



University name: University of Pécs
Country: Hungary

SDG15: Protecting terrestrial ecosystems

University of Pécs – Report on the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 15)

2024

1. Introduction

The University of Pécs is committed to **protecting natural resources, preserving biodiversity** and promoting **sustainable land use**.

Of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, **Goal 15 (Protecting terrestrial ecosystems)** is particularly important to the UP, as the region's biodiversity, agricultural research, and environmental and nature conservation education all play a prominent role in the institution's operations.

The 2024 report presents the measures, research and partnership programs through which the UP has contributed to the protection of terrestrial ecosystems, the maintenance of biodiversity and the promotion of sustainable management.

2. Strategic and institutional background

The **UP Strategy 2023–2030 document** places environmental sustainability and the preservation of ecological values at the centre of research, education and community responsibility.

The strategic objectives include:

- increasing the proportion of natural and artificial green spaces,
- preserving and increasing biodiversity on campus areas,
- integrating nature conservation into education and research.

3. Preserving genetic values

3.1. The Research Institute for Viticulture and Oenology of the University of Pécs

The Wine Estate of the UP, centred on the city of Pécs, with its viticultural traditions and culture that has always successfully renewed itself through the storms of history, has been the economic and cultural centre of South Transdanubia for two thousand years. Despite its developed vineyards, it remains an international city of grapes and wine. The Research Institute for Viticulture and Oenology participates in national projects in cooperation with Hungarian universities and partner institutions, as well as in European programs within the framework of international cooperation. The Institute's grape variety collection, which now consists of more than 1,500 items, is part of our "living heritage" and is Hungary's richest grape gene bank. A special feature of the collection is the plantation created from native grape varieties of the Carpathian Basin, the cultivation and development of which means maintaining genetic diversity and preserving our national treasure.



Exploring the genetic properties and cultivation characteristics of Hungarian grape varieties also serves to preserve the values of the past. The gene bank has been placed under local protection by the city and declared part of the Pécs Treasury. The aim of breeding and genetic research is to create new value. The Institute has 16 state-recognised grape varieties and 20 clones. The 36 new varieties and clones registered for state certification since 2000 serve to meet new consumer demands and the challenges of the age (changes in climate and cultivation technology, environmental and sustainability expectations, cost-effectiveness and competitiveness). Of the new breeding results, 11 are resistant variety candidates, while the clone candidates are mainly from the Hungaricum variety group.

3.2. Botanical Garden of the University of Pécs

The Botanical Garden of the University of Pécs is a county nature reserve. More than 8,000 plant species live here on an area of 68,500 m². The number of individuals exceeds 100,000. The number of protected or highly protected plant species is 350. Of the 66 animal species observed in the garden, 60 are protected.

3.3. Medicinal herb garden at the Faculty of Pharmacy

The Medicinal Herb Garden of the Institute of Pharmacognosy at the Faculty of Pharmacy of the University of Pécs features nearly 200 members of more than 50 plant families. The main purpose of the garden is to provide fresh and dried plant material for the education of pharmacy students. During the course, students can study the botanical characteristics of medicinal plant species and their use as medicines, laying the foundations for the pharmacognosy course. The garden also serves research purposes.

4. Bird-friendly University

The College for Sustainable Development of the University of Pécs has officially joined the Bird-Friendly School program of the Hungarian Ornithological and Nature Conservation Society. The UP Bird-Friendly University program was launched under the coordination of the College for Sustainable Development of the University of Pécs and with the support of the UP Green University Program, which involved the installation of bird feeders, waterers and bird food at various UP locations. The aim of the UP Bird-Friendly University is to support the reproduction of birds that nest in hollows (e.g. blue tits, house sparrows, etc.). In addition to the use of waterers and feeders, birds can now also raise their young in the courtyard.

5. Summary

In 2024, the University of Pécs achieved complex and exemplary results in the field of terrestrial ecosystem protection. Through research, education, green infrastructure developments and international cooperation, the University of Pécs has become an active player in the conservation of biodiversity and genetic resources, not only at a scientific level but also at a societal level.