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T-PVS (2016) 10

CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

Standing Committee

36th meeting
Strasbourg, 15-18 November 2016

Meeting of the Bureau

Strasbourg, 22 March 2016

MEETING REPORT

*Secretariat Memorandum
prepared by
the Directorate of Democratic Governance*

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair due to a strike movement, Mr Jan Plesnik (the previous Chair) opened the meeting on 22nd March 2016. The Chair welcomed the other Bureau members and the Secretariat, and informed the participants that a terrorist attack was going on in Brussels, namely at the airport and in the subway. He condemned any form of violence and hatred and invited the participants to observe a minute of silence in memory of the victims.

Afterward, the Chair introduced the draft agenda.

The draft Agenda was adopted without amendments (see Appendix 1).

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2016 PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES

[Note for the Bureau]
[T-PVS (2015) 14 - Programme of Activities for 2016-2017]

Ms Ivana d'Alessandro welcomed the Chair and the Bureau members, and presented Mr Alexandre Ghafari who recently joined the Biodiversity Unit for a 4-month traineeship programme. Mr Ghafari is a young French lawyer specialised in international environmental law. Moreover, he has already collaborated with the CMS and with the French NGO *France Nature Environnement*.

Furthermore, Ms d'Alessandro presented the main activities carried out for launching the implementation of the Convention's Programme of work since last Standing Committee meeting.

For the second consecutive year, all the meetings of the Groups of Experts will be hosted in a Convention's Party, at the kind invitation of the relevant governments. These are: the meeting of the Select Group of Experts on Invasive Alien Species (Italy), the Special Focal Points for Illegal killing of birds (Albania), the Group of Experts on Biodiversity and Climate Change (Bosnia and Herzegovina), the Group of Experts on Protected Areas (Serbia). Moreover, Ms d'Alessandro summarised the conclusions of the meeting of the consultative Group on the CMS Intergovernmental Task Force to address illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds in the Mediterranean region, which took place in January 2016 via Skype. Also, the Secretariat started approaching experts and countries for the setting-up of the working group that will finalise the draft Action Plan for the conservation of the Osprey.

A further highlight concerned the AEWA-Bern Convention monitoring and advisory visit to assess the possible impact of Icelandic forestry policy on migratory waterbirds, which has been scheduled to take place on 23-27 May 2016. The international consultants received their terms of reference and the programme of the visit has been almost finalised, in consultation with Icelandic authorities.

Besides, Ms d'Alessandro informed that the Secretariat addressed the CBD Secretariat with comments on the documents related to mainstreaming biodiversity, in preparation of the next SBSTTA meeting, to take place in Montreal, Canada, on 25-30 April, and added that an independent information document on IAS pathways has been under preparation by Mr Riccardo Scalera and Mr Piero Genovesi, and that this will mention the work done by the Bern Convention in this field.

Concerning administrative matters, she further informed that the specific abridged report of the 35th meeting of the Standing Committee, prepared for the Committee of Ministers' attention, has been forwarded to the CM Secretariat in January 2016, and that the 2015 budgetary exercise had been closed mid-February, with the certification of expenditure. Tailor-made letters requesting voluntary contributions were addressed to the EU, Norway and Switzerland at the beginning of February while the general letter signed by the Chair has been sent out on 29 February.

On communication, Ms d'Alessandro was pleased to inform that the Convention was quoted by the newspaper *The Guardian* on two occasions, in relation to its Recommendation on the planned hydropower plants on the territory of the Mavrovo National Park (also mentioned by the German newspaper *Frankfurter Rundschau*), and on the follow-up of the Kresna Gorge complaint, while an interview to the Secretary of the Convention was published in the French environmental magazine *Journal de l'Environnement*.

Moreover, the Facebook page of the Convention already reached the milestone of 800 followers on 1st March 2016, with an average post outreach per week of 3,000 views.

The Chair wished to acknowledge the work of the Secretariat, in particular for increasing the visibility and relevance of the Convention not only among other conventions but also for the wider public through mass media communication including new information technologies. He further noted that the roadmap for the activities is once more very clear and expressed gratitude to the countries which offered to host Convention's meetings.

2.1 Group of Specialists on the European Diploma for Protected Areas

a. Report of the meeting

b. Poloniny National Park (Slovak Republic): Monitoring of compliance

[T-PVS/DE (2016) 4 – Report of the meeting]

[T-PVS/DE(2016)10 – Expert analysis of annual reports submitted by the EDPA areas in 2015]

[T-PVS/DE (2016) 5 – Report of the on-the-spot appraisal to Bialowieza National Park]

[T-PVS/DE (2016) 9 – Report of the Slovak authorities on Poloniny National Park]

[T-PVS(2015)15 – Recommendation No. 181 (2015) on the Future of the EDPA]

The Secretariat summarised the outcomes of the meeting of the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma for Protected Areas (EDPA) which took place in Strasbourg on 7 March 2016.

In 2016, the composition of the Group was renewed by half according to the rotation principle. Specialists from Italy, Hungary and Sweden replaced the outgoing specialists from Estonia and Turkey. A new Chair, Mr Jan-Willem Sneep (the Netherlands), was appointed, instead of Mr Peter Skoberne (Slovenia).

The Group discussed the situation in the Poloniny National Park (the Slovak Republic) and in the Bialowieza National Park (Poland).

With regard to Bialowieza National Park whose Diploma has been pending renewal since 2007, the Group took note of the report of the on-the-spot appraisal conducted on 17-18 October 2015 by Mr Olivier Biber (Switzerland). Based on the overall positive outcome of the visit, the expert recommended renewing the EDPA. A draft resolution on the renewal of the EDPA was prepared. On the other hand, the Group took note of the recent information from press and NGOs that logging of the Białowieża Primeval Forest was to be restarted under a Government Forest Management Plan (2012-2021). In the absence of clarifications from the Polish authorities, the Group decided to defer a decision as to the renewal of the EDPA to its next meeting in 2017.

The Poloniny National Park has been under scrutiny by the Group particularly due to the long-term absence of a management plan due since 2010. In 2015, the Group submitted a draft recommendation on the withdrawal of the diploma to the Standing Committee, which rather decided to grant a last stay to the Slovak authorities to finalise and adopt the park's management plan. At its meeting in 2016, the Group of Specialists on the EDPA noted that management plan would be adopted in April-May 2016. The Group decided to postpone a decision on the draft Recommendation on the withdrawal of the EDPA awarded to the Poloniny National Park to its next meeting in 2017, subject to the Park's reporting results in 2016.

The Group noted that there were no formal applications for the EDPA in 2015.

The Group further analysed annual reports submitted by awarded areas. It noted with satisfaction an increase in the reporting rate between 2013 and 2015. However, it regretted that only 80 % of the sites/areas submitted information about the use of the EDPA logo.

Based on the reporting results, the Group formulated an individual decision for each of the 74 awarded sites/areas. It identified four areas requiring particular attention (the Central Balkan National Park (Bulgaria); Lüneburg Heath Nature Reserve (Germany); Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park (Italy); and the Oka National Biosphere Reserve (the Russian Federation)) and made specific recommendations.

The Group noted that no renewals of the EDPA were foreseen for 2017, whereas 20 EDPA sites/areas were pending renewal in 2018. Based on reporting results and the dates of the last visit, the Group decided to visit 16 areas between 2016 and 2017.

Furthermore, the Group submitted concrete proposals on how to implement Recommendation No. 181 (2015) on the Future of the EDPA. In particular, the Group decided to commission a study to identify ecosystems and landscapes missing from the EDPA network and to convene biennial thematic meetings of EDPA managers.

The Group discussed how to improve the visibility of the EDPA, in particular through a cost-effective visibility strategy, relying on social media and targeting biodiversity professionals, including the EDPA managers, ecologically friendly tourism and trade. In particular, the Facebook page of the Bern Convention should be explored as a platform for raising awareness of the EDPA and a promotional video of the EDPA should be produced.

Lastly, the Group proposed to suggest to the Committee of Ministers to amend the Regulations for the EDPA (Article 9, para.7)¹ providing for an automatic renewal of the award after its first renewal, which seemed to contradict the standards of high quality required by the EDPA. The amendment would read: “After the first renewal, the Diploma may be renewed by the Committee of Ministers every ten years, without any compulsory prior appraisal.”

DECISION: The Bureau took note of the meeting report of the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma for Protected Areas (EDPA). It instructed the Secretariat to carry out a number of appraisals in 2016 and 2017, as decided by the Group of Specialists.

The Bureau noted in particular that the Group of Specialists had decided not to propose the renewal of the EDPA awarded to the Białowieża National Park (Poland) as a new Government forest management plan might negatively affect the area surrounding the National Park.

The Bureau also noted that the Group of Specialists had decided to postpone a decision on the possible withdrawal of the EDPA awarded to the Poloniny National Park (the Slovak Republic) to its next meeting in 2017. The Bureau urged the Slovak authorities to approve the management plan and to keep the Bureau and the Standing Committee informed.

The Bureau expressed appreciation of the work of the Group of Specialists to publicise the value of the prestigious Diploma award.

Finally, the Bureau examined the draft amendment to Article 9, para.7, of the Regulations for the EDPA as proposed by the Group of Specialists. The Bureau decided to transmit the proposed amendment to the Standing Committee.

2.2 Invasive Alien Species: state of preparation of the meeting of the Select Group on IAS

[T-PVS (2016) 2 – Draft Agenda]

The Secretariat informed that the meeting of the Select Group of Experts on invasive alien species was scheduled to take place in Rome on 31 March-1 April 2016. The main topics for discussion will be the following:

- ✓ codes of conduct (awareness and publicizing codes that have been endorsed and elaboration of new codes);

¹ At present Article 9, para.7, of the Resolution of the Committee of Ministers CM/ResDipo (2008)1 on the revised Regulations for the EDPA reads: “After the first renewal, the Diploma will be automatically renewed every ten years, without any prior appraisal, except where there is an express request from the government of the country concerned or in the case of a recognised threat to the area.”

- ✓ information on species of special concern: the Ruddy Duck (after meeting the last December) and the American Mink;
- ✓ implementing the EU regulation and the related Bern Convention recommendations: management of pathways, risk assessment of some species;
- ✓ preparation of the next meeting of Working Group (likely to be held in Madeira, Portugal), and topics for future work

2.3 Follow-up to the Tunis Action Plan 2020: state of preparation of the 3rd Meeting of the Special Focal Points on Illegal killing of birds

[T-PVS (2016) 6 – Draft Agenda]

[T-PVS/Inf (2016) 3 – Questionnaire for the mid-term evaluation of the Tunis Action Plan]

The Secretariat informed of the state of progress in the preparation of the forthcoming meeting of the Special Focal Points on Illegal killing of birds, stressing that 2016 will mark the mid-term review of the implementation by the Parties of the Tunis Action Plan. In order to properly assess progress in this field, the Secretariat has prepared a comprehensive questionnaire that reviews each of the actions suggested by the AP and by the relevant Standing Committee Recommendations. The questionnaire has been sent to key international partners for comments and then addressed to the Parties together with a specific reporting request. Mr Umberto Gallo-Orsi has accepted to carry out the analysis of Parties' replies and to draw up the mid-term review together with the specific recommendations.

Among the other topics on the agenda, participants will discuss the lists of national priorities to be submitted by the Parties [see Recommendation No. 171 (2014)], ways to improve communication and methodology for interacting with the Task Force of the CMS, and a draft reporting format for wild bird crime cases. Once more, the agenda of the meeting is interesting and specific, and counts with the contribution of highly qualified speakers.

Finally, the Secretariat wished to thank the authorities of Albania for hosting the meeting that will include a half-day field trip to the National Park Divjake-Karavasta, the first Ramsar site and the most important bird area in Albania.

DECISION: The Bureau thanked Albanian authorities for hosting the meeting, and further welcomed the launch of a mid-term review. The Bureau invited countries to ensure timely reporting so to help the consultant in his analysis of implementation. Moreover, the Bureau welcome the synergies consolidated at the international level in the field of illegal killing of birds, and expressed satisfaction for the leading role that the Convention has assumed on these matters. Another positive aspect that was noted is the increased awareness of European citizens about these topics.

2.4 Climate change: state of preparation of the meeting of the Group of Experts on Biodiversity and Climate Change

The Secretariat informed that the meeting of the Group of Experts on Biodiversity and Climate Change was scheduled to take place in Mostar (Bosnia and Herzegovina) at the end of May / beginning of June.

The main topics for discussion will be the following:

- ✓ Report of States on implementation of the respective Bern Convention recommendations;
- ✓ Implications of climate change for the protected area management;
- ✓ Integrating climate change considerations in designation of protected areas: review of criteria for designation of long-term protected areas;
- ✓ Awareness on climate change and biodiversity;

- ✓ Priorities for further action of the Group of Experts and for Parties: focusing on areas where the Convention may have an added value over other initiatives.

2.5 Setting-up of the Emerald Network: state of progress

[T-PVS/PA (2016) 1 – Conclusions of the 3rd Steering Committee of the EU/CoE Joint Programme Emerald Network]

The Secretariat reported on the progress in setting-up of the Emerald Network.

In 2015, the Emerald Network coverage increased further. With about 3,000 fully adopted or candidate Emerald sites, the Network covered nearly 600,000 km² or an average of 11-12 % of the national territories of the participating countries. In December 2015, the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention agreed to the official nomination of 429 newly proposed areas as candidate Emerald sites by Georgia, Norway and the Russian Federation. In Montenegro, efforts are being pursued to define precise borders of the candidate Emerald sites in the country, in order to proceed to their full adoption.

The Emerald Network implementation has also been successful in the six countries of the Eastern Partnership² and the Russian Federation, through the implementation of the Emerald Joint Programme (2013-2016) of the European Union and the Council of Europe. Here, newly proposed and candidate Emerald sites cover between 8 and 17 % of the national territories. Nearly 900 new potential Emerald sites were identified in 2015 alone. These newly proposed sites should be nominated as candidate at the end of 2016, thus raising dramatically the total number of fully adopted and candidate Emerald sites.

The steady progress in setting-up the Emerald Network was emphasised by the stakeholders at the third meeting of the Steering Committee of the Joint Programme on 14 January 2016 in Strasbourg. In particular, in the seven target countries new potential Emerald sites and habitats were identified; borders of some Emerald sites were extended; the national databases and maps were revised; cooperation with national stakeholders and international initiatives increased; and publications and visibility materials were issued. In addition, the countries which signed Association Agreements with the European Union in 2014 (Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine) pursued efforts to approximate national legislation to the environmental acquis of the European Union and raise the status of the Emerald areas.

The stakeholders also highlighted challenges in the implementation of the Emerald Network, such as the need to mainstream the project results to high-level decision makers as well as across the scientific community and the need to upgrade scientific data on species and habitats.

The biogeographical seminars conducted in 2015 in Tbilisi, Petrozavodsk and Minsk received a very positive feedback from the target countries and the scientific experts. The experts praised the countries for their dedicated work and underscored better results compared with the Natura 2000 results at the same stage of the biogeographical process in the 1990s.

Four Emerald biogeographical evaluation seminars are foreseen in 2016, including three seminars in the framework of the Programme (in Chisinau, Kyiv and Tbilisi) and a seminar in Trondheim (Norway).

The Secretariat also informed about a new initiative of the European Union, the GREEN East cooperation programme, a needs-based framework aiming to improve environmental management in the Eastern Partnership countries. Stakeholders would include Governments, NGOs and networks of private enterprises. The framework design will be prepared over 2016-2017 in close cooperation with national ministries.

Finally, the preparations of the annual meeting of the Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks (22-23 September 2016) and the final event of the Emerald Joint Programme (October 2016, tbc) have started.

² Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

DECISION: The Bureau noted the good progress achieved in the implementation of the Emerald Network. It acknowledged the efforts of all participants in the biogeographical process, notably experts, national stakeholders and civil society.

The Bureau expressed gratitude to the European Union for the collaboration in the Emerald Joint Programme and for the contribution to setting-up an ecological network at the pan-European level. The outcomes of the Joint Programme would demonstrate the pan-European effort in managing the protected areas.

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION: CASE-FILES

[T-PVS/Notes (2016) 1 – Summary of case files and complaints]
[T-PVS/Inf (2016) 2 – Register of Bern Convention's case-files]

3.1 Specific Sites - Files open

➤ 2004/2: Bulgaria: Wind farms in Balchik and Kaliakra –Via Pontica

[T-PVS/Files (2016) 12 – Government report]
[T-PVS/Files (2016) 13 – NGO report]

The Secretariat summarised the above case-files and recalled the decision taken by the Standing Committee at its last meeting in this respect.

Already in December last year, the national report does not provide enough elements for a proper assessment. More precisely, the national authorities only mentioned that the first violation found by the European Court of Justice was duly removed as the necessary areas were added to the “Kaliakra” special protected zone”, and informed that in respect to the remaining three violations, the country would reply to the European Commission within a period of 2 months from reception of the letter notifying the Court’s decision. Unfortunately, no other relevant information was submitted concerning the implementation of the obligations stemming from the Convention, as well as the measures recommended in Recommendation No. 130 (2007) and the decision of the Standing Committee.

The complainant also submitted a (spontaneous) report identifying the actions mentioned in Recommendation No. 130 (2007) whose implementation is relevant also for compliance with the ECJ ruling.

DECISION: The Bureau took note of the information presented and instructed the Secretariat to reiterate its reporting request to the authorities of Bulgaria, stressing that this follows a decision of the Standing Committee and addresses its concerns. Moreover, the Bureau asked the Secretariat to liaise with the EU in order to get a clear picture of the situation at its next meeting.

➤ 1995/6: Cyprus: Akamas peninsula

[T-PVS/Files (2016) 18 – Government report]
[Letter requesting an on-the-spot appraisal]

The Secretariat informed that a first reporting request had been sent to the authorities of Cyprus in December 2015, in relation to the implementation of Recommendation No. 63 (1997). Unfortunately, the authorities further asked for an extension of the reporting deadline until after the first Bureau meeting in 2016. Moreover, in January 2016, the Secretariat addressed a second letter to express concern about the recent news reported by the press regarding the decisions taken by the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Cyprus on 11 January 2016, presumably implying:

1. The exclusion of private properties from the recently declared “Akamas National Forest Park”, opening the possibility for further development in the area;
2. The preparation of a new Local Plan, to be drafted by the Department of Town Planning and Housing, that would allow the licensing of holiday homes, hotels and other tourist developments

within the Akamas Natura 2000 site, in clear contradiction with the Akamas management plan whose main objective is to ensure the sustainable development of the area.

In its correspondence, the Secretariat stressed that the recent decisions, particularly the new local plan, might lead to the further expansion of the urban development zones for construction of additional houses and tourism facilities. After recalling the background of the case – and with the authorisation of the Bureau, the Secretariat requested the agreement of the authorities for an on-the-spot appraisal in order to gather additional information as well as to examine ways on how to improve the situation.

In reply to this letter the authorities committed to address a reply before the first Bureau meeting. Unfortunately, no news was received since then.

DECISION: The Bureau took note with concern of this new information, and regretted that in the many years this file had been opened there had been no clear protection for the area. Also, the Bureau expressed strong concern for the future developments in respect of the new Management Plan for the Natura 2000 area, which includes the recently declared “Akamas National Forest Park”, and which may open the way for new tourism development incompatible with the biodiversity values of the area and with Cyprus obligations under the Convention. The Bureau encouraged the Cyprus authorities to cooperate with the Bern Convention, facilitate the on-the-spot appraisal and invited once more Cyprus to achieve a full implementation of Standing Committee Recommendation No. 63 (1997).

To be assessed at the September Bureau meeting

- 2004/1: Ukraine: Project for a waterway in the Bystroe estuary (Danube delta)
- 2007/1: Italy: Eradication and trade of the American grey squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*)
- 2010/5: Greece: threats to marine turtles in Thines Kiparissias
- 2012/9: Presumed degradation of nesting beaches in Fethiye and Patara SPAs (Turkey)
- 2013/1: Hydro power development within the territory of Mavrovo National Park (“the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”)

3.2 Possible file

- **2011/4: Turkey: threat to the Mediterranean monk seal (*Monachus monachus*)**

[T-PVS/Files (2016) X – Report of the Barcelona Convention]

The Secretariat recalled that at the last Standing Committee meeting the authorities of Turkey informed about the first preliminary results of the implementation of the Action Plan for the monk seal, including in the Mersin region. The Committee further welcomed the signature of a Protocol between the authorities and the complainant, for the preparation of a study aimed at the determination of caves actively used by monk seals and the monitoring of monk seal activities in them. However, the Committee reiterated its concerns for one of the most threatened mammal species in the World. Bearing in mind the need to ensure co-ordination with the Barcelona Convention, as well as to give to the complainant the opportunity for expressing its views, and taking into account the pending request of the Bureau related to the possibility of assessing the Action Plan for the monk seal, the Committee decided to keep this case-file as a possible file.

The Secretariat informed that in December 2015 it had reiterated its reporting request to the Barcelona Convention, emphasising on the demand of the Committee to receive the Barcelona Convention’s own assessment of the Action Plan adopted by the Turkish authorities, as well as any other information relevant to the complaint that might be used for formulating the necessary recommendations. Moreover, the Secretariat asked whether the RAC-SPA started implementing or supervising the implementation of the Regional Strategy for the conservation of monk seals in the

Mediterranean (2014-2019), and whether the latter could be useful in the context of the present complaint. Despite several reminders, the requests of the Secretariat has remained unanswered.

DECISION: The Bureau appreciated the efforts of the Turkish government towards the conservation of the species in the Mersin Region but would like to have guaranteed that the Action Plan envisaged is able to ensure such goals. It instructed the Secretariat to ask the Turkish authorities for a translation of the Action Plan that would permit to assess if the development planned is likely to affect negatively the monk seal population. Synergy with the Barcelona Convention will be necessary on this file as it concern one of its priority species. In this respect, the Bureau gave mandate to the Chair for approaching personally the Barcelona Convention, through a letter addressed to both the Secretariat and the Chairperson, emphasising on the utility of liaising on this case file.

➤ **2012/3: Poland: Possible spread of the American mink**

[T-PVS/Files (2016) 14 – Government report]

The Secretariat informed that Polish authorities had sent an updated report on the latest and on-going legislative reforms aimed at amending the conditions for keeping species in captivity including fur ones so to bring these in conformity with European nature protection standards, as well as fixing additional requirements to minimise the risk of escape of the American mink from farms to the wild. Some draft amendments will also slower down the threshold which is used for qualification of a mink farm to the group of projects that are potentially likely to have a significant impact on the environment. Once the amendment adopted, any increase of the stock above the foreseen threshold will be subject to a decision based on environmental conditions. It will be further possible to set environmental conditions and requirements, including safety measures to prevent mink escapes from farms, in every decision on the environmental conditions, irrespectively of a procedure under which the decision will be issued (so far this is not possible for instance when there is no EIA obligation).

DECISION: The Bureau took note with interest of the information provided and recalled that the Select Group on Invasive Alien Species had been entrusted by the Standing Committee with the task of providing guidance on the matter. As the species is not in the list of alien species of the European Union concern in the new EU Regulation on invasive alien species, there is a possibility that the American mink is considered for “blacklisting” at the national level it (as has been done by a number of governments and the Supreme Court in Spain). The Select Group within the Bern Convention should also consider developing guidelines for avoiding escapes from mink farms into the wild.

➤ **2001/4: Bulgaria: Motorway through the Kresna Gorge**

[T-PVS/Files (2016) 11 – Government report + Addenda]

[T-PVS/Files (2016) 10 – NGO report]

The Secretariat recalled that the complaint introduced in 2001 concerns the construction of a motorway (“Struma motorway”) through the Kresna Gorge in South-West Bulgaria. The complainant, a group of Bulgarian NGOs, denounced that the construction could pose a threat to the unique biodiversity of the area which harbours many species listed in Appendices I and II to the Bern Convention.

In 2002, the Standing Committee adopted Recommendation No. 98 (2002), inviting the authorities in particular to conduct an in-depth environmental assessment of the motorway routing, to abandon the project to enlarge the current road and to study alternatives outside the gorge.

In 2004, the Standing Committee decided to open a case-file, which it closed 2009 in the light of decision by the Bulgarian authorities to refrain from the construction through the Kresna Gorge and opt for a so-called “tunnel” alternative bypassing the gorge.

In September 2015, the complainant alerted the Secretariat that the Government had rejected the “tunnel” alternative. In November 2015, the Bulgarian authorities informed that no decision as to the routing had been taken.

In December 2015, the Standing Committee decided to consider this closed file as a possible file, and invited the Bulgarian authorities to keep the Bureau informed.

The authorities replied positively to the reporting request. In their report submitted they stress that studies showed that the “tunnel” alternative could cause environmental damage to the gorge and pose a threat to public safety. Two other options, i.e. a long tunnel through the gorge and a dual carriageway, were being considered. The design of the long tunnel option was completed in 2015 and a detailed EIA/AA comparing the “long tunnel” and the “dual carriageway” options would be prepared in 2016. The authorities submitted technical documents related to the design and analysis of 16 possible options of the motorway routing. Views of the European Commission were sought and the project has been under public scrutiny.

The complainant further informed that the revised scope of the new 2015 EIA had been submitted for final approval to the Ministry of the Environment and Water. Both “long tunnel” and “dual carriageway” options would ensure movement in two directions but they breach Recommendation No. 98 (2002). The EIA/AA should be finalised by the end of March 2016.

The complainant further wrote that the construction of the motorway sections Lot 3.1 from the north and Lot 3.3 from the south of the Kresna Gorge had already begun. Hence any alternatives bypassing the gorge are excluded. The complainant insisted that the “tunnel” remained the only alternative in line with Recommendation No. 98 (2002). The complainant deplored a lack of action on behalf of the European Commission.

The complainant requested that the case-file be reopened and that Bulgarian authorities fulfil their obligations to protect the Kresna Gorge.

DECISION: In the light of the information from both sides, the Bureau decided to reconsider this complaint at its next meeting as a possible file. It requested the Government and the complainant to report, including on the construction and functioning of the selected “long tunnel” option.

The Bureau expressed hope that the Bulgarian authorities would be able to provide information demonstrating that the risks to the wildlife have been minimised.

3.3 Complaints on stand-by

➤ 2012/5: Sport and recreation facilities in Çıralı key turtle nesting beach (Turkey)

[T-PVS/Files (2016) 7 – Government report]

[T-PVS/Files (2016) X – Complainant report]

The Secretariat recalled that the above complaint was the object of a court case and that the court’s decision was pending. In a short note sent in March 2015 the authorities confirmed that the decision of the court has been still pending and that, in the meantime, the area continued to enjoy the protection granted to the site, with no sport activities implemented.

The same information was reiterated in February this year by the national authorities while the complainant didn’t address a report. Ms d’Alessandro added that she visited the area last summer on a private visit and confirmed that there are no sport facilities on the site. However, the signage and controls could be improved, as they currently rely on the efforts of the NGOs. No news was received by the complainant.

DECISION: The Bureau took note of the information provided and decided to keep this complaint on stand-by and to re-assess it after the sentence of the court is issued.

➤ **2012/7: Presumed illegal killing of birds in Malta**

*[T-PVS/Files (2016) 8 – Government report]
[T-PVS/Files (2016) X – NGO report]*

The Secretariat recalled that this complaint was lodged in 2012 and that since, Malta has conducted a full and thorough reform of its legislative framework, but also worked towards proper enforcement at bird-crime prevention and prosecution, ensuring the efficiency of the judiciary, and addressing cultural change through general public and the target group awareness raising as well as of the administrative rules and practice. The country has even already embedded a list of 8 gravity factors into national legislation, as requested by the general Standing Committee Recommendation adopted last December and worked on most of the actions suggested by the Tunis Action Plan.

This work allowed for outstanding results that were presented at the meeting of the Group of Experts on the Conservation of Birds (October 2015), mandated by the Bureau to assess the case-file. The Group of Experts assessed both the views of the Party and those of the complainant, and expressed satisfaction for the way in which the authorities handled the complaint, and congratulated them for the long-term approach implemented to illegal killing of birds, and for the substantial results already recorded. Parties also noted that the issue of trapping derogation is being assessed by the European Commission and does not fall under the scope of the present complaint.

The Secretariat addressed a further reporting request for the Bureau meeting to both the Party and the complainant. The country informed on the most recent progress while the complainant did not submit a report. In light of the excellent work carried out as well as of the results obtained, the Secretariat suggested that the complaint might be dismissed.

DECISION: The Bureau congratulated the authorities of Malta for the outstanding work carried out, as well as for their commitment and serious approach to illegal killing of birds which allowed for results in enforcement. The Bureau expressed appreciation for the efforts of the government that should inspire other Parties. The experience of Malta can also be considered as the evidence that the Tunis Action Plan can really help countries to properly and effectively address wild-bird crimes.

In the light of the above, the Bureau decided to dismiss this complaint.

➤ **2013/10: Impact of corn monoculture on the conservation status of protected species in Alsace, France**

*[T-PVS/Files (2016) 4 – Government Report]
[T-PVS/Files (2016) 16 – Complainant report]*

The Secretariat recalled that this complaint had been submitted in 2013 to denounce the presumed destruction of 75-80 % of the flora and fauna in the Alsace region due to corn monoculture in the plains of Haut-Rhin.

In March 2015, the Bureau examined the reports by the relevant stakeholders. It decided to keep this complaint on stand-by and to re-consider it at its first meeting in 2016 in the light of reports by the Parties. It also recalled that the EU Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) also addressed biodiversity conservation and habitats preservation.

In February 2016, the French authorities informed in a submitted report that the decline in the species richness and numbers mentioned in the complaint could not be attributable solely to the corn monoculture but rather to their limited distribution. They described measures taken to preserve the species, including late mowing which had proven successful in preserving the Corncrake. The authorities provided stocktaking data on five species mentioned in the complaint. The data shows that the species have declined except for the Red kite, whose population increased between 2014 and 2015.

The measures taken under the Regional Action Plan (2012-2016) proved favorable to the protection of species.

In March 2016, the complainant commented on the report of the French authorities. The complainant reiterated that corn monoculture remains the main reason for the decline in the species there. The complainant argued that the measures taken by the authorities were by and large ineffective. The complainant stressed that corn monoculture prevailed in Alsace, despite a slight decrease imposed by the EU CAP.

DECISION: While taking due note of the arguments by the Parties and reiterating that corn monoculture can affect biodiversity at a large scale, the Bureau recalled that the EU Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) and Biodiversity Strategy also addressed biodiversity conservation and habitats protection and management.

The Bureau expressed the expectation that the matter would be discussed at the EU level. It also encouraged the EU Member States to better align the agricultural policy with biodiversity concerns.

In the light of the considerations above, the Bureau decided to dismiss this complaint.

➤ **2014/6: Wind energy: Possible threats to an endangered natural habitat in Izmir (Turkey)**

[T-PVS/Files (2016) 15– Complainant report]

The Secretariat recalled that this complaint was submitted in July 2014 by a citizen of Çeşme, İzmir, to denounce the exponentially increasing number of wind energy installations (WEIs) that could affect an endangered natural area including its wildlife, and noted that the Bureau was not convinced that the file was well-founded on the ground. However, at its last meeting, the Bureau decided to give another chance to the complainant for completing its file by bringing more clear evidence of a potential impact of the denounced wind-farm developments on the species and/or habitats protected under the Convention.

The Secretariat further summarised the report of the complainant, stressing that the complainant also referred to a report presumably issued by the Ministry of the Environment and Water Works (İzmir Provincial Directorate) in 2013, concluding that the cumulative effects of wind energy developments in the area would present a serious life-threatening risk for several species, and for bird populations in particular.

DECISION: The Bureau took note of the information submitted by the complainant and asked the Secretariat to send the complainant's report to the national authorities asking for information and comments on the cumulative impact of wind-farm developments in the area. The Bureau decided to keep the complaint on stand-by and to re-assess it at its September meeting.

➤ **2014/1: Presumed risk of national extinction of badgers in Ireland**

[T-PVS/Files (2016) X – Government Report]

The Secretariat recalled that, as a follow-up to a previous complaint submitted in 2011 on the same issue, the Irish authorities recognized a certain decline in the badger population in Ireland, but informed that the latter was under control and that it would not continue further.

The Secretariat informed the Bureau that it had addressed a reporting request to the Irish authorities on any relevant change in the population size on the national territory since 2012, as well as on the measures undertaken to monitor it; on the conservation status of the species; and on the results of the research on the vaccination as an alternative to the culls. Unfortunately, the reporting requests remained all unanswered but in the last weeks the Permanent Representation of Ireland to the

Council of Europe has promised that a report will be submitted before the next Bureau meeting in September.

DECISION: In the light of the information above, the Bureau decided to keep the complaint on stand-by and instructed the Secretariat to re-contact the Permanent Representation of Ireland to the Council of Europe on time for providing a report at the next Bureau meeting.

➤ **2014/8: Presumed large-scale exploitation and marketing of protected marine shelled molluscs in Greece**

*[T-PVS/Files (2016) 17 – Government Report]
[T-PVS/Files (2016) 6 – Complainant report]*

The Secretariat recalled that this complaint concerns the large-scale illegal exploitation and marketing of protected marine shelled molluscs in Greece, including species protected under the Convention, as well as under other regional or international conventions and the EU legislation. At its last meeting – and following the opinion of the EU - the Bureau decided to ask the complainant for more information.

The Secretariat addressed reporting requests to both the authorities and the complainant.

In his report, the complainant stresses that the core problem in Greece is that conservation legislation is not enforced. Without appropriate enforcement measures and the establishment of effective control mechanisms, illegal exploitation and marketing of date mussels will remain. Moreover, the complainant defends the findings of the study on which the complaint is based, stressing that the methodology used for it consisted in selecting a large number of sites (not only black-spots) and in visiting all seafood restaurants that could be found in each of the sites. 219 interviews were conducted at 92 localities well covering all marine sub-regions of Greece. Hence, the sample is representative of the situation in the entire country, and the finding that 22.8 % of the seafood restaurants serve regularly (11.4 %) or occasionally date mussels is not an overestimate. Moreover, the complainant has recently scrutinised restaurants' webpages, blogs and food reviews on the internet. It appeared that enforcement is so weak that the restaurants even publicise their menus based on date mussels and or fan mussel (served at least at three localities). The complainant concludes by acknowledging the recent efforts of the country in terms of institutional strengthening of the regulations, but still points out to enforcement and ineffective surveillance as the matters to be addressed.

The Secretariat further summarised the information submitted by the authorities claiming that the data provided by the complainant are outdated and that, the Greek CITES Management Authority has not delivered any CITES permit in relation to the species in object of the complaint.

The Secretariat noted that the species is native to Greece and that illegal exploitation and internal trade could continue in the absence of CITES permits.

DECISION: The Bureau thanked the Greek authorities for their reply but noted that there was enough evidence of the presumed illegal trade, probably due to the lack of knowledge of legal regulations by restaurant managers or simply by the lack of implementation of the law. The Bureau instructed the Secretariat to contact the CITES Secretariat to see what information they hold on the species concerned, both on CITES permits or on illegal trade. The Bureau will discuss the issue at its next meeting to see whether it may be dealt with as a possible case-file.

➤ **2014/3: Presumed deliberate killing of birds in Serbia**

*[T-PVS/Files (2016) 9 – Government Report]
[T-PVS/Files (2016) X – Complainant report]*

The Secretariat recalled that this complaint was submitted to denounce a presumed breach of the Convention by Serbia for failing to take adequate measures against illegal bird poisoning. Poisoning concerned 122 birds listed in Appendix II to the Convention, including 26 white-tailed eagles, killed over the period 2007-2014 (until March).

According to the complainant, poisoning, mainly through carbofuran and feeding with poisoned seeds and carcasses, has an impact on wild bird breeding populations. Almost all dead individuals of the white-tailed eagle were found on intensively managed agricultural land. The complainant considers that the authorities are failing to adopt and enforce sufficiently strict administrative and legal measures to discourage poisoning of wild birds.

Further to the national report in March 2015, the Bureau welcomed the efforts deployed by the authorities to address the matters of the complaint and praised the nomination by the country of a Special Focal Point for illegal killing of birds as a first step towards the full implementation of the Tunis Action Plan. However, the Bureau regretted a lack of a more structured approach and decided to re-consider this complaint as a complaint on stand-by at its first meeting in 2016. It also invited Serbia to attend the meeting of the Group of Experts on the conservation of birds under the Bern Convention (“the Group of Experts”) and to report on follow-up activities and actions.

In October 2015, the authorities informed the Group of Experts that toxicological analysis (2014) confirmed that the death of the birds had been caused by carbofuran. The offenders were referred to the Prosecutor’s Office. The implementation of a comprehensive strategy against illegal killing of birds encounters challenges, such as the lack of funding and specifically trained human resources, the need to improve communication and co-operation between all competent bodies and stakeholders, and lengthy judicial procedures. These challenges are being addressed. In particular, some pending legal cases were presented as well as a WWF Serbia campaign for the responsible use of pesticides.

The Group of Experts referred the case to the Bureau.

Only the authorities provided an updated report in 2016.

According to the national report, legal provisions were amended/adopted in line with the requirements of the Bern Convention and the Tunis Action Plan. In February 2016, relevant stakeholders, such as CITES Unit and Environmental Inspectorate, the prosecutor’s office and NGOs, met to assess the situation and prepare the report for the Bureau. A draft Protocol was prepared for possible adoption by the Government. The Protocol identifies illegal killing of birds as a major threat to birds and their habitats. It aims at implementing joint actions and promoting cooperation between authorities and organisations involved in the fight against illegal killing of birds.

Furthermore, since 2014 a project has been carried out with a view to devising a National Action Plan on the sustainable use of plant protection products and establishing systems for regular technical inspection of pesticide application equipment. A number of awareness-raising activities have been conducted in cooperation with NGOs. Two draft laws on the accession to the AEWa and EUROBATS Agreements were adopted by the Government and transmitted to the Parliament.

The Secretariat further informed about a new similar complaint concerning the illegal killing of raptors in 2015-2016, which was submitted in March 2016. The present and the new complaints would be assessed separately based on reports and presented to the Bureau meeting in September 2016.

DECISION: The Bureau thanked the authorities and the complainant for the reports. It welcomed the new measures targeting illegal killing of birds in Serbia.

The Bureau decided to keep the case-file on stand-by until its next meeting, in order to assess the effectiveness of the legislation and other measures taken and to encourage a more systematic approach to the matter.

3.4 Other complaints

➤ **2015/2: Possible impact of wind-farm developments on bats (“the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”)**

*[T-PVS/Files (2016) 1 – Government Report]
[T-PVS/Files (2016) 2 – Complainant Report]*

The Secretariat recalled that the file concerns wind-farm development near the village of Bogdanci, located in the very close vicinity of the Dojran Lake, an important candidate Emerald site and an Important Bird Area in “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”. The complainant considers that the Bogdanci wind farm development poses a threat for not less than 15 bat species occupying the area where the farm was built, which is only several kilometres from the main migratory route Morava-Vardar.

In response to the specific reporting request sent by the Secretariat, the national authorities submitted their report in February 2016.

The report describes the Bogdanci Wind Farm (an ELEM’s project) which underwent a thorough environmental and social impact assessment (ESIA) in accordance with both the national law and the donors’ requirements (EU CARDS project). According to the authorities, the ESIA took both avian fauna and bats into account and included field survey and extensive research on scientific literature. In that context, detailed and structured environmental management and monitoring plan were developed and adopted by ELEM as part of project development documents.

A pre-survey assessment was also conducted to identify the species as well as the landscape features used by bats that were potentially at risk, and field surveys took place in spring and autumn seasons in 2009. The ecological assessment identified a comprehensive list of bats species that could be subject to disturbance and displacement during construction, but this impact was considered to be a short term disruption with no significant impact.

Moreover, a project’s Environmental Management and Monitoring Plan (EMMP) to eliminate adverse environmental and social impacts, offset them, or reduce them to acceptable levels has been developed as a part of the ESIA process. The whole ESIA package was publically disclosed in 2010 and a public hearing was organised and held in the Bogdanci municipality as a part of the consultation process. The decision for approval was issued after all the necessary steps had been completed.

The Emerald site Dojran Lake, also designated as Important Bird Area (IBA) and Ramsar Site, was also taken into consideration during environmental appraisal of the wind farm Bogdanci, but in fact the agricultural areas, including the Project’s site, are considered as not relevant for migratory species. In line with the above, the impact in relation to breeding bird species is predicted as unlikely to be significant both in terms of disturbance during construction and operation. As for the collision risks, an assessment of the potential for collision with the wind turbines predicts that the key bird groups recorded during the surveys were reported as flying mostly above 150 meters (the maximum rotor height), and thus exhibiting avoidance behavior. The assessment of the project was also undertaken in accordance with the EU Guidance on the Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites.

Regarding post-construction monitoring, ELEM has initiated the procedure for the nomination of a qualified consultant to perform the requested three-year post-construction / operational monitoring that is expected to start in spring 2016.

The authorities conclude by stressing that the complainant didn’t complaint during the ESIA phase, and co-signed the national reports submitted to EUROBATS.

The Secretariat further summarized the comments submitted by EUROBATS on the national report, basically explaining that the general information requested in national reports is not adequate to assess the situation in the present case. The EUROBATS further identifies some possible shortcomings and express the wish to cooperate with the Bern Convention in further assessing the matter to provide advice to the country in this respect. More precisely, EUROBATS would be interested in assessing the baseline bird/bat surveys undertaken for the purposes of the ESIA in the spring and autumn seasons of 2009 and recalled that the Guidelines for consideration of bats in wind

farm projects (2008) asking to survey bats during the pre-construction throughout the whole period of their activity, including summer (a reproduction time), from 15 February to 15 December.

DECISION: The Bureau decided to consider this complaint as a complaint on stand-by.

4. FOLLOW-UP OF PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS: PROPOSAL BY THE SECRETARIAT

- **Recommendation No. 96 (2002) on conservation of natural habitats and wildlife, especially birds, in afforestation of lowland in Iceland**
- **Recommendation No. 144 (2009) on the wind park in Smøla (Norway) and other wind farm developments in Norway**
- **Recommendation No. 110 (2004) on minimising adverse effects of above-ground electricity transmission facilities (power lines) on birds**
- **Recommendation No. 176 (2015) on the prevention and control of the *Batrachochytrium salamandrivorans* chytrid fungus**

DECISION: The Secretariat presented the list of Recommendations whose monitoring is proposed for next Standing Committee meeting. The monitoring of Recommendations No. 96 (2002), No. 144 (2009) and No. 110 (2004) is actually the result of decisions taken by the Standing Committee itself at last or previous meetings.

Concerning the monitoring of Recommendation No. 176 (2015), the Secretariat justified the proposal by stressing the urgency of the matter and the need to start implementing prevention and control measures.

The Bureau agreed with the proposed list and invited Parties to pay particular attention to Recommendation No. 176 (2015), urging for its fast implementation.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- **File Open - 2013/1: Hydro power development within the territory of the Mavrovo National Park (“the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”)**

[T-PVS/Files (2016) 5 – Report by the complainant]

The Secretariat informed that a spontaneous report was received by the complainant on this case-file whose assessment is scheduled for the next Bureau meeting. As the government had not been asked to report this file case, the Secretariat stressed that the information provided by the complainant cannot be dealt formally but under “other issues”. The complainant wished to raise the attention of the Bureau on the fact that the World Bank dropped one of the questioned projects (the Lukovo Pole project). With regard to the other project, Boskov Most HPP, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development pledged to comply with the recommendation and put the project on stay until the Strategic Environmental Assessment is completed. The complainant asked the bodies of the Convention to address with the authorities some specific points, in particular to:

- ask the government to suspend the construction of the small hydropower plants in the park;
- postpone the adoption of the Law on re-proclamation of the Mavrovo NP;
- provide guidelines on the implementation of the recommendation to all stakeholders;
- ask that the Strategic Environmental Assessment is transparent and involves all stakeholders;
- remind the stakeholders of the importance to conduct activities setting within the Balkan Lynx

(Lynx lynx balcanicus) Recovery programme.

Moreover, the complainant informed the Bureau of the construction of four new small hydropower plants funded privately.

Yet on 21 March 2016, the Government informed it was following the Recommendation, in particular the government had launched a national programme for monitoring and recovery of the Balkan lynx and promised to keep the Secretariat updated on the progress.

The Bureau took note of this information, stressing that the building of small plants is in line with the recommendation adopted by the Standing Committee and instructed the secretariat to ask both the authorities and the complainant to report on the current situation by the end of June 2016. The Bureau encouraged the government to fully implement the recommendation of the Standing Committee. It further noted that the protection of the Balkan lynx could be enhanced if it was listed as a subspecies in Appendix II to the Convention. A proposal in that sense would be welcome from any of the Parties in the range of the subspecies.

➤ **Expression of gratitude**

As this was the last meeting in which Ms Ivana D'Alessandro was acting as Secretary of the Bern Convention and Head of the Biodiversity Unit, the Bureau, acting in the name of the Standing Committee, wished to express its gratitude to her for her diligent and excellent work in the last six years, as well as for her commitment to nature conservation and for serving so splendidly well the Committee with both diplomacy and firmness. She had been indeed a most professional and efficient Secretary of the Convention which had benefited from her commendable efforts, enthusiasm and good sense. The Bureau wished her much success in the continuation of her career at the Council of Europe.

Appendix 1



Strasbourg, 22 March 2016



CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS
Standing Committee
Bureau meeting

Strasbourg, 22 March 2016
(Room 17, opening: 9:30 am)

AGENDA

1. **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA** *[Draft agenda]*
2. **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2016 PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES** *[Note for the Bureau]*
[T-PVS (2015) 14 - Programme of Activities for 2016-2017]
- 2.2 **Group of Specialists on the European Diploma for Protected Areas**
 - a. **Report of the meeting** *[T-PVS/DE (2016) 4 – Report of the meeting]*
[T-PVS/DE (2016) 5 – Report of the on-the-spot appraisal to Bialowiecza National Park]
 - b. **Poloniny National Park (Slovak Republic): Monitoring of compliance** *[T-PVS/DE (2016) 9 – Report of the national authorities]*
- 2.2 **Invasive Alien Species: state of preparation of the meeting of the Select Group on IAS** *[T-PVS (2016) 2 – Draft Agenda]*
- 2.3 **Follow-up to the Tunis Action Plan 2020: state of preparation of the 3rd Meeting of the Special Focal Points on Illegal killing of birds** *[T-PVS (2016) 6 – Draft Agenda]*
[T-PVS/Inf (2016) 3 – Questionnaire for the mid-term evaluation of the Tunis Action Plan]
- 2.4 **Climate change: state of preparation of the meeting of the Group of Experts on Biodiversity and Climate Change**
- 2.5 **Setting-up of the Emerald Network: state of progress** *[T-PVS/PA (2016) 1 – Conclusions of the 3rd Steering Committee of the EU/CoE Joint Programme Emerald Network]*
3. **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION: CASE-FILES** *[T-PVS/Notes (2016) 1 – Summary of case files and complaints]*
[T-PVS/Inf (2016) 2 – Register of Bern Convention's case-files]

3.1 Specific Sites - Files open

- 2004/2: Bulgaria: Wind farms in Balchik and Kaliakra –Via Pontica
[T-PVS/Files (2016) 12 – Government report]
[T-PVS/Files (2016) 13 – NGO report]
- 1995/6: Cyprus: Akamas peninsula
[T-PVS/Files (2016) 18 – Government report]
[Letter requesting an on-the-spot appraisal]

3.2 Possible file

- 2011/4: Turkey: threat to the Mediterranean monk seal (*Monachus monachus*)
[T-PVS/Files (2016) X – Report of the Barcelona Convention]
- 2012/3: Poland: Possible spread of the American mink
[T-PVS/Files (2016) 14 – Government report]
- 2001/4: Bulgaria: Motorway through the Kresna Gorge
[T-PVS/Files (2016) 11 – Government report + Addenda]
[T-PVS/Files (2016) 10 – NGO report]

3.3 Complaints on stand-by

- 2012/5: Sport and recreation facilities in Çıralı key turtle nesting beach (Turkey)
[T-PVS/Files (2016) 7 – Government report]
[T-PVS/Files (2016) X – Complainant report]
- 2012/7: Presumed illegal killing of birds in Malta
[T-PVS/Files (2016) 8 – Government report]
[T-PVS/Files (2016) X – NGO report]
- 2013/10: Impact of corn monoculture on the conservation status of protected species in Alsace, France
[T-PVS/Files (2016) 4 – Government Report]
[T-PVS/Files (2016) 16 – Complainant report]
- 2014/6: Wind energy: Possible threats to an endangered natural habitat in Izmir (Turkey)
[T-PVS/Files (2016) 15 – Complainant report]
- 2014/1: Presumed risk of national extinction of badgers in Ireland
[T-PVS/Files (2016) X – Government Report]
- 2014/8: Presumed large-scale exploitation and marketing of protected marine shelled molluscs in Greece
[T-PVS/Files (2016) 17 – Government Report]
[T-PVS/Files (2016) 6 – Complainant report]
- 2014/3: Presumed deliberate killing of birds in Serbia
[T-PVS/Files (2016) 9 – Government Report]
[T-PVS/Files (2016) X – Complainant Report]

3.5 Other complaints

- 2015/2: Possible impact of wind-farm developments on bats (“the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”)
[T-PVS/Files (2016) 1 – Government Report]
[T-PVS/Files (2016) 2 – Complainant Report]
- [...]

NOTE: To be assessed at the September Bureau meeting:

- **File Open** - 2004/1: Ukraine: Proposed navigable waterway in the Bystroe Estuary (Danube delta)
[T-PVS/Files (2016) 3 – Information submitted by Romania]
- **File Open** - 2007/1: Italy: Eradication and trade of the American grey squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*)
- **File Open** - 2010/5: Greece: threats to marine turtles in Thines Kiparissias

- **File open** - 2012/9: Presumed degradation of nesting beaches in Fethiye and Patara SPAs (Turkey)
 - **File Open** - 2013/1: Hydro power development within the territory of Mavrovo National Park (“the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”)
 - **Complaint on stand-by** - 2013/5: Presumed impact of a construction of Overhead Power Line (OHL) in an environmentally sensitive area in the Lithuanian-Polish borderland
 - **Complaint on stand-by** - 2011/5: France / Switzerland: threats to the Rhone streber (*Zingel asper*) in the Doubs (France) and in the canton of Jura (Switzerland)
- 4. FOLLOW-UP OF PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS: PROPOSAL BY THE SECRETARIAT**
- Recommendation No. 96 (2002) on conservation of natural habitats and wildlife, especially birds, in afforestation of lowland in Iceland
 - Recommendation No. 144 (2009) on the wind park in Smøla (Norway) and other wind farm developments in Norway
 - Recommendation No. 110 (2004) on minimising adverse effects of above-ground electricity transmission facilities (power lines) on birds
 - Recommendation No. 176 (2015) on the prevention and control of the *Batrachochytrium salamandrivorans* chytrid fungus
- 5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
- **File Open** - 2013/1: Hydro power development within the territory of Mavrovo National Park (“the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”)

[T-PVS/Files (2016) 5 – Report by the complainant]

Appendix 2

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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