

# NATURE PROTECTION IN BULGARIA

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# BULGARIA AND NATURE

Small country area of - 110 912 sq.km.  
With diverse geomorphology and 3  
climatic zones, diverse topography,  
geology, hidrology.  
88 habitats identified according to  
Directive 92/43/EEC  
116 habitats of species, according to  
Habitat Directives



# BULGARIA AND NATURE

## Very high species diversity

**More than 6 500 non-vascular plants**

**More than 3 500 vascular plants**

**Around 27 000 invertebrates**

**207 sea and fresh water fishes**

**18 amphibians**

**35 reptiles**

**400 birds**

**94 mammals**



# Protected areas

## History

Vitosha Nature Park"  
designated in 1934



"Silkosija" Reserve –  
designated in 1931

# Protected areas Act

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PAA is the first modern nature conservation Act in Bulgaria.

It entered into force in 1998. The Act introduces a modern protected areas classification in compliance with the International norms.

There are 6 categories of protected areas, which are particularly, as follows:

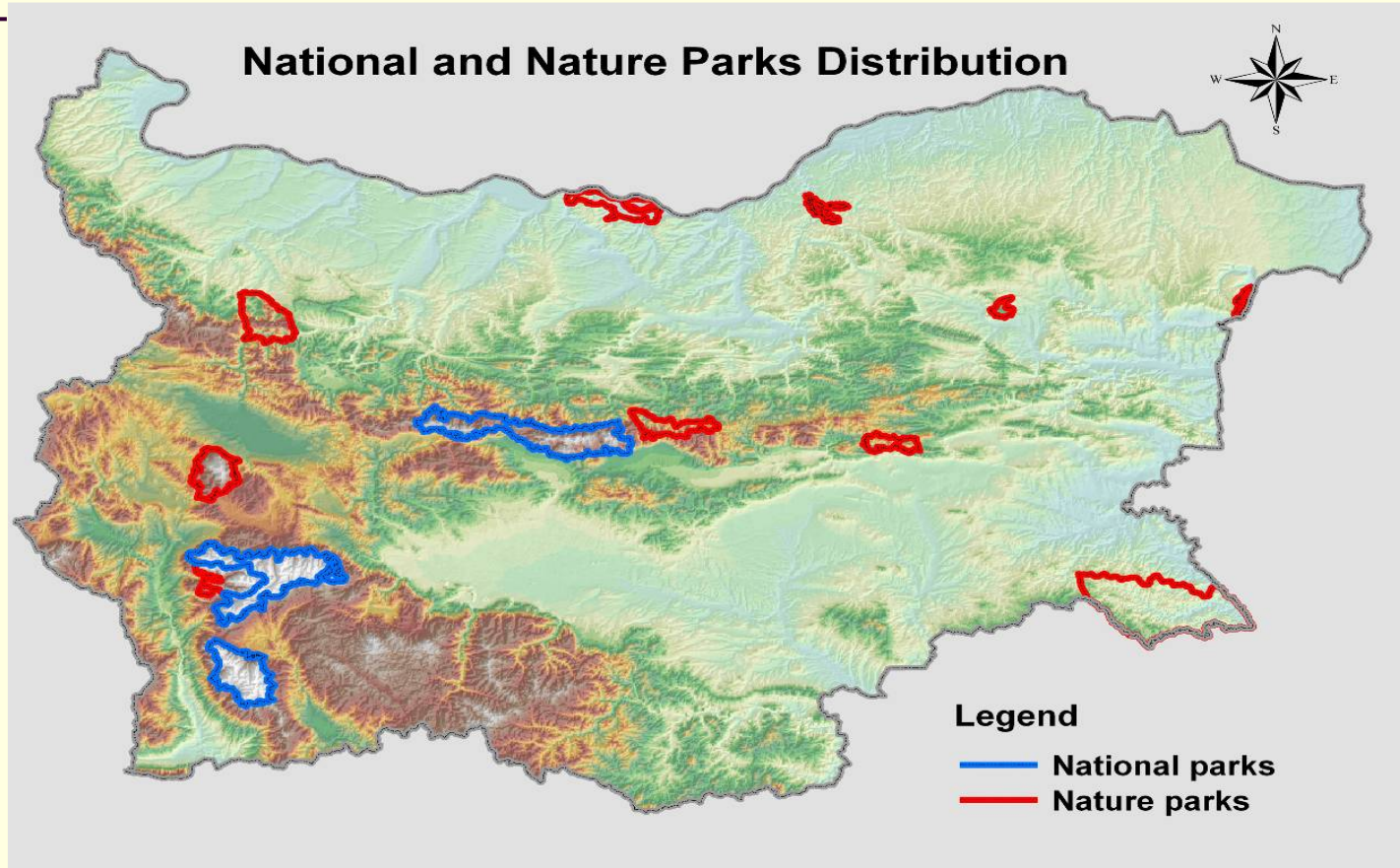
- Strict reserves – strictly protected, all kind of human activities are prohibited (IUCN category I)
- National parks – strictly protected, some activities permitted (IUCN category II)

# Protected areas classification (continued)

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- Natural monuments – conservation of natural formations, human activities allowed (IUCN category III)
- Managed reserves – human activities are permitted but only for conservation purposes (IUCN category IV)
- Nature Parks – sustainable development (IUCN category V)
- Protected sites – conservation of habitats and sustainable use of the natural resources (IUCN Category VI)

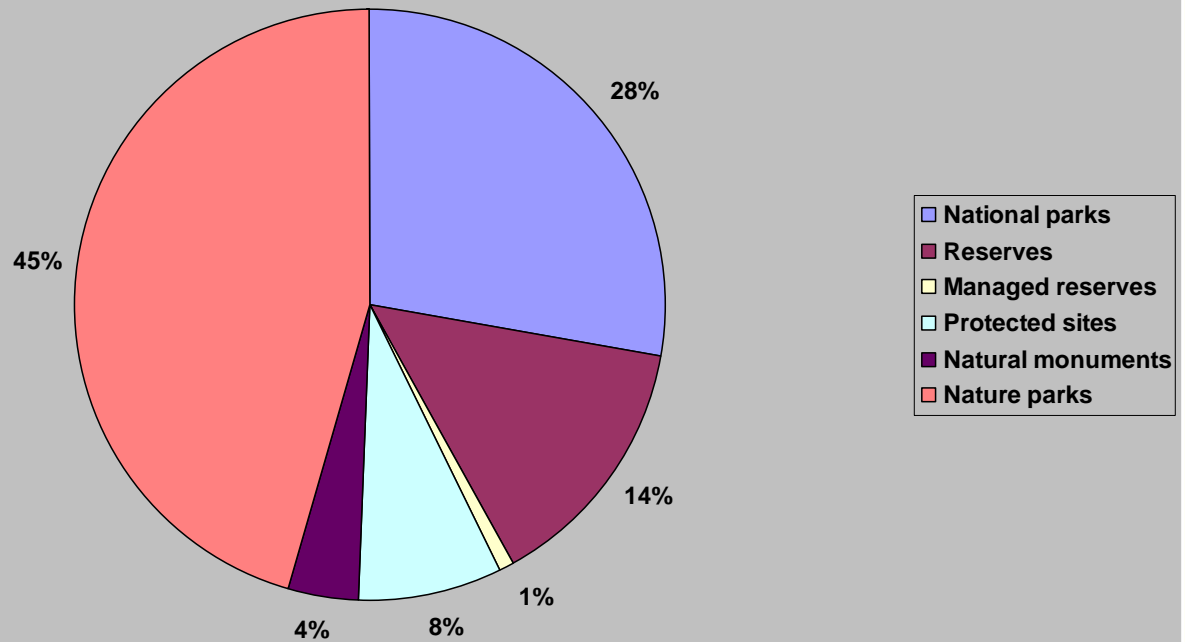
# PROTECTED AREAS



- 549927 ha of protected areas in 6 categories
- **4,95 %** of the territory of Bulgaria

# Present state

Protected areas ratio



# PROTECTED AREAS OF INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE

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**10 Ramsar sites**



**16 Biosphere reserves**

**2 World Heritage sites**



**114 Important bird areas**

# Ownership in Protected areas

The PAA determines different kind of ownership in protected areas:

The national parks, strict reserves and managed reserves are exclusively state property .

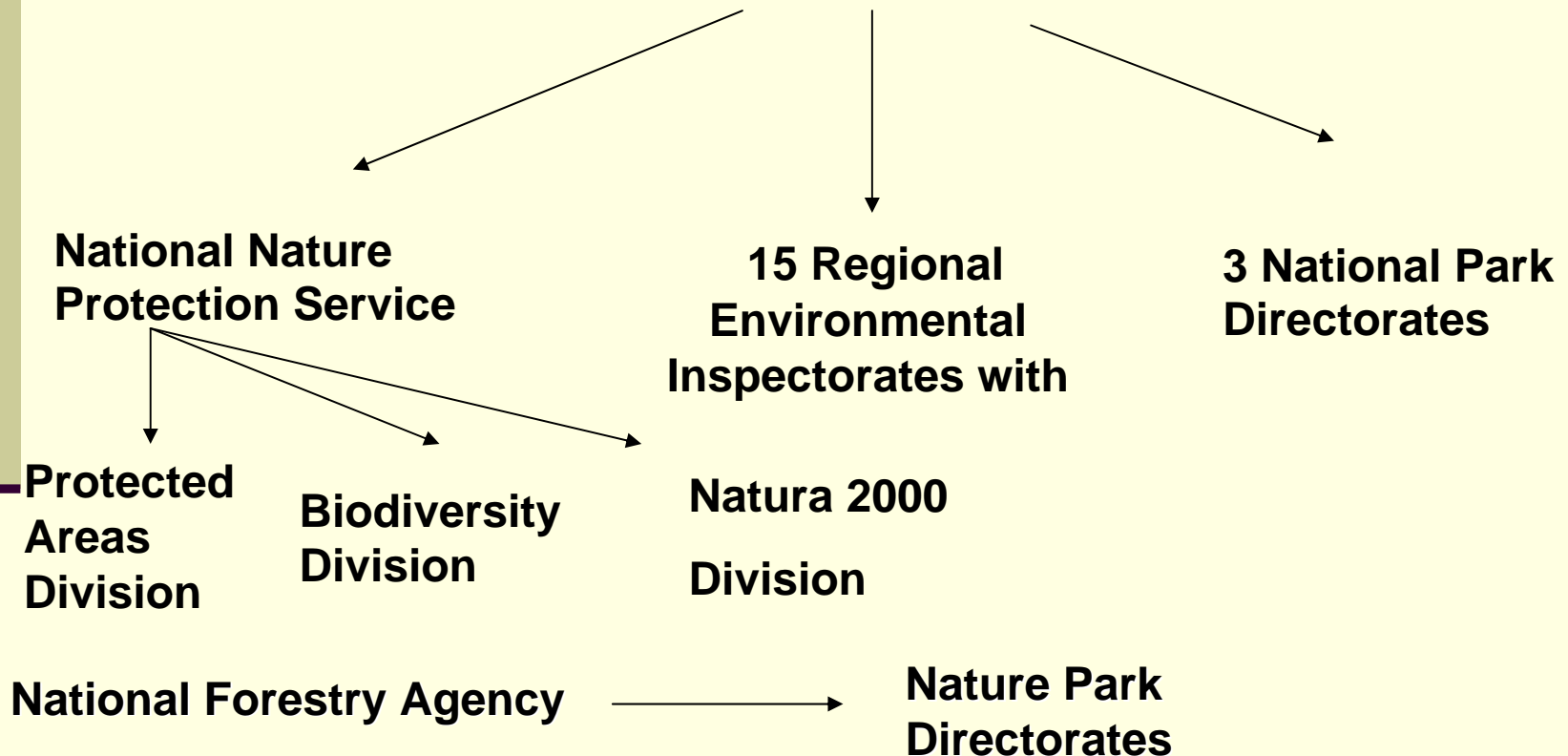
The other categories of protection, i.e. the nature parks, protected sites and natural monuments permit different kind of ownership of the land, such as private, municipal, etc. The owners and the users of these territories are obliged to follow the regulations of the PAA, as well as the particular regimes for use determined for each of these sites by their orders for designation and Management plans.



# Institutions responsible for the management and control of protected areas



**Ministry of Environment and Water**



# Management plans

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The PAA requires the elaboration of management plans for protected areas.

Besides the Act there is also a special Regulation developed which determines a comprehensive procedure related to the elaboration of management plans for the protected areas.

Management plans are obligatory for the categories of National parks, Nature parks, Strict reserves and Managed reserves.

Management plans provide zoning of the territories and define special regimes for use and utilization of the separate zones according to their conservation value.

# Financing of protected areas

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The main funding source is the Enterprise for management of environmental activities.

The Enterprise is a structure of the MOEW.

The Enterprise is a juristic person and it is not a commercial corporation and does not form and distribute any profit.

It was established by the Environmental Protection Act.

The core activity of the Enterprise is to implement environmental projects and activities in compliance with the environmental strategies and programmes at national and municipal level.

The Enterprise funding is distributed to:

- Municipalities, Individuals and legal entities as grants, interest free loans and low –interest loans

# Financing of protected areas

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The main funding source for the activities in protected areas is the Enterprise for management of environmental activities under the MOEW.

The funded activities in protected areas are:

- Preparation of management plans for protected areas;
- Preparation of action plans for plant and animal species;
- Monitoring of endangered species;
- Creation of visitor and information centers;
- Information services;
- Fire protection arrangements and activities, etc.

# Financing of protected areas (continued)

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Other option for funding of activities related to biological diversity:

- The Operational program “Environment”
- The Life + Program of the EU

Funds are also being ensured by international organizations, such as World Heritage Fund, Ramsar Convention, MAB Program of UNESCO.

# MONITORING

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## **Administrative arrangements for monitoring**

The Environmental Executive Agency of the MOEW is the structure responsible for the monitoring of all environmental components.

The National Monitoring Framework gives the parameters for the monitoring. Following the prescriptions of the Monitoring Framework each year the EEA requires the NPD, RIEWs and Basin Directorates to fill a specific form with the monitored indicators.

# MONITORING IN PROTECTED AREAS

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The following elements used to be monitored in protected areas:

- bear (*Ursus arctos*)
- European souslik (*Citellus citellus*)
- some birds species
- state of forests
- medicinal plants
- tourist flow

The information is being gathered by the rangers and provided on monthly basis to the experts in Flora, Fauna and Forests. At the end of the year the experts summaries the information and send a report to the Executive agency.

# BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT (BCA)

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The BCA determines the procedure for establishment of National Ecological network, as part of the European one.

The National Ecological network includes:

- Protected areas, designated according to the National legislation, namely PPA.
- Natura 2000 sites, according to the EU Bird and Habitat Directives;

# **BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT (BCA)**

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BCA determines the procedure for designation of Natura 2000 sites.

The Ministry of environment and water is the Institution in charge of the study, assessment and preparation of documentation for designation of Natura 2000 sites.

The list of potential Natura 2000 sites is prepared by the MOEW and afterwards considered by the National Biodiversity Council under the MOEW, the Council of ministers and only after its approval it is published in the State Gazette of Republic of Bulgaria.

# BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT - CONTINUE

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The list is submitted to the European Commission.

The Natura 2000 sites are designated by an order of the minister of environment. As soon as the list is published, the minister of environment designates the Natura 2000 sites, according to the Bird Directive by issuing an order.

As for the pSCI, the procedure is longer. After the publication of the list it is about to be submitted to the European Commission and only after the approval of the sites at the biogeographic seminars, they could be designated by an order of the minister of environment and water.

The legislative procedure requires the public to be strongly involved in the process of defining of particular regimes for the Natura 2000 sites.

# PROTECTED AREAS

2002 - 2004

**PROJECT “CONSERVATION OF SPECIES AND HABITATS IN BULGARIA”: HARMONIZATION WITH EU LEGISLATION”**

2005 - 2006

**TWO MAIN PROJECTS, FINANCED BY THE ENTERPRISE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES**

- 1) **Project “Establishment of the network of SPA in Bulgaria”, carried out by Green Balkans Federation**
- 2) **Project “Establishment of pSCI as part of the national ecological network“, carried out by the Bugarian Society for protection of birds - BSPB**

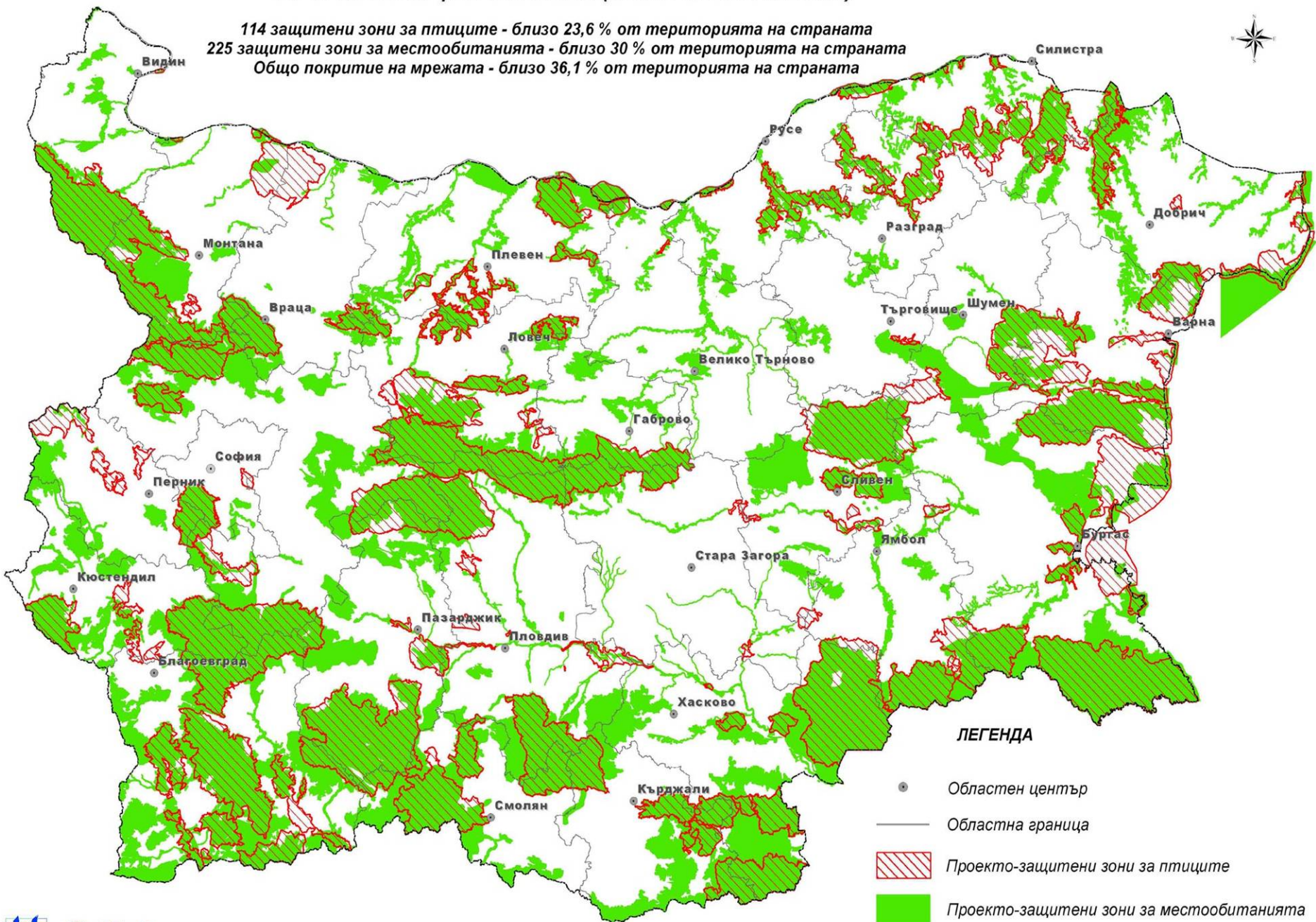


**Other projects and organizations were also involved – GEF, PIN, MATRA, WWF – Danube Carpatian Program , BBI MATRA, Bulgarian Biodiversity foundation, Nature Parks association in Bulgaria, Association for wild Nature - Balkani**



# ПРОЕКТО-ЗАЩИТЕНИ ЗОНИ (НАТУРА 2000 МЕСТА)

114 защитени зони за птиците - близо 23,6 % от територията на страната  
225 защитени зони за местообитанията - близо 30 % от територията на страната  
Общо покритие на мрежата - близо 36,1 % от територията на страната



## ЛЕГЕНДА

- Областен център
- Областна граница
- ▨ Проектно-защитени зони за птиците
- Проектно-защитени зони за местообитанията

# Decision of the Council of ministers

In February 2007 , the Council of Ministers approved:

- A list of 88 pSCI, covering about 11% of the territory of Bulgaria;
  - A list of 180 SPA, covering about 13% of the territory of Bulgaria;
- with total coverage of about 18 %.

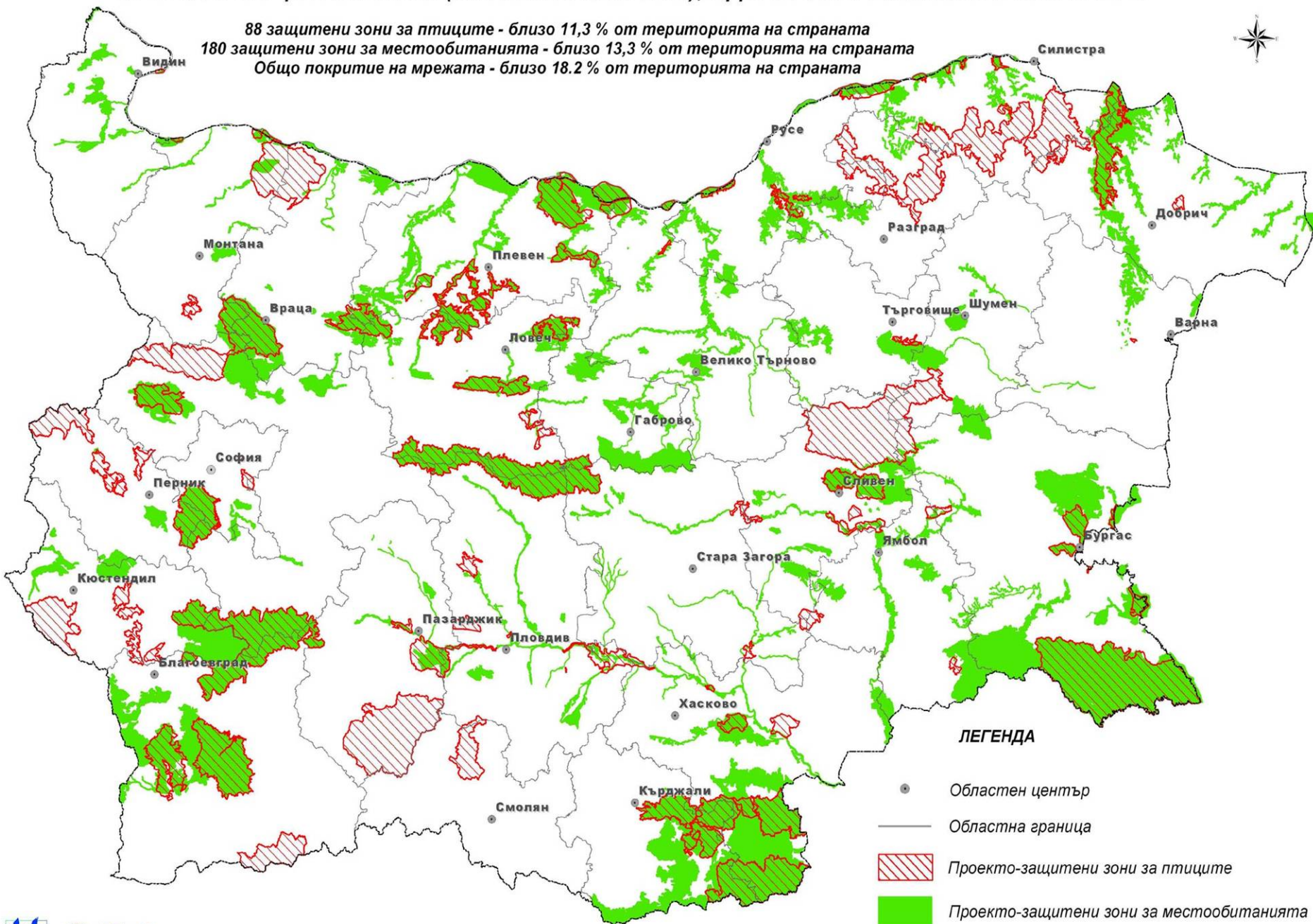
Many sites were withdrawn for additional studies and clarification of the boundaries.

The Council of ministers also decided not to be proposed as potential Natura 2000 sites, as follows: urban areas; areas, given on the basis of concession treaties for obtain of ores and minerals; areas for which there are approved general or detailed territorial arrangement plans.



# ПРОЕКТО-ЗАЩИТЕНИ ЗОНИ (НАТУРА 2000 МЕСТА), ОДОБРЕНИ ОТ МИНИСТЕРСКИ СЪВЕТ

88 защитени зони за птиците - близо 11,3 % от територията на страната  
180 защитени зони за местообитанията - близо 13,3 % от територията на страната  
Общо покритие на мрежата - близо 18,2 % от територията на страната



# Present development of Natura 2000

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Potential Natura 2000 sites, which are already approved by the Council of ministers of Republic of Bulgaria:

- 88 acc. to the Bird directive with coverage constituting 11.3% of the territory of Bulgaria ;
- 207 acc. to the Habitat Directive with coverage constituting 26.5 % of the territory of Bulgaria.

The total number of potential Natura 2000 sites is 295, which total coverage comes up to 28.8 % of the territory Of Bulgaria.

# Present development of Natura 2000

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Potential Natura 2000 sites, which are already approved By the National Biodiversity Council and will be proposed for approval at the next meeting of the Council of ministers:

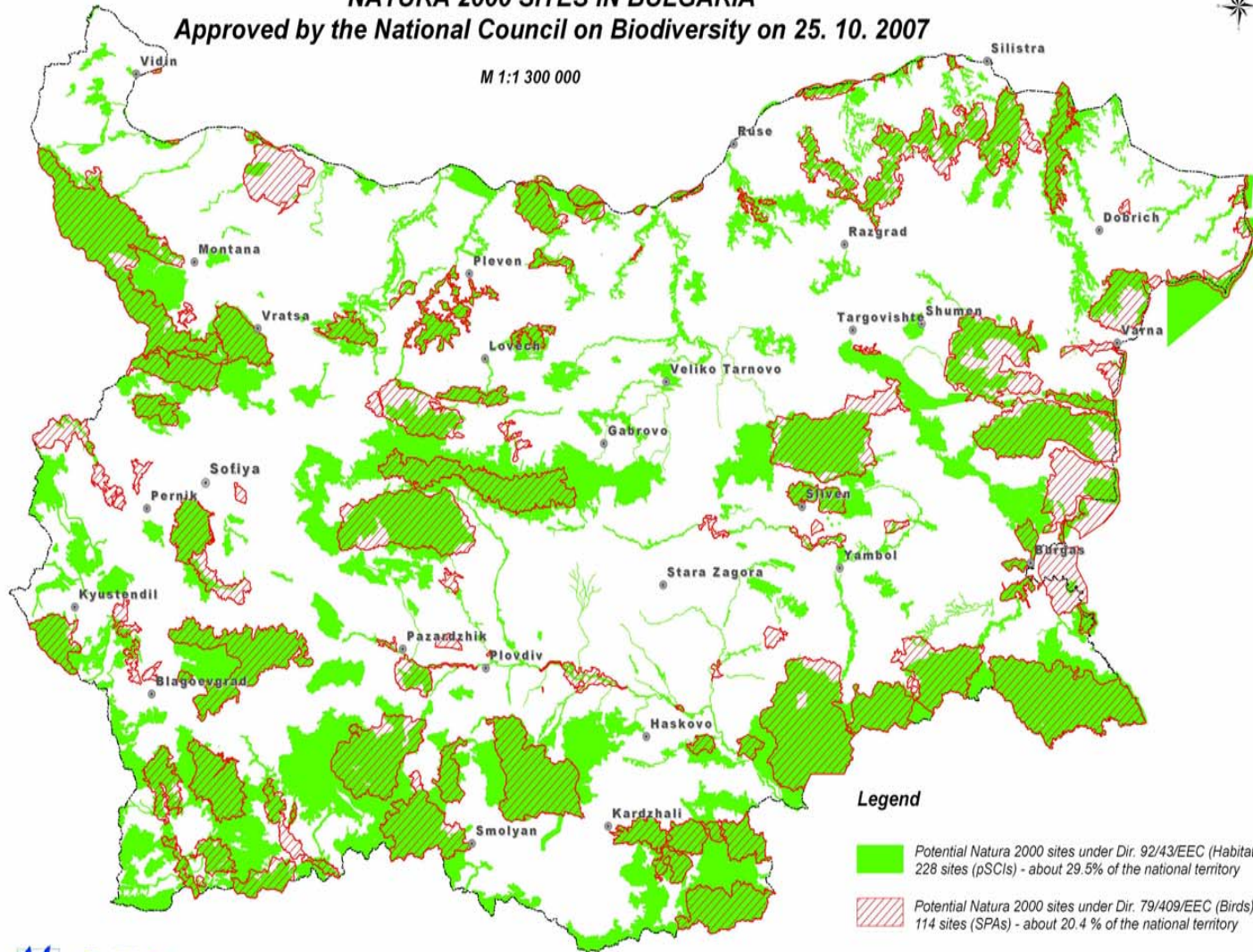
- 114 acc. to the Bird directive with coverage constituting 20.4% of the territory of Bulgaria ;
- 228 acc. to the Habitat Directive with coverage constituting 29.3 % of the territory of Bulgaria.

The total number of potential Natura 2000 sites is 342, which total coverage comes up to 33% of the territory of Bulgaria.

# NATURA 2000 SITES IN BULGARIA

Approved by the National Council on Biodiversity on 25. 10. 2007

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## Biodiversity Conservation Act – continue

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BCA provides protection for plant and animal species (567 plant species and more than 400 animal species are strictly protected) Those species are listed in an Annex of the BCA.

The prohibitions for these species are very strict:

For the animal species are forbidden activities such as their chasing, killing, disturbing during the period when they breed their youths, owning, trade, transportation, destruction Of their habitats, etc.

For the plant species is forbidden their collection, cutting tearing out, owning, trade, transportation

## Biodiversity Conservation Act - continue

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BCA provides a regime for regulation of the use of some plant and animal species (about 30 plant species and 55 animal species are under regulated regime of use). Those species also are listed in a separate Annex of the BCA .

According to the state of conservation of their populations special regimes are being determined annually with an order of the Minister of environment and water.

For example quotas could be introduced, temporal restrictions for their use or restrictions for their use from particular regions.

# Biodiversity Conservation Act - continue

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BCA ensures development of Action plans for plant and animal species.

Such plans are being developed with priority for species, which are threatened on international level or which populations are in bad condition on the territory of Bulgaria.

In these Action plans special measures for restoration of the populations and habitats of those species are foreseen, as well as measures for monitoring and control.

## Biodiversity Conservation Act - continue

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BCA regulates the introduction of not local species or reintroduction of local species.

This could happen after the elaboration of a comprehensive program, approved by the National biodiversity council under the MOEW.

For the implementation of such activities special permission is also required by the minister of environment and water and respectively the Director of the National Forestry Agency when bush, tree and game species are concerned.