



Strasbourg, 15 July 2026

T-PVS(2026)06

CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

Standing Committee
46th meeting
7-11 December 2026

Bureau meeting

17-18 June 2026
(online)

- MEETING REPORT -

Document prepared by the Secretariat

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING & ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1.1. Adoption of the agenda

[\[T-PVS/Agenda\(2026\)06\]](#)

The Chair opened the meeting and presented the draft agenda to the Bureau members, thereafter, requesting its formal adoption.

Decision: The meeting agenda was adopted.

2. REPORT FROM THE SECRETARIAT

2.1. Staff announcements

The Secretariat welcomed the new colleagues, Cassandra Macktavish (Senior Project Officer), Salomé Nozadze (Policy Officer) and Ozkan Hamarat (Administrative Assistant) and informed of the ongoing recruitment procedure for the position of an administrative assistant.

Decision: The Bureau took note of the information provided.

2.2. Calendar of activities

[\[Calendar of meetings 2026\]](#)

[\[T-PVS\(2025\)12\]](#) - Programme of Activities and budget for 2026]

The Secretariat provided an update on the calendar of activities and exact dates for the meetings planned in 2026. It also informed about surveys that have been launched.

Decision: The Bureau took note of the information provided.

3. FINANCING AND STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE BERN CONVENTION

3.1. Reykjavík process and the environment

- Participation in events and meetings: 1st European Forum on Environmental Human Rights Defenders (Strasbourg, 3-4 June 2026).
- Participation in upcoming events and meetings: Committee of Ministers GR-C meeting (Strasbourg, 30 June 2026) and CBD COP 17 in Armenia (Yerevan, 19-30 October 2026).

The Secretariat informed about the organisation and outcomes of the 1st European Forum on Environmental Human Rights Defenders (Strasbourg, 3-4 June 2026). The Vice-Chair shared his positive feedback on the Forum as a source of information of existing challenges and a forum of dialogue between authorities and defenders.

The Secretariat informed about upcoming events, their formats and dates and highlighted the possible Bern Convention contribution. The participants exchanged on the format and topics for these upcoming meeting, in particular for COP 17 in Armenia and COP 31 in Türkiye and were invited to take an active role in the organisation and participation in these meetings.

The Secretariat provided an update on the status of signatures and ratifications of the new Convention on the Protection of the Environment through Criminal Law and informed that treaty events will be organised in different settings to encourage further signatures of the Convention.

Decision: The Bureau took note of the information provided and expressed support for participation in relevant international events.

3.2. Working Group on the draft Protocol amending the Bern Convention

The Secretariat informed participants of the ongoing dialogue with the EU focal point and noted that no official EU position has yet been provided on the outstanding elements of the draft Protocol.

Decision: The Bureau took note of the information provided and asked to be kept informed of the outcomes of the ongoing negotiation with the EU.

3.3. Working Group on exploring mechanisms to guide amendments to the appendices of the Bern Convention

The Secretariat informed the Bureau about the process of selecting an expert to support the Working Group on exploring mechanisms to guide amendments to the appendices of the Bern Convention, and about its intention to organise a meeting of the Working Group in September 2026.

Decision: The Bureau took note of the information provided and agreed on the importance of carefully considering the next steps in this sensitive process.

3.4. Ways ahead with the Bern Convention complaint system

*[T-PVS/Inf(2026)06_rev – Secretariat
reflection on further enhancements
within the case-file system of the Bern Convention]
[T-PVS/Inf(2026)12e - Revised Case-file system Guide of Procedures]*

The Secretariat presented the modifications introduced to the reflection paper on the case-file system of the Bern Convention agreed at the extraordinary meeting of the Bureau on 6 May 2026 and a draft revised complaint form, for feedback. The Bureau agreed on the need to clarify definitions of statuses of complaints and case-files and discussed the frequency of their review by the Bureau. It also concluded that the reflection paper should not include lists of good and bad practice examples, and proposed introducing a new category, “Unresolved File”, for Open Files in which little or no positive developments has been made over a long period of time.

The Bureau also discussed the advantages of having an online complaint form and agreed that it would enable the Secretariat to be more efficient and reduce its administrative burden. To support this development, the Secretariat proposed minor changes to the complaint form to improve the clarity of the questions and to ease the assessment of newly submitted complaints. The Bureau expressed its general support for the proposed revisions and agreed to continue working on further improving the

complaint form while also exploring potential options for the development of an online submission platform.

Decision: The Bureau agreed to pursue some of the proposals to enhance the functioning of the Bern Convention case-file system and asked the Secretariat to prepare a further revised version of the complaint form, a revised Guide of Procedures on case-files and a list of files, which would qualify for the status "Unresolved File", for the next Bureau meeting in autumn 2026.

4. MONITORING OF SPECIES AND HABITATS

4.1. Emerald Network

The Secretariat informed the Bureau that the 16th meeting of GoEPAEN jointly with the 5th meeting of the Working Group on overseeing implementation of the Strategic Plan is scheduled for September 29-30 in Georgia and presented the expected outcomes of the meeting.

The Bureau was informed that no new databases have been received from the Contracting Parties. The Bureau was also informed that the revised version of Resolution No. 5 (1998) including its annex of Standard Data Form (SDF) has been updated on the website. The new SDF guidance document was elaborated by the Secretariat and circulated to the Contracting Parties for their feedback.

The Secretariat informed the Bureau of the invitation to contribute to the training course for EU accession countries organised by the European Commission in November 2026, and confirmed that the Secretariat of the Bern Convention would contribute to and participate in the workshop. The Bureau was also informed about the objectives of the workshop.

The Bureau was also informed that the Bern Convention Secretariat continues to support Contracting Parties in the development of their Emerald Networks via informal exchanges, as they focus on advancements for EU accession and preparation for Natura 2000. One Contracting Party requested the organisation of a joint Natura 2000/Emerald biogeographical seminar right before the EU accession.

Decision: The Bureau welcomed the work of the Secretariat during the intersessional period and its support for the Contracting Parties in advancing their work on the Emerald Network. The Bureau also appreciated the opportunity to participate in the workshop for EU enlargement countries, where key messages would be shared by the Secretariat.

The Bureau once again emphasised the importance of continuous efforts by the Contracting Parties to keep the Emerald Network databases updated. It noted that, once their national databases are updated, they can be easily streamlined with the Natura 2000 databases after EU accession. The Bureau also highlighted that support from the EU Commission is essential for these efforts.

The Bureau took note of the development of the SDF guidance document and emphasised the need to further support Contracting Parties in their transition to the

new SDF format, as this is crucial for the implementation and monitoring of the Bern Convention's impact.

5. MONITORING OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LEGAL ASPECTS OF THE CONVENTION

5.1. Biennial reporting and new Online Reporting System

The Secretariat informed the Bureau about the 2023-24 biennial reporting launched in the new Online Reporting System (ORS). The Bureau congratulated Türkiye for submitting the first report for the reference period and expressed satisfaction with the experience so far, noting that analysis of the data collected is to be available in time to inform the Standing Committee at its meeting later in the year.

Decision: The Bureau took note of the information about the launching of the new ORS, appreciated the positive experience with using it so far and commended the work of the Secretariat and WCMC to put the new reporting system in place.

5.2. Reporting under Resolution No. 8 (2012) on the conservation status of species and habitats

The Secretariat informed the Bureau about the progress made by the Contracting Parties in reporting under Resolution No. 8 (2012) and outlined the next steps in the reporting cycle for the period 2019-2025. To date, eight Contracting Parties have submitted national reports under Resolution No. 8 (2012). This includes four new reports from countries that have not participated in previous reporting cycle (2013-2018). All reports have been technically assessed and individually evaluated by experts. The Secretariat informed the Bureau that all Contracting Parties had been notified that their reports had successfully passed the technical validation process.

The Bureau was informed that some Contracting Parties are still finalising their national reports and have been granted an extension until the end of the year to submit them.

The Bureau was notified that currently the experts are analysing the submitted scientific data to prepare national summaries and dashboards, which will be published on the Bern Convention website. The documents developed during the intersessional period, will be presented at the 8th meeting of the Working Group on Reporting under Resolution No. 8 (2012) which is scheduled for 25 June 2026.

Decision: The Bureau took note of the information provided and acknowledged the efforts of the Contracting Parties that have submitted their national reports. The Bureau regretted that only eight Contracting Parties had submitted their national reports and encouraged Contracting Parties still undertaking the national reporting exercise to continue their work and to submit the required data by the end of 2026. The Bureau emphasised that Contracting Parties should fulfil their international obligations under the Bern Convention, including those arising from Resolution No. 8 (2012). The outcomes of the reporting under Resolution No. 8 (2012) are essential for demonstrating the commitment of the Contracting Parties to the implementation of the Convention and for assessing progress.

6. COMPLIANCE WITH THE CONVENTION

6.1. Vjosa-Narta Emerald candidate site (Albania)

The Secretariat provided an update to the Bureau concerning the Vjosa-Narta Emerald candidate site in Albania and its related case-file on the basis of information provided by the Albanian authorities and the *case-file 2016/05: Albania: Presumed negative impact of developments on the Vjosa river including hydro-power plant and Vlorë International Airport*. It informed that more than 100 notifications of concern were received from Albanian citizens concerning interventions affecting the Vjosa–Narta Emerald candidate site and their possible irreversible consequences on the site.

The Secretariat also reported on the exchanges held with the Prime Minister, the Minister, and the Ambassador of Albania in Strasbourg, as well as on the Secretariat's offer to provide support in relation to the environmental impact assessment of projects affecting the area and the preparation of an updated Emerald Network database.

Decision: The Bureau welcomed the ongoing dialogue with Albanian national authorities. The Bureau considered information received on new tourism development projects within the area of the Vjosa-Narta Emerald candidate site and welcomed the suspension of construction works at the site and the commitment of the Albanian authorities to conduct an Environmental Impact Assessment. However, it regretted that the authorities had not provided comprehensive information on the Vjosa Narta Emerald candidate site and had not submitted yet an updated Standard Data Form (SDF) for the Emerald sites in Albania.

The Bureau also highlighted the existing legal framework applicable to Emerald candidate sites and recalled the obligation to carry out an Environmental Impact Assessment for projects that may have significant effects on such sites, including those located outside their boundaries. It also requested the authorities to consider the cumulative impact of the different projects, including the Vjosa airport and the new projects, when conducting the Environmental Impact Assessment.

The Bureau also noted with concern that the approach taken by the Albanian authorities could pose similar risks to other Emerald candidate sites in the country.

The Bureau requested the Albanian authorities to provide additional and more detailed information ahead of its September meeting (22–24 September), particularly regarding the permits issued and the procedural steps undertaken. It also requested a map of national protected areas showing the overlap between the protected areas and Emerald candidate sites, together with the precise locations of the proposed development projects. The Bureau also requested the Albanian authorities to provide feedback on the support offered by the Bern Convention Secretariat in the preparation of the Environmental Impact Assessment for the existing and new projects affecting the Vjosa Narta Emerald candidate site. Furthermore, the Bureau encouraged close cooperation and constructive dialogue between the Bern Convention Secretariat and the Albanian authorities, particularly with regard to the preparation of a new SDF for the Emerald Network in Albania.

The Bureau also decided to defer its decision on the organisation of an on-the-spot appraisal until its next meeting in September.

6.2. Request to support a meeting on the Genus Zingel

The Bureau was provided with additional information, including a draft agenda, concerning the request submitted by ProNatura for the Bern Convention to support a meeting on the Genus Zingel. The Bureau was invited to decide whether such support may be granted.

Decision: The Bureau agreed to grant support to the organisation of the expert meeting on the Genus Zingel by ProNatura. At the same time, it clarified that this support allows the organiser to add the Bern Convention logo to the programme but should not put additional administrative burden on the Secretariat.

The Bureau also highlighted that the organisers will have the opportunity to report to the 46th Standing Committee in December 2026 under the agenda item on *Recommendation No. 169 (2013) on the Rhone streber (Zingel asper) in the Doubs (France) and in the canton of Jura (Switzerland) in the framework of a case-file on stand-by 2011/05: France / Switzerland.*

7. CASE-FILE

7.1. On-the-spot appraisals (OSAs)

- 2022/06: Serbia: Possible negative impact of mining activities in Bosilegrad and in the Homolje Mt region

The Secretariat informed the Bureau about the steps taken to organise the OSA to Bosilegrad and Homolje, two distinct mining areas in Serbia with respective challenges addressed within the same case-file. Serbian Government agreed to visit both areas and nominated the Bern Convention Focal Point as the main person of contact for the OSA. The exact date is to be fixed as soon as possible. Draft Terms of Reference of the visit and the CV of the expert identified by the Secretariat as a relevant candidate will be circulated to the parties shortly.

Decision: The Bureau took note of the state of play in the preparation of the double OSA to Bosilegrad and Homolje in August 2026, stressing the importance of the visit being held in 2026.

- 2013/01: North Macedonia: Hydro power development within the territory of Mavrovo National Park

The Secretariat informed the Bureau about the steps taken to organise the OSA to Mavrovo and a pending reply of the authorities.

Decision: The Bureau agreed further efforts are needed to organise the OSA in late 2026 or early 2027. An online meeting could be held to that end.

7.2. Possible files

[T-PVS/Notes(2026)4 – Summary of possible case files]

- 2022/07: Bosnia and Herzegovina: Possible negative impact of mining activities in Trstionica – Gornja Bukovica and Vareš

[[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2022-07_comp](#) - Complainant Report]

The Bureau:

Thanked the complainant for the submission of an update report and expressed serious concern that the Respondent did not provide any update for the second consecutive time, despite several reminders.

Noted with grave concern that, according to an official study by the Federal Institute for Agropedology, data on heavy metals along the active ore transport routes reveal significant ecological damage, particularly at Daštansko (Forestry land), Vareš (Built-up land) and Borovica (Forestry land). The current levels of soil contamination in high-value forestry areas present a direct and irreversible threat to local flora and fauna, negatively impacting species and habitats protected under the Bern Convention.

Concerned, took note of allegations regarding the manipulation of spatial data by FBiH authorities pertaining to the ecological impact on the Municipality of Kakanj and the foreseen reduction of the “Trstionica-Gornja Bukovica” area, which was explicitly designated for high-level institutional protection under the official Spatial Plan of the Zenica-Doboj Canton (2009–2029), to a core of only 30 to 80 hectares of primary forest, threatening the integrity of the protected area, specifically the Buffer Zone (52%) and the Transition Zone (46%), by restricting protection to only this 2% core.

Regretted the decision of the Federal Ministry of Environment and Tourism (FMOIT) to renew the environmental permit for the operator DPMetals BH d.o.o. on 27 March 2026, for a further five-year term, despite expressed community objections, warnings regarding toxic dust, and unauthorized expansion of the tailings dam at the Rupice site.

Noted that an official Request for Constitutional Review, together with a Motion for an Urgent Interim Measure, was submitted to the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina on 19 January 2026, challenging the illegal and unconstitutional conversion of 6,055.8 hectares of state-owned forestry land into construction land, as well as the unlawful granting of concessions to private mining entities in direct contravention of the Constitutional Court’s landmark ruling No. U-3/24.

Regretted that the Court did not grant the requested Interim Measure to halt the activities and further noted that civil society organisations have filed formal criminal charges against the operator’s management and senior state officials, including the Federal Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) Prime Minister and FMOIT Minister, for serious offences related to public health and organised crime.

Invited both parties to keep the Bureau informed of the outcome of these court proceedings.

Acknowledged the complainant's call for the immediate suspension of all mining operations at the Rupice/Vares site until independent and transparent baseline studies on toxicology and biodiversity have been established.

Urged the competent authorities to undertake systematic monitoring of water, air, and soil quality in the Trstionica and Gornja Bukovica area, and within the Kakanj municipal boundaries.

Recalled the decisions taken by the Standing Committee in December 2025 and by the Bureau in April 2026.

In light of the seriousness of the allegations, urged the authorities to submit all relevant information for consideration by the Bureau at its **autumn 2026** meeting, and indicated willingness to recommend to the Standing Committee that a case file be opened.

➤ 2023/03: Switzerland: New wolf culling policy

[\[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2023-03_gov](#) - Government Report]
[\[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2023-03_comp](#) - Complainant Report]

The Bureau:

Thanked both parties for their reports.

Appreciated that the wolf population in terms of the number of packs seemed stable and reiterated the Standing Committee's request for data on the impact of the regulation on the social structure and behaviour of the wolves, to ensure a holistic evaluation and in view of the concerns raised by the Complainants, pertaining to the detrimental effects of the measures in place on the wolf population.

Asked again for information on the proportion of funds for herd protection dedicated to lethal and non-lethal measures and on the evaluation of the effectiveness and cost efficiency of the policy in place, in view of the high investment in the culling in terms of staff working time and financial resources.

Expressed concern with the large extent of the culling, the irregularities in the implementation of the regulation in place reported by the Complainant, and with the impact of possible further relaxation of culling: facilitating removal of problematic individuals all year long, extending the regulation to the French speaking districts and proceeding to culling of wolves when the number of packs exceeds a set threshold.

Expressed appreciation of the Swiss involvement in the international cooperation pertaining to large carnivore management.

Invited both parties to submit update reports for the **autumn 2026** meeting of the Bureau.

7.3. Complaints on stand-by

[T-PVS/Notes(2026)5 – Summary of complaints on stand-by]

➤ 2019/04: United Kingdom: Badger Culling Policy in England

[[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2019-04_gov](#) - Government Report]
[[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2019-04_comp](#) - Complainant Report]

The Bureau:

Thanked both parties for the reports.

Highlighted the developments presented by the Government, namely the expansion of the badger vaccination programme with more than 4000 badgers vaccinated and giving preference to non-lethal wildlife control.

Took note of the information received from the Government that the badger control policy has ended in England's High Risk and Edge Areas and that there is no policy provision for granting any further licences in these regions. Noted the fact that culling under one remaining licence has ended in Low-Risk Area (Cumbria).

Requested both, the Government and the complainant, to provide clarification on the contradictory information provided, as the complainant informed that in 2025 supplementary badger culling licences were issued by Natural England for 9 zones in England that had previously completed four years of intensive culling, and across 11 zones for a fourth consecutive year.

Regretted that the complainant was not involved in the TB Eradication Strategy elaboration process and requested the Government to provide clarification. Furthermore, the Bureau requested that the Government ensures the involvement of the complainant and other research institutions in the strategy finalisation phase.

The Bureau requested the Government to provide updated statistics on badger vaccination and the results of the national badger population survey.

Invited both parties to report to the Bureau in **summer 2027**.

The case-file remains on stand-by and will be reconsidered following the submission of the next reports.

➤ 2020/06: Portugal: Presumed threat to Tagus Estuary Special Protected Area from a new airport

[[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2020-06_gov](#) Government Report]

The Bureau:

Thanked the Government for timely report.

Highlighted the information provided that the new Lisbon airport will be located at the Alcochete and that construction in Montijo has been ruled out.

Noted that the choice of the area for construction was confirmed by the Council of Ministers Resolution no. 66/2024, May 27.

Noted that EIA procedure for the Alcochete planned area has not taken place yet.

Decided to **close the case file** in view of the information provided by the Government that the threat to Tagus Estuary Special Protected Area is halted.

- 2021/05: Germany: Habitat loss in Baden-Württemberg threatening the conservation of Tetrao urogallus

[\[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2021-05_gov\]](#) Government Report]
[\[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2021-05_comp\]](#) Complainant Report]

The Bureau:

Thanked both Parties for the timely reports.

Acknowledged the efforts made by the Government of Germany for the conservation of capercaillie (*Tetrao urogallus*), including sustainable financial resources for implementation of management measures and monitoring of the population.

Noted information provided by the Government in regard to predation of small carnivores in the area and acknowledges that raccoons are not of a serious danger to the Capercaillie. Nonetheless, it requested the Government, to provide additional information in regard to the predation and provide results of monitoring activities, implemented to reduce this threat.

Noted information provided by the Complainant, that for capercaillie, the area is a bottleneck of vital importance regarding genetic exchange between the northern and the southern Black Forest populations.

Acknowledged the restoration of 574 ha of habitats in last five years, with a focus on rearing and breeding areas. However, it expressed regret that despite successfully implemented restoration activities and many other efforts for conservation of *Tetrao urogallus*, the Government continues to put important habitats in the Baden-Württemberg and Rohrhardsberg areas at risk. According to the report of the Complainant, **Planning Framework for Wind Energy and Capercaillie** promotes expansion of wind energy infrastructure in the Capercaillie habitats. The Bureau requested further clarifications on this matter and requested the government to provide summary of the EIA for planned wind turbines in regard to the *Tetrao urogallus*. It also requested the government to provide map of spatial overlap between the planned wind energy project and habitats of *Tetrao urogallus*.

Urged the German authorities to apply the precautionary principle and to undertake all effort to plan wind farms away from the N2000 and SPA sites.

Expressed concern and will consider elevating the case-file status depending on the findings of the next progress reports. Invite both parties to provide the reports for the Bureau in **summer 2027**.

The case remains on **stand-by**.

- 2021/06: France: Conservation of the Western hazel grouse (*Tetrastes bonasia rhenana*)

[\[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2021-06_gov](#) - Government Report]
[\[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2021-06_comp](#) - Complainant Report]

The Bureau:

Thanked both parties for their reports.

Regretted that, as highlighted by the complainant, no meaningful progress on conservation activities in favour of the hazel grouse in the Vosges was observed over the past year, and that the regional authority (DREAL) took no substantial action following the last decision, nor met its requirements. It noted, in particular, the lack of willingness to conduct further, specific studies involving experienced ornithologists and conservation biologists in order to supplement the existing data and clarify the status of the remaining populations.

Noted that, although the authorities maintain the genetic identity of the Vosgian population as *rhenana* is unconfirmed and contested, the commissioned genetic study remained unpublished despite repeated requests, and no response was provided to international research supporting the subspecies' unique status.

Noted that according to the complainant, no reliable, confirmed records of hazel grouse in the Vosges have been received since 2025, possibly indicating the extinction of the population.

Recognised both the legal constraints cited by the French authorities and the lack of prepared ex-situ facilities, while recalling the obligation of the parties to respect Article 3.1 and Article 9 of the Convention.

Invited the authorities to conduct an independent final search to confirm the status of the Vosgian population of the Western hazel grouse (*Tetrastes bonasia rhenana*) to provide a scientific evidence whether the *rhenana* subspecies is no longer present in the Vosges.

Requested both parties to submit update reports for the Bureau meeting in **summer 2027**.

The case-file remains on **stand-by**.

- 2021/07: Serbia: Alleged threat to fauna species and protected sites due to the proposed construction of a lithium mine in the Jadar River Valley

[\[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2021-07_gov](#) Government Report]
[\[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2021-07_comp](#) Complainant Report]

The Bureau:

Thanked both parties for their update reports.

Asked for the conclusions of the hydrological, hydrodynamic, and risk studies, alongside assessments of potential impacts on regional water supply and environmental baseline conditions, required from the investor in the water conditions issued by the Republic Water Directorate in August 2024.

Took note of issuing nature protection conditions for the 2026-2035 Forest Management Plan for “Jadar”, issued at the request of Rio Sava Exploration LLC - Belgrade by the Institute for Nature Conservation in January 2026, considering that the area is partly located within the potential Nature 2000 site “Korenita”, a habitat of nationally and internationally strictly protected species, and surrounded by protected areas of outstanding characteristics, including an internationally significant area for birds and biodiversity (IBA) and partly overlapping with a potential Natura 2000 area “Cer”.

Thanked the Government for the information about the EIA legal framework in place, transposing the relevant EU directive and harmonised with the Aarhus Convention, expressing concern that a statement of the project proponent and the responsible designer suffice to confirm compliance with environmental protection measures.

Asked about the pending legal procedures related to the decision on the scope and content of the EIA, and on approving the exploitation field.

Noted that some information of public importance requested by the complainants was provided to them and expressed hope that the pending, and future, requests will be met with a positive and timely response.

Thanked the authorities and the complainants for their involvement in the respective online meetings with the Chair of the Standing Committee and the Secretariat of Bern Convention. Stressed that the Secretariat aims to organise a round-table on mining in Serbia, as a stepping stone to holding an international workshop on minimising the negative impact of mining on biodiversity; encouraged the parties involved in this case to attend it.

Regretted that while the Government provided official correspondence from various authorities, it did not offer a substantive consolidated statement of its position in response to the complaint. Requested a consolidated Government report, explaining the state of the project, its timeline and any relevant recent and ongoing legal procedures.

Requested both parties to submit update reports for the Bureau meeting in **spring 2027**.

The case-file remains on **stand-by**.

- 2022/01: Serbia: Alleged habitat destruction in the area of Novi Sad due to proposed infrastructure constructions

[\[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2022-01_gov - Government Report\]](#)
[\[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2022-01_comp - Complainant Report\]](#)

The Bureau:

Thanked the Government for the report, recognising that the deadline for providing further updates was very short.

Noted the information provided by the authorities that relevant spatial plans have been adopted in accordance with national planning legislation and Strategic Environmental Assessments were completed for all applicable spatial plans in accordance with conditions set by the Ministry and the Institute for Nature Conservation.

Appreciated that according to the developer's documentation the prescribed protection measures of the ecological corridors were observed during the current construction phase and asked if an independent verification could confirm the information.

Noted that the evidence of complying with the conditions set in the EIA study provided by the project operator but remained concerned that the limited scope of the study may not warrant optimal protection of the species and habitats in place; encouraged pursuing independent ecological and hydrological assessments to clarify the situation beyond doubt.

Requested the Secretariat to further liaise with RAMSAR and/or other relevant stakeholders to further clarify the situation, including on the embankment.

Took note of the results of the analysis of the sediments, which contained cobalt and nickel already prior to the construction works.

Regretted that while the Government provided official correspondence from various authorities, it did not offer a substantive consolidated statement of its position in response to the complaint. Requested a consolidated Government report, explaining the state of the project, its timeline and any relevant recent and ongoing legal procedures.

Requested both parties to submit update reports for the Bureau meeting in **spring 2027**.

The case-file remains on **stand-by**.

➤ 2022/08: Serbia: Possible negative impact of mining activities in Mountain Baba

[\[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2022-08_gov\]](#) - Government Report]
[\[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2022-08_comp\]](#) - Complainant Report]

The Bureau:

Thanked both parties for their update reports.

Expressed concern over very significant divergence of the information provided by the respondent and the complainants and the implications of the mines for the livelihoods and health of the local population.

Asked the Government for information on the state of play with legal proceedings concerning the quarries in the area.

Reiterated the request to the complainant to provide explicit, scientifically based clarification on the impacts on biodiversity, which fall under the mandate of the Bern Convention, so that the Bureau can carry out a meaningful study of the file, or consider closing it.

Invited the authorities to ensure public access to information about the mines and transparent communication on the findings of the inspections performed on the ground.

Thanked the authorities and the complainants for their involvement in the respective online meetings with the Chair of the Standing Committee and the Secretariat of Bern Convention. Stressed that the Secretariat aims to organise a round-table on mining in Serbia, as a stepping stone to holding an international workshop on minimising the negative impact of mining on biodiversity; encouraged the parties involved in this case to attend it.

Regretted that while the Government provided official correspondence from various authorities, it did not offer a substantive consolidated statement of its position in response to the complaint. Requested a consolidated Government report, clearly explaining the state of the project, its timeline and any relevant recent and ongoing legal procedures.

Requested both parties to submit update reports for the Bureau meeting in **spring 2027**.

The case-file remains on **stand-by**.

- 2023/02: Switzerland: Alleged damage to protected habitats and species due to logging activities in the Belpau Emerald Network site (CH0000028)

[\[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2023-02 gov\]](#) - Government Report]

[\[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2023-02 comp\]](#) - Complainant Report]

Thanked both parties for their reports.

Noted that the Canton will prepare a management plan for the Belpau Emerald Network site between 2025 and 2028, and that, until its adoption, current protection measures will remain in place.

Noted the information provided by the authorities concerning the temporary clearance for the installation of a drinking water pipeline, including that the route was chosen to minimise impacts within the protected area. Also noted that an Environmental Impact Assessment was not required under national law for this intervention, and that steps have been taken to address biodiversity and conservation objectives at the site.

Emphasised the need for the authorities to continue comprehensive and transparent ecological monitoring within the Emerald Network site, in line with the Convention's requirements and relevant Standing Committee Resolutions, including Resolution No. 8 (2012).

Invited the authorities to reinforce and more clearly publicise the site's status as part of the Emerald Network, and to strengthen meaningful stakeholder and expert consultation, including with independent conservation NGOs and local experts, to support transparency and effective management.

Concluded that the evidence submitted by the complainant did not demonstrate a sufficient degree of seriousness or urgency related to species or habitats of European importance to warrant continued monitoring by the Bureau.

Decided to **close** the file.

7.4. New (pending) complaints

[T-PVS/Notes(2026)6 – Summary of new & new (pending) complaints]

- 2024/05: Bosnia and Herzegovina: Alleged threat to habitat and protected species from the 'Upper Horizons' Hydropower Project

[\[Complaint form\]](#)

[\[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2024-05_comp\]](#) - Complainant Report]

The Bureau:

Thanked the complainants for their report and regretted that the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina provide no update.

Expressed strong concern over the situation as depicted by the complainants, in view of procedural shortcomings and high risk of irreversible damage to endemic species, karst hydrology, and transboundary wetlands, which could be observed on the spot by the complainants and may require further independent scientific verification.

Requested information on the results of the Environmental Impact Assessment, where available, and the state of play of the procedure, if pending.

Called upon the authorities to halt the construction of the hydropower plants of the Upper Neretva Horizons and to reconsider the choice of best renewable energy source weighting advantages versus high risks and costs, including but not limited to environmental ones.

Urged the respondent to submit a report for the Bureau meeting in **autumn 2026**, in view of possibly elevating it to the status to a Possible File, considering the risk of irreversible damage to endemic species and valuable natural habitats.

The case-file remains on **stand-by**.

- 2025/01: Serbia: Alleged threat to habitat and protected species by the construction of the Gradina S4 hydropower plant on the Studenica River

[\[Complaint form\]](#)

[\[T-PVS/Files\(2025\)2025-01_gov\]](#) - Government Report]

[\[T-PVS/Files\(2025\)2025-01_comp\]](#) - Complainant Report]

The Bureau:

Thanked both parties for their reports.

Regretted that the progress report from the Government did not focus on changes in the activity, but rather description of procedures.

Noted that, in accordance with the Law of Environmental Impact Assessment of Serbia, the planned 2.1 MW hydro power plant does not require an immediate initiation of EIA procedure, but the project holder submitting a request to the competent authority to determine necessity of the EIA. Asked whether the competent authority required EIA or Screening procedure for the project.

Asked the Government to provide the shape files of the planned HPP project and shape files of protected sites in Serbia, including international recognitions.

Requested the Government to clarify the specific purpose of the planned project, if any, and to respond to the Complainant's allegations of false legal basis for obtaining a building permit.

Asked for clarifications on discrepancies on species list mentioned in Golija Emerald Site SDF and those provided by the complainant.

Recalled the importance of ensuring transparency and encouraged the competent authorities to strengthen communication and information-sharing in order to guarantee transparent engagement with local communities.

Regretted that while the Government provided official correspondence from various authorities, it did not offer a substantive consolidated statement of its position in response to the complaint. Requested a consolidated Government report, explaining the state and timeline of the planned project and necessary legal procedures, such as EIA or Screening, as well as timeline.

Invited both parties to consider concerns drawn in current decision and provide updated reports by **autumn 2026**. Upgrading or dismissal of this complaint will be reconsidered by the Bureau in autumn, based on information provided.

The complaint remains **New (pending)**.

7.5. New complaint forms received

The Secretariat informed about the recently submitted complaint forms, 19 of which were under the Secretariat's consideration, while six assessed as admissible led to requests for a response from a Contracting Party, already sent out by the Secretariat.

Decision: The Bureau took note of a large number of newly filed complaints, several of which are to be brought to its attention at the next, autumn 2026 meeting.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Bureau was also informed about Senate Bill 1552 proposing amendments to the Italian hunting legislation, which is currently under discussion in the Italian Parliament.

Decision: The Bureau expressed concerns regarding the content of the bill and requested to be kept informed of any responses to the request for clarifications sent to the Italian national focal point in June.

8.1. Dates of the 47th Standing Committee meeting – results of the poll

The Secretariat provided an update on the consultation with the Contracting Parties regarding a possible change to the dates of the Standing Committee meeting in 2027 and presented the results of the poll.

The results indicated a preference for holding the meeting at the end of May or the beginning of June. While some parties supported scheduling it for the third week of October, others expressed concerns about potential overlaps with meetings of other MEAs. Only a few parties would prefer to retain the current option of a meeting in December.

Decision: The Bureau requested that the Secretariat send a reminder to those Contracting Parties that had not yet responded to the poll. This would provide the Bureau with a more comprehensive overview of the Parties' preferences and support more informed planning for the 2027 Standing Committee meeting.

8.2. Stress test EU Birds and Habitats Directives

The Secretariat and the Vice-Chair informed the Bureau of the ongoing stress test on the EU Birds and Habitats Directives and of their recent participation in a focus group discussion organised by the European Commission, involving several key stakeholders, including international organisations and networks.

The Secretariat also informed the Bureau of the next steps in the process, including the submission of responses to an online questionnaire by 30 June and an in-person event to be held in Brussels on 21 September, during which the preliminary conclusions of the consultation process will be presented.

Decision: The Bureau agreed on the importance of actively participating in this process, given the potential risks associated with possible proposals to amend the annexes to the EU Directives and appendices to the Bern Convention. It also agreed to continue coordinating with the Secretariat on the submission of further inputs and on participation in the in-person event to be held in Brussels in September.

Appendix I – List of participants

CHAIR

Mr Carl AMIRGULASHVILI, Head of Biodiversity and Forestry Policy Department, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Georgia

VICE-CHAIR

Mr Claude ORIGER, Policy Adviser, Ministry of the Environment, Climate and Sustainable Development, Luxembourg

BUREAU MEMBERS

Ms Merike LINNAMÄGI, Advisor, Biodiversity Conservation Department, Ministry of the Climate, Estonia

Mr Burak TATAR, Senior Specialist, Directorate General of Nature Conservation and National Parks, Department of Wildlife Management, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Türkiye

SECRETARIAT

Council of Europe / Directorate of Social Rights, Health and the Environment

Mr Gianluca SILVESTRINI, Head of Department a.i.

Ms Grazia Alessandra SIINO, Secretary of the Bern Convention

Ms Marta MEḌLIŃSKA, Project Manager

Ms Salome NOZADZE, Policy Officer

Ms Cassandra MACTAVISH, Senior Project Officer

Ms Lilas HEULLANT, Administrative Assistant

Mr Ozkan HAMARAT, Administrative Assistant

Appendix II – Adopted Agenda

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING & ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1.1. Adoption of the agenda

2. REPORT FROM THE SECRETARIAT

2.1. Staff announcements

2.2. Calendar of activities

*[[Calendar of meetings 2026](#)]
[[T-PVS\(2025\)12](#) - Programme of Activities and budget for 2026]*

3. FINANCING AND STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE BERN CONVENTION

3.1. Reykjavík process and the environment

- Participation in events and meetings: 1st European Forum on Environmental Human Rights Defenders (Strasbourg, 3-4 June 2026)
- Participation in upcoming events and meetings: Committee of Ministers GR-C meeting (Strasbourg, 30 June 2026), CBD COP 17 in Armenia (Yerevan, 19-30 October 2026).

3.2. Working Group on the draft Protocol amending the Bern Convention

3.3. Working Group on exploring mechanisms to guide amendments to the appendices of the Bern Convention

3.4. Ways ahead with the Bern Convention complaint system

*[T-PVS/Inf(2026)06 – Secretariat
reflection on further enhancements within
the case-file system of the Bern Convention]
[T-PVS/Inf(2026)12e - Revised Case-file system Guide of Procedures]*

4. MONITORING OF SPECIES AND HABITATS

4.1. Emerald Network

5. MONITORING OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LEGAL ASPECTS OF THE CONVENTION

5.1. Biennial reporting and new Online Reporting System

5.2. Reporting under Resolution No. 8 (2012) on the conservation status of species and habitats

6. COMPLIANCE WITH THE CONVENTION

6.1. Vjosa-Narta Emerald candidate site (Albania)

6.2. Request to support a meeting on the Genus Zingel

7. CASE-FILES

7.1. On-the-spot appraisals

- 2022/06: Serbia: Possible negative impact of mining activities in Bosilegrad and in the Homolje Mt region
- 2013/01: North Macedonia: Hydro power development within the territory of Mavrovo National Park

7.2. Possible files

[T-PVS/Notes(2026)4 – Summary of possible case files]

- 2022/07: Bosnia and Herzegovina: Possible negative impact of mining activities in Trstionica – Gornja Bukovica and Vareš

[[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2022-07_comp](#) - Complainant Report]

- 2023/03: Switzerland: New wolf culling policy

[[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2023-03_gov](#) - Government Report]

[[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2023-03_comp](#) - Complainant Report]

7.3. Complaints on stand-by

[T-PVS/Notes(2026)5– Summary of complaints on stand-by]

- 2019/04: United Kingdom: Badger Culling Policy in England

[[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2019-04_gov](#) - Government Report]

[[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2019-04_comp](#) - Complainant Report]

- 2020/06: Portugal: Presumed threat to Tagus Estuary Special Protected Area from a new airport

[[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2020-06_gov](#) Government Report]

- 2021/05: Germany: Habitat loss in Baden-Württemberg threatening the conservation of Tetrao urogallus

[[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2021-05_gov](#) Government Report]

[[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2021-05_comp](#) Complainant Report]

- 2021/06: France: Conservation of the Western hazel grouse (Tetrastes bonasia rhenana)

[\[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2021-06_gov\]](#) - Government Report]
[\[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2021-06_comp\]](#) - Complainant Report]

- 2021/07: Serbia: Alleged threat to fauna species and protected sites due to the proposed construction of a lithium mine in the Jadar River Valley

[\[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2021-07_gov\]](#) Government Report]
[\[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2021-07_comp\]](#) Complainant Report]

- 2022/01: Serbia: Alleged habitat destruction in the area of Novi Sad due to proposed infrastructure constructions

[\[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2022-01_gov\]](#) - Government Report]
[\[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2022-01_comp\]](#)- Complainant Report]

- 2022/08: Serbia: Possible negative impact of mining activities in Mountain Baba

[\[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2022-08_gov\]](#) Government Report]
[\[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2022-08_comp\]](#) Complainant Report]

- 2023/02: Switzerland: Alleged damage to protected habitats and species due to logging activities in the Belpau Emerald Network site (CH0000028)

[\[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2023-02_gov\]](#) - Government Report]
[\[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2023-02_comp\]](#) - Complainant Report]

7.4. New (pending) complaints

[T-PVS/Notes(2026)6– Summary of new & pending complaints]

- 2024/05: Bosnia and Herzegovina: Alleged threat to habitat and protected species from the 'Upper Horizons' Hydropower Project

[\[Complaint form\]](#)
[\[T-PVS/Files\(2026\)2024-05_comp\]](#) - Complainant Report]

- 2025/01: Serbia: Alleged threat to habitat and protected species by the construction of the Gradina S4 hydropower plant on the Studenica River

[\[Complaint form\]](#)
[\[T-PVS/Files\(2025\)2025-01_gov\]](#) - Government Report]
[\[T-PVS/Files\(2025\)2025-01_comp\]](#) - Complainant Report]

7.5. New complaint forms received

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8.1. Dates of the 47th Standing Committee meeting – results of the poll

8.2. Stress test EU Birds and Habitats Directives