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# Cabinet Order No. 252

Riga, 02 April 2024 (Minutes No. 14 22. §)

On the National Research Programme "Development of research identified in the Biodiversity Priority Actions Programme"

1. In accordance with Section 13(2)(3) of the Law on Scientific Activity, and in compliance with Paragraph 4 of Cabinet Regulation No. 560 of 4 September 2018 "Procedures for the Implementation of State Research Programmes”, to approve the state research programme "Development of research identified in the Biodiversity Priority Actions Programme" 2024-2026 (hereinafter – the programme).
2. To assign the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development as the institution responsible for implementation of the programme.
3. The total financial envelope of the programme for the period 2024-2026 is EUR 1,800,000, including EUR 700,000 for 2024, EUR 700,000 for 2025 and EUR 400,000 for 2026. The Programme is financed from the resources allocated from the state budget to the Ministry of Education and Science for the state budget sub-programme 05.01.00 "Ensuring Scientific Activity".
4. **The overarching objective of the programme is to generate new knowledge and solutions to reconcile conservation and socio-economic interests in a changing climate.**
5. **The aim of the programme is to provide a basis for planning and implementing appropriate conservation measures to achieve favourable conservation status as defined in the Law on the Conservation of Species and Biotopes.**
6. **To set the following tasks for the programme:**
	1. to increase the knowledge base for the identification of nature conservation measures in Latvian and European Union (hereinafter – EU) planning documents and laws and regulations, for the assessment of socio-economic factors and climate change impacts on species of EU importance and biotopes of EU importance whose conservation status is assessed as unfavourable;
	2. to increase the knowledge base on species ecology, threats and distribution for species and habitats of EU importance for which no assessment of conservation status is known;
	3. to develop scientifically sound proposals for optimal spatial connectivity of species and habitats of EU importance, including specially protected areas, micro-reserves and habitats and species habitats outside the network of protected areas into a single network of nature territories;
	4. provide research on habitat dynamics as affected by different management practices and climate variability, assess ecosystem services and values to prioritise conservation planning in a cost-effective manner, and develop and validate an economic model for biodiversity sustainability, conservation and restoration (catalogue compensating measures, assess the degree of impact mitigation and compensating measures).
7. To set the following shared (horizontal) tasks for the programme:
	1. to build and develop interdisciplinary scientific teams to tackle biodiversity challenges at national and international level;
	2. to develop research activities in the following areas:
		1. cooperation with social partners involved in nature conservation (e.g. economic operators, target groups, sectoral professional organisations, national and local authorities);
		2. engaging in the educational process by developing master study courses and programmes related to the objectives and tasks of the Programme;
		3. involvement in international research and development projects;
		4. transfer of knowledge and good practice;
	3. to ensure communication on research and its results and making them visible in society;
	4. making research results publicly available, including publishing results in open access journals and depositing newly generated research data in research data repositories, promoting re-use of data in line with the FAIR principles (findability, accessibility, interoperability, re-usability) and transfer of science and best practice;
8. One or more of the following project results are expected during the implementation of the Programme:
	1. studies conducted on the development of nature conservation measures to meet existing requirements and new EU initiatives, three reports on the results of the studies with identified conservation measures to be taken;
	2. one spatial model has been developed to compare connectivity alternatives;
	3. scientific articles published in journals or collections of articles included in the *Web of Science* or SCOPUS databases;
	4. newly acquired research data deposited in open research data repositories, promoting data re-use according to FAIR principles (findability, accessibility, interoperability, re-usability).
9. The programme may be extended by up to one year without the award of additional funding if this is necessary to consolidate and publish the outcome of the programme and its projects.

Acting Prime Minister – Minister of Finance *A. Ašeradens*

Minister for Environmental Protection and Regional Development *I. Bērziņa*

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