



Sectoral Integration of Biodiversity in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

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1. Introduction

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia reported¹ examined the main directions of national policies are expressed in development plans, action plans made to put them into practice, sectoral policies and other similar documents. This include: National Master Plan of the Republic of Macedonia, State Budget Strategy 2008-2012, Sustainable Macedonia 21 (SM21), Coalition agreements of the government, Sectoral development plan 2007–2010, Research and preservation, Sectoral development plan 2008–2012, Strategy for accomplishment of basis for population policy 2006-2015, Development Plan for Support to Civic Initiative 2010, Economy: Long-term Public Fuel, Energy Sector Development Plan 2006-2015, The Macedonian Communication Strategy for Environment (2006-2020), The Public Transport Development Programme 2008-2015, The Rural Development Plan 2008-2015, National Fisheries Development Plan 2006– 2010, National Forestry Development Plan 2006-2010, National Hunting Activities Development Plan 2006–2010, The National Tourism Development Plan 2006-2020, The Development Plan for e-learning 2008-2015, The National Education Strategy 2006- 2015; health, social care and youth; regional development and regional policies; comments of implementation of Strategic Action Plan

The main directions of national policies are expressed in development plans, action plans made to put them into practice, sectoral policies and other similar documents.

Republic of Macedonia ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in 1997. Since 2000 Macedonian Government has started for implementation main goals of CBD: protection of biodiversity, sustainable use of bio-resources, fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources. In June 1999 Macedonian Government has establish a National Committee for CBD. In July 2003 Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning (MEPP) has develop the Country Study for Biodiversity of the Republic of Macedonia and the National Strategy of Biodiversity and Action Plan (NSBDAP). In January 2004 Macedonian Government has adopted NSBD and firs Action Plan (2004-2008).

The following summarizes analysis of documents prepared and published by different ministries and offices. These documents reflect about fifty different policies. Key words directly referring to biodiversity (also biological, natural diversity) were found in 11 documents – the Environmental Strategy and the NEAP 2, the draft for Nature Conservation Development Plan, State Budget Strategy, the Sustainable Macedonia 21, the Rural Development Plan, the Forestry Development Plan, the Fisheries Development Plan, the draft for National Strategy on Environmental Education, Hunting Activities Development Plan, final report of the monitoring system for the ecological tax reform and two programmes of the government – actual and that of the previous one. Nature conservation that can be considered an indirect reflection of biodiversity is in addition mentioned in National Master Plan of Macedonia 2020,

¹ The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (2012). Four National Report of the implementation of CBD in Republic of Macedonia (2006-2008), 32 pp.

Long-term Public Fuel and Energy Sector Development Plan until 2015, changes to the Rural Development Plan and Tourism Development Plan.

The documents expressing the sectoral policies cover the need for protection of biodiversity weakly, of secondary importance and often formally. Biodiversity is not an important issue in the documents outside the nature conservation and environment. Further the main national development plans as the cross-sectoral documents and selected sectoral development plans (many of which do have strong cross-sectoral features) are reviewed. The documents are grouped by sectors, always first the documents mentioning biodiversity and then the documents that do not mention biodiversity.

National Master Plan of the Republic of Macedonia

The Plan presents the vision of the spatial structure and the strategic goals for built and natural environment. It forms the basis for development of settlement system (living environment, economic activities, and major services) and protection of natural and cultural environment. The plan therefore forms a ground for important placement decisions and protection of certain areas and is a major factor that determines the spatial possibility for preservation of biodiversity. Several main goals of the National Master Plan are related to biodiversity:

- Preservation and development of the values of settlement and landscape structure;
- Protection and improvement good state of natural environment.

The Master Plan was created based on the understanding that the landscape structure is one of the major expressions of Macedonian culture and historical consistency, and an important factor supporting national identity and grade of environment. About three quarters is covered with forests and wetlands and, rich and diverse natural environment is one of most valuable dowries into the new century. Protection and development of the good state of natural environment is an important basic presumption for spatial management, settlement, land use, transportation, energy production and economic development.

State Budget Strategy 2008-2012

The document provides the principles of the government for composing the state budget within five years, main goals of activities, analysis of the economic situation, prediction of the economic development and other relevant financial information. The State Budget Strategy also plans the priorities and goals for use the EU funding within the 2008–2012.

The foreword to the document mentions among other preservation of the unique natural environment, as a detail of a more flexible and sustainable model of the welfare society nature capital is mentioned including biodiversity. The valuation of natural resources is expected to be achieved by taxation system. Preservation of biodiversity as a basis for assuring generally favorable environment is seen, mostly by means of NATURA 2000 areas and other protected areas and general nature protection management. The applied action plan of the document for environment includes measure for preservation of

biodiversity and securing sustainable use of natural resources as and investment from European Regional Fund.

Sustainable Macedonia 21 (SM21)

Sustainable Macedonia 21 determines the goals for development of the Republic of Macedonia and society until 2030 and relates the developments in economic, social and environmental sectors to global (Agenda 21) and EU documents for long-term regional development (goals and courses of action). Goals for development are brought out: preservation of Macedonian cultural space, growth of welfare, increase of the coherence of the society and preservation of the ecological balance. Special part of this document is Ecological balance and very important goal: Preservation of biodiversity and natural areas where a danger is seen in the increase of the share of energy production based on renewable resources, a support worthy activity itself, increasing at the same time the pressure on natural environment and biodiversity. The document brings out a strong relationship between the Macedonian cultural space and natural biodiversity with a clear positive effect to biodiversity.

Coalition agreements of the government

The coalition agreement of the previous government of Macedonian Parliament and Government included one very clear activity to create the NATURA 2000 network. This activity being lost from the new agreement can be related to the activity being fulfilled (further development of the NATURA 2000 network has moved into the daily activities) does not necessarily demonstrate change in attitude. The coalition agreement is much more declaratory but potentially includes more attention to biodiversity.

The Environmental Policy includes the aim of the environmental policy of the government: to ensure pure and naturally diverse environment supporting continuance of Macedonian people and preservation of that for generations. The government coalition assumes natural environment and seeks for reasonable balance between the environmental protection and other goals of society. To achieve this goal the government green coalition among other aspects emphasizes on active measures to protect and restore biodiversity. Certain measures mentioned:

- to develop of ecological tax reform, turning the monitoring system of following the „polluter pays” principle and the requirements for re-use/recycling of waste into effective.
- increases the payments for generating waste and resource use, including the oil-shale;
- improves the functioning of the network of protected areas and makes stronger the monitoring of the natural values to make better the protection of forests, wetlands and other important eco-systems;
- completes the reform of the nature protection management by giving the Department of Nature Protection have obligation of management and rights for supervisory of protected areas;
- to support traditional management of heritage landscapes and communities.

The tax reform plan could be brought out as an example of positive surprise. The reform plan supports the concept of nature's capital including the biodiversity, stresses that natural resources and ecosystems cannot be fully replaced by produced goods and the critical issue is following the precaution principle while formulating the policies, and ensuring sustainability of ecosystems by preservation of biodiversity.

Sectoral development plan 2007–2010

The development plan underlines in descriptive part the relations to biota, landscape and cultural diversity and relying on the same values.

Research and preservation, Sectoral development plan 2008–2012

The development plan underlines in descriptive part the relations to biota, landscape and cultural diversity and importance of natural places for cultural and natural conservation.

The major high priority success factors listed are science, education, technology and innovation and highly qualified and mobile workers (or human capital).

The goals, priorities and common understanding of future determined by the Development Strategy Macedonia 2020 are assumedly basis for all other strategic development plans and other documents. Nature conservation and biodiversity are mentioned in these documents.

Strategy for accomplishment of basis for population policy 2006-2015

The population policy covers policies for reproduction, family, geriatrics, healthcare, regional issues and migration.

Development Plan for Support to Civic Initiative 2010

The aim of the development plan is to establish favorable conditions for civic initiative.

Environmental Strategy 2020 and the implementation document The Second National Environmental Action Plan 2008-2012. Nature conservation and biodiversity are fully included in this document (Chapter for Nature Protection, part of Biodiversity Conservation).

Economy: Long-term Public Fuel, Energy Sector Development Plan 2006-2015

Nature conservation restrictions for development of fuel and energy management and while using certain energy resources are mentioned. National development plans and other similar level documents not referring to biodiversity in economy sector.

Communication, transportation

Nature conservation and Biodiversity are not directly reflected in development plans dealing with communication and transportation.

The Macedonian Communication Strategy for Environment (2006-2020)

The strategy is a sectoral development plan, setting out the. General framework, objectives and respective action fields for wide implementation of ICT in development of knowledge based of Environment Protection and nature Conservation in 2006–2020.

The Public Transport Development Programme 2008-2015

The vision, principles and main courses of action for development of public transport in 2008– 2015.

Housing and communal services

Nature conservation and Biodiversity are not directly reflected in development plans dealing with housing and communal services.

The Rural Development Plan 2008-2015

The general goal of compiling the rural development plan was to support the sustainable development in rural areas using the measures for rural development.

The National Rural Development Plan 2008-2015 is aimed at raising the competitiveness of agriculture and forestry in Macedonia, improvement of environment and localities, improvement of life quality and diversification of rural economy considering the distinctive character of rural life. The diversity is seen as an important strength and decrease of diversity as a threat, the activities preserving the diversity need to be supported (activities for protection of species and habitats).

National Fisheries Development Plan 2006– 2010

The strategy aims at development of native fisheries as an economic activity and increase of competitiveness of fish production in internal and external markets supporting development of favorable and balanced economic environment. The basis of strategy outlines considerations that the ability of fisheries sector has to meet the sustainable development of natural resource preserving the aquatic species and their natural habitats.

National Forestry Development Plan 2006-2010

The development plan determines the priorities for development of forestry until year 2010 and lists the activities needed to achieve the goals.

The development plan stresses biodiversity of forests as a benefit from the forest while discussing the importance of forestry and for biodiversity preservation is highlighted with a reference to the Convention. The need for biodiversity conservation is highlighted as a general principle or forest policy. The diversity is related to the vitality and sustainable productivity of the forests, protection of ecosystems.

National Hunting Activities Development Plan 2006–2010

The Development Plan states being based on the Convention and stresses the need for conservation of the game and habitat diversity. No major development plan or strategy in the primary sector passes the biodiversity without mentioning it.

The National Tourism Development Plan 2006-2020

The national tourism development plan presents the balanced strategy for development of tourism as economy sector during 2006-2020, aimed at support to economic growth of Macedonia by increasing international competitiveness of tourism sector. The development plan is focuses on strengths of Macedonia and resolving the bottlenecks supporting the development of tourism economy. Among the development plans of other sectors several are named supporting biological and landscape diversity.

Education and science

Biodiversity and nature conservation are included in development plans dealing with education and science. The National Strategy on Environmental Education is in completion that reflects the need to know and teach the relations of nature to other human activities. The development plan also included biodiversity conservation and sustainable us of natural resources.

National development plans

National development plans and other similar level documents not directly referring to nature conservation and biodiversity (priority is economy and technology). The National Research and Development Plan (2009-2020) provide the goals and action courses to achieve them to ensure quality and growth of the research and development activities. The strategy and the implementation plan provide the framework and volume for support measures in public sector, giving the research and development.

The Development Plan for e-learning 2008-2015

The development plan determines the main development courses of e-learning for the period. The aim of the plan is to raise the efficiency and quality of learning by use of ICT, turning e-learning a part of regular studies and providing the needed prerequisites for it.

The National Education Strategy 2006- 2015

The document determines the strategic development courses in education for the 10 year period. The guidelines adopted by the Parliament will guide the government, ministries and institutions of higher education.

Health, social care and youth

Nature conservation and Biodiversity are not directly reflected in development plans dealing with health, social care and youth. National development plans and other similar level documents not referring to biodiversity in health, social care and youth: Strategic Development Plan for Sport for All for 2006-2010.

Regional development and regional policies

Nature conservation and Biodiversity are not directly reflected in regional development plans, especially in Balkan Peninsula (Programme for Stability of Western Balkan).

Comments of implementation of Strategic Action Plan

Needs for an improved Action Plan implementation include the strengthening of capacity building at national and local level, the provision of appropriate financial resources for the implementation process, improved communication, improved education, and increasing public awareness. Challenges are the implementation of joint programmes for the sustainable use of biological resources balancing trade and biodiversity protection at the regional level. Further challenges are:

- Continuing biodiversity loss,
- The global economic and financial crisis,
- Poverty and indigence in this region,
- Illegal trade,
- Hunting and fishing.

The situation with the sustainable use of the components of biological diversity has been increased in last five years, but only in the protected areas. Nature conservation and sustainable use of bio-resources outside of protected areas has not been monitored. Several scientific studies and reports have focused degradation of site endangered wildlife species.

Environment awareness and nature education of the society, relevant ministries, local municipalities, university and schools is in progress (step by step). Since 2006 in Macedonian Parliament has been established the Green Coalition of Macedonia. The Macedonian Center for Environment Protection (MCEP) in 2007 has produced a set of National Environmental indicators (NEI) and mini-set with three national indicators of biological diversity. In 2008 has been adopted a set of National Biodiversity Indicators by Macedonian Government.

In relation to the first goal the Macedonian Government in December 2006 has adopted Programme of work with priorities. Several activities have been included in Annual Programme for investment for investment for Environment Protection (2006, 2007 and 2008).

In the Country Study of bio-diversity 6,7% of territorial land of Macedonia has been protected. In the reporting period (2006-2008) Macedonian Parliament has adopted laws of proclamation five very important natural ecosystems.

In NSBDAP (2004) and the Master Plan of the Republic of Macedonia (2006) this percent will be increased to 11,5 % of national territory by 2024.

Result of implementation four projects for designation important areas (ASCI) is 35 Emerald sites. They are including Important Bird Areas (IBA), 19 Important Plant Areas (IPA) and 11 Prime Butterflies Areas

(PBA). But many of priorities of NSBDAP have not been realized. Also monitoring of wild endangered species involved in the national and international trade is produced in NSBDAP.

The state interest is to increase the level of bio-diversity conservation and restoration by 30%, establish a database for species, habitats and protected areas, reduced the number of threatened species, introduced appropriate mechanisms for stimulating bio-diversity conservation and deterring bio-diversity loss outside of protected areas.

Concerning communication, education and public awareness, an internet connection and web-site were set up as well as a central database for biodiversity. Education programme for schools, universities and other institution were established. Public awareness activities were supported by institutions, NGOs, and media. Books, leaflets, and CD ROMs about biodiversity conservation were produced. Further activities has been organized include eco-campaigns, trainings, seminars, and workshops.

The legal framework includes a number of legal acts relevant for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of biological resources. The CBD was ratified in 1998; a law on nature protection was adopted in 2004 and revised twice in 2006 and in 2007. Legislation on water management, forestry, hunting and fishery was adopted between 2007 and 2008. Four strict nature reserves, three national parks and eight nature monuments were legally proclaimed.