

Please provide to following details on the origin of this report

Contracting Party	Lithuania
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<i>Submission</i>	
Signature of officer responsible for submitting national report:	
Date of submission:	2001 05 11

Please provide summary information on the process by which this report has been prepared, including information on the types of stakeholders who have been actively involved in its preparation and on material which was used as a basis for the report

The information in this report was provided by specialists of the Department of Forests and Protected Areas under the Ministry of Environment.

Decision IV/7 on Forest biological Diversity

1. What is the relative priority afforded to implementation of this decision by your country?					
a) High		b) Medium		c) Low	
2. To what extent are the resources available adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations made?					
a) Good		b) Adequate		c) Limiting	
d) Severely limiting					

3. Has your country assessed the status and trends of its forest biological diversity and identified options for its conservation and sustainable use? (Decision IV/7, paragraph 12)	
a) no	
b) assessment underway (please give details below)	
c) assessment completed (please give details below)	
d) not relevant	

<i>If a developing country Party or a Party with economy in transition -</i>	
4. Has your country requested assistance through the financial mechanism for projects that promote the implementation of the focused work programme on forest biological diversity? (Decision IV/7, paragraph 7)	
a) no	
b) yes (please give details below)	

Programme element 1: Holistic and inter-sectoral ecosystem approaches that integrate the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking account of social and cultural and economic considerations

5. Has your country identified methodologies for enhancing the integration of forest biological diversity conservation and sustainable use into an holistic approach to sustainable forest management at the national level? (Work Programme, paragraph 13)	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent (please give details below)	
c) yes significant extent (please give details below)	
d) not applicable	
6. Has your country developed methodologies to advance the integration of traditional forest-related knowledge into sustainable forest management, in accordance with Article 8(j)? (Work Programme, paragraph 14)	
a) no	

b) yes – limited extent (please give details below)	
c) yes – significant extent (please give details below)	
d) not applicable	
7. Has your country promoted cooperation on the conservation and sustainable use of forest biological resources at all levels in accordance with Articles 5 and 16 of the Convention? (Work Programme, paragraph 15)	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent (please give details below)	
c) yes significant extent (please give details below)	
d) not applicable	
8. Has your country promoted the sharing of relevant technical and scientific information on networks at all levels of protected forest areas and networking modalities in all types of forest ecosystems? (Work Programme, paragraph 17)	
a) no	
b) yes limited extent (please give details below)	
c) yes – significant extent (please give details below)	
d) not applicable	

Programme element 2: Comprehensive analysis of the ways in which human activities, in particular forest-management practices, influence biological diversity and assessment of ways to minimize or mitigate negative influences

9. Has your country promoted activities for an enhanced understanding of positive and negative human influences on forest ecosystems by land-use managers, policy makers, scientists and other relevant stakeholders) (Work Programme, paragraph 29)	
a) minimal activity	
b) yes – limited extent (please give details below)	
c) yes significant extent (please give details below)	
d) not relevant	
10. Has your country promoted activities to assemble management experiences and scientific, indigenous and local information at the national and local levels to provide for the sharing of approaches and tools that lead to improved forest practices with regard to forest biological diversity? (Work Programme, paragraph 30)	
a) minimal activity	
b) yes – limited extent (please give details below)	
c) yes – significant extent (please give details below)	
d) not relevant	

11. Has your country promoted activities with the aim of providing options to minimize or mitigate negative and to promote positive human influences on forest biological diversity? (Work Programme, paragraph 31)	
a) minimal activity	
b) yes – limited extent (please give details below)	
c) yes – significant extent (please give details below)	
d) not relevant	
12. Has your country promoted activities to minimize the impact of harmful alien species on forest biological diversity? (Work Programme, paragraph 32)	
a) minimal activity	
b) yes – limited extent (please give details below)	
c) yes – significant extent (please give details below)	
d) not relevant	
13. Has your country identified means and mechanisms to improve the identification and prioritisation of research activities related to influences of human activities, in particular forest management practices, on forest biological diversity? (Work Programme, paragraph 33)	
a) minimal activity	
b) yes – limited extent (please give details below)	
c) yes – significant extent (please give details below)	
d) not relevant	
14. Does your country hold research results and syntheses of reports of relevant scientific and traditional knowledge on key forest biological diversity issues and, if so, have these been disseminated as widely as possible? (Work Programme, paragraph 34)	
a) not relevant	
b) some relevant material, but not widely disseminated	
c) significant material that could be more widely disseminated (please give details below)	
d) yes - already widely disseminated (please give details below)	
15. Has your country prepared case-studies on assessing impacts of fires and alien species on forest biological diversity and their influences on the management of forest ecosystems and savannahs? (Work Programme, paragraph 35)	
a) no – please indicate below whether this is due to a lack of available case-studies or for other reasons	
b) yes – please give below any views you may have on the usefulness of the preparation of case-studies for developing a better biological understanding of the problem and/or better management responses.	

Programme element 3: Methodologies necessary to advance the elaboration and implementation of criteria and indicators for forest biological diversity

16. Has your country assessed experiences gained in national and regional processes, identifying common elements and gaps in existing initiatives and improving indicators for forest biological diversity? (Work Programme, paragraph 43)	
a) minimal activity	
b) yes – limited assessment made (please give details below)	
c) yes – significant assessment made (please give details below)	
d) not relevant	
17. Has your country carried out taxonomic studies and inventories at the national level which provide for a basic assessment of forest biological diversity? (Work Programme, paragraph 43)	
a) minimal activity	
b) yes – limited assessment made (please give details below)	
c) yes – significant assessment made (please give details below)	
d) not relevant	

If you have ticked any of the boxes in questions 5 to 17 above which invite you to provide further details, please do so here.

(Information can include descriptions of methodologies and of activities undertaken, reasons for success or failure, outcomes and lessons learned)

3. Explanatory notes:

1. The Forest Inventory and Management Institute periodically conducts stand-wise inventory in state and private forests. The institute at regular intervals carries out forest and game management planning, forest mapping and strategic planning of forestry.

2. The common Swedish-Lithuanian project "Pilot Woodland Key Habitat Inventory in Lithuania" has been launched in 2001. Seeking to preserve biodiversity in the forest ecosystems the pilot inventory of all Lithuanian forests and development of methodology, organisation and training methods have been started.

In addition there are a number of special research projects which have been successfully conducted or are being performed at the moment, for instance:

b) Inventory of wood-grouse in Varena, Druskininkai, Veisiejai, Kupiskis, Anyksciai, Rokiskis, Ignalina, Trakai, Nemencine, Salcininkai, Svencioneliai, Valkininkai, Vilnius forest enterprises and Dzūkija national park, preparation of recommendations to manage inventoried mating-places and proposals to establish reserves for its protection.

c) Recommendations of biodiversity protection in carrying out forest management activities.

3. Information of Forest monitoring has being analysed periodically.

4. Explanatory notes:

As it was mentioned above the common Swedish-Lithuanian project "Pilot Woodland Key Habitat Inventory in Lithuania" has been launched in 2001. From Swedish site this project is financed by Swedish Environmental Protection Agency.

5. Explanatory notes:

Conservation and sustainable use of forest biodiversity are ensured at national level through legislation, political and direct implementation measures:

Lithuanian Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and corresponding Action Plan was prepared by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and approved by the Parliament in 1998.

The network of nature protection areas was strengthened within the last few years. Structural and protection quality improvements were followed by the increase of protected area. Guidelines for Conservation of Biodiversity in Commercial Forests were prepared in 1996, Recommendations for Conservation of Rare Forest Habitats and Proposals for the Improvement of the Protection of Rare Forest Birds' Nesting Sites, in 1996.

At present new forestry policy and strategy statement is being prepared. The draft document of Lithuanian forest policy and strategy has been prepared in 2001. In the preparation process are involved all interesting NGO.

Rules on state and private forest use and management have been updated by including measures for biodiversity conservation and implementing principles of sustainable forest management.

Legal instruments which are related to the sustainable forest management, protection of biodiversity and the conservation of fauna and flora are as follow:

- › Forest Law (1994, last update 2001)
- › Regulations on Management and Use of Private Forests (1997)
- › Regulations of Forest Use and Protection in Nature Protected Areas (1995)
- › Regulation of Sanitary Forest Protection (1996)
- › Hunting Regulations (2000)
- › Rules on Hunting in Lithuania (2000)
- › Environmental Protection Law (1992, last update 1997)
- › Law on Protected Areas (1993, update 1995)
- › Law on Environmental Monitoring (1997)
- › Law on Wildlife (1997)
- › Law on Wild flora (1999)
- › Law on Waste Management (1998)
- › Law on Plant Protection (1995, last update 1998)
- › Law on Protected (endangered) Species of Plants, Animals, Funguses and their Communities (1997)
- › Law on Tax for Environment Pollution (1991, last update 1996)

Consequent actions towards education and rising of public awareness in relation to the conservation of biodiversity are being implemented recently. Educational curricula, programs of various courses for university and college degree forestry students, state forestry employees, forest owners and forest workers as an important part also includes biodiversity conservation issues. These activities are aimed not only at forestry professionals and forest owners but also cover broader auditorium, e.g.: schoolchildren, students with environmental background, forestry related institutions and NGO's.

7. Explanatory notes:

On national level governmental institutions and non-governmental organisations (NGO) have been involved in the preparation of many legal acts, related to biodiversity conservation and sustainable forest management, for instance: Forest Law, Environmental Protection Law and etc. The co-operation with NGO is being carried out in preparation of the draft of Forestry policy and strategy statement. On local level the certification process in two state forest enterprises (see details below on the next chapters) involves all interesting parties and stakeholders in decision marking process as well.

8. Explanatory notes:

The research results are published and distributed via the Internet, mostly in the database of Lithuanian Forest Research Institute. The publications in the form of booklets and books are available as well. The information about research projects and results is targeted mostly to NGO, governmental institutions and private persons (private forest owners) as well.

9. Explanatory notes:

Activities for an enhanced understanding of positive and negative human influences on forest ecosystems by land-use managers, policy makers, scientists and other relevant stakeholders are promoted by several activities, such as the following:

- various research projects
- training opportunities for private forest owners in relation to the concept of ecologically oriented forest management
- publications, information services and public awareness campaigns.
- preparation of the draft of the national forestry policy and strategy statement and other legal acts considering the interests of various social groups.

11. Explanatory notes:

There are different approaches and activities in Lithuania to reduce negative and promote positive human influence on forest biological diversity. This may be confirmed by the following examples:

- The certification of "Forest management" in Birzai and Panevezys (totally about 70 000 ha of state forests) state forest enterprises and "Chain-of-Custody" in the timber-processing unit in Birzai state forest enterprise has been launched in 2000 and will be completed in the middle of the year 2001.
- Training programmes are offered to private forest owners that are focused in particular on the concept of ecologically oriented forest management.

13. Explanatory notes:

The Government of the Republic of Lithuania approved Research priorities: 1) study on biodiversity and sustainability of forest ecosystems; 2) forest productivity, protection and economy problems; 3) analysis of forest genetic resources, their conservation, enrichment, and utilization.

Various research projects are being implemented within areas of mentioned research fields by the staff of the Forestry faculty at the Lithuanian University of Agriculture and the scientists of Lithuanian Research Institute and by others researchers as well.

The Institute is being discussed these topics with the Association of Forests Owners and the owners themselves to ascertain their relevance to them and to identify priorities where research is needed.

14. Explanatory notes:

Research results on forest biodiversity are available from projects of research institutions: Lithuanian Forest Research Institute and Forestry Faculty at Lithuanian Agricultural University. The results of the projects have been published and are accessible to the general public as well.

15. Explanatory notes:

The research project "Influence of forest fires to the forest soils and recommendation for its restoration has been conducted. But in general, there is no concrete risk to forest biodiversity from fires in Lithuanian forests.

16. Explanatory notes:

Lithuania has not developed any of its own special criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management. Most criteria and indicators have come directly from the Pan-European system.

The stand-wise inventories and great variety of different monitoring measures -assessment of damage to forest (level I), assessment of permanent-monitoring areas (level II), assessment of ecosystems development (integrated monitoring) provides important information on biological diversity. Collected data is used for strategic planning of forestry.

17. Explanatory notes:

- The stand-wise inventories in state and private forests are being conducted at regular intervals.
- Pilot woodland key habitat inventory is being performed in Lithuania on the base of the common Swedish-Lithuanian project "Pilot Woodland Key Habitat Inventory in Lithuania".
- Inventory of wood-grouse in Varena, Druskininkai, Veisiejai, Kupiskis, Anyksciai, Rokiskis, Ignalina, Trakai, Nemencine, Salcininkai, Svencioneliai, Valkininkai, Vilnius forest enterprises and Dzukija national park has been conducted as the result of the research project.
- Assessment and evaluation of permanent-monitoring areas (level II)