



Assessment of the risk of
unsustainable
production of forest biomass
Slovakia

Date: 25.05.2025

1. Information on the author of the risk assessment

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2. Scope of the risk assessment

Entire territory of the Slovak Republic. The assessment considers forest biomass production across whole Slovakia.

3. Structure of the forestry and wood processing industry in Slovakia

3.1. Description of the forestry industry

According to the Summary Information on the State of Forests (SISL), the area of forest land in Slovakia reached 2,028,172 ha in 2023. ha, of which forest land (forest stands) 1,955,522 ha. Forest coverage calculated from the area of forest land is 41.4% in 2023 of the total area of the Slovak Republic. In addition to forest stands, there are parts of agricultural and other areas in the Slovak Republic of land covered with forest trees meeting the criteria of a forest (so-called white areas) with area 288 ± 39 thousand ha (National forest inventory and monitoring 2015-2016, NIML 2). In case that area of white areas was included, the forest cover would be $45.7 \pm 0.9\%$ higher. According to the FOREST report EUROPE/FAO/UNECE on the state of European forests (2020), Slovakia was the 13th most afforested among 43 European countries and had a higher forest cover than the average of Europe (34.8%), EU-28 (38.3%), and European regions, except for Northern Europe (53.8%). It accounts 0.36 ha of forest per one inhabitant of the Slovak Republic. In the forest stands, deciduous trees predominate with a representation of 64.8%. The representation of conifers (35.2%) is decreasing due to the action of harmful agents (bark beetle, draught, windthrows etc.) in forests on spruce wood. Beech (*fagus sylvatica*) (35.4%), spruce (*picea abies*) (21.1%), summer oak (*quercus robur*) and winter oak (*quercus petraea*) (10.3%) and pine (*pinus silvestris*)(6.4%) have the highest representation among tree species.

During their history, because of varying altitude, length of vegetation season, as well as temperature and precipitation patterns, forests of the Slovak Republic evolved into eight altitudinal vegetation zones (AVZ), from the oak zone to the dwarf-pine zone. In each altitudinal zone, there can be several basic site types (fertile, oligotrophic, nitric, damp, waterlogged, exposed, protective, etc.) reflecting soil, water and terrain patterns. Due to a great diversity of natural conditions and habitats, Slovak forests have a very rich and varied tree species composition, age and spatial structures.

Forests in the Slovak Republic are divided into three main categories according to their prevailing function: production, protective and special-purpose forests. The trend in the percentages of individual categories is presented in Figure 4.1-1.

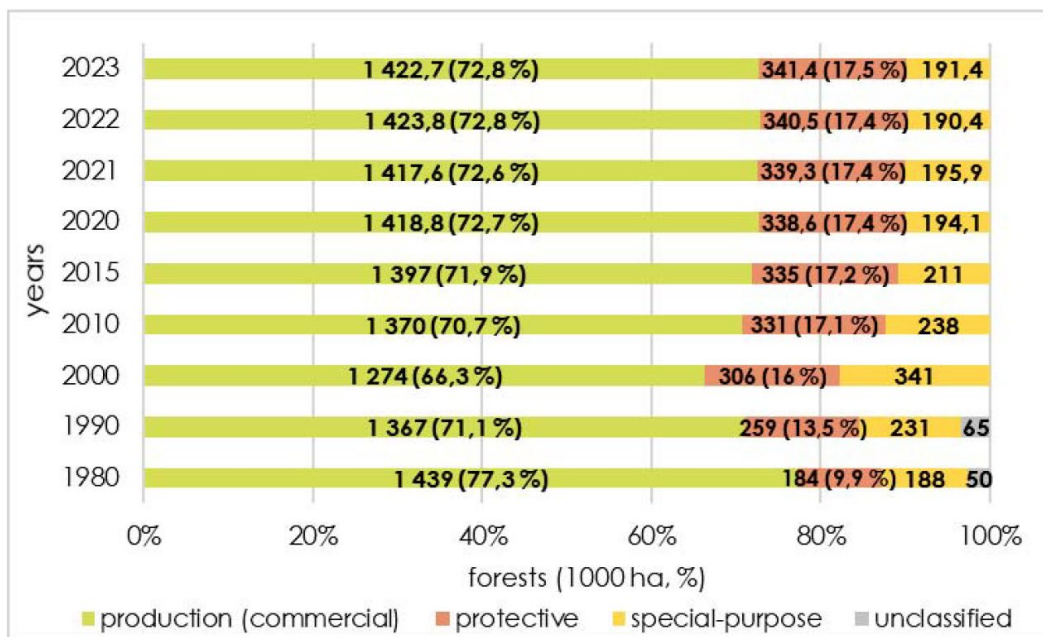


Figure 4.1-1 Forest categories area and percentage (ha, %)

Source: NFC, Compendium of Slovak Forestry Statistics SR 1970-2024.

In the SR, the increasing trend in planning (recommending) the cuts of shelterwood silvicultural system continues. Since 1990, the share of this system has increased from 14% to 65%. On the contrary, the share of various forms of clear-felling system decreased to 26%. Shelterwood system prevails in production and special-purpose forests. Achieving the planned proportion of individual silvicultural systems and their cuts is impossible mainly due the ongoing high extent disturbances to forest stands by harmful agents. Selection and on-purpose selection systems prevail in protection forests and in some subcategories of special-purpose forests that together reached almost 9% of the planned felling area in 2023.

In 2023, according to Forest Management Record data, forest was regenerated on the area of 10,059 ha, which was 1,178 ha (10.5%) less than in 2022, and even 36.7% less than in 2015. This decrease was mainly related to the trend of decreasing regeneration felling in 2020 to 2023.

In forest regeneration, artificial regeneration prevailed (6,307 ha) with the share of 62.7%.

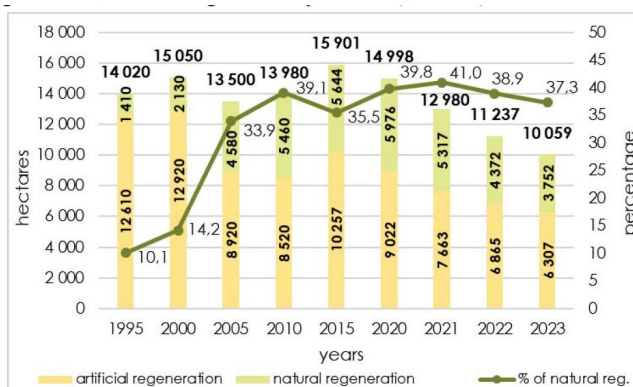


Figure 4.3-1 Forest regeneration

Source: NFC, Compendium of Slovak Forestry Statistics SR, 1996-2024

Natural forest regeneration was recorded on the area of 3,752 ha, (37.3%) of the total regenerated area (Figure 4.3-1), which corresponds to the trend observed over the last 15 years. Increasing share of natural regeneration reflects the forestry strategies of the SR aimed at promotion of close-to-nature management. It has the potential to improve

species

and spatial structures of forest stands to adapt to changing climate and ensure full range of forest ecosystem services in the future, within a framework of integrated forest management. Soil preparation for natural regeneration was carried out on the area of 6,328 ha.

In the period of the last 15 to 20 years, the forests in the Slovak Republic were exposed to an unprecedented frequency and intensity of the action of harmful agents in the forests, to a large extent also due to the influence of climate change. The effects of the drought occurring in 2022 were also reflected in the deterioration of the forest health during 2023. Wind, snow, rime, drought, high water table and other abiotic agents in 2023 damaged trees in forest stands with the timber volume of 1.2 million m³, of which 753 thousand m³ was softwood. Of the conifers, spruce was the most damaged (563 thousand m³) and of the broadleaves, it was beech (292 thousand m³). Wind was the most significant harmful agent (770 thousand m³). During 2023, 1.1 million m³ of timber of trees damaged by abiotic agents was salvaged (including part of the remnants from previous years). In 2023, the trees of the volume of 2.55 million m³ of timber were damaged by biotic harmful agents, of which bark beetles and other animal pests accounted 2.41. Of this, almost 2.4 million m³ were processed. The listed volume of damaged trees was 540 thousand m³ higher compared to the year 2022. The most significant biotic harmful agent was the European spruce bark beetle, which damaged over 2.27 million m³ of wood. The most damaged tree was spruce (2.33 million m³). The most important phytopathogenic organism was the root rot, which damaged 79 thousand m³ of wood.

3.2. Description of the timber volume and timber use

In 2023, according to the NFI data, the total volume of growing stock on forest land in Slovakia was 487.1 million m³ (as of the timber to the top of 7 cm under bark). Compared to 2022, it increased by 4.3 million m³, i.e. by 0.9%. In particular, the supply of hardwood increased to the level of 295.1 million m³, i.e. by 3.7 million m³ compared to last year. The supply of coniferous wood reached 192.0 million m³ (Figure 2.3-1). The ratio of softwood and hardwood stocks was 39.4% to 60.6%. The growing stock per hectare was 250 m³. For conifers, it was 280 m³, and for broadleaves 234 m³.

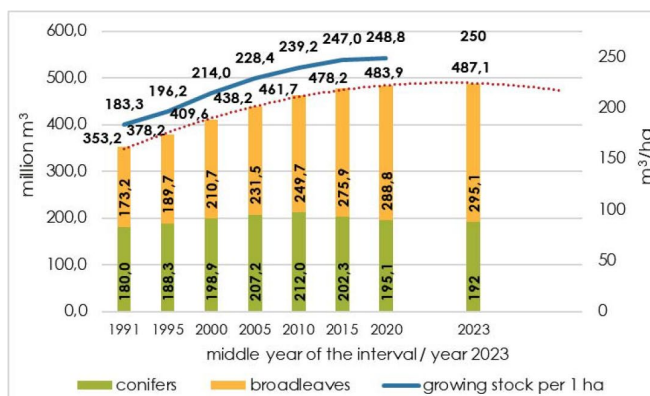


Figure 2.3-1 (Extrapolated) trends in growing stock in total and by main tree species (million m³), average growing stock (m³/ha)

Source: NFC, Compendium of Slovak Forestry Statistics SR 1970-2024.

Note: The values for the presented central years were calculated as an arithmetic average of the intervals: 1990-1992, 1993-1997, 1998-2002, 2003-2007, 2008-2012, 2013-2017, 2018-2022. Values for 2023 represent the data for this year only.

The current culmination in the volume of growing stock is a natural consequence of the gradual change in the uneven age structure of forest stands in Slovakia, associated with the structural shift in the age classes, that are overrepresented as for the area and volume, into

the age at which their gradual regeneration is ongoing.

Such an uneven age structure resulted mainly from the high level of logging in the first half of the 20th century, i.e. in the period of war conflicts and socio-economic crises, bringing along large areas of clearings. The clearings were subsequently reforested and the resulting forest stands are, at the moment, 80 to 130 years old (age classes 8 to 12) and, inter alia, they are also the source of the actual increased timber-felling possibilities. The in-time development of such an uneven age structure is associated with cyclical changes in the production-environmental indicators, including growing stock. The current peak in the volume of growing stocks should gradually continue into a phase of decline that should last for the several next decades. The actual age structure of our forests with a surplus area of older forest stands in the age classes 8 – 15+, in which high growing stock is accumulated (Figure 2.3-3), will gradually shift, especially in production forests, in favour of younger age classes with lower growing stocks, as area of age classes 1 and 2.

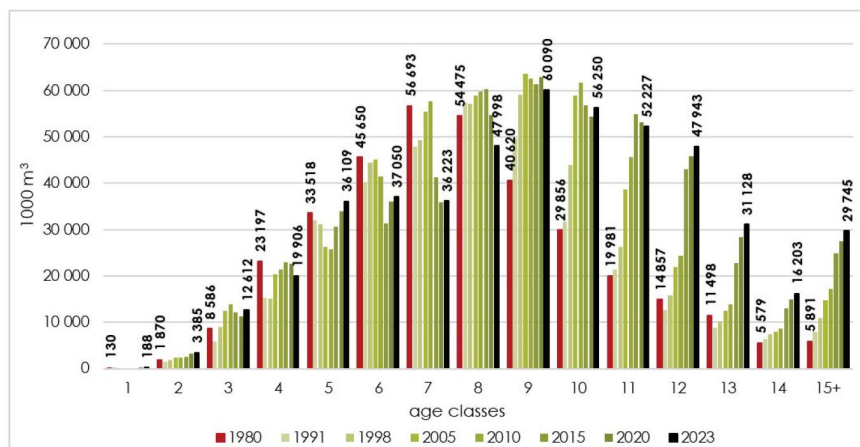


Figure 2.3-3 Trends in growing stock by age class since 1980

Source: NFC, Compendium of Slovak Forestry Statistics SR 1970-2024.

Note: numerical values refer to 1980 and 2023.

50.4% of the total wood stock is located in the forests managed by state organisations (hereinafter: "state forests"), the rest (49.6%) is located in the forests managed by non-state forest managers (hereinafter: "non-state forests"). In state forests, there is currently a lower proportion of softwood stock (47.7%), while the proportion of hardwood stock is higher (52.3%). Compared to state forests, in non-state forests the growing stock located in mature stands available for wood supply (usually age classes 8 to 14) was 9.77 million m³ higher, of which 9.31 million m³ was softwood and 0.45 million m³ hardwood. From the above figures, it is obvious that there is a higher actual potential for softwood logging in non-state forests.

In 2023, 7.223 million m³ of wood was felled in the SR. (Figure 4.4-1), which was 0.464 million m³ more than last year. This total volume consisted of 53.3% of softwood and 46.7% of hardwood. State forest organisations logged 54.2%, and non-state entities the remaining 45.8%. 3.507 million m³ (48.6% of the mentioned volume) was felled as an aftermath of forest disturbances by harmful agents, of which 85% was coniferous and 15% hardwood.

Since 1990 (during 34 years), an average of 7.383 million m³ of timber, which represents 101.4% of the volume planned, has been felled annually. The total annual logging exceeded the volume planned in FMPs especially in the period 1994 - 2011. Felling was lower than planned at the beginning of the monitored period in 1991-1993 and from 2012 to the present. During the entire presented period, the annual timber felling did not exceed the

proportion of felling to TCI was the lowest (55%) in 2000-2003 and the highest (over 80%) in 2005, 2010 and 2018.

The unbalanced age structure of the forests in the SR results, among other things in cyclical changes in potential felling that can be expressed through the area and growing stock volumes in mature forest stands, i.e. stands in which, according to the legislation, regeneration felling could/should be planned. The data in Figure 4.4-4 show that, in 2023, the area of mature forest stands was almost 455 thousand ha with the growing stock of 189.2 million m³, i.e. 38.9% of the total growing stock in the forests of the SR.

3.3. Description of the wood processing industry

Timber is the most important source of income in forestry, necessary to maintain their functions, including the supplies of timber to the wood-processing industry, employment, sales and income in the entire forest-timber sector. In 2023, the total supply of raw wood reached a volume of 7,101 thousand m³, of which 6,760.2 thousand to the domestic market (of which domestic sales 6,724.6 thousand m³ and in-house consumption 35.6 thousand m³).

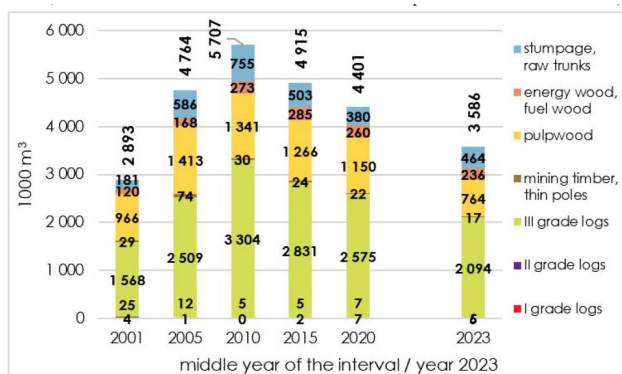


Figure 5.1-1 Domestic softwood supply by log grades, excluding in-house consumption

Source: Quarterly timber supply statistics Les D (MARD SR) 2-04, 2024

Note: The values for the presented central years were calculated as an arithmetic average of the intervals: 2000-2002, 2003-2007, 2008-2012, 2013-2017 and 2018-2022. Values for 2023 represent the data for this year only.

Compared to 2022, timber supply to the domestic market (including in-house consumption) decreased by 326 thousand m³. Softwood deliveries increased by 68.7 thousand m³, while deliveries of hardwood decreased by 394.9 thousand m³. Within the softwood supply to the domestic market without in-house consumption, III grade logs (Figure 5.1-1) had long-term

predominance with a share of 58.4% in 2023. In the supply of hardwood, pulpwood predominated (Figure 5.1-2) the share of which increased significantly to 69.3% in 2023, mainly at the expense of III-grade, whose share fell to 19.6%. The share of the highest quality logs of I and II grades was 0.6% in the supply of hardwood and 0.3% in the supply of softwood in 2023.

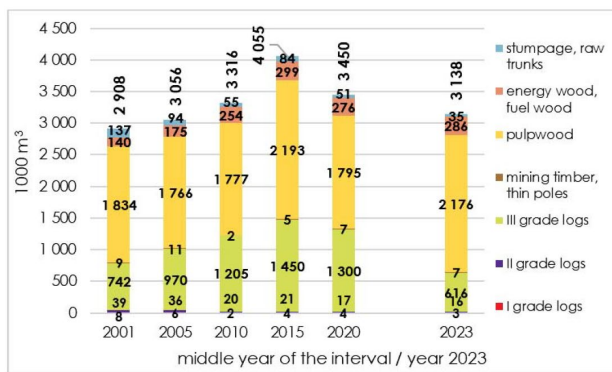


Figure 5.1-2 Domestic hardwood supply by log grades excluding in-house consumption

Source: Quarterly timber supply statistics Les D (MP SR) 2-04, 2024

Note: The values for the presented central years were calculated as an arithmetic average of the intervals: 2000-2002, 2003-2007, 2008-2012, 2013-2017 and 2018-2022. Values for 2023 represent the data for this year only.

According to the preliminary data of the foreign trade statistics (customs statistics), 1.839 million m3 of raw wood was exported in 2023 (Figure 5.1-3).

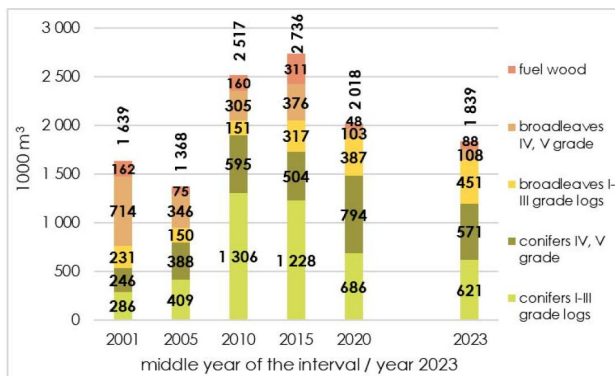


Figure 5.1-3 Timber export by grades

Source: Quarterly timber supply statistics Les D (MP SR) 2-04, 2024

Note: The values for the presented central years were calculated as an arithmetic average of the intervals: 2000-2002, 2003-2007, 2008-2012, 2013-2017 and 2018-2022. Values for 2023 represent the data for this year only.

The export of raw wood decreased by 49 thousand m3 compared to 2022. In exports, which

were made mainly to EU countries (Romania, the Czech Republic, Poland and Austria) and to China, the logs of I to III quality classes in softwood (33.8% of total exports) prevailed. In hardwood it was 24.5% of the logs of I to III quality classes (Figure 5.1-3). Of the above-mentioned volume, forest managers and owners exported only 340.9 thousand m3 (101.7 thousand m3 of softwood and 239.2 thousand m3 of hardwood), i.e. 18.5% of the total volume of exports. The remaining 81.5% was exported by various non-forestry entities, mainly trading companies. In 2023, the volume of timber exports was 179 thousand m3 lower than the average annual export in the period 2018-2022.

In 2023, 1,336 thousand m3 of raw wood were imported to the territory of the SR, which was 1,505 thousand m3 less than last year, or by 726 thousand m3 less compared to the five-year average of imports in the period of 2018-2022 (Figure 5.1-4). In a year-on-year comparison, a very significant decrease in the import of raw wood was caused by the unfavourable situation on the market for wood products and lower demand. In the import of raw wood, hardwood logs of I to III grade prevailed (43.3%).

3.4. Sources

REPORT ON THE FOREST SECTOR OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC 2023 published by Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic and National Forest Centre.

4. Evaluation of the sustainability criteria for forest biomass	
4.1. Legality of wood harvesting	
Step 1: Identification of applicable laws	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>460/1992 Coll. - The Constitution of the Slovak Republic as amended later</i> 2. <i>Act no. 40/1964 Coll. - Civil Code as amended later</i> 3. <i>Law no. 513/1991 Coll. - Commercial Code as amended later</i> 4. <i>Act no. 326/2005 Coll. on forests as amended and supplemented</i> 5. <i>Act no. 543/2002 on nature and landscape protection</i> 6. <i>Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic no. 297/2011 Coll. on forest management records as amended later</i> 7. <i>Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic no. 451/2006 Coll. on the professional forest manager as amended later</i> 8. <i>Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic no. 232/2006 Coll. on the marking of wood harvesting as amended and supplemented</i> 9. <i>SR Government Regulation 86/2005 Coll. on the classification of wood as amended and supplemented</i> 10. <i>Act 113/2018 on the introduction of wood and wood products to the internal market and on the amendment of Act no. 280/2017 Coll. on the provision of support and subsidies in agriculture and rural development and on the amendment of Act no. 292/2014 Coll. on the contribution provided from the European structural and investment funds and on the amendment of certain laws as amended</i> 11. <i>Act No. 81 of 27 March 2025 ensuring the implementation of certain European Union measures to mitigate global deforestation and amending certain laws</i> 	
Sources	<i>1.-11.: Slov-Lex – Legislative and Information Portal of the Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic (https://www.slov-lex.sk/web/en)</i>
Were applicable laws identified?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (audit required)
Step 2: Description of enforcement and monitoring	
<p>Property rights in general and for forests are determined by the Slovak Constitution and by Slovak Civil Code. Possession and ownership are documented in a land register entry. The general provisions for the documentation of the property are stipulated in the Land Register Code. As long as no other laws are violated, the management right also lies within the owners of the land. The right to manage forests can be transferred to others in the form of a lease agreement. The requirements for lease agreements and the rights and duties of lessees and lessors are defined by the Slovak Civil Code. Law on forests defines all the duties of the forest manager. Forest management must be overseen by Licensed Forest manager (OLH) (Decree 451/2006) who implements into practice prescriptions of regularly updated 10-years management plan and issues harvesting permits. FMPs are prepared by specialised inventory organisations based on ecological and economic as well as technological reviews of the forest stands. Volumes of timber from logging in the forest are</p>	

subject to cross-checking by the tax office through the financial data of logging companies, transport companies and timber sellers matched in the tax office's information system.

Due to the fact that according to the Forest Act, the volume of logging planned according to the approved Forest management plan should not be exceeded, except for sanitation logging, Licensed Forest manager risks losing its license in case of violation of the Forest Act. Act 326/2005 Coll. on forests states that the manager is obliged to report accidental harvesting in following cases:

- a) the estimated volume of wood that is the reason for the processing of sanitation logging and the total volume of sanitation logging exceed 15% of the stand stock specified in the stand description,
- b) the estimated volume of wood that is the reason for the processing of sanitation logging, the total volume of intentional logging carried out and the total volume of sanitation logging exceed 30% of the stand stock specified in the stand description; this does not affect the provision of letter a),
- c) the reason for the processing of sanitation logging has been reported for the stand pursuant to letter a) or letter b) and the estimated volume of wood that is the reason for the processing of further sanitation logging exceeds 5% of the stand stock specified in the stand description on a single occasion or
- d) sanitation logging is to be carried out on a continuous area of more than 0.3 hectares.

According to the act 113/2018 and 81/2025 any legal entity placing wood on the EU market must follow Due Diligence system differing in scope within forest manger, logging company, agricultural landowner or transport company.

For the felling of trees outside the forest land according to § 47 par. 3 of Act No. 543/2002 Coll. on nature and landscape protection requires the consent of the nature protection authority. The municipality is the competent authority for permitting or disallowing felling. The district office decides on felling outside the built-up area of the municipality. Wood cutting can only be done after the wood cutting has been marked and after the validity of the consent to felling, which is the executor of felling obliged to prove it upon request (§ 47 paragraph 11).

MARD SR (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development) is the supreme national body of the state administration on forestry, hunting (SAFH) and introduction of timber and timber products to the internal market (SA EUTR), which is, at country level, executed by the Slovak Forestry and Timber Inspection (SFTI).

The police, the forest office, the tax office and the national EUTR inspection „SFTI“ (established under EUTR Act No. 113/2018 Coll. On the placing of timber and timber products on the internal market) have the right and obligation to control the entire timber trade chain. In addition to its consulting activities, it monitors, ascertains and controls the fulfilment of obligations arising for economic entities, timber traders and transporters, operating in forests and outside forest lands throughout the territory of the Slovak Republic. At district level, SAFH and SA EUTR are carried out by the respective departments of the district offices, in military forests by the Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic. The performance of SAFH was carried out mainly on the basis of the provisions of the acts on forests, hunting, forest reproductive material, land associations, etc. In 2021, the SAFH authorities managed a total of 63.2 thousand individual proceedings, of which 8.4 thousand proceedings according to the administrative order. SFTI performed a total of 646 state inspections. 580 timber shippers were inspected.

The main tasks of the SLDI:

- a) supervise economic operators, traders and transporters of timber and timber products;
- b) impose measures on economic operators, traders and transporters of timber and timber products;
- c) decide in the first instance on offences and other administrative offences committed by economic operators, traders and transporters of timber and timber products; in the case of imports of timber and timber products from a partner state, decide on offences and other administrative offences pursuant to Section 17(4)(c) of the Timber Act;
- d) provide free consultancy in the field of placing timber on the internal market and due diligence systems;
- e) cooperate with authorities in the provision and control of funds from public sources;
- f) cooperate with other public administration authorities, police authorities and organisations in the field of placing timber and timber products on the internal market;
- g) provides cooperation to customs authorities and other state administration authorities in case of doubts about the type, quantity and origin of timber and timber products;
- h) collects and processes data in the area of placing timber and timber products on the market and provides them to the Ministry.

In order to achieve the purpose of supervision, SLDI may decide to impose a measure, to detain timber and timber products, to forfeit the detained timber and timber products, as well as to prohibit further trade in timber and timber products.

SLDI is authorized through its employees to:

- enter land, buildings, facilities, vehicles used for the purpose of placing timber and timber products on the internal market or for their transport;
- independently stop vehicles transporting timber and timber products on forest roads and forest lands and other lands;
- require proof of the identity of persons and their permanent residence for the purpose of supervision;
- to request statements, information, data and explanations on facts important for the performance of supervision.
- to carry out necessary investigations for the purpose of supervision;
- to summon persons to provide explanations on facts important for the performance of supervision;
- to require the submission of documents and other documents related to the performance of supervision and to inspect them;
- to take originals or officially certified copies of documents and other documents necessary for securing evidence, and to make copies of them;
- to require persons subject to supervision to identify wood and wood products;
- to take samples of wood and wood products for the purpose of expert examination;
- to make visual, audio and audio-visual records of detected deficiencies and for the purpose of securing evidence.

Sources	<p>Slov-Lex – Legislative and Information Portal of the Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic (https://www.slov-lex.sk/web/en)</p> <p>Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development https://www.mpsr.sk/slovenska-lesnicko-drevarska-inspekcia/postavenie/47-186-1356 https://www.sizp.sk/priroda/ochrana-prirody-a-krajiny/ochrana-drevin/vyrub-drevin https://www.sizp.sk/slovak-environmental-inspectorate/about-us</p> <p>Register of inspections https://gis.nlcsk.org/islhp/register-sldi</p>
Are enforcement and monitoring ensured for the identified laws?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (audit required)
Degree of compliance of the criterion “Legality of timber harvesting”	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirements fulfilled <input type="checkbox"/> Requirements not fulfilled	

Step 3: Evaluation of the effectiveness of the legal framework on the legality of timber harvesting																					
<p>As the legal framework to legality is quite robust in Slovakia, there is a need to evaluate effectiveness of its implementation.</p> <p>Indicator 1: World governance index shows in several levels effectiveness of implementation of legal system.</p>																					
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;">Worldwide Governance Indicators</div> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Indicator</th> <th>Country</th> <th>Year</th> <th>Percentile Rank (0 to 100)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td rowspan="3">Rule of Law</td> <td rowspan="3">Slovak Republic</td> <td>2013</td> <td>~65</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2018</td> <td>~68</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2023</td> <td>~70</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="3">Control of Corruption</td> <td rowspan="3">Slovak Republic</td> <td>2013</td> <td>~60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2018</td> <td>~62</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2023</td> <td>~65</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Indicator	Country	Year	Percentile Rank (0 to 100)	Rule of Law	Slovak Republic	2013	~65	2018	~68	2023	~70	Control of Corruption	Slovak Republic	2013	~60	2018	~62	2023	~65
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		2023	~65																		
<p>1. Main selected indicators for Legality of wood harvesting according to RED III Article 29 (6) indicate LOW RISK.</p> <p>On above stated basis, the sustainability criterion “legality of timber harvesting” is rated in category A – criterion Efficiency confirmed</p>																					
Sources	Worldwide Governance Indicators, 2024 Update, World Bank (www.govindicators.org), Accessed on 10/30/2024																				

Effectiveness (points):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Category A (20 points)	<input type="checkbox"/> Category B (10 points)	<input type="checkbox"/> Category C (0 points)
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4.2. Forest regeneration	
Step 1: Identification of applicable laws	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Act no. 326/2005 Coll. on forests as amended and supplemented</i> 2. <i>Decree no. 297/2011 Coll. Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic on forestry records</i> 3. <i>Law no. 138/ 2010 Coll. on forest reproductive material as amended and supplemented</i> 4. <i>Act no. 543/2002 on nature and landscape protection</i> 5. <i>Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic no. 501/2010 Coll., which establishes details on the production of forest reproductive material and its introduction to the market as amended later</i> 	
Sources	<p>https://www.forestportal.sk/odborna-sekcia-i/lesnicka-politika-a-legislativa/narodna-legislativa-v-oblasti-lesneho-hospodarstva/</p> <p>Slov-Lex – Legislative and Information Portal of the Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic (https://www.slov-lex.sk/web/en)</p>
Were applicable laws identified?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (audit required)
Step 2: Description of enforcement and monitoring	
<p>According to valid Law about forests 326/2005 §20 Forest restoration is carried out as</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) natural regeneration, during which a forest stand is created from the seed or saplings of trees, b) artificial renewal, in which forest cover is created by planting seedlings and saplings or by sowing seeds, c) combined regeneration, in which forest cover is created by a combination of natural regeneration and artificial regeneration. <p>(2) The forest manager restores the forest stands of the habitat with suitable forest trees, prioritizing natural regeneration, so that the subsequent forest stand meets the criteria of a secured forest stand. Reproduction material can be used for artificial restoration according to a special regulation (138/2010).</p> <p>(3) Clearing for the purposes of this Act is a forest plot or part thereof, on which the forest cover has disappeared due to the action of harmful agents or has been removed by deliberate logging [§ 22 par. 2 letters a)], sanitation harvest [§ 22 par. 2 letters c)] or forest land intended for afforestation.</p> <p>(4) The forest manager is obliged to restore the forest in the clearing within two years at the latest, and in protected forests within three years from the end of the calendar year in which the clearing was created, except for protected areas with the fifth level of protection(no intervention regime); if it concerns clearings with dead forest growth left, where there is a risk of life or health during forest restoration, the period does not expire. The body of the state administration of forestry can extend this period by a maximum of two years, based on the request of the forest manager. When clear-cuts occur after accidental harvesting to an extent that exceeds 1/10 of the plan of afforestation tasks for the forest unit or property unit specified in the forest care program, or if it is necessary due</p>	

to the creation of an age- and spatially differentiated stand structure, or when clear-cuts occur according to § 37 par. 3, the state forestry administration body may, at the request of the forest manager, determine a special schedule for the restoration of the forest on the clearing; the period for reforestation on the clearing may not exceed 20 years and may not be extended. In the approved schedule, the extent of forest regeneration on clearings per year must not be less than 1/10 of the planned artificial forest regeneration for the forest unit or ownership unit specified in the forest care program, except for the last year of validity of the schedule.

(5) If the conditions for natural regeneration have disappeared on the clearing when applying economic methods according to § 18 par. 1 letter a) to c), the forest manager is obliged to carry out artificial restoration based on the modification of the forest care program carried out by the manager.

(6) The forest manager is obliged to secure the forest cover created after the restoration of the forest according to paragraph 1 within two to ten years from the expiration of the period specified in paragraph 4, differentiated according to the forest care program. If the forest stand was not secured despite the fact that the forest manager took adequate measures to secure it, the state forestry administration body can extend this period by a maximum of two years.

(7) The provisions of paragraphs 5 and 6 do not apply to energy crops and forest plantations.

All silvicultural operations including forest regeneration (restoration) are according to the decree 297/2011 subject to yearly reporting to State forestry office. They must be in line with the 10-year forest management plan and are subject of controls by Forestry office in production forests and State nature protection office in protected areas. All the reports are collected by Slovak National forestry centre and publicly available including FMP.

Sources	https://static.slov-lex.sk/pdf/SK/ZZ/2011/297/ZZ_2011_297_20210101.pdf https://www.forestportal.sk/odborna-sekcia-i/lesnicka-politika-a-legislativa/narodna-legislativa-v-oblasti-lesneho-hospodarstva/ Slov-Lex – Legislative and Information Portal of the Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic (https://www.slov-lex.sk/web/en) https://gis.nlcsk.org/islhp/
Are enforcement and monitoring ensured for the identified laws?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (audit required)
Degree of compliance of the criterion “forest regeneration”	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirements fulfilled <input type="checkbox"/> Requirements not fulfilled	

Step 3: Evaluation of the effectiveness of the legal framework for forest regeneration
<p>The area of forest land and forest stands has been long-term increasing in Slovakia.</p> <p>The average annual increase of forest stands area was 1,024 ha.</p>

The area of forest land in Slovakia has been long-term increasing (Figure 2.1-1). According to the data of the NFC’s Compendium of Slovak Forestry Statistics (CSFS), in 2023 it was 2,028,172 ha. Since 1990, it has increased by 51.7 thousand ha, i.e. by 2.6%, which is, on average, 1.57 thousand ha per year.

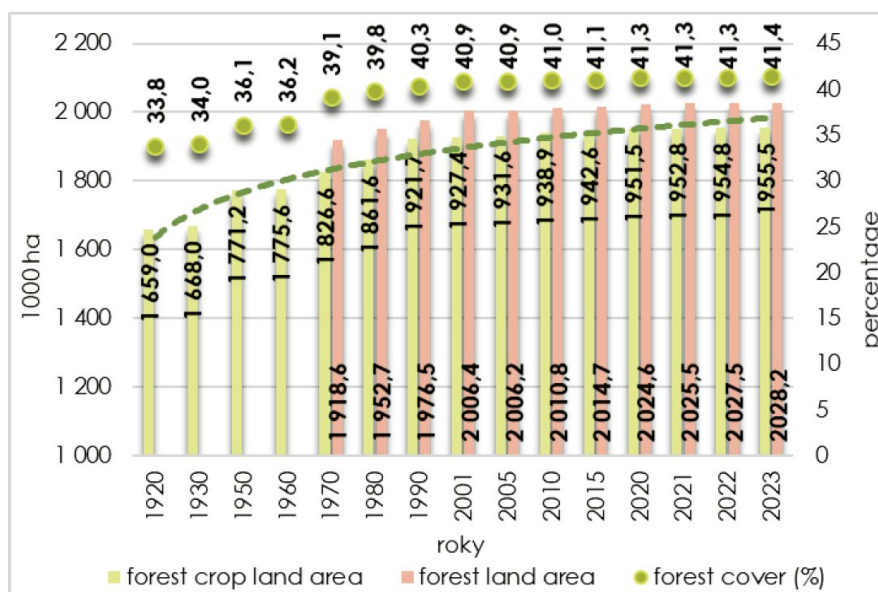


Figure 2.1-1 Forest land, area of forest stands (1,000 ha) and forest cover (%)

Source: NFC, Compendium of Slovak Forestry Statistics SR 1970-2024; NFC, Forestry Case Studies 55/1999.

Notes: Forest cover = the percentage of forest land out of the total area of the SR including the area of water bodies

There is no loss of forest cover in Slovakia. According to latest FAO and Forest Europe report as well as enviroportal - Slovak forests area grows annually by rate to 0,2%.

Accordingly, the sustainability criterion “forest regeneration” is rated in category A.

Sources	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> https://gis.nlc.sk/org/islhp/ https://foresteurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/SoEF_2020.pdf https://www.mpsr.sk/download.php?fID=25480 		
Effectiveness (points):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Category A (20 points)	<input type="checkbox"/> Category B (10 points)	<input type="checkbox"/> Category C (0 points)

4.3. Biodiversity	
Step 1: Identification of applicable laws	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Law no. 543/2002 Coll. on nature and landscape protection as amended later 2. Law no. 237/2002 Coll. on trade in endangered species of wild animals and wild plants and on the amendment of certain laws as amended later 3. Law no. 15/2005 Coll. on the protection of species of wild animals and wild plants by regulating trade with them and on the amendment of certain laws as amended later Ratified international treaties and conventions: 4. Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, Bonn, 1979 5. Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, Paris, 1972 6. Convention on the Conservation of Wild Animals and Natural Habitats, Bern, 1979 7. Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Species of Migratory Waterfowl, The Hague, 1995 8. Convention on Biological Diversity, Rio de Janeiro, 1992 9. Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, Especially as Waterfowl Habitat, Ramsar, 1971 10. Convention on the Conservation of Bats in Europe, London, 1991 11. Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, Washington, 1073 12. Convention on cooperation in the protection and sustainable use of the Danube, Sofia, 1994 13. Protocol on Water and Health, London, 1999 14. Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Streams and International Lakes, Helsinki, 1993 15. Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, Aarhus (Denmark), 1998 16. Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians, Kyiv, 2003 17. Convention on the Assessment of Transboundary Environmental Impacts, Espoo, 1991 18. Convention on Persistent Organic Substances, Stockholm 2001 19. Protocol on Sustainable Forest Management to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians, 2011 	
Sources	<i>1.-19. Slov-Lex – Legislative and Information Portal of the Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic (https://www.slov-lex.sk/web/en)</i>
Were applicable laws identified?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (audit required)
Step 2: Description of enforcement and monitoring	

There are forest stands with an area of 1.16 million ha in all networks of protected areas: national, European and other internationally protected areas.

The European NATURA 2000 network consists of two partially overlapping sub-networks: special protection areas (SPAs) and sites of Community importance (SCIs), in which there are 955 thousand ha of forest stands. In the protected areas of the national network, approximately 794 thousand ha of forest stands are located. Within other internationally protected areas, i.e. in the UNESCO natural heritage sites, 37 thousand ha of forest stands is protected. There are 1,164 thousand ha of forest stands in national, European networks and other internationally protected areas.

The European and national networks overlap on approximately 783 thousand ha of forest stands. As of December 31, 2023, 23 SPA's management programs were in force, the remaining 18 still awaiting approval. The area of forest stands by levels of protection and PA categories is presented in table 10.1.

Table 10.1 Protected forest stand area by category and level of protection

Protected area category		Level of protection (1,000 ha)					Total
		1	2	3	4	5	
Protected Landscape Areas (PLAs) ¹⁾		0	318,3	0,1	0	0	318,4
National Parks (NPs) ¹⁾		0	0	168,7	0,3	0,1	169,0
Buffer zones of NPs		0	127,0	0	0	0	127,0
Zones of PLAs ²⁾ and NPs ³⁾	A	0	0	0	0	13,6	13,6
	B	0	0	0	7,7	0	7,7
	C	0	0	29,8	0	0	29,8
	D	0	17,4	0	0	0	17,4
Small-scale Protected Areas (SSPAs)	(National) Nature Reserves ((N)NRs) ³⁾	0	0	0	9,7	73,3	82,9
	(National) Nature Monuments ((N)NMs)	0	0	0	0,4	0,4	0,8
	Protected Landscape Elements (PLEs)	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Protected Sites (PSs)	0	2,0	4,0	1,2	0,2	7,4
	Buffer zones of SSPAs	0	1,0	16,5	1,4	0	19,0
Sites of Community Importance (SCIs) – outside national PA network		0	78,5	0,5	0,3	0,3	79,6
Special protection Areas (SPAs) – outside SCIs and national PA network		291,7	0	0	0	0	291,7
Total		291,7	544,2	219,6	21,0	87,9	1 164,4

Source: ME SR at 31 December 2023, edited by NLC-LVÚ Zvolen 2024.

Explanations: ¹⁾ the area after deducting the SSPAs and the zoned PLAs and NPs, ²⁾ the Horná Orava PLA is currently zoned,

³⁾ PIENAP, Slovenský raj NP and Muránska planina NP are currently zoned.

Note: The areas determined from the GIS layers should be considered as indicative, not completely identical to the official areas of individual protected areas. ZBGIS data were used as a basis for the forest boundaries.

The basic legislative document for the protection of nature and landscape of the Slovak Republic is Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 543/2003 Coll. of June 25, 2002. on nature and landscape protection, as amended (hereinafter referred to as "the law").

This law regulates the competence of state administration bodies and municipalities, as well as the rights and obligations of legal entities and natural persons in the protection of nature and the landscape, with the aim of long-term ensuring the preservation of natural balance and the protection of the diversity of conditions and forms of life, natural values and beauties, and creating conditions for sustainable the use of natural resources and for

the provision of ecosystem services, taking into account economic, social and cultural needs, as well as regional and local conditions.

One of the ways to achieve this goal is the territorial protection of nature and landscape. According to the law, it means the protection of nature and landscape on the territory of the Slovak Republic or a part of it. Five levels of protection are established for territorial protection. The range of restrictions increases as the degree of protection increases. In the area where several protected areas with different degrees of protection overlap (for example, a national park and a nature reserve), the highest of them always applies.

In the territory of the Slovak Republic, the first degree of protection applies, unless this law or a generally binding legal regulation issued on its basis provides otherwise. In the first level of protection, the provisions on general protection of nature and landscape are applied according to the law. This level of protection is therefore not granted territorial protection according to Sections 17 to 31 of the Act. That is, it is the territory outside the specially declared protected areas, with the exception of protected bird areas, caves and waterfalls and their protective zones and general protected areas. In these categories, the degrees of protection do not apply, but the conditions established in their promulgation regulations.

Protected areas (PA) can be declared as sites where there are biotopes of European importance, biotopes of national importance, biotopes of species of European importance, biotopes of species of national importance and bird habitats, including migratory species (for the protection of which protected areas are declared), significant landscape elements or natural creations.

National system of protected areas

National parks and protected landscape areas are referred to as large-scale protected areas (VCHÚ). Protected areas, nature reserves, national nature reserves, natural monuments, national natural monuments, natural parks and protected landscape elements are referred to as small-area protected areas (MCHÚ). All these protected areas form the national system of protected areas, divided into the following categories:

A protected landscape area (PLA) is a larger area, usually with an area of more than 1,000 ha, with scattered ecosystems, important for the preservation of biological diversity and ecological stability, with a characteristic appearance of the landscape or with specific forms of historical settlement. It can be declared by the Government of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter referred to as the "Government") by regulation, and in its territory, the second level of protection applies, unless the law provides otherwise (for example, by declaring a zoning or MCHÚ on the territory of the PLA). As of 31 December 2024, 14 PLAs have been declared.

A national park (NP) is a larger territory, usually with an area of more than 10,000 ha, predominantly with ecosystems substantially unchanged by human activity or in a unique and natural landscape structure, forming the most significant natural heritage, in which nature conservation is superior to other activities. It can be declared by the government by regulation, and the third degree of protection applies to its territory, unless otherwise provided by law. As of December 31, 2024, 9 NPs have been announced.

A nature park is a larger territory, usually with an area of more than 500 ha, mainly with ecosystems changed by human activity, which form biocentres of supra-regional importance or which are important for ensuring the favourable status of biotopes of European importance, biotopes of national importance, biotopes of species of European importance or biotopes of species of national importance. It can be declared by the

government, and the second or third level of protection applies to its territory, unless otherwise provided by law. In this new category (as of 2020), no protected area has yet been declared.

A protected area (CHA) is a location, usually with an area of up to 500 ha, on which there are biotopes of European importance or biotopes of national importance, or which is the habitat of a species of European importance or the biotope of a species of national importance and where the favourable condition of these biotopes depends on human management. It can be declared by the government by regulation, and the second, third, fourth or fifth level of protection applies to its territory. As of 12/31/2021, 191 CHAs have been announced (including 1 private one).

A nature reserve (PR) is a location, usually with an area of up to 1,000 ha, which represents original or little-altered by human activity biotopes of European or biotopes of national importance or biotopes of European species or biotopes of national importance. It can be declared by the government by regulation, and the fourth or fifth level of protection applies to its territory. A nature reserve, usually representing a supra-regional biocentre as part of the most important natural heritage of the state, can be declared by the government as a national nature reserve (NPR). As of 12/31/2021, 421 PRs have been announced (including 3 private and 160 NPR).

A natural monument (PP) is a point, linear or other small-scale ecosystem, its components or elements, usually with an area of up to 50 ha, which have scientific, cultural, ecological, aesthetic or landscape significance. It can be declared by the government by regulation, and the fourth or fifth level of protection applies to its territory. A unique natural monument, which is part of the most important natural heritage of the state, can be declared by the government as a national natural monument (NPP). As of 31/12/2024, 276 PP and 60 NPP have been announced.

A protected landscape element (CHKP) is an important landscape element that fulfils the function of a biocentre, biocorridor or interaction element of particular local or regional importance. It can be declared by the government by regulation, and the second, third, fourth or fifth level of protection applies in its territory. As of December 31, 2024, 1 CHPK has been announced.

Municipal protected area (OCHÚ) is a locality, usually with an area of up to 100 ha, with cultural, scientific, ecological, aesthetic or landscape significance. It can be declared by the municipality by means of a generally binding regulation, in which the conditions for its protection are stated. As of 31 December 2024, 13 protected areas have been declared.

Protection zones of protected areas

If the interest of protecting a national park, protected area, nature reserve, national nature reserve, natural monument or national natural monument requires it, their buffer zones can be declared in the same way as the corresponding protected area is declared according to the law. On the territory of the buffer zone of the protected area with the third level of protection, the second level of protection applies, on the territory of the buffer zone of the protected area with the fourth level of protection, the third level of protection applies, and on the territory of the buffer zone of the protected area with the fifth level of protection, the fourth level of protection applies.

If the buffer zone of the nature reserve or the buffer zone of the national nature reserve has not been declared separately, it is the territory up to a distance of 100 m outward from its border and the third level of protection applies in it. If the buffer zone of the natural monument or the protection zone of the national natural monument has not been

separately declared, it is the territory up to a distance of 60 m outward from its border and the third level of protection applies in it, this provision does not apply if it is a cave buffer zone and a natural waterfall protection zone .

If the buffer zone of a nature reserve, the buffer zone of a natural monument, the buffer zone of a national nature reserve or the buffer zone of a national natural monument has not been separately declared and if it is not in the interest of such a protected area to have a protection zone, it may be established in the declaration regulation that the protected area does not have no buffer zone.

As of December 31, 2024, a buffer zone has been declared for all 9 national parks and 73 small-area protected areas. The legal buffer zones up to a distance of 100 m has established 474 NPR and PR, and the legal buffer zone up to a distance of 60 m has established 207 NPP and PP. No buffer zone has 374 MCHÚ.

Zones of protected areas

VCHÚ and MCHÚ may be divided into a maximum of four zones based on the state of the biotopes, if this is necessary to ensure its care. The importance of dividing the protected area into zones lies in the differentiation of protection and its adaptation to the nature of the natural values of the protected area. As a rule, zones are defined as integral parts of the protected area according to the nature of the natural values in them, the originality of the ecosystems, the degree of intervention by human activity and the use of the territory by man, so that the fifth level of protection is determined in zone A, the fourth level of protection in zone B, the third level of protection in zone C and the second level of protection in zone D. Zones can also be divided into sub-zones, if within the zone there are parts of the protected area with different methods of care or protection objectives. The zoning of a protected area can be declared by a generally binding regulation by the authority that is competent to declare a given protected area.

Small-scale protected areas that become part of declared PLA or NP zones are always cancelled. This simplifies and unifies the protection system of individual PLAs and NPs.

Until December 31, 2024, the zoning of three VCHÚ was announced - the Horná Orava Protected Landscape Area, the Pieniny National Park and the Slovak Paradise National Park, NP Muránska planina, NP Veľká Fatra a NP Slovenský kras. Zoning was also announced for 40 MCHÚ.

Private protected areas

The owner of such land, which meets the conditions established by this law for a protected area, nature reserve or natural monument and has not yet been declared protected, may, on the basis of the submitted protection project, apply to the district office in the seat of the region for the declaration of a private protected area, private nature reserve or private natural monuments (hereinafter referred to as "private protected area"). If the land meets the conditions for the declaration of territorial protection, the district office in the seat of the region will declare it a private protected area

In the Slovak Republic, the Slovak Environmental Inspection (SIŽP), which was established in 1991, is the main professional control and administrative body through which the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic carries out state supervision in matters of environmental care.

According to § 9 par. 1 of Act no. 525/2003 Coll. on the state environmental care administration SIŽP:

- carries out state supervision in matters of environmental care to the extent and under

the conditions established by special regulations,

- imposes fines in matters of environmental care,
- performs local state administration in the area of integrated prevention and control of environmental pollution according to a special regulation,
- performs other activities in matters of environmental care within the scope of special regulations,
- performs the activities of the control body according to special regulations,
- carries out state supervision in matters of achieving the goals of the state environmental policy at the national level and at the regional level through actions for which support was provided from the Environmental Fund.

SIŽP controls compliance with legal regulations in 6 sections - the section for water protection, air protection, waste management, nature and landscape protection and regulation of trade in CITES specimens, biological safety and the section for integrated permitting and control. The control activity of the SIŽP in 2018 was focused on compliance with the obligations arising from the current legislation of the Slovak Republic in the field of the environment, including transposed EU directives as well as individual EU regulations.

Sources	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>State nature protection of SR</i> https://www.sopsr.sk/web/?cl=20835 2. https://webqis.biomonitoring.sk/ 3. <i>REPORT ON THE FOREST SECTOR OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC 2023 by Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic and National Forest Centre</i> 4. https://www.enviroportal.sk/agendy/verejna-sprava/organy-ochrany-prirody 5. https://www.enviroportal.sk/pravne-predpisy-dokumenty 6. https://www.sopsr.sk/web/?cl=1 7. https://www.minzp.sk/
Are enforcement and monitoring ensured for the identified laws?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (audit required)
Degree of compliance of the criterion “biodiversity”	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirements fulfilled <input type="checkbox"/> Requirements not fulfilled	

Step 3: Evaluation of the effectiveness of the legal framework for biodiversity
<p>Indicator: Protected forest areas: percentage of forest protected to maintain biological or land-scape diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slovakia contains 1.16 million ha of forest land within protected areas (59.5% of total forest area). • Natura 2000 network covers 955,000 ha of forest land (48.8%). • National protected areas (CHÚ) overlap with Natura 2000 on 783,000 ha.

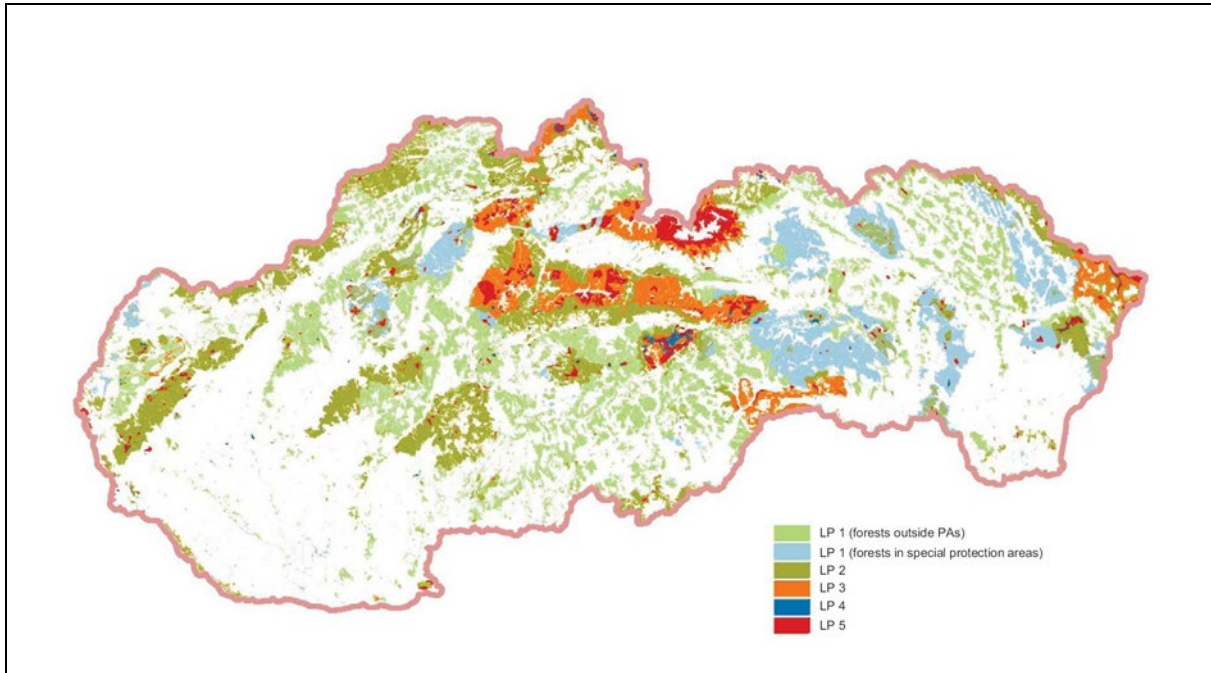


Figure 10.1-1 Forest by a level of protection (LP)
 Source: ME SR, 2023, NFCI Zvolen 2024

Indicator: Deadwood: Volume of standing and lying deadwood

Deadwood is also an important component of forest ecosystems. It should be retained in forests to the extent appropriate to their required functions. According to the second cycle of NFI, there was 87.0 ± 5.7 mil. m³ of deadwood (standing snags, stumps, lying thick and thin deadwood), which averages 45.2 ± 2.8 m³ per ha. According to the State of Europe’s Forests 2020 report, the stock of standing and lying deadwood thicker than 10 cm (without stumps and thin wood up to 10 cm) in the forests of the was 28.0 m³ per ha, which is the highest volume among the countries that reported on this indicator.

Carbon stock in forests

Healthy and resilient forests are important also from the point of view of significant role in the carbon sequestration in their biomass, deadwood and litter (necro mass), and in the soil.

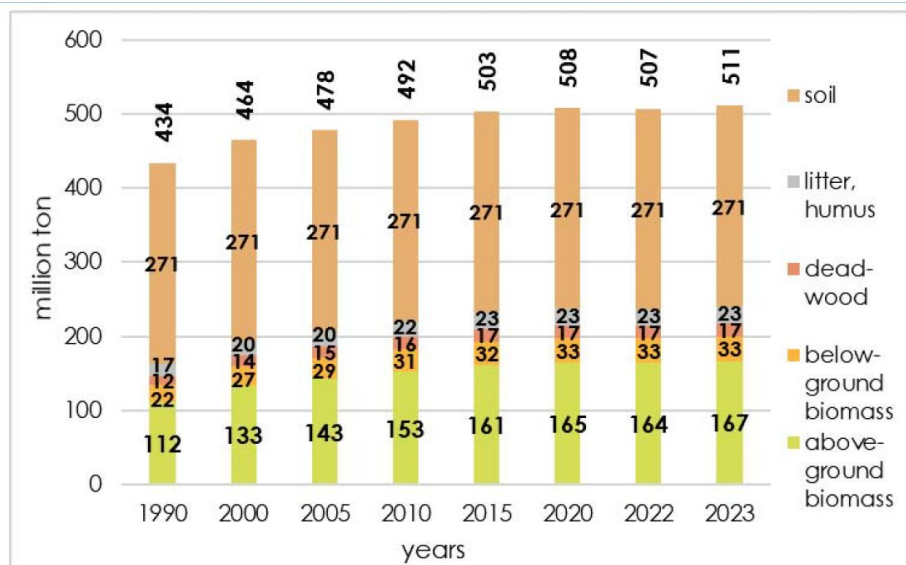


Figure 2.3-6 Trend in carbon stock in the forests of the SR
 Source: NFC, Compendium of Slovak Forestry Statistics SR 1970-2024.

In 2023, carbon stocks in forests in living biomass, necro mass and forest soil reached the value of 511.0 million tonnes (4.0 million tonnes more than in 2022). The largest amount of carbon is stored in soil (270.5 million tonnes) and in aboveground tree biomass (167.0 million tonnes) (Figure 2.3-7). Considering the current trend in the development of the age composition of forests, the current value of the stock of carbon bound in the above-ground biomass can be considered close to the maximum value. Simultaneously with the expected decrease in the stock of wood in the forests, there will also be a decrease in the stock of carbon bound in its individual balance categories.

Indicator: Age and diameter structure: Age and diameter structure of trees in the forest

Information on the age structure of forests is important for knowing the up-to-now development of forests as well as their future (anticipated) state and potential availability of their services.

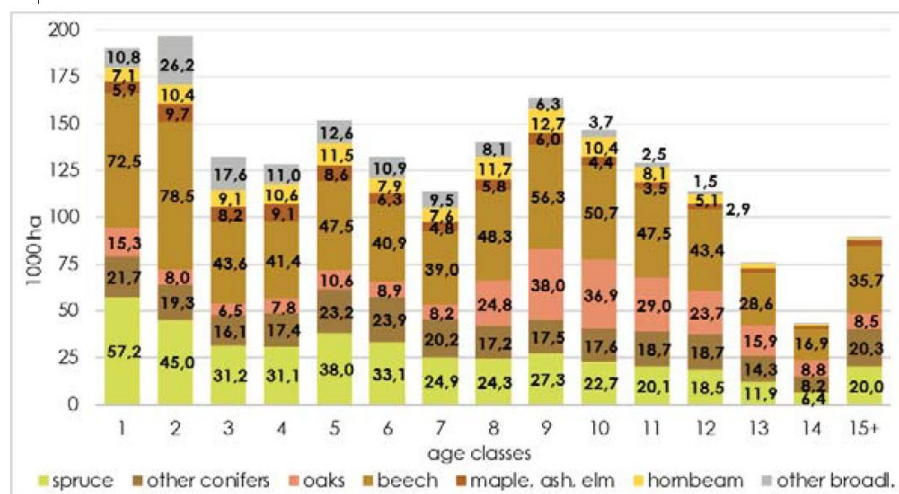


Figure 2.2-2 Forest stand area by age classes and tree species (thousand ha)

Source: NFC, Compendium of Slovak Forestry Statistics SR 1970-2024.

Figure 2.2-3 shows the development of the areas of age classes over the past 50 years (since 1970). As a result of the above-mentioned uneven age structure, there are cyclical changes in the forest production and ecology indicators, particularly growing stock volumes, increments, carbon sequestration in forest ecosystems, the volumes of sustainable timber felling, and the economic stability of forest managers. As a consequence of the current age structure with a higher representation of older "mature" production forests in age classes 9 to 15+, there are also increased opportunities for regeneration felling.

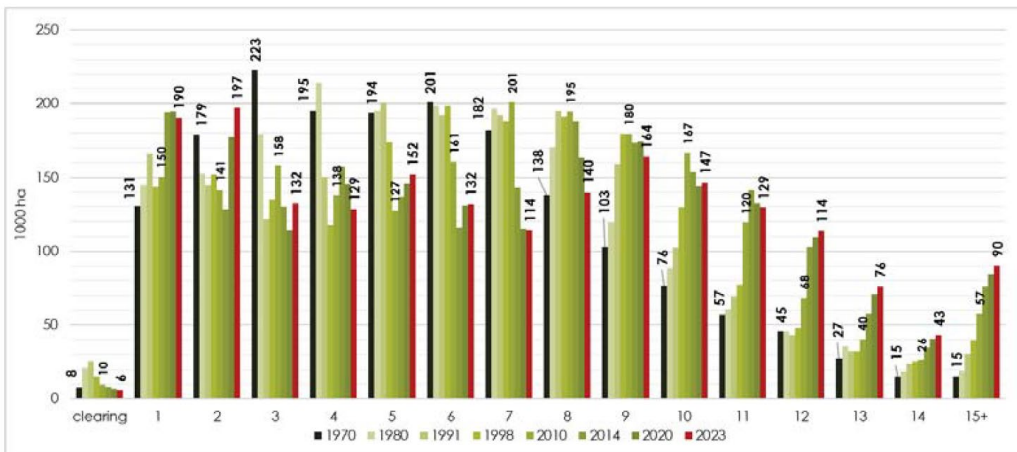
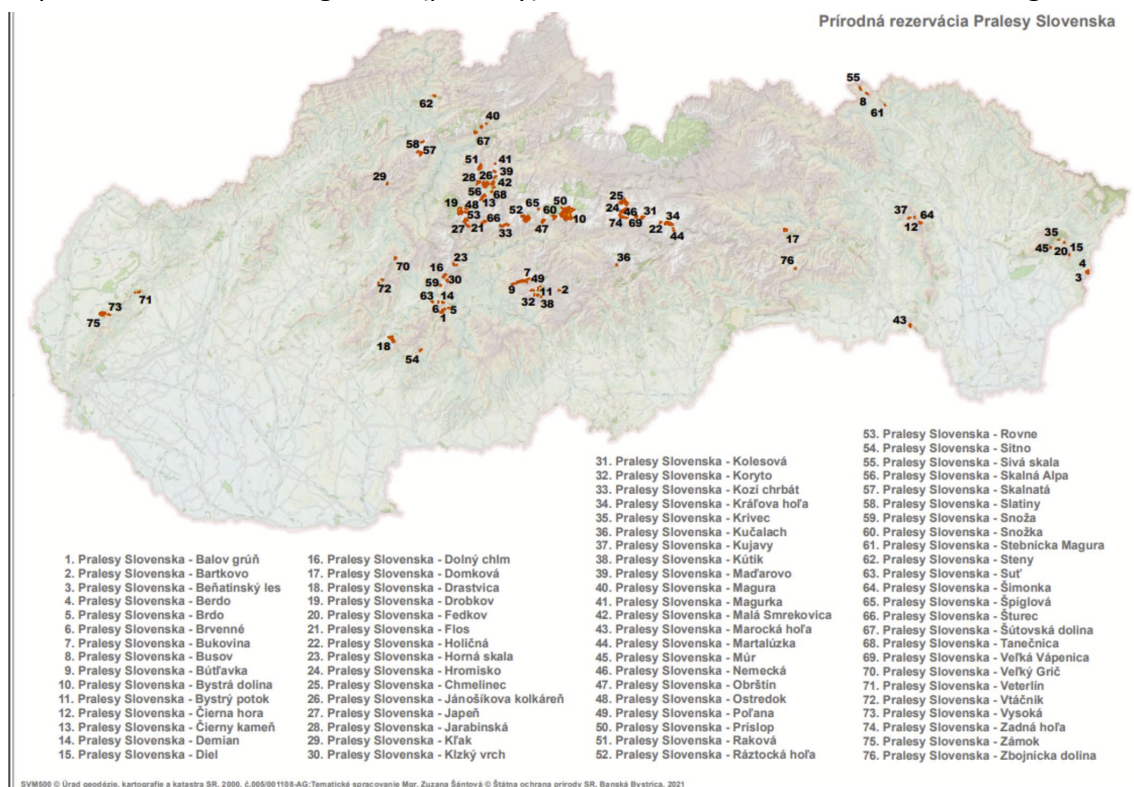


Figure 2.2-3 Forest area of the SR by age classes (thousand ha)
 Source: NFC, Compendium of Slovak Forestry Statistics SR 1970-2024.

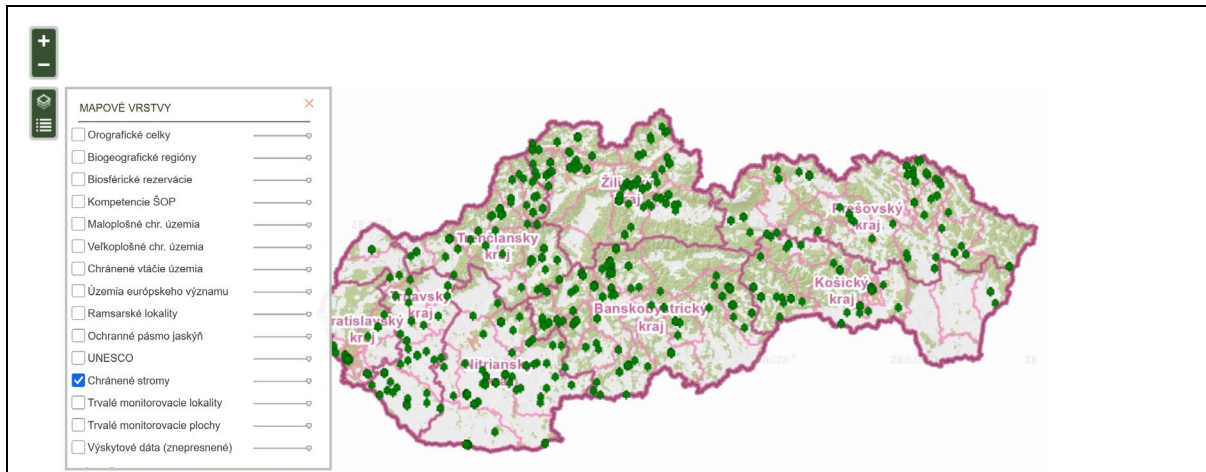
Indicator:

Habitat and biotope trees¹⁴: Number of habitat and biotope trees per hectare

On 1.12.2021 was by government of SR declared ne nature reserve with the highest level of protection called Old growth (primary) forests of Slovakia with 76 areas designated.



In addition, map of protected trees in Slovakia is added:



Indicator 1.-4. Efficiency confirmed

Sources	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Indicator: 1., 2., 3., <i>REPORT ON THE FOREST SECTOR OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC 2023</i> by Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic and National Forest Centre Indicator: 4., <i>State nature protection of SR</i> https://www.sopsr.sk/web/?cl=20835 		
Effectiveness (points):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Category A (20 points)	<input type="checkbox"/> Category B (10 points)	<input type="checkbox"/> Category C (0 points)

4.4. Maintenance of soil quality	
Step 1: Identification of applicable laws	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 220/2004 on the protection and use of agricultural land 2. 188/2003 on the application of sewage sludge and bottom sediments to the soil 3. 136/2000 on fertilizers 4. 518/2003 and 330/1991 on land improvements 5. 543/2002 on nature and landscape protection 6. 245/2003 on integrated pollution prevention and control 7. 184/2002 on water (water law) 8. 223/2001 on waste 9. 44/1988 on the protection and use of mineral wealth (Mining Act) 10. 326/2005 on forests 	
Sources	Slov-Lex – Legislative and Information Portal of the Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic (https://www.slov-lex.sk/web/en) https://uniba.sk/fileadmin/prif/envi/kpe/ochrana_a_vyuzitie_pe_dosfery/ochrana_pody_zakony.pdf https://www.slovensko.sk/sk/zivotne-situacie/zivotna-situacia/ochrana-pody
Were applicable laws identified?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (audit required)
Step 2: Description of enforcement and monitoring	
<p>According to § 20 of Act no. 220/2004 Coll. on the protection and use of agricultural land, as amended (hereinafter referred to as "the Act") the main bodies for implementation of soil protection in Slovakia are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter referred to as "the Ministry"), - District office in the seat of the region, land and forest department - District office, land and forest department <p>Ministry: is the central body for the protection of agricultural land, issues generally binding legal regulations in the field of agricultural land protection.</p> <p>District office in the seat of the region, land and forest department: coordinates cooperation with the land service in the application of this law, processes and submits to the Ministry information on the loss of agricultural land within the territorial district of the region.</p> <p>District office, land and forest department: orders measures to protect agricultural land, decides on changing the type of agricultural land, decides on the confiscation of agricultural land, decides on the arrangement of the type of land, is the concerned authority and gives an opinion from the point of view of the protection of agricultural land in proceedings related to the prevention and remediation of environmental damage to land, deals with offences, imposes fines, controls the fulfilment of the conditions laid down in the decisions,</p>	

cooperates with the land service, monitors and evaluates the loss of agricultural land within its territorial district at annual intervals, agrees and resolves discrepancies with the relevant state administration body in the cadastre section, issues a binding opinion on the withdrawal of agricultural land for its non-agricultural use (i.e. for the purpose of building highways and roads for motor vehicles). The binding opinion is issued by the District Land Office in whose district the agricultural land proposed for non-agricultural use is located.

Professional supervision over the protection of agricultural land, supervision over the observance and application of the provisions of this law is carried out by the authorities of the protection of agricultural land in cooperation with the land service and the Central Agricultural Inspection and Testing Institute.

The authority for the protection of agricultural land is authorized to enter agricultural land for the purpose of checking the implementation of measures when performing professional supervision.

As part of professional supervision, the land service:

- carries out research and monitoring of agricultural land,
- maintains a database of information on agricultural land,
- processes proposals for measures and expert opinions,
- administers and refines the map of certified soil-ecological units systemically as part of a comprehensive revision of the cadastral territory and in the area of the entire cadastral territory.

In addition, Act No. 220/2004 Coll. on the protection and use of agricultural land and on the amendment of Act no. 245/2003 Coll. on the integrated prevention and control of environmental pollution and on the amendment of certain laws as amended establishes:

- protection of the properties and functions of agricultural land and ensuring its sustainable management and agricultural use,
- protection of the environmental functions of agricultural land, which are biomass production, filtration, neutralization and transformation of substances in nature, maintaining the ecological and genetic potential of living organisms in nature,
- protection of the area of agricultural land against unauthorized taking for non-agricultural use,
- the procedure for changing the type of land and the procedure for taking away agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes,
- sanctions for violation of obligations established by this law.

ACT 534/2002 ON NATURE AND LANDSCAPE PROTECTION (Soil Protection in protected areas) defines:

- competence of state administration bodies and municipalities, as well as the rights and obligations of legal entities and natural persons in the protection of nature and landscape
- Part 3 of the law is essential, which is divided into the so-called heads: 1. territorial protection, 2. protection of plants, animals, minerals and fossils, 3. protection of trees, 4. declaring, changing and cancelling the protection of specially protected parts of nature and landscape.

Since the goals of the law include e.g. maintaining the ecological stability of the territory, as well as protection of individual components of ecosystems, these goals also include soil protection.

Title 1 of the Act, which defines the rules of zoning, primarily concerns land protection protection. In this context, the law establishes five levels of territorial protection. Range restrictions on various human activities that could result in damage habitats, increases with increasing degree of protection.

ACT 326/2005 ON FORESTS

Defines:

- delineation of forest lands and their protection,
- ownership of forest land and use of forests,
- professional forest management,
- support of sustainable forest management from public sources
- the scope of the bodies of the state forestry administration and state supervision in forests,
- sanctions for violation of obligations established by this law.

...approximately 41% of the territory of the Slovak Republic consists of forest land

Acts: 364/2004 and 184/2002 and decree 29/2005 about Soil and water protection define obligations/criteria for specific types of land and thus also for the soil that is located on them.

Forest Management Practices for Soil Protection (2023):

Soil Preparation for Regeneration: 6,300 ha — mechanical and biological methods (e.g., mulching, scarification) applied with low-impact equipment to avoid compaction.

Pre-commercial Thinning: 29,300 ha — ensures optimal spacing and reduces nutrient competition.

Weed Control: 23,800 ha — reduces competition for soil moisture and nutrients using mechanical or selective biological methods, avoiding overreliance on herbicides.

Protection Against Game Damage: 29,200 ha — game overpopulation can severely disturb soil structure by trampling and browsing young plants, so measures include fencing and game regulation.

Additional Measures:

Harvesting systems (e.g., cable extraction) are adapted to slope and soil conditions to avoid erosion.

Biomass extraction guidelines limit removal of low-diameter material in nutrient-poor soils.

Monitoring of soil condition (pH, organic content, compaction) is conducted as part of national forest inventory and long-term ecological research (LTER) plots.

Environmental Considerations:

Forest operations in sensitive sites (e.g., shallow or erosive soils) are restricted under forest management plans.

Reforestation is prioritized with native and site-adapted species to restore soil cover rapidly.

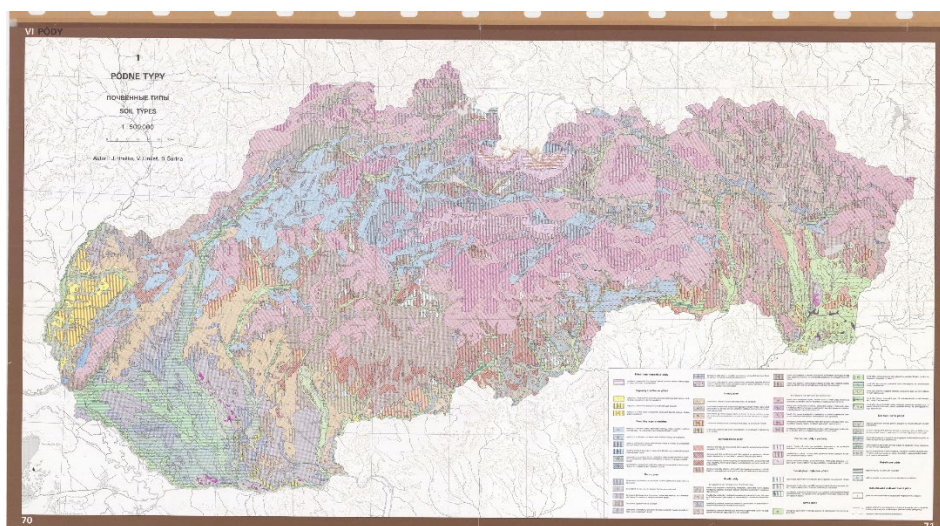
Sources

<https://www.slovensko.sk/sk/agendy/agenda/organy-ochrany-polnohospodarsk>
https://uniba.sk/fileadmin/prif/envi/kpe/ochrana_a_vyuzitie_pe_dosfery/ochrana_pody_zakony.pdf

	https://www.mpsr.sk/?navID=47&slD=23&navID2=21 https://www.minzp.sk/ochrana-prirody/ REPORT ON THE FOREST SECTOR OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC 2023 by Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic and National Forest Centre
Are enforcement and monitoring ensured for the identified laws?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (audit required)
Degree of compliance of the criterion “maintenance of soil quality”	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirements fulfilled <input type="checkbox"/> Requirements not fulfilled	

Step 3: Evaluation of the effectiveness of the legal framework for the maintenance of soil quality

1 indicator: Soil condition survey



In the Slovak Republic, soil condition surveys, including the development of soil condition in forests, are conducted through monitoring systems like the Partial Monitoring System - Forests (PMS-F), which is managed by the National Forest Centre – Forest Research Institute. These surveys assess the state and trends of forest soil properties, providing data on various aspects like soil acidification, erosion, and organic matter content.

Partial Monitoring System - Forests (PMS-F):

This system, managed by the National Forest Centre – Forest Research Institute, is a key tool for assessing the condition of forest soils in Slovakia. Soil Condition Assessment: The surveys monitor various aspects of soil condition, including: Acidification: Anthropogenic factors like acidic fertilizers and atmospheric pollutants contribute to soil acidification. Erosion: Significant areas in Slovakia, particularly in hilly and mountainous regions, are susceptible to soil erosion. Organic Matter Content: Decline in soil organic matter is a concern, indicating potential soil degradation. Physical Properties: Compaction and erosion are noted as major physical changes in soil.

Data Reporting:

Data collected through the monitoring system is reported to international organizations like the Joint Research Centre (JRC) in Ispra (Italy) and the European Environmental Agency (EEA) in Copenhagen (Denmark)

2 Indicator: Soil condition maps, statistical data or other reliable findings are available for the assessment area, which indicate that monitoring of soil quality is effective and that management practices have been adapted accordingly.

The Geochemical atlas of the Slovak Republic, at a scale of 1:1,000,000. was started in 1991. The primary reference network soils are 10km² grid cells distributed over all country. In these cells, the soil samples were taken at random. Within this project, agricultural and forest soils were sampled over all territory (1 sample/10km²) from the A and C horizons. At each site 3-5 sub samples were collected and one composite sample was prepared for each horizon. The samples were prepared by dry sieving. The fraction <0.125mm was then used for chemical analysis and the fraction <2mm was used for the soil analysis. The assemblage of 36 elements: Al, As, B, Ba, Be, Bi, Ca, Cd, Ce, Co, Cr, Cs, Cu, F, Fe, Ga, Hg, La, K, Li, Mg, Mn, Mo, Na, Ni, P, Pb, Rb, Sb, Se, Sn, Sr, V, W, Y and Zn, was analysed. This project is finished and the results have been published (Čurlík and Šefčík: Geochemical atlas of Slovak Republic, Part V - Soil, 1999). To elaborate this atlas the Soil Science and Conservation Research Institute was mandated. The atlas should be helpful at creation an integrated view on spatial chemical element distribution , geogenic and anthropogenic conditioned enhanced concentrations, including the risk elements remote transport into the soils.

Geochemical Atlas of Soils is elaborated based on the results of chemical analyses from 5 200 soil profiles in all the territory of Slovakia.

The application show and present trace 36 elements distribution (Sb, As, Ba, Be, Bi, B, Ce, Cs, Sn, K, F, P, Ga,Al, Mg, Cr, Cd, Co, La, Li, Mn, Cu, Mo, Ni, Pb, Hg, Rb, Se, Na, Sr, V, Ca, W, Y, Zn a Fe) and the variability of soil properties (carbonate content, pH/H₂O, pH/KCl and soil granularity) in surface humus-rich soil horizons (horizon A) and in substratum (horizon C) –throughout the Slovakia.

Slovakia's legal and technical forest management framework provides robust safeguards for maintaining soil health, avoiding nutrient depletion, compaction, and erosion, thereby supporting forest productivity and biodiversity.

Indicator 1. And 2. Efficiency confirmed

Sources	<p>Indicator 1:</p> <p>https://www.enviroportal.sk/uploads/report/2010-1-4-soil.pdf</p> <p>https://www.researchgate.net/publication/281942604 Permanent soil monitoring system as a basic tool for protection of soils and sustainable land use in Slovakia</p> <p>https://www.enviroportal.sk/sprava/11841</p> <p>Indicator 2:</p> <p>https://www.geology.sk/maps-and-data/mapovy-</p>
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	<p>portal/atlases/geochemical-atlas-of-the-slovak-republic-part-v-soils/?lang=en</p> <p>https://app.geology.sk/atlaspody/</p> <p>(Čurlík and Šefčík: <i>Geochemical atlas of Slovak Republic, Part V - Soil</i>, 1999)</p> <p>Linkeš, V. et al. (1997). <i>Monitoring pôd SR. Súčasný stav monitorovaných pôd (Soil monitoring in Slovakia. Present status of monitored soils)</i>. SFRI Bratislava, 128pp</p>		
Effectiveness (points):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Category A (20 points)	<input type="checkbox"/> Category B (10 points)	<input type="checkbox"/> Category C (0 points)

4.5. Regulations for protected areas

Step 1: Identification of applicable laws

1. Act of the NR SR no. 543/2002 Coll. on nature and landscape protection, as amended Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 170/2021 Coll., implementing Act No. 543/2002 Coll. on nature and landscape protection, as amended
2. Act of the NR SR no. 15/2005 Coll. on the protection of species of wild animals and wild plants by regulating trade with them and on the amendment of certain laws as amended
3. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 110/2005 Coll., which implements some provisions of the Act on the Protection of Species of Wild Animals and Wild Plants by Regulating Trade with Them and on Amendments to Certain Acts, as amended
4. Act of the NR SR no. 150/2019 Coll. on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive non-native species and on the amendment of certain laws
5. Act of the NR SR no. 237/2002 Coll. on trade in endangered species of wild animals and wild plants and on amendments to certain laws as amended
6. Act of the NR SR no. 216/2018 Coll. on fishing and on amendments to Act no. 455/1991 Coll. on trade entrepreneurship (Trade Act) as amended
7. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic No. 381/2018 Coll., implementing Act No. 216/2018 Coll. on fishing and on amendments to Act no. 455/1991 Coll. on trade entrepreneurship (Trade Act) as amended
8. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 383/2018 Coll. on the technical conditions of the design of fish channels and the monitoring of the migratory permeability of fish channels
9. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 83/1993 Coll. on state nature reserves as amended
10. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 293/1996 Coll., which publishes the list of protected areas and natural monuments and declares them national natural monuments in the Slovak Republic
11. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 292/2001 Coll., declaring national natural monuments
12. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 17/2003 Coll., which establishes national nature reserves and publishes the list of nature reserves in the wording of Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 420/2003 Coll.
13. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 450/2019 Coll., establishing the conditions and methods of removing invasive non-native species
14. Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 449/2019 Coll., issuing a list of invasive non-native species of concern to the Slovak Republic
15. Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 199/2005 Coll. on protective measures against the introduction and spread of organisms harmful to

plants or plant products, as amended

16. Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 438/2005 Coll. on the details of the content of the request for payment of compensation for the limitation of normal management of the land and on the method of calculating the compensation
17. Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 23/2009 Coll., establishing requirements for the protection of animals used for experimental purposes or for other scientific purposes
18. Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 58/2003 Coll., declaring the Tatra National Park
19. Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 140/2002 Coll., declaring the Veľká Fatra National Park
20. Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 101/2002 Coll., declaring the Slovak Karst National Park (editorial notice on correcting errors published in part 135/2004)
21. Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 278/2022 Coll., declaring the Muránska Planina National Park, its zones and protection zone
22. Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 258/1997 Coll., declaring the Poloniny National Park
23. Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 182/1997 Coll. about the Low Tatras National Park
24. Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 47/1997 Coll. on the Pieniny National Park as amended by SR Government Regulation No. 335/2004 Coll.
25. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 319/2004 Coll., establishing the zones of the Pieniny National Park
26. Decree of the SSR Government No. 24/1988 Coll. on Malá Fatra National Park as amended by Act No. 287/1994 Coll.
27. Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 69/2016 Coll., declaring the Slovak Paradise National Park, its zones and protection zone
28. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 122/2004 Coll. about the Latorica Protected Landscape Area
29. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 420/2003 Coll., establishing the territory of the Protected Landscape Area of Horná Orava and its zone
30. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 396/2003 Coll. on the Protected Landscape Area of the White Carpathians
31. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 530/2001 Coll. about the Eastern Carpathian Protected Landscape Area
32. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 433/2001 Coll. about the Cerová vrchovina protected landscape area
33. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 431/2001 Coll. about the Protected Landscape Area of Poľana
34. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 138/2001 Coll. on the Protected Landscape Area of the Lesser Carpathians

35. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 111/1999 Coll., by which the territory of Vihorlat is established as a protected landscape area
36. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 81/1998 Coll. on the Dunajské Luhy Protected Landscape Area
37. Decree of the Ministry of Culture of the SSR no. 14/1989 Coll. on the protected landscape area Strážovské vrchy as amended by Act No. 287/1994 Coll.
38. Decree of the Ministry of Culture of the SSR no. 220/1988 Coll. on the protected landscape area of Záhorie as amended by Act No. 287/1994 Coll.
39. Decree of the Ministry of Culture of the SSR no. 58/1985 Coll., which declares the protected landscape area of Ponitrije as amended by Act NR SR no. 287/1994 Coll.
40. Decree of the Ministry of Culture of the SSR no. 68/1984 Coll., which declares the protected landscape area of Kysuce as amended by the Act of the Republic of Slovakia No. 287/1994 Coll.
41. Decree of the Ministry of Culture of the SSR no. 124/1979 Coll., which declares the protected landscape area Štiavnické vrchy in the wording of Act NR SR no. 287/1994 Coll.
42. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 173/2005 Coll., declaring the Horná Orava Protected Bird Area
43. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 216/2005 Coll., which declares the Small Carpathian Protected Bird Area
44. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 377/2005 Coll., declaring the Protected Bird Area of Lehnice
45. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 234/2006 Coll., declaring the Protected Bird Area Sys'ovské polya
46. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 593/2006 Coll., declaring the Dolné Považie Protected Bird Area
47. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 17/2008 Coll., declaring the Tribeč Protected Bird Area
48. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 18/2008 Coll., declaring the Ostrovné luky Protected Bird Area
49. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 19/2008 Coll., declaring the Protected Bird Area Ondavská rovina
50. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 20/2008 Coll., declaring the Poiplia Protected Bird Area
51. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 21/2008 Coll., declaring the Kráľová Protected Bird Area
52. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 22/2008 Coll., declaring the Košická Kotlina Protected Bird Area
53. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 23/2008 Coll., which declares the Protected Bird Area Paris Marshes
54. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 24/2008 Coll., declaring the Poľana Protected Bird Area
55. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 25/2008 Coll., which declares the Protected Bird Area Bukovske vrchy

56. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 26/2008 Coll., declaring the Medzibodrožie Protected Bird Area
57. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 27/2008 Coll., declaring the Dolné Pohronie Protected Bird Area
58. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 30/2008 Coll., which declares the Protected Bird Area Cerová vrchovina - Porimavie
59. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 31/2008 Coll., declaring the Protected Bird Area Žitavský luh
60. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 32/2008 Coll., declaring the Sĺňava Protected Bird Area
61. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 437/2008 Coll., which declares the Protected Bird Area Úľanská wetland
62. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 440/2008 Coll., which declares the Dunajské Luhy Protected Bird Area, as amended by the Ministry of the Environment Decree No. 466/2013 Coll.
63. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 434/2009 Coll., declaring the Protected Bird Area Strážovské vrchy
64. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 435/2009 Coll., which declares the Dubnické štrkovisko Protected Bird Area
65. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 436/2009 Coll., declaring the Senianske rybníky Protected Bird Area
66. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 438/2009 Coll., which declares the Laborecká vrchovina Protected Bird Area
67. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 439/2009 Coll., declaring the Protected Bird Area Muránska planina - Stolica
68. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 187/2010 Coll., which declares the Veľkoblakovské rybníky Protected Bird Area
69. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 189/2010 Coll., declaring the Low Tatras Protected Bird Area
70. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 192/2010 Coll., declaring the Slovak Karst Protected Bird Area
71. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 193/2010 Coll., declaring the Slanské vrchy Protected Bird Area
72. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 194/2010 Coll., declaring the Veľká Fatra Protected Bird Area
73. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 195/2010 Coll., declaring the Protected Bird Area Vihorlatské vrchy
74. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 196/2010 Coll., declaring the Volovské vrchy Protected Bird Area
75. Regulation of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 145/2015 declaring the Protected Bird Area Záhorské Pomerania
76. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 2/2011 Coll., declaring the Malá Fatra Protected Bird Area
77. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 3/2011 Coll.,

<p>declaring the Protected Bird Area Slovak Paradise</p> <p>78. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 4/2011 Coll., declaring the Tatra Protected Bird Area</p> <p>79. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 26/2011 Coll., declaring the Chočské vrchy Protected Bird Area</p> <p>80. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 27/2011 Coll., which declares the Protected Bird Area of Špačinsko-Nižnianske Polia</p> <p>81. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 28/2011 Coll., declaring the Čergov Protected Bird Area</p> <p>82. Decree of the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic no. 434/2012 Coll., declaring the Levočské vrchy Protected Bird Area</p>	
Sources	<p>1.-82. Slov-Lex – Legislative and Information Portal of the Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic (https://www.slov-lex.sk/web/en)</p> <p>1-82. https://www.enviroportal.sk/environmentalne-temy/zlozky-zp/rastlinstvo-a-zivocisstvo/pravne-predpisy-sr</p> <p>https://www.sopsr.sk/web/?cl=114</p> <p>https://www.sopsr.sk/natura/</p>
Were applicable laws identified?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (audit required)
Step 2: Description of enforcement and monitoring	
<p>Nature protection authorities</p> <p>According to Act NR SR no. 543/2002 Coll. on nature and landscape protection, anyone who intends to intervene in a biotope of European importance or a biotope of national importance in a way that can damage or destroy the biotope, is obliged to request the consent of the nature protection authority. If the intervention results in damage or destruction of a biotope of European importance or a biotope of national importance, the applicant is obliged to carry out adequate replacement revitalization measures resulting mainly from the nature and landscape protection documentation; this obligation does not apply if it concerns the normal management of agricultural crops or forest crops. If replacement revitalization measures cannot be carried out, he is obliged to pay financial compensation up to the social value of the affected biotope (§ 95). The financial compensation is the income of the Environmental Fund (§ 6 (1)).</p> <p>According to Act no. 543/2002 Coll. perform state administration in matters of nature and landscape protection:</p> <p>1. Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic (Ministerstvo životného prostredia SR)</p> <p>Role: Serves as the central authority for environmental policy, including nature and landscape protection, waste management, water resources, and flood protection.</p> <p>Functions: Develops legislation, oversees national environmental strategies, and coordinates with subordinate agencies. Website: www.minzp.sk</p>	

2. Slovak Environmental Inspectorate (Slovenská inšpekcia životného prostredia – SIŽP)

Role: Acts as the main supervisory body for enforcing environmental laws and regulations. Functions: Conducts inspections, imposes fines, and oversees compliance in areas like waste management, air and water protection, and nature conservation.

Website: www.sizp.sk

The Slovak Environmental Inspection (SIŽP), which was established in 1991, is the main professional control and administrative body through which the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic carries out state supervision in matters of environmental care.

According to § 9 par. 1 of Act no. 525/2003 Coll. on the state environmental care administration SIŽP:

- carries out state supervision in matters of environmental care to the extent and under the conditions established by special regulations,
- imposes fines in matters of environmental care,
- performs local state administration in the area of integrated prevention and control of environmental pollution according to a special regulation,
- performs other activities in matters of environmental care within the scope of special regulations,
- performs the activities of the control body according to special regulations,
- carries out state supervision in matters of achieving the goals of the state environmental policy at the national level and at the regional level through actions for which support was provided from the Environmental Fund.

SIŽP controls compliance with legal regulations in 6 sections - the section for water protection, air protection, waste management, nature and landscape protection and regulation of trade in CITES specimens, biological safety and the section for integrated permitting and control. The control activity of the SIŽP is focused on compliance with the obligations arising from the current legislation of the Slovak Republic in the field of the environment, including transposed EU directives as well as individual EU regulations.

State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic (Štátna ochrana prírody SR – ŠOP SR)

Role: Serves as the central expert institution for nature and landscape conservation.

Functions: Manages national parks and protected areas, conducts biodiversity research, and implements conservation projects. Website: www.sopsr.sk

Slovak Environment Agency (Slovenská agentúra životného prostredia – SAŽP)

Role: Provides technical support and expertise in environmental protection.

Functions: Develops environmental policies, conducts assessments, and supports sustainable development initiatives.

Website: www.sazp.sk

Slovak Museum of Nature Protection and Speleology (Slovenské múzeum ochrany prírody a jaskyniarstva)

Role: Manages the State Inventory of Specially Protected Parts of Nature and Landscape.

Functions: Maintains official records of protected areas, trees, and caves, and provides public education on nature conservation.

Website: www.smopaj.sk

National Park Administrations

Monitoring and protecting flora and fauna

Regulating tourism and public access
 Working with landowners and foresters
 Managing buffer zones and ecological connectivity

Implementing conservation projects and education.

1. Tatra National Park (TANAP)

Established: 1949

Location: Northern Slovakia (Prešov Region)

Area: ~74,000 ha (core) + ~31,000 ha (buffer zone)

Administration: Tatranská Lomnica

Responsibilities:

Protection of alpine and subalpine ecosystems

Conservation of endemic and glacial relict species

Management of tourism and hiking infrastructure (e.g. High Tatras)

2. Low Tatras National Park (NAPANT)

Established: 1978

Location: Central Slovakia (Banská Bystrica, Žilina)

Area: ~72,800 ha + ~110,000 ha buffer zone

Administration: Banská Bystrica

Responsibilities:

Forest ecosystem protection

Habitat management for large carnivores (bear, lynx, wolf)

Sustainable forestry coordination

3. Slovak Paradise National Park (NP Slovenský raj)

Established: 1988

Location: Eastern Slovakia (Košice Region)

Area: ~19,763 ha + ~13,011 ha buffer zone

Administration: Spišská Nová Ves

Responsibilities:

Protection of karst terrain, gorges, caves, and waterfalls

Management of sensitive habitats (moss-rich canyons, glacial relicts)

Tourism regulation (via ferratas, trails, ladders)

4. Pieniny National Park (PIENAP)

Established: 1967

Location: Northern Slovakia (Prešov Region)

Area: ~3,750 ha + ~22,000 ha buffer zone

Administration: Červený Kláštor

Responsibilities:

Management of transboundary ecosystem (with Poland)

Conservation of the Dunajec River Gorge

Cultural landscape maintenance (traditional meadows)

5. Muránska Planina National Park

Established: 1997

Location: Central-Southern Slovakia (Banská Bystrica)

Area: ~21,318 ha + ~20,000 ha buffer zone

Administration: Revúca

Responsibilities:

Plateau karst conservation

Management of forest and cave ecosystems

Species conservation (wild horses, owls)

6. Veľká Fatra National Park

Established: 2002

Location: Central Slovakia (Žilina, Banská Bystrica)

Area: ~40,371 ha + ~26,000 ha buffer zone

Administration: Martin

Responsibilities:

Protection of primeval beech forests

Management of traditional pastoral landscapes

Wildlife corridors for large mammals

7. Malá Fatra National Park

Established: 1988

Location: Northwestern Slovakia (Žilina Region)

Area: ~22,630 ha + ~23,000 ha buffer zone

Administration: Varín

Responsibilities:

Conservation of karst and forest landscapes

Protection of endangered species (e.g. golden eagle)

Coordination with tourism and ski resorts

8. Poloniny National Park

Established: 1997

Location: Far Eastern Slovakia (Snina District)

Area: ~29,805 ha + ~10,973 ha buffer zone

Administration: Stakčín

Responsibilities:

Protection of primeval beech forests (UNESCO World Heritage)

Management of Slovakia's most biodiverse region

Transboundary cooperation with Ukraine and Poland

Sources	https://www.enviroportal.sk/environmentalne-temy/starostlivost-o-zp https://www.enviroportal.sk/spravy/detail/10547 https://www.enviroportal.sk/agendy/verejna-sprava/organy-ochrany-prirody
Are enforcement and monitoring ensured for the identified laws?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (audit required)

Degree of compliance of the criterion “regulations for protected areas”

Requirements fulfilled

Requirements not fulfilled

Step 3: Evaluation of the effectiveness of the legal framework for regulation of protected areas

Indicator 1: protected areas have been designated

National system of protected areas

National parks and protected landscape areas are referred to as large-scale protected areas (VCHÚ). Protected areas, nature reserves, national nature reserves, natural monuments, national natural monuments, natural parks and protected landscape elements are referred to as small-area protected areas (MCHÚ). All these protected areas form the national system of protected areas, divided into the following categories:

A protected landscape area (PLA) is a larger area, usually with an area of more than 1,000 ha, with scattered ecosystems, important for the preservation of biological diversity and ecological stability, with a characteristic appearance of the landscape or with specific forms of historical settlement. It can be declared by the Government of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter referred to as the "Government") by regulation, and in its territory, the second level of protection applies, unless the law provides otherwise (for example, by declaring a zoning or MCHÚ on the territory of the PLA). As of 31 December 2024, 14 PLAs have been declared.

A national park (NP) is a larger territory, usually with an area of more than 10,000 ha, predominantly with ecosystems substantially unchanged by human activity or in a unique and natural landscape structure, forming the most significant natural heritage, in which nature conservation is superior to other activities. It can be declared by the government by regulation, and the third degree of protection applies to its territory, unless otherwise provided by law. As of December 31, 2024, 9 NPs have been announced.

A nature park is a larger territory, usually with an area of more than 500 ha, mainly with ecosystems changed by human activity, which form biocentres of supra-regional importance or which are important for ensuring the favourable status of biotopes of European importance, biotopes of national importance, biotopes of species of European importance or biotopes of species of national importance. It can be declared by the government, and the second or third level of protection applies to its territory, unless otherwise provided by law. In this new category (as of 2020), no protected area has yet been declared.

A protected area (CHA) is a location, usually with an area of up to 500 ha, on which there are biotopes of European importance or biotopes of national importance, or which is the habitat of a species of European importance or the biotope of a species of national importance and where the favourable condition of these biotopes depends on human management. It can be declared by the government by regulation, and the second, third, fourth or fifth level of protection applies to its territory. As of 12/31/2021, 191 CHAs have been announced (including 1 private one).

A nature reserve (PR) is a location, usually with an area of up to 1,000 ha, which represents original or little-altered by human activity biotopes of European or biotopes of national importance or biotopes of European species or biotopes of national importance. It can be declared by the government by regulation, and the fourth or fifth level of protection applies to its territory. A nature reserve, usually representing a supra-regional biocentre as part of the most important natural heritage of the state, can be declared by the government as a

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national nature reserve (NPR). As of 12/31/2021, 421 PRs have been announced (including 3 private and 160 NPR).

A natural monument (PP) is a point, linear or other small-scale ecosystem, its components or elements, usually with an area of up to 50 ha, which have scientific, cultural, ecological, aesthetic or landscape significance. It can be declared by the government by regulation, and the fourth or fifth level of protection applies to its territory. A unique natural monument, which is part of the most important natural heritage of the state, can be declared by the government as a national natural monument (NPP). As of 31/12/2024, 276 PP and 60 NPP have been announced.

A protected landscape element (CHKP) is an important landscape element that fulfils the function of a biocentre, biocorridor or interaction element of local or regional importance. It can be declared by the government by regulation, and the second, third, fourth or fifth level of protection applies in its territory. As of December 31, 2024, 1 CHPK has been announced.

Municipal protected area (OCHÚ) is a locality, usually with an area of up to 100 ha, with cultural, scientific, ecological, aesthetic or landscape significance. It can be declared by the municipality by means of a generally binding regulation, in which the conditions for its protection are stated. As of 31 December 2024, 13 protected areas have been declared.

Protection zones of protected areas

If the interest of protecting a national park, protected area, nature reserve, national nature reserve, natural monument or national natural monument requires it, their protection zone can be declared in the same way as the corresponding protected area is declared according to the law. On the territory of the protective zone of the protected area with the third level of protection, the second level of protection applies, on the territory of the protective zone of the protected area with the fourth level of protection, the third level of protection applies, and on the territory of the protective zone of the protected area with the fifth level of protection, the fourth level of protection applies.

If the protection zone of the nature reserve or the protection zone of the national nature reserve has not been declared separately, it is the territory up to 100 m outward from its border and the third level of protection applies in it. If the protection zone of the natural monument or the protection zone of the national natural monument has not been separately declared, it is the territory up to 60 m outward from its border and the third level of protection applies in it, this provision does not apply if it is a cave protection zone and a natural waterfall protection zone .

If the protection zone of a nature reserve, the protection zone of a natural monument, the protection zone of a national nature reserve or the protection zone of a national natural monument has not been separately declared and if it is not in the interest of such a protected area to have a protection zone, it may be established in the declaration regulation that the protected area does not have no buffer zone.

As of December 31, 2024, a protective zone has been declared for all 9 national parks and 73 small-area protected areas. The legal protection zones up to 100 m has established 474 NPR and PR, and the legal protection zone up to a distance of 60 m has established 207 NPP and PP. No protection zone has 374 MCHÚ.

Zones of protected areas

VCHÚ and MCHÚ may be divided into a maximum of four zones based on the state of the biotopes, if this is necessary to ensure its care. The importance of dividing the protected area into zones lies in the differentiation of protection and its adaptation to the nature of the natural values of the protected area. As a rule, zones are defined as integral parts of the protected area according to the nature of the natural values in them, the originality of the

ecosystems, the degree of intervention by human activity and the use of the territory by man, so that the fifth level of protection is determined in zone A, the fourth level of protection in zone B, the third level of protection in zone C and the second level of protection in zone D. Zones can also be divided into sub-zones, if within the zone there are parts of the protected area with different methods of care or protection objectives. The zoning of a protected area can be declared by a generally binding regulation by the authority that is competent to declare a given protected area.

Small-scale protected areas that become part of declared PLA or NP zones are always cancelled. This simplifies and unifies the protection system of individual PLAs and NPs. Until December 31, 2024, the zoning of three VCHÚ was announced - the Horná Orava Protected Landscape Area, the Pieniny National Park and the Slovak Paradise National Park, NP Muránska planina, NP Veľká Fatra a NP Slovenský kras. Zoning was also announced for 40 MCHÚ.

Private protected areas

The owner of such land that meets the conditions set out in this Act for a protected area, nature reserve or natural monument and has not yet been declared protected may, on the basis of a submitted protection project, request the district office in the seat of the region to declare a private protected area, private nature reserve or private natural monument (hereinafter referred to as the "private protected area"). If the land meets the conditions for declaring territorial protection, the district office in the seat of the region shall declare it a private protected area by a decree, which shall also establish the level of protection of the private protected area and details of the territorial protection of the private protected area and its protection zone, including their territorial and time period of validity.

By 31. 12. 2024, 4 private protected areas were declared - 3 nature reserves (Vlčia, Rysia, Roháčia) and 1 protected area (Langáčske skaly).

Caves and natural waterfalls

A special group of protected areas are caves and natural waterfalls. According to the law, a cave is a hollow underground space in the earth's crust that is accessible to humans and created by natural processes, the length or depth of which exceeds 2 m and the dimensions of the surface opening are smaller than its length or depth. A natural waterfall, according to the law, is a natural rock formation through which a watercourse falls from a height of more than 3 m under the influence of natural forces without human intervention or flows through a continuous or cascading rock slope steeper than 75° and the water in the bed persists throughout the year. All caves and natural waterfalls that meet the above definitions are, according to the law, natural monuments (PP). A unique cave or natural waterfall that represents part of the most significant natural heritage of the state can be declared a national natural monument (NPP). Caves and natural waterfalls and their protection zones are not subject to protection levels, but to special protection conditions specified in Section 24 of the Act.

As of 31 December 2023, there were 7,940 caves and over 200 waterfalls registered in Slovakia, which are natural monuments based on the above criteria. Of these, 44 caves and 5 natural waterfalls were specifically declared national natural monuments. A total of 22 caves have declared protection zones. 13 caves operated by the Slovak Caves Administration

and 4 caves operated by other entities are accessible with a guide. Another 54 caves are freely accessible to the public.

The European Natura 2000 network of protected areas in the Slovak Republic

By joining the European Union on 1 May 2004, the Slovak Republic joined the community of states, which is built on the foundations of a common internal and foreign policy. Common rules and standards are binding on all EU Member States and are superior to their individual national laws. The European Union thus acts towards the rest of the world as a single entity.

According to the law, the European Natura 2000 network of protected areas is a coherent European ecological system consisting of sites with habitats of European importance, habitats of species of European importance and habitats of migratory species, the aim of which is to enable the maintenance and, if necessary, restoration of the favourable status of these habitats and species in their natural range. In the territory of the Slovak Republic, the European network of protected areas consists of protected bird areas and areas of European importance.

A system of protected bird areas (in European legislation these areas are called Special Protected Areas, SPAs), which has been created since 1979 on the basis of Council Directive No. 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds (the so-called Birds Directive), which was replaced by Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds.

According to the law, a protected bird area (SPA) represents the habitats of migratory bird species, in particular their nesting, moulting and wintering areas, as well as resting places on their migration routes and habitats of bird species of European importance. In order to ensure their survival and reproduction, the government may declare it by regulation, which shall also establish a list of activities that are prohibited in the SPA, including their territorial and temporal restrictions.

Currently, there are 41 declared SPAs, covering an area of 1,284,806 ha, which represents 26.20% of the area of the Slovak Republic, with a large part of the area overlapping with other protected areas.

A system of areas of European importance (in European legislation referred to as Special Areas of Conservation, SACs), which has been created since 1992 on the basis of Council Directive No. 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the so-called Habitats Directive).

According to the law, a territory of European importance (ÚEV) is understood to be a territory in the Slovak Republic consisting of one or more localities,

where habitats of European importance or species of European importance are located, for the protection of which protected areas are declared, which are included in the national list of these localities procured by the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic and negotiated with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic.

The National List of IUCNs was established by the Government Regulation of the Slovak Republic No. 451/2023 Coll. and contains 644 IUCNs. A large part of the area of IUCNs overlaps with the protected areas of the national system.

Areas of international importance

According to the law, an area of international importance is understood to be a site to which obligations and recommendations in the field of nature and landscape protection apply, which for the Slovak Republic result from international treaties by which it is bound, from membership in international organizations and from international programs to which the Slovak Republic has acceded. Areas of international importance currently consist of wetlands of international importance (14 so-called Ramsar sites), UNESCO World Heritage sites (2 nominations with multiple sites), biosphere reserves (4 sites) and sites with the Council of Europe Diploma (2 sites). They may also include other internationally important areas recorded in lists maintained by the competent authorities established on the basis of international treaties by which the Slovak Republic is bound, authorities of international organisations of which the Slovak Republic is a member, or authorities of international programmes to which the Slovak Republic has acceded.

If this is required for the fulfilment of commitments and recommendations, an area of international importance shall be declared a protected area under this Act with a level of protection, the application of which shall ensure the protection of the area of international importance in accordance with these commitments and recommendations. All areas of international importance in Slovakia are currently part of one of the national categories of protected areas.

Sources	https://www.sopsr.sk/web/?cl=114		
Effectiveness (points):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Category A (20 points)	<input type="checkbox"/> Category B (10 points)	<input type="checkbox"/> Category C (0 points)

million tonnes) (Figure 2.3-7). Considering the current trend in the development of the age composition of forests, the current value of the stock of carbon bound in the above-ground biomass can be considered close to the maximum value. Simultaneously with the expected decrease in the stock of wood in the forests, there will also be a decrease in the stock of carbon bound in its individual balance categories.

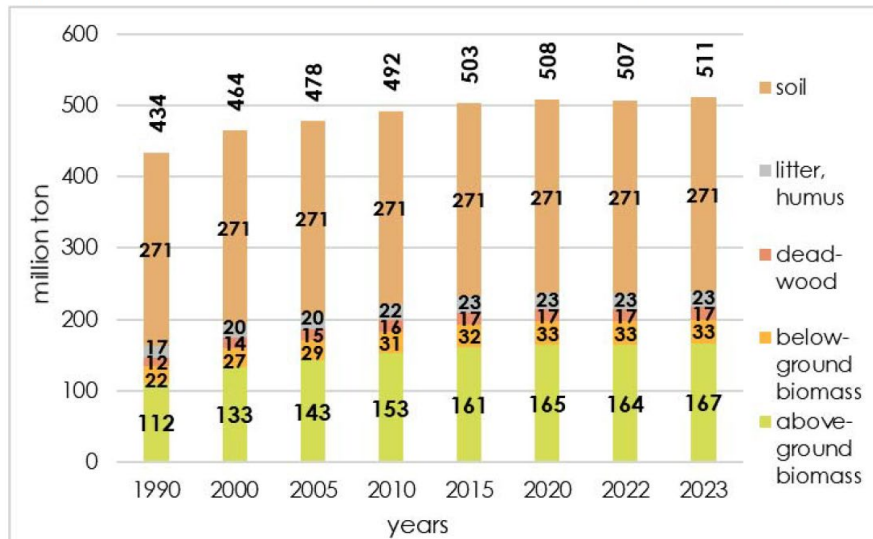
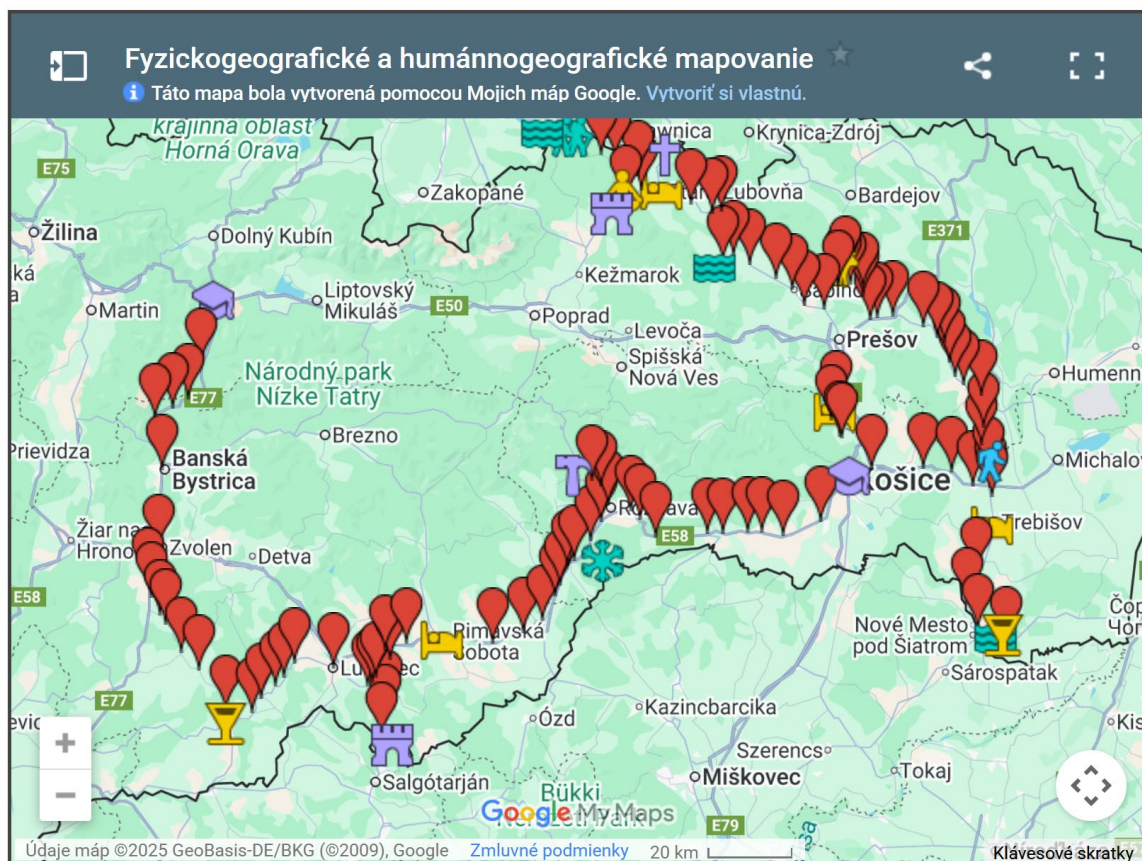


Figure 2.3-6 Trend in carbon stock in the forests of the SR
 Source: NFC, Compendium of Slovak Forestry Statistics SR 1970-2024.

Peatland:

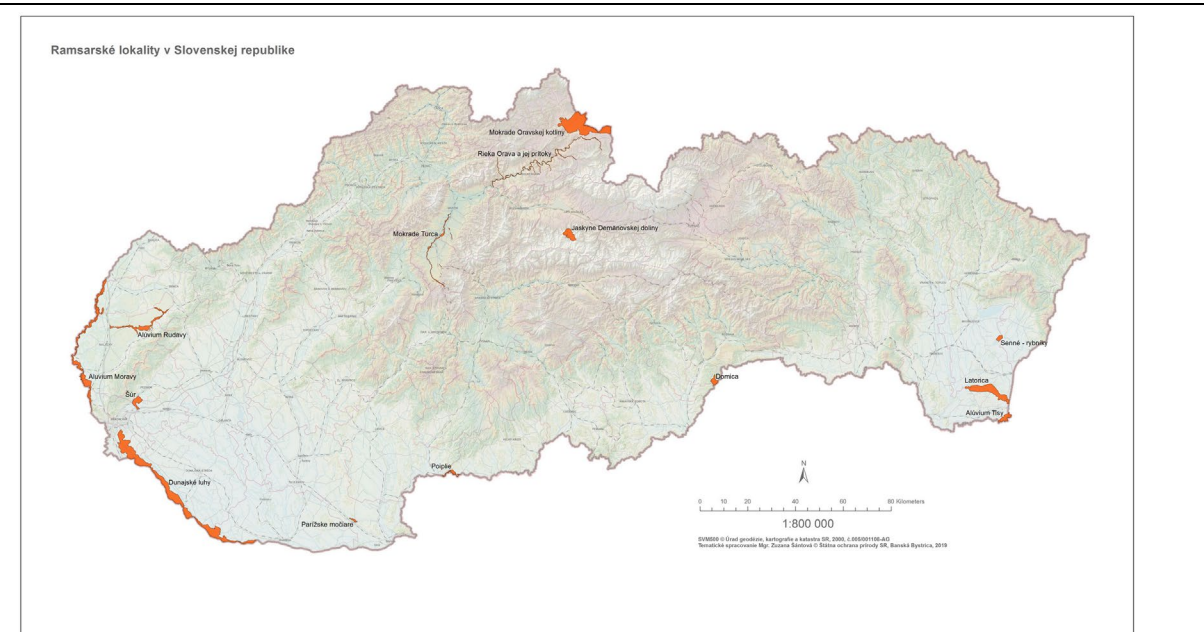
Wetlands are areas that are soaked or flooded with water, whether permanently or seasonally. Inland wetlands include swamps, ponds, lakes, peat bogs, fens, watercourses and river floodplains, whether natural or artificial, with a very diverse area. Wetlands are defined in the legal system of Slovakia in Act No. 543/2002 Coll. on Nature and Landscape Protection, as amended (hereinafter referred to as “Act No. 543/2002 Coll.”). According to Section 2(g) of Act No. 543/2002 Coll., a wetland is an area with swamps, fens or peatlands, a wet meadow, natural flowing water and natural standing water, including a watercourse and a water surface with ponds and water reservoirs.



According to Section 6(4) of Act No. 543/2002 Coll. Protection of natural habitats. The consent of the nature protection authority is required for changing the state of a wetland, in particular its modification by backfilling, drainage, extraction of reeds, peat, mud and river material, except for the performance of these activities by the watercourse administrator in accordance with a special regulation (Section 48 of Act No. 364/2004 Coll. on waters and amending Act No. 372/1990 Coll. on offences, as amended (Water Act)).

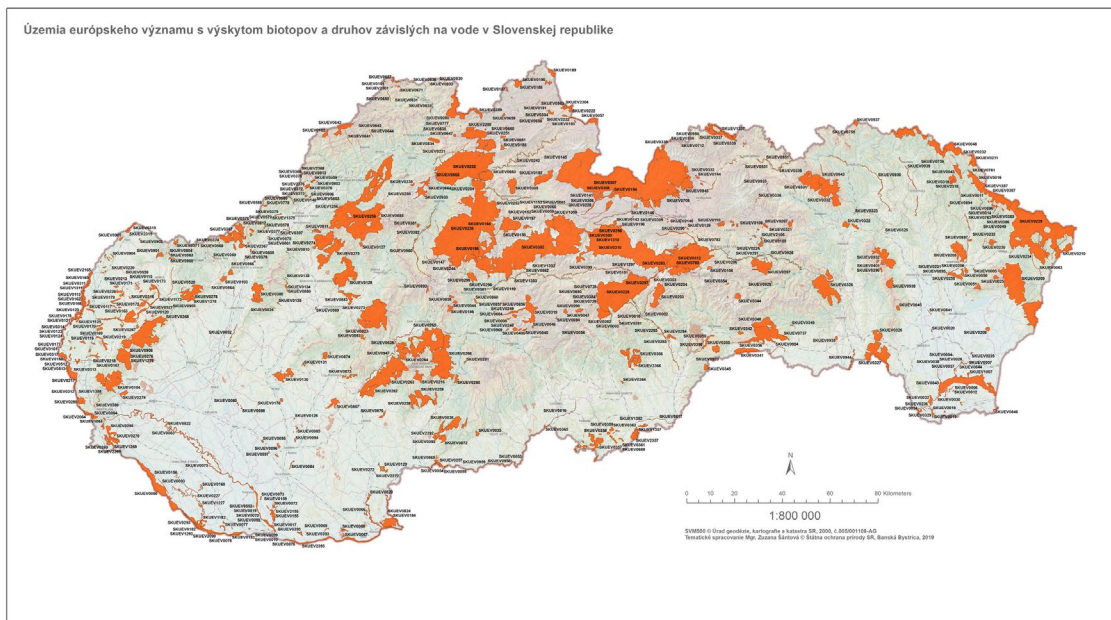
Wetlands of International Importance in Slovakia - Ramsar Sites

The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention) was signed on 2 February 1971 in Ramsar (Iran) and entered into force in 1975. The Slovak Republic acceded to the Ramsar Convention on 2 July 1990. Each Contracting Party to the Ramsar Convention is obliged to include at least one wetland area in the "List of Wetlands of International Importance" (so-called List of Wetlands of International Importance) and to ensure adequate protection and wise use of these areas. The list includes wetlands that meet international criteria in terms of ecology, botany, zoology, limnology or hydrology. The Slovak Republic has so far included 14 areas of so-called Ramsar sites in the List of Wetlands of International Importance.



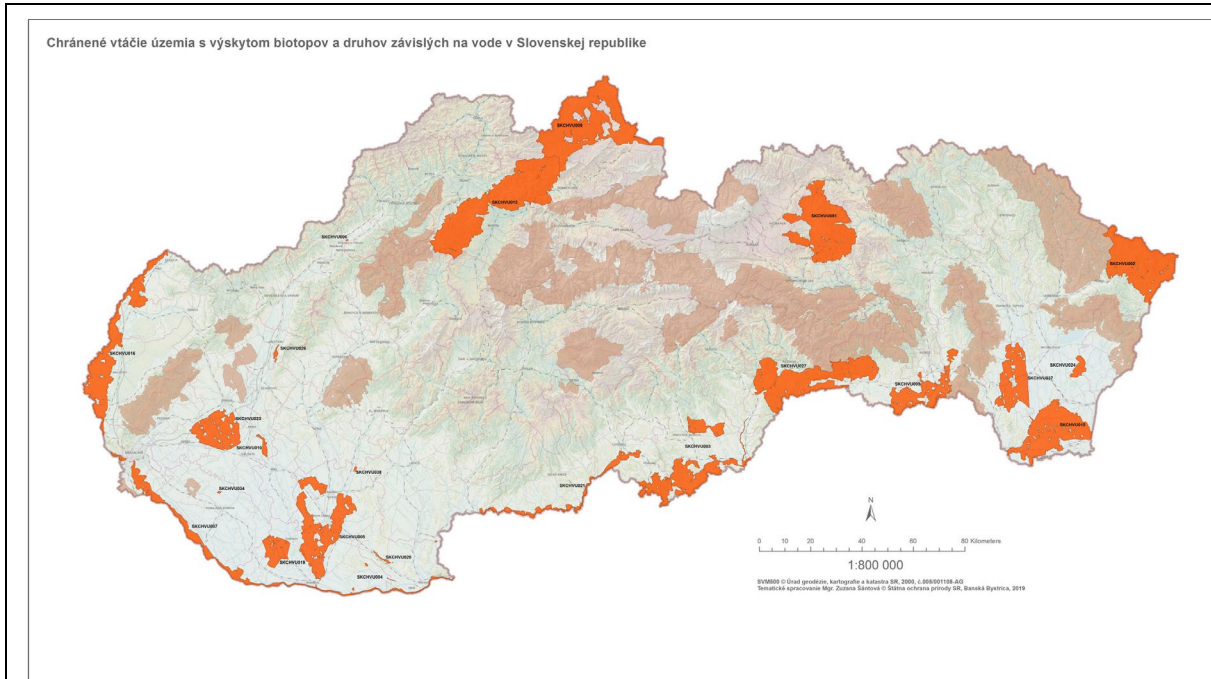
Water-dependent Sites of European Importance

Sites of European Importance (SEI) are defined in accordance with Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora and are part of the European network of protected areas Natura 2000. In the updated national list of 642 SEIs approved by the Government of the Slovak Republic, 493 SEIs of European importance were identified as being crucially water-dependent.



Water-dependent Special Bird Areas

Special Bird Areas (SBAs) are defined in accordance with Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (codified version) and are part of the European network of protected areas Natura 2000. Of the total number of 41 SBAs in the national list of SBAs approved by the Government of the Slovak Republic, 23 areas are identified as key water-dependent.



Protected areas: See the whole point 4.5.

Sources	<p>https://www.minzp.sk/files/sekcia-ochranyprirodyakrajiny/zoznam-pravnych-predpisov-k-1marcu2022.pdf</p> <p>https://www.minzp.sk/files/aktuality/pr_pralesy_slovenska_mapka_final.pdf</p> <p>https://en.pralesy.sk/lokality/</p> <p>https://www.mpsr.sk/en/index.php?navID=15</p> <p>https://www.minzp.sk/oblasti/ochrana-prirody-krajiny/mokrade/</p> <p>https://natura2000.sopsr.sk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/ZZ_2002_543_20221201.pdf</p> <p>https://natura2000.sopsr.sk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/ZZ_2021_170_20230101.pdf</p> <p>https://www.slov-lex.sk/ezbierky/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2023/451/20240101</p> <p>https://www.cwi.sk/files/CWI-handbook.pdf</p>
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Were applicable laws identified?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (audit required)
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Step 2: Description of enforcement and monitoring

Substantial tool for implementing environmental legislative into our life is qualified supervision with legal powers to impose sanctions. The major executive body of this policy in the Slovak Republic is the Slovak Inspectorate of the Environment that was founded by the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic.

The Slovak Inspectorate of the Environment (hereinafter referred to as SIE) is a specialized supervisory authority providing for the state supervision and imposing fines on the matters

concerning environment protection and carrying out the municipal administration in the field of integrated pollution prevention and control.

The competences of SIE increased substantially in regards to the transposition of the EU legislation into Slovak legal framework, resulting in establishment of two new departments in 2003 for the area of biosafety, where SIE acts as an authority of state administration supervision in the field of the use of genetic technologies and genetically modified organisms and for the area of integrated prevention and control, whereas stipulate in the Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Act (Act on IPPC), SIE has also decision-making competences in addition to the supervisory ones, it means SIE is a permitting authority over the bodies subjected to this act. An increase in competences occurred also in case of other SIE departments, e.g. in the field of trade in endangered species of wild fauna and flora subject to CITEC, in prevention of major industrial accidents (SEVESO), or in managing the extraordinary water pollutions.

Current spheres of SIE activity include:

- Integrated pollution prevention and control
- Waste management
- Water protection
- Air protection
- Nature and landscape protection
- Biosafety

The scope of SIE can be characterized by following activities:

- it supervises, how legal persons, natural persons, entrepreneurs and municipalities follow environmental legal provisions,
- it imposes fines and introduces corrective measures, if breach of the environmental legal provisions by monitored subjects is observed,
- it carries out control of imposed correction measures,
- it issues integrated permits,
- it resolves complaints, notices and inputs from public, organizations, other institutions of the state and municipal administration,
- it cooperates with other institutions of the state administration, and with other organizations revealing environmental activities.

Peatland protection in Slovakia focuses on conservation, restoration, and sustainable management of these valuable ecosystems. The State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic plays a key role in this effort, implementing practical management measures and developing integrated care programs. Key initiatives include hydrological restoration, carbon sequestration studies, and raising public awareness about the importance of peatlands. The State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic (SNC SR) is the central organization responsible for nature protection, including peatlands.

Sources

<https://www.sizp.sk/slovak-environmental-inspectorate/about-us>

<https://www.prirodaprevsetkych.sk/project-team/>

<https://www.slov-lex.sk/ezbierky/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2023/451/20240101>

Are enforcement and monitoring ensured for the identified laws?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (audit required)
Degree of compliance of the criterion “regulations for particularly valuable landscapes, where restrictions on harvesting forest biomass apply”	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirements fulfilled <input type="checkbox"/> Requirements not fulfilled	

Step 3: Evaluation of the effectiveness of the legal framework for regulation of particularly valuable landscapes, where restrictions on harvesting forest biomass apply			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas where restrictions on harvesting forest biomass apply are defined: criterion Efficiency confirmed see text above • areas can be clearly delimited, for example by means of mapping, marking or other geographical information: Efficiency confirmed see the text above and http://www.biomonitoring.sk • official guidelines, protected area by-laws on management, regulations or similar which prohibit the harvest of forest biomass in Type I: Efficiency confirmed see text above and https://www.sopsr.sk/web/?cl=114 • official guidelines, protected area by-laws on management, regulations or similar which establish the conditions under which the harvest of forest biomass in Type II landscapes is allowed: Efficiency confirmed see text above and https://www.sopsr.sk/web/?cl=114 • 			
Sources	https://www.sopsr.sk/web/?cl=114		
Effectiveness (points):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Category A (20 points)	<input type="checkbox"/> Category B (10 points)	<input type="checkbox"/> Category C (0 points)

4.7. Maintenance of the long-term production capacity of the forest

Step 1: Identification of applicable laws

1. Law no. 326/2005 Coll. on forests as amended and supplemented
2. Law no. 138/ 2010 Coll. on forest reproductive material as amended and supplemented
3. Law no. 405/2011 Coll. on herbal medicine care as amended later
4. Law no. 259/1993 Coll. on the Slovak Forestry Chamber as amended later
5. Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic no. 297/2011 Coll. on forest management records as amended later
6. Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic no. 453/2006 Coll. on forest management and forest protection as amended later
7. Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic no. 397/2006 Coll. on the forest guard as amended later
8. Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic no. 441/2006 Coll. which establishes the details of the examination of professional competence for the preparation of a forest management plan and the issuance of revocations of the certificate of professional competence for the preparation of a forest management plan, as amended by later names and supplements
9. Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic no. 451/2006 Coll. on the professional forest manager as amended later
10. Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic no. 232/2006 Coll. on the marking of wood harvesting as amended and supplemented
11. Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic no. 12/2009 Coll. on the protection of forest lands during land-use planning activities and when they are exempted and restricted from fulfilling the functions of forests, as amended later
12. Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic no. 501/2010 Coll., which establishes details on the production of forest reproductive material and its introduction to the market as amended later
13. Decree of the Ministry of the Slovak Republic no. 65/1995 Coll. on the registration of forest land and buildings as amended later
14. SR Government Regulation 86/2005 Coll. on the classification of wood as amended and supplemented
15. SR Government Regulation 199/2005 Coll. on protective measures against the introduction and spread of organisms harmful to plants or plant products as amended later
16. Law no. 503/2003 Coll. on return of ownership to land as amended later
17. Act No. 504/2003 Coll. on the lease of agricultural and forest land as amended later
18. Law no. 140/2014 Coll. on the acquisition of ownership of agricultural land as amended later
19. Law no. 180/1995 Coll. on some measures for the arrangement of land ownership as amended later

<p>20. Law no. 330/1991 Coll. on land improvements, arrangement of land ownership, land offices, land fund and land communities, as amended and supplemented</p> <p>21. Law no. 215/1995 Coll. on geodesy and cartography as amended and supplemented</p> <p>22. Law no. 97/2013 Coll. on land communities as amended later</p> <p>23. Law no. 162/1995 Coll. - Cadastral Act as amended later</p> <p>24. Law no. 278/1993 Coll. on the administration of state property as amended later</p> <p>25. Decree of the Office of Geodesy, Cartography and Cadastre of the Slovak Republic no. 461/2009 Coll. which implements Act no. 162/1995 Coll. on the real estate cadastre and on the registration of ownership and other rights to real estate (cadastral law), as amended</p> <p>26. Decree of the ÚGaK SR no. 300/2009 Coll. which implements Act no. 215/1995 Coll. on geodesy and cartography</p> <p>27. Law no. 180/2013 Coll. on organizations of local state administration and on the amendment of some laws as amended later</p> <p>28. Law no. 71/1967 Coll. on administrative proceedings as amended later</p> <p>29. Law no. 211/2000 Coll. on free access to information and on the amendment of certain laws as amended later</p> <p>30. Law no. 25/2006 Coll. on public procurement as amended later</p> <p>31. Law no. 314/2001 Coll. on fire protection as amended later</p> <p>32. Decree of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic 121/2002 Coll. on fire prevention as amended later</p> <p>33. Law no. 274/2009 on hunting and on the amendment of certain laws as amended later</p> <p>34. Act No. 190/2003 Coll. on weapons and ammunition as amended and supplemented</p> <p>35. Law no. 139/2002 on fisheries as amended later</p> <p>36. Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic no. 344/2009 Coll. which implements the Act on Hunting as amended later</p> <p>37. Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic No. 238/2002 Coll. implementing some provisions of the Act on Fisheries</p>	
Sources	<p>1. - 37. Slov-Lex – Legislative and Information Portal of the Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic (https://www.slovlex.sk/web/en)</p> <p>https://www.mpsr.sk/index.php?navID=24&navID2=24&SID=37&ofs1=13</p>
Were applicable laws identified?	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (audit required)</p>
Step 2: Description of enforcement and monitoring	
<p>Forests in the Slovak Republic are divided into three main categories according to their prevailing function: production, protective and special-purpose forests. The trend in the percentages of individual categories is presented in Figure 4.1-1.</p>	

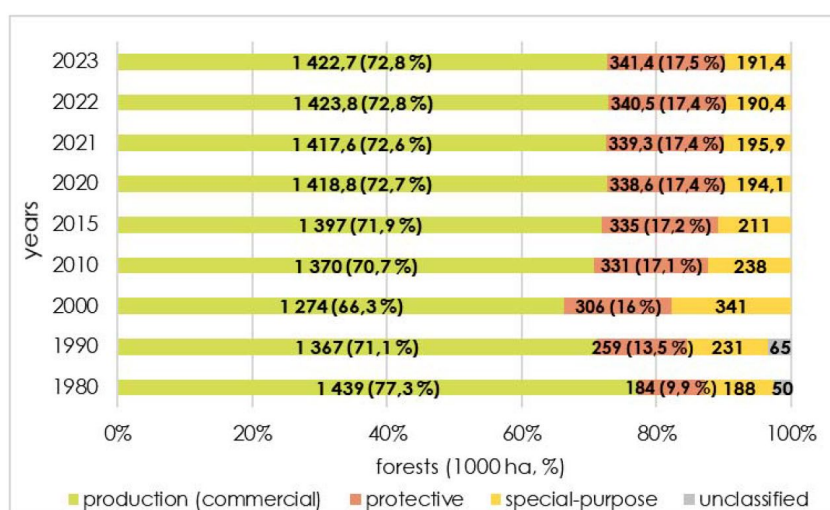


Figure 4.1-1 Forest categories area and percentage (ha, %)

Source: NFC, Compendium of Slovak Forestry Statistics SR 1970-2024.

Of the “forest categories”, production forests prevailed. In 2023, their area was 1,422.7 thousand ha, i.e. 72.8%. These forests are managed mainly for the production of timber and other forest products but, at the same time, they provide non-production services. They are

managed according to the principles of so-called “functionally integrated forestry”. Production forests also include energy-biomass stands and forest plantations. Compared to the minimum area of these forests in 2000, their actual area is by 6.5 percentage points higher. The area of the type of exclusively production forest was only 155.8 thousand ha, i.e. 7.97% of the forest stand area.

The area of protective forests in 2023 reached 341.4 thousand ha, i.e. 17.5% of the forest stand area of the SR. The designation of protective forests is based on predefined site conditions. The main goal of their management is to maintain their protective functions, especially the protection of soil, water and infrastructure. According to the Act on Forests, protective forests can be designated according to: a) "forests on particularly unfavourable habitats", which form 24.6% of the protective forests area; b) "subalpine forests below the upper tree limit" (15.1%); c) "forests with dwarf pine predominating" (6.1%) and d) "forests with a Predominant function of soil protection" (54.1%). The area of protective forests is still slightly increasing, mainly due to the refinement of the site mapping; it increased by 1.4 percentage point since 2000.

Soil quality preservation is integral to sustainable forest management in Slovakia and is legislatively ensured through multiple laws and forest management practices:

Key Legislative Instruments:

- Act No. 326/2005 Coll. on Forests: Prohibits excessive biomass removal that could deplete forest soil nutrients (e.g., stumps, fine roots, forest litter).
- Act No. 220/2004 Coll. on Agricultural Land Protection: Applied where forestry overlaps with agricultural soils and includes erosion prevention requirements.

Forest Management Practices for Soil Protection (2023):

- Soil Preparation for Regeneration: 6,300 ha — mechanical and biological methods (e.g., mulching, scarification) applied with low-impact equipment to avoid compaction.
- Pre-commercial Thinning: 29,300 ha — ensures optimal spacing and reduces nutrient competition.

- Weed Control: 23,800 ha — reduces competition for soil moisture and nutrients using mechanical or selective biological methods, avoiding overreliance on herbicides.
- Protection Against Game Damage: 29,200 ha — game overpopulation can severely disturb soil structure by trampling and browsing young plants, so measures include fencing and game regulation.

Additional Measures:

- Harvesting systems (e.g., cable extraction) are adapted to slope and soil conditions to avoid erosion.
- Biomass extraction guidelines limit removal of low-diameter material in nutrient-poor soils.
- Monitoring of soil condition (pH, organic content, compaction) is conducted as part of national forest inventory and long-term ecological research (LTER) plots.

Monitoring of forest health is focused on surveying and comparing data on forest health using selected measured and assessed parameters. Monitoring of forest health is based on the visual assessment of tree defoliation on 112 permanent monitoring plots (PMPs) in a 16 x 16 km grid covering the entire territory of Slovakia (extensive 1st level monitoring). Nine of the plots are used for the 2nd level intensive monitoring in which also other parameters impacting forest health are monitored including 67 depositions of particular ion of nitrogen and sulphur, soil condition, quality of soil solution, and nutrient content in leaves and needles. Both levels of monitoring plots are included in the European network of monitoring plots.

Environmental Considerations:

- Forest operations in sensitive sites (e.g., shallow or erosive soils) are restricted under forest management plans.
- Reforestation is prioritized with native and site-adapted species to restore soil cover rapidly.

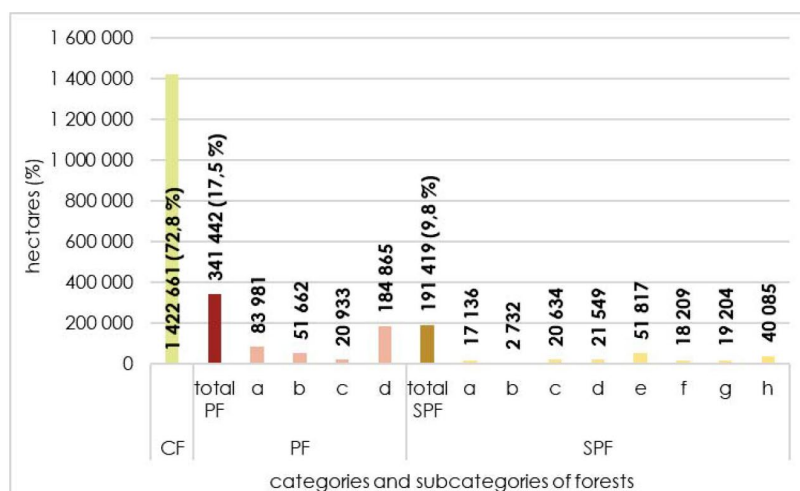


Figure 4.1-2 Area and percentage of forest categories and subcategories

Forest regeneration

In 2023, according to Forest Management Record data, forest was regenerated on the area of 10,059 ha, which was 1,178 ha (10.5%) less than in 2022, and even 36.7% less than in 2015. This decrease was mainly related to the trend of decreasing regeneration felling in 2020 to 2023. In forest regeneration, artificial regeneration prevailed (6,307 ha) with the share of 62.7%.

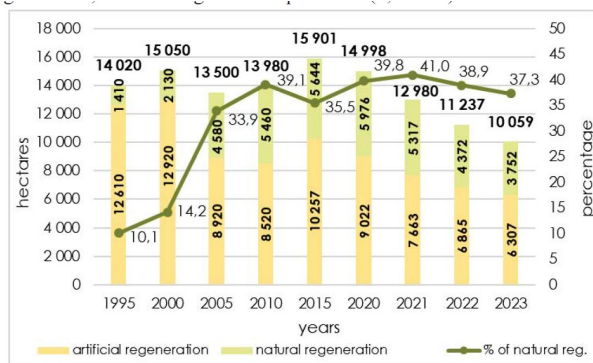


Figure 4.3-1 Forest regeneration
Source: NFC, Compendium of Slovak Forestry Statistics SR, 1996-2024

Natural forest regeneration was recorded on the area of 3,752 ha, (37.3%) of the total regenerated area (Figure 4.3-1), which corresponds to the trend observed over the last 15 years. Increasing share of natural regeneration reflects the forestry strategies of the SR aimed at promotion of close-to-nature management. It has the potential to improve species and spatial structures of forest stands to adapt to changing climate and ensure full range of forest ecosystem services in the future, within a framework of integrated forest management.

Growing stock in forests

In 2023, according to the NFI data, the total volume of growing stock on forest land in Slovakia was 487.1 million m³ (as of the timber to the top of 7 cm under bark). Compared to 2022, it increased by 4.3 million m³, i.e. by 0.9%. In particular, the supply of hardwood increased to the level of 295.1 million m³, i.e. by 3.7 million m³ compared to last year. The supply of coniferous wood reached 192.0 million m³ (Figure 2.3-1). The ratio of softwood and hardwood stocks was 39.4% to 60.6%. The growing stock per hectare was 250 m³. For conifers, it was 280 m³, and for broadleaves 234 m³.

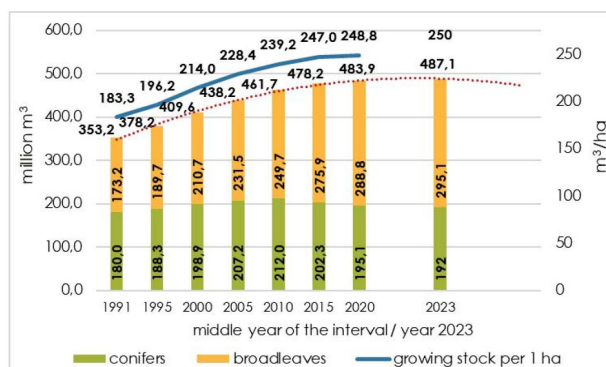


Figure 2.3-1 (Extrapolated) trends in growing stock in total and by main tree species (million m³), average growing stock (m³/ha)

Source: NFC, Compendium of Slovak Forestry Statistics SR 1970-2024.

Note: The values for the presented central years were calculated as an arithmetic average of the intervals: 1990-1992, 1993-1997, 1998-2002, 2003-2007, 2008-2012, 2013-2017, 2018-2022. Values for 2023 represent the data for this year only.

Wood increment in forests

In 2023, the total current increment (TCI) of wood on forest land in Slovakia reached a volume of 11.88 million m³, i.e. 6.16 m³ per ha. Annual TCI means the volume of wood that

accrue in the forests during one year. Since 2015, a trend of an annual decrease of TCI (in total and per hectare) has been observed. The trend in TCI, including the extrapolation, is presented in Figure 2.3-7.

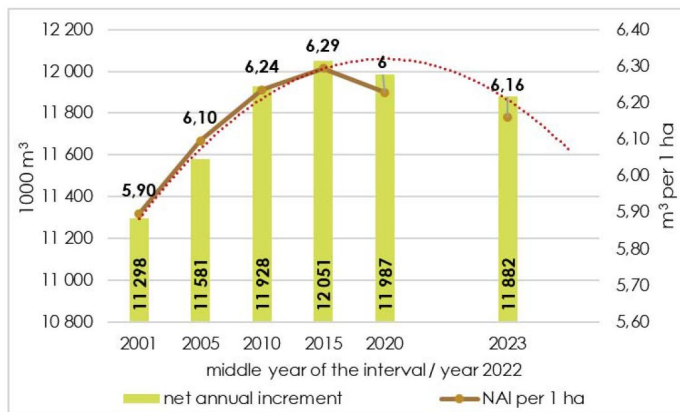


Figure 2.3-7 Total current increment – total volume and per hectare – with extrapolation
 Source: NFC, Compendium of Slovak Forestry Statistics SR 1970-2024.

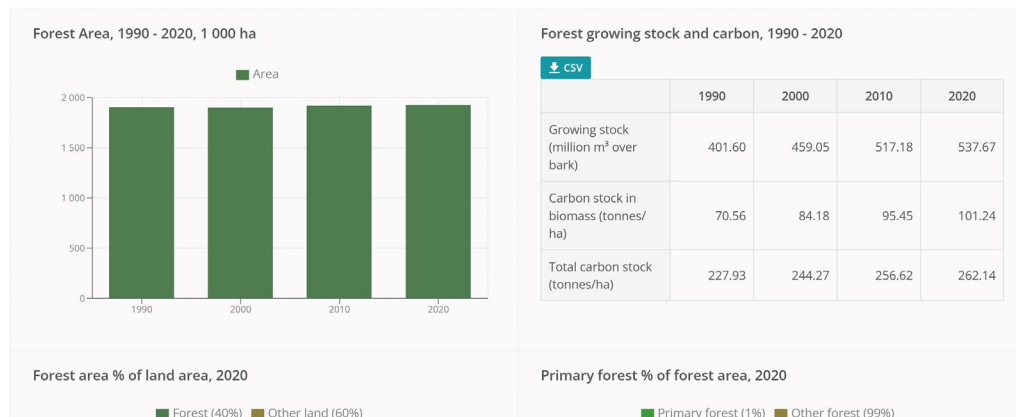
Note: The values for the presented central years were calculated as an arithmetic average of the intervals: 2000-2002, 2003-2007, 2008-2012, 2013-2017 and 2018-2022. Values for 2023 represent the data for this year only.

Global Forest Resources Assessment

English ▾ Reserved area

LAST PUBLISHED JULY 2020

Slovakia



Long-term Production Capacity

- Sustainability is ensured via:
 - o Forest Management Plans (10-year cycles)
 - o Monitoring of increment vs. harvest
- 2023 data:
 - o Annual increment: 12.0 million m³
 - o Annual harvest: 7.22 million m³
 - o Harvest/increment ratio: 60.1%
- Forest age structure shows potential for future yield, with an increasing share of young forests (<20 years) at 387,000 ha.

Sources

REPORT ON THE FOREST SECTOR OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC 2023
 by Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic and National Forest Centre

<https://fra-data.fao.org/assessments/fra/2020/SVK/home/overview>

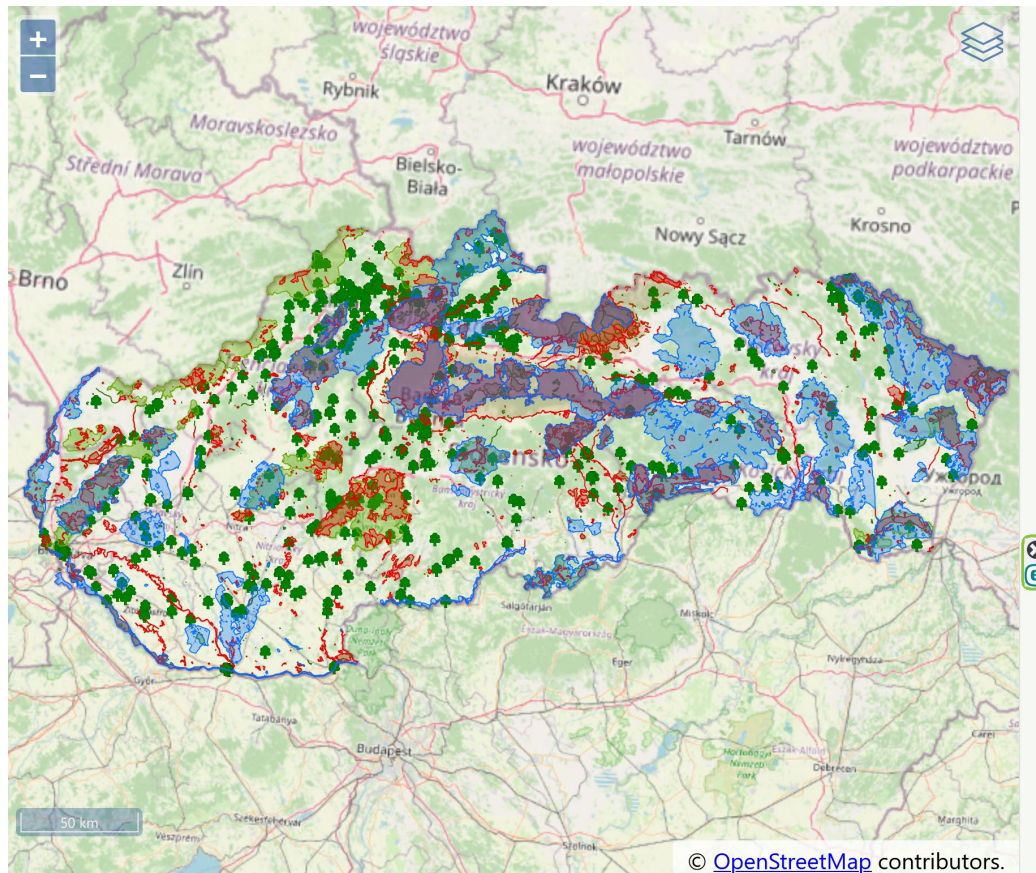
Are enforcement and monitoring ensured for the identified laws?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No (audit required)
Degree of compliance of the criterion “maintenance of the long-term production capacity of the forest”		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirements fulfilled <input type="checkbox"/> Requirements not fulfilled		

Step 3: Evaluation of the effectiveness of the legal framework for maintenance of the long-term production capacity of the forest			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preservation of the soil structure – Efficiency confirmed see step 1 and step 2 explanation of soil protection monitoring and measures. • Preservation of the biological diversity – Efficiency confirmed – see the whole point 4.5 • Guarantee of forest regeneration legal enforcement provided in the legislation and through repeated controls from state forestry office – Efficiency confirmed. 			
Sources	REPORT ON THE FOREST SECTOR OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC 2023 by Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic and National Forest Centre		
Effectiveness (points):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Category A (20 points)	<input type="checkbox"/> Category B (10 points)	<input type="checkbox"/> Category C (0 points)

4.8. Statement of assurance by installations processing forest biomass	
Step 1: Identification of applicable laws	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ACT 309 of 19 June 2009 on the promotion of renewable energy sources and high-efficiency cogeneration and on amendments to certain acts 2. DECLARATION 397 of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic of October 9, 2023, establishing the requirements for the declaration of a biomass grower or supplier 3. Act No. 543/2002 Coll. on Nature and Landscape Protection 4. Act No. 326/2005 Coll. on Forests 	
Sources	https://www.slov-lex.sk/ezbierky/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2023/397/
Were applicable laws identified?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (audit required)
Step 2: Description of enforcement and monitoring	
<p>Act 309 stipulates</p> <p>a) the method of support and conditions for support for the production of</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. electricity from renewable energy sources, 2. electricity from high-efficiency combined generation, 3. biomethane, <p>b) the rights and obligations of producers of</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. electricity from renewable energy sources, 2. electricity from combined generation, 3. electricity from high-efficiency combined generation, 4. biomethane, 5. heat from fuel produced from biomass, <p>c) the rights and obligations of other participants in the electricity and gas market,</p> <p>d) the rights and obligations of a legal entity or natural person who places fuels and other energy products used for transport purposes on the market.</p> <p>This act further defines except other issues also:</p> <p>a) sustainability criteria and greenhouse gas emission savings for biofuels, bioliquids, biomass fuels and other fuels, greenhouse gas emission savings from fuels containing recycled carbon and fuels from renewable sources of biological origin and limit values for greenhouse gas emissions from the cultivation of agricultural raw materials to maintain sustainability criteria,</p> <p>b) details of demonstrating compliance with individual sustainability criteria,</p> <p>c) details of issuing a certificate of professional competence for the purpose of verifying the calculation of emissions, details of the qualification requirements for issuing a certificate of professional competence for the purpose of verifying the calculation of emissions,</p> <p>d) details of the application for issuing a certificate of professional competence for the purpose of verifying the calculation of emissions, details on the professional competence</p>	

- test for the purpose of verifying the calculation of emissions,
- e) the content of the certificate of professional competence for the purpose of verifying the calculation of emissions and details on notification of changes in data, the conditions of the documents on the basis of which the certificate of professional competence for the purpose of verifying the calculation of emissions was issued and on the examination of professional competence for the purpose of verifying the calculation of emissions,
- f) the calculation methodology and the simplified methodology for calculating greenhouse gas emissions during the life cycle of bioliquid fuels, the method of calculating greenhouse gas emission savings resulting from the use of biofuels and bioliquids,
- g) the method and details of publishing the list of methodologies for the purpose of verifying the calculation of emissions recognised by the Slovak Republic, which are considered equivalent pursuant to Section 14b(1). 6,
- h) the mass balance system for biofuels, bioliquids and biomass fuels,
- i) the manner in which the Slovak Hydrometeorological Institute will control the activities of professionally competent persons for the purposes of verifying calculations and the interval of control activities,
- j) details of decision-making in disputed cases concerning the issuance and withdrawal of certificates of professional competence and the purposes of verifying emissions calculations,
- k) interim targets and preliminary additional target concerning the obligation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions during the life cycle per unit of energy from biofuel fuels and supplied electricity used in road vehicles and the possibility of joint fulfilment of this obligation pursuant to Section 14c, paragraphs 6 and 9,
- l) details of decision-making in disputed cases concerning the verification of reports pursuant to Section 14c, paragraphs 3,
- m) details on the method of measuring the amount of electricity supplied for use in road vehicles by electricity suppliers,
- n) details on the issuance of a sustainability certificate,
- o) details on the eligibility of measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the pre-production phase, the maximum possible savings for individual types of fuels, the method of verifying the amount of greenhouse gas emission reductions and the requirements for reporting on the offset of greenhouse gas emission reductions,
- Act No. 326/2005 Coll. on Forests: Prohibits excessive biomass removal that could deplete forest soil nutrients (e.g., stumps, fine roots, forest litter).
 - Act No. 543/2002 Coll. on Nature and Landscape Protection, which defines five protection levels. The higher levels (III, IV, and V) impose increasing conservation restrictions on forest management activities.
 - Following map displays areas with 4th and 5th level of protection. These areas are not stated specifically as “no-go areas for collection of biomass” nevertheless their level of protection secures legally prescribed no-intervention regime which prohibits any commercial activity including harvesting of biomass. Accordingly, displayed areas can be fully understood as “no-go” areas for collection and harvesting of biomass. In addition, levels of protection are clearly defined in the

legislation, areas are clearly defined and mapped.



Sources	https://www.slov-lex.sk/ezbierky/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2023/397/ Act No. 543/2002 Coll. on Nature and Landscape Protection https://www.slov-lex.sk/ezbierky/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2018/309/20200101 https://data.sopsr.sk/chranene-objekty/
Are enforcement and monitoring ensured for the identified laws?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (audit required)
Degree of compliance of the criterion “Statement of assurance by installations processing forest biomass”	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirements fulfilled <input type="checkbox"/> Requirements not fulfilled	

<p>Step 3: Evaluation of the effectiveness of the legal framework for the statement of assurance by installations processing forest biomass</p>
<p>ACT 309/2018 clearly defines: Demonstration of sustainability criteria and greenhouse gas emission savings for biofuels, bioliquids and biomass fuels (1) Energy from biofuels, bioliquids and biomass fuels used in installations pursuant to</p>

paragraphs 2 and 3 shall be considered for the purposes of fulfilling obligations under this Act, assessing eligibility for financial support and fulfilling the target for renewable energy sources set out in the integrated national energy and climate plan if biofuels, bioliquids and biomass fuels meet the sustainability criteria.

(2) Meeting the sustainability criteria for biomass fuels requires installations for electricity production and installations for heat production with a total rated thermal input of at least

- a) 20 MW if solid biomass fuels are used, or
- b) 2 MW if gaseous biomass fuels are used.

(3) The sustainability criteria for biomass fuels shall also be met for electricity and heat production facilities, as the sustainability criteria shall be a condition for the provision of financial resources for their construction, reconstruction or modernisation from the Recovery and Resilience Facility^{17l}) or from European Union funds.^{17m})

(4) The producer of biofuels, bioliquids or biomass fuels shall demonstrate the sustainability criteria by issuing a sustainability certificate, which shall also indicate the amount of greenhouse gas emissions savings.

(5) The farmer or supplier of biomass shall demonstrate compliance with the sustainability criteria by means of a declaration by the farmer or supplier of biomass. The requirements for the declaration by the farmer or supplier of biomass shall be laid down in a generally binding legal regulation issued by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic.

(6) A legal entity or natural person who is a supplier of biomass or raw material or who produces biofuel, bioliquid or fuel from biomass shall have the right to issue a sustainability certificate if it carries out supervision pursuant to Section 14b, paragraph 3.

(7) A legal entity or natural person shall be obliged to use a mass balance system when issuing a sustainability certificate and to keep its annex pursuant to Section 14b, paragraph 4 for at least five years.

(8) Biofuels, bioliquids and biomass fuels produced from waste and residues originating from agricultural land shall meet the sustainability criteria if the suppliers of the raw materials and their production comply with the obligations relating to carbon balance control and soil quality management and soil carbon management in accordance with a special regulation.¹⁷ⁿ)

(9) Biofuels, bioliquids and biomass fuels produced from forest biomass, including trees that have been harvested as part of forest protection measures or as part of measures related to the elimination of the consequences of the effects of harmful factors in forests, shall meet the sustainability criteria if the supplier of forest biomass has an economic measure approved by the state forestry administration or an approved forest management programme.^{17o})

(10) If forest biomass originates from a state that does not have a legal regulation in place pursuant to paragraph 9, the grower or supplier of forest biomass is obliged to demonstrate compliance with the sustainability criteria declaration of the grower or supplier of biomass, the forest resource area level has established management systems that ensure that

- a) harvesting and logging operations are legal,
- b) the forest in the harvesting and logging areas is being restored,

- c) areas designated by international law, national law or the competent body for nature conservation, including peatland wetlands, are protected, unless evidence is provided that the harvesting and logging of this raw material is not in conflict with such nature conservation,
- d) logging and harvesting are carried out with a view to preserving soil quality and biodiversity in order to minimize negative impacts, and
- e) harvesting and logging preserves or improves the long-term productive capacity of the forest.

(11) A biomass grower may not issue a biomass grower or supplier declaration if the biomass does not meet the biomass sustainability criteria under this paragraph or under Section 19b(1)(a). If the biomass does not meet the biomass sustainability criteria under this paragraph or under Section 19b(1)(a), a biomass grower or supplier declaration issued in another country shall not be recognised.

(13) Compliance with the sustainability criteria under Sections 8 and 9 may also be demonstrated by a document proving compliance with sustainability criteria recognised in another Member State or issued under supervision within the framework of a voluntary certification system.

(14) A legal entity or natural person involved in the life cycle of production of sustainable motor fuels, bioliquids and fuels from biomass cultivation or the creation of raw materials and their supply to the market in the Slovak Republic shall be obliged to:

- a) provide its customer with accurate, complete and truthful information on the origin of the biomass or raw materials,
- b) keep records of the mass balance and movement of biomass or raw materials and keep them for at least five years,
- c) provide, upon request, the Slovak Trade Inspection, the Slovak Forestry and Timber Inspection, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic, the Financial Directorate of the Slovak Republic, the Slovak Hydrometeorological Institute and the Ministry of the Environment with the information necessary to demonstrate compliance with the sustainability criteria, the principles of the mass balance of biomass or raw materials and information necessary for calculating greenhouse gas emission savings related to the life cycle of biomass fuel from the beginning of the life cycle to the current stage of the life cycle.

Criterion Efficiency confirmed

Sources	1. <i>ACT 309 of 19 June 2009 on the promotion of renewable energy sources and high-efficiency cogeneration and on amendments to certain acts</i>		
Effectiveness (points):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Category A (20 points)	<input type="checkbox"/> Category B (10 points)	<input type="checkbox"/> Category C (0 points)

4.9. Guarantee of carbon sequestration parity	
Paris Agreement ratified?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Submission of a relevant NDC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Sources	<p>1. United Nations (ED.) (2020): United Nations Treaty Collection https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mdsg_no=XXVII-7-d&chapter=27&clang=en</p> <p>2. UNFCCC (ED.) (2020): NDC Registry https://unfccc.int/NDCREG</p>
Brief description of how agriculture, forestry and land use are accounted for in NDC	<p>In the European NDC, with regard to the accounting of agriculture, forestry and other land uses, a comprehensive accounting framework, activity-based or land-based approach, is mentioned for emissions and degradation by land use, land use change and forestry. Reference is further made to LULUCF Decision 529/2013/EU, which includes the following aspects and refers to the following principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Afforestation, reforestation • Deforestation • Forestry • Arable farm management • Pastureland management • Or equivalence-based accounting with • UNFCCC reporting categories • Other categories/activities chosen by the EU • And its Member States as parties to the Kyoto Protocol and the Doha amendment. <p>Further supplementary information on national implementation is provided under levels 1, 2 and 3.</p>
<p>OR^(*) (*) This option should be selected if no NDC has been submitted. If the answer is yes for both options, these fields can be skipped.</p>	
Step 1: Identification of applicable laws	
NA	
Sources	NA
Were applicable laws identified?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (audit required)

Step 2: Description of enforcement and monitoring	
<p><i>The UNECE report Forests in the ECE Region: Trends and Challenges in Achieving the Global Objectives on Forest Management includes the values for total greenhouse gas emissions from the forestry industry. Under section 5 “LULUCF”, for Slovakia is set for -7,2 Tg CO2 equivalent.</i></p>	
Sources	<p>1. United Nations (ED.) (2020): United Nations Treaty Collection https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mt_dsg_no=XXVII-7-d&chapter=27&clang=en</p> <p>2. UNFCCC (ED.) (2020): NDC Registry https://unfccc.int/NDCREG</p> <p>3. The UNECE report Forests in the ECE Region: Trends and Challenges in Achieving the Global Objectives on Forest Management.</p>
Are enforcement and monitoring ensured for the identified laws?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (audit required)
Degree of compliance of the criterion “guarantee of carbon sequestration parity”	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requirements fulfilled <input type="checkbox"/> Requirements not fulfilled	

Step 3: Assessment of the effectiveness of the legal framework for the guarantee of carbon sequestration parity			
<p>Slovakia signed the Paris Agreement on 22 April 2016. It was ratified and the NDC “nationally determined contribution” was submitted on 5 October 2016.</p> <p>The documentation and reporting against the European Commission is annual. The emissions of the LULUCF sector in Slovakia are negative.</p> <p>It is stated that the reported carbon emissions for the LULUCF sector are not higher than the carbon extraction from the sector. Accordingly, carbon sequestration parity can be ensured by both options.</p> <p>On this basis, the sustainability criterions “LULUCF” is rated as effectively implemented</p>			
Sources	<p>1. United Nations (ED.) (2020): United Nations Treaty Collection https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mt_dsg_no=XXVII-7-d&chapter=27&clang=en</p> <p>2. UNFCCC (ED.) (2020): NDC Registry https://unfccc.int/NDCREG</p> <p>The UNECE report Forests in the ECE Region: Trends and Challenges in Achieving the Global Objectives on Forest Management.</p>		
Effectiveness (points):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Category A (20 points)	<input type="checkbox"/> Category B (10 points)	<input type="checkbox"/> Category C (0 points)

5. Results			
Criterion	Degree of compliance		Number of points (effectiveness)
	Requirements fulfilled	Requirements not fulfilled	
Legality of wood harvesting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	20
Forest regeneration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	20
Maintenance of biodiversity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	20
Maintenance of soil quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	20
Regulations for protected areas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	20
Regulations for particularly valuable landscapes, where restrictions on forest biomass harvesting apply	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	20
Maintenance of the long-term production capacity of the forest	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	20
Statement of assurance by installations processing forest biomass	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	20
Guarantee of carbon sequestration parity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	20

6. Evaluation of the risk assessment	
Risk status:	The sustainability criteria were fulfilled <i>9 times</i> . The sustainability criteria were not met <i>0times</i> .
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Low-risk area <input type="checkbox"/> Specified-risk area
Risk level: (Total points)	<i>180</i> of a maximum of 180 points was awarded.
Written summary of the results:	
This risk assessment reviews the legal framework and the requirements of revised Directive (EU) 2018/2001 Article 29(6) and (7). This risk assessment is prepared for the entire biomass sourcing area - Slovakia, which classifies the risk of the forestry biomass not being produced sustainably in accordance with RED III as low-risk. The risk assessment confirms that a legal framework is in place and enforced in the sourcing area where the biomass is	

harvested to ensure the legality of harvesting, trading and transport of the biomass, forest regeneration of the harvested area, protection of designated conservation areas - including wetlands, heathland, grassland and peatland, regulation of land where forest biomass may not be harvested, soil quality, biodiversity, long-term production capacity of the forest and at least a balanced carbon stock in the area where the biomass is harvested. All sustainability criteria of the directive are considered in the described scope of application and are effectively implemented.

The sustainability of forest management in Slovakia is regulated by law, well monitored and enforced, and a positive development of forest condition can be identified.

Annex to the risk assessment: Documentation of the stakeholder dialogue**Author of the risk assessment:***Ing. Michal Žák***Date of the stakeholder dialogue:***[Please enter the date the stakeholder dialogue took place.]***Specific issue discussed in the stakeholder dialogue:***[Please enter the specific issue discussed in the stakeholder dialogue here.]***Participating institutions or individuals:***[Please enter the participating institutions or individuals here.]***Result of the stakeholder dialogue:***[Please enter the result of the stakeholder dialogue here.]*