



Strasbourg, 26 February 2026

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CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

Standing Committee

46th meeting
Strasbourg, 7-11 December 2026

Bureau of the Standing Committee

7-9 April 2026
Strasbourg

Stand-by case file: 2021/8

**Possible threat to Rioni River from the Namakhvani Hydropower Project
(Georgia)**

- GOVERNMENT REPORT -

*Document prepared by the
Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia*

Update Report – February 2026

To: Ms. Alessandra Siino,

Secretary of the Bern Convention

Cc: Permanent Representation of Georgia to the Council of Europe

Subject: Complaint on stand-by no. 2021/8: Georgia: Possible threat to Rioni River from the Namakhvani Hydropower Project

Dear Ms. Siino,

On behalf of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, I would like to refer to the letter of the Bern Convention dated November 18, 2025 with the Bureau Decision regarding Complaint on stand-by no. 2021/8 - Georgia: Possible threat to Rioni River from the Namakhvani Hydropower Project.

As a follow-up of the Government's report in 2025, I would like to inform the Bureau that the planned project of Namakhvani Hydropower Plant (HPP) has been suspended. An international arbitration decision has been issued.

As referenced in the decision, the Bureau requested clarification in regards to the adoption of draft law on Rioni River Managed Reserve. In close collaboration with central and local stakeholders, the draft law has been submitted to the Parliament of Georgia and is scheduled for its first hearing within the current year. Once adopted, it will provide an additional layer of protection for the sturgeon spawning grounds in the Rioni River.

However, the present complaint concerning the Namakhvani Hydropower Project is not directly related to the Vartsikhe HPP (built in 1970s) and should remain focused exclusively on the current project. The information regarding the construction of the Vartsikhe fish pass was provided to the Bureau in 2022 as supplementary material in the context of conservation efforts for sturgeon species in the downstream section of Rioni river. It was submitted for informational purposes only and should not be interpreted as an obligation or a condition within the framework of the present complaint.

I once again express our appreciation for the continued constructive cooperation and for the Bureau's thorough consideration of both, the complainants' and the Government's reports. I hope that the above-mentioned update serves as a basis for the dismissal of the case file. Please do not hesitate to contact us should further clarification be required.

Sincerely,

First Deputy Minister

Nino Tandilashvili