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Republic of Latvia

Cabinet

Regulation No. 189

Adopted 8 May 2001

Nature Protection Regulations in Forest Management

Issued pursuant to Section 13 and Section 37,
Paragraph one of the Law on Forests

I. General Provisions

1. These Regulations determine:

- 1.1. general nature protection requirements with respect to forest management;
- 1.2. nature protection requirements with respect to final felling and thinning; and
- 1.3. restrictions on economic activity during the reproduction season of animals.

II. General Nature Protection Requirements with respect to Forest Management

2. Methods that do not cause soil erosion (movement of the topsoil due to the effect of water or wind resulting in bedrock exposure) shall be utilised in forest management. Erosion that has taken place continuously in an area of 20 square metres or less shall not be regarded as erosion within the meaning of these Regulations. The preparation of soil for forest regeneration shall not be regarded as erosion within the meaning of these Regulations.

3. If pursuant to felling the drainage of water to ditches, streams and rivers are hindered, the person who has carried out the felling shall, within a one-month period after the performance of the work, renew the drainage of water.

4. The treatment of soil in forest glades and the seeding or planting of forests, with the exception of glades for additional foddering of game, is prohibited.

5. Simultaneously with the creation of micro-reserves, buffer zones (areas where restrictions on economic activity are prescribed in order to reduce the impact of intensive economic activities on the micro-reserves of specially protected bird species) shall be determined for the following species of birds:

5.1. up to 500 metres around wood grouse, spotted eagle, white-tailed sea eagle and golden eagle micro-reserves, but with an area of not more than 300 hectares, including the territory of the micro-reserve;

5.2. up to 300 metres around an osprey micro-reserve, but with an area of not more than 300 hectares, including the territory of the micro-reserve;

5.3. up to 250 metres around an eagle owl or peregrine falcon micro-reserve but with an area of not more than 50 hectares, including the territory of the micro-reserve;

5.4. up to 250 metres around a black stork, lesser spotted eagle, black kite, red kite or short-toed eagle micro-reserve but with an area of not more than 40 hectares, including the territory of the micro-reserve; and

5.5. up to 250 metres around a roller, goosander or stock dove micro-reserve but with an area of not more than 15 hectares, including the territory of the micro-reserve.

6. It is prohibited to carry out land amelioration in buffer zones around wood-grouse mating-places in micro-reserves.

7. In order to reduce the negative impact of cities on the environment and to maintain the biological diversity of forests, in addition to the restrictions of forestry activities referred to in other regulatory enactments, clear felling is prohibited in the following objects:

7.1. in forest protective zones around cities and in forests within the administrative boundaries of cities;

7.2. in the zone of restricted economic activities of the protective coastal zone of the Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Riga;

7.3. in protective zones along wetlands (marshes and overflowing clearings with an area of more than one hectare which within a ten-year period overflow four to five times):

7.3.1. in areas of between one and 100 hectares, in a zone of at least 20 metres;

7.3.2. in areas of more than 100 hectares, in a zone of at least 50 metres in forest growing condition types on dry, drained and wet mineral soil, drained turf soil, and in a zone of at least 100 metres in forest growing condition types on wet turf soil;

7.4. in protective zones along waters:

7.4.1. in a zone of at least 50 metres along rivers of 10 kilometres in length or more and along lakes of 10 hectares or more in area;

7.4.2. in a zone of at least 25 metres along rivers the length of which does not exceed 10 kilometres and along lakes not exceeding 10 hectares;

7.4.3. in a zone of at least 10 metres along streams (the average width of the natural flowing water body within a section of 50 metres is less than a metre);

7.5. on islands of marshes and lakes;

7.6. in alluvial land of flowing water bodies and water bodies (alluvial land within the meaning of these Regulations is part of a valley which periodically overflows and has vegetation characteristic of alluvial land);

7.7. in pure stands of common alder, oak, ash, willow, wych elm, European white elm, linden and maple and in mixed stands in the protective zones of stationary and flowing bodies water; and

7.8. in clumps of forests – in forest stands of an area of less than one hectare which are located at a distance of 500 metres or more from another forest section with an area of more than one hectare.

8. In order to maintain the biological diversity of tree species, the State Forest Service shall separate out the forest stands of genetic resources (high-quality forest stand tree species of natural origin for the maintenance of genetic diversity and the gene pool). An area of a forest stand of genetic resources shall be regenerated by utilising the reproductive material acquired in such a forest stand.

III. Requirements of Nature Protection with respect to Final Felling and Thinning

9. At least five most viable older trees and trees of largest size shall be conserved in the final felling and thinning (calculating per hectare of the felling area), first selecting:

- 9.1. trees with big and thick branches;
- 9.2. den trees;
- 9.3. trees with burn scars; and
- 9.4. oaks, lindens, pines, ashes, wych elms, European white elms and maples.

10. It is permitted to leave conservable trees in groups.

11. Seed trees shall not be included in the number of conservable trees.

12. In addition to the provisions in Paragraph 9 of these Regulations, the following shall be conserved:

12.1. all trees with large (diameter more than 50 centimetres) bird nests and a row of trees around them;

12.2. trunks of broken trees and dead standing trees of larger size which do not endanger safety at work shall be conserved in amounts which do not hinder the regeneration of forests and do not endanger the forest sanitary situation;

12.3. all fallen deadwood, the diameter of which is more than 50 centimetres; and

12.4. the following shall be conserved in amounts that ensure the regeneration of the forest:

12.4.1. deadwood, the diameter of which is more than 25-50 centimetres; and

12.4.2. crab apple-trees, junipers and bay-leaf willows; and

12.4.3. underwood and regrowth groups around the burrows of foxes and badgers.

13. Overgrowth in micro-depressions (lowering in the relief with highly increased humidity) shall be conserved in the final felling.

14. Trees, with the exception of white alder stands, in the final felling of the objects referred to in Paragraph 7 of these Regulations shall be felled gradually by complying with the following additional conditions:

14.1. in forest stands of the objects referred to in Sub-paragraph 7.1 of these Regulations (with the exception of the provisions in Sub-paragraph 14.2 of these Regulations):

14.1.1. trees shall be felled by utilising not more than three felling turns;

14.1.2. the next final felling turn shall be commenced not earlier than five years after the completion of the previous turn of final felling; and

14.1.3. it is allowed, both in the first and second turn, to fell not more than 30 per cent of the standing timber that was in the forest stand before the start of the first turn of final felling;

14.2. in birch and aspen forest stands of the objects referred to in Sub-paragraph 7.1 of these Regulations:

14.2.1. trees shall be felled by utilising not more than two felling turns;

14.2.2. the next turn of the final felling shall be commenced not earlier than five years after the completion of the previous turn of final felling;

14.2.3. it is permitted in the first turn to fell not more than 50 per cent of the standing timber that was in the forest stand before the start of the first turn of final felling;

14.3. in the sites referred to in Sub-paragraphs 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.6, 7.7 and 7.8 of these Regulations:

14.3.1. it is permitted in the first turn to fell not more than 25 per cent of the standing timber that was in the forest stand before commencement of the first turn of final felling;

14.3.2. the next turn of final felling shall be commenced not earlier than ten years after the completion of the previous turn of final felling;

14.3.3. at least 30 of the most viable older trees and trees of largest size shall be conserved (calculating per hectare of felling area) when carrying out the last turn of final felling; and

14.3.4. when felling trees, underwood and regrowth shall be conserved in amounts that do not impede compliance with the work safety regulations.

15. If several clear fellings have been planned for a forest stand, the minimum distance between felling areas shall be 90 metres. In a forest stand where the dominant species of tree is fir and where several fellings have been planned, the next clear felling shall be directly adjacent to the previous one.

16. If a forest stand is intended to be felled in final felling by several turns, each next felling turn shall be commenced not earlier than five years after the completion of the previous turn of final felling.

17. The width of final felling of buffer zones around wood-grouse mating places in micro-reserves shall not exceed 50 metres and the felling area shall not exceed one hectare. In each separate forest property at least 60 per cent of the pine stands which are older than 60 years shall be conserved in the buffer zone.

18. In thinning:

18.1. the underwood tree species shall be conserved in a forest stand the width of which stand is not less than the height of the average tree of the dominant stand in the zone of transition from forest to non-forest ecosystems; and

18.2. the mix of broad-leaved tree species corresponding to types of growing conditions shall be conserved in the amount of at least five per cent of the composition of the stand in coniferous tree pure stands with a mixture of broad-leaved trees.

IV. Restrictions on Economic Activity during the Reproduction Season of Animals

19. From 15 April to 30 June the maintenance of forest stands of 10-year old pines and less than 20-year old broad-leaved trees and firs is prohibited in all forests.

20. From 1 March to 1 September forestry activities, with the exception of fire fighting and forest regeneration utilising a manual labour force, are prohibited in the buffer zone around wood-grouse mating-places in micro-reserves.

21. The restrictions on economic activity in the buffer zone around black stork, black kite, red kite, osprey, white-tailed sea eagle, short-toed eagle, spotted eagle, golden eagle, lesser spotted eagle, peregrine falcon, eagle-owl, goosander, roller and stock dove micro-reserves shall be as follows:

21.1. from 1 March to 31 August all types of felling are prohibited; and

21.2. from 1 March to 30 June mechanical preparation of soil is prohibited.

X. Closing Provisions

22. Until the inventory of specially protected forest areas and protected forest biotopes and the taking of a decision by the responsible State institution regarding the formation of a micro-reserve or a refusal of a proposal regarding the formation of a micro-reserve, the following specially protected forest areas and protected forest biotopes, separated out up to the present time and registered by the State Forest Register, shall be conserved:

- 22.1. forests on ravine slopes;
- 22.2. forests endangered by water or wind erosion;
- 22.3. forests on river banks;
- 22.4. forests around medical treatment institutions;
- 22.5. forests of wood-grouse mating-places;
- 22.6. restricted botanical areas;
- 22.7. protected restricted botanical areas;
- 22.8. restricted cranberry areas;
- 22.9. protected restricted cranberry areas;
- 22.10. restricted zoological areas;
- 22.11. protected restricted zoological areas;
- 22.12. protected nature parks;
- 22.13. protected parks;
- 22.14. park plants;
- 22.15. protected complex restricted areas;
- 22.16. protected restricted marsh areas;
- 22.17. protected forest biotopes;
- 22.18. forest biotopes of protected plant species;
- 22.19. forest biotopes of protected fungi species;
- 22.20. forest biotopes of protected animal species;
- 22.21. conservation blocks;
- 22.22. model stands;
- 22.23. model stands of types of forest growing conditions;

22.24. forests of restricted geological and geomorphological areas;
22.25. forests of other geological and geomorphological objects;
22.26. stands with superior trees;
22.27. stands of venerable trees;
22.28. stands of peculiar trees;
22.29. stands of foreign trees; and
22.30. cultural heritage forests (protected archaeological objects, protected historical monuments, with the exception of specially protected forest areas – sites of the Christmas battles, protected architectural monuments, protected art objects and cultural and historical stands of trees).

23. At the sites referred to in Paragraph 22 of these Regulations, it is prohibited to:

23.1. carry out forestry activities, with the exception of forest fire safety measures;
23.2. use fertilisers, pesticides or other chemical substances; and
23.3. carry out forest land transformation (with the exception of cases where this is required by the construction of motor roads, railways, electric power lines, communication lines and pipelines).

24. Cabinet Regulation No. 132 of 14 June 1994, On Classification of Forests into Categories and Specification of Specially Protected Forest Areas (*Latvijas Vēstnesis*, 1994, No. 87), is repealed.

Prime Minister

A. Bērziņš

Minister for Agriculture

A. Slakteris

This Regulation shall come into force on 12 May 2001.