

Natura 2000 Sites in Latvia

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Translated by machine translator



All countries of the European Union (EU) have committed to establishing a common network of protected sites called [Natura 2000](#).

Latvia has also established its share of this network since 2004. It was made up of already existing specially protected nature areas, with a further 122 new sites. Protecting rare and threatened plant and animal species and their habitats (habitats) is a key condition for the creation of sites across Europe. The lists of such species and habitats are included in two EU directives, the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive, and their protection is mandatory for all EU countries. Of the species and habitats listed in the directives, 20 species of plants, 34 invertebrates, 29 mammals, 3 reptiles, 11 amphibians, 13 fish, 93 birds and 58 habitat types are found and protected in Latvia.

Natura 2000 sites in Latvia

The net of *Natura 2000* in Latvia includes 333 territories – [4 nature reserves](#), [4 national parks](#), [239 nature closures](#), [37 nature parks](#), [9 protected landscape areas](#), [7 protected marine areas](#), [9 natural monuments](#) and [24 microreserves](#). Terrestrial territories cover 12% or 787729 ha of the whole terrestrial area of the Latvia. These areas have different protection and management regimes, ranging from minimum restrictions in protected landscape areas to a complete ban on economic activity in strict nature reserves. The territories are listed in the Annex to the Law On Specially Protected Nature Areas.

 [The list of Natura 2000 territories in Latvia](#) 

What *does Natura 2000* mean for landowners, residents?

Including of the land property in the *Natura 2000* territory does not mean termination of any management. However, economic activities are more or less restricted, depending on the purpose of the creation the protected area. For example, in a swamp, where protection regime is stated to protect the ecosystem, the peat extraction is forbidden, but hunting, picking berries, bird-watching and nature trails are allowed. In many nature reserves economic activities can be carried on: land farming, mowing the meadows, grazing the grass, and considerably manage the forest. To make sure that the protection and management will be carried out in a proper way, nature protection plans are developed. They are worked out in cooperation with local authorities and land owners, to get out most of both the nature protection and successful profitable management. Financement from EU funds for the management is available. To help land owners with compensations to cover losses that occur because of the restrictions concerning economic activities in protected areas, the law „About restrictions in protected territories” is prepared. This law will state the order of compensation ways and amounts – money compensations or land exchange.

In order to compensate landowners for losses that may arise from restrictions on economic activity in nature protected areas, the Law [on compensation for restrictions on economic activity in protected areas](#) has been prepared.

Possibilities of visiting *Natura 2000* sites

Visitors are allowed to all *Natura 2000* territories, except a part of nature reserves. There are numerous nature trails and information boards already waiting to welcome interested parties.

However, it is necessary to remember the main purpose of creating these territories – the protection regime for rare and endangered nature values. This means that nature should be treated here carefully, especially in spring, when birds and animals are mating and breeding their offspring.

Walking in the protected territories is allowed only along roads and paths, fires can be made on specially allowed places and no litter can be left behind. Behaving quietly will increase the chances of seeing more birds and animals.

<https://www.daba.gov.lv/en/natura-2000-sites-latvia>