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CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE  
AND NATURAL HABITATS

**Standing Committee**

35<sup>th</sup> meeting  
Strasbourg, 1-4 December 2015

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**RECOMMENDATION NO. 184 (2015)  
ON THE PLANNED HYDROPOWER PLANTS ON THE  
TERRITORY OF THE MAVROVO NATIONAL PARK  
("THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF  
MACEDONIA")**

*Document  
prepared by  
the Directorate of Democratic Governance*



Convention on the Conservation  
of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats

**Recommendation No. 184 (2015) of the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention, adopted on 4 December 2015, on the planned hydropower plants on the territory of the Mavrovo National Park (“the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”)**

The Standing Committee to the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, acting under Article 14 of the Convention,

Having regard to the objectives of this Convention, which aims to conserve wild fauna and flora and their natural habitats, by giving particular attention to vulnerable species, including migratory species threatened by extinction;

Noting that the Mavrovo National Park in “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” is one of the biodiversity hotspots in Europe, hosting a very high number of species and natural habitats protected by the Bern Convention;

Recalling that the Mavrovo National Park has been officially nominated as candidate Emerald site in 2011, in accordance with national legislation, and - as such - it is subject to Recommendation No. 157 (2011) on the status of candidate Emerald sites and guidelines on the criteria for their nomination, requiring national authorities to “take the necessary protection and conservation measures in order to maintain the ecological characteristics of the candidate Emerald sites” until their full inclusion in the Emerald Network;

Noting that the Mavrovo National Park and its immediate surroundings are among the core reproduction areas of the critically endangered Balkan lynx;

Worrying that the Management Plan of the National Park is still awaiting an official adoption, and encouraging the government to adopt the appropriate legal framework;

Taking note of the report (document [T-PVS/Files \(2015\)36](#)) of the on-the-spot appraisal carried out on 24-25 June 2015,

Recommends “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” to urgently:

1. Suspend the implementation of all government projects, in particular the hydropower plants foreseen and related infrastructure, within the territory of the Mavrovo National Park, until a Strategic Environmental Assessment will be completed taking into account the following point of the Recommendation, putting specific emphasis on cumulative effects of all planned development activities on the territory of the Park, also taking into account social aspect; the assessment needs to consider the regional long-term effects, on the water regimes of the Drin and Vardar rivers;
2. In the frame of the assessment above, address the specific conservation needs of those species of fauna and flora for the conservation of which the Mavrovo National Park bears special responsibility, including the species and habitats for which this site was nominated as candidate Emerald site; take into account the results of the analysis recommended under the point above when adopting the Management plan for the area;

3. Keep the Standing Committee regularly informed about the progress in the implementation of this Recommendation.

Invites international financial institutions to consider the results of the strategic environmental assessment when deciding on the financing of the hydropower projects in the Park.