in 2008.
- In 2007, legislation additional to that existing on protected areas and Natura 2000 sites was adopted, listing sites in special conservation categories and establishing the rules pertaining to them.

Decree of the Minister of Environment and Water on the Hungarian Biosphere Reserves

Ordinance of the Minister of Environment and Water on the Biosphere Reserves

Ordinance of the Minister of Environment and Water on European Diploma holding sites

Communication of the Minister of Environment and Water on European Diploma holding sites

- The decree of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development on rules of protection of game, game management, and hunting was amended in order to implement the provisions of the Birds Directive in hunting procedures.
- Efforts were made to enforce the aspects related to halt the loss of biodiversity in the energy sector especially during the implementation of the activities in connection with renewable energy production and use. To this end, nature conservation aspects were integrated into the Energy Policy of Hungary (period of 2007-2020) and into the strategy on increased utilization of renewable energy sources in Hungary.
- Also in connection with the energy production, nature conservation aspects were fully enforced during the formulation of authorization conditions of herbaceous and woody energy crops, which were regulated in the following laws:

Governmental decree on woody energy crops

Decree of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development on the detailed rules of the authorisation, planting, cultivation and abolition of woody energy crops and the administrative costs of the procedures;

Decree of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development on the conditions of the additional support to be granted for energy crops from the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund;

Decree of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development on the detailed rules of applications for supports for planting short felling cycle woody energy crops from the European Agricultural and Rural Development Fund;

Decree of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development on the detailed rules of support to be granted for the plantation of perennial, herbaceous energy crops from the European Agricultural and Rural Development Fund.

- A special calculation system was accepted in the construction procedures in the interest of halting the loss of biodiversity in order to maintain the proportion of green surfaces, as detailed by Decree of the Minister of Local Governments on the calculation of territorial biological activity value. According to these rules, the biological activity value of the administrative area of the settlements should not be reduced by designation of new areas for development. (Biological activity value: a parameter expressing the effects of the characteristic vegetation of an area on the ecological status of the settlement and on human health.)
- The Environment and Energy Operational Program (EEOP) financed from Cohesion and Structural Funds of the European Union between 2007-2013 was developed by the Ministry of Environment and Water. The “Wise management of natural assets” priority axis of EEOP is dedicated to the preservation, restoration and development of Hungary’s natural values, with a focus on protected areas, Natura 2000 sites and protected species. The application procedures for the period of 2007-2008 have been developed and announced.

4. Raising public awareness for the 2010 biodiversity target:

- The “Nature School” Committee, responsible for qualifying Nature Schools (institutions providing nature education programmes to be incorporated into the curriculum of primary schools) drafted also a new qualification procedure for Nature School and Kindergarten Services (24th June 2007) and conciliated it with the two responsible ministries (Ministry of Environment and Water and Ministry of Education and Culture). At present, 67 nature schools have a qualification certificate. The Minister of Environment and Water recently handed over 7 certificates in Ipolytarnóc.
- In order to legitimise the Nature School and Kindergarten qualification procedure, the Ministry of Environment and Water, the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Environmental and Nature Conservation Education Centers signed a co-operative agreement in November 2007. The aim of the agreement is to develop the conditions to apply for grants for infrastructural developments of the Nature School network within the „Environment and Energy Operative Program and the Central Hungarian Operational Program” and to put down in writing the principles upon which qualification is carried out. This agreement ensures the continuity of the qualification activity.
- The Nature School Program raised the interest of Hungarians living outside Hungary and also of neighbouring countries. In the frame of a ‘Hungarian - Hungarian Green Program’, the Ministry of Environment and Water also makes efforts to achieve that similar programs could be launched in the territory of neighbouring countries, especially where Hungarian people live.
- The ‘Green Kindergarten Network’ extended environmental education to the lower grade education. Environmental education in kindergarten has been in the centre of interest for a long time. Kindergarten teacher workshops were established where exemplary results were reached concerning the teaching methodology and instrumental requirements of environmental education in kindergartens. The Ministry of Environment and Water and the Ministry of Education and Culture announce a call for applying for the „Green Kindergarten” awards, so far granted to 109 kindergartens. The two ministries intend to

support the environmental education of the award-winning kindergartens by announcing more new programs.

- The call for the „Green Kindergarten” award was announced with the deadline till 15th February 2008.

5. Protection and management for habitats and species:

- The implementation of many previously started species protection actions continued, for example in the case of Great Bustard, Red-footed Falcon, Meadow Viper, Wolf and Lynx.
- The implementation of a Transition Facility project granted in 2006 was started, aiming to establish the monitoring of certain Natura 2000 species and habitats.
- In 2007 the National Biodiversity-monitoring System, a national program operated by the State Secretariat for Nature and Environment Protection of the Ministry of Environment and Water, was 10 years old. The task of this program is to observe the status and trends of biodiversity in Hungary in a long term. Currently monitored components are: habitats, plant associations, protected and invasive plant species, mosses, fungi, mammals (small mammals, tundra vole, bats, ground squirrel, mound-builder mouse, and dormouse), amphibians, reptiles, fish species, aquatic macroscopic invertebrates, dragonflies, butterflies, moths, arthropods living on the ground surface, Orthopterans. In the framework of the connected regional monitoring programs further groups are monitored according to characteristics of the areas (for example birds, molluscs, spiders, Trichopterans, algae, and zooplankton). In this year the results and experience achieved until now were summarised for the public in presentations held at a celebrative event at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Coloured brochures were also published in Hungarian and in English, presenting the National Biodiversity-monitoring System in an easy-to-understand style. A brochure series about the results of the monitoring of habitats, mosses and fungi was published for the experts and the next volume on zoological results is under editing. The Ministry of Environment and Water is engaged to the long term run of the National Biodiversity-monitoring System, which carries out the monitoring activity undertaken in the Countdown 2010 program at an even higher standard than previously expected.
- This year a brochure entitled 'European Strategy against invasive species' was published in Hungarian. A list of the species that pose potential or already perceptible threats to native communities or their components was drawn up in order to create the national strategy. The possible and necessary protection methods will be developed after accepting the final list of species by involving the wider expert public.
- The declaration of sites listed in the 1st section and their nature conservation management plans were also published. Furthermore, the management plan of another protected area was also published: Csigás-forest in Dénesmajor. So management plans were prepared for a total of 3,941.8 ha protected area in 2007.