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Publications:

<https://batsconserve.com/project-resources/library-of-studies/>

The BatsConserve Project

Bats are species of high conservation status - subject to Biological Diversity Act, Bern Convention, Bonn Convention, EUROBATS, Habitat Directive, IUCN Red List. Bats are essential for nature. The big sized bats eat various moths and worms that are harmful to agriculture and forestry. The small-sized bats eat mosquitoes and other double-winged insects - carriers of disease such as malaria and leishmania. Bats that eat fruit and flowers disperse seeds of more than 500 species of trees and shrubs and pollinate flowers. Considering ecology and distribution of bats in the cross border area their sustainable conservation requires joint actions.

The project's approach is based on research, assessments and taking integrated interventional and methodological measures for conservation of significant bat habitats, not only in NATURA 2000 sites, but also in surrounded areas. These parts of NATURA 2000 sites, where measures are taken for improving bat habitats will contribute to the Programme's aim for better conservation status of habitats. The target groups under the project include the population from both sides of the border, local governments aimed at biodiversity conservation, land owners and land users, forestries and stakeholders.

The project is implemented under the partnership of the South-West University "Neofit Rilski" in Blagoegrad, Bulgaria and the Aristotle University in Thessaloniki, Greece.

What's done so far



During its first year of implementation the project already achieved the following results:

1. Developed Communication strategy and plan.
2. Launched a website, where the scientific publications will be published and will also host Geoportal.
3. Some desk and field studies were performed.

Research so far



There are several desk and field studies that have been carried out within the project: Report on available information on bat populations, research on parentage between bats from both sides of the border based on molecular genetic identification of threats, etc.

In the autumn of 2018, the project territory was designated and the first desk study was produced by the BatMap consortium – Report containing an analysis of available data (including spatial) of bat species in the project territory. According to this study, 23 bat species were identified in the Bulgarian part of the project territory. Most of the species have habitats in **BG0001021 “Reka Mesta” and BG0001028 „Sreden Pirin Alibotush”** (19 species) and least species in **BG0000167 „Belasitsa”** (9 species). The examination of secondary sources for the Greek part resulted in 22 identified species. Most of the species have potential habitats in **GR1140003 Periochi Elatia, Pyramis Koutra** (10 species) and least species in **GR140004 Koryfes Orous Falakro** (4 species).

Several field studies were also carried out in both the Bulgarian and the Greek part of the project territory. The Greek team had 5 expeditions at 27 sampling sites including 19 species and collected 164 samples. The species identified during the field work of the Bulgarian team include: *Hypsugo savi*; *Myotis blythii*; *Myotis daubentoniid*; *Myotis myotis*; *Myotis capaccinii*; *Myotis sp.*; *Miniopterus schreibersii*; *Nyctalus sp.*; *Pipistrellus kuhlii*; *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*; *Pipistrellus sp.*; *Plecotus austriacus*; *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*; *Rhinolophus hipposideros*; *Rhinolophus blasii*; *Rhinolophus euryale*; *Rhinolophus sp.*; *Tadarida teniotis*; *Vespertilio murinus*.

For additional information visit our website:

<http://www.batsconserve.com>

What comes next



In the next few months the field and desk studies will continue.

Six trainings will be organized in the period May-June 2019 in Greece and Bulgaria.

Info days will take place in Blagoevgrad and Thessaloniki.