

1096/1996
Nature Conservation Act
December 20, 1996

In accordance with the decision made by Parliament, the following is enacted:

Chapter 1
General provisions

Section 1
Aims of the Act

The aim of this Act is to:

- 1) maintain biological diversity;
- 2) conserve the beauty and scenic values of nature;
- 3) promote the sustainable use of natural resources and the natural environment;
- 4) promote awareness and general interest in nature; and
- 5) promote scientific research.

Section 2
Scope of application

This Act shall apply to nature and landscape conservation and management.

With the exception of sections 4, 5 a, 9, 39, 42, 47–49, 55, 56 and 57 a, and Chapters 3–5 and 10, this Act shall not apply to such use and management of forests as provided for under the Forest Act ([1093/1996](#)). ([29.5.2009/384](#)).

Nature conservation planning and landscape conservation provided for under this Act shall take into account financial, social and cultural considerations, and characteristic local and regional features.

Section 3
European Community directives

This Act transposes into Finnish law Council Directive (92/43/EEC) on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, hereinafter the *Habitats Directive*, and Council Directive (79/409/EEC) on the conservation of wild birds, hereinafter the *Birds Directive*, as applicable to species of flora and fauna other than those specified in section 5 of the Hunting Act (615/93), and the Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council (2004/35/EC) on environmental liability with regard to the prevention and remedying of environmental damage, hereinafter the *Environmental Liability Directive*, unless its transposition is otherwise provided for in other legislation.

Section 4 *International conventions*

In addition to what is provided in this Act, the provisions set forth under binding international conventions on nature conservation and the protection of wild species of flora and fauna shall also apply.

The Government is authorised to issue more detailed regulations on the enforcement of such obligations laid down in these conventions as fall within the purview of this Act.

Section 5 *Favourable conservation status*

In order to achieve the aims described in section 1, nature conservation shall focus on attaining and maintaining the favourable conservation status of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.

The conservation status of a natural habitat shall be taken as favourable when its natural range and the areas it covers within that range are stable enough to ensure the long-term maintenance of said habitat and of the structure and functions of its ecosystem, and when the conservation status of its typical species is deemed favourable.

The conservation status of a species shall be taken as favourable when the species proves capable of maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitat.

Section 5 a ([29.5.2009/384](#)) *Damage to protected species and natural habitats*

Damage to protected species and natural habitats refers to a significant, measurable, direct or indirect adverse effect on reaching or maintaining a favourable conservation status:

- 1) with respect to the ecological values of the areas selected for inclusion in the Natura 2000 network referred to in Chapter 10;
- 2) with respect to the species referred to in Article 4(2) of the Birds Directive and the species listed in Annex I of the Directive, as well as the species listed in Annex II of the Habitats Directive;
- 3) with respect to the sites providing habitats for species referred to in subparagraph 2 that are protected against deterioration and destruction in accordance with section 47 of this Act; and

4) with respect to the species listed in Annex IV of the Habitats Directive or the breeding sites and resting places of individual animal species referred to in Annex IV(a) of the Directive.

However, an adverse effect for which a derogation has been granted in accordance with section 48, paragraph 2, section 49, paragraph 3, or section 66, will not be regarded as damage to protected species and natural habitats.

The significance of the adverse effect shall be assessed in relation to the conservation status of the natural habitat or species in question at the time of the damage and to the services they provide and their natural ability to recover. Further provisions on factors determining the significance of the adverse effect shall be given by government decree.

Section 6

Administration of nature conservation

The Ministry of the Environment is responsible for the overall guidance and supervision of nature and landscape conservation.

It is the responsibility of the centre for economic development, transport and the environment to promote and supervise nature and landscape conservation within its jurisdiction. ([22.12.2009/1587](#))

It is the responsibility of the local authority to promote nature and landscape conservation within its jurisdiction.

Chapter 2

Nature conservation planning

Section 7

Nature conservation programme

In order to preserve natural features of national interest, a nature conservation programme can be drawn up, in which specific sites are allocated for the purpose of nature conservation.

The nature conservation programme shall specify any measures regarded as jeopardising its objectives.

Section 8

Drafting and adoption of a nature conservation programme

The Ministry of the Environment is responsible for the drafting of nature conservation programmes.

When drafting the programme, any party whose interests or rights are affected shall be given an opportunity to state his case. When the programme is in the early stages of being drafted, the Ministry of the Environment shall inform the public in such a way as to provide an opportunity for public debate.

The nature conservation programme shall be adopted by the Government in plenary session.

Section 9

Legal effects of a nature conservation programme

Any action which jeopardises the conservation objectives of a site included in a nature conservation programme adopted by the Government is prohibited (*restriction on action*). The restriction on action shall remain in effect irrespective of appeal, unless decided otherwise by the appellate authority.

The centre for economic development, transport and the environment may grant derogations from the restriction laid down in paragraph 1, provided that the conservation objectives of the site are not jeopardised to any substantial degree.
[\(22.12.2009/1587\)](#)

In planning or deciding to undertake any action, government authorities and agencies shall ensure that said action in no way hinders the implementation of a nature conservation programme.

Chapter 3

Nature reserves and natural monuments

Nature conservation on State-owned Land and in Finland's Exclusive Economic Zone
[\(26.11.2004/1069\)](#)

Section 10

Nature reserves and prerequisites for their establishment

The following constitute nature reserves:

- 1) national parks;
- 2) strict nature reserves; and
- 3) other nature reserves.

The general prerequisites for establishing a nature reserve are that:

- 1) the site hosts an endangered or rare species, population or ecosystem, or one that is becoming scarce;
- 2) there are breeding sites or resting places of specimens of the species referred to in Annex IV(a) of the Directive on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora;
- 3) it is the site of a special or rare natural formation;

- 4) it is a site of outstanding natural beauty;
- 5) there is a natural heritage type which is becoming scarce within the area;
- 6) it is necessary for attaining or maintaining the favourable conservation status of a natural habitat or species; or
- 7) the site is otherwise so representative, typical or valuable that its conservation may be deemed necessary for the preservation of biological diversity or natural beauty.

(553/2004)

Section 11 *National parks*

The establishment and objectives of a national park shall be prescribed by law. A national park can only be established on State-owned land.

A national park shall be no smaller than 1,000 hectares in size. The area should hold general interest as a natural attraction, or with respect to raising general awareness of or interest in nature.

Section 12 *Strict nature reserves*

The establishment and objectives of a strict nature reserve shall be prescribed by law if the site is at least 1,000 hectares in size, and otherwise by decree. A strict nature reserve can only be established on State-owned land.

A strict nature reserve should hold significance as a means of safeguarding undisturbed natural development, or for scientific research or education.

Section 13 *Protection provisions*

Any action altering the natural surroundings is prohibited in a national park or strict nature reserve. The following is thus prohibited in these areas:

- 1) the construction of buildings and other fixed installations, and the building of roads;
- 2) the extraction of sand and stone materials and minerals, and any action that damages the soil or bedrock;
- 3) drainage;
- 4) the removal or destruction of fungi, trees, bushes and other plants or parts thereof;
- 5) the capture, killing and disturbance of wild vertebrates, and the destruction of their nest and burrows, and the capture and collection of invertebrates; and
- 6) any other action which may have a detrimental impact on the natural conditions and the landscape, or on the preservation of fauna and flora.

Conditions for prohibiting or restricting passage, camping, mooring and landing, and the keeping of vehicles in a nature reserve are set forth in section 18.

Section 14
Derogations from protection provisions

Without prejudice to the provisions of section 13, any action necessary for the appropriate maintenance and use of a nature reserve is permissible in a national park or strict nature reserve, provided this does not jeopardise the purpose for which it was established. The following is thus permissible:

- 1) the construction, restoration and repair of any buildings, fixed installations and paths necessary for the management of the site, surveillance, research, public orientation, and hiking, or of other visitors' facilities;
- 2) the upkeep and restoration of natural habitats and natural heritage types, and steps taken to restore the natural ecological balance;
- 3) the building of roads necessary for public orientation;
- 4) the picking of berries and mushrooms used for human consumption and other practical purposes;
- 5) angling and ice fishing;
- 6) reindeer farming as specified in the Reindeer Husbandry Act (848/90);
- 7) the use and repair of roads, power lines, telephone lines and associated equipment within the area;
- 8) the repair of waterways and installations essential for safe navigation, and any minor land clearing required for the installation of navigational aids; and
- 9) mapping and surveying.

Measures imperative for the purpose of rescue service, fire prevention, border control, animal disease control and animal protection are also permissible in a nature reserve as the situation demands.

Without prejudice to what is prescribed in paragraph 1, subparagraph 6, the authority or agency in charge of the site may impose restrictions on the grazing of reindeer in a strict nature reserve for scientific research or some other special purpose. The State shall be responsible for the resultant cost of fencing and other related expenses.

Section 15 ([21.1.2011/58](#))

Derogations subject to special permit

With permission from the authority or agency in charge of the site, the following is permitted in a national park or strict nature reserve, provided that the conservation objectives of the site are not jeopardised:

- 1) the killing and capture of animals, collection of mushrooms and plants or parts thereof, and of nests and minerals for research or other scientific or educational purposes;
- 2) the control of populations of non-native species or of other plant or animal species that have increased detrimentally or otherwise constitute a nuisance;

- 3) the removal of individuals of such game species subject to a hunting licence that, when outside a nature reserve, they pose a clear risk to the safety of people or they may cause significant financial loss or damage to property;
- 4) the removal of a dead game animal from the area;
- 5) the catching of fish by means other than angling or ice fishing;
- 6) the construction of buildings or other fixed installations for the purpose of reindeer farming;
- 7) geological surveys and prospecting;
- 8) the landing of an aircraft; and
- 9) the restoration and repair of buildings and fixed installations other than those referred to in section 14, paragraph 1, subparagraph 1.

In addition, elks may be driven in a national park during hunting, subject to the conditions laid down in paragraph 1.

Section 16 ([21.1.2011/58](#))
Securing certain rights

Conditions for the maintenance and development of the Sámi culture shall be secured in national parks and strict nature reserves located in the Sámi homeland, referred to in section 4 of the Act on the Sámi Parliament (974/1995). When an area is being established, the specific objectives of its protection and, if the area to be established is a national park, the interests of visitors to the area shall be taken into account in an appropriate manner.

Provisions on the right of municipal residents to hunt in the area of a national park referred to in section 8 of the Hunting Act shall be issued separately.

Section 17 ([21.1.2011/58](#))
Other nature reserves

Provisions on the establishment of other nature reserves on State-owned land shall be prescribed by government decree, as shall their objectives, or, if the nature reserve to be established is no larger than 100 hectares, by a decree of the Ministry of the Environment (*decree on establishing a nature reserve*).

Provisions on the establishment of other nature reserves in Finland's exclusive economic zone shall be prescribed by government decree. The restrictions on the jurisdiction of a coastal state provided for in Parts V and XII of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (Treaty Series of the Statutes of Finland 49–50/1996)

shall be taken into account. What is prescribed in sections 19–22 shall not apply to other nature reserves to be established in Finland's exclusive economic zone.

Section 17 a ([21.01.11/58](#))

Protection provisions for other nature reserves

What is prescribed in sections 13–15 and section 16, paragraph 1, shall apply to other nature reserves, unless otherwise provided in this section.

Hunting is permissible in other nature reserves located in a municipality mentioned in section 8 of the Hunting Act. However, provisions on restrictions on hunting in other nature reserves located in such a municipality may be issued by government decree, if hunting would jeopardise the purpose for which the area was established or cause inconvenience for other uses of the area. Such restrictions may apply for certain areas and time periods, or to game species. It may also be laid down by government decree that hunting is permissible only for municipal residents referred to in section 8 of the Hunting Act, if this is necessary in order to safeguard or manage game populations.

What is prescribed in section 13, paragraph 1, subparagraph 5, of this Act on the killing, capture and disturbance of animals shall apply to other nature reserves located in areas other than those referred to in section 8 of the Hunting Act. However, provisions on permission to hunt in other nature reserves may be issued by government decree if hunting would not jeopardise the purpose for which the area was established or cause inconvenience for other uses of the area. Such provisions may be limited in terms of time or place or concern certain game species.

What is provided in section 6, paragraph 1 of the Fishing Act (286/1982) shall apply to fishing in other nature reserves located in public waters and in Finland's exclusive economic zone. However, provisions on restrictions on fishing in other nature reserves located in public waters and in Finland's exclusive economic zone may be issued by government decree, if fishing would jeopardise the purpose for which the area was established or cause inconvenience for other uses of the area. Such restrictions may apply to certain areas or time periods.

Provisions on the exercise and training activities of the Defence Forces in other nature reserves that the Defence Forces have a right to use, and also otherwise in water areas included in other nature reserves, may be given in the decree establishing the nature reserve, if the activities would not jeopardise the purpose for which the area was established. In addition, provisions on the placement and maintenance of safety equipment for flight operations and sea traffic and on other corresponding measures by authorities in other nature reserves may be given by the decree establishing the nature reserve, as well as provisions on permitting the construction of a road, line or cable, excavation of a ditch, dredging of a waterway or other, corresponding action in other nature reserves, if the action would not jeopardise the purpose for which the area was established.

Section 18

Restriction of access in a nature reserve

Passage off marked trails, paths and other designated areas in a strict nature reserve is allowed only with special permission from the authority or agency in charge of the site.

The decision on establishing a national park or other nature reserve, or the regulations for use of said national park or nature reserve, can prohibit or restrict passage, camping, mooring and landing, and keeping a boat, ship or any other form of transport in the area. A prohibition or restriction on free passage, mooring and landing shall apply only if deemed necessary for the conservation of flora and fauna in the area.

What is prescribed in paragraph 1 shall not apply to passage during tasks necessary for reindeer farming. ([21.1.2011/58](#))

Section 19

Management plan

A special plan shall be drafted for the management and use of a national park, specifying the measures necessary for attaining its conservation objectives. As necessary, a management plan may also be drafted for a strict nature reserve or other nature reserve. (30.5.1997/492)

The authority or agency in charge of the nature reserve is responsible for preparing the management plan. The management plan for a national park must be ratified by the Ministry of the Environment. ([21.1.2011/58](#))

Section 20

Rules and regulations

Rules and regulations shall be drafted for visitors of national parks, specifying the necessary restrictions referred to in section 18, paragraph 2. Rules and regulations can also be drafted, as necessary, for a strict nature reserve or other nature reserve.

The authority or agency in charge of the site is responsible for issuing the rules and regulations of a nature reserve.

Section 21

Demarcation and boundary-marking of a nature reserve

The formation of a nature reserve into a real estate unit is governed by the Real Estate Formation Act ([554/1995](#)). ([13.12.2013/913](#))

A nature reserve shall be marked in the terrain in a clearly visible fashion. Water boundaries shall be marked on maps only. The Ministry of the Environment shall

issue more detailed regulations on means of marking the boundaries of a nature reserve.

Section 22

Adding land to a nature reserve

State-owned land which is allocated for addition to a nature reserve at the time of its purchase or other acquisition shall be considered part of said nature reserve. On application of Metsähallitus, any other land area that is part of the property of public administration duties referred to in section 14 of the Act on Metsähallitus (1378/2004) may be added to a nature reserve by a cadastral procedure or a decision on amalgamation of real estate. However, areas that are part of public waters may not be added to a nature reserve on application. ([21.1.2011/58](#))

Land that is owned by a public corporation other than the State and that adjoins an existing national park can be added to said national park with the consent of the corporation concerned.

What is prescribed in section 21, paragraph 1, shall apply to the real estate formation of land added to a nature reserve. If a private nature reserve acquired by the State is added to a nature reserve, the entry regarding the protection of said private nature reserve is removed from the Land Information System upon the addition. At the same time, any earlier protection orders on the area cease to be in force. The public shall be informed, via the municipal notice board, of the decision to add land to a nature reserve, in the manner prescribed in the Public Announcements Act (34/1925). ([21.1.2011/58](#))

Section 23

Natural monuments

If a single tree, group of trees, erratic boulder or other corresponding natural formation is deemed worthy of special conservation because of its beauty, rarity, scenic value, scientific interest or other corresponding reasons, it can be designated a protected natural monument.

The decision to designate a protected natural monument is taken by the authority or agency in charge of the site of the natural monument. That authority or agency is also responsible for ensuring that the natural monument is marked in the terrain in a clearly visible fashion.

It is prohibited to damage or deface a protected natural monument.

Nature conservation on private land

Section 24 ([22.12.2009/1587](#))

Establishment of a nature reserve

The centre for economic development, transport and the environment may, on application or with the consent of the landowner, establish a nature reserve, referred to in section 10, paragraph 1, subparagraph 3, on land referred to in section 10, paragraph 2. Other public interests shall also be taken into account when deciding to establish the reserve.

The decision on establishing the nature reserve, referred to in paragraph 1, shall include the necessary provisions on the protection of the reserve and, as necessary, on its management. The decision may also include provisions prohibiting or restricting free passage in the reserve or part thereof, provided this is deemed necessary for the conservation of plant and animal species within the area. The decision cannot be issued until the landowner and the centre for economic development, transport and the environment are agreed on the protection provisions for the reserve and the landowner's compensation.

The centre for economic development, transport and the environment may establish a nature reserve on private land without the landowner having applied for it or given consent to it, if the land in question falls within the bounds of a nature conservation programme adopted by the Government. Protection provisions instituted in such a reserve are not to restrict land use to any greater degree than is entailed by the nature conservation programme, unless agreed otherwise with the landowner. The landowner and the local authority shall be given an opportunity to state their case before the decision is made.

What is provided in section 21 applies, as appropriate, to the boundary-marking of nature reserves on private land. The establishment of a new nature reserve shall be entered in the Real Estate Register. ([13.12.2013/913](#))

Section 25

Temporary protection order

For the purpose of nature and landscape conservation, a contract can be concluded between the centre for economic development, transport and the environment and the landowner on the temporary protection, either complete or partial, of land referred to in section 10, paragraph 2. The term of the contract is not to exceed 20 years. ([22.12.2009/1587](#))

The contract referred to in paragraph 1 remains in effect even if the land passes to a new owner.

The contract shall be entered in the Real Estate Register. ([13.12.2013/913](#))

Section 26

Natural monuments on private land

On application of, or with the consent of, the landowner, natural monuments, as described in section 23, which lie on private land, can be placed under a protection order by the local authority. What is prescribed in section 23 shall apply to the boundary-marking of and protection provisions for these natural monuments.

Section 27

Lifting a protection order

On application of the landowner or any other interested party, or by proposal of the Ministry of the Environment, the centre for economic development, transport and the environment is authorised to fully or partly lift a protection order on private land, or to grant derogations from it, provided that the ecological value of the site has declined substantially or its protection prevents the implementation of a project or plan of overriding public interest. ([22.12.2009/1587](#))

The Ministry of the Environment shall state its opinion on all such applications. If the matter is instigated by the Ministry of the Environment or any other interested party, the landowner shall be given an opportunity to state his case.

If a protection order is lifted or its provisions substantially weakened on application of the landowner, the decision can be made subject to the condition that the landowner returns the sum originally paid to him as compensation, either in part or in full.

The decision to lift a protection order shall be entered in the Real Estate Register. ([13.12.2013/913](#))

Section 28 ([22.12.2009/1587](#))

Lifting a protection order on a natural monument

On application of the landowner or by proposal of the centre for economic development, transport and the environment, the local authority is authorised to lift a protection order on a natural monument referred to in section 26, provided that the grounds for its protection no longer exist, or that it prevents the implementation of a project or plan of major public interest.

The centre for economic development, transport and the environment shall issue its opinion on all such applications. If the proceedings are instigated by the centre for economic development, transport and the environment, the landowner must be given an opportunity to state his case.

Chapter 4 Conservation of natural habitats

Section 29

Protected habitat types

It is prohibited to alter any of the following natural habitat types or comparable habitats in such a way as to jeopardise the preservation of the characteristic features of the area in question:

- 1) wild woods rich in broad-leafed deciduous species;
- 2) hazel woods;
- 3) common alder woods;
- 4) sandy shores in their natural state;
- 5) coastal meadows;
- 6) treeless or sparsely wooded sand dunes;
- 7) juniper meadows;
- 8) wooded meadows; and
- 9) prominent single trees or groups of trees in an open landscape.

More detailed provisions on natural habitat types referred to in paragraph 1 shall be issued by decree.

Section 30

Entry into force of a prohibition

The prohibition referred to in section 29, paragraph 1, shall take effect as of when the centre for economic development, transport and the environment has set the boundaries of the natural habitat to be protected and has notified the site's owners and holders of its decision. The prohibition is not valid until a public announcement is made and is posted on the municipal notice board, as stipulated by the Public Announcements Act. ([22.12.2009/1587](#))

Decisions referred to in paragraph 1 shall remain in force irrespective of appeal, unless decided otherwise by the appellate authority.

If a site belonging to a protected natural habitat type no longer has any ecological value, the protection order can be lifted. The procedure for doing so is prescribed in paragraph 1.

Section 31([22.12.2009/1587](#))

Authority to grant derogations

In individual cases, the centre for economic development, transport and the environment may grant derogations from the prohibition referred to in section 29, paragraph 1, provided this does not seriously jeopardise the conservation objectives of the natural habitat type in question, or if its protection prevents the implementation of a project or plan of overriding public interest.

Chapter 5

Landscape conservation

Section 32

Landscape conservation area

A landscape conservation area can be established in order to preserve and manage a natural or cultural landscape of outstanding beauty, historical interest or other special value.

Section 33 ([22.12.2009/1587](#))

Establishment of a landscape conservation area

The Ministry of the Environment shall decide on the establishment and prospective uses of a landscape conservation area of national interest. In cases where the landscape conservation area does not hold national interest, the matter shall be decided by the centre for economic development, transport and the environment on submission of the regional council.

Section 34

Provisions on landscape conservation areas

Provisions necessary for preserving the characteristic features of a landscape conservation area can be written into the decision establishing the area. These provisions are not, however, to constitute a significant inconvenience to the property owner.

In individual cases, the centre for economic development, transport and the environment can grant derogations from the prohibitions in force in a given landscape conservation area. ([22.12.2009/1587](#))

Provisions within the building legislation concerning a landscape conservation area shall not apply to sites where there is a town plan or legally valid master plan in force. ([5.2.1999/144](#))

Section 35

Lifting a landscape protection order

What is provided in section 33 concerning the establishment of a landscape conservation area shall apply, as appropriate, to the lifting of a landscape protection order or any other decision altering its status.

A landscape protection order can be lifted or derogations granted if the scenic value of the landscape has declined substantially or its protection prevents the implementation of a project or plan of major public interest.

Section 36 ([23.6.2005/506](#))

Prohibition notices

No sign prohibiting trespassing, mooring and landing or otherwise restricting free public access is to be erected on land or in water in so far as there are no legal grounds for doing so.

Chapter 6

Protection of species

Section 37

Scope of application

The provisions of this chapter shall apply to all naturally occurring animal and plant species in Finland and Finland's exclusive economic zone, with the exception of game animals and non-protected species referred to in section 5 of the Hunting Act, and commercial fish species. Notwithstanding the above, the scope of application of sections 44 and 49 is prescribed in said sections. ([26.11.2004/1069](#))

What is prescribed in this chapter concerning species shall correspondingly apply to subspecies, races, subpopulations and forms.

What is prescribed in this chapter concerning plants and plant species shall correspondingly apply to mushrooms and fungi.

Section 38

Protection of animal species

All mammals and birds within the scope of application of this chapter are protected.

If a species other than a bird or mammal becomes endangered or its protection otherwise proves necessary, the species in question may be placed under a protection order by decree, either throughout the country or in a specific part thereof.

The protection of animals referred to in section 5 of the Hunting Act is subject to the provisions of said Act. The import and introduction into the wild of foreign bird and mammal species is subject to what is prescribed in the Hunting Act, the Animal Disease Act (441/2013) and the Animal Protection Act (247/96).

Section 39

Protection provisions

The following prohibitions apply to all specimens belonging to a protected species:

- 1) deliberate killing and capture;
- 2) appropriation, removal or deliberate destruction of eggs and other developmental stages in their life cycles;
- 3) deliberate disturbance of animals, particularly during breeding, in important resting places during migration, or on any other sites of significance to their life cycles.

Any appropriately marked tree hosting the nest of a protected bird species and any tree hosting a large bird of prey is protected if the bird in question nests in it on a regular basis and the nest is clearly visible.

It is prohibited to use means for the capture of invertebrates that are harmful in respect of nature conservation.

Further provisions on prohibited means of capture are issued by a decree of the Ministry of the Environment. ([24.6.2004/553](#))

Section 40

Protected animals found dead

No protected animal found dead may be appropriated. Such an animal may, however, be handed over to a State research institute for examination in order to establish the cause of death. ([24.6.2004/553](#))

If an animal referred to in paragraph 1 has scientific, educational or collection value, when properly treated, it may be appropriated for assignment to the Central Museum of Natural History, some other natural science museum or institution, a university, or, with permission from the centre for economic development, transport and the environment, to a body other than those referred to above. ([22.12.2009/1587](#))

What is provided in this section shall not apply to animal species referred to in section 49.

Section 41

Animals found in a helpless state

Every effort must be made to assist a protected animal found diseased, injured or otherwise in a helpless state. Such animals may be appropriated for transportation to a veterinary facility or for temporary care. What is prescribed in the Animal Protection Act shall otherwise apply.

Section 42

Protection of plant species

If a wild plant species becomes endangered or its protection otherwise proves necessary, the species can be placed under a protection order by decree, either throughout the country or in a specific part thereof.

The picking, collecting, cutting, uprooting and destruction of a protected plant species or part thereof is prohibited. The same shall correspondingly apply to the seeds of any protected plant species.

Section 43

Preventing the spread of non-native species

Non-native species falling outside the purview of the Hunting Act or Fishing Act are not to be released into the wild if there is cause to suspect that the species may become established permanently.

Non-native plant species without an established range in the Finnish wild are not to be planted or sown outside a garden, field or other site designated for special purposes, nor in natural waters, in so far as there is cause to suspect that the species may become established permanently. This does not apply, however, to the planting or sowing of trees for the purpose of forestry.

If a non-native plant or animal species is known to spread rapidly in the wild, and there is reasonable cause to suspect that it might constitute a health hazard or have a detrimental effect on an indigenous Finnish species, the Ministry of the Environment may issue any regulations as prove necessary for preventing the spread of such a species.

Measures for preventing the spread of animal disease are set forth in the Animal Disease Act.

Section 44 ([30.5.1997/492](#))

International trade in endangered species

What is provided in Council Regulation (EC) No. 338/97 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein shall apply to the import, export, re-export and through transit, sale, offering for sale, keeping for commercial purposes, display to the public for commercial purposes and transporting for sale of the animal and plant specimens, or parts or derivatives thereof, referred to in said Regulation.

The Ministry of the Environment shall assume the administrative authority described in the European Community Regulation referred to in paragraph 1. The Finnish Environment Institute, however, is the competent authority referred to in said Regulation in all matters concerning the issue of permits and certificates. The Finnish Museum for Natural History of the University of Helsinki is the scientific authority referred to in said Regulation.

Further provisions are issued by a decree of the Ministry of the Environment as necessary on the implementation of the Council Regulation referred to in paragraph 1. The Ministry may decide to assign to the Finnish Museum of Natural History expert duties related to the implementation of said Council Regulation. (553/2004)

It is the duty of the customs authority to ensure that the Community Regulations on importation, exportation, re-exportation and through transit are observed.

Section 44 a ([30.5.1997/492](#))

Designated customs offices

Specimens, parts and derivatives of animal and plant species described in the European Community Regulation referred to in paragraph 1 of section 44 that are imported to Finland from countries outside the European Community (*third countries*) or exported to third countries, shall pass via a designated customs office, unless provided otherwise by decree. Customs authorities shall direct specimens, parts and derivatives of animal and plant species referred to in said Regulation to the nearest designated customs office under customs supervision.

More detailed provisions on the designated customs offices required by European Community legislation shall be issued by decree.

Section 45 ([22.12.2009/1587](#))

Trade in protected species

The import, export, sale, exchange and offering for sale or exchange of a specimen of a protected animal or plant species not belonging to the species referred to in section 44, or a part or derivative thereof, is prohibited without permission from the centre for economic development, transport and the environment.

Section 46

Threatened species

Any naturally occurring species whose survival in the wild is at risk in Finland can be declared a threatened species by decree.

Section 47 ([29.5.2009/384](#))

Species under strict protection

Any species at imminent risk of extinction can be placed under a strict protection order by decree. The Ministry of the Environment shall, as necessary, prepare a programme for reviving the populations of such species.

The deterioration and destruction of a habitat important for the survival of a species under strict protection is prohibited.

The prohibition referred to in paragraph 2 shall take effect as of when the centre for economic development, transport and the environment has set the boundaries of a site hosting a species under strict protection and has notified the site's owners and holders of its decision. The prohibition is not valid until a public announcement is made and is posted on the municipal notice board, as stipulated in the Public Announcements Act. The decision remains in force irrespective of appeal, unless decided otherwise by the appellate authority. ([22.12.2009/1587](#))

What is provided in section 30, paragraph 3, regarding the lifting of a protection order on a site belonging to a protected natural habitat type shall also apply to the lifting of a protection order on the habitat of a species under strict protection.

The deterioration and destruction of habitats significant for reaching or maintaining the favourable conservation status of a species referred to in section 5 a, paragraph 1, subparagraph 2 is prohibited. What is prescribed in paragraphs 3 and 4 of this section shall apply to the entry into force and the lifting of the prohibition. ([29.5.2009/384](#))

Section 48

Derogations from a protection order

What is provided in sections 39 and 42, paragraph 2, shall not preclude the use of land for farming, forestry and development, or the use of a building or piece of equipment for its intended purpose. In doing so, however, steps should be taken to avoid harming or disturbing protected plants and animals, in so far as this is feasible without substantial additional expense.

The centre for economic development, transport and the environment can grant a derogation from the protection provisions enacted under sections 39, 42 and 47, provided that the conservation status of the affected species remains favourable. If the application for a derogation concerns the entire country, only the Ministry of the Environment is authorised to grant the derogation. The derogation may be made subject to certain conditions as deemed necessary. ([22.12.2009/1587](#))

What is prescribed in this section shall not apply to animal and plant species referred to in section 49.

Section 49 ([22.12.2009/1587](#))

Special provisions on species protected in the European Community

The destruction and deterioration of breeding sites and resting places used by specimens of animal species referred to in Annex IV(a) of the Habitats Directive is prohibited.

With the exclusion of game animals and non-protected animals referred to in section 5 of the Hunting Act, it is prohibited to keep, transport, sell, exchange or offer for sale or exchange specimens of animal species referred to in Annex IV(a), and plant species referred to in Annex IV(b) of the Habitats Directive, or any part or derivative thereof. The same shall correspondingly apply to birds referred to in Article 1 of the Birds Directive as based on the derogations provided in Article 6(2) and (3) of said Directive.

In special cases, the centre for economic development, transport and the environment is authorised to grant derogations from the prohibition referred to in paragraph 1 of this section, and from the prohibitions referred to in section 39, section 42, paragraph 2, and section 47, paragraphs 2 and 5, concerning animal and plant species referred to in paragraph 2 of this section, on grounds set forth in Article 16(1) of the Habitats Directive. A derogation can correspondingly be granted for birds referred to in Article 1 of the Birds Directive on grounds set forth in Article 9 of said Directive.

In special cases, the centre for economic development, transport and the environment is authorised to grant derogations from the prohibition referred to in paragraph 2 on grounds specified in Article 16(1) of the Habitats Directive. It may correspondingly grant a derogation for birds referred to in Article 1 of the Birds Directive on grounds set forth in Article 9 of the Birds Directive.

Chapter 7 **Implementation of nature conservation**

Section 50

Implementation of a nature conservation programme

The Ministry of the Environment shall take immediate steps to begin the implementation of an adopted nature conservation programme. In assessing its order of priority, due attention shall be paid to the particular ecological and scenic value of the site, and any factors endangering it.

The manner in which a site is protected shall depend on its conservation objectives. Conservation measures should primarily be implemented on a voluntary basis.

In the event that the ecological and scenic value of the site has declined substantially, its conservation objectives are not seriously jeopardised or its protection prevents the implementation of a project of major public interest, the Ministry of the Environment may, to the extent necessary, refrain from implementing the nature conservation programme.

Section 51

The owner's right to compulsory purchase

Four years after a nature conservation programme is adopted and the decision gains legal force, the owner of any piece of land falling within the confines of said programme has the right, unless agreed otherwise, to demand that the land be purchased by the State if the programme has not been put into effect by that time.

The compulsory purchase proceedings are initiated by applying for an order from the National Land Survey of Finland. ([13.12.2013/913](#))

Section 52

The State's right of expropriation

For the purpose of creating a nature reserve or instituting other protection measures referred to in this Act, the State is empowered to expropriate immovable property and special rights in the order provided in the Act on Redemption of Immovable Property and Special Rights (603/77).

The Ministry of the Environment can, however, observing the provisions of paragraph 1, decide on an expropriation permission if the site in question is included in a legally

valid nature conservation programme or is included in or in accordance with a legally valid Government proposal belonging to the Natura 2000 network as an object to be implemented under this Act or if it is a question of usufruct of such an area. The same shall apply to a site which narrowly extends beyond the confines of a nature conservation programme site or an above-mentioned Natura 2000 network object, provided that expropriation is required by nature conservation or other public interests. ([24.6.2004/553](#))

Prior to instituting the expropriation proceedings referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2, the matter should be negotiated with the landowner, in so far as this is feasible without major inconvenience.

Section 53

Duty of the State to pay compensation

If the property owner or holder of special rights incurs significant inconvenience due to a decision made under section 29 or 47 or to a prohibition laid down in section 49, paragraph 1, he is entitled to full compensation from the State. The State is not required to pay compensation until the owner has applied for a derogation under the provisions of section 31 or section 48, paragraph 2, or section 49, paragraph 3, and said application has been denied. If it is manifestly impracticable to grant any derogation, no further special application is needed in order to institute compensation proceedings. ([24.6.2004/553](#))

If a centre for economic development, transport and the environment has, under section 24, paragraph 3, made a decision on establishing a nature reserve and the decision causes the property owner significant inconvenience, the State is required to pay compensation for said inconvenience. ([22.12.2009/1587](#))

If no settlement is reached on compensation or an alternative form of protection, an application can be submitted to the district survey office for assessment of compensation referred to in paragraphs 1, 2 and 5. The compensation shall be determined in accordance with the provisions of the Act on Redemption of Immovable Property and Special Rights. Under section 95, paragraph 1, of the same Act, interest shall be paid on compensation for a usufruct restriction as of the date when the landowner applies for formal compensation proceedings at the district survey office. ([13.12.2013/913](#))

If the permanence of significant inconvenience due to a decision issued under section 49, paragraph 1, cannot be estimated reliably in advance, compensation may be determined for a maximum period of ten years, depending on the species. Thereafter, compensation is to be determined for permanent inconvenience if it is likely that the breeding site or resting place is permanent. ([24.6.2004/553](#))

If a decision made by an authority on a permit matter under section 66, paragraph 1, or by a centre for economic development, transport and the environment on a measure subject to notice under section 65 c, restricts the right of use of the real estate in question in such a way as to result in consequences referred to in paragraph 1 for the landowner or holder of a special right, and there would otherwise have been no

obstacle to granting the permit or enacting the measure subject to notice, the State is obliged, on request, to provide compensation for the inconvenience. The right to compensation does not apply, however, if the inconvenience is caused:

- 1) by refusal of an application for an exemption order regarding pollution, or an alteration or blocking prohibition referred to in the Water Act ([587/2011](#));
- 2) by refusal of a permit as referred to in the Environmental Protection Act ([527/2014](#));
- 3) by the resolution of a matter concerning an exploration permit, mining permit or gold panning permit as referred to in the Mining Act ([621/2011](#));
- 4) by refusal to grant expropriation permission referred to in the Act on Redemption of Immovable Property and Special Rights; or
- 5) to the State, a municipality or joint municipal board. ([19.12.2014/1259](#))

Separate provisions are laid down on compensation for inconvenience caused by refusal to grant permits under Land Use and Building Act ([132/1999](#)) and Extractable Land Resources Act ([555/1981](#)). Under section 10 of the Forest Act, provisions on modification of the special obligation concerning forest use are laid down in section 11 of the same Act. ([27.5.2011/594](#))

Section 54 ([22.12.2009/1587](#))

Scheduling of compensation payments

Compensation payable under the provisions of section 53 of this Act can, on request of the centre for economic development, transport and the environment, be split up into not more than four yearly instalments.

Interest referred to in section 53, paragraph 3, is payable as of the date when the first instalment is paid.

Chapter 8 Injunctions, coercive measures and penalties

Section 55 ([22.12.2009/1587](#))

Temporary injunctions

The centre for economic development, transport and the environment is empowered to prohibit for not more than two years such use of land referred to in section 10, paragraph 2, as might jeopardise the conservation objectives of the site. An injunction imposed by a centre for economic development, transport and the environment shall be observed irrespective of appeal, unless ruled otherwise by the appellate authority.

If the protection order is subsequently lifted and the landowner has incurred significant inconvenience as a result of the injunction, he is entitled to State

compensation. The same shall apply if a decision is made to refrain from implementing a nature conservation programme under the provisions of section 50, paragraph 3.

Compensation shall be awarded on application and by decision of the centre for economic development, transport and the environment.

Section 56

Injunctions on sites pending expropriation

If permission is granted for expropriation of property or special rights under the provisions of section 52, paragraph 1, any action that might jeopardise the objectives of the expropriation is prohibited on said property. The injunction is in force as of when the site's owners and holders are notified of the expropriation order.

[\(24.6.2004/553\)](#)

Section 57 [\(22.12.2009/1587\)](#)

Administrative enforcement

Should anyone fail to observe the provisions laid down in or under this Act, or undertake action contrary to them, the centre for economic development, transport and the environment can forbid that person from continuing or repeating the offence or instance of negligence and require that he or she correct the unlawful situation or redress the negligence within a time limit under notice of a conditional fine or enforced suspension, or can issue notice that the necessary measures will be taken at his or her expense. The ruling of the centre for economic development, transport and the environment shall be observed irrespective of appeal, unless decided otherwise by the appellate authority.

Whosoever incurs inconvenience has the right to initiate proceedings at the centre for economic development, transport and the environment referred to in paragraph 1, provided that the purpose of the proceedings is to prevent the destruction of the environment or any deterioration of its ecological value deemed to be of not minor importance, or to initiate the remediation of damage to protected species and natural habitats. The same right shall apply to associations referred to in section 61, paragraph 3, within their jurisdiction, and also to local authorities. [\(27.6.2014/548\)](#)

In all matters concerning notice of a conditional fine, notice of enforced compliance and notice of enforced suspension, threat of penalty payment, taking of action or suspension, what is provided in the Act on Conditional Fines (1113/90) shall be observed.

Section 57 a [\(22.12.2009/1587\)](#)

Prevention and remediation of damage to protected species and natural habitats

If a natural or legal person who operates an occupational activity or who *de facto* controls said activity (*operator*) deliberately or through negligence causes damage, or

imminence of damage, to protected species and natural habitats through action contrary to the provisions and regulations laid down in or by virtue of this Act or by failure to observe said provisions and regulations, the operator shall notify the centre for economic development, transport and the environment of the damage or the imminent threat thereof without delay and take the necessary measures to prevent or minimise any adverse effects.

Once notified of damage to protected species and natural habitats or the imminent threat thereof, the centre for economic development, transport and the environment shall, in addition to what is prescribed in section 57, require that the operator who has caused the damage take measures to prevent any adverse effects or limit them to the minimum and, if necessary, require that the operator take remedial measures referred to in the Act on the Remediation of Certain Environmental Damages ([383/2009](#)). The centre for economic development, transport and the environment may intensify the effect of an order that it has issued by conditional imposition of a penalty payment, by having the omission corrected at the expense of the defaulting party, or by suspending operations. Provisions on access to justice are laid down in section 57, paragraph 2 of this Act.

Notwithstanding the secrecy provisions, the centre for economic development, transport and the environment has the right to obtain from the operator the information necessary for the prevention of damage to protected species and natural habitats or the imminent risk thereof or for the remediation of damage to protected species and natural habitats.

What is prescribed in paragraphs 1 and 2 does not apply to damage to protected species and natural habitats where the prevention and remediation is regulated under the Environmental Protection Act, the Water Act or the Gene Technology Act ([377/1995](#)). ([27.5.2011/594](#))

Section 58 *Penalties*

The penalty for causing damage to the environment, or for any other nature conservation offence, is laid down in Chapter 48, sections 1–5, of the Penal Code.

Whosoever either wilfully or through gross negligence

- 1) violates a provision or a regulation on nature conservation laid down in or by virtue of this Act, or buys or accepts an item obtained by violating said provisions;
- 2) takes possession of, assigns, presents in public for commercial purposes, sells, keeps with intent to sell, offers for sale or transports with intent to sell, imports or exports a plant or animal specimen or a part or derivative thereof, contrary to the provisions of section 40 or 45, or section 49, paragraphs 2 and 4; or
- 3) imports, exports, or conducts through transit across Finnish territory an animal or plant specimen, or a part or derivative thereof, described in the European Community Regulation referred to in section 44, paragraph 1, without a permit or certificate

required by said Regulation, or fails to comply with the stipulations specified on said permit or certificate; or [\(30.5.1997/492\)](#)

4) imports from a third country or exports to a third country an animal or plant specimen, or a part or derivative thereof, referred to in the European Community Regulation referred to in paragraph 1 of section 44, without passing via a customs office designated under this Act, or fails to make the import notification required under the said Regulation; or [\(30.5.1997/492\)](#)

5) purchases, offers to purchase, acquires for commercial purposes, displays to the public for commercial purposes, uses for commercial purposes, sells, keeps for sale, offers or transports for sale an animal or plant specimen, or a part or derivative thereof, listed in Annex A or B of the European Community Regulation referred to in paragraph 1 of section 44, in contravention of Article 8 of said Regulation, [\(10.12.2010/1074\)](#)

shall be fined for committing a *nature conservation violation*, unless the action is punishable as a nature conservation offence.

Whosoever either wilfully or through gross negligence unlawfully destroys a breeding site or resting place of specimens of the species listed in Annex IV(a) of the Directive on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, or causes a breeding site or resting place to deteriorate shall also be sentenced for committing a nature conservation violation. [\(24.6.2004/553\)](#)

Section 59 [\(26.10.2001/878\)](#)

Forfeiture

Whosoever is guilty of a violation referred to in section 58 shall be sentenced to forfeit to the State that which constitutes the object of the offence. In addition, the monetary value of a protected plant or animal as a representative of its species shall be forfeited. The Ministry of the Environment shall set standard monetary values for protected animals and plants. Otherwise, what is provided in Chapter 10, sections 1–4 and 6–11, of the Penal Code (39/1889) shall apply where appropriate.

Section 60

Right of seizure

The warden of a nature reserve employed by the authority or agency in charge of said reserve, or the landowner of any nature reserve not in the possession of a public corporation, has the right to appropriate implements used for hunting and gathering, or other equipment which has been used or intended for purposes contrary to the provisions and regulations observed in the nature reserve. The same right of seizure shall apply to animals unlawfully captured or plants unlawfully removed from a nature reserve, to other natural features whose removal from said reserve is unlawful, and to any item whose use is prohibited in said reserve.

Section 60 a ([15.7.2005/591](#))
Enforcement duties of the Finnish Border Guard

The Finnish Border Guard shall participate in the enforcement of the provisions laid down in this Act in nature reserves.

Chapter 9
Appeals

Section 61
Appeal

A decision taken by the Government or a ministry can be appealed in the Supreme Administrative Court. An appeal can be lodged on the grounds that said decision is contrary to the law.

A decision taken by Metsähallitus, the Finnish Environment Institute, the Finnish Forest Research Institute or a centre for economic development, transport and the environment, or a decision taken by a local authority under section 26 or 28, can be appealed in an administrative court. The competent administrative court shall be determined in accordance with section 12 of the Act on the Application of Administrative Law (586/1996), except where the appeal is lodged against a decision taken by a centre for economic development, transport and the environment, in which case the competent administrative court is that in whose jurisdiction most of the site lies. ([22.12.2009/1587](#))

The right to appeal belongs to those whose rights or interests are affected by the matter in question. In matters other than compensation, the local authority also has the right of appeal. In matters other than compensation and those involving the derogations referred to in section 31 and section 48, paragraph 2, the right of appeal also belongs to any registered local or regional association whose purpose is to promote nature conservation or environmental protection. A decision taken by the Government concerning the adoption of a nature conservation programme can also be appealed by a corresponding national organisation or any other national organisation safeguarding the interests of landowners.

What is provided in the Act on the Application of Administrative Law (586/96) shall otherwise apply.

Section 62 ([22.12.2009/1587](#))
Appeal against a provincial administrative court ruling

A ruling made by an administrative court under the provisions of this Act can be appealed in the Supreme Administrative Court. What is provided concerning appeals in section 61, paragraph 3, shall otherwise apply. If the administrative court amends or repeals a decision taken by another authority, the right to appeal shall also belong to said authority.

Section 63 ([22.12.2009/1587](#))

Appeal against decisions made under other legislation

In addition to what is prescribed separately elsewhere regarding appeals, the centre for economic development, transport and the environment has the right to appeal a decision taken under other acts concerning the issue of a permit or the adoption of a plan, on the grounds that the decision is contrary to the provisions or regulations laid down in or under this Act.

Chapter 10
Special provisions on the European Community Natura
2000 network

Section 64

The Natura 2000 network

The European Union's Natura 2000 network in Finland consists of:

- 1) special protection areas pursuant to the Birds Directive of which the European Commission has been notified;
- 2) special areas of conservation as laid down by decree of the Ministry of the Environment, after the Commission or Council has approved the areas concerned as sites of Community importance pursuant to the provisions of the Habitats Directive. ([19.12.2014/1259](#))

What is provided in section 8 concerning the drafting and adoption of a nature conservation programme shall correspondingly apply, as appropriate, to the drafting of a proposal for sites to be included in the Natura 2000 network. Parties affected by the decision shall be given an opportunity to state their opinion after a public announcement is posted on the municipal notice board, as stipulated in the Public Announcements Act. The public shall be forewarned of the announcement well in advance in at least one newspaper of general circulation within the locality concerned. The State shall cover the cost of public announcements. Information on the proposal must be made available in the municipality concerned for the duration that the announcement is posted on the municipal notice board.

Changes to the scientific data on nature in the areas included in the Natura 2000 network are decided upon by the government plenary session. ([19.12.2014/1259](#))

What is provided in section 61, paragraphs 1, 3, and 4, applies to appealing the decision. ([19.12.2014/1259](#))

A list and maps of the areas included in the Natura 2000 network shall be published by Ministry of the Environment decree. The list of areas shall include, for each area, an identification number, name, centre point coordinates, grounds for conservation and indication of whether the area contains a priority natural habitat, as referred to in Annex I of the Habitats Directive, or a priority species, as referred to in Annex II. ([19.12.2014/1259](#))

Section 64 a ([19.12.2014/1259](#))
Prohibition against deterioration

The ecological values on which the conservation of an area included in the Natura 2000 network is based may not be significantly deteriorated.

Section 65 ([22.12.2009/1587](#))
Assessment of projects and plans

If a project or plan, either individually or in combination with other projects and plans, is likely to have significant adverse effect on the ecological value of a site included in, or proposed by the Government for inclusion in, the Natura 2000 network, and the site has been included in, or is intended for inclusion in, the Natura 2000 network for the purpose of protecting this ecological value, the planner or implementer of the project is required to conduct an appropriate assessment of its impact. The same shall correspondingly apply to any project or plan outside the site which is liable to have a significantly harmful impact on the site. The above assessment of impact can also be carried out as part of the assessment procedure referred to in Chapter 2 of the Act on Environmental Impact Assessment Procedure (468/1994). (553/2004)

The authority in charge of granting the permit or approving the plan shall oversee that the assessment referred to in paragraph 1 is carried out. The authority shall thereafter request an opinion on the assessment from the centre for economic development, transport and the environment and the authority in charge of the site in question. If the centre for economic development, transport and the environment itself is the party planning or implementing the project, the Ministry of the Environment decides which other centre for economic development and the environment will issue the opinion. The decision of the Ministry of the Environment cannot be appealed separately.
([19.12.2014/1259](#))

The opinion referred to above in paragraph 2 shall be issued without delay and no later than within six months after the request for the opinion has arrived at the centre for economic development, transport and the environment or the centre has received notification of the Ministry of the Environment decision referred to in paragraph 2.
([19.12.2014/1259](#))

Section 65 a ([19.12.2014/1259](#))
Authority's duty to suspend and provide notification

An authority notified under due procedure, as provided by act or decree, of a project or plan referred to in section 65, paragraph 1, shall take steps within its jurisdiction to suspend the implementation of the project or plan until the assessment described in section 65, paragraph 1, is carried out. The authority shall also immediately notify the centre for economic development, transport and the environment of the matter.

Section 65 b ([19.12.2014/1259](#))

Duty of the party responsible for the measure to provide notification

If the measure may result in the consequence prohibited under section 64 a, the party responsible shall notify the centre for economic development, transport and the environment of the measure. The notification is not required if the measure requires a permit from the authority or if the notification referred to in section 65 a is provided.

The notification shall be issued in writing at least 30 days before initiating the procedure. It shall be deemed delivered to the centre for economic development, transport and the environment upon arrival. The notification shall include information on the measure, its method of implementation and effects on the conservation objectives of the area. Further provisions on the content of the notification may be laid down by government decree.

Section 65 c ([19.12.2014/1259](#))

Prohibiting or restricting a measure

If a measure notified to the centre for economic development, transport and the environment under section 65 a or 65 b causes or is at risk of causing the consequence prohibited under section 64 a, the centre for economic development, transport and the environment shall within 30 days of the arrival of the notification prohibit the commencement of the measure or restrict the measure. Before making a decision, the centre for economic development, transport and the environment shall strive to negotiate alternative ways to implementing the measure with the party responsible in order to prevent the consequence prohibited under section 64 a.

Section 66

Granting of permits and adoption and ratification of plans

No authority is empowered to grant a permit for the implementation of a project, or to adopt or ratify a plan, if the assessment procedure or the requested opinion referred to in section 65, paragraphs 1 and 2, indicates that the project or plan would have a significant adverse impact on the particular ecological value for the protection of which the site has been included in, or is intended for inclusion in, the Natura 2000 network. ([26.3.1999/371](#))

Without prejudice to the provisions of paragraph 1, a permit can be granted and a plan can be adopted or ratified if the Government decides that said project or plan must, in the absence of alternative solutions, be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

Where a site hosts a priority natural habitat type referred to in Annex I, or a priority species referred to in Annex II, of the Habitats Directive, a further precondition for granting a permit or adopting or ratifying a plan is that a reason relating to human health or public safety, or to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment, or any other imperative reason of overriding public interest so demands. In the latter case, an opinion shall be requested from the European Commission.

In decisions concerning the implementation of a project or plan made under paragraph 2 or 3, the Government shall issue an order on measures required to compensate for the deterioration of the overall coherence or ecological values of the Natura 2000 network. The costs of the measures shall be covered by the party implementing the project or plan. The liability for costs can be made more reasonable by taking into account a compelling reason of overriding public interest that serves as one of the bases for the project or plan. ([19.12.2014/1259](#))

Section 67
Special cases

What is provided in sections 65 and 66 shall correspondingly apply to a site which the European Commission has reported as being under consideration for inclusion in the Natura 2000 network.

Should the Commission reject a site proposed by the Government for inclusion in the Natura 2000 network, or should the Council decide against the inclusion of a site which has been under consideration, the provisions of sections 65 and 66 shall no longer apply. What is provided in section 55, paragraph 2, shall accordingly apply.

Section 68 ([19.12.2014/1259](#))
Implementation of the Natura 2000 network

A site included in the Natura 2000 network shall be protected in a manner complying with its conservation objectives without delay and within six years of the Commission or Council having approved it as a site of Community importance. A special protection area referred to in section 64, paragraph 1, subparagraph 1, shall nevertheless be placed under protection immediately after the Commission has been notified of the site.

The grounds for the conservation objectives for the site are incorporated into the site-specific Standard Data Form of the Natura 2000 database. Upon establishing nature conservation areas and deciding on other measures pursuant to this Act, the authorities shall promote measures that meet the ecological requirements of the natural habitats and species on which the conservation of Natura 2000 sites is based, and that aim to preserve, increase or improve these habitats and species. Corresponding measures shall also be promoted when preparing management plans for wilderness areas in accordance with the Wilderness Act (62/1991) and for state camping and hiking areas established under the Outdoor Recreation Act (606/1973), and when the centre of economic development, transport and the environment and Metsähallitus prepare management plans for Natura 2000 sites, and when assessments are made of the condition of Natura 2000 sites. The grounds for conservation shall also be taken into account when drawing up plans in accordance with the Land Use and Building Act, as required by the purpose and intent of the plan, and when making grant decisions regarding environmental management.

Section 69
Lifting a protection order and compensation for deterioration of the network

A protection order on a site included in the Natura 2000 network, referred to in this chapter, can be lifted or weakened only on the conditions referred to in section 65, paragraphs 1 and 2, and section 66, paragraphs 2 and 3.

If a protection order on a Natura 2000 site is lifted, or the provisions on its protection are weakened, or an authority has granted a permit or adopted or ratified a plan under section 66, paragraph 2 or 3, and the decision leads to deterioration of the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 network or its ecological value, the Ministry of the Environment shall take immediate action as ordered by the Government under section 66, paragraph 4. ([19.12.2014/1259](#))

Chapter 11

Miscellaneous provisions

Section 70 ([29.5.2009/384](#))

Exemption from payment

Decisions on nature reserves, landscape conservation areas and natural monuments given under this Act, as well as decisions made by virtue of section 30, paragraph 1, and section 47, paragraphs 3 and 5, are exempt from payment.

Section 71

Easement and other special rights

This Act, and decisions made by virtue of it, shall not impose constraints on easement, leasehold or other corresponding rights existing on a piece of property before the site is designated a nature reserve. The State is nevertheless authorised to expropriate such rights.

Section 72

Organisations empowered to exercise public authority

What is provided in this Act concerning authorities shall also apply to any organisation or body empowered to exercise public authority within its statutory jurisdiction.

Section 72 a ([22.12.2009/1587](#))

Procedure concerning notifications on the flying squirrel

When a centre for economic development, transport and the environment receives a notification referred to in section 14 b of the Forest Act from a forestry centre, it must take measures to determine the location of the breeding site or resting place of the flying squirrel and the permitted management of the forest. The centre for economic development, transport and the environment must give its decision in the matter without delay as soon as it has received the notification referred to here from the forestry centre.

Section 73 ([19.12.2014/1259](#))

Special provisions on the network of Baltic sea coastal and marine protected areas

What is provided in section 64, paragraph 2, concerning the drafting and adoption of the Natura 2000 network, shall correspondingly apply to the drafting of proposals for sites to be included in the network of protected areas based on the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area (12/80). The provisions of section 64, paragraph 4, shall correspondingly apply to the right of appeal.

Section 74

More detailed provisions

More detailed provisions on the implementation of this Act shall be provided by decree.

Chapter 12
Provisions on entry into force

Section 75

Entry into force

This Act takes effect on 1 January 1997. The provisions of section 64, paragraph 2, can nevertheless be applied before it takes effect.

Any steps necessary for the implementation of this Act may be taken before it takes effect.

Section 76

Transitional provisions

This Act repeals the Nature Conservation Act of February 23, 1923 (71/23), and later amendments to it. Any reference elsewhere in the law to the repealed Nature Conservation Act shall refer to this Act as of when it takes effect.

A decision on establishing a nature reserve that was affirmed before this Act takes effect, and the rules and regulations of said nature reserve, shall remain in force. Any protection provisions and regulations issued by virtue of them shall also remain in force unless they are separately amended or repealed.

The following provisions and decisions issued by virtue of the repealed Nature Conservation Act shall remain in effect in so far as they are not replaced by the Nature Conservation Decree:

- 1) Decree on the Protection of Certain Plant Species (450/92);
- 2) Decree on the Protection of Certain Animal Species (483/94);
- 3) Decree on the Acquisition, Administration and Maintenance of Nature Reserves (296/96);

- 4) Council of State decision on species under strict protection (519/89);
- 5) Ministry of the Environment decision on standard monetary values of protected animal and plant species (1209/95); and
- 6) Ministry of the Environment decision on the duties of regional environment centres in the acquisition of nature reserves (298/96).

Any land adjoining property designated as a nature reserve and acquired by the State for the purpose of nature conservation before this Act takes effect shall be regarded as part of said nature reserve. The provisions of the Real Estate Formation Act shall apply to the real estate formation of such land.

Section 77

Application of provisions to existing conservation programmes and decisions

What is provided in section 24, paragraph 3, and section 52, paragraph 2, concerning nature conservation programmes shall correspondingly apply to the following conservation programmes and decisions adopted by the Government before this Act takes effect:

- 1) Programme for the Development of National Parks and Nature Reserves (February 24, 1978, supplemented April 2, 1980, December 19, 1985 and June 16, 1988);
- 2) Mire Conservation Programme (April 19, 1979 and March 26, 1981);
- 3) Waterfowl Habitats Conservation Programme (June 3, 1982);
- 4) Herb-Rich Forest Conservation Programme (April 13, 1989);
- 5) Decision on the Protection of the Mikkeliinsaaret islands (August 24, 1989);
- 6) Shore Conservation Programme (December 20, 1990);
- 7) Programme for the Protection of Old-Growth Forests (June 27, 1996).

The Government shall, as necessary, amend the conservation programmes and decisions referred to in paragraph 1.