

Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats



Standing Committee

Recommendation No. 55 (1996) on giving consideration to ZNIEFF (nature reserves of ecological interest for fauna and flora) in the development of projects for the Biltzheim Forest and the areas of Niffer and the Petit Landau (France)

(Adopted by the Standing Committee on 6 December 1996)

The Standing Committee on the Convention of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, acting under the terms of Article 14 of the convention,

Having regard to the aims of the convention to conserve wild flora and fauna and their habitats;

Recalling that Article 3 of the convention provides that each Contracting Party shall take steps to promote national policies for the conservation of wild flora, wild fauna and natural habitats, with particular attention to endangered and vulnerable species, especially endemic ones, and endangered habitats;

Recalling that Article 4, para. 1 of the convention provides that each Contracting Party shall take appropriate and necessary legislative and administrative measures to ensure the conservation of the habitats of wild flora and fauna species, especially those specified in Appendix II to the convention, and the conservation of endangered natural habitats;

Recognising the importance and the value of the ZNIEFF (nature reserves of ecological interest for fauna and flora) inventory as a tool for investigating France's natural heritage (Circular No. 91-71 of 14 May 1991);

Noting that, although the ZNIEFF inventory is not itself legally binding, it is designed to facilitate administrative decisions and policy of the State;

Noting that it is one of the main scientific bases of the state's wildlife protection policy;

Noting that a development project for an identified ZNIEFF should take the ecological needs of that zone into consideration;

Given that the conservation of a ZNIEFF in a municipality's territory is a means of enhancing that municipality in aesthetic, recreational, educational and sustainable local development terms;

Considering that the Biltzheim Forest and the Niffer and Petit Landau areas concerned by development projects are ZNIEFF and home to several species listed in Appendix II of the Bern Convention,

Recommends that the French Government:

1. generally take fully into consideration the fact that certain areas have been scientifically identified as:
 - areas, usually small in size and home to rare or outstanding species, groups of species or habitats, or representative of the national or regional natural heritage (type I ZNIEFF), especially sensitive to built installations or other transformations, even when their scope is limited;

– large natural features (forests, valleys, plateaux, estuaries, etc), rich or unspoilt in natural terms, with considerable biological potential (type II ZNIEFF), whose major ecological balances must be respected and where special attention must be paid to the vital issue of sedentary or migratory fauna.

2. ensure that the quality of the ZNIEFF of the Biltzheim Forest and the Niffer and Petit Landau areas concerned are carefully examined prior to the scheduled development projects.