



Sectoral Integration of Biodiversity in Czech Republic

Contents

1. Introduction	2
2. National policies and strategies	2
3. Ecological sustainable tourism.....	5
4. Environmental education.....	6
Financial support mechanisms.....	7
5. Subsidy schemes in nature protection in the Czech Republic	7
6. Development assistance to other countries	8

1. Introduction

Czech Republic reported¹ information on national policies and strategies, ecological sustainable tourism, environmental education, financial support mechanisms, including subsidy schemes in nature protection in the Czech Republic, and development assistance to other countries.

2. National policies and strategies

There is a number of national strategies and plans concerning the issue of biodiversity. Many of them are already mentioned throughout the text in Chapter 1. They can be summarized in the following list:

- State **Environmental Policy for 2004 - 2010** is conceived so as to define a consensual framework for long-term and medium-term directing of the development of the environmental dimension of sustainable development in the Czech Republic. The Third National Report of the Czech Republic to the CBD includes more detailed information; the text of the SEP itself can be found on http://www.mzp.cz/en/sep_cz.
- **Strategy for Sustainable Development** - the Government of the Czech Republic adopted the SSD by its decision No. 1242 of 8th December 2004. The Strategy should become a consensual framework for the processing of additional documents of a conceptual nature (sectoral policies or action programmes). It should serve as an important basis for the strategic decision-making of individual ministries and for inter-ministerial co-operation and co-operation with major groups. To see the text of this strategy, go to http://www.mzp.cz/en/czech_republic_strategy_sd.
- **State Nature Conservation and Landscape protection Programme of the Czech Republic (SNCLPP)** - the Government of the Czech Republic adopted the SNCLPP by its decision No. 415 of 17 June 1998. Adopting the document, the Czech Republic joined more than 80 countries all over the world which according to the United Nations Environment Programme have passed similar strategies aimed at nature conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. Because of the old date of approval, there is a project for new SNCLPP currently running.
- **National Biodiversity Strategy of the Czech Republic**, as an effective implementation of Article 6, the basic strategy for the biodiversity conservation and fulfilling the CBD objectives.
- **National Strategy Plan for Rural Development of the Czech Republic for 2007-2013 and the Rural Development Programme of the Czech Republic for 2007-2013** - the guarantor and coordinator of these documents is the Ministry of Agriculture. The existence and the realisation of the Rural Development Programme of the Czech Republic assists in achieving the goals set by the National Strategic Rural Development Plan, i.e. the development of the rural areas of the Czech Republic

¹ Czech Republic (2009). Fourth National Report of the Czech Republic to the Convention on Biological Diversity, Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic, 6 May 2009, 108 pp.

according to the principals of sustainable development, environmental protection and reducing the negative impact of intensive agriculture. The programme will further create conditions for the competitiveness of the Czech Republic in basic food commodities. The Programme will also support and expand the diversification of economic activities in the countryside, with the goal of developing entrepreneurship, creating new jobs, lowering the unemployment rate in the countryside and strengthening the cohesion of the rural population. Go to <http://www.mze.cz/UserFiles/File/EAFRD/RDP%20November%202008.pdf> to see the text of this programme.

- **National Programme on Conservation and Utilisation of Plant, Animal and Microbial Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture**
- **National Forest Programme**
- **The Strategic plan of implementation of the Ramsar Convention in the Czech Republic for the period 2009-2015**
- **The Programme for Revitalisation of River Systems**
- **National Programme to Abate the Climate Change Impacts in the Czech Republic**
- **Climate Protection Policy of the Czech Republic**
- **State Tourism Policy Concept for the Years 2007-2013**
- **State Programme of Environmental Education and Public Awareness**

The planning and developing of policies and strategies is not limited only to the central level. At the regional level, the relevant authorities have also elaborated and approved their plans of nature conservation and landscape protection. For example the Central Bohemia Region authority approved the **Conception of nature and landscape protection of the Central Bohemia Region for 2006 - 2016**. In the area of town and country planning, regional and local authorities have developed and approved the development plans of their relevant territorial units taking into account the principles of nature conservation and landscape protection, and are fully responsible also for their implementation.

Environmental impact assessment The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process was implemented into the Czech Republic's legal system on 1 July 1992, upon the entry into force of Czech National Council Act No. 244/1992 Coll., on environmental impact assessment. The process constituted both an important element in the system of preventive environmental protection instruments and, simultaneously, a significant component of environmental policy.

As of 1 January 2002, Czech National Council Act No. 244/1992 Coll., namely its section pertaining to impact assessment of projects, was superseded by Act No. 100/2001 Coll., on environmental impact assessment and amending some related regulations. On 1 May 2004, Act No. 100/2001 Coll. was amended by Act No. 93/2004 Coll., which regulates, in accordance with the laws of the European

Communities, the assessment of environmental impacts and impacts on public health and the procedures to be adhered to by individuals, legal entities, administrative authorities and self-governed territorial units (municipalities and regions) in the course of such assessments. In addition to that, the Act also newly regulated the assessment of environmental impacts of concepts and abolished the valid Czech National Council Act No. 244/1992 Coll., on the assessment of environmental impacts of development concepts and programmes. Concurrently, the transitional provisions of the Act (Section 24) stipulated that assessments which had been started prior to the effective date of the Act shall be completed pursuant to Act No. 244/1992 Coll. In view of the individual cases on which work had already been in progress to a considerable extent, several concepts and projects were being assessed pursuant to the original Act No. 244/1992 Coll. as late as 2006.

As of 27 April 2006, Act No. 100/2001 Coll., as amended by Act No. 93/2004 Coll., was amended by Act No. 163/2006 Coll. Among other things, the Act also took into account the so-called 'below-limit projects', which was reflected in the statistics for the relevant year, namely as an increase in the number of submitted notifications under Section 6 of the Act. As of 22 August 2007, Act No. 100/2001 Coll. was amended by Act No. 216/2007 Coll., which regulates impact assessment of below-limit projects and this step reduced the administrative strenuousness.

The objects of compulsory assessment consist of plans (projects) for construction, activities and technologies listed in Annex No. 1 of Act No. 100/2001 Coll., as amended by Act No. 93/2004 Coll., Act No. 163/2006 Coll., Act No. 186/2006 Coll., Act No. 216/2007 Coll., and their amendments pursuant to Section 4.1. The Ministry of the Environment, in accordance with the provisions of Article 21 and the regional authority in accord with the provisions of Section 22 of this Act, provide for assessment of these plans (projects). The results of the process are employed as a professional basis for subsequent decision-making processes on the issuance of a permit for the plans (projects).

Objects of compulsory assessment also include plans (strategies) listed in Section 10(a) of the above Act and Land-Use Planning Documentation, the assessment of which is carried out in accordance with the provision of Section 10(i) of the Building Act. The process of strategic environmental impact assessment (SEA) is based on the systematic examination and assessment of the potential environmental impact. The purpose of this is to determine, describe and carry out comprehensive evaluation of the expected impacts of prepared plans (strategies) on the environment and public health in all decisive contexts. The EIA/SEA process is intended to reduce the detrimental environmental impacts of the evaluated projects and plans.

Information on assessed projects and concepts, processes, authorised subjects and other facts are available at www.cenia.cz/eia and www.cenia.cz/sea. The lists of authorised subjects are also regularly published in the Journal of the Ministry of the Environment (annotations refer to documents in the Czech language).

Other important legislation documents include: [Council Directive 97/11/EC of 3 March 1997 amending Directive 85/337/EEC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the](#)

[environment](#); Council Directive 97/11/EC of 3 March 1997 amending Directive 85/337/EEC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment; [Directive 2001/42/EC of the EP and of the Council on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment](#); and Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment.

3. Ecological sustainable tourism

The principles of ecological sustainable tourism are included in state policies and strategies only partly. There are no official programmes in place for tourism operators at the moment.

Some projects for eco-guide services in protected areas are now under development. However, increasing number of people are employed as guides in National Parks and Protected Landscape Areas. This development is very important as these people are trained to forward the principles of nature conservation and sustainable development to others and thus can directly influence in a positive way a lot of other people.

Here are some of the most important national level plans/strategies where the principles of the ecologically sustainable tourism are incorporated: **State Tourism Policy Concept for the Years 2007-2013**, which defines measures leading to the implementation of basic objectives of the government's tourism policy. These objectives can be generally summarized as improvement of the competitiveness and economic benefits of tourism in the Czech Republic, reduction of unemployment, development of regions, growth of small and medium enterprises, and also protection of the environment. More information is at: www.mmr.cz.

State environmental Policy of the Czech Republic for the Years 2004 - 2010. The main goals stated in the document are listed below. Implementation of some of them is under preparation, some of them are already in place:

- Prepare a proposal and ensure systematic territorial, temporal and thematic monitoring of tourism development impacts on the environment and local development.
- Promote the development of sound, environmentally acceptable forms of tourism and/or attempt to increase the share of this type of tourism in the total volume of tourism.
- Create a network of regional centres of environmentally sound tourism coordinated by a national centre for the purpose of greening regional tourism, methodical and practical support.
- Promote the creation of a National System of Certification of Environmentally Sound Tourism Services (accommodation and catering services, tour operators and entire destinations); promote the introduction of environmental management systems in tourism sector and achievement of the label as criteria for possible subsidy titles.

- In specially protected areas, provide for implementation of the principles of the “European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas” and take into consideration the introduction of the NATURA 2000 network.
- Extend tourism and hiking by including less attractive areas using European structural funds.
- Introduce environmental certification and promotion of tourist destinations that respect the principles of protection of the living environment.
- Landscape management through the development of rural tourism, eco-tourism and ecoagro- tourism; utilise this tourism form for education of visitors and, indirectly, also the local population to build a relationship and thus also a responsible approach to the creation, evaluation and protection of the environment.
- Promote the development of environmentally sound transport systems in all tourism areas; support public mass transport, especially in Protected Landscape Areas, National Parks and historical cities, and thus reduce the individual automobile transport in these areas.
- Provide conditions for pedestrian or cyclist accessibility of the landscape through reconstruction and establishing of field and forest roads in connection with carrying out land-use planning, as an instrument of implementation of the landscape care.

The National Biodiversity Strategy of the Czech Republic has a specific chapter dealing with the current conditions, problem issues and provides a set of objectives for improvement.

For further information on this issue, reach the strategy on this weblink:

http://chm.nature.cz/cooperation/fo1362718/Strategie_ochrany_ENG_finalni.pdf

State Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection Programme of the Czech Republic (SNCLPP) states among its objectives the support of development of sustainable tourism and ecotourism in particular, which should lead people towards better recognition and greater knowledge and understanding of nature.

4. Environmental education

Starting in 1960s, environmental education and public awareness (EEPA) has had a long tradition in the country. The overall aim has always been to disseminate information on the importance of the conservation of biological diversity, sustainable use of its components, principles of sustainable development, and also on responsibility for our own actions. Today, EEPA has developed into a programme being taken very seriously at the national and subnational levels with many mutual agreements, strategies and collaboration projects. In 2007, **the State Programme of Environmental Education and Public Awareness** and its Action Plan have been updated and approved by the Czech Government. EEPA is also defined in **the State Environmental Policy 2004-2010** as one of the implementation tools of the environmental policy and several concrete implementation measures are

stated here – take into account the targets of the State Programme of Environmental Education and Public Awareness in the CR in the related legislation – Act No. 123/1998 Coll., on free access to information on the environment, and other. It also includes a system of environmental education and public awareness for officials of administrative authorities and employees of the public administration. Environmental education is being increasingly included in the teaching programs of pre-schools, elementary and secondary schools, and universities.

However, it is highlighted here that the role of EEPA should be increased and emphasis should be placed on children and youths.

The implementation step has also been taken when the Ministry of Environment has concluded an intersectoral agreement with the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports on environmental education issues. Building of new environmental education centres of all kinds and reconstruction of existing ones is financially supported through subsidies and programmes of the State Environmental Fund of the Czech Republic, including the Operational Programme Environment.

Many institutions and bodies like primary and secondary schools, universities, museums, zoological and botanical gardens, local and regional governments, state nature conservation authorities, as well as numerous non-governmental organisations develop their own activities in the sphere of environmental education and raising public awareness. Since 2001, a specialized nationwide grant programme the National Network of Centres for Environmental Education has been provided to support EE activities of NGOs. All these entities usually provide information by, advertising, publishing leaflets, brochures, and books, making films, video and television programmes, arranging exhibitions, giving public lectures and providing information through the Internet.

Financial support mechanisms

5. Subsidy schemes in nature protection in the Czech Republic

This section contains a synoptic summary of the sources of funding for nature and landscape protection, i.e., schemes that applicants can draw funds from if meeting certain criteria, or apply for specific projects. The section is divided into European Programmes – providing information on programmes funded from the EU Funds – and National Programmes, paid by the Ministry of the Environment budget. The possibilities for drawing funds for nature and landscape protection have been extended substantially after the EU accession. The Ministry of the Environment now administers and implements the Operational Programme Environment which draws financial help from the EU sources. The Programme's axis 6 – Improving the State of Nature and the Landscape, has the following defined goals: implementation of the Nature 2000 network, renewal and protection and natural and semi-natural biotopes and threatened plant and animal species, restoration of ecological stability of landscape, optimisation of the hydrological regimes, regeneration of urbanised landscape, prevention of landslides and rock collapses. The MoE also administers several important domestic subsidies programmes financed from the budget of the Ministry of the Environment. They include landscape management programmes which aim is to support measures preserving the landscape's cultural status, contributing

to species diversity maintenance, improving natural processes in the landscape, strengthening the functions of significant landscape elements and components of the territorial system of ecological stability, and also some ex-situ conservation measures (Landscape management programme, River systems restoration programme, recently finished Programme for the stabilization of the forests in the Jizerske hory Mts. and on Ještěd, Programme of Subsidies for Zoological gardens). The State Environmental Fund also finances from the MoE budget one programme aimed at land purchasing in specially protected areas.

Projects focused on nature and landscape protection can also be applied for using the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms, the Swiss Financial Assistance will be available in future.

The Ministry of Agriculture is responsible for drawing funds under the Second Pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy, focused, among other things, on environmental protection and rural development: it administers the Rural Development Programme for 2007-2013.

Measures aimed at nature and landscape protection are included chiefly in axis 2 of the Programme, particularly these are agro-environmental measures, payments within Natura 2000 on farmland and forest, and environmental forestry payments.

Within the EU Fisheries Policy, the European Fisheries Fund supports the Operating Programme for Fisheries 2007-2013, also under the Ministry of Agriculture. Measures aimed at the protection of aquatic environments include environmentally friendly pond management, focused primarily on areas of high natural value.

6. Development assistance to other countries

The Czech Republic began providing international development cooperation in the form of specific development projects in 1996, with the primary framework objective to contribute, in compliance with the efforts of the international community, to poverty alleviation in the less advanced/developed countries of the world by way of sustainable development. In this respect, the Czech Republic lends full support to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), derived from UN international conferences and ratified by the UN Millennium Summit in 2000. The principal objective is to reduce the number of people living in absolute poverty to one half by 2015. Between 1997 and 2008 the Ministry of the Environment coordinated the implementation of 95 development projects in 36 developing countries.

Development projects are mostly implemented over several years and consist of study work and work in the field, investment measures, technical cooperation (provision of know-how, teaching and training courses, seminars) and provision of advanced technologies. The projects are concerned primarily with: compliance with multilateral environmental agreements (protection of the ozone layer of the Earth, combating desertification, protection of biodiversity, climate change, etc.), sustainable use of natural resources, water protection, environmental aspects of industrial activities (cleaner production, environmental management systems), environmental geology (hydrogeology, natural risks assessment), waste management; clean up of contaminated sites; and remediation of old environmental liabilities.

Priority countries for the Ministry of Environment are Serbia, Mongolia, Vietnam and Moldova. Generally, to the priority regions should be invested approx. 75 % of the financial volume for bilateral and multilateral development projects. Up to now, implemented projects are of a great importance for the recipient state and Czech international development assistance is generally highly evaluated.