

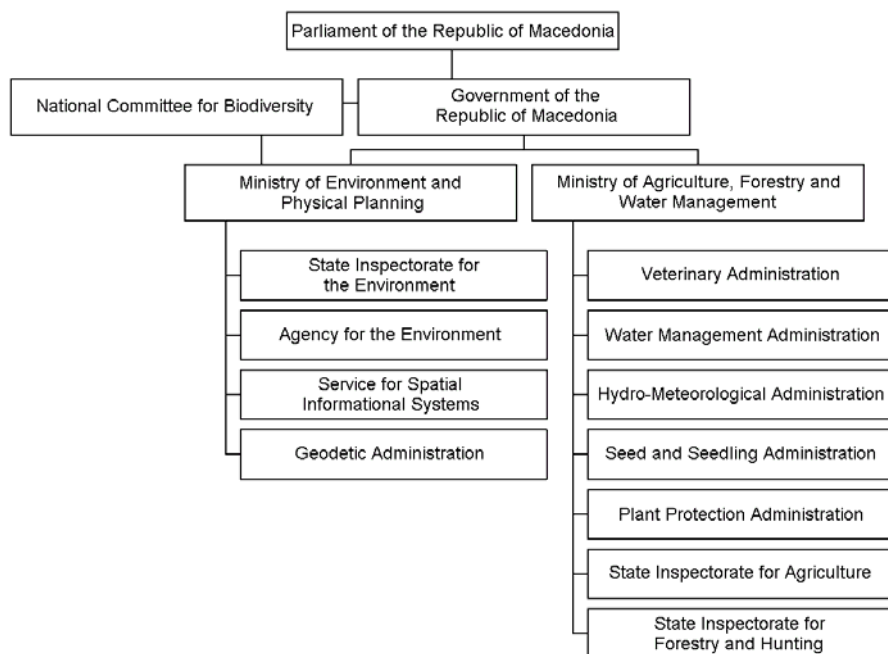
Hunting and conservation law

Macedonia

1. Institutional framework

Governmental agencies

In addition to the Macedonian Parliament (with its authorized commissions) and the national government, as the main responsible entities, biodiversity conservation falls within the responsibilities of two Ministries, including certain of their agencies, offices, services and inspectorates.



Scheme of State agencies and biodiversity authorities.

Source: Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for the Republic of Macedonia. 2003.

2. Legislative Framework

Public institutions for conservation and management and their related Ministries.

| Responsible Ministry | Public Institution for Conservation and Management |
|---|---|
| Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning | National Parks Administration |
| | Mavrovo National Park |
| | Pelister National Park |
| | Galichitsa National Park |
| Ministry of Culture | Macedonian Museum of Natural History |
| | Zoological Garden – Skopje |
| | Zoological Garden – Bitola |
| Ministry of Education and Science | Hydro-Biological Institute – Ohrid |

Source: Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for the Republic of Macedonia. 2003.

3. Laws

Following the recommendations of the NEAP, in December 1996 the Council of the Republic of Macedonia established the Law for Protection and Promotion of the Environment and Nature as the basic and preferred strategic goal. Through the passage of this law, a legal framework was established for the realisation of the dedicated strategy for protecting and promoting the environment (NEAP).

There are numerous general environmental laws in Macedonia. The main problem is in their implementation.

3.1 Laws relevant to biodiversity conservation:

- Protection of Natural Rarities Law (1973) amended 1976, 1990, and 1993

- Law on protection of Lakes (1977)
- National Parks Law (1980), amended 1990, 1993
- Regional and Urban Planning (1985), amended 1990, 1996, 1997, 1999
- Forests Law (1997)
- Waters Law (1981)
- Fishing (1993)
- Hunting (1996)
- Management and Use of Pastures and Abandoned Fields and Meadows (1974), amended 1998, 2000
- Geological Investigations and Exploitation of Mineral Resources (1988)
- Construction Investment (1990)

3.2 International Conventions

Macedonia has ratified several major international conventions in the field of biodiversity conservation.

- Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus), as of 22 July 1999
- Convention on Biodiversity (CBD), as of 2 December 1997
- Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), as of 4 July 2000
- Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, as of 17 December 1998
- Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, as of 1 November 1999
- Convention Concerning the Protection of the World's Cultural and Natural Heritage, as of 30 April 1997
- Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar), as of 8 September 1995
- Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context, as of 31 August 1999
- Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, as of 16 February 1997

- Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, as of 10 March 1994
- Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution, as of 17 November 1991
- Framework Convention on Climate Change, as of 28 January 1998

3.3 Bilateral co-operation

In addition, Macedonia has also signed agreements of co-operation in the field of environmental protection with its neighbouring states, Albania and Greece. On February 2, 2001 – World Wetlands Day – Prime Ministers from all three countries declared “Prespa Park” a new trilateral transboundary protected area.

The Republic of Macedonia has signed additional bilateral acts which address the conservation of biodiversity:

- **Albania:** Memorandum of Understanding and Co-operation in the fields of environmental conservation and sustainable development.
- **Austria:** Statement addressing the intention to establish friendly relations and co-operation in the field of environmental conservation with the province, Lower Austria.
- **Bulgaria:** Contract for co-operation in the field of conservation of the environment and nature.
- **Croatia:** Contract for co-operation in the field of conservation of the environment and nature.
- **Czech Republic:** Agreement for co-operation in the fields of the environment, nature and spatial planning.
- **Greece:** Memorandum of Understanding and Co-operation.
- **Russian Federation, The:** Agreement for co-operation in the field of conservation of the environment and nature.
- **Serbia and Montenegro:** Agreement for co-operation in the field of the environment.
- **Switzerland:** Contract for a monitoring system for rivers in the Republic of Macedonia.

- **NGO Consortium:** Memorandum of Understanding for the conservation of the four species of European vulture.

Notwithstanding the fact that the Government is making strong efforts in coordination the current legislative framework with that of European Union, the country is faced with transition period that is characterized with large recession in economy, enlargement of unemployment and fall of the living standard of the population. The political instability of the country, as well as the inter ethnic conflicts resulted with war in the year 2001. In such circumstances, it is impossible to expect complete implementation of current laws, concerning nature conservation in general, including the hunting law.

4. The Current Hunting Law

The current Hunting Law was officially proposed on April 17, 1996, and adopted by the Parliament on May 5, 1996 (Official Register of the Republic of Macedonia [RM] 20/96), amended 1997. In accordance with this law, the term “hunting” is defined as “reproducing, raising and exploiting game.”

In Article 4 of this law, a list containing 127 species of game is presented, consisting of 24 mammal and 103 bird species. Of the total of 103 game bird species, 70 are included within the category, “permanently protected species.” All birds of prey, including the four vulture species, are within this category - except the Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*). The Goshawk is included on the list of eight bird species with no protection whatever, meaning they could be hunted at any time. On the one hand, this could lead to misidentification of Goshawks in nature by hunters. On the other hand, under the pretext of hunting Goshawks, other birds of prey, such as vultures, could become victims.

List of Game Species of Macedonia (from 1996/97 Law on Hunting).

| Category of Game | Total Number of Species | Mammal Species | Bird Species |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Permanently protected | 79 | 9 | 70 |
| Seasonally protected | 31 | 6 | 25 |
| Without any protection | 17 | 9 | 8 |
| Total number | 127 | 24 | 103 |

Source: Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for the Republic of Macedonia. 2003.

4.1 Organisation of hunting

Hunting is conducted through hunting associations combined under the Hunting Union of Macedonia. Macedonia is divided into 11 managed hunting areas, with 107 hunting sites for large game (47% of the total area, excluding lakes) and 145 hunting sites for small game (49% of the area). These hunting leases are managed both by the hunting associations themselves and by organisations working in the field of forestry. In addition, five enclosed areas totalling 4,041 ha for the breeding of large game and one pheasant farm with a yearly production capacity of 40,000 two-month-old pheasants have been established.

The greatest portion of the land area licensed for hunting consists of forests and forested areas. With the Law on Hunting, 127 species of game (24 fur-bearing animals and 103 birds) have been given special consideration.

After adopting of the Hunting Law in 1996, The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy prepared the additional regulations necessary for implementation of the law (Official Register of RM 16/97). The Department of Hunting, within the Faculty of Forestry in Skopje, also prepared a General Long-term Management Plan for hunting activities within the entirety of Macedonia which was first adopted by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy, and then by the Government on May 5, 1997. This document addresses the development of hunting activities over a period of 20 years, as well as establishes the borders of hunting grounds within Macedonia in accordance with their use for big or small game.

On the basis of this document, the government adopted specific regulations allowing for the establishment of a total number of 249 hunting grounds (104 for big game and 145 for small game) (Official Register of RM 49/97, amended 19/2001). Four of the 249 have been established as "State Hunting Grounds" (Official Register of RM 56/97), as follows:

1. State Hunting Ground for Big Game "Polaki-Kocani"; 15,250 ha
2. State Hunting Ground for Big Game "Jasen-Skopje"; 24,000 ha
3. State Hunting Ground for Big Game "Lesnica-Tetovo"; 11,930 ha
4. State Hunting Ground for Small Game "Trubarevo-Skopje"; 1,475 ha

State Hunting Grounds are used exclusively for the needs of the State (i.e., hunting organised by the President of Macedonia, the annual hunt for the diplomatic corps and hunting organised in honour of official visits by high foreign diplomats).

As for the rest of the 245 hunting grounds, in October 2002 an open competition was held awarding concessions to the highest bidders. Users of a certain hunting ground are obliged to pay for their own specific management plan (which is made in accordance with the General Management Plan and adopted by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy). They must also pay an annual fee of 20% of the estimated value of the game present within the hunting ground as specified by their individual management plan (Official Register of RM 16/97).

Sources:

Petkovski, S. D. Smith, T. Petkovski, and V. Sidorovska. 2003. Study on Hunting Activities in Macedonia: Past, Present and Future. Society for the Investigation and Conservation of Biodiversity and the Sustainable Development of Natural Ecosystems (BIOECO), Briselska 12, 1000 Skopje, Macedonia.)

Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for the Republic of Macedonia. 2003. Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning. Skopje, November 2003

Country Study for Biodiversity of the Republic of Macedonia. First National Report. 2003. Ministry of environment and physical planning. Skopje, 2003.