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CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE  
AND NATURAL HABITATS

**Standing Committee**

43<sup>rd</sup> meeting  
Strasbourg, 27 November - 1 December 2023

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**Open case-file 2013/1**

**Hydro power development within the territory of Mavrovo  
National Park**

**- REPORT BY THE COMPLAINANT -**

**To the Bern Convention Secretariat**  
**01.09.2023**

**Report of the Complainant regarding the 2013/1 - North Macedonia: Hydro power development within the territory of the Mavrovo National Park case file**

Dear Mr. Kelly,

Thank you for the opportunity to report on the progress related to the 2013/1 - North Macedonia: Hydro power development within the territory of the Mavrovo National Park case file. In this report we will focus on the points raised at the last Standing Committee meeting in 2022 and report on the progress of each of those points.

**1. Cancel the remaining three concessions in Mavrovo NP (Zhirovnica 5 and 6 and Ribnicka sHPP);**

On this point we would like to inform the Bern Convention Secretariat that the Government of North Macedonia at its 127<sup>th</sup> session in February 2023 adopted a decision to cancel the concessions for the 2 planned hydro power plants Zhirovnica 5 and 6. It obliged the Ministries of economy, finance and environment and physical planning to establish a Committee and propose how to regulate the cancellation of the contract with “Hydrogen Energy DOO Skopje”.

Ribnichka HPP remains with a valid contract.

However, at the same session, the Government also extended the concession contracts for 3 small hydro power plants located in the new National Park Shar Mountain (Pena 85 and 85 extended to 25.11.2024 and Vejachka to 20.05.2023).

Between January and June 2023, a total number of 12 concession contracts were extended with an annex. Some of the locations of the HPPs are nearby protected areas.

**2. Accelerate the adoption of the new Law on nature;**

We have not noted any progress with the Law on nature, as it has not been published for public consultations and we have not seen the new draft of the Law.

**3. Start the process of reproclamation of Mavrovo NP by initiating public consultations and desktop analysis of existing documentation;**

The study for valorization of the values of Mavrovo has been initiated and a memorandum between the Ministry of environment and physical planning, the NP Mavrovo authority, the Global Conservation and the Macedonian Ecological Society was signed on February 4, 2023. The purpose of the memorandum is to regulate the support provided to the NP Mavrovo authority to complete an updated/revised study for the valorization of the values of Mavrovo National Park. Partial state funding was allocated for this activity.

To our knowledge, the study is in process of preparation.

**4. Start the process of updating the Balkan Lynx Conservation Action Plan;**

To our knowledge, there has been no progress with this point.

**5. Start the process of preparation of the methodology for determination of ecological flow in cooperation with civil society organisations;**

To our knowledge, there has been no progress with this point from the side of the Government. The Water Law which was amended during 2022 went through public consultations and the final draft is awaiting the approval at the Parliament. In the final version of this Law, the ecological flow was generally defined, replacing the previous “biological minimum”.

. Eko-svest was recently awarded a grant from the Prespa Ohrid Nature Trust to support the river management in the National parks of Mavrovo and Shar Mountain. Within this project we will work with experts to prepare the draft methodology for ecological flow.

**6. Establish regular coordination and consultation between the State authorities and CSO Complainants.**

We were informed by the Ministry of environment that there was a change in the focal point and we conducted one meeting with the new focal point. However, there has been no other meetings held since the beginning of 2023. In general we remain in communication with the Nature Department in the Ministry of environment, but on the topic of the open case file there were no specific meetings held.

We remain at your disposal for any further questions,

Sincerely,

Ana Colovic Lesoska

Eko-svest