

Protection of Species and Habitats

Published: 05.04.2020.

There are 18 047 animal, 5396 plant and 4000 mushroom species in Latvia. The scientists consider 907 species (about 3, 3% of total species) are rare and endangered. Wild plants and animals are significant part of each ecosystem. If one of the species vanishes, the linkage between species is disarranged. Also an opportunity to use currently unknown characteristics of the species for the benefit of humans may disappear.

In Latvia, requirements of protection of species and habitats are defined by the Law of Protection of Species and Habitats (ratified by the Parliament on 16.03.2000.). In compliance with this Law the lists of specially protected species and habitats have been established, where endangered, vanishing or rare species and habitats or species which inhabit specific habitats have been included. The species traditionally protected in Latvia, as well as protected species and habitats defined by the EU Birds or Biotopes Directives have been included in the list. 723 plant and animal species and 93 biotopes have been included in the lists of specially protected species and habitats in Latvia. This protected species and habitats lists have been adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers.

The protection of species and habitats is ensured in Specially Protected Nature Territories, including in the network of Natura 2000 territories, and microreserves. The establishment procedure of microreserves and protection requirements are defined by regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers "Regulations of Establishment, Protection and Management of Microreserves" (Nr. 45/2001).

In addition to the mentioned, the protection of species and habitats is ensured by providing accordant assessment to activities that can result in destroying of specially protected species or habitats.

Species or Habitats Management Plans are developed for particular species. In such management plans information about species' distribution, significant areas for protection of habitats, as well as population of species or tendencies, affecting factors, as well as measures to be taken for improving condition of species or habitats is aggregated.

Up to now, 8 Management Plans of Species have been developed and adopted in Latvia.

Latvian Environmental, Geological and Meteorological Agency maintains data base of protected plants species. This data base provides information on protected plant species (geographical location, quantitative and qualitative status), information covers historical information, as well as data on repeated inspection on the spot. Agency also maintains data base of microreserves. Data base provides information on object (species or biotope) for which microreserve has been established, location of microreserve (region, municipality, geographical coordinates and/or description of borders), as well as information on population of species or status of habitats.

<https://www.varam.gov.lv/en/protection-species-and-habitats>