

Nature and its values are of interest for the Republic of Croatia and enjoy its special protection

(the Nature Protection Act)

NATURE PROTECTION STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA FOR THE PERIOD 2017-2025

Source: Antun Cerovečki, *Parcs of Croatia*

There are almost 40,000 known species and subspecies in the Republic of Croatia, and it is assumed that the actual total number is in fact significantly higher. Despite the abundance of biodiversity and implementation of certain conservation measures, many wild species are endangered. In the Republic of Croatia, based on the IUCN criteria threat status has been assessed for almost 3,000 species, or 8% of known species. Out of the assessed species, 42.3% have been classified as species facing high risk of extinction, pointing to the need for further active conservation.

In the period of implementation of the 2nd Strategy since 2008, 450 new species been recorded and described. This is largely a result of intensified research connected with Croatia's EU accession process, in particular the preparation of the Natura 2000 ecological network.

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REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT
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Protected and conserved nature will ensure preservation of fundamental national values and potential for further development of the country. The Republic of Croatia will be a country with increased awareness on the importance of conservation of nature that allows multiple development paths through smart and sustainable use. Stronger involvement at local and regional level, education, intersectoral cooperation and public participation will lead to increased awareness on the need to protect nature through all levels of political, economic and social engagement.



Source: Dario Rogić, Pares of Croatia

Conservation of nature is one of the highest value of the constitutional order of the Republic of Croatia

(The Constitution of the Republic of Croatia)

The priorities of nature protection in the forthcoming period are strongly connected with the establishment of implementation mechanisms aiming to ensure a favourable conservation status of species and habitat types, primarily through setting up management framework for Natura 2000 network.

As the umbrella document for the nature protection in Croatia, Strategy aims to conserve biodiversity, maintain functional ecosystems and to enable long-term sustainable development. The Strategy promotes mitigation of direct and indirect impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity, sustainable use of natural resources, and an equitable distribution of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources. This Strategy aims to, inter alia, make natural values more recognized and to ensure adoption of strategic decisions at the local, regional and national level as well as to apply most recent scientific and expert knowledge in line with the global and EU nature policies.

National Strategic goals are deriving from the Aichi Targets of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the targets of the EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy

Strategy sets out 5 Strategic goals:

1 Increase effectiveness of key nature protection mechanisms

- 1.1. Ensure a clear, harmonized and feasible legislative and institutional framework for the implementation of nature conservation mechanisms
- 1.2. Design and establish a representative and functional network of areas important for nature conservation
- 1.3. Standardize management in nature protection and establish a performance monitoring system
- 1.4. Develop co-operative management modalities and strengthen communication

2 Reduce direct pressures on nature and promote sustainable use of natural resources

- 2.1. Ensure sustainable use of natural resources through sectorial planning documents
- 2.2. Strengthen the system for implementation of Ecological Network Impact Assessment
- 2.3. Ensure sustainable use of native wild species where their use is not regulated by special regulations
- 2.4. Protect genetic diversity and sustainably use of genetic resources
- 2.5. Conserve unfragmented natural areas and restore the most threatened degraded habitats
- 2.6. Establish management system for alien species, and implement measures for the prevention of introduction, spread and control of Invasive Alien Species

3 Strengthen the capacities of nature protection system

- 3.1. Strengthen institutional capacities in nature protection
- 3.2. Continue strengthening technical knowledge and skills for effective implementation of nature protection
- 3.3. Increase financial sustainability of the nature protection system

4 Increase the knowledge and availability of data on nature

- 4.1. Increase the knowledge on the state of nature
- 4.2. Increase the availability of data on the state of nature
- 4.3. Evaluate and map ecosystems and their services with the goal of assessing and improving their status

5 Raise the level of knowledge, understanding, and support for nature protection among the general public

- 5.1. Improve understanding and representation of nature-related topics and nature protection in the educational system and strengthen cooperation with the education sector
- 5.2. Promote and implement informal education on nature protection
- 5.3. Improve public information in order to raise awareness on nature and nature protection
- 5.4. Improve participation in decision-making directly or indirectly connected with nature protection.