

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2021¹
“POLONINY NATIONAL PARK”

State: **The Slovak Republic**
Name of the area: **National Park POLONINY (hereafter the “Poloniny NP”)**

Year and number of years since the award or renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas:
The Resolution CM/ResDip(2018)11 on the renewal of the European Diploma of the Protected Areas awarded to the Poloniny NP (Slovakia)² /hereafter “Resolution No (2018)11”³

Central authority concerned:

Name: Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic (MoE SR)
Division of Nature and Biodiversity
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Tel: (+ 421 2) 5956 2211;
e-mail: jana.durkosova@enviro.gov.sk (contact person);
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Authority responsible for its management:

Name: State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic (SNC SR)
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1. Conditions:

Resolution CM/ResDip(2018)11 contains 3 conditions

Condition No. 1: By 31 December 2021, submit to the Secretariat of the Council of Europe a detailed report, covering the implementation of each of the 52 actions in the Poloniny National Park Action Plan (Appendix 6.6.17 of the Poloniny National Park Management Plan for 2017-2026)

Management Plan for the Poloniny National Park for 2017 – 2026 (hereafter „the Poloniny NP Management Plan“) was adopted by the Government of the Slovak Republic on 7th July 2016. **The detailed report on the implementation of the Poloniny National Park Action Plan (Appendix 6.6.17 of the Poloniny National Park Management Plan for 2017-2026) will be sent in the separate document.**

Apart for report on the specific measures it is important to stress following fundamental changes:

First, in January 2020 **amendments of the Act No 543/2002 Coll. on Nature and Landscape Protection (“Act No 543/2002 Coll”) and the Act No 326/2005 Coll. On Forests (“Act No 326/2005 Coll”)** came into force. These legal processes were aimed, among others, to **streamline procedures** – namely for **sanitary logging in protected areas as well as of the appropriate assessment** of the forest management plans in light of their possible significant impacts on Natura 2000 sites. This is very relevant for the Poloniny NP that is fully overlapping with Natura 2000. Another crucial change is that from the 3rd level of protection (e.g. minimum level of protection within each NP) **only close to nature forestry is allowed.**

Second, at the end of 2020, the **process of forest management plan approval for the Forest Management Units Starina and Sobrance for 2020-2029 was finalized** (this process was under supervision of the Regional Forestry Government Office in Prešov. The SNC SR – Poloniny NP Administration has submitted their requirements including the principles which are specified in the Poloniny NP Management Plan appealing on § 54 section 5 of *Act No 543/2002 Coll.*, by which all decisions approving any plans should be in

¹ reported period 1st September 2020 – 31th August 2021

² adopted at the 1321th meeting of the Committee of Ministers on 4 July 2018, valid by 18 September 2028

³ Originally resolution No (1998)26, resolution No (2003)2, No (2008)3 and resolution No (2012)19, respectively

Internet : <http://www.coe.int/cm>

accordance to management plans of protected areas). Results are the following: there will be only softer management ways used (only selective cutting, according to the law this manner can be single-tree selective cutting or group-selective cutting while the area of groups may be maximally 0,2 ha), for every logged plot - minimally three trees per hectare will be left to survive and pass away (what is beneficial for the hollow-nesting birds like woodpeckers, owls, etc.) as well as a part (40 %) of logging residues volume (branchwood, etc.) would be left as a dead wood (what is positive for xylophilous species like mushrooms, insects etc).

The **Forest Management Unit Starina is spread approximately on the half of forested land of the Poloniny NP**, while the Forest Management Unit Sobrance intersects is within the buffer zone of the Poloniny NP (2nd level of protection) – there are less strict requirements comparing the Forest Management Unit Starina would apply.

In 2021 works on renewal of the forest management plan for the **Nižná Jablonka Forest Management Unit** started for decade 2022-2031. In this case the SNC SR – Poloniny NP Administration applied for the same requirements as for the Starina Forest Management Unit.

Third, in the reported period SNC SR implemented the **project “Realisation of selected activities from the Poloniny NP Management Plan”** financed from EU funds within the Operational programme Quality of Environment. Activities include management of selected meadow habitats, planting of orchard from traditional local cultivars of fruit species, monitoring of selected species (European bison) as well as compensation for leaving old trees in the forest uncut.

Forth, as already reported, SNC SR **negotiated with non-state owners and users** of the forest land in order to implement the close to nature forestry in their forest stands. Their loss due to nature protection restriction is compensated on the base of agreement between the SNC SR and these subjects via contracts in accordance to § 61d of *Act. No 543/2002 Coll.* SNC SR has signed agreements with 7 non-state subjects owning forest stands in the Poloniny NP and subsequently these subjects managed their forests in accordance to the Poloniny NP Management Plan being compensated (41 860,50 EUR for softer management of forests a year). The total area managed by these 7 subjects under these agreements is 1 395,35 ha.

Condition No. 2: By 31 December 2023, initiate the revision of management and action plans for the Poloniny National Park so that they can be approved (by government resolution, if necessary) before they are due to be implemented on 1 January 2028;

The **revision of the Poloniny NP Management and Action Plans** will be initiated in a due period. Implementation of this Plan is evaluated as part of the annual plan of SNC SR.

The Poloniny NP Administration has started preparation of the **Integrated Management Plan for the Slovak part of the “Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe” World Heritage Property** (hereafter the “UNESCO Property”). More details about this important document will be provided in the next period (after its adoption).

Condition No. 3: Deploy adequate resources, both financial and human, in order to achieve a satisfactory outcome of the actions detailed in the Poloniny National Park Action Plan;

The **total amount of working positions** in the Administration of the Poloniny NP is **15** (in the reported period **3 positions were not occupied**).

Competencies of SNC SR increased since 2020 (mainly regarding the sanitary logging) in line with the above mentioned amendment of the *Act No 543/2002 Coll.* Moreover, after parliamentary elections in March 2020, the new government in its Government Programme set goal to **unify administration of state land within the protected areas** (to create independent legal bodies for each NP that would be under jurisdiction of MoE). **This reform was subject to parliamentary discussion since July 2021.** By this step, the status of the Poloniny NP Administration would significantly increase (including higher number of employees).

In additions to the contracts mentioned above the relevant district offices (nature protection bodies) also approved requests for **compensations from the state budget**⁴. These relate (i) to financial compensations for restriction of the common land use and (ii) to the compensation for damages caused by the selected protected

⁴ § 61 and §§ 97-102 of the Act No 543/200 Coll. on Nature and Landscape Protection as amended

animal species. In the reported period there were paid (i) **totally 51 266 EUR to 2 subjects and (ii) 5 015 EUR to 12 subjects.**

In connection with financing it is necessary to stress a new **Slovak Recovery and Resilience Plan** to be financed in the frame of "NextGenerationEU" – recovery plan for Europe. Aim of this EU financial instrument is to support the economy recovery after the recession caused by Covid-19 virus. At the same time, this instrument should strengthen the resilience of the economy to fluctuations and support the transformation toward to new progressive economic activities, also with regard to digitization, ecology and climate change. Under its Component 5 "Adaptation to Climate Change" there are **2 beneficiary national parks (Poloniny NP and Muránska planina NP) with allocation of 16,8 million EUR mainly for soft tourism activities.**

2. Recommendations

Resolution CM/ResDip(2018)11 contains 8 recommendations

Recommendation No. 1: By 2020, develop a prioritised plan for all land in State ownership to be reclassified as levels 3, 4 or 5; and demonstrate significant progress in reclassifying the level-3 forest as either level 4 (with exploitation by a silvicultural selection methodology) or as level 5 (no exploitation);

By September 2020 within the Poloniny NP there were **21 small scale protected areas** (with total area 2 432,78 ha). In September 2021 **the amount increased to 23 with total area of 3 425 ha, e.g. from 8.16 to 11.49 %** of the NP territory. Details are attached at the end of this annual report and in the bellow text.

These protected areas are in the 4th and 5th level of protection, according to the amended *Act No 543/2002 Coll.*, the **regime within these 2 levels of protection changed in favour of stricter protection.**

Since 2017 the MoE invested in land purchase⁵ of privately owned land in the Poloniny NP and in 2018 the MoE bought approximately 67 ha (184 885 EUR from the state budget). Further purchase depends on available financial resources and on offers from the private owners. These discussions are closely related to the finalization of the **UNESCO World Heritage (WH) Property** (boundary modification was adopted on 14th October 2019 adopted by the Government of SR - resolution No. 508/2019). SNC SR subsequently elaborated a nomination project (together with 9 other countries which wish to access to this multilateral international property or to add new components - Italy). The nomination dossier was submitted to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre in February 2020 in order to enlarge this UNESCO WH property from Spain on the west to Ukraine on the east and from Italy on the south to German isle Rügen on the north. The World Heritage Committee adopted a decision on this matter on 28th July 2021 (during its 44th session in Chinese City of Fuzhou). The proposal of the Slovakia for significant boundary modification of all inscribed components was adopted by the Committee - see the decision 44 COM 8B.32, pages 368-372 on <https://whc.unesco.org/en/sessions/44COM/decisions/>). In Slovakia there are 5 components after this approval from which 4 are in the Poloniny NP. Consultations continue regarding the newly proposed Slovak component part called Kyjovský prales.

In the reported period, Slovakia completed designation of the 3rd nature reserve (NR) within the UNESCO WH Property. After 2 reserved adopted by the Government on 19th August 2020 (NR Rydošová with area ver 88 ha that partly belongs to the Poloniny NP and partly to the neighbouring the Východné Karpaty Protected Landscape Area as well as Vihorlatský prales with total area of almost 2 161 ha that is out the Poloniny NP) the governmental ordinance No. 334/2021 Coll. Declaring NR Veľký Bukovec was **adopted on 31st August 2021**, with total area of almost **974 ha**. More details are in the text at the end of this annual report.

Recommendation No. 2: Encourage church, association and private landowners to reclassify their land as level 3 or 4, utilising a single-tree or group-selection silvicultural system wherever appropriate;

The crucial change is the already mentioned legal obligation to apply in national parks only **close to nature forestry – similar to the selective silvicultural system.** In accordance to § 18 section 4 of *Act. No 326/2005 Coll.* only special purpose silvicultural system or selection system or shelterwood system of small felling areas may be applied (where the area of one felling plot must not exceed 0,2 ha, in terrain with

⁵ § 63 of the Act No 543/200 Coll. on Nature and Landscape Protection as amended

slopes more than 40 %, in inaccessible terrain and on poor load bearing soil it must not exceed 1,5 ha with felling plot not wider than mean height of logged forest stand).

The area of the Poloniny NP belongs to **7 forest management plan units**. The new forestry management plan has to be approved by the regional government authority and comply with the Poloniny NP management plan as according to the national law⁶ (there is an obligation to respect the Poloniny NP Management plan in decisions of state bodies including decision on the forestry management plans).

Details on the **process of forest management plan approval finished in 2020 for two Forest Management Units** are under the condition No. 1 Rather big part of the Poloniny NP has slopes steeper than 40 % where is allowed by our legislation to fell forests on plots with area up to 1,5 ha. We achieved during this approval process that in the forest management plan on the whole area of the Forest Management Unit Starina included into the Poloniny NP the upper limit of felling area will be 0,2 ha what is much more softer management than with limit 1,5 ha allowable by legislation (limits included into the forest management plan are obligatory, if any forest manager wants to exceed this limit he has to apply for permission from regional governmental office). Only selective system may be applied. By our legislation this manner can be single-tree selective system or group-selective system while the area of felled groups may be maximally 0,2 ha. Single-tree selective system is more usable for coniferous stands. In broadleaves stands which dominate in the Poloniny NP the more applicable manner is group-selective system. In addition on every logged plot minimally three trees per hectare have to be let to survive and pass away, what is beneficial for the hollow-nesting birds like woodpeckers, owls, etc. After felling of forest stands it is usual also to process the logging residues (branchwood, etc.) for production of wood chips. We achieved that in felled stands should be left a part (40 %) of logging residues volume as a dead wood what is positive for xylophilous species like mushrooms, insects and etc.

In 2021 the process of renewal of the forest management plan for the Nižná Jablonka Forest Management Unit for decade 2022-2031 has begun. In this case the SNC SR – Poloniny NP Administration applied the same requirements as for the Forest Management Unit Starina.

As mentioned under the condition No.1 the SNC SR continued negotiations with non-state owners and users of the forest land with expected signature of contracts.

Recommendation No. 3: Maintain the management of meadows outside the World Heritage Site, preferably by summer grazing by livestock or alternatively by cutting and removing the cut material from the site;

Maintaining of meadows by cattle grazing or maintaining the traditional livestock breeds are involved into the Poloniny NP Action Plan. **Mowing of fens (2,60 ha)** was financed from budget of the SNC SR as well as **cutting of mesophilic and humid meadows on area 13 ha.**

At the large scale, maintaining of grassland was supported in the frame of **Rural Development Programme 2014-2020**, the precise data (coverage) are not available at this moment. This programme is co-financed from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development. Within the reported period frame for the 2021-2027 was under preparation.

As it was mentioned in the Condition No. 1 within the **project “Realisation of selected activities from the Poloniny NP Management Plan”** it is supported also a management of selected meadow habitats. In the reported period two land users realised a cutting of natural self-sowing young shrubs and trees on selected meadows and subsequently mowing on the area of **13 ha.**

Recommendation No. 4: Liaise with appropriate stakeholders, especially those involved with sustainable tourism, to prepare an inventory of objects of cultural significance within the national park and support a prioritised programme of restoration of these culturally significant objects;

The inventory of 51 significant cultural sites/objects in the area of the Poloniny NP is available in the chapter 2.2.9 “Cultural Heritage and Religious Activities” of the Poloniny NP Management Plan. The **cooperation exists with the “Club of the Military History Beskydy”** which restored several military cemeteries in the area of the Poloniny NP as well as with a non-profit organization **“Carpathian wooden churches”** oriented at support of regional wooden churches maintenance. This cooperation continued also in the reported period.

⁶§ 54. 5 of the Act No 543/200 Coll. on Nature and Landscape Protection as amended

Recommendation No. 5: Develop effective research and monitoring programmes which provide data helpful to the management of the national park's resources;

Many ongoing research activities are part of research and monitoring programmes mentioned in the Poloniny NP Management plan or its Action Plan. They are **either carried out by the staff of the Poloniny NP** (monitoring of beaver, otter, amphibians, etc.) **or by external researchers** (who finance their activities by themselves).

During the reported period the following research and monitoring activities in the Poloniny NP were undertaken:

- Geological survey in the frame of elaborating PhD. thesis “Features of sediment density flows, their influence on reservoir properties of Cergowa Beds (Oligocene of the Dukla Tectonic Unit, Polish Outer Carpathians)
 - Long-term Air Quality Monitoring in the frame of The European Monitoring and Evaluation Programme (EMEP) – station located in Starina
 - Long-term Ecosystem Research carried out within LTER-Europe platform⁷
 - Monitoring aimed on species of Community interest
 - Monitoring of seminatural meadows species composition under the impact of different ways of management on permanent plots in the Poloniny NP
 - Research of *Coleoptera*
 - Research of soil arthropods
 - Research of malacofauna
 - Research of dragonflies (*Odonata*)
 - Research of water invertebrates
 - Research of arachnids
 - Research “Diversity and distribution of botanical species and associations in changing environment conditions
 - Research “Silvopastoral ecosystems of Slovakia”
 - Speleology survey and research in Cadastral Area Ruske
 - Hydrogeological survey in Villages of Nová Sedlica, Uličské Krivé, Brezovec, Jalová, Kalná Roztoka, Klenová, Kolbasov, Osadné, Parihuzovce, Pčoliné, Príslop, Ruská Volová, Ruský Potok, and Topoľa which cadastral areas are fully or partly included into the Poloniny NP
 - Research of insects and wasps parasitizing on spiders
 - Research of traditional regional cultivars of fruit trees
 - Evaluation of bear abundance in the Poloniny NP based on the non-invasive collecting of fur samples.
- Despite the above activities, no new scientific articles were published in the reported period.

Recommendation No. 6: Devise and implement with local stakeholders a tourism development strategy and a prioritised action plan so that the infrastructure facilities can be developed for the benefit of both the national park and the economic well-being of the people who live in the area;

Activities related to this recommendation undertaken by the municipalities, local companies and NGOs were supported in the past from the **Swiss financial mechanism** mainly via small grant program and also in the frame of the **Norwegian financial mechanism**. Their results were used in the reported period, too.

Also in the reported period, the Slovak Environmental Agency motivated municipalities to increase their involvement in the **Village renewal programme** (traditional instrument supported annually from the state budget). In **2021 one project was supported** from the NP Poloniny - village of Hostovice – Ensuring access to water – well.

Additional activities related to tourism development were carried out by local NGOs, for instance as a part of the project “**Concept of development of the Snina district**” which was elaborated by Aegis Foundation in 2018. This NGO gave to register a trademark “**Poloniny neskutočne skutočné**” (**Poloniny unrealy real**). It

⁷ <http://www.lter-europe.net/projects/eLTER>

efforts to encourage local inhabitants to perform and provide any services for tourists like accommodation, accompaniment services, production and selling of local products (e. g. souvenirs), gastronomic services, etc. This NGO offers to these providers of services that if they fulfil some conditions (rules) and criteria for quality they can use the possibility to promote their services using a trademark “Poloniny neskutočne skutočné” also across NGO 's webpage <https://regionpoloniny.sk/> where you can find more information.

Very similar activities are developed by NGO “Take naše” (“So ours”). Together in cooperation with Administration of the Poloniny NP and with Prešov Self-Governing Region, they organized one event - Weekend of beautiful experiences called “**Objavte Poloniny**” (“**Discover Poloniny**”) in our area. They also encouraged local producers and providers of services. This NGO promoted their products by web page. During that weekend “Objavte Poloniny” tourists could attend on many partial events like e. g. school of local dishes cooking, manufacture of wicker baskets, a course in forage and using of healing herbs, and many others. This event was very successful and interest of tourists was rather high. More information you can find on webpage <https://www.objavtepoloniny.sk/>. This NGO repeated the same event also this year. During the weekend from 13th until 15th August 2021 tourists could choose to take a part on 24 activities like observing of night sky with lectures of astronomers, course of traditional three-part folk singing, etc. The full list of activities you can find on web <https://www.objavtepoloniny.sk/preskumaj-vsetky-zazitky/>.

As mentioned in the previous report the Prešov Self-Governing Region (PSGR) was involved as a **pilot region from Slovakia into the “Catching-up Regions Initiative”** It is a co-operative programme of the EU and the World Bank for supporting of regions in the EU with lower level of development. The goal of this initiative in the PSGR is to support sufficient development and creation of working positions through the Action Plan for Development and Employment PSGR. Within the frame of this initiative, the experts of the World Bank elaborated a study report “**Unlocking the Endogenous Tourism Potential of Poloniny National Park and the Snina District**” on which cooperated also the SNC SR – Poloniny NP Administration. This study analyses current situation in tourism development and it proposes measurements to stimulate tourism in this region. See <https://www.worldbank.org/en/region/eca/publication/slovakia-catching-up-regions>. The proposed activities should be supported in the frame of ENPI Cross Border Cooperation Programme in next years. During the reported period, there were done the first steps.

The PSGR continued with realization of the **project of 2 cycle trails**: one is from Snina to Jalova’s crossroads, the second trail leads from village Ulič to Uličské Krivé. Both cycle trails should be built outside of existing roads so tourists can enjoy the safety and serene biking. The project dossier is in rather high level of elaboration. The PSGR also started to work on a new **project of 14,2 km long cycle trail from Jalova’s crossroad to crossroad called “Pod Hrabom”** in the former Village of Ruské displaced during the construction of Water Reservoir Starina.

The Poloniny NP belongs to the region called **Upper Zemplín**. In the reported period a deeper cooperation was developed with The Regional Tourism Organization Upper Zemplín and Upper Šariš (neighbouring region). They are regional organizations based by local municipalities (towns, villages) and other subjects (e.g. some hotels) interested in tourism aimed at the support and promotion of tourism in this region and on creation of better conditions for the development of tourism in the territory with the aim of sustainable development of tourism. The Poloniny NP participated in some events arranged by this organization.

Similarly, like in condition No.3 it is necessary to emphasize the Slovak Recovery and Resilience Plan. Projects will be prepared at the local level and evaluated by the commissions (participation of the Poloniny NP Administration and representatives of local stakeholders). This commission should choose the best proposals aimed on tourism development, which should be realized within this Recovery Plan.

Recommendation No. 7: Maintain co-operation with the other nations which incorporate parts of the Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe World Heritage Site, as well as with Bieszczady National Park in Poland, the East Carpathian Biosphere Reserve and the two neighbouring Landscape Protected Areas – Východné Karpaty and Vihorlat;

The SNC SR - Poloniny NP Administration has good **contacts with neighbouring protected areas** in Slovakia and also in neighbouring countries. However, cooperation during the last two years was limited mainly due to coronavirus pandemic. There is an excellent cooperation in the frame of the **UNESCO WH Property “with neighbouring Vihorlat Protected Landscape Area (PLA) and also with Východné Karpaty PLA.**

The SNC SR - Poloniny NP Administration has also contacts with **foreign partners.**

Representative of the SNC SR - Poloniny NP Administration participated in several meetings regarding the UNESCO WH Heritage site (for example the **Joint Management Committee meeting for the WH Property**, videoconference sessions with partners). Due to Covid-19 pandemic situation all those meetings were organized just in online form. The SNC SR – the Poloniny NP Administration has also a long term cooperation with partners within the **East Carpathians Transboundary Biosphere Reserve (Slovakia/Poland/Ukraine)**. **The trilateral agreement** concluded on 15th November 2013 is being implemented. The Steering Council of this biosphere reserve consists of administrations of the relevant national parks and protected landscape areas from Slovakia, Poland and Ukraine. Its role is to jointly manage and coordinate cross-border activities. In the reported period an annual meeting of the Steering Council was planned to hold in Poland in spring this year, but it was cancelled because of covid pandemic.

During the reported period the SNC SR - Poloniny NP Administration cooperated **with Polish partner – the Bieszczady National Park on the microproject** “At the Rivers Headwaters of Polish-Slovak Borderland – Man, Nature and Culture” (2021-2022) implemented in the frame of the Transboundary Cooperation Program Interreg Poland-Slovakia (V-A PL-SK 2014-2020).

Colleagues from Polish Bieszczady NP also actively attended the event - Weekend of beautiful experiences called “Objavte Poloniny” (“Discover Poloniny”) in our area.

Recommendation No. 8: Continue the dialogue with local communities in order to build confidence and foster involvement in the diploma-holding area.

A dialogue between the SNC SR - Poloniny NP Administration and local communities **runs permanently**. There is a good cooperation with some **local communities**, for example with municipalities **and local schools**. In this respect projects financed from **Swiss financial mechanism** and also **Norwegian financial mechanism** were very useful (both projects were finished in the year 2017, local municipalities were involved as partners).

In addition, the cooperation with some forest managers improved thanks to contracts mentioned under condition No. 1.

As mentioned under recommendation No. 6 we cooperated also with PSGR in the frame of “Catching-Up Regions Initiative” during the reported period.

During the reported period several meetings with stakeholders were organized. These meeting were aimed on communication and future cooperation regarding the preparation and subsequent implementation of the Slovak Recovery and Resilience Plan. More informations are given in Condition No. 3 and Reccomendations No. 6.

Site Management:

Designation of the Veľký Bukovec Nature Reserve by the governmental ordinance No. 334/2021 Coll.

Amendment Act No 543/200 Coll. Within this amendment, there are also new provisions for the site on international importance. The list and fundamental data on their list was made available at the <https://www.minzp.sk/ochrana-prirody/medzinarodne-dohovory/uzemia-medzinarodneho-vyznamu/>.

3. Boundaries:

No change of the NP boundaries.

4. Other information:

Except for already mentioned information, there was no change in nature and culture heritage, education and scientific interests.

December 2021, prepared by the State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic (Marián Gič, Michaela Mrázová) in cooperation with the Department of Nature Protection of the Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic (Jana Durkošová)

Details on the implementation of the recommendation No 1⁸

Since amendment of the *Act No 543/2002 Coll.* (valid from January 2020) **in the territory of the NP only close to nature forestry is allowed - this applies to all the territory, e.g. both state and private properties within 3rd and 4th levels of protection while the 5th level means non-intervention regime.** By this (and the following renewal of the forestry management plans) the second part of the recommendation No 1 is implemented.

Regarding the first part of the recommendation No 1 it is important to mention that:

- a) all the land within the Poloniny NP is in 3, 4 or 5th levels of protection.
- b) the amended *Act No 543/2002 Coll* calls for zonation of each NP in the way that 50 % of the territory should be at the 5th level (zone A). This would mean a significant change requiring a broad consultation and financial resources for land purchase (that are since 2022 available in higher portion).
- c) **The table below provides overview on progress in designation of nature reserves since 2015.** The total portion of 4th and 5th level of protection in the Poloniny NP increased from 2 256 ha to 3 425 ha, e.g. **from 7.67 % to 11.14 % of this NP territory.** This progress is connected mainly to the higher level of protection within the core and buffer zones of the UNESCO WH via designation procedures successfully completed in 2021.
- d) After the NP reform (via amendment of the *Act No 543/2002 Coll.* adopted by the Slovak parliament in December 2021) **from April 2022 each NP would become a legal body (subordinated directly to the Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic).** In addition all the state land in 3 of 9 NPs will be administered by this new NP administration unit (Tatranský NP, Pieninský NP and the Slovenský raj NP), while in remaining NPs, this reform would be gradual (depending on the zonation). Therefore zoning of the Poloniny NP will be high priority in the coming period. There is a vision of priority sites with increased level of protection that needs to be consulted with stakeholders according to the due procedures.

Overview on the (national) nature reserves and nature monument with the Poloniny NP and its buffer zone (progress since 2015 marked in green)

category/name/zone	level of protection	Prevailing type of land	Area (ha)
nature reserve			
Havešová	5 th	forest	171,3200
Jarabá skala	5 th	forest	359,9400
Pláša	5 th	forest	110,8000
Pod Ruským	4 th	permanent grasslands	11,1412
Rožok	5 th	forest	67,1300
Stinská	5 th	forest	90,7800
Stužica	5 th	forest	761,4900
Together nature reserves:			1572,6012
Bahno	5 th	forest	2,7800

⁸ By 2020, develop a prioritised plan for all land in State ownership to be reclassified as levels 3, 4 or 5; and demonstrate significant progress in reclassifying the level-3 forest as either level 4 (with exploitation by a silvicultural selection methodology) or as level 5 (no exploitation).

Borsučiny		5 th	forest	83,7200
Borsukov vrch		5 th	forest	146,7928
Bzaná		5 th	permanentgrasslands	15,4600
Gazdorán		4 th	forest	17,3000
Grúnik		4 th	forest	4,6000
Hlboké		5 th	forest	2,2800
Ruské		4 th	permanentgrasslands	1,4614
Rydošová (part to the Poloniny NP)	Zone A	5 th	forest	12,0126
	Zone B	4 th	forest	6,5586
Stinská slatina		5 th	forest	2,7600
Stružnická dolina		4 th	forest	2,2400
Šípková		5 th	forest	156,3200
Udava		5 th	forest	391,9800
Uličská Ostrá		5 th	forest	25,2400
Veľký Bukovec	Zone A	5 th	forest	270,7814
	Zone B	4 th	forest	703,1947
national nature reserves together:				1845,4815
Ulička		5 th	permanentgrasslands	7,2400
together national monument:				7,2400
Together NP Poloniny (nature reserves/monuments):				3425,3227
Area NP Poloniny:			29805	% from NP territory 11,49