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CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

Standing Committee
45th meeting
Strasbourg, 8-12 December 2025

Bureau of the Standing Committee
16-18 September 2025
Strasbourg

New File: 2024/02

**Deforestation in an Emerald Network site (UA0000338) in
Kyiv Region
(Ukraine)**

- GOVERNMENT REPORT -

*Document prepared by
Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine*

Update Report, received September 2025**МІНІСТЕРСТВО ЕКОНОМІКИ,
ДОВКІЛЛЯ ТА СІЛЬСЬКОГО
ГОСПОДАРСТВА УКРАЇНИ****Ministry of Economy,
Environment and Agriculture
of Ukraine**

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№ _____ від _____ 20__ р.

Mr. Mikaël Poutiers
Secretary of the Bern Convention
Council of Europe, Avenue de l'Europe F-
67075 Strasbourg Cedex, France

Subject: Complaint No. 2024/02: New complaint: Ukraine: Deforestation in the Emerald Network (UA0000338) in the Kyiv region

Dear Mr. Mikaël Poutiers,

The Ministry of Economy, Environment, and Agriculture of Ukraine (hereinafter referred to as the Ministry) extends its regards to the Secretariat of the Bern Convention.

The Ministry is pleased to transmit herewith a letter dated 25 August 2025 No.17976/1.2/7-25 from the Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine concerning the justification for the absence of any other satisfactory solution for the location of the National Military Memorial Cemetery and underlining the overriding public interest in its establishment (a copy of the letter is enclosed). The Ministry would also like to inform the Secretariat that supplementary materials, including details of the environmental study undertaken as well as information regarding the derogation from the provisions of the Bern Convention under Article 9, or other relevant measures if required, will be duly provided in advance of the next meeting of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention.

The Ministry avails itself of this opportunity to reaffirm Ukraine's commitment to the objectives and principles of the Bern Convention and to renew to the Secretariat of the Bern Convention the assurances of its highest consideration.

Sincerely,
Igor Zubovich
Deputy Minister

Annex: letter of the Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine (6 pages)



ДОКУМЕНТ СЕД Мінекономіки АСКОД

Підписувач Зубович Ігор Олегович

Сертифікат 3FAA9288358EC00304000000553B3C003034E700

Дійсний з 07.08.2025 21:00:00 по 07.08.2027 20:59:59

Мінекономіки



77-01/61012-07 від 10.09.2025

Annex - unofficial translation of a letter from the Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine

Non-official translation

MINISTRY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OF UKRAINE

Ministry of Economy, Environmental Protection,
and Agriculture of Ukraine

The Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine, in addition to letter No. 14803/1.2/7-25 dated July 16, 2025, regarding letter No. 25/8-11/9597-25 dated July 8, 2025, from the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources of Ukraine concerning the provision of information regarding the absence of any other satisfactory solution for the location of the National Military Memorial Cemetery, the important public interest and the justification for the size of the National Military Memorial Cemetery, informs on the following.

On the importance of the public interest in the construction of the National Military Memorial Cemetery.

The National Military Memorial Cemetery is the country's main memorial honoring the memory of the defenders who died fighting for Ukraine.

The National Military Memorial Cemetery is being created for the first time in the history of our state. Honoring heroes is very important, especially now, when our country is at war, which is why the memory of those who gave their most precious gift - their lives - for the freedom and independence of Ukraine must be immortalized in a dignified manner.

The National Memorial Cemetery is a symbol of memory, honor, and unity of the Ukrainian people, a place where the feat of the fallen defenders of Ukraine is immortalized. It is a symbol of the indomitable spirit and devotion to the Motherland, as well as a future that demonstrates that the state does not forget its heroes and that their sacrifice is duly honored.

The purpose of constructing the National Military Memorial Cemetery is to create a national place of remembrance for those who died (passed away) defending the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Ukraine, fulfilling their official duties and oath of allegiance to the Ukrainian people.

The memorial complex will include not only a military cemetery with all the necessary ritual facilities for organizing honorary burials of those who died (passed away) defending the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Ukraine. There will also be a museum complex that will immortalize the memory of the deceased (fallen) Defenders.

Ukraine and will record their contribution to the protection of Ukrainian statehood for future generations.

The high status of the Memorial has been determined not only by the Government of Ukraine, but also by the highest authority in Ukraine – the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.

In order to implement this national project, the Ukrainian parliament has twice passed laws:

- in 2022, No. 2292-IX «On Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine Regarding the National Military Memorial Cemetery,» which, in particular, regulates who can be buried at the National Military Memorial Cemetery, the costs of burial and maintenance of the memorial space.
- in 2023, No. 3505-IX «On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine Regarding the Construction and Operation of the National Military Memorial Cemetery,» which, in particular, regulated issues related to the location of the complex, land use, and reburial at the National Military Memorial Cemetery, the Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine was designated as the customer for construction in accordance with this law.

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On May 19, 2025, construction was completed and the first launch complex of the first stage of the National Military Memorial Cemetery was put into operation. As a result, 6,000 burial sites were created. A total of six construction phases are planned.

On the absence of any other satisfactory solution for the location of the National Military Memorial Cemetery

Taking into account that the National Military Memorial Cemetery is not only a spatial complex intended for the organisation of honorary burials of national significance, but also a nationwide memorial dedicated to perpetuating the memory of the Heroes who gave their lives defending the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, as well as the right of the whole of Europe to a peaceful and secure life, special requirements were applied to its location. These requirements, in order of importance, included:

- location (within the capital of Ukraine or its vicinity, not exceeding 20 km);
- a picturesque natural landscape and surroundings;
- sufficient size of the site – given the number of fallen soldiers and the ongoing armed aggression;
- historical, cultural and spiritual significance of the place.

The process of searching for and selecting an appropriate location lasted almost two years.

There are very few large areas free from development in Kyiv and within a 20 km radius of it, most of which are active nature parks and other nature conservation areas. Initially, the following areas were considered for construction Singing Field in Pechersk Landscape Park in Kyiv, a vacant lot at the Kyiv Exhibition Center, a vacant lot near the Berkovets Cemetery, and in the Bykivnia Forest along Brovarskoe Highway, not far from the exit from Kyiv.

Unfortunately, none of these areas met the size requirements, as their area did not exceed 50 hectares.

Two sites met the maximum criteria:

1. a very picturesque area, was Lysa Hora, a historic site and hill in Kyiv, located southwest of Vydubychi on the right bank of the Lybid River, between Telichka, Saperna Slobidka, and Bagrynova Hora, with an area of 140 hectares.
2. less picturesque but also beautiful area of a larger area, about 260 hectares, is the forest areas of the Boyarka Forest Research Station of the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine on the territory of the Hatnenska rural territorial community of the Fastiv district of the Kyiv region, less than 20 km from Kyiv.

Subsequently, it was decided to abandon Lysa Hora for several reasons:

The entire territory is covered by the Lysa Hora Regional Landscape Park, where in 2021 many plants, fungi, insects, and snakes listed in the Red Book were found, as well as bats protected by the Red Book of Ukraine and Appendix II to the Bern Convention.

According to historical data, at the beginning of the 20th century, this territory was used for the execution of political and criminal offenders. In total, about 300 people were executed here, and in 1917-1940, Lysa Hora was home to military warehouses, including pyroxylin.

Therefore, the only possible location for the National Military Memorial Cemetery was the territory of the Boyarka Forest Research Station in the Gatnenska rural community.

Advantages of the selected site:

- beautiful natural scenery and landscape, beautiful forests around;
- land plot of optimal size;
- land plot, although it passes through the territory of the Emerald Network site Pryirpinnya and Chernechy Forest (UA0000338), but occupies less than 5% of its territory, does not include objects of the nature reserve fund, as well as species protected by the Red Book of Ukraine and the Bern Convention;
- according to chronicle sources, this place was mentioned as early as 980. The village, namely the Dobryi Dub tract, was well known to the princes of Kyiv. This is how the present-day village of Hatne is mentioned in many historical documents, starting from the times of the reign of Vladimir the Great, Yaroslav the Wise, and Vladimir Monomakh.

First Deputy Minister

Viktor BAIDACHNY

Update Report dated January 2025



**МІНІСТЕРСТВО ЗАХИСТУ
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Mikaël POUTIERS
Secretary of the Bern
Convention Council of
Europe, Avenue de l'Europe
F-67075 Strasbourg Cedex,
France

Dear Mr. Mikaël Poutiers,

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources of Ukraine (hereinafter referred to as the Ministry) expresses its respectful regards to the Secretariat of the Bern Convention and has the honor to submit report in response to your letter dated September 3, 2024. This report address the complaints related to the following cases No. 2024/02: New Complaint: Ukraine: Deforestation in an Emerald Network site (UA0000338) in Kyiv Region.

The Ministry reiterates its commitment to the principles of the Bern Convention and takes this opportunity to extend to the Secretariat the assurances of its highest consideration.

Annex: report on 2 pages.

Sincerely,

Viktoria
Kireyeva
Deputy
Minister



UB
Міндовкілля
№25/4-11/918-25 від 21.01.2025
КЕП: Кирєєва В. С. 21.01.2025 15:57
3FAA9288358EC0030400000BDEF2F0071CED800
Сертифікат дійсний з 11.09.2024 10:33 до 11.09.2026
10:33

Annex 1:

Case No. 2024/02: New Complaint: Ukraine: Deforestation in an Emerald Network site (UA0000338) in Kyiv Region

response to the complainant's message

With the beginning of Russia's full-scale armed aggression against Ukraine in February 2022, Ukrainian soldiers stood up to defend the state, tens of thousands of them died, and their deaths require proper commemoration and burial. In this regard, there is an urgent public need to create a National Military Memorial Cemetery.

Following numerous discussions of this issue in society and at the level of the Government of Ukraine, the need to create such a cemetery in Kyiv region was identified. After considering the options for the possible location of the National Military Memorial Cemetery, the Government chose state-owned land plots next to the already functioning Southern Cemetery, which makes it possible to ensure compliance with the requirements of state building codes, standards and regulations, including those related to the sanitary and epidemiological well-being of the local population, ecology and industrial safety during the design, construction and operation of the new cemetery.

Given that the existing Southern Cemetery is surrounded by state-owned forest areas that have the status of the Emerald Network UA0000338 Pryirpinnya and Chernechy Forest, it was impossible to avoid using this territory for these purposes.

The selected land plots cover 266,6905 hectares, which is 4.38% of the territory of the Emerald Network UA0000338 Pryirpinnya and Chernechy Forest, with a total area of 6094.74 hectares. Only part of this territory will be changed and used for the construction of the necessary infrastructure. According to the Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine, the project of the National Military Memorial Cemetery provides for maximum preservation of the ecosystem. For its implementation, it became necessary to remove trees directly under the planned construction sites on an area of 13 hectares, which is 0.2% of the territory of the Emerald Network UA0000338 Pryirpinnya and Chernechy Forest. It is assumed that the removal of hazardous, dead and faulty trees and shrubs will be carried out on an area of 130 hectares, which is no more than 10% of the territory's greenery. In other words, no logging operations are carried out on the territory of the Emerald Network UA0000338 Pryirpinnya and Chernechy Forest as indicated in the Complaint No. 2024/02, but the planned removal of tree and shrub vegetation on a small area for the construction of the National Military Memorial Cemetery is being carried out.

At the same time, it is believed that these measures and the construction of the cemetery will not harm the survival of the relevant populations of flora and fauna species and habitats in other parts of the UA0000338 Pryirpinnya and Chernechy Forest Emerald Network, in the region and in Ukraine.

The Government of Ukraine will be grateful to the Standing Committee of the Convention for advice on how to address this situation and ensure the conservation of flora and fauna species and their habitats in accordance with the requirements of the Convention on the Conservation of Wild Flora and Fauna and Natural Habitats in Europe.
