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T-PVS (2017) 25

CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

Standing Committee

37th meeting
Strasbourg, 5-8 December 2017

Meeting of the Bureau

Strasbourg, 18-19 September 2017

- MEETING REPORT -

*Secretariat Memorandum
prepared by
the Directorate of Democratic Citizenship and Participation*

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1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The Chair of the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention, Mr Øystein Storkersen, opened the second annual meeting of the Bureau to the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention.

He reminded that as we are getting closer to 2020 and the end of the Aichi targets, it is useful that the Convention considers how it will review its contribution towards the achievement of the world targets and to assess which of its activities feed directly into the global efforts in nature conservation. He reminded that the CMS 12th COP taking place in October this year is deciding on a reporting format in line with the Aichi targets, as the CMS is a UN Environment Convention.

Mr Eladio Fernandez-Galiano reminded that the Secretariat of the Convention is now placed in a new Division and Directorate within the same Directorate General and has a new Director since the 1st of September 2017, Mr Matthew Johnson. The Bureau proposed that, if appropriate and feasible, a short meeting could be organised between the Chair of the Standing Committee and the new Director overseeing the Secretariat of the Convention, in conjunction with the upcoming 37th meeting of the Standing Committee.

Mr Eladio Fernandez-Galiano further shared the most recent information on the preparation of the Council of Europe Budget for the period 2018-2019, as the budget of the Convention for the next biannual depends on the contribution provided by the Council of Europe. He further shared the information that the Council of Europe is currently facing negative financial implications due to the decision by the Russian Federation to suspend the payment of the remaining part of its contribution to the ordinary budget for 2017. The Organisation therefore operates with a restricted budget and unfortunately has to implement a contingency plan in order to face the important negative financial implications faced. He hopes that more information on this will impact the 2018-2019 budget of the Organisation will be available ahead of the Standing Committee meeting in December 2017.

The meeting agenda was adopted with two additional points added to the agenda item 8 “Any other business”.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2017 PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES

The Secretariat quickly presented the various activities organised and meetings attended by the Secretariat since the last meeting of the Bureau on 18 March 2017.

Mr Eladio Fernandez-Galiano informed about his participation at the Conference “Old growth forests”, organised by Wild Europe Initiative in Brussels on 14-15 September. The event was aimed at promoting countries action to protect old growth forests under nature conservation schemes. One of the main issues encountered remains the fact that most forests protected under the Natura 2000 and Emerald networks are not old growth forests as well as the lack of an agreed “definition” of old growth forest in Europe. The results of the Conference will be presented at the Standing Committee to the Convention in December this year.

2.1 Group of Experts on Invasive Alien Species back-to-back with a Seminar on the “Eradication of IAS in small European islands”: results of the meeting

The Secretariat informed of the results of the back-to-back meetings dedicated to the eradication and control of IAS which took place in Madeira in June 2017. The meetings have been considered a success, as they bring draft recommendations to the agenda of the Standing Committee, two of them bringing in for possible adoption of two new voluntary Codes of Conduct, one on Invasive Alien Trees and the other one on International travel and IAS.

<p>DECISION: The Bureau welcomed the results from the meeting and expressed a hope the Code of Conduct on Invasive Alien Trees, which will be discussed for a third consecutive year, will be adopted at the 37th Standing Committee meeting. It requested that the expert in charge of the draft Code of Conduct is also invited to attend the meeting to present the revised version of the text of the Code and explain how he has coped with the various comments received from Contracting Parties.</p>
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2.2 1st meeting of the Restricted Group of Experts on Biodiversity and Climate change: results of the meeting

The Bureau received detailed information on the outcomes of the first meeting of the Restricted Group of Experts on Climate Change and biodiversity. It welcomed the agreement on the mandate of the Group and its advisory role, which will support the work of the Secretariat in moving forward the implementation of the Convention's Programme of Work on Climate change and Biodiversity.

The Group further agreed on the structure and issues to be covered in the reporting format, for a new reporting exercise which should take place every two years. When ready, the draft reporting format should be circulated to the Restricted Group of Experts for their comments and possible testing (voluntary countries), ahead of its sending out to all Parties, possibly in 2018.

The Group further agreed on the methodology which should be used for the assessment of the vulnerability of species protected through the Convention and agreed to recommend to the Standing Committee, the inclusion of financial provisions in the Programme of Work 2018-2019 for the development of such assessments. The possible synergies which could be developed between the Bern Convention and the EUR-OPA Major Hazards Agreement, on the issue of nature based-solutions was also debated and an agreement was reached that in 2018, a joint meeting of the Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks and the Group of Experts on Climate Change and biodiversity should take place, where issues such as adaptive management of protected areas can be discussed.

DECISION: The Bureau welcomed the outcomes of the work of the Group and agreed that any new reporting format should indeed include a section explaining the reasons behind the new reporting request under preparation.

2.3 6th meeting of the Group of Experts on the Conservation of Birds: results of the meeting

The Secretariat updated the Bureau on the results achieved at the back-to-back meetings on the issue of wild birds' conservation, which took place in Malta in June 2017. The Group of Experts on the conservation of wild birds held good discussions not only in relation to the bird species' related case-files on which the Bureau had requested advise, but also on the future work of the Group, on the added value of the Convention in the field taking into account the complex landscape of actors operating alongside the Convention, as well as on ways to support and strengthen the implementation of the SAPs.

DECISION: The Bureau welcomed the good results of the meeting and congratulated the Secretariat for the successful organisation of the meeting.

2.4 Joint Meeting of the Bern SPFs on Eradication of Illegal Killing, Trapping and Trade in Wild Birds (Bern SFPs Network) and the CMS MIKT: results of the meeting

The organisation of a Joint Bern Convention/CMS meeting dedicated to the eradication of illegal killing of birds proved to be a milestone in the action by both Conventions in the field. The meeting succeeded in finalising and agreeing on a draft Joint Bern/CMS MIKT Scoreboard on measuring progress in combatting illegal killing, taking and trade of wild birds. The draft text was the result of the work of a consultant, in cooperation with a Working Group composed of the consultant, representatives of the Secretariat of the Bern and Bonn Conventions and the Chair of the Bern Convention Network of Special Focal Points on IKB. The first draft text of the Scoreboard was

submitted for comments ahead of the meeting to a number of volunteering Parties and NGOs and was finally debated, amended and agreed on at the meeting in Malta. It is a self-assessment tool and it is going to be tabled for adoption at the Standing Committee in December 2017 through a draft Recommendation. However, the Secretariat reminded that the approval of the Joint Scoreboard is also expected at the CMS COP 12 taking place in October 2017 in Manila, ahead of the Standing Committee meeting. The outcomes of the discussions at the CMS COP 12 will be taken into account when the tool is presented for adoption in December.

DECISION: The Bureau welcomed the excellent results of the meeting and congratulated the Secretariat for the successful organisation of a joint meeting between two international conventions.

2.5 2nd meeting of the Restricted Group of Experts on Reporting on the Emerald Network: state of preparation and expected results

The Secretariat presented in details the agenda of the two back-to-back meetings dedicated to protected areas, to take place in Belgrade on the kind invitation of the Serbian authorities – a meeting of the Restricted Group of Experts on Reporting and the full Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks.

The main expected result of the meeting of the Restricted Group of Experts is an agreement on the Draft reporting format under Resolution No. 8 (2012), focusing on reporting on the conservation status of species and habitats protected through the Emerald Network. The Group is also expected to agree on a selection of species and habitats for the first reporting exercise to be implemented for the period 2013-2018.

DECISION: The Bureau welcomed the progress in reaching an agreement on the reporting format and wished the Restricted group fruitful discussions.

2.6 Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks: state of preparation and expected results

The Secretariat further informed on the other important issues that are going to be debated at the meeting of the full group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks, such as a Form and guidance on reporting on negative changes in Emerald Network sites and a first discussion document on how to measure the impact of these negative changes on the ecological character of the Emerald Network sites.

The Secretariat further updated the Bureau on the most recent developments in relation to the Emerald Network in the 16 Contracting Parties working on its establishment. The end of the joint EU/CoE Programme happened at the beginning of April this year, after a 6 months no-cost extension of the project eligibility period. An evaluation of the 7-year long EU/CoE cooperation on the setting up of the Emerald Network in the Eastern Partnership (EaP) region and the Russian Federation was finalized and presented to DG NEAR of the European Commission. The report takes stock of the progress achieved and lessons learned, and identifies potential further actions based on countries' needs.

DG NEAR was very satisfied with the report; however the DG is completely changing its *modus operandi* in financing environment projects. They are willing to enhance the connectivity between different environment sectors they have been working on so far, improve education and awareness-raising and greening decision-making in the EaP region. Therefore, there is no possibility for the Bern Convention to get further financial support through the new financial programme, called EU for Environment, they are currently finalising. In this new instrument, several components are included: circular economy, forests/ecosystems and biodiversity, administrative capacity and governance, etc.

The Secretariat reminded the Bureau that the positions of two staff members out of 4 working for the Convention Secretariat have so far been funded through the Joint Programme and voluntary contributions. The end of the project is thus putting the Secretariat in a situation of vulnerability for the years to come, in addition to the negative financial situation of the Council of Europe in general, due to the decision of the Russian federation to suspend the payment of its remaining contribution for 2017. The Secretariat is seeking other funding opportunities to ensure a stable Secretariat and invited the Contracting Parties to consider the feasibility of secondment a national civil servant to the Bern Secretariat.

DECISION: The Bureau thanked the Secretariat for the detailed information and agreed that the financial situation is extremely worrying and that the issue has to be clearly raised at the upcoming Standing Committee meeting and possible solutions to be debated.

2.7 9th meeting of the Group of Experts on Amphibians and Reptiles: state of preparation and expected results

The Secretariat informed the Bureau that the preparations for the meeting have advanced well. The logistical organisation is very smooth as well, thanks to the kind hosts of the Norwegian Environment Agency. Several experts have confirmed their presence at the meeting. The meeting will be mostly dedicated to the issue of herpetofauna diseases and will review Parties' action since the adoption of Recommendation No. 176 (2015) on the prevention and control of the *Batrachochytrium salamandrivorans* chytrid fungus.

The Group will also debate the need for adopting a new recommendation of the Convention on biosafety issues targeting all pathogens and diseases facing amphibian and reptile species. The working methods of the Group are also going to be discussed, together with the future work priorities.

DECISION: The Bureau welcomed the progress in the preparations for the meeting and advised the Secretariat to propose the preparation of a list of contacts in Contracting Parties, experts in the field of herpetofauna conservation. This could support the creation a core group of experts ready to actively support the work of the Convention in the area.

The Bureau further instructed the Secretariat to liaise with IUCN, as they have compiled a European Red List of Amphibians, in order to identify if there are some species which could benefit from the development of specific Action Plans. The Secretariat was also instructed to make a presentation at the meeting, during the discussions on the working methods and the future work priorities of the Group, on what has already been achieved in the past.

3. GENDER MAINSTREAMING AND THE BERN CONVENTION: DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

The Secretariat informed on state of preparation of the draft Recommendation, as debated at the first meeting of the Bureau for 2017 in March. The Secretariat is in contact with colleagues from the Gender Equality Division at the Council of Europe and their advice on the draft text of the Recommendation is expected in the coming week.

DECISION: When ready, the draft text of the Recommendation will be circulated among the Bureau members for their possible contribution ahead of it being tabled for discussion and possible adoption by the Standing Committee at its 37th meeting.

4. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION: CASE-FILES

4.1 Specific Sites - Files open

➤ 2013/1: Hydro power development within the territory of Mavrovo National Park (“the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”)

DECISION: The Bureau reminded that both the Bureau to the Convention and the Secretariat are ready to support the authorities in the implementation of Recommendation No. 184 (2015).

It expressed a hope that it will soon be clarified who is the new Focal Point for “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” before the Bern Convention and communication with the authorities will be re-established.

The Bureau further reminded national authorities that the Standing Committee will meet for its 37th meeting on 5th to 8th December 2017 in Strasbourg and invited them to attend the meeting and provide a status update on the file and respond specifically on measures taken to meet Recommendation No. 184 (2015) on the planned hydropower plants on the territory of the Mavrovo National Park.

The Bureau thanked the complainant for the updated report submitted in May 2017. The complainant is also invited to present an updated report to the Standing Committee at its 37th meeting.

The file remains open.

➤ 1995/6: Cyprus: Akamas peninsula

DECISION: The Bureau thanked the national authorities for their report. However, the Bureau noted that no action has been taken to fulfil the terms of Recommendation No. 191 (2016).

The Bureau invited the national authorities and the complainant to provide a status update on the Recommendation’s implementation to the Standing Committee at its 37th meeting on the 5th to 8th December 2017 in Strasbourg.

Furthermore, the Bureau instructed the Secretariat to liaise with the European Union and to request information on the European Commission’s action in relation to the area’s conservation. This information should be provided at the 37th meeting of the Standing Committee.

The file remains open.

➤ 2010/5: Greece: threats to marine turtles in Thines Kiparissias

DECISION: The Bureau thanked both the national authorities and the complainant for their reports.

Noting the report of the complainant, the Bureau decided to keep the file open until the national authorities’ report that satisfactory progress has been made regarding the implementation of Recommendation No. 174 (2014) and until it is clearly shown that the Presidential Decree is adopted and that its establishment ensures the adequate protection of the species and their habitat.

The Bureau invited the national authorities and the complainant to provide a status update on the Recommendation’s implementation to the Standing Committee at its 37th meeting on the 5th to 8th December 2017 in Strasbourg.

The file remains open.

➤ **2004/2: Bulgaria: Wind farms in Balchik and Kaliakra –Via Pontica**

DECISION: The Bureau thanked the national authorities and the complainant for the detailed reports submitted to its attention.

It invited the authorities to attend the 37th meeting of the Standing Committee to the Convention and to provide a status update on the development of the Integrated Management Plan (IMP), on how it will address the operational points of Recommendation No. 130 (2007), on the conclusions of the public consultations which were expected to be held in early July 2017 and on the expected final adoption of the IMP.

Furthermore, the Bureau invited the Complainant to also provide an updated report for the above mentioned Standing Committee meeting and instructed the Secretariat to liaise with the European Union and AEWA and request information on their respective processes in relation to the file and to look together for possible joint action.

The file remains open.

➤ **2012/9: Presumed degradation of nesting beaches in Fethiye and Patara SPAs (Turkey)**

DECISION: The Bureau thanked the complainant for the detailed reports submitted to its attention on the progress in implementing Recommendations No. 182 (2015) and No. 183 (2015).

It expressed its concern that national authorities have not made progress in the development of a management plan or legal protection of the areas, in particular Patara.

The Bureau invited the national authorities to provide a report to the Standing Committee meeting on the 5th to 8th December 2017 detailing a plan to remedy these concerns. This report should provide a Timeline which clearly shows when the planned measures will be implemented, ultimately aiming to fully meet the terms of Recommendations No. 182 (2015) and No.183 (2015).

Furthermore, the Bureau requested that the Complainant also provides an updated report for the Standing Committee's 37th meeting.

The file remains open.

4.2 Possible files

➤ **2001/4: Bulgaria: Motorway through the Kresna Gorge**

DECISION: The Bureau thanked the complainant for providing updated information on the most recent developments related to the possible case-file and in particular on the recent public hearings in relation to the EIAs/AAs on the various alternatives formulated for the highway's last remaining Lot.

It invited the national authority to provide an exhaustive, detailed and clear update to the Standing Committee meeting on the 5th to 8th December 2017 regarding progress of the motorway plan and specifically how these plans comply with the Recommendation No. 98 (2002). This report should also provide information regarding the progress and results of public the consultations.

The Bureau also instructed the Secretariat to liaise with the European Union and to invite them to provide an update to the Standing Committee at its 37th meeting, regarding their position on the process and eventual results of the EIA/AA development for the Lot 3.2 of the highway.

The file remains as a possible file.

4.3 Complaints on stand-by

➤ 2012/5: Sport and recreation facilities in Çıralı key turtle nesting beach (Turkey)

DECISION: The Bureau welcomed the information provided by the national authorities in their report from July 2017.

On the basis of the information that no sport facilities are currently being developed nor planned in the Çıralı key turtle nesting beach, the Bureau decided to dismiss the complaint.

The complaint is dismissed.

➤ 2014/6: Wind energy: Possible threats to an endangered natural habitat in Izmir (Turkey)

DECISION: The Bureau thanked the national authorities for their participation at the meeting of the Group of Experts on the conservation of wild birds (Malta, 21/06/2017).

The Bureau invited the national authorities to report again in detail for the next meeting of the Bureau in March 2018 on the cumulative impact of wind-farm developments in the whole area and on the possible follow-up given by the authorities to the discussions and possible actions identified at the meeting of the Group of Experts on the conservation of birds.

A SEA and cumulative impact assessment for all wind energy developments - which appear to increase in the area - are not yet communicated nor documented. The national authorities are also invited to report on how they intend to implement Recommendation No. 109 (2004) of the Standing Committee on minimising adverse effects of wind power generation on wildlife and the September 2013 guidance on Wind Farms and Birds: An Updated Analysis of the Effects of Wind Farms on Birds, and Best Practice Guidance on Integrated Planning and Impact Assessment [Document T-PVS/Inf (2013) 15].

The Bureau pointed out that international standards and (such as AEWA¹ and CMS² standards and guidance should also be closely followed and advice should be sought from AEWA, EUROBATS and the CMS on the impact assessments made.

The file remains on stand-by.

➤ 2014/1: Presumed risk of national extinction of badgers in Ireland

DECISION: The Bureau welcomed the renewed contact with the national authorities of Ireland and the appointment of a new Focal Point to the Convention. The Bureau was satisfied with the content of the national authorities May 2017 report on the situation of badgers in Ireland and, on this basis, decided to dismiss the complaint.

¹ AEWA Conservation Guidelines No. 11 - Guidelines on how to avoid, minimize or mitigate impact of infrastructural developments and related disturbance affecting waterbirds and Resolution 6.11 addressing impacts of Renewable energy deployment on migratory waterbirds, adopted at the 6th Session of the Meeting of the Parties to AEWA (Bonn, 9-14 November 2015)

² Resolution 7.5 on Wind turbines and migratory species, adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species and Wild Animals, at its Seventh Meeting (Bonn, 18-24 September 2002)

The Bureau noted the national authority's actions regarding vaccination of badgers and requested a report for its meeting in September 2019 on the results of the current measures, vaccination results and the species' population size.

The complaint is dismissed.

➤ **2014/8: Presumed large-scale exploitation and marketing of protected marine shelled molluscs in Greece**

DECISION: The Bureau thanked the national authorities and the complainant for the timely and detailed reports submitted to its attention.

It highlighted that the national authorities have undertaken a large amount of work to address the complaint and expressed its satisfaction for the measures so-far taken. The Bureau wished to encourage the national authorities to continue acting on the issues linked to the exploitation of the protected molluscs - which appears to continue - and to introduce more extensive measures.

The Bureau noted that fines presented are not dissuasive enough and should be increased. Additionally, a large number of controls are taking place but these should be more focused on the particular species of concern and efforts should be made to directly target controls on restaurants.

The Bureau requested the national authorities to report back to the Bureau on progress made to control the large scale exploitation for its September 2018 meeting.

The file remains on stand-by.

➤ **2014/3: Presumed deliberate killing of birds in Serbia & 2016/3: Alleged deliberate killing of birds of prey in Serbia**

DECISION: The Bureau thanked the national authorities and the complainants for their reports and welcomed the authorities' presence at the 6th meeting of the Group of Experts on the Conservation of Birds in June 2017.

The Bureau noted that many positive measures were identified at the Group of Experts' meeting and that progressive action has been proposed by the national authorities and the NGOs. The work of the national authorities in regard to eradicating illegal killing of birds was also welcomed although results are still expected and the efforts should continue on the long-term. It is recommended that all actions and possible cooperation identified during the meeting is further intensified and fully implemented.

National authorities are requested to provide an updated report for the first annual Bureau meeting in March 2018 and specifically address the matters proposed by the Group of Experts.

The file remains on stand-by.

4.4 Other complaints

➤ **2015/2: Possible impact of wind-farm developments on bats ("the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia")**

DECISION: The Bureau noted the lack of report by the national authorities, probably due to the lack of designated national focal point for "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia".

The Bureau stressed that authorities should plan the best possible monitoring, with a view to implement well adapted mitigation measures, where necessary for the species. It was recommended that national authorities collaborate with EUROBATS to develop appropriate post construction studies and consider ways to fill gaps in the monitoring scheme for the park by using established international standards and guidance.

The Bureau requested that the national authorities provide a report for its March 2018 meeting that shows solid collaboration and adapted mitigation measures.

The complaint is moved to the category Complaints on stand-by.

➤ **2016/4: Development of a commercial project in Skadar Lake National Park and candidate Emerald site (Montenegro)**

DECISION: The Bureau thanked the national authorities for their detailed report, as well as the complainants for the updated information provided to its attention.

The Bureau welcomed the kind invitation of the authorities for the organisation of an on-the-spot assessment in the Skadar Lake National Park in relation to the planned tourist project. The Bureau agreed with national authorities that such a visit would be useful for shedding light on the current protection of the National park, on the exact status of development of the project, on providing guidelines and recommendations on how the national authorities should proceed further with the developments plans in full respect of their international obligations.

Therefore, the Bureau accepted the invitation of the national authorities and instructed the Secretariat to work, in cooperation with the national authorities, on a possible organisation of the appraisal in 2018. The Secretariat was further instructed to seek collaboration with Ramsar, the European Union and IUCN for the organisation of the appraisal.

The complaint is moved to the category Complaints on stand-by.

➤ **2016/05: Presumed negative impact of hydro-power plant development on the Vjosa River in Albania**

DECISION: The Bureau thanked the national authorities and the complainant for their detailed reports and noted the expression of concern shared by many scientists over the effective protection of the Vjosa River and the potential impact the planned hydropower plant could have on the ecosystem it forms.

However, the Bureau further noted that the national appeal court process is still on-going. Therefore, it decided that no action will be taken until the appeal court issue a determination.

The national authorities and the complainant are invited to report back to the Bureau on any new information on the case they deem useful for its March 2018 meeting and to send an alert to the Bureau as soon as the national appeal court process is over.

The complaint is moved to the category Complaints on stand-by.

➤ **2016/09: Possible threat to Svaneti 1 Candidate Emerald site from Nenskra HPP (Georgia)**

DECISION: The Bureau thanked both the national authorities and the complainant for the numerous reports and additional studies submitted to its attention.

It appreciated that the site comprises some of the most pristine nature areas in Georgia and expressed again its concern over the fact that the area of the Svaneti 1 Candidate Emerald site has been drastically reduced, while noting the national authorities' efforts in adding new areas to the national Emerald Network in February 2017.

The Bureau decided that there is a strong need to receive further clarification on the exact species and habitats present in the area, and on how the exclusion of some parts of the candidate site will impact the overall sufficiency of the Emerald Network.

The Bureau reminded national authorities of its decision from March 2017 that species and habitats evaluated during the first Emerald Biogeographical Seminar in May 2015 will have to be re-evaluated at the upcoming Emerald Biogeographical Seminar for the South Caucasus, taking place in November 2017. Therefore, the Bureau expects to receive the new evaluation conclusions on the Georgian Emerald Network sufficiency to protect the habitats and species listed in Resolutions No. 4 (1996) and No. 6 (1998), before making a recommendation on the case.

The Bureau also wished to draw the attention of national authorities to the possibility of organising an on the spot assessment after the November 2017 Seminar in Tbilisi.

The complaint is moved to the category Complaints on stand-by.

➤ **2017/01: Lack of legal protection for Northern goshawk and birds of prey in Norway**

DECISION: The Bureau thanked the national authorities for the letter replying to the Secretariat's request for information.

The national authorities letter acknowledges that there was an unintentional change to the wording of the Wildlife Act and that the Supreme Court judgment of 12 March 2014 decided that the term 'considered necessary' does not apply where wild animals are making a direct attack on livestock, domesticated reindeer, pigs, dogs and poultry.

In order to maintain adherence to, in particular, Article 1, 2, 3(1), 6(ii) (a), 7(2) and 8 of the Bern Convention, the Bureau considered it is necessary that the unintentional change of the Act wording is corrected.

The Bureau invited the national authorities to attend the 37th meeting of the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention, meeting on 5-8 December 2017 to report on their plans to change the legislation.

The complaint is moved to the category Possible files.

➤ **2016/06: Presumed risk of national extinction of great bustards (*Otis tarda*) in Serbia**

DECISION: The Bureau thanked the national authorities and the complainant for the timely detailed reports submitted to its attention.

It expressed concern about the future conservation of this rare species and encouraged better management of the Great Bustard and its habitat in the country. The Bureau thanked the national authorities for taking the initiative to produce a management plan and encourages collaboration with the complainant, national BirdLife partner in Serbia and other relevant organisations.

Specifically, the Bureau requested an update on the status of the draft management plan and a full copy of the management plan, or alternatively a summary of its content, in English. The content of this plan will be assessed to check sufficiency. Furthermore, the Bureau requested that national authorities include a response to all new issues raised by the Complainant in their June 2017 report.

It is recommended that national authorities take action to postpone mowing to avoid unintentional killing of birds and consult with the complainant and other relevant organisations to determine a suitable grazing system.

An update should also be provided regarding the status of the project application prepared in late 2016 within the framework of the invitation for cross border cooperation IPA CBC INTERREG Hungary-Serbia. Maximum advantage should be taken of existing knowledge and management plans for great bustard conservation, particularly under CMS and through close collaboration with experts in Hungary. This cooperation should result in a well-developed management plan.

The national authorities and the complainant are invited to send their updated reports for the March 2018 meeting of the Bureau to the Bern Convention.

The complaint is moved to the category Complaints on stand-by.

5. FOLLOW-UP OF PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS AND CASE-FILES

The Bureau briefly discussed the reports received so far in the frame of the monitoring of previous Recommendations and case-files.

DECISION: The Bureau thanked the national authorities who have already submitted their reports and expressed hopes that the national authorities and relevant NGOs/complainants will provide timely reports for the 37th meeting of the Standing Committee, in particular for the following Recommendations, for which some reports are still missing:

- Closed case-file 1998/3: Habitats for the survival of the common hamster (*Cricetus Cricetus*) in Alsace, France
- Recommendation No. 95 (2002) on the conservation of marine turtles in Kazanlı beach (Turkey)
- Recommendation No.190 (2016) on the conservation of natural habitats and wildlife, specially birds, in afforestation of lowland in Iceland
- Recommendation No. 9 (1987) on the protection of *Caretta Caretta* in Laganas bay, Zakynthos (Greece)

6. STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONVENTION

The Secretariat informed the Bureau that an activity report is under preparation, taking stock of what was achieved by the Convention in the current biennium, 2016-2017. The document tries to show how the work of the Convention supports the implementation of the CBD Strategic Plan for biodiversity and the Aichi targets.

The activity report will be updated after the meeting of the 37th Standing Committee and could be designed in an electronic publication which can be distributed at the beginning of 2018 to all Contracting Parties, partners and funding organisations.

DECISION: The Bureau welcomed this initiative; in particular as the deadline for the achievement of the world Aichi targets is fast approaching and many organisations and MEAs are already looking forward to the post 2020 objectives.

7. 37TH STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING

7.1 Draft Agenda

The Bureau discussed the draft agenda of the 37th meeting of the Standing Committee. The Secretariat warned that a few items that might change as a consequence of the forthcoming meetings of Groups of Experts and the results achieved. The Annotated draft Agenda of the meeting will be ready at the beginning of October.

DECISION: The Bureau validated the draft agenda for submission to the Standing Committee.

7.2 Draft Programme of Activities 2018 – 2019

DECISION: The Bureau took note of the proposed draft Programme of Activities for the next Biennium 2018-2019. It noted that the allocation from the Council of Europe to the Convention budget is still a forecast and that the on-going situation with the suspended payments by the Russian Federation might have an impact on the Convention foreseen budget for the next biennium.

The Bureau expressed hope that by the date of the 37th meeting of the Standing Committee there will be more clarity on the total envelope the Convention could receive from the Council of Europe ordinary budget. The Bureau reminded that the financial matters should be discussed by the Committee at its upcoming meeting.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- **Complaint on stand-by N° 2011/5: France / Switzerland: threats to the Rhone streber (*Zingel asper*) in the Doubs (France) and in the canton of Jura (Switzerland)**

DECISION: The Bureau thanked the national authorities of Switzerland and the complainants for their detailed reports on positive steps undertaken to implement Recommendation No. 169 (2013).

The Bureau confirmed that the matter will be placed before the Standing Committee at its 38th meeting in 2018, where both the French and the Swiss authorities and the complainants are going to be invited to present their updated reports on the state of conservation of the species.

The file remains on stand-by and will be treated by the Standing Committee in 2018, under the agenda item Follow-up of previous Recommendations and complaints.

Appendix 1



Strasbourg, 15 September 2017



T-PVS (2017) 11

CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

Standing Committee
Bureau meeting

Strasbourg, 18-19 September 2017
(Room 14, opening: 9:30 am)

AGENDA

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

[T-PVS (2017) 11 - Draft agenda]
[T-PVS (2017) 9 - Report of the 1st meeting of the Bureau]

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2017 PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES

[Note for the Bureau]
[T-PVS (2016) 20 - Programme of Activities and budget for 2017]

2.1 Group of Experts on Invasive Alien Species back-to-back with a Seminar on the “Eradication of IAS in small European islands”: results of the meeting

[T-PVS (2017) 12 – Meeting report]
[T-PVS (2017) 14 - Draft Recommendation on the European Code of Conduct on Invasive Alien Trees]
[T-PVS (2017) 15 - Draft Recommendation on the European Code of Conduct on International Travel and IAS]
[T-PVS (2017) 16 - Draft Recommendation on the control and eradication of IAS on islands]

2.2 1st meeting of the Restricted Group of Experts on Biodiversity and Climate change: results of the meeting

[T-PVS (2017) 19 – Meeting report]
[T-PVS (2017) 18 – Mandate of the Restricted Group of Experts on Climate Change and Biodiversity]

2.3 6th meeting of the Group of Experts on the Conservation of Birds: results of the meeting

[T-PVS (2017) 23 – Meeting report]
[T-PVS (2017) XX – Draft Workframe Programme of Work]

2.4 Joint Meeting of the Bern SPFs on Eradication of Illegal Killing, Trapping and Trade in Wild Birds (Bern SPFs Network) and the CMS MIKT: results of the meeting

[T-PVS (2017) 22 – Meeting report]
[T-PVS (2017) 10 - Draft Recommendation on the establishment of a Scoreboard for measuring progress in combatting illegal killing, taking and trade of wild birds]

2.5 2nd meeting of the Restricted Group of Experts on Reporting on the Emerald Network: state of preparation and expected results

[T-PVS/PA (2017) 3 - Draft agenda]
[T-PVS/Inf (2017) 11 - Legal analysis of the Emerald Network reporting requirements under the Bern Convention]
[T-PVS/PA (2017) 9 – Draft reporting format for the period 2013-2018]

2.6 Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks: state of preparation and expected results

[T-PVS/PA (2017) 4 - Draft agenda]

2.7 Group of Experts on Amphibians and Reptiles: state of preparation and expected results

[T-PVS (2017) 13 - Draft agenda]

3. GENDER MAINSTREAMING AND THE BERN CONVENTION: DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

[T-PVS (2017) 21 - Draft Recommendation]

4. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION: CASE-FILES

4.1 Specific Sites - Files open

- 2013/1: Hydro power development within the territory of Mavrovo National Park (“the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”)

[T-PVS/Files (2017) 9 - Government Report]
[T-PVS/Files (2017) 14 - Complainant Report]

- 2004/2: Bulgaria: Wind farms in Balchik and Kaliakra –Via Pontica

[T-PVS/Files (2017) 18 - Government Report]
[T-PVS/Files (2017) 31 - Complainant Report]

- 1995/6: Cyprus: Akamas peninsula

[T-PVS/Files (2017) 19 - Government Report]
[T-PVS/Files (2017) 24 - Complainant Report]
[T-PVS/Files (2017) 22 -EU Report]

- 2010/5: Greece: threats to marine turtles in Thines Kiparissias

[T-PVS/Files (2017) 20 - Government Report]
[T-PVS/Files (2017) 30 - Complainant Report]

- 2012/9: Presumed degradation of nesting beaches in Fethiye and Patara SPAs (Turkey)

[T-PVS/Files (2017) XX - Government Report]
[T-PVS/Files (2017) 29 - Complainant Report]

4.2 Possible files

- 2001/4: Bulgaria: Motorway through the Kresna Gorge

[T-PVS/Files (2017)10 + Annex 1 - Government Report]
[T-PVS/Files (2017) 33 - Complainant Report]

4.3 Complaints on stand-by

- 2012/5: Sport and recreation facilities in Çıralı key turtle nesting beach (Turkey)

[T-PVS/Files (2017) 23 - Government Report]
[T-PVS/Files (2017) XX - Complainant Report]

- 2014/6: Wind energy: Possible threats to an endangered natural habitat in Izmir (Turkey)

[T-PVS/Files (2017) 5 - Government Report]
[T-PVS/Files (2017) XX - Complainant Report]

- 2014/1: Presumed risk of national extinction of badgers in Ireland

[T-PVS/Files (2017) 15 - Government Report]

- 2014/8: Presumed large-scale exploitation and marketing of protected marine shelled molluscs in Greece

[T-PVS/Files (2017) 6 - Government Report]
[T-PVS/Files (2017)17 - Complainant Report]

- 2014/3: Presumed deliberate killing of birds in Serbia & 2016/3: Alleged deliberate killing of birds of prey in Serbia

[T-PVS/Files (2017) 8 + 2 Ann - Government Report]
[T-PVS/Files (2017)4 - Complainant Report]

4.4 Other complaints

- 2015/2: Possible impact of wind-farm developments on bats (“the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”)

[T-PVS/Files (2017) XX – Government Report]
[T-PVS/Files (2017) XX – Complainant Report]

- 2016/4: Development of a commercial project in Skadar Lake National Park and candidate Emerald site (Montenegro)

[T-PVS/Files (2017) 13 - Government Report]
[T-PVS/Files (2017)3 + 10 Ann - Complainant Report]

- 2016/05: Presumed negative impact of hydro-power plant development on the Vjosa river in Albania

[T-PVS/Files (2017) 1 + + Annex 1 + Annex 2 + Annex 3 + Annex 4 + Annex 5 + Annex 6 - Government Report]
[T-PVS/Files (2017) 2 + Annex 1 + Annex 2 + Annex 3 + Annex 4 + Annex 5 + Annex 6 + Annex 7 - Complainant Report]

- 2016/09: Possible threat to Svaneti 1 Candidate Emerald site from Nenskra HPP (Georgia)

[T-PVS/Files (2017) 7 - Government Report]
[T-PVS/Files (2017) 21 + Annex 1 - Complainant Report]

- 2017/01: Lack of legal protection for Northern goshawk and birds of prey in Norway

[T-PVS/Files (2017) 16 - Government Report]
[T-PVS/Files (2017) 27 + Annex 1 + Annex 2 - Complaint Form]

- 2016/06: Presumed risk of national extinction of great bustards (*Otis tarda*) in Serbia

[T-PVS/Files (2017) 28 - Complaint Form]
[T-PVS/Files (2017) 11 - Government Report]
[T-PVS/Files (2017) 12 - Complainant Report]

5. FOLLOW-UP OF PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS AND CASE-FILES

- **Closed case-file 1998/3: Habitats for the survival of the common hamster (*Cricetus Cricetus*) in Alsace, France**

[T-PVS/Files (2017) 25 - Government Report]

- **Recommendation No. 95 (2002) on the conservation of marine turtles in Kazanlı beach (Turkey)**

- **Recommendation No. 176 (2015) on the prevention and control of the *Batrachochytrium salamandrivorans* chytrid fungus**

[T-PVS/Inf (2017) 18 - Compilation of National Replies to the questionnaire]

- **Recommendation No.190 (2016) on the conservation of natural habitats and wildlife, specially birds, in afforestation of lowland in Iceland**

- **Recommendation No. 9 (1987) on the protection of *Caretta Caretta* in Laganas bay, Zakynthos (Greece)**

6. STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONVENTION

7. 37TH STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING

7.1 Draft Agenda

[T -PVS (2017) 1 - Draft Agenda]

7.2 Draft Programme of Activities 2018 – 2019

[T-PVS (2017) 20 - Draft Programme of Activities for 2018 - 2019]

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- Complaint on stand-by N° 2011/5: France / Switzerland: threats to the Rhone streber (*Zingel asper*) in the Doubs (France) and in the canton of Jura (Switzerland)

[T-PVS/Files (2017) 32 – Swiss Government report]

[T-PVS/Files (2017) 26 + Annex 1 + Annex 2 + Annex 3 + Annex 4 – NGO report]

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