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CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

Standing Committee

30th meeting
Strasbourg, 6-9 December 2010

**Follow-up of Recommendation No. 98 (2002) on
the project to build a motorway through the
Kresna Gorge (Bulgaria)**

REPORT BY THE GOVERNMENT

*Document prepared by:
the Ministry of Environment and Water, Bulgaria*

INFORMATION ON THE PROGRESS ON THE PROJECT FOR CONSTRUCTION OF MOTORWAY IN THE REGION OF THE KRESNA GORGE (BULGARIA)

In connection with the decision taken on the 30 Session of the Bern Convention Standing Committee for closing the file based on the application of Recommendation 98 (2002) concerning a Project for construction motorway in the region of Kresna gorge (Bulgaria), on condition that Bulgaria continues providing information concerning the progress on the project, the Ministry of Environment and Water (MOEW) provides the following information about the current situation.

Background information

In 2008 the Minister of environment and water has issued EIA Decision *No 1-1/ 2008* for construction of Struma Motorway based on Addendum to the EIA Report in the part, concerning the biodiversity. The Addendum includes assessment under Article 6 of Habitats Directive, information about all variants of the road-beds, and also a requirement for fulfillment Recommendation 98 (2002) of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention.

In the course of the procedure a good collaboration has been realized in aspect providing information and conducting discussions between MOEW, the investor, NGOs and the experts, completing EIA. Intensive preliminary consultations have been carried out for finding the most proper solution for the Struma road-bed in the region of Kresna gorge and in the sections passing close to the protected sites under NATURA 2000 network.

The EIA decision contains specific conditions, aiming protection of the biota of the region and decreasing the habitat fragmentation, thus the most important among them is to design the road-bed in west direction, out of the gorge and passing through a harsh mountain terrain by system of tunnels and viaducts.

Actual information

Through the current year contacts have been realized between MOEW and the competent authorities - Ministry of Transport, Information Technologies and Communications and Road Infrastructure Agency for providing actual information about the progress on the project.

According to the acquired information, the funding of the Struma Motorway is covered by financial means from EU Operative program Transport and national co-financial funds. The construction of Lot 3, including the region of the Kresna gorge is envisaged for the next program period. For the time being there is an elaborated technical assignment for designing of Lot 3, consistent with the imposed by the EIA decision conditions. A forthcoming public tender procedure is invited for elaboration of the project.

Taking into account the stage of the project and for lack of necessity of collaboration and partnership for solving concrete problems, during the current year 2010 no contacts have been realized with NGOs related to that object.

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