FORMAT FOR REPORTS

OF THE PARTIES
AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF AFRICAN-EURASIAN MIGRATORY WATERBIRDS (The Hague, 1995)

Implementation during the period 2002 and 2004

Contracting Party: Slovak Republic

Designated AEWA Administrative Authority: Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic

Full name of the institution: Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic

Name and title of the head of the institution: Mgr. Peter Pilinský
Mailing address: Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic
Námestie Š. Štúra č. 1
812 35 Bratislava 1

Telephone: 00421/2/5956 2189
Fax: 00421/2/5956 2207
Email: pilinsky.peter@enviro.gov.sk
# Table of Contents

1. Overview of Action Plan implementation &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &nbsp; &n
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appendix 4:</th>
<th>List of research and monitoring programmes and projects</th>
<th>43</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 5:</td>
<td>List of national institutions involved in migratory waterbird conservation</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 6:</td>
<td>List of relevant World Wide Web addresses for national institutions involved in migratory waterbird conservation</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 7:</td>
<td>List of relevant migratory waterbird and habitat conservation projects initiated, ongoing or completed in the last three years</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overview of Action Plan implementation

Slovak Republic has supported the development of the African - Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA). Slovakia has a long history of support for international cooperation to conserve waterfowl since it holds important water bird breeding and wintering areas and is located on important migration route.

1.1 Summary of progress to date

This report for the third Meeting of the Parties (MoP) covers the implementation period 2002-2004. It provides information about Slovakian initiatives in relation to the conservation of migratory water birds and their wetland habitats. The report is based on information drawn from governmental and non-governmental organizations.

Species conservation
- An account of Slovak legislation regarding the conservation of water bird
- The status national single-species or management plans
- An account of procedures for responding to emergency situations in place
- A review of non-native species control

Habitats conservation
- An account of Slovak legislation regarding the conservation of habitats important for water bird
- The status of national habitat action plans
- The status of management plans for important sites
- An account of Slovak recent review of Special Protected areas (SPAs) designated under Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds

Management of human activities
- The extend of eco-tourism in the Slovak Republic and of relevance to water bird conservation

Monitoring and research
- A review of the main research and monitoring projects concerning the protection of water birds in Slovakia

Education and Information
- A review of the main training, education and public awareness projects which are linked to water bird conservation

1.2 Outline of planned actions for national implementation over the next three years

The priorities for national implementation over the next three years

1.3 Outline of priorities for international co-operation over the next three years
2. Species conservation

Legal measures

2.1 Has a national policy/strategy or legislation to protect and conserve species covered by the Agreement (Table 1: column A; column B) and their supporting important areas been developed? If so:

a. What are the main features of the policy/legislation?

Slovakia has a wide range of strategies, policies and plans alongside a comprehensive legislative framework which affords statutory protection to wild birds. The key legislative tools are:

- the Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 543/2002 on Nature and Landscape Protection
- the Regulation of the Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic No. 24/2003

The Slovak legal obligations under AEWA closely relate to existing obligation under the EC Directive of the Conservation of Wild birds (79/409/EEC). The Agri-environment schemes are one of the example of the wild bird protection in wider countryside.

b. Which organisations are responsible for implementation?

- the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic
- the Ministry of Land Use of the Slovak Republic (for game birds)
- the State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic

c. How does it relate to other national initiatives (e.g. national Biodiversity Action Plans)?

As a response to the 1992 CBD, Slovakia developed a National Biodiversity Strategy and updated National Action Plan for the Implementation of National Biodiversity Strategy (2003 – 2010) for the conservation and enhancement of biological diversity and sustainable use of biological resources. The plan also contributes to the conservation of global biodiversity through appropriate mechanisms.

2.2 What legal measures or practices has your country developed to prohibit or regulate for the following (refer also to section 4 on hunting):

a. Taking of, and trade in birds listed in Column A and B of Table 1 (where utilization or trade contravenes the provisions set out in paragraphs 2.1.1 (a) and 2.1.2 of the Action Plan)?

The taking of, and trade in, birds listed in Table 1 of the AEWA Action Plan is regulated under the Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 543/2002 on Nature and Landscape Protection and its Regulation of the Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic No. 24/2003.

According to this Act and its Regulation, it is prohibited to:
a) capture, wound or kill protected animals in their natural environment,
b) disturb protected animals in their natural development, especially to disturb them in a period of their breeding, rearing, hibernation, migration,
c) disturb and damage habitats of protected animals, especially their dwellings, nests or sites for breeding, acquiring food, resting, moulting or wintering,
d) destroy development phases of protected animals in wild including empty eggs,
e) collect development phases of protected animals in wild including empty eggs,
f) possess protected animals including possession of empty eggs from wild,
g) breed protected animals in captivity,
h) sell, buy or exchange and offer protected animals for sale or exchange,
i) move or transport protected animals,
j) carry out interspecies hybridisation of protected animals,
k) export protected animals.

According to higher mentioned Act, all bird species, occurring in Slovakia are protected. Some of the birds which are listed as a game birds with the open hunting season can be exploited in accordance with the Hunting Law.

b. Methods of taking?

Prohibited methods and means of capture and killing of protected animals are for stated in § 9 of Regulation of the Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic No. 24/2003 as follow:

1. snares, hooks,
2. capture of birds on lime,
3. using blind or otherwise mutilated animals as live bait,
4. tape recorders or other sound devices,
5. electric or electronic devices capable of killing or stunning,
6. artificial light sources, mirrors and devices for dazzling targets,
7. sighting devices for night shooting with electronic image magnifier or image inversion and similar devices enabling night shooting,
8. explosives and chemicals,
9. bows, muzzle-loaders, air and gas weapons, and crossbows,
10. capture of animals into nets and other devices with the intention of their subsequent killing,
11. capture in traps except those in which animals are captured live and uninjured,
12. poisons or poisoned or anaesthetic bait2,
13. gassing or smoking out;
14. automatic weapons shooting by individual shots or bursts with magazine capable of holding more than two rounds of ammunition,
15. capture and killing of protected animals from airplanes, moving motor vehicles and from boats sailing at a speed in excess of five kilometres per hour,

c. Setting of taking limits and monitoring these limits?


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2 § 181a to 181c of Penal Code.
Landscape Protection and its Regulation of the Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic No. 24/2003 is stating also conditions which have to be fulfilled to get permission (exception) for killing protected species (including birds). For details of exceptions see point e).

Exception from the Act is allowed by the Ministry of Environment of Slovak Republic, which gives also condition on fulfillment of the exceptions. Ministry is also doing evidence of such exceptions in national scale, thus monitor fulfillment of exception with the help of controlling authority – Slovak Inspection of the Environment.

For other limits concerning hunting species, please see point 4.1

d. Sustainable hunting of species listed in Categories 2 and 3 (and marked by an asterisk) in Column A only?

Only two species listed in Category 2 and 3 in Column are sustainable hunted in Slovakia (see table no. 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bird species</th>
<th>Open hunting season</th>
<th>Column / Category of Action plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White-fronted Goose (<em>Anser albifrons</em>)</td>
<td>16.10. - 15.1.</td>
<td>A / 3c*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greylag Goose (<em>Anser anser</em>)</td>
<td>16.10. - 15.1.</td>
<td>A / 2*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ministry of Environment of Slovak Republic could allow the exception from the Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 543/2002 on Nature and Landscape Protection. The exception may be allowed only:

a) to protect affected species or natural habitats,

b) to prevent serious damage, mainly of harvest, livestock, forests, fish farming, game keeping, water management,

c) to protect health and safety of inhabitants, safety of the state or other important public interests prevailing nature and landscape protection including social and economic reasons with favorable impact on the environment,

d) for research and educational purposes, repatriation of species into their habitats and for possessing, growing or breeding in captivity of affected species that are necessary for these purposes.

### Single Species Action Plans

2.3 Of the species covered by the Agreement (species listed in Table 1: column A), which spend part or all of their life history in your country, which have formal international (Category 1, species marked with an asterisk) or national (column A) Single Species Action Plans:

a. Proposed?

b. In preparation?
c. Being implemented?
Under the Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 543/2002 on Nature and Landscape Protection it is possible to prepare Rescue plan for single species, which content is identical with the SAP content. The Rescue plan for species is prepared by expert organization State Nature Conservancy of Slovak Republic and approved by Ministry of Environment of SR.
Single species action plan is in preparation only for Ferruginous duck (\textit{Aythya nyroca}). Recently data of occurrence are collected and SAP is in preparation, consulted with experts. Afterwards, it will be submitted to Ministry of Environment of Slovak Republic, which will approve it.
No other species listed in Table 1 Column A have species action plan prepared or in preparation.

Please append a list of species and their action plan status. (For international plans indicate which other countries are involved in plan development/implementation.)

Emergency measures

2.4 Describe any bilateral or multilateral co-operative action that your country has undertaken to develop and implement emergency measures to conserve species in response to unfavorable or endangering conditions occurring in the Agreement area.

Each year is under coordination of BirdLife International organized winter census of migrating birds, including AEWA species. There is wild geese wintering site on border with Austria, which is protected and monitored. Monitoring joint venture census program for nesting birds and migrating birds in northern Slovakia and part of southern Poland is realized. Also habitat and species protection is assigned through bilateral Ramsar sites, Biospherical reservations (MaB), PAN-PARK program and also trilateral site in Poloniny NP where European Diploma is obtained.

Re-establishments

2.5 Has a policy on species re-establishments been developed in your country? If yes, please outline the main features of the policy and give details of any re-establishment programmes for species covered by the Agreement.

No special policy has been developed in Slovakia. All species re-establishment, restitution and reintroduction must be realized with awareness of Ministry of Environment of SR and its expert organization. All such activities are realized according to IUCN Guidelines for Re-introductions.

Introductions
2.6 Has your country developed and implemented legal measures to prohibit the introduction of nonnative species? Please provide details, particularly describing measures to control the release or introduction of non-native species (please indicate which species and their status).

National Strategy on Invasive Alien Species is being developed based on the Global/European Strategy on Invasive Alien Species. The Strategy will address comprehensive measures to prevent the introduction of, control or eradicate invasive alien species in Slovakia. The Strategy will also tackle the policy and legal review process as in Slovakia several ministries/departments and organizations have responsibilities for some aspects of invasive alien species (e.g. prevention, management) and several different laws are relevant (nature conservation, plant and animal health). However, the most important is the Act No.543/2002 Coll. on Nature and Landscape Protection. Its provisions provide a frame for the protection of natural species composition of ecosystems; they deal with e.g. intentional dissemination of alien species, trade in invasive alien species, elimination of invasive alien species. As for strategic documents, invasive species matters have been incorporated in the National Biodiversity Strategy (approved by the Government of SR and National Council of SR in 1997). Action Plan for the Implementation of National Biodiversity Strategy was updated and approved in 2002. Cooperation with the focal points of other conventions and international organizations is not systematic. This ad hoc cooperation should be replaced by the coordination mechanism that needs to be identified within National Strategy on Invasive Alien Species.

Slovakia is still missing a comprehensive system of risk analysis.

Branta canadensis is an example of non-native waterbird.

3. Habitat conservation

Habitat inventories

3.1 Has your country developed and published inventories of important habitats for species covered by the Agreement? If yes, please provide details, including any provisions to maintain or update these inventories.

National list of proposed Special Protected Areas (SPAs) was approved by the decree of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 636 dated July 9, 2003. National list of SPAs contains 38 proposed sites. SPAs are new category which was incubed into our juridical system in accordance with transposition of EC Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds. More than 55 % of the area of proposed SPAs is already covered by national network of protection areas (for example National Parks, Nature Reserves).

Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic in accordance with § 26 of the Act no. 543/2002 proclames by the regulation all the SRAs as protected areas.
3.2 Has your country undertaken a strategic review of sites to develop a national network of important sites or areas for species covered by the Agreement? Please append a list of identified sites of international importance.

Ramsar sites designation in Slovakia has focused on designating internationally important localities for waterbirds. Below in table no. 2 we listed those Ramsar sites in Slovakia which are important because they support animal species at a critical stage in their life cycle, provide refuge during adverse conditions or support 1% of the individuals in a population of one species or subspecies of waterbird.

Review of Slovak Ramsar sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Ramsar site</th>
<th>Area (ha)</th>
<th>Habitat types</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paríž marches</td>
<td>184,0</td>
<td>M, Tp, U, W, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Šúr</td>
<td>1136,6</td>
<td>M, N, Tp, Ts, U, W, Xf, 2, 4, 7, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danube floodplain</td>
<td>14488,0</td>
<td>L, M, O, P, Tp, Ts, W, Xf, 1, 4, 6, 7, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morava River floodplain</td>
<td>5380,0</td>
<td>M, O, P, Tp, Ts, W, Xf, 4, 7, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rudava River valley</td>
<td>560,0</td>
<td>M, Tp, Ts, U, W, Xf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turiec wetlands</td>
<td>466,9</td>
<td>M, Tp, Ts, U, W, Xf Y, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poiplie</td>
<td>410,9</td>
<td>M, Tp, Ts, Xf, 3, 4, 7, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wetlands of Orava Basin</td>
<td>9264,0</td>
<td>M, Tp, Ts, U, W, Xf, Xp, 4, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orava River</td>
<td>865,0</td>
<td>M, Tp, Ts, W, Xf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tisa River alluvium</td>
<td>1130,0</td>
<td>M, O, P, Tp, Ts, W, Xf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senne fishponds</td>
<td>426,6</td>
<td>Ts, W, 1,2, 3, 4, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latorica</td>
<td>4404,7</td>
<td>M, O, P, Tp, Ts, W, Xf, 4, 7, 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The National list of SPAs includes the sites which are important for the conservation of AEWA bird species. It contains 38 territories with the area of 1, 236, 545. ha (25.2% of the whole territory of Slovakia). The List of sites of international importance see in Appendix 2.

Conservation of areas

3.3 Describe the legal frameworks and other measures through which sites (including transfrontier sites) including of international importance gain practical protection. (Please append a list of internationally important protected sites.)
**National protected areas**

- Protected sites of national importance are designated according to Act No.543/2002 Coll. on Nature and Landscape Protection. The Act recognizes 5 degrees of protection, and each category of protected site has special degree of protection. Protected site are designated not only for birds, but also for other animals and plant species and biotopes. Category of protected territories in Slovakia and their areas see in table no. 3.

Table no. 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of protected area</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Area of protected area (in ha)</th>
<th>Area of buffer zone (in ha)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National parks</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>317,890</td>
<td>270,128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protected landscape areas</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>522,579</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural reservations</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>12,459,380</td>
<td>243,402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National natural reservations</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>83,712,3480</td>
<td>2,994,9377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural monuments</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>1,542,2643</td>
<td>207,5711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National natural monuments</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>58,9381</td>
<td>42,4770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protected grounds</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>5,461,9435</td>
<td>2,146,2076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Together</strong></td>
<td>1,073</td>
<td><strong>103,234,8739</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,634,5956</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All together (protected sites + buffer zones)</strong></td>
<td>108,869,4695</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to this Act and its Regulation, it is also prohibited to disturb and damage habitats of protected animals, especially their dwellings, nests or sites for breeding, acquiring food, resting, moulting or wintering.

**Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance**

- Each Ramsar site in Slovakia has a Ramsar manager who is employee of the State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic. Ramsar manager is in charge of practical protection of the site.

**EC Directives**

- Council Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409/EEC) commonly known as the “Bird Directive”. Article 4 requires Member States to establish Special protection Areas where these areas appropriate means of conserving Annex I and/or migratory bird species. Member States shall take similar measures for regularly occurring migratory species not listed in Annex I, bearing in mind their need for protection in the geographical sea and land area where this Directive applies, as regards their breeding, moulting and wintering areas and staging posts along their migration routes.

- Council Directive on Conservation of Natural habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (92/43/EEC) commonly known as the “Habitats Directive”. This requires Member States to establish Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) for the conservation of habitats, plants and animal designated in Annex I and II of the Directive. A list of
candidate SACs has been submitted to the European Commission. The National list of pSci contains 382 sites with the area of 573,690.0 ha (which represents 11.7% of the whole territory of Slovakia)

- Together those Slovakian sites classified as SPAs and candidate SACs form part of the European Natura 2000 network.

Agri-environmental schemes

Agri-environmental schemes are the main mechanism available to the Government to encourage the positive management of habitats and species of national and international importance in the wider countryside. The following list includes the main schemes:

- **Basic schemes**: - the so-called “preliminary package without entitlement to compensation payments”, measures promoting Good Agricultural Practice, as currently required by the laws regulating the conservation of nature, landscape, water and soil.
- **General Agri-Environmental Schemes** – compensation payments for prescribed land management, the basic scheme (above) is connected to a general General Agri-Environmental Schemes for the conservation of nature and the landscape. It is differentiated according to the type of land use with different packages for the arable land, permanent grass cover, and for permanent cultures.
- **Specific Agri-Environmental Schemes** – compensation payments for the conservation of significantly important ecosystems, e.g. a scheme for arable land with biotopes of non-forest woody vegetation, a scheme for marshy and moist meadows, and a scheme for semi-dry and dry soil cover using grass.
- **Complementary Schemes** – compensation payments for environmental/landscape-sensitive farming, this support is available for certified production which is governed by special regulations – e.g. integrated production, organic-production, or for income foregone due to obeying certain limits in low-input systems (limited nitrogen input or stocking/grazing density limits to stabilize grassland biodiversity and/or prevent soil erosion.)

3.4 Has your country developed a management planning process for protected sites? If yes, please outline the types of management plans and organisations responsible for development and implementation.

Each protected site designated according to Act No.543/2002 Coll. on Nature and Landscape Protection must have developed management plan of the area. Management plan includes required activities and areas, aims and methods of reaching the favorable conservation status of species or habitats in the area, analyses of data and their synthesis. Management plan must be approved by administration bodies. It depends on the category of protected area which body is responsible for approving this management plan (ministry of environment, regional office of environment and district office of environment).

3.5 How many protected sites have formal management plans (please append a list of sites and their management planning status):

a. Proposed?
b. In preparation?
c. Being implemented?

All protected areas have formal management plans. New methodology for internationally
important protected areas is being prepared by the State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic. Methodology for the both large-scaled (national parks, protected landscape area) and small scaled (national nature reserve, nature reserve) protected areas of national importance have been prepared by the State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic and they are in a process of approval by the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic. The date of elaboration of new management plans see bellow in table no. 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of national park (NP) and protected landscape area (PLA)</th>
<th>Date of elaboration of management plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muránska planina NP</td>
<td>31.12.2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poloniny NP</td>
<td>31.12.2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAPANT NP</td>
<td>31.12.2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malá Fatra NP</td>
<td>30.11.2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PIENAP NP</td>
<td>31.12.2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TANAP NP</td>
<td>31.12.2005</td>
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</table>

3.6 What measures does your country have in place to ensure the wise use of wetland habitats and to prevent habitat degradation e.g. pollution control and managing water resources? Please provide examples of best practice initiatives particularly involving cross-sectoral co-operation or public participation.

During the period 2002 – 2004 following acts concerning the wise use of wetlands have been adopted by the Slovak Government:
- New Act no 127/2004 on Environmental Impact Assesment
- New Act no. 139/2002 on Fish
• Rural Development Plan of the Slovak Republic for the years 2004-2006 (Measure 4: Agroenvironmental support and submeasure 4.1.8: the Protection of water and wetland biotops)

The water quality and quantity available to, and required by, wetlands has been assessed. There are localities and profiles, where samples are regularly taken for assessments of water quality and quantity in the whole area of Slovakia. Slovak Water Management Company, state company (SVP, s.p.) is responsible for assessment of water quantity and Slovak Hydrometeorological Institute (SHMU) for quality. There are several NGOs which are interested in assessments of water quality and quantity. One of them is SOSNA NGO which led the project "We are taking care of our river". The water samples were taken in the Hornád, Torysa, Hnilec and Sokoliarsky potok Rivers and the basic chemical parameters such as pH, the concentration of nitrates, nitrites, phosphates, ammonia were assessed.

The NGO TATRY have organized the groundwater monitoring and have proposed the sewerage system in some parts of the Tatry region.

Intra- and inter-ministerial dialogues have been established by the means of Slovak Ramsar Committees for the purpose to enhanced integration of relevant policies related to the conservation of water resources, wetlands and biodiversity.

River Basin Hydrological Plans provide a process for co-ordinating the hydrological management of particular areas. They focus also on resolving conflicts between conservation needs and those of other users. The State Nature Conservancy in some cases has cooperated with The Slovak Water Management Company in preparation of River Basin Hydrological Plans. The comments of State Nature Conservancy have been fully accepted in management plans of the Poprad, Hornád, Morava, Chvojnica and Myjava River catchments.

Rehabilitation and restoration

3.7 Does your country have a policy for the identification, rehabilitation and restoration of wetlands important for species covered by the Agreement? Please provide examples of rehabilitation and restoration projects and initiatives undertaken.

The Slovak Wetland Management Programme (National Wetland Strategy) has 8 strategic goals. There were elaborated 2 action plans to this programme for conservation, restoration and wise-use of wetlands. Action plan for the years 2000 – 2002 was assessed and new action plan for the years 2003 – 2007 was developed and approved by the Slovak Government in February 2003 (resolution no. 200/2003). The Slovak Wetland Management Programme is fully integrated into and harmonized with other strategic or planning processes and documents, in particular those related to biodiversity, desertification, climate change, agriculture, trade in endangered species, water resource management, integrated coastal zone management and environmental planning in general including national strategies for sustainable development called for by the WSSD.

There was developed the Strategy for the implementation of Water Framework Directive
Act no. 127/1994 on the environmental assessment was adopted in Slovakia. All the projects, developments or changes which may impact on wetlands have to be assessed under this act.

- **The restoration of water regime in NNR Šúr**
  The main goal of the project is to supply NNR Šúr by sufficient conveyance of water, restoration of water regime and achievement of favorable conservation status of rare wetland fen forest with Alnus glutinosa. The restoration of water regime is decisive and inevitable factor for the preservation of rare animal and plant species which occur on wetland biotops.

The short-term objectives are as follow:
1. to elaborate the rescue programme for NNR Šúr
2. reconstruction of existing and building new hydrological objects which will improve water regime in NNR Šúr
3. to increase public information of local communities, owners and other stakeholders about the importance and value of NNR Šúr

- **The restoration of the Wetlands of Orava Basin Ramsar site**

Management measures such as mowing, removing of nature seedings, mulching were taken in the Ťaskovka, Tisovnica Nature Reserves and Vtáčí ostrov Protected area in 2002. In 2003 mowing, removal of the biomass, restoration of nest conditions of waterfowl, protection against livestock were done in some sites within the Wetlands of Orava Basin.

- Restoration measures (removal of seral tree species, mowing...) were taken by the Administration of Muránska Planina NP in fen peats in the Trstie, Rosiarka and Klenovské Blatá Nature Reserves.

- Management plans have been developed for the fen peat medow Chmúra Protected Area and peatland the Polková Nature Reserve.

4. **Management of human activities**

**Hunting**

4.1 Outline the main features of legislation or legal measures in your country to control hunting of the species covered by the Agreement (e.g. use of lead shot and poisoned baits, and to eliminate illegal taking).

Main feature of legislation is to control the hunting of species covered by the Agreement is Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 543/2002 on Nature and Landscape Protection and its Regulation of the Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic No. 24/2003 and the Act No. 23/1962 Coll. on hunting and its regulations.
By the Act No 543/2002, all bird species, occurring in Slovakia are protected and also some methods of hunting of all protected species (including birds) are prohibited:

1. snares, limes, hooks,
2. catching on glue,
3. blind or mutilated live birds using as decoys,
4. tape recorders or other sound makers,
5. electric or electronic devices able to kill or stun,
6. artificial light sources, mirrors and devices for illuminating targets,
7. sighting devices for night shooting comprising an electronic image magnifier or image converter and other similar devices allowing night shooting,
8. explosives or chemicals,
9. crossbow, air or gas guns and weapons solo-shooting,
10. catching birds to nests or to other devices with objective to kill them,
11. catching to traps except live-traps, where animals are catch live and un-injured,
12. poisons and baits with poison or anesthetic or killing substance,
13. using gas,
14. semi-automatic or automatic weapons shooting singly or with a magazine capable of holding more than two rounds of ammunition,
15. catching and killing of protected animals from airplanes, moving vehicles or boats swimming faster than 5 km per hour.

Regulation of the Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic No. 24/2003 is determining bird species which could be caught, injured, killed, kept in captivity, but in correspondence with Act No. 23/1962 on hunting.

Also the Act No. 23/1962 Coll. on hunting and its regulations mention some prohibited methods.

Apart from information in point 2.2.c.), Regulation of the Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic No. 24/2003 is determining bird species which could be caught, injured, killed, kept in captivity, but in correspondence with Act No. 23/1962 on hunting. It is concerning these species from Annex 2 of Agreement: The bird species which could be hunted and their hunting season see in table no. 5. Although Slovak Republic acceded to the AEWA with the reservation to the provisions of Art. 4.1.4 of Action Plan, there are plans to introduce the legislaton which will prohibit the use of lead shot in wetlands and for shooting of certain waterbird species till 2010.

Table no. 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bird species</th>
<th>Open hunting season</th>
<th>Column / Category of Action plan</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Common Mallard (<em>Anas platyrhynchos</em>)</td>
<td>16.9.-15.1.</td>
<td>B / 2c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White-fronted Goose (<em>Anser albifrons</em>)</td>
<td>16.10. - 15.1.</td>
<td>A / 3c*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greylag Goose (<em>Anser anser</em>)</td>
<td>16.10. - 15.1.</td>
<td>A / 2*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bean Goose (<em>Anser fabalis</em>)</td>
<td>16.10. - 15.1.</td>
<td>B / 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Coot (<em>Fulica atra</em>)</td>
<td>1.10.-16.1.</td>
<td>C / 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eurasian Woodcock (<em>Scolopax rusticola</em>)</td>
<td>16.3.-30.4.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2 Does your country monitor hunting levels? If so, how is this information collected and reported?
In Slovakia, Slovak Hunting Association associates all hunters. There are more than 55000 hunters in Slovakia. They are associated into regional organizations and those hunting unions.

Each hunting union has obligation to register all individuals they shot. This register is then passed to Forest Research Institute, an expert organization under Ministry of Land Use of SR, which is administrating the register on national level. Mentioned species are annually counted (on 31. March) by hunting associations.

4.3 Describe action undertaken by hunting clubs and organisations to manage hunting activity e.g. cooperative action, issuing of licences and proficiency testing of individual members.

According to the Act No. 23/1962 Coll. on hunting, hunters are obliged to manage their activities in accordance with nature protection. Many of hunting unions cooperate with environmental organizations.

**Eco-tourism**

4.4 What is the status of eco-tourism programmes or initiatives in your country? Please provide examples of projects with an indication of the significant outcomes.

Currently we do not have any strategy for development of eco-tourism in Slovakia. Preparation of such a material is in a progress. However, there are 3 objectives dealing with eco-tourism in Biodiversity Action Plan for 2003 – 2010. Several initiatives are run by the State Nature Conservancy of SR and NGOs.

State Nature Conservancy of SR Administration of Cerová vrchovina PLA has started a project CBC Phare "Development of eco-tourism in Cerová vrchovina PLA":

The main aims of the project are as follow:

1. Protection of nature values and sustainable utilization of nature resources
2. Tourist utilization of the territory and environmental education
3. Economical benefit for the local communities and mutual communication and cooperation between the stakeholders

Another activities are carried out in PIENAP National park. Local people within the existing eco-centrum and museum offer to the tourists accommodation, guiding, providing of ecological information of the territory, restaurant, small shops with local products, private transportation and rafting the Dunajec River.

4.5 What social and economic benefits accrue to the local communities from the conservation of important water bird sites?

For the maintaining of favorable status of habitats which is not possible to reach by the common management the users and the owners of the land in important water bird sites can receive the financial contribution from the state budget. The Ministry of Environment and State Nature Conservancy are the authorities in charge of the process of public information, assessment of the applications and allotting the finance.

If favorable status of habitats is not possible to maintain by common management the users
of the land have to accept restrictions and they have to take necessary measures which are resulting from nature protection conditions. In this case the users of the land have the right to receive compensation for their lost caused by using environmental friendly management methods.

Other human activities

4.6 Does your country carry out Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of activities potentially affecting protected sites or areas important for species covered by the Agreement? If yes, briefly describe the main features of your EIA policy and procedures.

Slovak Republic carries out Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of activities potentially affecting protected sites or areas important for species covered by the Agreement. Act no. 127/1994 on the environmental assessment was adopted in Slovakia. Under this act all activities which could cause substantial changes in biological diversity of ecosystems must be assessed.

All the projects, developments or changes which may impact on wetlands have to be assessed under this act. Under higher mentioned act must be assessed:

- all the activities project which could cause substantial changes in biological diversity, structure and function of ecosystems
- amelioration in protected areas (if the area of interest is from 10 to 500 ha) and in other area if the area of interest is larger than 500 ha.
- peat excavation in protected areas (if the area of interest is from 3 to 20 ha) and in other area if the area of interest is larger than 20 ha.

4.7 Please describe the main features of your planning policy and provide examples of practical implementation (e.g. activities to minimising disturbance of species populations or limit the impact of species populations on crops or fisheries). Please summarize any land-use conflicts especially emphasising successful solutions to problems encountered in promoting the wise-use of waterbirds and their habitats.

During the years 2002 – 2004 (pre-accession period) Slovakia had to adapted its agricultural policies to EU legislation. In September 2001 the Codex of Good Farming Conditions was adopted by the Ministry of Land Use of the Slovak Republic. The principles of the Directive no. 676/1991 EEC concernig the water protection from nitrate pollution originated in agriculture sources were included into the mentioned codex.

Bellow we listed all land use policies and strategies concerning water sites which are important habitats for waterfowl:

- National Environmental Action Program II (NEAP II) and proposed NEAP III. followed from the State Environmental Policy approved by Slovak Council resolution no. 339/1993 and by resolution of Slovak Government no. 619/1993.
• **National Sustainable Development Strategy** was approved by Slovak Government resolution no. 978/2001. Under preparation is Action Plan to the strategy.

• **Integrated Approximation Strategy in Environment Chapter and its annexes** was approved by the Slovak Government (resolution no. 1138/2001) was prepared for plan of implementation of EU directives in Environment Sector and estimations of financial needs and human capacities for their transposition and implementation to Slovak legislation. 2nd Section, 4th Sector on nature protection is constituted of implementation strategy and plan system (Natura 2000, etc.).

• **National Strategy on Biodiversity in Slovakia** was prepared in accordance with Convention on Biological Diversity (Rio de Janeiro, 1992) and it is one of the basic documents of nature protection (approved by resolution no. 231/1997 of Slovak Government and then also by Slovak Council in June 1997). Its implementation is ensured by ‏**Updated Action plan for implementation of the National Strategy on Biodiversity in Slovakia for years 2003 – 2010** (resolution of Slovak Government no. 1209/2002). This document includes also Wetland Chapter.

• Within the framework of the **Slovak Spatial Development Perspective – KÚRS** (approved by the Slovak Government in October 2001) the emphasis is put also on the localities of international importance (including Ramsar sites). There is big natural heritage potential in water and marsh ecosystems.


• Wetland issues have been incorporated to the frame of **Rural Development Plan for the years 2004 – 2006**. Specifically 2 measures – measure 3 and measure 5:

  9.3. Measure 3 (Less favoured areas and areas with environmental restrictions), within 1 sub-measure:

  Less favoured areas and areas with environmental restrictions are following: A. Mountain areas (Article 18), B. Other less favoured areas (Article 19), C. Areas with specific handicaps (Article 20), D. Areas with environmental restrictions (Article16).

  9.3.4. Areas with environmental restrictions, Article 16 (indication E), to these areas belong the bird areas falling under the protection system NATURA 2000. In 2005, in the system of protected bird areas will be implicated Horná Orava, Malé Karpaty, Sysťovské polia, Dubnické štrkovisko, Lehnice, Pofana, Východoslovenská rovina. In 2006, in the system of protected bird areas will be implicated Dolné Považie, Ostrovské lúky, Morava, Medzibrodzie. (Bird areas cover only a concrete determined part of agricultural land, not the land of the whole municipality). On the areas integrated in less favoured areas with environmental constraints the farmers have to implement the specified procedures (methods) which are defined in the basic scheme of the agri-environmental support.

  9.5. Measure 5 (Agri-environment and Animal welfare), within 2 sub-measures:

  9.5.1.6. Protection of biotops of semi-natural and natural permanent grassland which includes following subject of support: Management of the selected areas of semi-natural and natural grasslands located on the territory of the holding according to defined conditions. To permanent grassland rich in species belongs also B.
Mesophillic permanent grassland and C. Hydrophillic and boggy permanent grassland are included. For mesophillic grassland: To mow meadows regularly not more than twice a year, while the first mowing should be carried out on the end of June (the first degree) or on the end of July (the second degree) as set by an expert organisation; For hydrophillic and boggy grassland: The wet meadows not more than twice a year, implementing the firs mowing within the term from the end of June to the end of July and the second mowing six weeks after the first mowing; To mow spurry-free meadows once a year within the term from August to September; To mow the boggy meadows once a year within the term July, August (the smallest wetting).

9.5.1.8. Protection of water and wetland biotops includes operational objective: Re-establishment of the ecological stability in agricultural country by the protection and renewal of the eco stability elements networks. Subject to support: Protection and care for water and wetland biotopes located on the territory of the business according to defined conditions. Water and wetland biotopes are springs, small water flows, channels, reservoirs, gravel pits, lakes, and wetlands.

- There was developed the Strategy for the implementation of Water Framework Directive in the Slovak Republic by the Ministry of the Environment, Water Division and approved by Slovak Government. (resolution no. 46/2004).

- For financing from ERDF structural fund Operation Program Basic Infrastructure was prepared. Specifically priority 2 – Environment infrastructure, measure no. 2.4 – Protection, enhancement and regeneration of natural environment. This is important for integration nature conservation in environmental sector for possibility to obtain EU financing for building of infrastructure and management plans for protected areas. According to this document there are possibilities to invest building of information centers and to fund developing and implementation of the management plans of wetland areas.

- Policy of nature and landscape protection as a main document of nature conservation was prepared to determine the main strategic goals for 10 years duration but it is still under approval process by the Slovak Government (2nd submission is expected by June 30, 2005)

5. Research and monitoring

Status of research and monitoring programmes for species

5.1 How are priorities for research identified in your country? Please briefly describe your country’s research programmes, including any bilateral or multilateral co-operative action, for wetland habitats and for species covered by the Agreement (e.g. studies into species population, ecology and migratory patterns). Please append a list of research activities initiated, ongoing or completed in the last three years.

Research has been promoted on the role of wetlands in the Morava River floodplains Ramsar site:

- Ecological carrying capacity of the landscape
- Introductory solution to the restoration of the Morava River,
- Biological research and monitoring of re-opened river branches,
- Research of the quality of water and sediments from the perspective of the Morava River restoration,
- Specification of the terms for adjustment of the Morava River channel implementing rehabilitative water managing – ecological measures,
- Water quality in the Danube watershed in the territory of Slovakia,
- Conception of sustainable development of recreation and tourism for the region of the lower Morava
- Regular annual reports on the water quality of the Morava River and its tributaries made by the river administrator.

**Wetlands of Orava Basin**

- Grasslands mapping
- Peatlands mapping (During the peatlands mapping were noting ground water characteristics)
- Permanent monitoring in the B-zone the Klinske raselinisko pestland

**The Turiec wetlands Ramsar site**

- soil and hydrogeology surveys
- landscape-ecological survey & evaluation of stream ecosystems
- habitat mapping
- multilevel and multidisciplinary ecological essestment of the Turiec Region
- monitoring of ground water level at NNR Klastorske Luky Meadows

**Danube floodplain Ramsar sit**

- Gabčíkovo dam system impact on ground water and biota

**The Orava River Ramsar site**

- integrated water management study of the Orava River basin

**Latorica ramsar site**

- hydrological monitoring is provided by Slovak Hydro-meteorological Institute Bratislava
- Monitoring of surface water quality is provided by the Administration of Bodrog and Hornad Catchment Kosice
- Extensive hydrological monitoring and assesment of Latorica watershed

Since COP8 we designated to the List of Internationally Important Wetlands the Tisa River Transboundary Ramsar site (2004) . We cooperate closely with Austrian and Czech colleagues and this year we plan to declare the transboundary Morava-Danube-Dyje wetland Ramsar site.

**5.2 What monitoring activities does your country undertake, including any bilateral or multilateral cooperative action, of wetland areas and species covered by the Agreement (e.g. national monitoring schemes, International Waterfowl Census)?**
Please append a list of monitoring activities or programmes initiated, ongoing or completed in the last three years

We have Partial Monitoring System Biota. It included selected species of fauna and flora (19 plants and 8 animals). Monitoring started in 2001. Today it is transformed to the system of monitoring NATURA 2000 species and habitats. Monitoring will oriented to the surveillance of the Favourable Conservation Status according to Habitats Directive

6. Education and information

Training and development programmes

6.1 Describe the status of training and development programmes which support waterbird conservation and implement the AEWA Action Plan.

The process of definition of favorable conservation status (FCS) for species and biotops of European importance has been finished. FCS for 81 (24 AEWA) bird species was defined. The State Nature Conservancy of SR has organized 3 national conferences concerning FCS. The monitoring methodology for bird species and selection of monitoring sites in SPA and in other areas is being prepared. All these activities are coordinate by SNC. 3 working groups were established (1 for water bird species) for the preparation of monitoring system.

6.2 What bilateral or multilateral co-operative action is your country undertaking to develop training programmes and share examples of good practice?

There were organized 8 staff trainings for State Nature Conservancy of SR employees (Department of Informatics) focused on collecting and elaborating dates of habitats and species (training on developing databases in Access, GIS, ArcInfo) in 2002 – 2004.

3 conferences were organized under the Twinning PHARE project:
The conference which was held on January 20 – 21, 2004 was focuses on favourable conservation status of Annex I habitats.

The conference held on June 15 – 16, 2004 presented draft definitions of Favourable Conservation Status of habitats and species, whose conservation is required by the Birds and Habitats Directives and sought endorsement of such definitions from a broader expert community in Slovakia. The workshop also provided a possibility to initiate discussion of monitoring and conservation management of Natura 2000 habitats and species in Slovakia.

The 3rd conference held on November 15-16, 2004 focused on monitoring and conservation management of NATURA 2000 habitats and species in Slovakia. The meeting was coorganized jointly by the State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic, Bioconsult Ltd. and Daphne – Institute Applied Ecology, within the frameworks of the the projects Twinning PHARE SK02/IB/EN/03 „Implementation of Habitats and Birds Directives in the Slovak Republic“ and DANCEE No. 128/037-022"Natura 2000 in Slovakia – Bridging the Implementation Process".
Raising public awareness

6.3 Describe activities to raise public awareness of the objectives of the AEWA Action Plan. Please outline any particular successes generating public interest in, and securing support for, waterbird and wetland conservation (e.g. campaigns, information notes or other initiatives)?

State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic organized a National Conference on Protection of Wetlands in Slovakia on December 2, 2003. We compiled advice, methods and best practice studies for the wise use of wetlands, including the application of the ecosystem approach, and disseminated these to wetland managers. There were also regional conferences in some Ramsar sites (Šúr, Poiple, Wetlands of Orava Basin) where local stakeholders and wide public took place.

Regional museums are used for exhibitions, lectures and other activities related to wetlands (e.g. Slovak National Museum – Turiec Museum of A. Kmet in Martin), staff members of the Botanical garden of the Comenius University in Blatnica are involved in education activities.

Education centre which has been established in the Morava River floodplain Ramsar site is run by the DAPHNE NGO. The representatives of this NGO are closely cooperating with the State Nature Conservancy of SR, Ministry of Environment in issues dealing with conservation of wetlands. The Head of DAPHNE NGO is a member of Slovak Ramsar Committee.

A Wetland Centre is being established for the Turiec Wetlands Ramsar site.

In 2004 – 2005 we organized the Exhibition on Wetlands in Slovakia and displayed it in different places in Slovakia (Schools, Administrations of protected areas...).

Several lectures were carried out by the Administration of High Tatras NP in cooperation with the firm of NEUSIEDLER SCP about the water pollution. The exhibition “the Wetlands of Tatra Valley” connected with lectures were organized for basic schools. The State Nature There was a student conference about the wetlands and stork in 2002 and in 2003 there was an exhibition on Ramsar Convention prepared by the Administration of Veľká Fatra NP. In 2004 the Administration of Ponitrie PLA organized lecture about Ramsar Convention for 150 students of secondary schools in Nitra town. A special pannel “The Wetlands in Štiavnické vrchy PLA” was displayed in different schools in Banská Štiavnica town.

7. Final comments

7.1 General comments on the implementation of the AEWA Action Plan

7.2 Observations concerning the functions and services of the various AEWA bodies
   a. The Agreement Secretariat
   b. International organisations
   c. AEWA NGO partners

7.3 How might the Action Plan be further developed as a practical aid for national and international conservation of migratory waterbirds?
8. Progress to implement Resolutions and Recommendations of the Meeting of the Parties

*Please summarize progress to implement decisions of previous Meetings of the Parties.*
9. OPTIONAL SECTION – Planned and future actions

Contracting Parties are invited to outline below any further information regarding the aims of the Agreement, for example, planned actions or other informative examples.

1. Species conservation
2. Habitat conservation
3. Management of human activities
4. Research and monitoring
5. Education and information
List of abbreviations and acronyms used in the report
NP - national park
PLA - protected landscape area
MoE - Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic
SNC - State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic
SPAs - Special Protected areas
MoP - Meeting of the Parties
pSCI - Proposed Sites of Community Importance
SVP, s.p. - Slovak Water Management Company, state company.
SHMU - Slovak Hydrometeorological Institute
FCS - favorable conservation status
References


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TOPERCER, J. ml., 1997b: Ročný cyklus dominancie vtákov v prostrediach dolín vysokých pohorí Západných Karpát. Tichodroma 10: 36 - 37


Appendices
Appendix 1: Status of Single Species Action Plans

Appendix 2: List of sites of international importance

Appendix 3: Status of management plans for sites of international importance

Appendix 4: List of research and monitoring programmes and projects

Appendix 5: List of national institutions involved in migratory waterbird conservation

Appendix 6: List of relevant World Wide Web addresses for national institutions involved in migratory waterbird conservation

Appendix 7: List of relevant migratory waterbird and habitat conservation projects initiated, ongoing or completed in the last three years
Appendix 2: List of sites of international importance

Special Protection Areas (SPA)

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<th>No.</th>
<th>The name of the area</th>
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### Proposed Sites of Community Importance (pSCI)

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Appendix 4:  List of research and monitoring programmes and projects

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<td>Conservation and management of Danube floodplain forests</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Production of artificial nest for White Stork (<em>Ciconia ciconia</em>)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Setting up of the Carpathian Protected Areas and Ramsar sites net.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Setting up of the Database for Internationally Important Areas/Ramsar sites and for proposed Bodrog-Latorica-Tisa Ramsar site.</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>The Revitalization of Water Regime in the Ostrov orliaka Island National Nature Reserve</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Participative and Sustainable Management of the Tatra National Park</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>White Stork (<em>Ciconia ciconia</em>) in Slovakia</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Wetlands Awareness and Education in the Turiec Wetlands Ramsar Site</td>
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<td>The Protection and Management of the Turiec Wetlands</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>The participation of volunteers &amp; wider public in the biodiversity conservation in the Muránska planina plateau National Park.</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>The Analyse of Biological Diversity State in the Muránska planina plateau National Park.</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>White Stork (<em>Ciconia ciconia</em>).</td>
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Appendix 5:  List of national institutions involved in migratory waterbird conservation

The Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic
The State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic

Appendix 6:  List of relevant World Wide Web addresses for national institutions involved in migratory waterbird conservation

www.enviro.gov.sk
www.sopsr.sk
www.sovs.sk
www.daphne.sk
www.uke.sav.sk/bioplatform/domace.htm