



Revision and Update of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan

Project

GEF project TF 012599

**FIFTH NATIONAL REPORT OF ALBANIA TO THE UNITED
NATIONS CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (CBD)**



May 2014

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction	Page 3
II. Update on biodiversity status, trends, and threats and implications for human well-being	Page 4
III. The national biodiversity strategy and action plan (NBSAP), its implementation, and the mainstreaming of biodiversity	Page 12
IV. Progress towards the 2015 and 2020 Aichi Biodiversity Targets and contributions to the relevant 2015 Targets of the Millennium Development Goals	Page 37

Cover photo: Sazani Island (Photo: S. Beqiraj)

INTRODUCTION

This report is prepared according to the template recommended by the CBD CoP Resolution on the elaboration of national reports by the Parties to the Convention.

The compilation of the data and the report drafting are based on the existing information collected during the assignment in the context of the GEF funded project Revision and update of the NBSAP of Albania.

The Fifth National Report has endeavoured to identify the Progress towards the implementation of strategic Plan for biodiversity for the period 2011-2020 and the progress towards Aichi Biodiversity targets.

The National Report has been prepared under the supervision of the Biodiversity and Protected Areas Directorate at the General Directorate of Environmental Policies at the Ministry of the Environment of Albania.

PART I

I.1 AN UPDATE ON BIODIVERSITY STATUS, TRENDS, AND THREATS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR HUMAN WELL-BEING

Albania is well known for its high diversity of ecosystems and habitats. Albania's total land area is divided into three main ecological zones (the coastal plain zone, the hilly transition sub-mountainous zone, and the mountainous zone) and 13 sub-zones, which contribute to the country's rich biodiversity. Forests cover 36% of the country's territory, agricultural land about 26% and pastures about 15%. Approximately 60% of the pastures are alpine and sub-alpine pastures and meadows. Forest and pastures have a high diversity of types Mediterranean shrubs, oak woodland, beech forest, mountain pine, etc and animal communities. Along the coastline of the country there are many ecosystems of significance in the Mediterranean region such as lagoons, wetlands, sand dunes, river deltas, hydrophilic and hygrophilous forests. The lakes and rivers are also important for the biological and landscape diversity of the country. The beauty of the landscape makes Albania a potential attraction for nature-based recreation activities.

Taking into account the existing information, Albania has a rich diversity of flora and fauna with about 3,200 species of vascular plants, 2,350 species of non-vascular plants, and 15,600 species of invertebrates and vertebrates. Albania is an important migration route for birds. Approximately 30% of European flora and 42% of European mammals occur in Albania. The relief has created the conditions for the existence and protection of a number of endemic and sub-endemic species. There are 32 plant species with 150 subspecies which are endemic in Albania and another 160 plant species which are sub-endemic in Balkan region.

Albania counts 91 globally threatened ornithofauna species and is of critical importance for some of them (e.g. *Pelecanus crispus*, *Phalacrocorax pygmeus*, and *Acipenser sturio*). Coastal lagoons and large lakes are important areas, especially for wintering migratory birds. There, annually are encountered 70 waterfowl and waterbird species with a total population of 180,000 individuals in Albania during winter. Albania has a number of autochthonous breeds of cattle and crops. About 30 species of crops are native to Albania. There are 9 autochthonous breeds of goats and 5 of

sheep. There is an important heritage for the protection and improvement of the production and the quality of the agricultural and animal husbandry.

In highlands there more than 52 00 ha of natural forests with woods more than 200 years old with high value for biodiversity for wild animals and birds and for recreational purposes. This area is the most significant area for research and genetic resources.



A glance of coastal habitats

1.2 Major changes in the status and trends of biodiversity in your country

Protection of species and habitats

Following the implementation of the provisions of the laws are drafted by-laws, which complete the legal basis for specific elements of nature. Among such documents is the list of flora and fauna species that are under protection and are materialized with the publication of the Red Book of Albanian Flora and Red Book of Albanian Fauna.

Protection of species of conservation interest is realized through specific biodiversity law provisions and the law for protection of wild fauna. The biodiversity Law at the same time contains provisions for invasive species and protection measures for species conservation. The achievement of favourable status of conservation for species is aimed through biodiversity law

and protected areas law, which contain provisions for the protection of biodiversity inside protected areas as well as outside them.

The habitat protection is done through provisions of the law on protected areas, based on which is revealed the representative network of protected areas that will serve to identify and create the ecological network NATURA 2000. The Law on wild fauna protection foresees protecting provisions for important habitats for birds in general and migratory birds in particular.

Based on national legal provisions all species listed in the Red List of Albania's wild Flora and Fauna, according to different IUCN threat categories, enjoy special protection and cannot be included in the list of huntable species in the Republic of Albania.

Aktualisht ne Listen e Kuqe te miratuar me Urdher te Ministrit te Mjedisit nr. 1280, date 20.11.2013 "Per miratimin e listes se kuqe te llojeve te faunes dhe flores se eger shqiptare" bejne pjese 405 species of wild flora and 575 species of wild fauna



Possidonia meadows in Vlora Bay

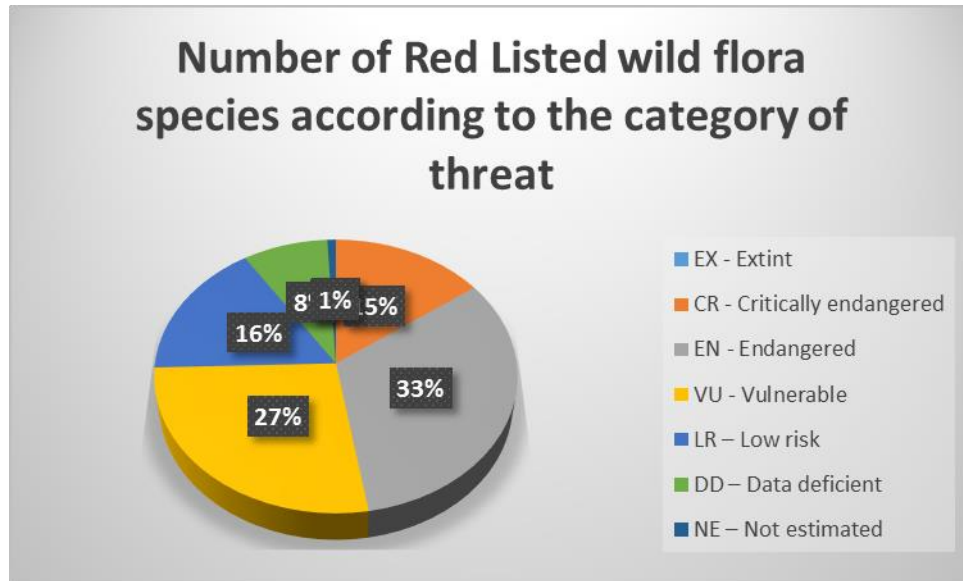
Coraligenous habitats in Karaburun penninsula



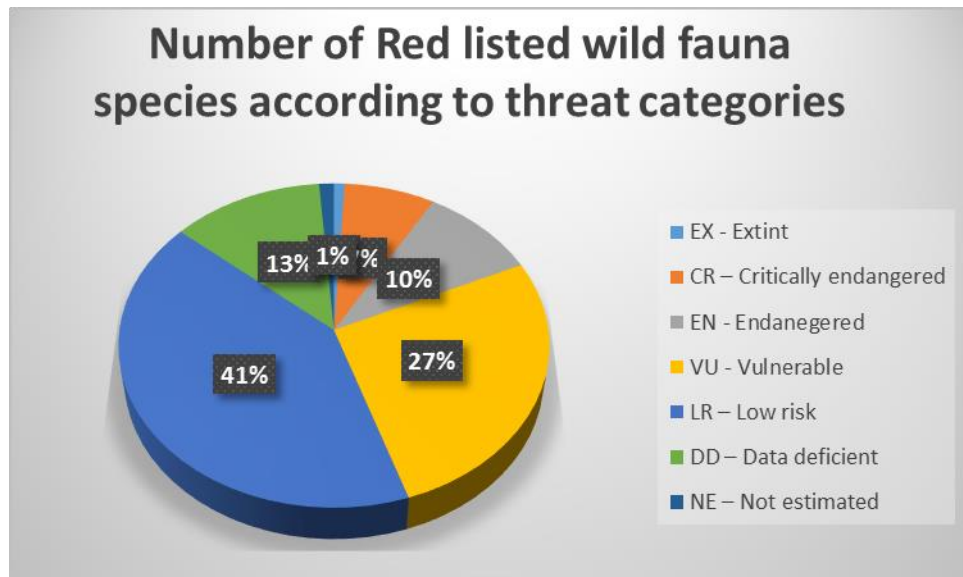
Summary table of Red List of flora and fauna species

IUCN categories

Wild flora



Wild fauna



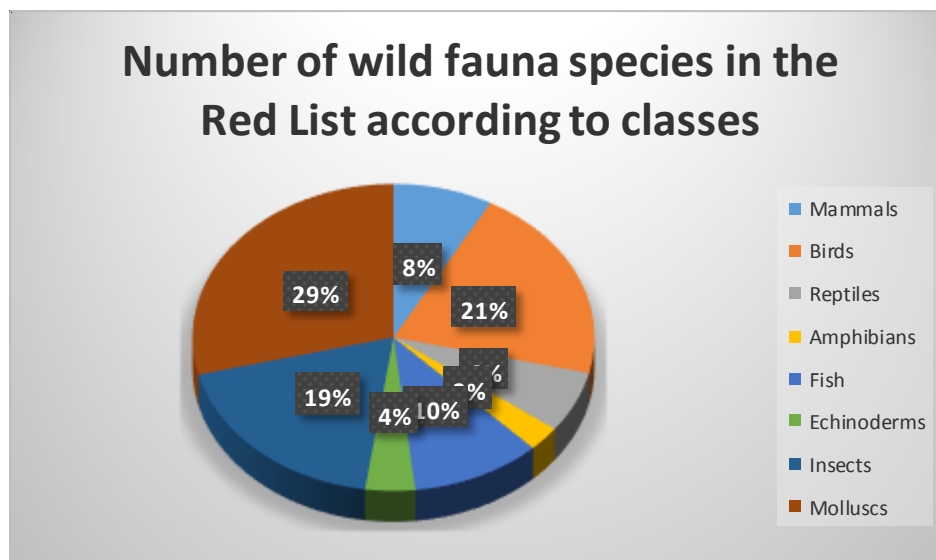
Protected species (flora and fauna)

Protected species of Albania according to the new Red List of wild fauna and flora approved in December 2013, by Ministerial Order no. 1280 of 20.11.2013.

Protected flora species: **405** species from 361 in the previous Red List of 2007

Protected fauna species: **575** species – the same number no changes since 2007 on fauna species

Protected wild fauna species according to major classification classes



Protected Areas

The total number of protected areas is 798 (including nature monuments), covering an area of more than 455,854 hectares. This is 15, 83 % of the territory of Albania. In addition there are four Ramsar sites of wetlands on international importance in the country and Important Bird Areas designated by Ministerial order in April 2013.

During the reporting period since 2010, the proposed Emerald network of Areas of Special Interest (ASCIs) for Albania, consisting on 25 sites and covering an area of 17, 8 % of the country's territory was approved by the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention in December 2012.

Law No. 9868, dated 04.02.2008 on some addendums and changes to the Law No. 8906, dated 6.6.2002 "On protected areas", defines the criteria for proclaiming protected areas as well recognizes special protected areas of interest to the European Community, initially providing the possibility for assessment of habitats of interest to the European Community included in the annexes of the Habitats Directive and then to propose these areas based on criteria established by law in accordance to Habitats Directive.

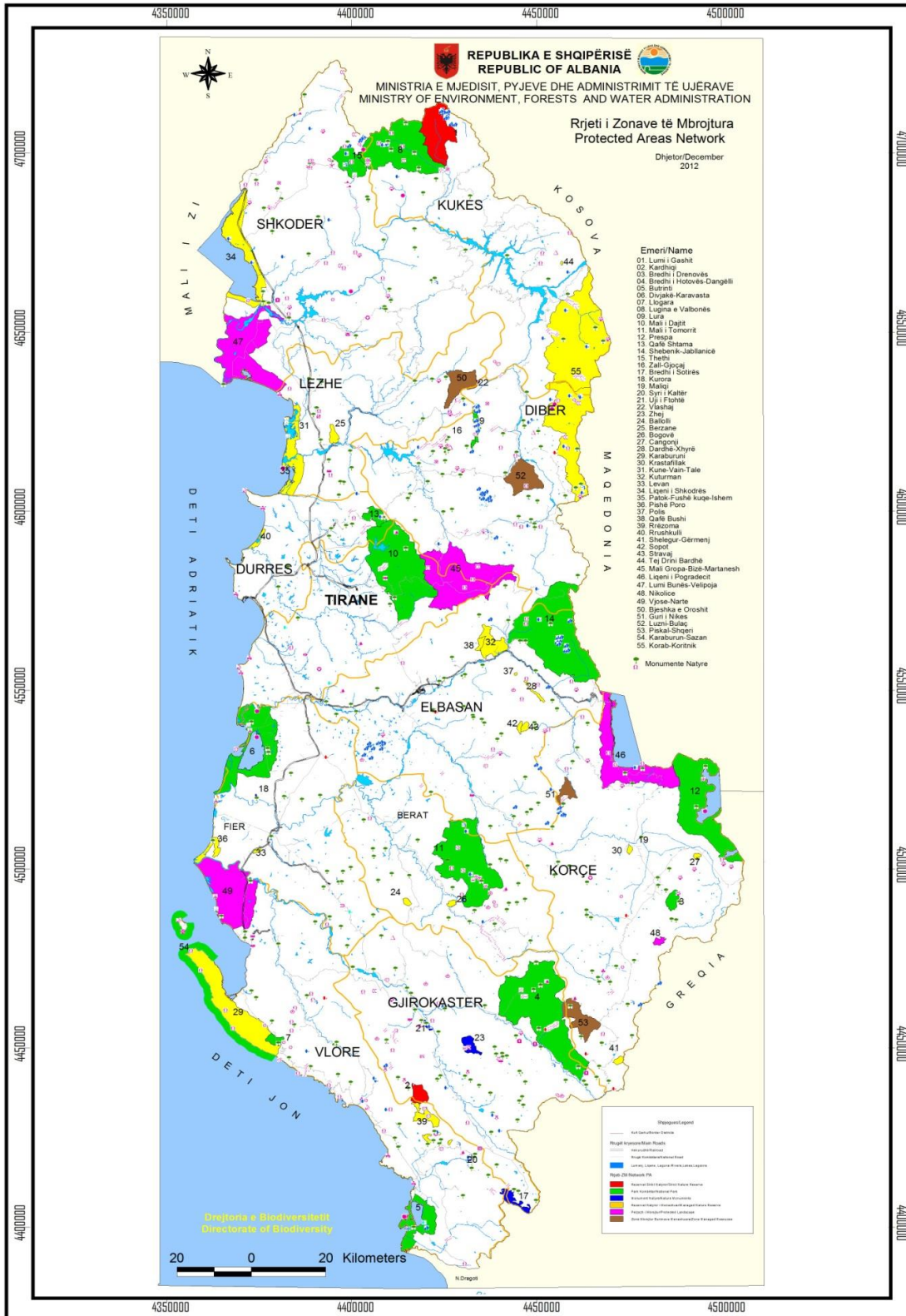
Also, the law sets the internal sub-zoning for each protected area. The concept of division of a protected area territory into functional sub zones based on their characteristics, facilitates the performance of community activities in the territories of protected areas, provides "buffer" or mitigating effects and better characterizes the properties of natural areas. The law defines the procedures for proclaiming protected areas in regard to local government and landowners.

The first MPA in Albania was designated in April 2010 as the "Karaburuni peninsula-Sazani island" Marine National Park covering an area of 12,428 hectares.

There are four **Ramsar sites** of wetlands of international importance especially as waterfowl habitats:

- Karavasta lagoon;
- Butrinti wetland complex;
- Shkodra Lake and Buna river wetland complex, and
- Prespa Lakes area, the latest designation in July 2013;

Map of Protected Areas in Albania (2014) – Biodiversity and Protected Areas Directorate



1.3 Main threats to biodiversity

Main threats to biodiversity include: industrial development, urbanization, deforestation, illegal hunting, fishing, soil erosion, energy and mining, transport and tourism are the sectors that have impacts on the biological diversity.

Other endangering factors: the uncontrolled pollution, alteration of river courses and hydro technical works, mineral resource extraction and overexploitation of biological resources.



Marine turtles in Sazani Island

PART II - THE NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN (NBSAP), ITS IMPLEMENTATION, AND THE MAINSTREAMING OF BIODIVERSITY

The “in situ” nature preservation in Albania started some 50 years ago, but it took a stronger development after 1990. There are currently about 798 protected areas (including 750 Nature Monuments) in Albania, covering around 15.83 % of the total land surface of the country. The first marine protected area - Marine National Park of Sazan - Karaburun was designated in April 2010.

- The administration and management of protected areas is based on Law No. 8906, dated 6 June 2002 “On Protected Areas”. The object of this law is the declaration, preservation, administration, management and use of protected areas and their natural and biological resources; the facilitation of conditions for the development of environmental tourism, for the information and education of the general public and for direct or indirect economic profits, by the local population, by the public and private sector.

- This law regulates the protection of six categories of protected areas, applied in the territory of the Republic of Albania. The categorization of areas, the status, and level of protection for each area is based on the criteria of the World Centre of Nature Conservation (IUCN). The law pays special attention to forests, waters and other natural resources within protected areas that shall be excluded from classification as forests for utilization.

Thus major development so far has been the establishment of the **Representative Network of Protected Areas in Albania** that is being extended gradually specially since 2005 and will be the baseline for the setting-up of Natura 2000 ecological network as the country progresses in its roadmap to EU integration. Meanwhile the Emerald network of ASCI-s completion is an obligation after the assessment carried out in 2011-2012 by the ETC/BD Museum of Natural Sciences of Paris. Gaps and new designations have still to be addressed in this context.

Summary table of the Representative Network of Protected Areas in Albania
(source: Biodiversity and Protected Areas Directorate, May 2014)

No	Protected Area category	No. PAs	Area hectares	% Protected Areas territory
1.	<i>Cat. I.</i> Strict nature reserve	2	4,800.0	0.105
2.	<i>Cat. II.</i> National Park	15	210,501	46.17
3.	<i>Cat. III.</i> Nature monument	750	3,470.0	0.7
4.	<i>Kategoria IV.</i> Managed Nature reserve	22	122,974.1	27.02
5.	<i>Kategoria V.</i> Protected landscape	5	95,864.4	21.06
6.	<i>Kategoria VI.</i> Managed resources PA/PA of multiple use	4	18,245.0	4.03
	Total	798	455,854.9	100

II.2 National biodiversity strategy and action plan to incorporate these targets and to serve as an effective instrument to mainstream biodiversity

The revision and update of the NBSAP for Albania is on-going in the frame of implementation of the project "Review of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) for Albania" funded by the GEF project "Revision of the Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and Fifth National Report of Albania to the Convention of Biodiversity (CBD)" continuous since January 2013. After some delays the preparation of the fifth national report and the revised NBSAP for Albania are ongoing and expected to be completed respectively in May and July 2014.



The biodiversity protection can be achieved only by accepting and respecting the objectives and the principles of preservation and enhancement of the steady development in sectors related to biodiversity such as agriculture, forestry, fishing, industry, urbanization, transport and tourism.

Internationally recognized principles such as the principle of "the careful Decision Making", "Prevention", the "Exclusion / Avoiding of injuries", "displacement in other areas in order to minimise the damage", "Who Damages or Defiles Pays"; the "Ecological Compensation", "Preservation of Ecological Integrity", the principle of "Restoration" and "Re-creation", the principle of "Best Technology and Practice", "public participation and the public's right to get information", should be implemented in all sectors mentioned above in order to increase the protection of biodiversity. Based on these principles we will analyze the existing legal and institutional framework supporting biodiversity protection in the country and identify necessary improvements and propose amendments to be made to existing laws.

Nature Protection in general principles is also guaranteed through Law "*On Environmental Protection*" No. 10431, dated 14/06/2011, in Article 5 of which is defined that "conservation of biological diversity" is one of the environmental elements.

Nature Protection principles are guaranteed through the **Law No. 8934, dated 5.9.2002**, Official Journal No. 60, publishing date 16.10.2002, page 1673 "*On Environmental Protection*", amended by **Law No. 9890, date 20.03.2008**, Official Journal: Year 2008, No. 45, Page 2031, Publishing date 01.04.2008, which in Article 5 states that "conservation of biological diversity" is one of the environmental elements.

There are several legal acts guaranteeing Nature protection in the Republic of Albania including:

- **Law No. 9587, dated 20.07.2006**, Official Journal No. 84, publishing date 9.8.2006, page 2847, “On Biodiversity Protection”, amended in 2012;
- **Law No. 8906, dated 6.6.2002**, Official Journal No. 29, publishing date 26.6.2002, “On protected areas”, amended in by **Law 9868, date 04.02.2008** ‘On some addendums and changes in **Law No.8906, date 06.06.2002** “On protected Areas”, published in Official Journal No 18, Year 2008, page 640, publishing date 19.02.2008, and amended in 2012;
- **Law No.10006, dated 23.10.2008**, Official Journal No. 168, publishing date 31.10.2008, page 8273, “On Wild Fauna Protection”, amended in 2012;
- **Law No.9867, dated 31.1.2008**, Official Journal No. 18, publishing date 19.2.2008, page 629, “On rules and procedures for international trade of endangered species of flora and fauna”, amended in 2012;
- **Law no. 10253, date 11.3.2010**, “On hunting”, approved by the Assembly and to be published in the Official Journal.

To ensure the implementation of these laws, a number of bylaws have been promulgated to complete the legal basis for specific elements of nature protection, including the listing of protected fauna and flora species published in the Red Book of Albanian Flora and the Red Book of Albanian fauna.

Protection of species of interest is accomplished through specific provisions of the biodiversity law and the wild fauna protection law. The biodiversity law also contains provisions for invasive species and protection measures for species conservation. The habitat protection is accomplished through provisions of the law on protected areas, and the network of protected areas. This network serves to identify and establish the NATURA 2000 ecological network. The law on wild fauna protection foresees protecting important habitats for birds in general, and migratory birds in particular.

Actions has taken to implement the Convention since the fourth report and the outcomes of these actions

The implementation of main strategic documents in the filed of nature and biodiversity protection namely: The Intersectoral Environmental Strategy (2007-2013) of November 2007 and the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action of 2000 as well as the legal framework on this field have contributed to the following below listed achievements:

- The extension of the representative network of Protected Areas, by increasing it since 2005 from 5.8 % to 15, 83 % actually;
- The red list of fauna and flora species is being completed and updated and a by-legal act has been formulated to give a legal basis for their protection;
- The area covered by Protected Areas actually stands at 460.021 hectares;
- Single species action plans have been elaborated for six species and habitats;
- Ten Management Plans for Protected Areas, especially for National Parks have been elaborated and approved and 10 other MP are bieng drafted actually. The implementation of management Plans for PAS that have such plans already approved, has contributed to the improvement of conservation status for theratened species and habitats;
- The elaboration of e new law “On hunting”of 2010 and the amendment of the law “On protected areas”, ensured an improved legal basis for the protection of species and habitats.



The Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (BSAP) approved by DCM No. 532, dated 5.10.2000, on the approval of the study "Strategy and action Plan for Biodiversity", published in Official Journal No. 32, dated 23.10.2000, is the main document on biodiversity for the period 2000-2015. The Strategy defines the main directions of preserving biodiversity and habitats, through their identification and proclamation as protected areas, and through protection of species within and outside the protected areas.

During these years a series of Strategy recommendations such as: drafting and implementation of the law "*On biodiversity protection*", 2006, the law "*On protected areas*", 2002, as amended, designation of new Protected Areas as well as the increase of protected areas coverage from 5 % to 12.57 %, have been implemented.

The Environmental Cross-Cutting Strategy of 2007 includes objectives and main actions for biodiversity protection, protected areas, threatened species etc. Preparation and implementation of action plans for specific threatened and endemic species of wild fauna are part of plans for biodiversity. In this framework five action plans have been elaborated including threatened species of flora and wild fauna. The Strategy and Action Plan for Wetlands of 2006 is another document that complements the framework of plans for elements of biodiversity.

The action plan for global environment regarding the implementation of three United Nations conventions, the so-called Rio Conventions (Biodiversity, Climate Change, and Desertification) is another national document.

The Government's Programme 2009-2013, to increase the surface of protected areas is also part of biodiversity plans, aiming to guarantee preservation of habitats and species to reach a favourable conservation status. The intention is to increase the surface of protected areas at comparable levels to the average of EU member countries. The Forestry Strategy of 2004 addresses the issues of forest biodiversity conservation.

DCM No. 84, 27.1.2009 "On the determination of the criteria for establishment of biodiversity inventory and monitoring network", Official Journal No. 12, dated 19.2.2009, page 911, completes a necessary element for a functional biodiversity monitoring network.

Administration and management of protected areas are based on **Law No. 8906 dated 06.06.2002 "On protected areas"**, as amended by **Law No.9868 dated 04.02.2008** on some addendums and changes in the Law No.8906, dated 06.06.2002 "On protected areas" published at Official Journal No.18, Year 2008, page 640, publishing date 19.02.2008. The object of the Law is to declare, conserve, administer, manage and sustainable use of the protected areas and their natural and biological resources; to alleviate conditions for environmental tourism development; to inform and educate the public on direct and indirect economical benefits for local people, for the public and private sector.

The Law regulates the protection of six categories of protected areas, and the status and level of protection for each area based on the criteria and guidelines of International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN, 1994a). The Law devotes special attention to the management of forest, waters and other natural resources within the protected areas. Forests within Protected Areas are excluded from utilization for economic purposes.

Based on the Law, important or threatened areas are proclaimed as protected areas, within the following categories:

- Strict natural reserve / scientific reserve (I Category);
- National Park (II Category);
- Nature Monument (III Category);
- Managed Nature Reserve/natural park (IV Category);
- Protected landscape (V Category);
- Protected area of managed resources/ protected area with multiple use (VI Category).

Law No. 9868, dated 04.02.2008 with amendments and changes by **Law No. 8906, dated 6.6.2002 "On protected areas"**, defines the criteria for proclaiming protected areas and recognizes Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) of interest to the European Community. It

provides the possibility of assessing habitats of Community interest and inclusion in the Annexes of Habitats.

The Law also defines the internal sub-zoning for each protected area based on their characteristics, facilitates the performance of community activities in the territories of protected areas, provides "buffer" or mitigating effects with the aim to preserve the core sub-zone and better characterizes the properties of natural areas. The law defines procedures for proclaiming protected areas. Although few in number, Marine protected areas are included. The protection of marine environments is defined as an important priority for the future. The MoEFWA has submitted the proposal for designation of Karaburun (Vlore) as the first marine National Park to the Council of Ministers for approval.

Analyses of marine areas have included assessment of biodiversity and natural values in general, and assessment of historical, cultural, social and economic values, aimed at identifying marine area for protection status. This analysis creates the opportunity for the establishment of a network of marine areas and its inclusion in the representative network of protected areas of the country.

The above mentioned legislation on nature protection, horizontal environmental legislation, the legislation on forests, fisheries, water, land, territorial planning, tourism, etc. include various management and control measures for planning and land use, and for law enforcement within and outside of the system of protected areas. The law "*On protected areas*", for each category of protected area defines the degree of protection and prohibited activities.

Private land owners, whose properties are included in a protected area, and users of these properties, participate in the planning, conservation and use of natural resources of the area. They are obliged to cooperate with the administration of the protected area and must strictly implement certain rules, management plans and programmes designed for a sustainable development of the area.

Law enforcement measures regarding nature protection are defined in environmental and sectoral laws and regulations. Their implementation is ensured by the Environmental Inspectorate, the Forestry Police, the Fisheries Inspectorate, and inspectors working for other line Ministries.

Albanian legislation for the protection of nature after 2006, when Albania signed the SAA, and within the framework of INPSAA implementation, is approximated to a considerable degree with the main EU directives on nature protection. The Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, is approximated at 80%;, the Birds Directive 2009/147/EC, OJ EU L 20/7, 26.1.2010, is approximated at 85%; and implementation of the Regulation on International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora 338/97EC within the framework of the CITES Convention is under way. EU legislation for nature protection is also transposed through the law on protected areas, the law on protection of wild fauna, the law on hunting, and the law on the rules and procedures for international trade of endangered species of wild fauna and flora.

Full approximation will be achieved through drafting added sub legal acts as foreseen in the National Plan for Implementation of Stabilization, Association Agreement approved by the DCM No 463, dated 05.07.2006, Official Journal: Year 2006, No.80, Page 2307; Publication Date 02.08.2006; and through monitoring, assessment, and awareness campaigns. Approximation will continue with the approval of the list of species and habitats to be under special protection.

Among difficulties with the approximation process, the lack of community expertise in monitoring, evaluation, training, and awareness, and the need for additional financial and human resources are the most important.

There are no essential differences between Albanian legislation and EU regulations regarding wildlife trade. With approval of Law No. 9867, dated 31.1.2008 *"On the determination of rules and procedures for international trade of endangered species of wild fauna and flora"* implementing the CITES Convention *"On international trade of endangered species of wild fauna and flora"*, Albania adheres to EU regulations.

The difference consists on species covered by this legislation. In the case of Albania the species included are those listed in the annexes of the Convention, while for EU the one listed in the Annexes A, B, C and D which are not identical with annexes of Convention. Additionally, the Convention requires import permits for species listed in Annexes 1 and 2 of the Convention, and the EU requires import permits for species listed in Annexes A and B of the Regulations for EU Wildlife trade. There are also differences in the permit and/or certificate formats used by the European Community and Member States.

EU legislation regarding the marketing of seal products has recent changed due to approval of Regulation No.1007/2009 on 16 September 2009, which prohibits this activity beginning in August 2010. (Regulation (EC) No 1007/2009 of the Europe Parliament and of the Council of 16 September on the trade of seal products, CELEX number 32009R1007, OJ 286, 31/10/2009, P.0036-0039).

Marketing of seal products is not addressed by specific provisions in Albanian legislation, but is guaranteed by application provisions of Law No.10006, dated 23.10. 2008 "*On protection of wild fauna*". Article 19 of the law prohibits possession, captivity and trade of individuals of wild fauna species which are taken directly from nature. Other provisions of the same law prohibit the taking of protected species. As a result, there are no fundamental differences between Albanian legislation and EU legislation regarding the trade in seal products.

The Albanian legislation for the welfare of wild animals is provided **in Law No.10006, dated 23.10.2008 "*On protection of wild fauna*", and the Law Nr.9867, dated 31.1.2008,"*On the rules and procedures of international trade of endangered species of wild fauna and flora*".**

These laws contain specific provisions related to the welfare of wild animals designated for protection.

The Law on wild fauna contains provisions for protection of species based on species status and habitat, and includes provisions for protection of migratory routes, reproduction conditions and the recovery of species populations. A number of activities are prohibited, including: possession, captivity and trade of individuals of wild fauna species taken directly from nature; torture and cruel behaviour towards individuals of species of wild fauna; capture and killing of individuals of wild fauna; destruction of habitats and reproduction conditions; movement and transportation of individuals of wild fauna species; transfer of animals or their organs to other locations, actions to eradicate wild fauna species and their populations with the Environmental Regional Agency are in charge implementing the law.

Law no.10253, dated 11.3.2010, "*On hunting*", will be published soon in the Official Journal. It defines humane hunting methods. Council Regulation No. 3254/91 of 4 November 1991, to ban the use of flintlocks, CELEX number 31991R3254, OJ L 308, 9.11.1991, p. 0001-0004, will automatically be applicable upon EU membership moment, and its principles and structures related to the control of trade in animal is already established and operational in Albania.

There are no essential differences between the Albanian legislation and EU legislation regarding wildlife animal welfare. We are in the process of augmenting the above mentioned legal acts with additional sub-legal acts. Legislation prepared during the last two years will provide a further approximation to EU legislation in this field. However, limited human and financial capacities may have a slowing impact on the approximation process.

The legal basis for keeping animals in zoos is relatively new and consists of provisions of the **Law No. 10006, dated 23.10.2008 "On protection of wild fauna**. Article 26 of the Law is focused on zoo collections, which may keep only individuals born in captivity or obtained through licensed hunting or fishing. The treatment of wild fauna species in zoos or other surroundings wherein animals are exposed to the public will be regulated by regulation of MoE. Inspection of zoos is the duty of the Forestry Police and local governmental control bodies, which, in cooperation with the Regional Environment Agency in charge of law enforcement.

Biodiversity mainstreaming into relevant sectoral and cross-sectoral strategies, plans and programmes

The entire process of drafting national environmental legislation and policies is based on approximation of EU environmental directives. This is a methodological principle in the preparation and approval of any normative environmental legislation. To ensure accurate implementation of this principle the following steps were followed:

- Identification of EU directives on the environment, including amendments to certain directives;
- Grouping of directives according to areas of focus, such as air, water, wastes, etc.;
- Setting out priorities for transposing each of the EU directives;
- Translation of EU directives into Albanian and publication of transposed directives;
- Drafting and approval of the mid-term plan for approximation of the directives. The plan is closely monitored by the Ministry of Integration and reported to Brussels;

- Drafting, approval and implementation of an annual matrix of normative acts, identifying each directive to be transposed;
- Any draft-law or draft-Council of Ministers Decision is accompanied by the “*Approximation Table*”, which identifies transposed EU directive or parts thereof, and the degree to which the EU directives were incorporated into the proposed legislation, and is reviewed by the Ministry of Integration. Proposed legislation is vetted by the Ministry of Integration prior to consideration by the Council of Ministers and the Assembly;
- The MoE, as the institution responsible for drafting and implementing environmental legislation, has a Directorate of Integration and Projects that continuously follows the process of approximation and informs the Ministry of Integration;

The main difficulties encountered during the approximation process include initial identification of needed organizational, economical, structural and administrative measures. This is especially true with regard to water quality standards since attainment requires substantial investments in environmental infrastructure. Additionally, many of the directives require the establishment of new organizations and systems, and the necessity to strengthen existing capability and capacity. Thus, in practice EU directives are implemented with difficulty and generally involve delays. This in turn compromises successful transposition of EU directives into Albanian legislation.

The principles of a sustainable development are integrated into a number of strategic and legal documents. The most important are the Environment Cross-cutting Strategy (ECS) adopted by Decree of the Council of Ministers No. 847, dated 29.11.2007 (*Official Journal* 174/2007, p. 5349, date of publication 22.12.2007), and the National Strategy for Development and Integration (NSDI), 2007-2013, adopted in Decree of the Council of Ministers in March 2008.

The Strategic Goals of the Republic of Albania in the field of environment are defined in the Environmental Cross-cutting Strategy (ECS), an integral part of the National Strategy for Development and Integration. ECS is approved by DCM No. 847, dated 29.11.2007, *Official Journal*: Year 2007, No. 174, Page 5349; Publication Date: 22-12-2007 and it is available at www.moe.gov.al. ECS is the basic document that sets forth state policy in the field of environmental protection. The ultimate goal is to meet the constitutional obligation towards Albanian citizens to provide a healthy and ecological environment; development of the rational and sustainable use of natural resources; preservation of the environment from contamination

and degradation; and promotion of environmental values as important assets for the sustainable development of the country.

Many of the policies and measures of this strategy are supported by programmes and actions set out in inter-ministerial strategies. The inter-ministerial framework provides contemporary and integrated consideration of environmental factors related to transportation, agriculture, property rights, etc. This concept holds central and local government institutions responsible for environmental protection and the sustainable development of the country.

Environmental goals, objectives, and issues are identified in the following documents:

- **Albanian Government Programme – 2013-2017;**
- **National Plan for European Integration;**
- **Action Plan to Implement European Partnership Priorities.**

The goals include:

- Achievement of required (EU, WHO) standards for air quality, water supply and treatment, noise, urban waste, and protected areas with the purpose of improving the life quality;
- Reduction of greenhouse gas emission and ozone depleting substances with the aim of contributing to prevention of climate changes,
- Protection and maintenance of all ground and underground water resources for present and future use,
- Protection and improvement of land for the purpose of maximizing fertility, minimize erosion, and prevent pollution,
- Protection and improvement of biodiversity, protected zones and species with the purpose of preserving the natural and cultural heritage of our environment in line with our European and international commitments;
- Effective spatial and integrated developmental planning, which takes into consideration economic, social and environmental objectives in a balanced manner;
- Repair and restoration of seriously damaged zones with the purpose of preventing threats against public health and biodiversity due to these damages. ECS is designed in full compliance with the drafting strategy standards of European Countries, is thoroughly discussed in roundtables by all relevant Line Ministries and interest groups. ECS targets its

objectives through a concrete programme, timetables, relevant institutions, and financial budgeting.

The effective implementation of ECS is a legal obligation for all the institutions, the majority of which have been part of the consultation process. An Inter-ministerial Working Group headed by the Minister of Environment (MoE) with high-level membership representing various line ministries was established to draft the ECS.

The ECS determines the main objectives of national sustainable development, while protecting to the degree possible, all natural resources from pollution and degradation and promoting environmental assets to benefit national prosperity. Sustainable development is guided by the vision and policies of the government through the integrated development of rural and urban areas, consistent with protection of the environment. This will be achieved through effective convergence of sectoral policies into a single integrated approach. Since the sectors of fisheries, aquaculture, and forestry are part of the administrative structure of the MoEFWA, the strategy prepared by the Ministry maintains an integrated approach to the development of these sectors.

One of the strategic priorities of the ECS is the rapid, balanced, and sustainable development in the economic, social and human fields, where transport, energy, water supply, sanitation, and environment play a major role. It cross-sectoral strategies for sustainable development, including:

- **The National Strategy of Energy**, adopted in DCM No. 424, dated 26.06 2003 (Date of adoption 26.06.2003, *Official Journal* 54, p. 2196);
- **The Sectoral Strategy on Agriculture and Food**, adopted in DCM No. 924, dated 14.11.2007 (*Official Journal* 192, p. 6149, date of approval 14.11.2007);
- **The Strategy for the Development of Business and Investments**, adopted in DCM No. 795, dated 11.07.2007 (*Official Journal* 170, p.5109, date of approval 11.07.2007);
- **The Sectoral Strategy for Transportation**, adopted in DCM No. 1214, dated 3.9.2008 (*Official Journal* 145, p.7183, date of approval 03.09.2008);
- **The Sectoral Strategy for Tourism**, adopted in DCM No. 844, dated 11.6.2008 (*Official Journal* 107, p. 4732

- **The Cross-Sectoral Strategy for Rural Development**, adopted in DCM No. 924, dated 14.11.2007 (date of approval 14.11.2007, *Official Journal* 192, p.6149);
- **The Cross-Sectoral Strategy for Regional Development**, adopted in DCM No. 773, dated 14.11.2007 (date of approval 14.11.2007, *Official Journal* 161, p. 4715).

These documents lay down concrete measures for balanced development, including the protection of habitats and species.

- **The Sectoral Strategy for Energy** was adopted in July 2003 and an updated draft is under consideration. The Strategy strongly respects the principles of environmental protection and sustainable development. It stresses the need for enhanced energy efficiency and lays down several directions that cover the thermo-insulation, the promotion of the use of renewable energy resources, public transportation, etc. The Sectoral Draft-Strategy reiterates the importance of further developing the sector of renewable energy resources with a view toward developing more environment friendly energy sectors. The draft-strategy stresses the objective of ensuring greater energy efficiency in sectors of energy while protecting the environment.
- **The Strategy for the Development of Business and Investments**, adopted by DCM No. 795, dated 11.07.2007, pays special attention to the development of the mining sector and stresses strict rules for environmental protection and rehabilitation. Among the strategic objectives of this sector, the following are:
 - Institutional strengthening and a higher level of professionalism to respond to the demands for restructuring the mining industry, with the aim of ensuring sustainable development.
 - Drafting and implementing general policies for the promotion and rational exploitation of natural resources.
- **The Sectoral Strategy for Agriculture and Food** underlines the growth of farming production by means of a sustainable development, guaranteed by effective institutions. Policies to be followed ensure the sustainable management of land as a fundamental component for the sustainable development of agriculture.
- **The Sectoral Strategy for Transportation** has as its main objective the establishment of a unified road transport network, which would gradually balance economic conditions and

control traffic to reduce pollution and road accidents. The strategy requires development of sustainable transport, which implies the optimization of costs, safety and environmental protection. At the same time, in the field of sea transport, the strategy stresses protection of the marine environment, necessary to ensure effective protection of coastal regions and the maritime environment. The strategy places emphasis on enforcement of the MARPOL 73/78 Convention.

- **The Sectoral Strategy for Tourism** was adopted in 2008 by Council of Ministers Decree No. 844, dated 11.6.2008. It is based on the Strategy and Action Plan for the Development of Natural and Environmental Tourism adopted in 2006. The strategy emphasizes implementation of the principles of sustainable development at all levels of planning, decision-making, and management. Sustainable management of natural, cultural and human resources is critical for long-term sustainability of the tourist industry. Chapter II of Law No. 9734 "On Tourism", dated 14.5.2007, amended, explicitly sets out the principle of sustainable development of tourism and protection of the environment and natural resources.
- **The Cross-Sectoral Strategy for Rural Development** also integrates the principles of sustainable development and environmental protection, including habitats that are important for conservation. The strategy highlights the need to preserve the cultural landscape. The strategy clearly defines the need to draft environmentally friendly policies and management plans for territories that are likely candidates to be part of NATURA 2000 network.
- The legislation on fisheries is guided by the general principles of the Management Code of Responsible Fishing of the FAO. The responsible minister for fisheries may determine the zones where any fishing activities are absolutely forbidden. (Article 43 of Regulation No.1, dated 29.3.2005 "On the enforcement of the legislation on fisheries and aquaculture"). The legal framework will be improved by more fully integrating the principles of sustainable development. To this end, MoE has finalized the draft law on the SAE, which is expected to be adopted during 2010. The draft-law ensures protection of the environment and the sustainable utilization of natural resources through identification and assessment of the adverse effects that may derive from strategies, programmes and plans. The law requires fuller integration and greater compliance with the principles of sustainable development from the very early phases of the planning process.
 - destructive natural phenomena;

- Maintenance of the ecologic balance, and improvement of the quality of life.

There are partial legal definitions in Albania regarding environmental liabilities. Law No 10431, of 14.6.2011, “On environmental protection” determines the principal strategic elements of environmental protection:

- Prevention and reduction of water, atmosphere and land pollution and other kinds of pollution;
- Protection of the biological diversity;
- Rational use of natural and mining resources and avoidance of their over exploitation;
- Rehabilitation of ecological areas damaged and polluted due to human activities and

Since January 2014 has started the implementation of a new GEF project ‘Elaboration of the action plan harmonized with the Strategic Plan of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the preparation of the National Report for the Convention’. This project will last 18 months and will contribute to fulfil the reporting obligations and implementation of the UNCCD in the country.

- Cross-cutting issues with the tourism as eco-tourism and touristic hunting activity as well as issues on territory planning with the Ministry of Urban Development and Tourism;

-Cross cutting issues on land with the Ministry of Agriculture Rural Development and Water Administration;

National biodiversity strategy and action plan implementation

The Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has proclaimed national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) to be the primary mechanisms for the implementation of the Convention and its Strategic Plan. Article 6(a) of the CBD requires all Parties to develop an NBSAP. The strategy is meant to be a roadmap for how the country intends to fulfil the objectives of the Convention in light of its specific national circumstances. The related action plan will constitute the sequence of steps to be taken to meet the goals of the strategy. The development of the NBSAP in accordance with Article 6(a) is the cornerstone for fulfilling the requirement of Article 6(b) to mainstream biodiversity and the three

objectives of the CBD. This should occur across all sectors of government, economic sectors and involve other actors who have an impact on biodiversity, through relevant sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programs and policies. NBSAPs developed in isolation from other sectoral policies and programs are ineffective in protecting biodiversity and the integrity of critical ecosystem functions.

National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans are the principal instruments for implementing the Convention at the national level. The Convention requires countries to prepare a national biodiversity strategy (or equivalent instrument) and to ensure that this strategy is mainstreamed into the planning and activities of all those sectors whose activities can have an impact (positive and negative) on biodiversity.

The document is aimed to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the content, adequacy, implementation and effectiveness of existing NBSAP and, in the light of this assessment, offer recommendations on what steps should be taken to ensure that NBSAPs fulfil their role as the primary mechanism for the implementation of the Convention and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2013-2020, especially and with particular emphasis on marine biodiversity issues.

In 1998, the Albanian government charged the National Environmental Agency (today the Ministry of Environment) to prepare the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan as the main strategic document toward the implementation the Convention on Biological Diversity requirements. Albania has been, and continues to be, a participant in European and regional initiatives related with the CBD, especially in the PAN-European Strategy on Biological and Landscape Diversity (PESBLD), and the main objectives for implementing the CBD and PEBLDS are:

1. protection and improvement of biological and landscape diversity;
2. incorporation of the principles and policies required for sustainable biodiversity use and management; and
3. promoting sustainable development for present and future generations.

The document was finalized in 1999 and endorsed by the government in 2000. The Albanian BSAP was the first document analyzing on a national level the situation, the impact of country development the biodiversity and landscape (as habitat loss and fragmentation, damage and degradation of habitats and ecosystems, disturbance and maltreatment of wildlife, loss of species

or the threat of their extinction, damage and erosion of genetic resources), identifying the major threats and propose the main actions to be taken in a short and long term for improving the situation. Based on the selected criteria, together with the present level of knowledge on national biodiversity status and the opinion and consensus of the country's leading experts, were prepared the list of priority plant and animal species, and the habitat types which needed action plans.

Other issues were included in this process as the institutional reform and strengthening their role, the improvement of the legal framework and commensurate law enforcement efforts, identification and mobilization of financial resources, identification of economic barriers to biodiversity protection, finding and implementing the appropriate mechanisms to realize the benefits of protection; and technical support for future projects.

From 2000 that the first NBSAP for Albania was approved there were make some efforts in implementing it and reporting the situation. Several projects and activities were trying to realize some of the priority in the field of:

- 1. In situ conservation, increasing the surface and management of the protected area network;**
- 2. Research and studies related to the biodiversity, particularly in several project areas and through the monitoring program;**
- 3. The legal framework, were the law on protected areas and the law on biodiversity protection are the main achievement;**
- 4. Institutional reforms, regarding the establishment of the Ministry of Environment and its related structure;**
- 5. Information and awareness, including the strengthening of the civil society organization etc.**

The Republic of Albania has acceded in two Protocols of the Conventions of Biological Diversity (CBD):

- Nagoya Protocol on access to genetic resources and benefit sharing - accession by Law no. 113/2012 of 22.11.2012;**
- Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur supplementary Protocol to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety – accession by Law no.112/2013 of 22.11.2012.**

Instruments of accession were deposited by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the CBD Secretariat on 29 January 2013.

Main achievements on the implementation of the NBSAP in Albania are:

- **Legislation:** completion of the legal framework by the means of elaboration of by-legal acts for the law ‘On biodiversity protection’, and the approval of the law “On some changes and additions to the law “On protected areas”, in 2008 as well as several key laws in the area of environmental protection and sustainable development have been enacted, which have all been harmonized with the appropriate EU directives. A detailed list of legal acts enacted from 2007 onwards is given in the following section of this report.
- **In-situ conservation:** Increased the surface of protected areas has increased considerably starting from 2005 to **15,58 %** actually which is a figure comparable to the EU average of 17 % of the territory being protected.
- **Action plans for single species and habitats:** so far 6 species action plans have been elaborated. The following strategic documents as Action Plans have been prepared:
 - Action Plan for Conservation of the Brown Bear (*Ursus arctos*);
 - Action Plan for Conservation of the Lynx (*Lynx lynx*);
 - Action Plan for the conservation of the Pygmy cormorant (*Phalacrocorax pygaeus*)
 - Action Plan for the Conservation of Cetaceans;
 - Action Plan for the Conservation of Posidonia oceanic meadows;
 - Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine turtles and their natural habitats (prepared in cooperation with MEDASSET) approved in November 2012;
- **Preparations for Natura 2000:** Drafting of a project fiche in the frame of IPA 2013 for the initiation of Natura 2000 process in Albania. The proposal includes the implementation of Management Plans of Protected Areas in Albania, capacity building and existing infrastructure improvement of Protected Areas, that will be the base for future Natura 2000 in the country. The project-fiche is being negotiated with the European Commission.

- **Reporting to the CBD** and its Protocols and Programmes of Work
 - The fourth National Report of Albania to the CBD was completed in March 2011;
 - The second National Report of Albania to the Cartagena Protocol on biosafety was completed in November 2011;
 - The second PoWPA to the CBD was completed in June 2012.

Recently, some month before had been developed the BSAP for the Marine Protected Areas, from the Institute of Nature Conservation in Albania, useful document to be taken into account for the new strategy to be developed.

Regarding the institutional structure since September 2013 the previous Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water Administration is the Ministry of the Environment. Consequently there is a new structure of the ministry. Nature protection is in this context covered by the Sector of Biodiversity and Protected Areas at the Directorate of Forests and Biodiversity – in the wider context placed under the general Directorate of Policies (structural chart of MoE enclosed in Annex to this report). The flow chart of nature protection in Albania is also enclosed in the Annexes to this report.

As stated also in the fourth National Report the existing (first) NBSAP has been implemented to some extent. This is due to limitations in financial and human resources.

The most advanced program implemented is that on Protected Areas. This objective is seen in three aspects:

- 1. Extension of the Protected Areas network;**
- 2. Elaboration of Management Plans for Protected Areas;**

Drafting of management plans for six protected areas below continued, of which the first four (of the list below) are completed and for which the proces of consultationis underway. All plans will be completed within 2014.

- National Park "Bredhi i Hotoves-Dangelli";
- National Park "Tomori Mountain";
- Protected Landscape "Pogradec Lake";

- National Park "Korab-Koritnik";
- Protected Landscape "Mali me Gropa-Bize-Martanesh";
- National park Albanian Alps".

Preparation of the Management Plan for the National Park 'Divjake-Karavasta' is on-going in cooperation with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The final draft was prepared at the end of March 2014 and actually is undergoing the consultation process with the stakeholders.

Preparation of the management plan for National Park Prepsa is in process in the frame of a project with German KfW. The final draft was completed in March 2014 after reflecting comments and suggestions by stakeholders during the consultation phase. The Order of Minister for its approval is in being prepared.

Institutional framework

Ministry of Environment through the Directorate of Biodiversity and Protected Areas within the General Directorate of Environmental Policy and Delivery of Priorities deals with the formulation of policies on nature protection and development of strategic documents in the field. The cooperation is extended with other departments of the Ministry and the implementing institutions:

- National Environment Agency;
- The Regional Forest Service Directorates (which in the context of structural reform currently being implemented, have in two sectors: Protected Areas sections in each district and a sector of Protected Areas of the region; and
- State Inspectorate of the Environment, Forestry and Water Administration.

In the field of nature protection, the Environment Ministry cooperates with the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Water Management for agricultural biodiversity, the Ministry of Urban Development and Tourism related to decision - making on land use, the Ministry of Interior to coordinate work on the management of hunting activity (sportive and touristic one), the Minister of State for Local Government for local management of natural resources in communal ownership, as well as the Directorate General of Customs for international customs control on trade of endangered species of wild fauna and flora.

Genetically Modified Organisms

As GMO-s is a cross-cutting filed, no structure is set by law for GMOs. Meanwhile, in the framework of the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), stakeholders have been identified. As such GMO-s requires the input of all key stakeholders to define and coordinate the work between them.

The main institutions are the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Water Administration for planting, food and trade, Ministry of the Environment for the controlled introduction into the environment, including setting and ways of notification system (notification) between the States Parties to the Protocol of bio-safety.

At the national level pursuant to the provisions of Law no. 9863, dated 28.01.2008 "On Food" was created the National Food Authority (NFA) depending by MAFRDWA (Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Rural Development and Water Administration) by DCM no.1081, dated 21.10.2009 "On the organization and functioning of the NFA". Among the tasks of NFA determined that "directs the process of risk assessment in food and feed".

Other stakeholders on policy making are the Ministry of Health for microorganisms able to close and impacts on human health and the Ministry of Education and Sports for the development of biotechnology. Directorate General of Customs is important to implement the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety regarding trans-boundary movements of GMO-s.

In the framework of the reform of scientific research institutions, is created the Department of Biotechnology at the Faculty of Natural Sciences, University of Tirana, which in collaboration with other institutions under the Ministries mentioned and the Academy of Sciences are important for performing the procedure risk assessment of GMOs .

NATURE PROTECTION

Institutions	Main functions							Main Agencies/Departments/Units	Subordinate Agencies/Units	
	Policy making	Resource planning	Resource allocation	Policy Implementation	Monitoring	Coordination	Oversight			
Council of Ministers	✓				✓	✓	✓	DSDC		
	✓							Legal Department		
Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Water Administration	✓				✓	✓		General Directorate of Policies		
	✓	✓	✓		✓			Biodiversity Directorate		
				✓				Implementing agencies		NEA
				✓						Administrations (under DFS)
Ministry of Finance		✓	✓					General Budget Department		
					✓			CFCU		
Ministry of Agriculture Food & Consumer	✓		✓					General Directorate of Soil	Centres of Agricultural Technology Transfer	
				✓				Implementing agency		
Ministry of Integration					✓	✓		NIPAC office		
	✓							Directorate of Internal Market		
Ministry of Education & Science					✓			Implementing Agencies	Academy of Sciences	
					✓				Centre for Flora and Fauna Research (UT)	
MPWT				✓				Implementing Agency	Territory Planning Agency	
METE				✓				Implementing Agency	National Agency of Natural Resources	
Ministry of Interior				✓	✓				Local Government Units	
PARLIAMENT	✓						✓	Commission for Production Activities, Trade and Environment		
	✓						✓	Laws commission		

Organizational structure of nature protection in Albania

ON-GOING NATURE PROTECTION PROJECTS IN ALBANIA

“Strengthening environmental legislation and enforcement in Albania” SELEA project (IPA 2010) has a component on the elaboration of Management Plans for the following Protected Areas:

1. National Park “Bredhi i Hotovës-Dangëlli”;
2. National Park “Mali i Tomorrit”;
3. Proposed National Park “Alpet Shqiptare”;
4. Natural park “Korab-Koritnik”;
5. Protected landscape “Mali me Gropa-Bizë-Martanesh”;
6. Protected landscape “Liqeni i Pogradecit”.

- **The project** “Institutional support for the MoEFWA on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in protected areas” funded by Cooperazione Italiana and IUCN. The project aims strengthening of institutional capacities and of the staff at national and local level on the planning and management process of Protected Areas. Two management plans will be prepared: MP for protected landscape Lumi Buna-Velipoje and MP for national Park Shebenik-Jabllanice.
- **The project** “Trans-boundary Biosphere Reserve Prespa: Support for Prespa National Park -Albania”, funded by KfW, also elaborating the Management Plan for Prespa National Park ;
- **The project** “Improving coverage for an effective management of coastal and marine MPA-s ”, supported by UNDP/GEF – which is preparing the Management Plan for the Marine National park the first MPA in Albania Karaburun-Sazan;
- **The project** “Conservation and sustainable use of “Divjakë-Karavasta” National Park with the participation of local government and interested stakeholders”, supported by Japanese International cooperation Agency (JICA). This project is elaborating the

Management Plan for the National Park Divjake-Karavasta with the participatory approach.

Thus there are 10 Management Plans being drafted actually for the Protected Areas.

PART III - PROGRESS TOWARDS THE 2015 AND 2020 AICHI BIODIVERSITY TARGETS AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE RELEVANT 2015 TARGETS OF THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

III.1 Progress towards the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets

- ✓ The Law “On the delaration of hunting ban in the Republic of Albania”, no. 7/2014, of 30.01.2014, was drafted and approved. According to the provisions of this law hunting activity in the country is banned for a two year period. The law was published in the OJ on 28.2.2014 and it entered into force on 16 March 2014.
- ✓ Minister's Order no. 1280, dated 20.11.2013 "On approval of the red list of wild fauna and flora" of Albania, which represents the review and update of the existing red list compiled for the first time in Albania in 2007.
- ✓ Order of Prime Minister no. 121, dated 20.03.2014 “On the re-organization of the cross-sectoral working group “Man and biosphere”;
- ✓ DCM no. 489, dated 06.13.2013 "On the designation of the natural complex of the Prespa Lakes and surrounding territories, specially protected area and its inclusion in the list of wetlands of international importance, especially as waterfowl habitat (Ramsar)"; With the designation of these areas, the total area of specially protected areas as wetlands of international importance, especially as waterfowl habitat (in the framework of the Ramsar Convention), reached 98,180.6 ha or 3,42% of the total area of the country. Actually Protected Areas coverage actually stand at **455 584 ha or 15, 58% of** the territory, of which total area of 13,261.2 hectares of protected areas is marine area.

Major national targets to 2020 are defined as follows:

1. By 2020, ensure full approximation and implementation of the EU *acquis* in the field of nature protection;
2. By 2015, have a strategic document for the biodiversity (NBSAP) revised and approved – in line with Aichi target 12;
3. By 2020 establish a conservation target of 17 % of terrestrial & inland water areas and 5 % of marine & coastal areas. Establishment of the National Ecological Network of Albania as an integral part of the Pan-European Ecological Network (PEEN) – in line with Aichi target 11;
4. Restore at least 15 % of degraded areas through conservation and restoration activities – in line with Aichi targets – this action will be achieved through the implementation of management plans for Protected Areas and through the implementation of single species action plans for species and habitats;
5. More sustainable agriculture and forestry – in line with Aichi targets;
6. Implement the Nagoya protocol on access and benefit sharing of genetic resources and benefits that arise from their use – in line with Aichi target

Other sectoral strategic goals for nature protection are:

- ✓ Address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by mainstreaming biodiversity across government and society;
- ✓ Reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use
- ✓ Enhance implementation through participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building
- ✓ Enhance the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services
- ✓ To improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity

These strategic goals will be achieved through the implementation of a set of concrete measures as follows:

Achieving full approximation of the field of protection directives that nature, biodiversity and landscape.

- ✓ Approximation of Full Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, through the drafting of by laws – Decision of the Council of Ministers;
- ✓ Approximation of the Birds Directive Full (2009/147/EC) through the development and adoption of bylaws as scheduled in the NPI regulations of the Law “On protection of wild fauna” and the Law “Hunting”: Council Decisions of Ministers and Regulation;
- ✓ Transposition of the Zoo Directive “On keeping animals in zoos”;
- ✓ Practical application of Regulation 338/97 of the EU on International Trade in Endangered Species of wild flora and fauna;
- ✓ Accession of Albania to the European Landscape Convention;
- ✓ Review and update the Strategy and Biodiversity Action Plan (BSAP) for Albania in line with the Strategic Plan of the Global Biodiversity Convention and the preparation of the Fifth National Report for the Convention on Biodiversity ;
- ✓ Regularly monitor the current status and trend status of protected species of wild flora and fauna listed in the Red Book;

Increased area of protected areas in 17% of the country’s land surface and increased surface Protected Areas and coastal marine equivalent to the average of EU countries and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets of the Convention

- ✓ Increase of Protected Areas coverage by designation of a new protected area (or extension of existing ones) each year to increase the surface of Protected Areas;
- ✓ Preparation of a strategic document for marine protected areas and coastal Albania;
- ✓ Preparation of studies and GIS mapping for specific areas identified to be declared protected marine areas and coastal.
- ✓ Extension of existing biodiversity monitoring indicators recommended by the European Environment Agency in the field of nature protection;

Preparation and implementation of management plans of protected areas and species action plans and habitats, preparations for Natura 2000.

- ✓ Completion of the draft Management Plans for six Protected Areas in cooperation with SELEA project; two management plans with Cooperazione Italiana/IUCN; one management plan with JICA for Divjake-Karavasta National Park; one management plan for Sazan Karaburun Marine National Park in cooperation with GEF-UNDP project ;
- ✓ The implementation of management plans for protected areas that already have adopted such plans, in accordance with the plan expenditures and potential funding of projects .
- ✓ Identify potential areas that meet the criteria to be declared Natura 2000 sites in Albania.
- ✓ Identification of the National Ecological Network of Albania (Alb-NEN) as an integral part of the Pan – European Ecological Network;

Medium and long term objectives

Implementation of the directives of the field of nature and landscape protection:

- ✓ Completion of the study on the Emerald network of Areas of Special Conservation Interest (ZIVR) in the frame of the Bern Convention “ For the preservation of wildlife and natural habitats European” ;
- ✓ Application of protective measures for species and habitats listed in the annexes of the Habitats Directive and the Birds ;
- ✓ Practical implementation of the regulation “On keeping animals in zoos “ ;
- ✓ Practical implementation of the EU Regulation on International Trade in Endangered Species of wild fauna and flora ;
- ✓ Implementation in practice of a comprehensive system of biodiversity monitoring ;
- ✓ Increasing the surface of the Protected Areas and Protected Areas marine coastal water surface 10 % of the country in line with the Aichi Biodiversity Targets of the Convention in 2020;
- ✓ Designation of two marine Protected Areas in accordance with the strategic document developed and adopted for this purpose;

- ✓ Draft Management Plans for Protected Areas declared new areas and update / review of existing plans;
- ✓ Carry out a national research on the re-classification of Protected Areas, based on the new criteria published by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN);
- ✓ Implementation of management plans of protected areas and species action plans and habitats, identification and study of Natura 2000 sites in Albania;
- ✓ Implementation of concrete measures provided in management plans to ensure the favorable conservation status of globally threatened species and habitats;
- ✓ Prepare proposals for Natura 2000 sites for Albania in the format required by the European Commission;
- ✓ Implementation of management plans for protected areas under budget allocated to the PBA and potential donor projects;

Major challenges for the future include:

- Preparing for the identification and establishment of the Natura 2000 network of conservation areas important for the European community;
- Implement management plans for those protected areas who already have such plans drafted and approved;
- Elaboration of Management Plans for Protected Areas that do not have such plans yet;
- Strengthening law enforcement and administrative capacity building of staff of protected areas administrations and control structures for the conservation of flora and fauna;

List of Annexes

1. Protected Areas Network table
2. Table of Ramsar sites in Albania
3. Map of Ramsar sites of Albania
4. Map of Karaburun-Sazan the first Marine Protected Area in Albania

Annex 1

Table of Protected Areas in Albania

May 2014

No.	Category	Qark	District	PA name	Designation	No	Area
1	I	Kukës	Tropojë	Lumi i Gashit	DCM no.102, dated 15.01.1996	1	3,000.0
2	I	Gjirokastrë	Gjirokastrë	Kardhiq	DCM no.102, dated 15.01.1996	1	1,800.0
	SHUMA I	Rezervat Strikt Natyror/Rezervat Shkencor				2	4,800.0
3	II	Shkodër	Shkoder	Thethi	DCM no. 96, dated 21.11.1966	1	2,630.0
4	II	Dibër	Dibër	Lura	DCM no. 96, dated 21.11.1966	1	1,280.0
5	II	Vlorë	Vlorë	Llogara	DCM no. 96, dated 21.11.1966	1	1,010.0
6	II	Korçë	Korçë	Bredhi i Drenovës	DCM no. 96, dated 21.11.1966	1	1,380.0
8	II	Kukës	Tropojë	Lugina e Valbonës	DCM no.102, dated 15.01.1996	1	8,000.0
9	II	Durrës	Kruje	Qafë Shtamë	DCM no.102, dated 15.01.1996	1	2,000.0
10	II	Dibër	Mat	Zall Gjoçaj	DCM no.102, dated 15.01.1996	1	140.0
11	II	Korçë	Korçë	Prespa	DCM no. 80, dated 18.02.1999	1	27,750.0
12	II	Vlorë	Sarandë	Butrinti	DCM no.134, dated 20.02.2013	1	9,424.4
13	II	Tiranë, Durres		Mali i Dajtit	DCM no. 402, dated 21.06.2006	1	29,216.9
14	II	Fier, Tiranë		Divjakë-Karavasta	DCM no.687, dated 19.10.2007	1	22,230.2
15	II	Elbasan, Diber		Shebenik-Jabllanice	DCM no.640, dated 21.05.2008	1	33,927.7
16	II	Gjirokastrë, Korce		Bredhi Hotovës-Dangelli	DCM no.1631, dated 17.12.2008	1	34,361.1
17	II	Vlore	Vlore	PKD "Karaburun-Sazan"	DCM no.289, dated 28.04.2010	1	12,428.0
18	II	Berat, Elbasan		Mali i Tomorrit	DCM no.472, dated 18.07.2012	1	24,723.1

	Total II	National Parks					15	210,501.4
19	III	Nature monuments	Albania	Bio-monuments	DCM no.676, dated 20.12.2002	348	0.0	
	III			Geo-monuments	DCM no.676, dated 20.12.2002	398	0.0	
				Total		746	0.0	
20	III	Gjirokastrë	Gjirokastrë	Bredhi i Sotirës	DCM no.102, dated 15.01.1996	1	1,740.0	
21	III	Gjirokastrë	Gjirokastrë	Zhej	DCM no.102, dated 15.01.1996	1	1,500.0	
22	III	Vlorë	Delvinë	Syri i Kaltër	DCM no.102, dated 15.01.1996	1	180.0	
23	III	Dibër	Dibër	Vlashaj	DCM no.102, dated 15.01.1996	1	50.0	
						4	0.0	
				Total nature monuments	VKM nr.676, datë 20.12.2002	750	0.0	
	Total III	Monument Natyre						3,470.0
24	IV	Vlorë	Vlorë	Karaburun	Order of Agriculture Minister no.1, 27.7.1977	1	20,000.0	
25	IV	Korçë	Devoll	Cangonj	Order of Agriculture Minister no.1, 27.7.1977	1	250.0	
26	IV	Berat	Skrapar	Bogovë	Order of Agriculture Minister no.1, 27.7.1977	1	330.0	
27	IV	Korçë	Korçë	Krastafillak	Order of Agriculture Minister no.1, 27.7.1977	1	250.0	
28	IV	Elbasan	Librazhd	Kuturman	Order of Ministry of Agriculture no.1, 27.7.1977	1	3,600.0	
29	IV	Fier	Fier	Pishë Poro	Order of Ministry of Agriculture no.1, 27.7.1977	1	1,500.0	
30	IV	Lezhë	Lezhë	Berzanë	Order of Ministry of Agriculture no.1, 27.7.1977	1	880.0	
31	IV	Fier	Fier	Levan	Order of Ministry of Agriculture no.1, 27.7.1977	1	200.0	

32	IV	Berat	Berat	Balloll	Order of Ministry of Agriculture no.1, 27.7.1977	1	330.0
33	IV	Elbasan	Elbasan	Qafë Bushi	Order of Ministry of Agriculture no.1, 27.7.1977	1	500.0
34	IV	Durrës	Durrës	Rrushkull	Order Minister no.2, of 26.12.1995	1	650.0
35	IV	Vlorë	Delvinë	Rrëzomë	DCM no.102, of 15.01.1996	1	1,400.0
36	IV	Kukës	Has	Tej Drini Bardhë	DCM no.102, date 15.01.1996	1	30.0
37	IV	Korçë	Kolonjë	Gërmenj-Shelegur	DCM no.102, dated 15.01.1996	1	430.0
38	IV	Elbasan	Librazhd	Polis	DCM no.102, dated 15.01.1996	1	45.0
39	IV	Elbasan	Librazhd	Stravaj	DCM no.102, dated 15.01.1996	1	400.0
40	IV	Elbasan	Librazhd	Sopot	DCM no.102, dated 15.01.1996	1	300.0
41	IV	Elbasan	Librazhd	Dardhë-Xhyrë	DCM no.102, dated 15.01.1996	1	400.0
42	IV	Shkodër	Shkodër	Liqeni i Shkodrës	DCM no. 684, dated 02.11.2005	1	26,535.0
43	IV	Lezhë	Lezhë	Kune-Vain-Tale	DCM no.432, dated 28.04.2010	1	4,393.2
44	IV	Lezhë	Kurbin	Patok-Fushë Kuqe-Ishem	DCM no. 995, dated 03.11.2010	1	5,000.7
45	IV	Diber, Kukes		Korab-Koritnik	DCM no.898, dated 21.12.2011	1	55,550.2
	Total IV	Managed Nature Reserve/Nature Park				22	122,974.1
46	V	Korçë	Devoll	Nikolicë	DCM no.102, dated 15.01.1996	1	510.0
47	V	Korçë	Pogradec	Pogradec	DCM no. 80, dated 18.02.1999	1	27,323.0
48	V	Vlorë	Vlorë	Vjosë-Nartë	DCM no.680, dated 22.10.2004	1	19,738.0
49	V	Shkodër	Shkodër	Lumi Buna-Velipojë	DCM no.682, dated 02.11.2005	1	23,027.0
50	V	Tiranë,Diber,Elbasan		M.Gropa-Bizë-Martanesh	DCM no.49, dated 31.01.2007	1	25,266.4
	Total V	Protected Landscape				5	95,864.4

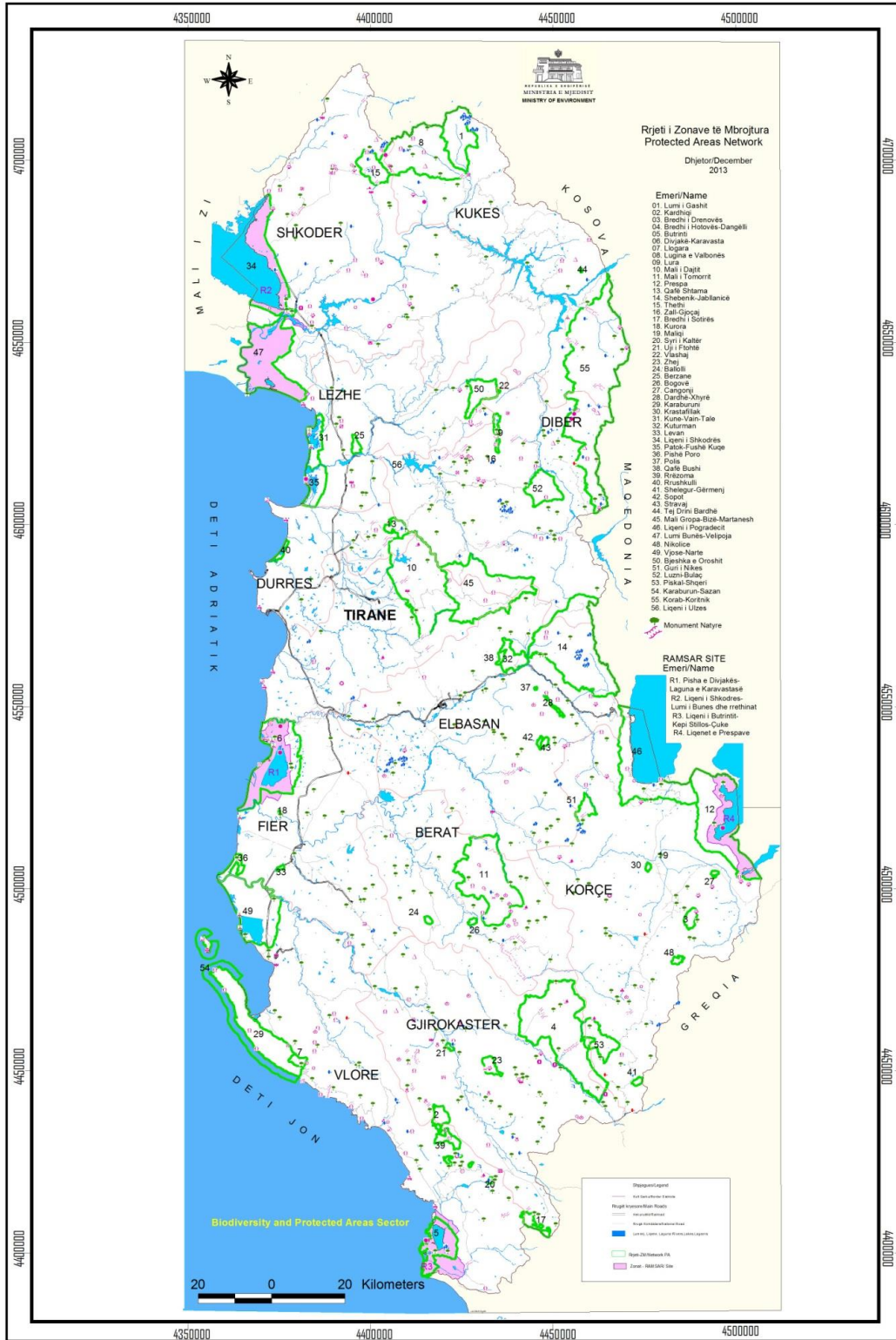
51	VI	Dibër	Dibër	Luzni-Bulaç	DCM no.102, dated 15.01.1996	1	5,900.0
52	VI	Korçë	Kolonjë	Piskal-Shqeri	DCM no.102, Dated 15.01.1996	1	5,400.0
53	VI	Lezhë	Mirditë	Bjeshka ^e Oroshit	DCM no.102, dated 15.01.1996	1	4,745.0
54	VI	Korçë	Pogradec	Guri i Nikës	DCM no.102, dated 15.01.1996	1	2,200.0
	Total VI	Protected Zone of Managed Resources				4	18,245.0
	Total Protected Areas		No.		15.83%	798	455,854.9

Annex II
Table of Ramsar sites

SUMMARY TABLE OF RAMSAR SITES IN ALBANIA

	<i>District</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Designation</i>	<i>Area</i>
1	<i>Lushnje</i>	<i>Laguna Karavastase-Pisha Divjakes</i>	DCM no.413, 22.08.1994	16,143.3 hectares
2	<i>Sarande</i>	<i>Kanali Çukes-Butrint-Kepi Stillos</i>	DCM no.531, 31.10.2002	13,500.0 hectares
3	<i>Shkoder</i>	<i>Liqeni Shkodres-Lumi Bunes</i>	DCM no.683, 02.11.2005	49,562.0 hectares
4	<i>Korce, Pogradec</i>	Prespa Lakes area	DCM no.489, 13.06.2013	15,118.58 hectares
	<i>Total</i>			<i>79,205.30</i>

Annex III
Map of Ramsar sites in Albania



Annex IV

Map of Karaburun-Sazani the first MPA in Albania

