



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
ENVIRONMENT
Directorate E - Implementation & Support to Member States
The Director

Brussels
ENV.E.1/ARK

Dobromir Dobrinov
WWF Bulgaria
e-mail: [REDACTED]

Subject: Infringement procedure concerning Bulgaria

Dear Mr Dobrinov,

Thank you for the letter of 28 May 2020, registered under ref. Ares(2020)2779930, in which you ask questions related to the substance of an infringement case initiated by the Commission against Bulgaria.

I would like to draw your attention that the Commission is allowed not to disclose details of investigations and infringement procedures and documents exchanged in the context of such procedures by the provisions of Article 4.2 of Regulation 1049/2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents, confirmed by the settled case-law of the Court of Justice of the EU. The purpose is to favour mutual efforts for the identification of solutions leading to compliance by the Member State concerned in each case.

I would also like to draw your attention that some information about the main elements of the infringement case in question was already made public by the Commission in accordance with its standard practice¹. According to the Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (Habitats Directive), Member States have to designate the EU-listed Sites of Community importance as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). They also have to establish the necessary conservation measures to maintain or restore the protected species and habitats to a favourable condition. These steps need to be carried out within six years from the inclusion of these sites in the EU list as Sites of Community importance. Bulgaria did not designate all Sites of Community importance as Special Areas of Conservation within the required time limit, and has generally and persistently failed to set site-specific detailed conservation objectives and measures for any of them.

For more details on the management of SACs, I would like to refer you to the Commission notice on the interpretation of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive².

I trust that the above information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

(e-signed)

Aurel CIOBANU- DORDEA

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/memo_19_462

² https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/art6/Provisions_Art_6_nov_2018_en.pdf