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CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

Standing Committee

32nd meeting
Strasbourg, 27-30 November 2012

Other complaints

**POSSIBLE SPREAD OF THE AMERICAN MINK
(*NEOVISON VISON*) IN POLAND**

REPORT BY THE GOVERNMENT

*Document prepared by
the Ministry of the Environment, Poland*

OFFICIAL POSITION OF THE MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT ON THE REGULATION OF THE MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT OF 9 SEPTEMBER 2011 ON LIST OF ALIEN PLANTS AND ANIMALS SPECIES, WHICH IF RELEASED TO THE ENVIRONMENT CAN THREATEN NATIVE SPECIES OR NATURAL HABITATS

In response to the request, received by email on 9 May 2012, concerning the American mink (*Neovision vison*) which has not been included in the *Regulation of the Minister of the Environment of 9 September 2011 on list of alien plants and animals species, which if released to the environment can threaten native species or natural habitats (Journal of Laws No. 210, item. 1260)*, we would like to the following information pass on.

In opinion of the Minister of the Environment, there are reasons to include American mink (*Neovision vison*) in the Regulation of the Minister of the Environment of 9 September 2011 on list of alien plants and animals species, which if released to the environment can threaten native species or natural habitats (Journal of Laws No. 210, item. 1260).

American mink was mentioned in the draft regulation sent to public consultation and inter-ministerial consultations. The decision to remove the species from the draft was taken after negotiations with the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.

According to the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, the argument not to include American mink in the Regulation is first and foremost the fact that this animal is not a wild animal, but it is recognized as a farm animal, which breeding conditions are regulated in the Act of 29 June 2007 on the organization of animal breeding and reproduction farm (Journal of Laws No. 133, item. 921, as amended).

In addition, according to the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, American mink breeding farms do not pose a threat to native wildlife, because farms are well protected from animal escapes. Mink escapes occur only occasionally, mainly when changing place of capture of the animals.

It should be noted that the present Regulation is a very important instrument for protection of native species and habitats from negative impacts of invasive alien species. In view of the urgent need for the adoption of the Regulation to provide the necessary provisions concerning alien species, the Minister of Environment adopted the Order (the list of invasive alien species), as agreed with the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development .

It is worth noting that, taking into account the high public and scientific interest in the Regulation, not only in the case of the aforementioned American mink, a deeper analysis of the regulation will take place in the next few years.