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CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

Standing Committee

42nd meeting
Strasbourg, 29 November - 2 December 2022

Complaint on stand-by: 2016/09

**Possible threat to Svaneti 1 Candidate Emerald
site from Nenskra HPP (Georgia)**

- REPORT BY THE GOVERNMENT -

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

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22/03/2022

To: The Secretary of the Bern Convention

To: Ms. Ursula Sticker

Copy: Permanent Representation of Georgia to the Council of Europe

Subject:

Complaint on stand-by No. 2016/9: Georgia: Possible threat to “Svaneti 1” Candidate Emerald Site (GE0000012) from Nenskra Hydro Power Plant development – Progress report by Georgia

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia would like to provide a short update to the Secretariat regarding the follow-up letter after Bureau 2021 and the next possible steps by the Georgian Government.

We would like to stress attention to the three large-scale compensatory sites (GE0000057 Samegrelo 2 85676,20 ha; GE0000058 Racha-Lechkhumi 43162,11 ha; GE0000059 Svaneti-Racha 59114,55 ha) for the initial Svaneti site; Ecological values and characteristics of Svaneti site were assessed and based on these assessments, as well as consultations with scientific society, the Species Conservation Centre NACRES **selected** and **proposed** to the Ministry the 3 sites to include into the Emerald Network. The Ministry once again **would like to assure Secretariat to close the case file** (2016/9: Georgia: Possible threat to “Svaneti 1” Candidate Emerald Site (GE0000012) from Nenskra Hydro Power Plant development), considering the appropriate and compensating ecological values of the selected compensatory sites, considering that these sites cover at least 17 medium and large rivers (total length covering around 200 km) and its freshwater habitats, considering the improvements of the sufficiency evaluations of the 2021 Biogeographical Seminar for 7 species and one habitat, distributed in Svaneti area.

In addition to the above-mentioned, the Government of Georgia carried out the decision of the Bureau (2020), therefore the draft Law of Georgia on Water Resources Management was prepared by the Ministry in accordance with the obligations of EU legislation. The draft law is submitted to the Parliament of Georgia (15.11.2021) for consideration and subsequent adoption.

As well, we would like to provide updated maps of freshwater habitats available at this stage. Georgia is responsibly working on the improvement of management and governance of the Emerald Network in the country, to have an integrated, interconnected, well-managed network. The government continues to fund main objectives for the Emerald Network development, with the support of the Swedish Government, following years will be dedicated to the development of management plans of sites; species and habitats research work will continue furthermore. Georgian government as well expects the Bern Convention Standing Committee to upgrade proposed and candidate sites statuses and adopt them in 2022.

Sincerely,

Deputy Minister

Nino Tandilashvili

