



Republic of North Macedonia

**Ministry of Environment
and Physical Planning**

North Macedonia

**Workshop on National Action Plans on the Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory
Birds**

Montenegro, Podgorica 2-4 September 2024



August 2024

Legislative frameworks

The Law on Nature Protection (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia” No. 67/04, 14/06, 84/07, 35/10, 47/11, 148/11, 59/12, 13/13, 163/13, 41/14, 146/15, 39/16, 63/16, 113/18 and 151/21

A new law on Nature – Fully approximate with EU Habitats and Bird Directives, on procedure for adoption, where **draft sub-laws in relation od Natura 2000 were developed**

New CITES law on preparation

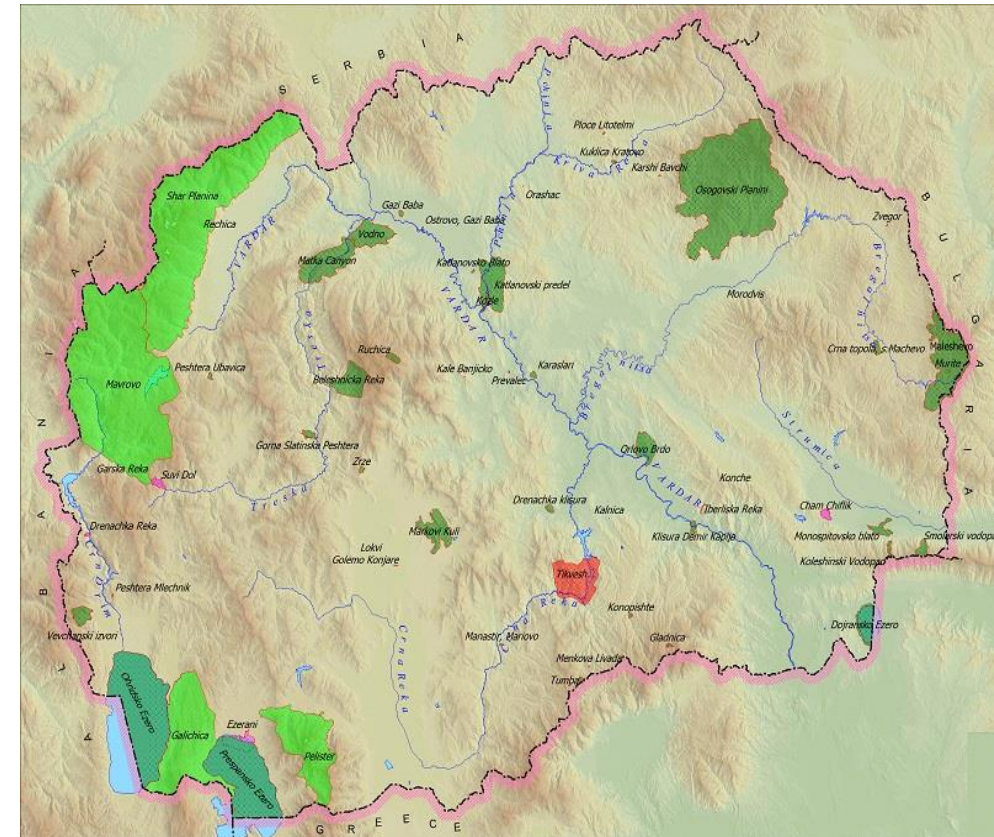
National Strategy for Nature Protection and Action Plan (2017- 2027) adopted by the Government 2018

National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2018-2023) adopted by the Government 2018 - new is under planning under CBD GBF



Recent development regarding PA

- **13.9 %** protected area in the country
- **3 new PA was proclaimed** in past years: NP Sara Mounutan, PL Osogovski planini and PA Malesevo
- National parks cover **about 6.91% of the country's territory**, followed by **nature monuments with 3.0%**, while all other categories of protected areas cover about **4.01%** of the country's territory.
- With the declaration of the locality Studenchiško and Belchiško Blato as new protected areas and the re-declaration of Matka Canyon, Ohrid Lake and Dolna Pcinja as a protected area, **the percentage of protected areas at the national level is expected to increase.**

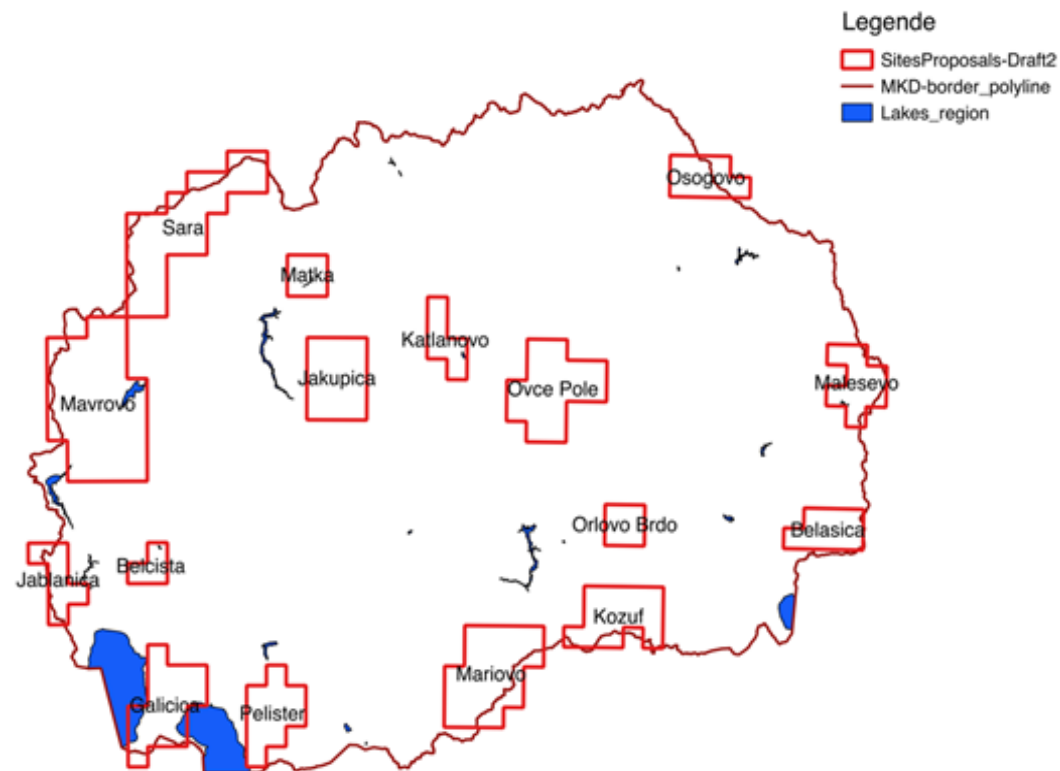


NATURA 2000

In 2017/18, the MoEPP together in cooperation with national experts in the field biology, ecology and forestry, after the collected overall literature data and the field research carried to identified potential areas so N2K in whole country.

In relation to the requirements of the Habitats and Birds Directives up to now, **12 sites were identified as potential Natura 2000 sites in the country.**

ongoing EU IPA project **Improving capacities for Natura 2000 and CITES (2022-2024)** for identification of new N2K sites as well preparation of new CITES law as well increase national capacity



PROTECTED AREAS WITH INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION STATUS

- List of World Heritage of UNESCO
 - Lake OHRID (1979/1980) Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid region
 - Dlaboka Reka (NP Mavrovo) (2021) Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests
- Tentative list of UNESCO
 - SP Markovi kuli (2004)
 - SP Cave Slatinski Spring (2004)
- Site List of Ramsar Convention
 - Prespa Lake (1995)
 - Dojran Lake (2007)
 - Ohrid lake (2016)
- Biosphere Reserve Prespa - Ohrid, UNESCO (2014)



In the Republic of North Macedonia, the national institutions with legislative authority concerned with the issue of wildlife poisoning are:

- The Ministry for Environment and Physical Planning
- The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy

With regard to investigative and law enforcement authority, the relevant institutions for the Republic of North Macedonia are:

- Ministry of Interior/Department for forensic technical examinations and expertise
- Faculty of Veterinary Medicine Skopje
- Agency for Food and Veterinary
- State Environmental Inspectorate
- State inspectorate for Forestry and Hunting

Legislation in the Republic of North Macedonia

The Republic of North Macedonia has good national legislation in place regarding the use of poisonous substances in the natural environment. The use of poison baits was declared illegal in 1985 and wildlife poisoning remains an illegal activity which is sanctioned according to Criminal Law.

There are several laws in North Macedonia that are concerned either with the protection and wellbeing of animals, refer to wildlife poisoning directly, or alternatively deal with the application of toxic substances in agriculture or the natural environment generally.



Griffon Vulture

*The following laws comprise the national legislation which is relevant for the problem of **wildlife poisoning** in North Macedonia:*

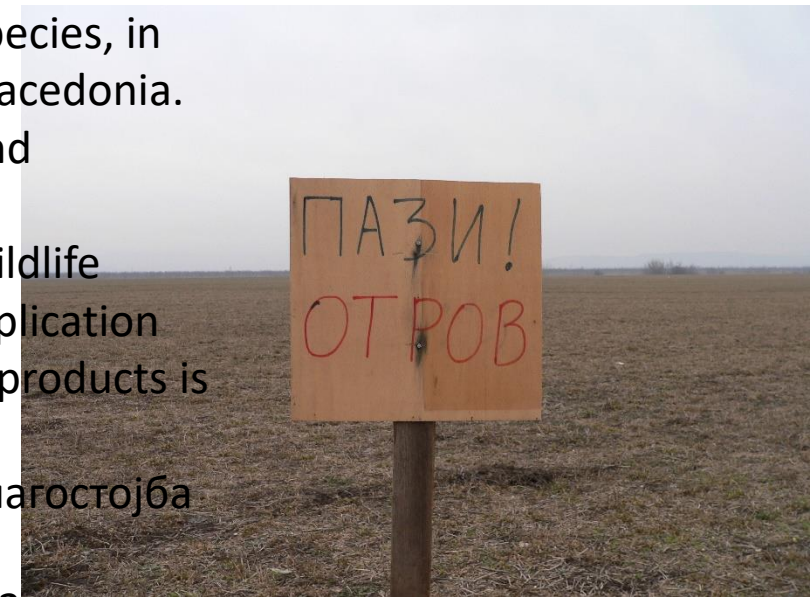
1. **Hunting law** – Article 54. of this law states that all means of hunting that lead to massive losses to populations of game animals are prohibited, including the use of poisonous substances.

2. **Law on nature protection** – Article 43. states that indiscriminate means of shooting and capturing wild species are prohibited, as well as the use of substances which may cause the local depletion or serious disturbance of the populations of those species, in accordance with international agreements ratified by the Republic of North Macedonia. This applies in particular to: poison and tranquilizing substances and poison and tranquilizing baits.

3. **Law on plant protection products** – This law does not specifically refer to wildlife poisoning, however it is important because it regulates the legal usage and application of toxic substance in agriculture. The inadequate use and application of these products is often a source of unintentional wildlife poisoning.

4. **The law on the protection and welfare of animals** – Закон за заштита и благостојба на животните („Службен весник на Република Македонија “бр. 149/2014)

5. **Criminal Law of the Republic of North Macedonia** – article 230, 228 and 233



“Be careful, poison” signs in arable land are not uncommon



**STOP WILDLIFE
POISONING!**

Current situation in the country

Wildlife poisoning is well documented in North Macedonia

The relevant institutions keep records of all legally processed cases of wildlife poisoning, whereas the Macedonian Ecological Society (MES) monitors cases of poisoning and suspected poisoning incidents, and mortality of birds of prey which has occurred in the past 30 years.

Poisoning was the most serious reason for vulture decline in Macedonia and declared poisoning to be of potentially critical importance for the Bearded and Cinereous Vulture, and of very high importance for the Griffon and Egyptian Vulture.



From a poisoning incident in 2003. Photo T. Lisichanets

Forensic toxicological analysis has been conducted in **only 2** events and remains the biggest gap in conducting proper investigation of poisoning incidents in North Macedonia. In both cases Methomyl was identified as the substance used for poisoning. Relevant national laboratories are lacking operational capacities and equipment to conduct analysis of samples from wild animals and this issue should represent one of the priorities in future actions concerning combating wildlife poisoning in the country.

A total of 6 species of wild animals have been found poisoned or presumably poisoned during the period from 2000-2020 in North Macedonia.

- most common victims by far were Griffon Vultures, with mortality recorded in 75,8% poisoning and presumably poisoning incidents. A total of 102-125 individuals were found poisoned and presumably poisoned within 22 separate events.
- The second most numerous victim of poisoning events in North Macedonia is the Egyptian Vulture (4 individuals in 2 separate incidents), followed by Imperial Eagle (3 individuals in 2 separate incidents).
- Other species affected by this practice include Golden Eagle, Common Buzzard, Golden Jackal and Hooded Crow.



Poisoning incident in 2019 claimed lives of 3 Golden Jackals and 2 Imperial Eagles

Educational and anti-poisoning activities regarding illegal bird poisoning in North Macedonia

Since 2006 anti-poison activities including workshops and educational lectures have been held for various groups of stakeholders in North Macedonia. In 2006, 4 workshops were held for representatives of different inspectorates (120 attendees in total). Parallel to this, 20 educational lectures were held in villages.

In 2010 again, two workshops were held for the inspectorates (for approximately 60 more people). Educational lectures for villagers in vulture regions that were defined by the scope of the Balkan Vulture Action Plan were continued during the period of 2008-2009.

When it comes to veterinary professionals, a capacity-building training was held for veterinarians in 2012 at the Veterinary Faculty in Skopje, concerning anatomopathological analyses and basic toxicological analyses.



Previous ongoing projects concerning wildlife poisoning

- Egyptian Vulture New Life - Reinforcement of the easternmost population of the Egyptian vulture (*Neophron percnopterus*) in Europe by delivering urgent conservation measures towards eliminating major known threats in the breeding grounds and along the flyway.

Organization: Macedonian Ecological Society, 2018-2022

- Balkan Anti-Poisoning Project - Preparation of a national strategy addressing wildlife poisoning incidents by involving competent institutions, extending institutional capacity and raising public awareness.

Organization: Macedonian Ecological Society, 2018 - 2020

- Vulture Conservation Project in Macedonia - Vulture conservation in the Balkans and the neighbouring countries.

Organization: Macedonian Ecological Society, 2002-2008



National training for officials

The National Action Plan for the fight against poisons in the Republic of North Macedonia was prepared by the National Working Group for the fight against poisons. The development of this action plan was a project activity within the Balkan Anti-Poison Project (BAPP), which is part of the Mediterranean Anti-Poison Project - MAPP (Combating Poisoning - Reducing Mortality of Vultures [and other vultures and raptors birds] caused by poison baits and lead ammunition throughout the Mediterranean.

Adoption pending.



**НАЦИОНАЛЕН АКЦИСКИ
ПЛАН ЗА БОРБА ПРОТИВ
ТРУЕЊЕ ДИВИ ЖИВОТНИ
ВО РЕПУБЛИКА СЕВЕРНА МАКЕДОНИЈА**

**НАЦИОНАЛНА РАБОТНА ГРУПА ЗА БОРБА
ПРОТИВ ТРУЕЊЕ ДИВИ ЖИВОТНИ**



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Poaching

Less documented, but present:

- Killing protected species
- Hunting in no-hunt areas (parts of protected sites, lakes, fishponds, etc.)



Plastic decoy and hunting spot ad Lake Dojran Monument of Nature



Pellets in Lesser Kestrel carcasses


Law on hunting (Official Gazette 263/2023) in conflict with international legislation

Spring hunting is still allowed
Some species of conservation concern can be hunted

https://flightforsurvival.org/how-the-illegal-killing-of-birds-is-infecting-social-media/

ds Countries Threats Our Mission Migration About IKB Newsletter Animal cruelty

How one Facebook photo exposed an international conservation treaty violation



It is infuriating, but not uncommon, to see advertisements inviting hunters to shoot migratory birds in foreign countries with weaker nature protection laws. In this particular post, an Italian company unabashedly offered waterbird-killing holidays in North Macedonia. They used an image showing several freshly-killed duck species, including Ferruginous Ducks: a threatened species of international conservation concern.

Hunting these threatened ducks is illegal for signatories of the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement – an international conservation treaty under the umbrella of the United Nations Environment Programme. As it turns out, North Macedonia has signed this treaty – so why was the hunting company claiming it was legal there?

The Committee Against Bird Slaughter (CABS) reported this to North Macedonia's Ministry of Environment. Shockingly, they claimed that the hunting the threatened Ferruginous Duck was indeed legal in the country: a clear violation of the conservation treaty. This case is still ongoing...

Species\Month	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3
<i>Anas acuta</i>								
<i>Anas crecca</i>								
<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>								
<i>Spatula querquedula</i>								
<i>Branta ruficollis</i>								
<i>Anser albifrons</i>								
<i>Anser anser</i>								
<i>Anser erythropus</i>								
<i>Anser fabalis</i>								
<i>Aythya ferina</i>								
<i>Aythya fuligula</i>								
<i>Aythya nyroca</i>								
<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>								
<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>								

THANK YOU FOR ATTENTION

WWW.MOEPP.GOV.MK

WWW.NATURA2000.GOV.MK

HTTP://REDLIST.MOEPP.GOV.MK

HABITATNAKARTA.MOEPP.GOV.MK

