

EEA-42 Biodiversity



Ministerstvo životního prostředí

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NEWS

Project name: Measures for Stopping the Loss of Biodiversity at Statewide and Regional Level

Project Nr.: EHP-CZ02-OV-1-026-2015

Project location: Various locations throughout the Czech Republic

Financial support: EEA Grants, The CZ02 Programme – Biological Diversity and Ecosystem Services / Monitoring and Integrated Planning and Control in the Environment / Adaptation to Climate Changes

Total Resources: 9,999,619 CZK incl. VAT

Financing: Financial resources from EEA Grants are assigned in the amount of 7,999,695 CZK, which is 80% of the anticipated total project expenditure. The state budget grants financial resources in the amount of 1,999,924 CZK, which is 20% of the anticipated total project expenditure.

Project duration: 1.1.2015 – 30.4.2017

Project partners: no partners

Project guarantee:

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Project Objective and Scope:

The loss of biodiversity is now among the most serious environmental issues, probably the most serious issue in Europe and in the Czech Republic as well. This was also why the Convention on Biological Diversity set forth the objective to stop the loss of biodiversity in EU countries by 2010 (the “2010 Biodiversity Target”). Unfortunately, this target is quite far from being fulfilled, and the loss continues. Moreover, it has now turned out that the legislative protection itself in selected areas without further follow-up steps does not suffice. There is a massive loss of biodiversity resulting from poor management or the absence of management even in areas with the highest level of protection. This project contains three main steps to stop or slow down the loss of biodiversity in the Czech Republic. The realisation and preparation of the action plans is a measure which treats the critical situation for the most endangered species. The realisation of regional action plans will allow regional support for important and seriously endangered species, often ideal candidates for an action plan, for which, however, no action plan has been approved. These regional action plans were conceived to include the umbrella species, conserving of which will lead to the conservation of other species endangered at the European, national or regional level. The preparation of new Red Lists (in connection with the chapter entitled “Preparation of Red Lists of Endangered Species and Other Professional Documents”) is now necessary and is based on the fact that the existing Red Lists are obsolete while still being the most important source of information on biodiversity. Other activities within this project are the translation and publishing of the Action Plan for the Eurasian Beaver (*Castor fiber*) into English and German, the

preparation of a new website for the action plans and expenses for the Project Management and Publicity.

Description of Individual Parts of the Project

Regional Action Plan for the Western Capercaillie (*Tetrao urogallus*) in the Beskydy Protected Landscape Area

The Western Capercaillie (*Tetrao urogallus*) is a critically endangered species of the galliforms, bound to old spruce stands. Its critical decline not only in Central Europe has been attended by ornithologists and professionals. Despite strict legal protection, the survival of the species cannot be guaranteed without the protection of suitable biotopes, old sparsely stocked spruce stands. The Beskydy Protected Landscape Area is one of the last places in the Czech Republic where this species occurs. The action plan will treat the concept of long-term survival of the Western Capercaillie in the Beskydy PLA, including selection of the most suitable places where forest management measures will be made to support the species, such as opening up of the stand and planting suitable tree species. The Western Capercaillie is a typical umbrella species whose protection provides suitable conditions for other rare species bound to mountain spruce forests.

Regional Action Plan for the Ukrainian Brook Lamprey (*Eudontomyzon mariae*)

The Ukrainian Brook Lamprey (*Eudontomyzon mariae*) is a non-anadromous and non-parasitic species. The Czech Republic is on the western margin of its natural range, with the only known site in the Czech Republic being the Raci brook (also called Racinka) near Velke Losiny, part of the River Morava's catchment area. However, numbers of Ukrainian Brook Lamprey have seriously declined since the first reported occurrence in 1968. Works were made to the watercourse in the 1990s which considerably reduced the broken character of the bed and reduced the silt areas which are necessary for the development of the ammocoetes (larvae), and the passage where the larvae were reported has shrunk from 2 km to only 300 m today. This activity proposes specific up-to-date measures which are necessary to preserve the species, including rescue catching of the larvae washed ashore and their reintroduction, and the catching of Freshwater Brown Trout.

Regional Action Plan for the Sudeten Ringlet (*Erebia sudetica*) in Maly Ded

The forest-free mountain area in Maly Ded is a valuable biotope in terms of the whole Czech Republic, with the occurrence of many endangered plant and animal species. However, the site is endangered by the spread of the dwarf pine, which had been planted here and has intensely spread over the site to actually endanger the unique local fauna and flora. This part of the project deals primarily with the rescue measures for the local subpopulation of the endemic subspecies of *Erebia sudetica* ssp. *sudetica*, as well as many other montane species. The realisation lies in eradication and removal of some of the dwarf pine from the site.

Regional Action Plan for the Grayling (*Hipparchia semele*) and Owlfly Ascalaphid (*Libelloides macaronius*)

The Grayling (*Hipparchia semele*) is bound to short-culm steppe grasses and is among the most endangered Czech butterfly species. This once ordinary species with countrywide occurrence has been affected by reductions in extensive pasture and has disappeared in the whole historical area of Moravia and Silesia, with the last few populations surviving in Bohemia. The Zlaty kun National Nature Monument, located in the Cesky kras (Czech Karst) Protected Landscape Area, is host to the most numerous surviving population of the species in the Czech Republic, and similarly as at other steppe sites faces the issue of spreading vegetation. This part of the project will seek to implement pasture, and the extension of suitable biotopes will be achieved by the removal of self-seeding tree species. Protection of the Grayling will support the populations of many other insect species which are near extinction, such as the critically endangered Owlfly Ascalaphid (*Libelloides macaronius*) which still occurs at the site.

Regional Action Plan for the Eurasian minnow (*Phoxinus phoxinus*)

The Eurasian minnow (*Phoxinus phoxinus*) is another species whose populations have rapidly declined in the Czech Republic. Once a species with countrywide occurrence, it has disappeared over the past decades from most of the brooks in the Vysocina (Highlands) and more numerous populations of this fish are known at only a few sites. The root causes are changes in the fish's environment, namely regulation of small watercourses, their fragmentation and a large-scale increase in the contents of nutrients in the water which prevents successful reproduction, and also the rearing of the Brown Trout in

upper courses. The plan will propose specific measures for the identified sites, consistent monitoring of the sites where the species has recently or historically occurred, water quality analysis at the historical and recent sites, and direct measures to protect the species, such as limiting the rearing of Brown Trout fry at sites where the Eurasian minnow occurs, revitalising measures on watercourses and support for local populations of the Eurasian minnow in the catchment area.

Regional Action Plan for the Variegated Horsetail (*Equisetum variegatum*) in the Litovelske Pomoravi Protected Landscape Area

The Variegated Horsetail (*Equisetum variegatum*) is a very rare species in the Czech Republic. In the Red List it is classified as a very endangered species (C2b) and in Decree 395/1992 Coll. as a critically endangered species. It has greater requirements for light, requires a specific water regime and is weak as regards competitiveness. The fitness of the population is endangered by the direct liquidation of biotopes, namely by construction works in sand pits and quarries or changes in the use of sites, by succession changes, changes in the water regime, often caused by dropping levels of ground water, and by eutrophication of the sites where the surrounding vegetation massively spreads. The project assumes to remove the top layer on part of the area of the Mohelnice sand pit and Nemilany brickworks in order to create suitable biotopes to allow the growth of this species. To obtain more detailed information on the ecology and fitness of the populations, monitoring of recent sites is planned together with verification of the possible occurrence of this species near the Litovelske Pomoravi area and around Olomouc. Selected sites with suitable conditions will be used for plants collected from strong populations, such as the Mohelnice sand pit or the Naklo gravel pit, aiming to establish other ("spare") sites.

Regional Action Plan for the *Tephroseris longifolia* subsp. *moravica* plant

Tephroseris longifolia subsp. *moravica* is an endemic plant in the westernmost part of the Carpathians, a critically endangered taxon and a species of European importance included in Annex II to the Directive on the sites of the Natura 2000 system. It only occurs in the White Carpathians in the Czech Republic, namely in their northern parts around Brumov-Bylnice and Nedasova Lhota, with historical occurrence reported at four other sites. The population sizes fluctuate or tend to diminish. This project should outline ideal conditions for the development of the populations and their strengthening. The project includes practical interventions, setting up appropriate management and support for the populations by cultivating seeds and planting at selected sites.

Preparation of the Action Plan for the Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*)

This task comprises the revision, more detailed specification and completion of the action plan draft for this critically endangered species, in line with the accession of the Czech Republic to the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Central-European Populations of the Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*) in the Czech Republic and the fulfilment of other tasks in the action plan for the Great Bustard, whereby the main emphasis is put on monitoring of the conditions of the sites and changes concerning the sites in which special management is and will be provided in cooperation with the land owners and those who use the land. The aim of this action plan is to support, in the long run, the return of the Great Bustard to the Czech Republic – South Moravia Region, by means of pro-active measures in the selected sites, especially by changing the composition of crop species and the method of use in cooperation with the local farmers. This will also require adequate public awareness and an explanation of the conservation measures and proposals. The proposed changes in land use will improve the conditions for many other organisms, such as field birds, insects and other invertebrates, as well as other plants.

Preparation of the New Red Lists of Vascular Plants, Vertebrates and Invertebrates

The Red Lists are an established source of information of the status of animal, plant and fungi species. They analyse the probability that they may become extinct in the future by using standard categories and criteria. The Czech Red Lists contain assessments of almost all groups of species. On the other hand, the use of standard criteria and categories is not always fully complied with, which is a result of a lack of central coordination in this activity. The Red Lists are used to assess the composition of communities, as the underlying documents for the proposals of various conservation measures or for environmental impact assessments. This part of the project aims at preparing and publishing up-to-date Red Lists as per the IUCN standards, for selected groups of organisms, which would be bilingual (Czech – English), as separate

monothematic volumes of the Nature magazine and in electronic format.