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CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE  
AND NATURAL HABITATS

**Standing Committee**

40<sup>th</sup> meeting  
Strasbourg, 30 November - 4 December 2020

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**Specific Sites - Files open**

**Hydro power development within the territory of  
Mavrovo National Park  
(North Macedonia)**

**- REPORT BY THE GOVERNMENT -**

*Document prepared by  
the Government of North Macedonia*

## **REPORT on the Bern Convention**

Due to the complexity of the process, and in order to act on the recommendation of the Existing Subcommittee of the Bern Convention, in the past period technical assistance was requested from the Secretariat of the Bern Convention in order to take into account all aspects of the process and to comply with the New Law for nature protection, which integrates the EU Directives on nature protection.

The Secretariat responded positively to the request for technical assistance, and through joint cooperation it was concluded that it is necessary to define the Terms of reference of the upcoming mission, in order to prepare the country to adequately respond to the requests of the mission.

Because there are two more complaints that refer to sensitive areas that are of great importance with their natural values, which are: Possible impact on the development of wind farms on bats for the Bogdanci Wind Park, as well as: Potential negative impacts on locations on Lake Ohrid and the Galicica National Park due to the development of infrastructure, in agreement with the Secretariat of the Bern Convention, it was proposed that during the visit to the Republic of North Macedonia, these two processes to be considered as well, and taken into consideration in the Terms of reference of the mission.

This Report briefly covers the activities carried out in relation to the activities with the files which are under consideration by the Subcommittee and the Secretariat of the Bern Convention, for:

- 1) The open case no. 2013/1 for North Macedonia: Development of hydropower facilities on the territory of NP Mavrovo
- 2) Complaint at rest no. 2015/2 for North Macedonia: Possible impact on the development of wind farms on bats for Bogdanci Wind Park
- 3) Other complaints no. 2017/2 for North Macedonia: Potential Negative Impacts on Locations on Lake Ohrid and Galicica National Park Due to Infrastructure Development

1. Regarding the Open Case no. 2013/1 for North Macedonia: Development of hydropower facilities on the territory of NP Mavrovo, recommendations were adopted by the Existing Subcommittee of the Bern Convention in 2015, on the basis of which the state prepares Reports. The recommendations refer to the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment Study of the Management Plan of the Mavrovo National Park, which will cover the cumulative impacts of the hydropower facilities provided in the Mavrovo National Park. For the preparation of the Study for strategic evaluation of the Management Plan of the National Park Mavrovo, it is necessary to adopt the Study for reevaluation of NP Mavrovo, in which the protection zones of the park will be defined. Based on the Study, the Law on re-announcement of NP Mavrovo for protected area should be prepared, and then the Management Plan of NP Mavrovo should be prepared, followed by preparation of the Strategic Assessment Study.

The activities in fulfilling the recommendations are at a standstill and in anticipation of the mission of the Bern Convention.

Having in mind the current situation with the Covid crisis and the unpredictability of the development of the situation, we believe that in cooperation with the Secretariat of the BerneConvention and the Subcommittee, it is necessary to carry out the planned activities in the scope of the mission with a phased approach. The phased fulfillment would mean that all those administrative activities would take place online, in anticipation of the opening of the possibility for field activities, which would take place possibly in 2021.

Accordingly, it is necessary to make an appropriate change in the Terms of reference of the mission.

2. Regarding the Complaint at rest no. 2015/2 for North Macedonia: Possible impact on the development of wind farms on bats for the Bogdanci Wind Park, in the past the state regularly submitted Reports on the operational monitoring of the Wind Park to the Secretariat of the Bern Park with a detailed review of the impact on the bats and bats.

However, within this Report, once again we submit the Final Report prepared by AD Power Plants of North Macedonia. (<https://we.tl/t-0ZKVawhCvY>)

Having in mind that the Reports were prepared by an expert team from KfW Bank, we request the Secretariat and the Subcommittee of the Bern Convention **to review the Complaint and to take a positive position regarding it and to adopt an appropriate act to close the process, ie the Complaint.**

3. Regarding Other Complaints no. 2017/2 for North Macedonia: Potential negative impacts on the locations of Lake Ohrid and the National Park Galicica due to the development of the infrastructure, we would like to inform that at the Session of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia from 17.11.2020 the following decisions were made:

- a. For the nomination of Lake Ohrid and Studencishko Blato for Ramsar places in the World Ramsar List and submission of the application file to the Secretariat of Ramsar Convention no later than December 2020
- b. The decision on the acceptability of the proposal for declaring the site Studencishko Blato a protected area in the category

Within the current GEF / UNEP project: "Achieving biodiversity protection through the creation and efficient management of protected areas and integrating biodiversity into land use planning" (STAR 5) in July 2020 activities were launched for preparation of a Valorization Study and a Draft Management Plan for the Lake Ohrid Nature Monument. The activity will be conducted by the Regional Office of the International Union for Conservation of Nature for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (IUCN ECARO) in cooperation with the MoEPP and UNEP, with the participation of international and national experts. IUCN ECARO will apply best international standards for protected areas, including its own best practice guidelines.

We would like to inform that the Republic of North Macedonia regularly submits reports on the progress in fulfilling the UNESCO recommendations for the Ohrid region.

Having in mind the scope and levels of protection in the Ohrid region, at the moment the progress of activities in the process of implementation of the Plan for management of the world natural and cultural heritage of the Ohrid region is being prepared and adopted.

MISCELLANEOUS: The Government of the Republic of North Macedonia has decided that the focal point for the Bern Convention should be the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning. For the changes the Secretariat of the Bern Convention will be additionally notified.

The Cabinet of the Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of North Macedonia in charge of economic affairs, coordination of economic departments and investments, will remain at the disposal of the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning and also of the Secretariat of the Bern Convention in the next period for these processes