

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

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Pursuant to Article 58 paragraph 3 of the Nature Protection Act (Official Gazette 70/2005), the Government of the Republic of Croatia, at its session on 19 October 2007, adopted the following

REGULATION

ON PROCLAMATION OF THE ECOLOGICAL NETWORK

I GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1

- (1) This Regulation hereby proclaims the ecological network of the Republic of Croatia with the system of ecologically important areas and ecological corridors with conservation objectives and guidelines for protection measures which are aimed at maintaining or establishing a favourable status of threatened and rare habitat types and/or wild taxa.
- (2) Ecological network areas with conservation objectives and guidelines for protection measures referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article are listed in Appendixes 1.1 and 1.2, which are kept and available at the Ministry of Culture (hereinafter referred to as: the Ministry) and the State Institute for Nature Protection, which represent an integral part of this Regulation, and are not published in the Official Gazette.
- (3) Besides the ecological network areas listed in Appendix 1.1 i 1.2, all speleological objects, including submarine speleological objects, within the meaning of the Nature Protection Act (hereinafter referred to as: the Act), also represent an integral part of the ecological network.
- (4) Ecological network areas for which the conservation objectives are habitat types and/or wild taxa listed in appropriate regulations of the Republic of Croatia, international treaties signed by the Republic of Croatia, EU regulations and acts of the Council of Europe, are listed in Appendixes 1.1 and 1.2 and are marked with the sign #.
- (5) The ecological network also includes ecological corridors (migration routes) listed in Appendix 2, which is kept and available at the Ministry and State Institute for Nature Protection, represents an integral part of this Regulation, and is not published in the Official Gazette.

Article 2

- (1) Different parts of the ecological network are connected via natural or artificial ecological corridors.
- (2) Habitat types which are threatened on the global, European or state level are the ones listed in appropriate appendixes of international acts referred to in Article 1 paragraph 1 of this Regulation, as well as the habitat types established under the Ordinance on sorts of habitat types, habitat maps, endangered and rare habitat types and on measures for conservation of habitat types (Official Gazette, 7/2006).
- (3) Wild taxa which are threatened on the global, European and state level, as well as endemic

taxa for the Republic of Croatia, are listed in the Ordinance on proclaiming wild taxa protected and strictly protected (Official Gazette, 7/2006) and/or the Red List of Endangered Plants and Animals of Croatia.

II PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT OF ECOLOGICAL NETWORK AREAS

Article 3

- (1) Conservation objectives for ecological network areas are established in line with ecological requirements for wild taxa and/or habitat types referred to in Article 2 paragraph 2 and 3 of this Regulation, as well as on the basis of professional and scientific criteria.
- (2) Protection measures related to ecological network areas are established on the basis of guidelines for protection measures listed in Appendix 1.3, which is kept and available at the Ministry and State Institute for Nature Protection, represents an integral part of this Regulation, and is not published in the Official Gazette.
- (3) Guidelines for protection measures related to ecological network areas apply to all natural and legal persons who exploit natural resources in those areas and perform activities and projects in line with the Act.
- (4) Data on whether the scope of a document or plan affects an ecological network area shall be entered into physical planning documents and natural resource management plans.
- (5) By way of derogation from paragraph 2 of this Article, the Government of the Republic of Croatia may approve exclusion of certain measures or their modification, if there is a prevailing public interest for a planned natural project in line with the Act.

Article 4

- (1) An ecological network area, which is at the same time proclaimed as a protected area in line with the Act, shall be managed by a public institution.
- (2) An ecological network area, which is located outside a protected area proclaimed as such pursuant to the Act, and is not specially protected, shall be managed by a public institution for managing protected natural values which is established by a regional self-government unit or the City of Zagreb, on the territory of which the ecological network area is located.
- (3) An ecological network area which is located on the territory of two or more counties shall be jointly managed by public institutions for managing protected natural values of those counties.

Article 5

- (1) Protection of ecological network areas is ensured by implementation of the prescribed protection measures and nature protection requirements which are issued by the body in charge of nature protection activities in line with the provisions of the Act.
- (2) A management plan for the purpose of conserving each area within the ecological network, as well as preserving biological and landscape diversity and protecting natural values shall be adopted for ecological network areas.
- (3) If an ecological network area is at the same time protected under one of the protection categories prescribed by the Act, the Protected Area Management Plan shall be considered as the Ecological Network Management Plan and shall be adopted in the manner prescribed by the Act.
- (4) If an ecological network area is located outside an area proclaimed as protected pursuant to the Act, the Ecological Network Management Plan is adopted by a public institution for

managing protected natural values on the territory of which the ecological network area in question is located.

(5) Exploitation of natural resources in an ecological network area is performed on the basis of natural resource management plans, which contain measures and requirements for nature protection in line with the Act.

(6) Care of an ecological network area may, except in the case referred to in paragraph 5 of this Article, be conferred upon an owner or holder of the property rights, by signing an agreement which regulates mutual rights and obligations between a public institution which manages the ecological network area and the owner or the person authorised for holding property rights, in the manner prescribed for protected areas by the Act.

(7) Care of an ecological network area may, except in the case referred to in paragraph 5 of this Article, be conferred upon a person who is not the owner or holder of rights, on the basis of a conducted tender and conclusion of a custodian agreement under the requirements established by the Ministry. The tender is conducted by a public institution which manages the ecological network area in question in conformity with the Act.

Article 6

It is not permitted to introduce genetically modified organisms into the environment in ecological network areas nor in areas which represent protected zones of impact in line with the Act on Genetically Modified Organisms.

III FINANCING

Article 7

(1) Financial resources for the protection of ecological network areas shall be secured from the State Budget and budgets of regional self-government units and the City of Zagreb.

(2) Financial resources for the implementation of measures and requirements for the protection of ecological network areas shall be provided by natural and legal persons who exploit natural resources, carry out projects and activities in nature in those areas as defined in the Nature Protection Act, public institutions which manage the proclaimed protected area and persons that have undertaken the obligation to implement nature protection measures and requirements on the basis of an agreement.

(3) Conservation of threatened wild taxa, indigenous domesticated taxa and threatened habitat types in ecological network areas shall be supported by financial incentives and compensations, and favourable loans for protection activities in line with the Act and special regulations.

IV MONITORING ECOLOGICAL NETWORK AREAS

Article 8

(1) In ecological network areas, the status of those indicators which enable the following shall be monitored:

- monitoring the status of wild taxa and habitat types and
- monitoring efficiency of protection measures in relation to the realisation of established conservation objectives.

(2) Monitoring is primarily performed for wild taxa and habitat types which are designated as conservation objectives for the concerned ecological network area, whereby special attention

is paid to species whose status most apparently reflects changes in habitats of other species or in habitat types.

(3) The ecological network database is an integral part of the Nature Protection Information System in line with the Act.

(4) Public institutions which manage protected natural values, legal and natural persons who manage the ecological network area and bodies in charge of nature protection shall monitor the status in the ecological network area and gather data for the purpose of completing the ecological network database.

V CARTOGRAPHIC PRESENTATION OF ECOLOGICAL NETWORK AREA

Article 9

(1) An overview map of the environmental network areas is shown on the cartographic presentation (hereinafter referred to as: the presentation) in a scale of 1:100000; it represents an integral part of this Regulation as Appendixes 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3, which are kept and available at the Ministry and the State Institute for Nature Protection and are not published in the Official Gazette.

(2) The State Institute for Nature Protection shall chart, in cooperation with the State Geodetic Directorate, the boundaries of ecological network areas in the Basic Map of Croatia (BMC) in a scale of 1:5000, which is, when necessary, supplemented with ortophoto (aerophotogrammetric) images or the Basic Map of Croatia (BMC) in a scale of 1:10000 or in the cadastral plot.

(3) Data on ecological network area boundaries are obtained by covering a layer of the geographic information system in a scale of 1:5,000 referred to in paragraph 2 of this Article, by a digital cadastral plan and by showing the course of the boundary precisely on the cadastral plot.

(4) When defining the boundaries referred to in paragraph 3 of this Article in such a manner, the entire cadastral plot must be included in the ecological network area, if half or more than a half of the plot is situated within the ecological network area, with the exception of defining boundaries on state owned forest land when only the part of the cadastral plot which is within the boundaries of the ecological network is included in the ecological network area.

(5) When in doubt whether a certain area lies within the borders of the ecological network area, prior to completing the tasks referred to in Article 11 paragraph 1, a cartographic presentation of the area shall be made in a scale of 1:5000 in line with paragraph 2 of this Article.

(6) In the procedure for modifying boundaries of the ecological network, the opinion of competent bodies for physical planning, environmental protection and other environmental components in line with special regulations must be previously obtained.

(7) The Ministry shall deliver the presentation referred to in paragraph 1 and/or 2 of this Article to the person in charge of preparing the physical planning document as the basis for the preparation of that document free of charge.

VI SUPERVISION

Article 10

Supervision over the implementation of this Regulation is performed by the nature protection inspection and supervisors of public institutions which manage protected natural values.

VII TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 11

- (1) Bodies referred to in Article 9 paragraph 2 shall chart, within a period of one (1) year from the date of entry into force of this Regulation, the boundaries of the ecological network in the cartographic presentation referred to in Article 9 paragraph 2 of this Regulation.
- (2) Until completion of activities referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article, the cartographic presentation referred to in Article 9 paragraph 1 of this Regulation shall be used when preparing the ecological network management plan and physical planning documents.
- (3) The Public institution for managing protected natural values shall adopt the plan referred to in Article 5 paragraph 4 within a period of two years from the entry into force of this Regulation in the manner prescribed by the Act.

Article 12

- (1) Until establishment of public institutions for managing protected areas of regional self-government units or the City of Zagreb, the Ministry shall adopt the Ecological Network Area Management Plan for the territories of the above mentioned units as well as implement management measures.
- (2) The Ministry shall adopt the Management Plan referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article on the basis of the professional platform of the State Institute for Nature Protection, and after carrying out the public inspection procedure, in line with the Act.

Article 13

- (1) Physical planning documents which have not been adopted until entry into force of this Regulation and for which requirements and measures have been issued and/or a nature protection approval has been granted shall be considered to be in line with the provisions of this Regulation.
- (2) Physical planning documents adopted prior to the entry into force of this Regulation shall be brought in line with the provisions of this Regulation through amendments to the part of the physical planning document which needs to be amended.
- (3) Natural Resource Management Plans and Management Plans which have not been adopted until entry into force of this Regulation shall be brought in line with the provisions of this Regulation prior to their adoption. Natural Resource Management Plans and Management Plans adopted prior to entry into force of this Regulation shall be brought in line through amendments, within a period of 9 years.

Article 14

This Regulation shall enter into force on the eighth day after the day of its publication in the Official Gazette.

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The Prime Minister
Ivo Sanader, m.p.

PROVISIONAL TRANSLATION