

**Pirin National Park
Republic of Bulgaria**

***Nomination for changes in the boundaries of Pirin
National Park as Natural World Heritage Property***

**2009
Ministry of Environment and Water
Pirin National Park Directorate**

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Acronyms

CC	Consultative Council
EEA	Environmental Executive Agency
GIS	Geographic Information System
IBA	Important Bird Area
IPA	Important Plant Area
MAB	UNESCO Man and Biosphere Programme
MoEW	Ministry of Environment and Water
MAF	Ministry Of Agriculture And Food
MP	Management Plan
NNPS	National Nature Protection Service
NP	National Park
NPD	National Park Directorate
RIEW	Regional Inspectorate of Environment and Water
SC	Scientific Council
WHP	World Heritage Property

Executive Summary

State Party

Republic of Bulgaria

State, Province or Region

Blagoevgrad District

Name of Property

Pirin National Park as World Heritage Property

Geographical coordinates to the nearest second

	Latitude	Longitude
North East	41° 53' 127"	23° 34,1' 17,2"
Central	41° 44' 33,8"	23° 25' 49,7"
South West	41° 36' 24"	23° 17' 43,6"

Textual description of the boundaries of the nominated property

The Pirin Mountain is located in Southeastern Bulgaria; the chain, some 35 km long, stretches northeast - southeast. The geographic boundary of Pirin Mountain to the north is the Rila Mountain and follows the banks of the rivers of Gradevska, Elovitsa and Kulina, the Predela Saddle (1,142 meters of elevation), and the valley of Rablevska River. To the east the boundary follows the Razlog Valley, the Momina Klisura Pass and the Gotse Delchev Plain - the Valley of Mesta River separates Pirin from the Rhodopes. To the south, the boundary of the Pirin Mountain initially follows the banks of the rivers of Matnitsa and Burovitsa, which separate it from the Stargach and Slavyanka mountains, while the Paril Pass (1,170 meters of elevation) - through the valleys of Goleshevska and Kalimanska Rivers - separates the mountain from Slavyanka. To the west, Pirin shares boundary with the Petrich Plain, the Kresna Pass and the Simitli Plain - the bank of Struma River separates it from Bulgarian western national border marked by the Mountains of Ograzhden, Malashevska and Vlahina.

The current nomination proposes extension of the Pirin National park as a World Heritage Property, designated in 1983, by means of inclusion of the central alpine zone, as well as other territories in the World Heritage Property, as a contribution to the preservation of the Park's integrity and better management.

Besides the extension, the present nomination proposes the two ski zones, located above the town of Bansko and above the village of Dobrinishte, which fall within the present boundaries of the World Heritage Property and are determined as part of the "tourist zone" in the Management plan of Pirin National park, to be excluded from the WH property and transferred into its buffer zone.

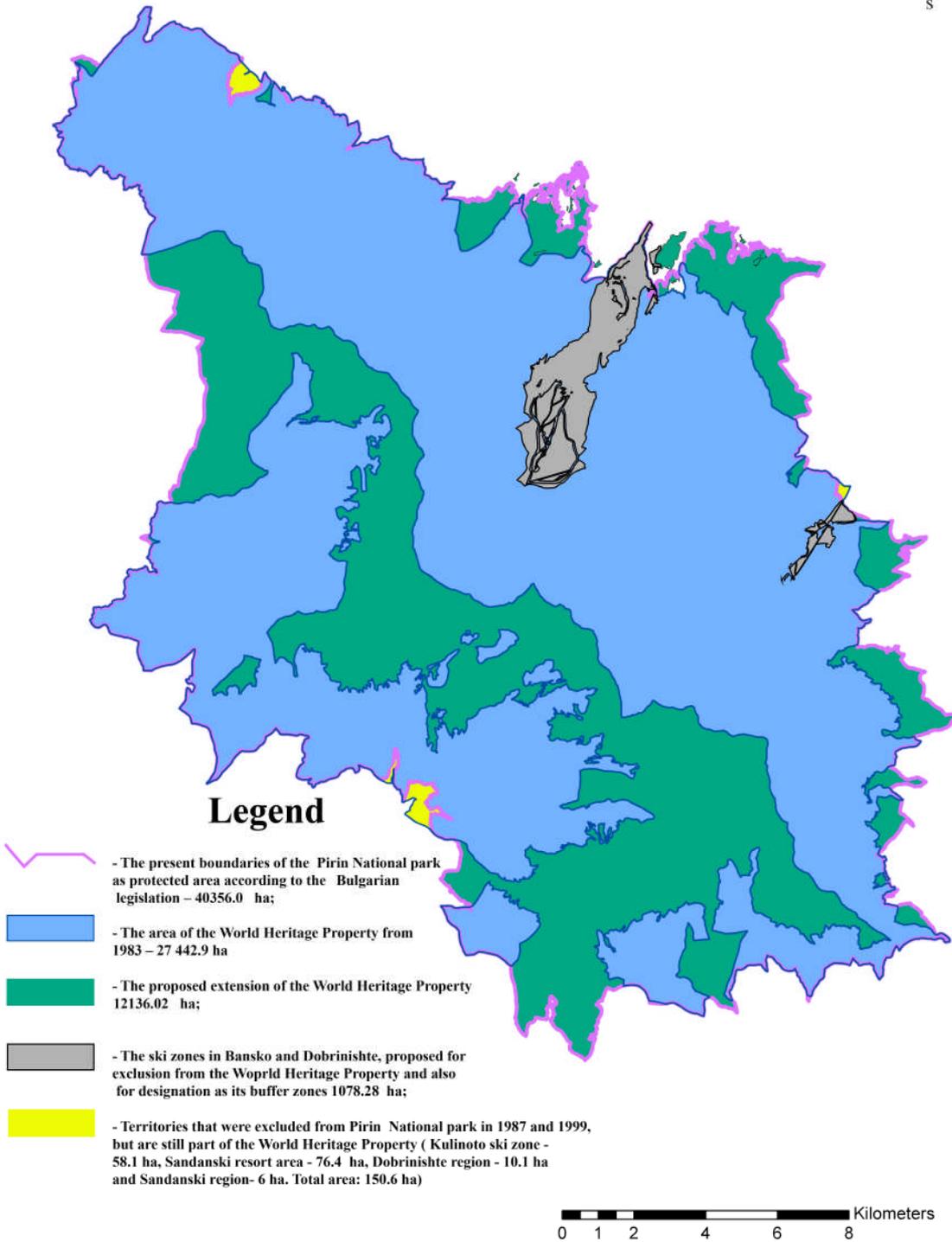
The nomination proposes also the exclusion of comparatively small territories, which were excluded in the past from the boundaries of the National Park as protected area according to the Bulgarian legislation but are still part of the World Heritage Property since no official steps and procedures for their exclusion were undertaken so far.

These are the Kulinoto ski zone in the territory of Razlog municipality (58.1 ha), a resort area (ex camping area) in the region of Sandanski municipality (76.4 ha), Dobrinishte forestry area (10.1) ha and Sandanski forestry area (6 ha).

Below is shown an A4 map, showing the proposed changes in the boundaries of Pirin National park as World Heritage Property, designated in 1983.

PIRIN NATIONAL PARK

PROPOSED AS WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY (2009)



Justification Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

Pirin offers unique high-mountain scenic landscape at the cross-road between the central European, Mediterranean and Ponicic biogeographical regions.

The uniqueness of Pirin ensues from its relative isolation from the other mountain chains. Compared with them the Mediterranean influence, penetrating along the river valleys of Struma and Mesta Rivers, here is stronger. This results in the unique combination of the widespread Mediterranean species (12%) and the much less represented Arctic-Alpine species (less than 1%), although the relief of the mountain is a typical Alpine one.

In the time of the last glaciations during the Tertiary, overall ice cover had not been formed in Pirin and the highest parts of the mountain remained refuges for glacial relict species, which are still present today, thus additionally increasing the conservation value of the mountain.

In terms of flora, Pirin is among the most unique Bulgarian and Balkan mountain ranges. The shaping of the contemporary composition of the flora and the formation of the vegetation cover has continued after the last glaciating, when the species preserved so far in the refuges have re-colonized their former habitats.

Exceptional biological diversity and high percent of the endemic component characterize Pirin. Pirin endemic species are fourteen higher plants, which is more than half of all the Bulgarian endemic plants; 17 higher plants and two animals are Bulgarian endemic species; 86 higher plants and 6 representatives of the vertebrate fauna are Balkan endemic species. Despite the fact that only two groups of invertebrates have been studied in Pirin – Arthropods and Mollusks, the richness of the invertebrate fauna is indisputable: 216 endemics and 176 relicts.

One of the greatest riches of Pirin is its forest. Forest of natural character, aging over 140 years, and covers more than half of the territory of the protected area. More than 90% of the forests are coniferous, and the occurrence of the two endemic species – Macedonian pine (*Pinus peuce*) and Bosnian pine (*Pinus heldreichii*) – diversifies this clearly differentiated coniferous belt.

Of all the habitats described on the territory of Pirin, the rock habitat is the most representative for the unique character of the mountain. Refuges of the unique rock flora and fauna are the 35 cirque valleys, the 180 glacial lakes, the pyramidal and conic summits and the picturesque rock phenomena.

The identification of Pirin NP as a CORINE Site in 1998 confirmed its value as a key territory of a high conservation importance. Because of the priority habitats and species occurring in Pirin, the site has also been proposed to become a Natura 2000 site. Pirin has been designated an Important Bird Area that will allow the long-term preservation of threatened bird species in their natural habitats.

The Pirin NP has been inscribed as one of the 114 Important Plant Areas of Bulgaria under the criteria of occurrence of threatened species, threatened habitats and floral richness.

The Biosphere Reserve Bayuvi Dupki–Dzindziritsa designated in 1977 is also located in the Park. The opportunity for designation of the whole territory of the National Park with its adjacent settlements as a Biosphere Reserve will be considered in future.

The core zone of the Pirin Mountain has been largely preserved of the human impact. Some of the most accessible highland zones have been used for several centuries for agro-pastoral activities. These activities have contributed to increase the species and habitat diversity below and above the treeline; their continuation contribute to the achievement of the conservation goals.

Criteria under which property is nominated

Criteria VII, IX and X of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention.

Name and contact information of official local institution

Organization: Pirin National Park DIRECTORATE

Address: Bansko, 4 Bulgaria str.

Tel: 00359 749 88203

Fax: 00359 749 88204

E-mail: pirin_np@mail.bg

Web address: www.pirin-np.com

Introduction

In 1983, Pirin National Park was designated as World Heritage Property with area of approximately 27,400 ha.

Further, the territory of the Park changed several times to reach its current size of 40,356 ha. In 1999, after the enforcement of the Protected Areas Act, which introduced new categories for protection according to the international norms, the legal status of the Park was changed and eventually it became a National Park, meeting the criteria of IUCN category II protected area.

Following the provisions of the Convention concerning the protection of the world cultural and natural heritage (World Heritage Convention) and the requirements of the World Heritage Center, in cases of significant changes in the territories of properties, which have already been inscribed on the World Heritage List, the state parties should fill in, and submit for consideration a new nomination form. Since its inscription in 1983, the area of Pirin National Park was significantly enlarged – more than 12,000 ha have been adjoined. According to the Operational Guidelines, the State Party in agreement with the World Heritage Center has decided to initiate a new nomination procedure.

Following the recommendations of the 2004 joint mission of UNESCO and IUCN, the Bulgarian Ministry of Environment and Water requested Preparatory assistance from the World Heritage Center. Consequently, the World Heritage Center provided consultant services to prepare the nomination for the extension of Pirin National Park World Heritage Property.

In January 2007 a nomination was submitted to the WHC. The same proposed extension of the WHP which will make its boundaries to coincide with those of the National Park.

With letter from 16th of March 2007 the World Heritage Center informed the Ministry of environment and water that the nomination submitted had been found to be complete and fulfill all the technical requirements, outlined in the "Operational guidelines for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention" and thus was entering into the correspondent year and a half cycle for consideration of new nominations, considered from 1st of February 2007.

In September 2007 a mission with the participation of an IUCN expert was held on the site. In July 2008, before the 32d session held in Quebec city, Canada in 2008, the Ministry of environment and water of Bulgaria withdrew the nomination. The withdrawal of the nomination was adopted with Decision 32 COM 8B.15 of the World Heritage Committee.

Later on the State Party took a decision for preparation of a new nomination.

The current nomination proposes changes in Pirin National park as a World Heritage Property, designated in 1983, including extension of the territory of the World Heritage Property with 12 136.02 ha, exclusion of territories with total coverage of 1228.88 ha and also proposes a buffer zone of the WHP.

The changes, proposed in the boundaries of the World Heritage Property are in compliance with the recommendations, given in the IUCN technical evaluation report about Pirin National park, elaborated within a previous nomination cycle for extension of Pirin National Park as WHP and also the recommendations proposed in the draft decision for the 32d session in Quebec city, Canada.

The State Party is convinced that the territory to be additionally included will significantly enhance the integrity of the site and contribute highly significant natural values to the originally designated property.

On the other hand, the exclusion of the proposed territories will contribute to a coherent management corresponding to the reality on the ground. The designation of a buffer zone will result in better preservation of the WHP.

1. Identification of the Property

1.a Country

Republic of Bulgaria

1.b State, Province or Region

Blagoevgrad District

1.c Name of Property

Pirin National Park as World Heritage Property

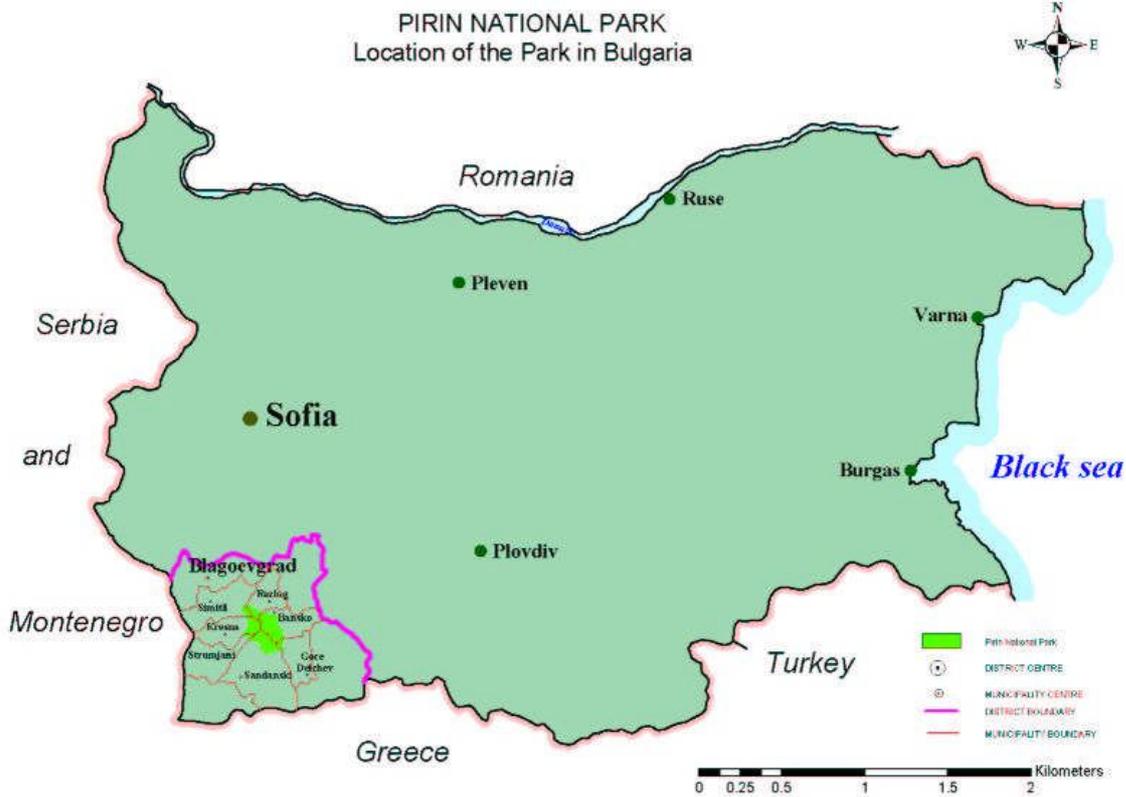
1.d Geographical coordinates to the nearest second

	Latitude	Longitude
North East	41° 53' 127"	23° 34,1' 17,2"
Central	41° 44' 33,8"	23° 25' 49,7"
South West	41° 36' 24"	23° 17' 43,6"

1.e Maps and plans, showing the boundaries of the nominated property

The Pirin Mountain is located in Southeastern Bulgaria; the chain, some 35 km long, stretches northeast - southeast. The geographic boundary of Pirin Mountain to the north is the Rila Mountain and follows the banks of the rivers of Gradevska, Elovitsa and Kulina, the Predela Saddle (1,142 meters of elevation), and the valley of Rablevska River. To the east the boundary follows the Razlog Valley, the Momina Klisura Pass and the Gotse Delchev Plain - the Valley of Mesta River separates Pirin from the Rhodopes. To the south, the boundary of the Pirin Mountain initially follows the banks of the rivers of Matnitsa and Burovitsa, which separate it from the Stargach and Slavyanka mountains, while the Paril Pass (1,170 meters of elevation) - through the valleys of Goleshevska and Kalimanska Rivers - separates the mountain from Slavyanka. To the west, Pirin shares boundary with the Petrich Plain, the Kresna Pass and the Simitli Plain - the bank of Struma River separates it from Bulgarian western national border marked by the Mountains of Ograzhden, Malashevska and Vlahina.

Below is a map showing location of the Pirin National Park in Bulgaria:



The present nomination proposes the following changes in the boundaries of Pirin National Park as World Heritage Property, designated in 1983:

- Extension of the World Heritage Property, by including of highland meadows alpine peaks and screes and other territories which are presently within the boundaries of the Pirin National park, in order to strengthen the integrity and management of the WHP.
- Exclusion from the World Heritage Property of the two ski zones, above the town of Bansko and the village of Dobrinishte, with total area of 1078.28 ha and their designation as buffer zone of the WHP, in order to give an added layer of protection of the property;
- Exclusion of other territories with total area of 150.6 ha from the World Heritage Property - Kulinoto ski zone in the territory of Razlog municipality, a resort area in the region of Sandanski municipality, Dobrinishte and Sandanski forestry areas, as their values and integrity are no longer compatible with World Heritage status. The same were excluded from the National park as protected area, according to the Bulgarian legislation in 1987 and 1999 but are still part of the World Heritage Property because were not officially excluded from its boundaries.

Detailed description of the nominated property and proposed changes in the boundaries of Pirin National park as World Heritage Property is given in point 2.a – “Description of property”, as required by the Nomination format, Annex 5 of the Operational guidelines for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention.

Below are given two A4 maps.

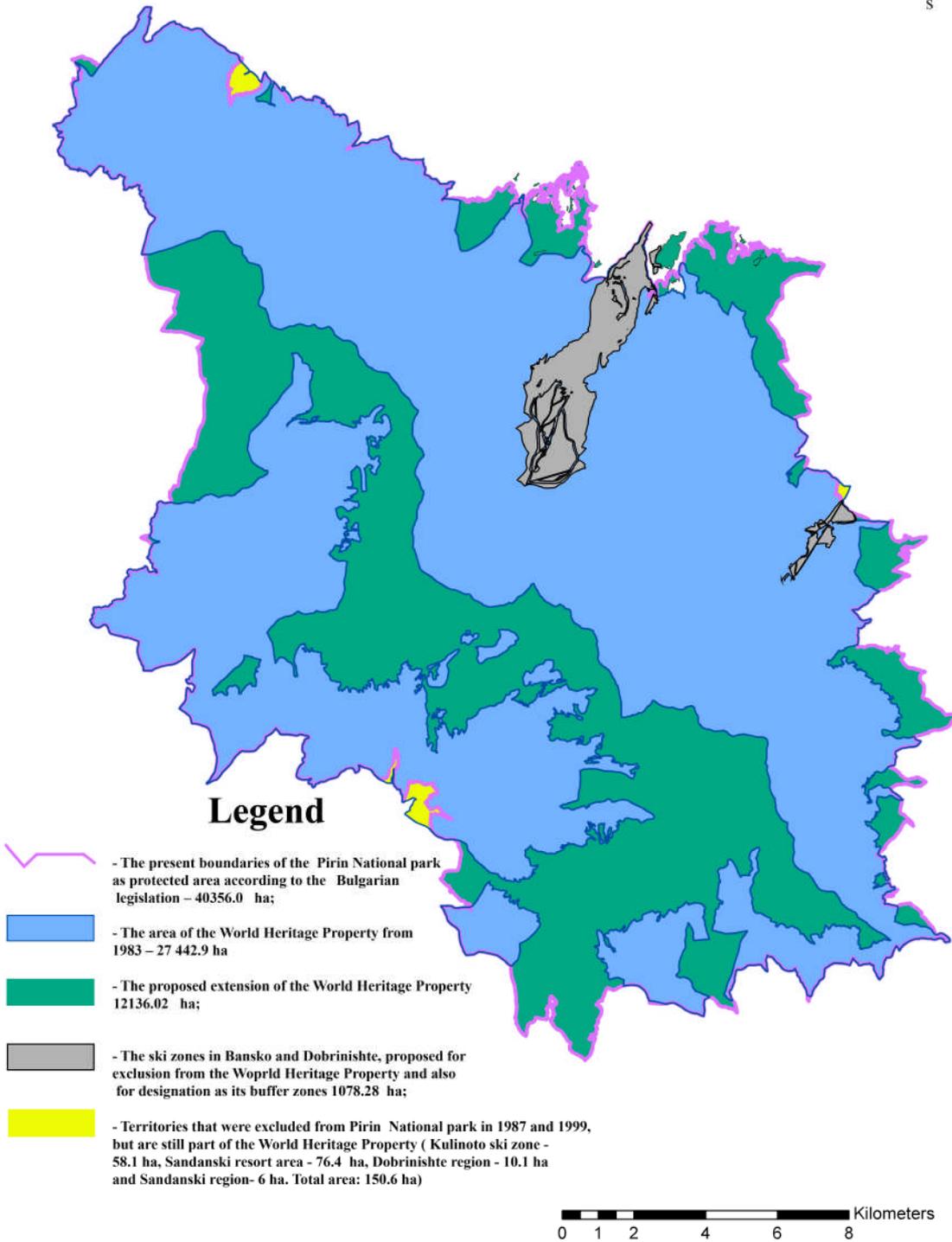
The first map is showing the proposed changes in the World Heritage Property, as stated below:

- the present boundaries of the National park as protected area according to the Bulgarian legislation;
- the proposed extension of the World Heritage property;
- the ski zones in Bansko and Dobrinishte, proposed for exclusion and also for designation as buffer zone of the World Heritage property;
- the territories that were excluded from the National park in 1987 and 1999 (including Kulinoto ski zone - 58.1 ha , Sandanski resort area - 76.4 ha, Dobrinishte region - 10.1 ha and Sandanski region - 6 ha).

The second A4 map is showing the boundaries of the National park, the proposed World Heritage Property and buffer zone.

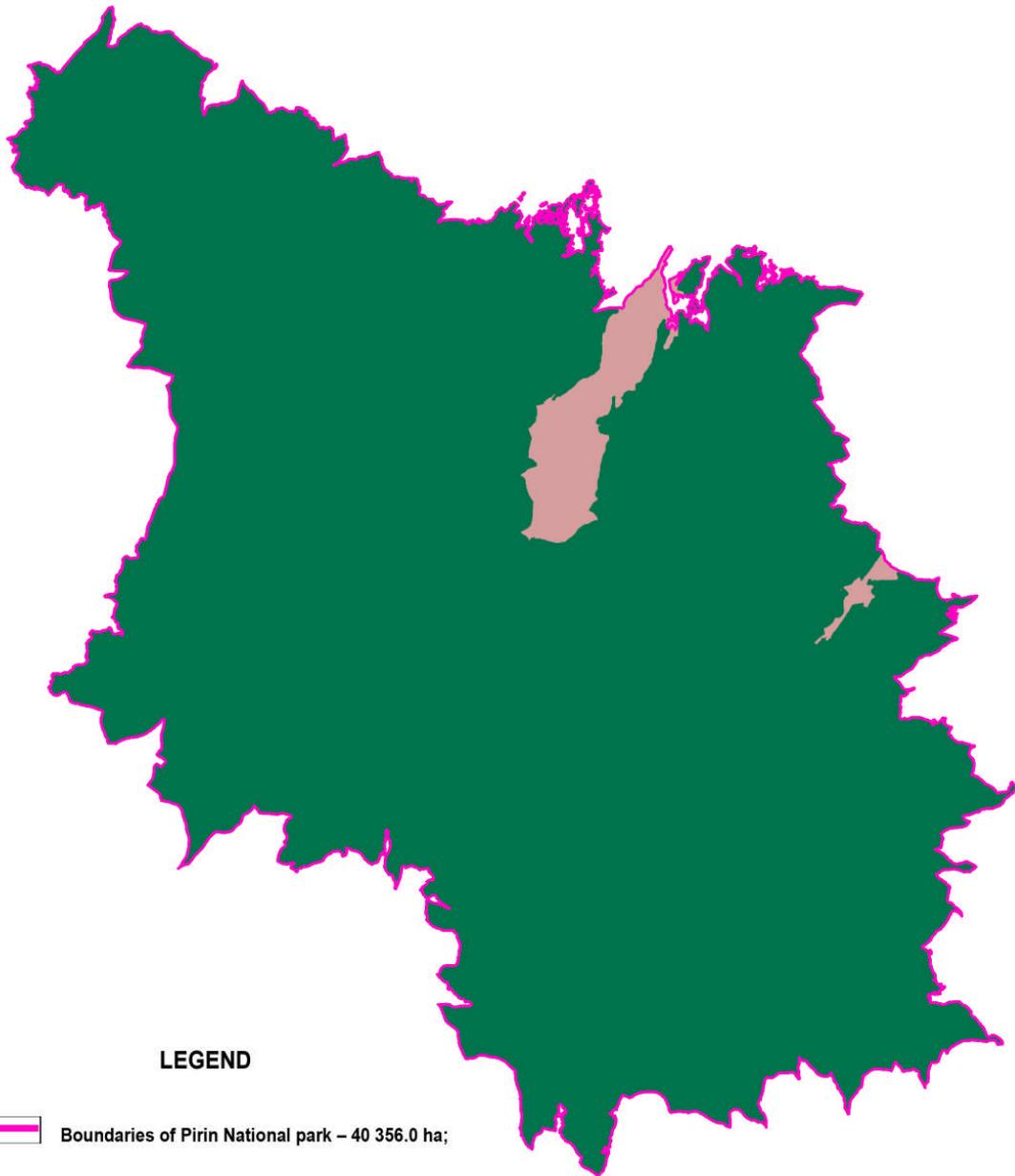
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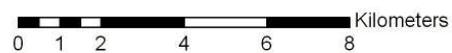
PIRIN NATIONAL PARK

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LEGEND

-  Boundaries of Pirin National park – 40 356.0 ha;
-  Proposed World Heritage Property (2009) – 39 277.72 ha
-  Proposed buffer zone - 1078.28ha



As Annex 1 of the nomination is given a sufficiently scaled map of Pirin National Park World Heritage Property (1:25 000), bearing topographic features, showing the boundaries of the already inscribed World Heritage Property, the proposed extension of the WHP, the territories, proposed for exclusion and proposed buffer zone;

As Annex 2 of the nomination, are given thematic A3 Maps:

- 2.1 Soils
- 2.2 Plant communities
- 2.3 Forest vegetation
- 2.4 Habitats
- 2.5 Zoning
- 2.6 Map of Pirin National Park and Pirin as Corine site
- 2.7 Pirin National Park as Important Bird Area;
- 2.8 Map of Pirin National Park as Natura 2000 site and surrounding territories, as Natura 2000 sites.

1.f Area of nominated property (ha.) and proposed buffer zone (ha.)

	Area / ha /
WH property from 1983	27 442.9
Proposed extension	12 136.02
Ski zones, above the town of Bansko and above the village of Dobrinishte, proposed for exclusion (proposed buffer zone)*	1078.28
Territories, proposed for exclusion from the WH property - Kulinoto ski zone - 58.1 ha, Sandanski resort area - 76.4 ha, Dobrinishte region - 10.1 ha and Sandanski region - 6 ha. (the same were excluded from the National Park in 1987 and 1999 but are still part of the WH property)	150.6
Proposed Area of the WH property in 2009**	39 277.72

*Proposed buffer zone consists of the two ski zones located above the town of Bansko and above the village of Dobrinishte, which are part of the "tourist zone", determined by the management plan of the National park. The total area of the proposed buffer zone (1078.28 ha) was included in the boundaries of the World Heritage Property, designated in 1983.

** Proposed area of the WH Property in 2009 is calculated as follow: the total area of the Pirin National Park, as determined in the management plan (40356 ha) minus the proposed buffer zone (1078.28 ha).

The proposed buffer zone of the WHP, containing of the two ski zones, above the town of Bansko and the village of Dobrinishte will ensure better preservation of the property, though it is not surrounding it but rather is engraved into it (cut into it).

As far as a buffer zone, surrounding the proposed World Heritage Property, it should be mentioned that according to the specific Bulgarian legislation, buffer zones can not be designated around protected areas which are "national parks". It should be mentioned that the territories surrounding Pirin National Park are being managed by other institutions. So,

they fall out of the scope of Pirin National Park Directorate and are also not subject of the Management plan, approved for the whole territory of the National Park.

As a new member state to the European Union, Bulgaria has established its Natura 2000 network according to the Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (Habitat Directive) and Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds (Bird Directive).

The whole territory of Pirin National Park (and proposed World Heritage Property) is proposed as Natura 2000 site according to the two directives, mentioned above.

A big part of the territories surrounding the National Park, have been also proposed as Natura 2000 sites under the Habitat directive of the EU.

According to the requirements of the EU Directives transposed into the Bulgarian legislation and particularly the Biodiversity conservation Act, all Natura 2000 sites, are designated with orders of the minister of environment and water, defining specific regimes for use and utilization for each of them, according to their conservation value and potential threats.

Besides, these orders for designation, according to Article 6 of the EU Habitat Directive, all plans, programs, and investment projects are subject of a special assessment on their possible negative impact on the Natura 2000 sites. There is also a special Regulation which determines the terms and order for carrying out of this assessment.

As seen, the national legislation, harmonized with the European one, provides several mechanisms for ensuring the protection of the Natura 2000 sites. These mechanisms will also ensure the protection of the National Park and its surrounding territories. Thus, the Natura 2000 site, surrounding the National park will play the role of a buffer zone of the World Heritage property.

In Annex 2 is given map, showing the boundaries of Pirin as Natura 2000 site according to the Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (Habitat Directive) and Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds, as well as the surrounding territories of the National Park, also proposed as Natura 2000 sites, according to the Habitat Directive.

See map 2.8 in Annex 2

2. Description

2.a Description of Property

Pirin National Park is located in Pirin Mountain, in the Southwestern part of Bulgaria. Geographically it belongs to the Rila-Rhodopean mountain massif and according to the administrative division of Bulgaria falls within the Blagoevgrad District.

In 1983, Pirin National Park was designated as World Heritage Property with area of approximately 27 400 ha.

Further, the territory of Pirin National Park as protected area according to the Bulgarian legislation was changed several times to reach its current size of 40 356 ha. No steps were provided during the years to follow in order to extent the area of the World Heritage Property as well and it remained the same, as designated in 1983, namely 27 400 ha.

According to the provisions of the World Heritage Convention, in cases of significant changes in the territories of properties, which have already been inscribed on the World Heritage List, the state parties should fill in and submit for consideration a new nomination form.

In relation to the above and following the recommendations of the 2004 joint mission of UNESCO and IUCN, the Bulgarian Ministry of Environment and Water, on behalf of the State party prepared a new nomination, proposing changes in the boundaries of the World Heritage Property as designated in 1983.

Before stating out the changes proposed by the current nomination, it has to be mentioned that the initial nomination of Pirin as UNESCO WHP included only 2/3 of the present territory of the Park, namely its forests. At that time, priority was given to forest protection. Forests were considered to be of major conservation value, particularly because of their wildlife reservoir role. On the other hand, alpine meadows, rocky summits and screes were not considered worth protecting. In addition, the highland pastures were not part of the nomination because they were not within the jurisdiction of the Nature Protection Committee, which was the authority, responsible at that time for the management of protected areas. State policy towards highland pastures was aiming at using them mainly for highlands stockbreeding rather than for conservation purposes.

The present nomination proposes to include the highland pastures, alpine peaks and screes, which form the central part of the Park, for several reasons:

- The property, as declared in 1993, was divided in two main zones and several small islands, which do not correspond to the biological or functional units.
- The pastures and the alpine zone play a significant role for the plant diversity and offer favorable habitat to number of endemic organisms.
- Alpine pasture and alpine rocky summits are located in the center of the Park and provide the link between the lower elevations forested areas on both sides. In addition, the different habitats are interconnected and many animal species migrate daily or seasonally from forests to alpine meadows and vice-versa.
- For better management it is necessary to extend the WH property boundaries so that it covers almost the whole territory of the National Park (without the two ski zones above the town of Bansko and the village of Dobrinishte, proposed for buffer zone). That will guarantee the integrity of the Park and allow for efficient integrated management.

As already mentioned, within the boundaries of Pirin National Park and World Heritage Property are located two ski zones, above the town of Bansko and above the village of Dobrinishte. Both of them fall within the "tourist zone", determined by the Management plan of the National Park.

The current nomination proposes the two ski zones to be excluded from the World Heritage Property and to be designated as a "buffer zone" of the Property in order to ensure its better protection.

In case of exclusion of the ski zones and their transformation into a buffer zone, the same will stay within the boundaries of Pirin National Park as protected area, will proceed being part of the "tourist zone" and correspondingly will keep their regimes for use, determined by the Management plan and national legislation.

(see map 2.5 in Annex 2).

Besides the inscription of the highland pastures, alpine peaks and screes, which form the central Part of the Park and also the exclusion of the two ski zones and their transformation into a buffer zones, the current nomination proposes also few other territories to be excluded from the World Heritage Property.

These territories are as follows:
Dobrinishte region – 10.1 ha

Sandanski region – 6 ha
Razlog Park region – Kulinoto – 58.1 ha
Sandanski Park region – 76.4 ha

The same were excluded from the National Park as protected area according to the national legislation in the past, particularly 1987 and 1999 but are still part of the World Heritage Property since no official steps were undertaken for their exclusion.

As mentioned above the Protected areas Act, which is in force since 1998, a new a modern protected areas classification in compliance with the international norms was introduced.

In relation to the above, in 1999, with order RD - 395 from 15.10.1999 of the minister of environment and water the category of the existing at the time Pirin People's Park was changed and it turned to be a National Park. The territory of the National park was also changed with the same order and turned to be 40332.4 ha, later on recalculated to 40356.0 ha by the Management Plan of the National Park, as a result of better measurement. With the same order from the territory of the National park were excluded the Kulinoto ski zone - 58.1 ha in the territory of Razlog municipality and the resort area (ex camping area) in the region of Sandanski municipality – 76.4 ha.

These territories were excluded from the national park, following a procedure, determined by the specialized Bulgarian legislation – Protected areas Act.

The main argument for the exclusion of those territories was the lack of conservation value, because at the time the same were already occupied by different facilities and buildings.

On the other hand, the Protected areas Act requires the lands, the forests and the waters within the National Parks to be exclusively state property.

This requirement of the legislation, as well as the presence of many private owners in the above mentioned territories also became a reason for their exclusion from the boundaries of the National Park in 1999.

The necessity to undertake official steps in order to exclude those areas from the World heritage property as well, was pointed by the IUCN expert who visited the site in 2007 as part of a previous nomination procedure mission.

Beside, those territories, there are two other - in the region of Dobrinishte - 10.1 ha and also in Sandanski - 6 ha, which were excluded with Order 1036/ 17.11.1987 of the Nature Protection Committee of the Council of Ministers from the boundaries of Pirin National park with the aim to adapt the boundaries of the park to specific features of the terrain (existing road).

Parallel to the exclusions of these areas from the boundaries of the National Park, with the same order the territory of the park was also sufficiently extended. The territory which was added constituted about 12 639.9 ha (later on recalculated to 12 913.5 ha) and was composed of high mountain treeless zone, unique rock formations and huge forests stands, all characteristic with their high conservation value and worthy to be officially protected.

The territories, excluded from the boundaries of the National park, mentioned above do not merit to be part not only from the protected area but also from the World Heritage Property.

The main argument for this is the lack of conservation value but also the fact that being once excluded from the National Park, they stay apart from the scope of the Pirin National Park Administration and the Management plan, and therefore can not be efficiently managed and controlled as the other parts of the Protected area.

Abiotic factors

Pirin Mountain belongs to the continental-Mediterranean climatic zone where frequent and abundant rainfall is characteristic. The annual rainfall ranges from 600 mm at low elevation sections to some 1,200 mm in the upper zones. The Mediterranean draughts define the character of the climate. The summers are hot and dry, and relatively moderate temperatures are characteristic to the winters – these are generally higher than that in the other mountain regions in Bulgaria.

The Pirin Mountain represents a complex high mountain structure rising between the rift valleys of the Struma and Mesta Rivers. The Park covers the high elevation part of Pirin Mountain characterized by well-expressed alpine relief.

In terms of geology, it belongs to the Rhodopean supergroup, composed of different bedrocks. Pirin geology is characterized by the almost the equal presence of marble (covering some 45% of the park's territory) and granite (covering some 55% of the park's territory). This has strongly influenced the vegetation formation. Given its geomorphologic structure, the Park could be roughly divided in two distinctive parts:

- The unique northern part, characterized by sharp marble ridges, with deep dry rock cirques where the highest Pirin peaks are located, and
- The southern part, a granite ridge comprising slightly lower peaks

The karst relief of the northern part (the so-called Marble Pirin) had favored the formation of numerous caves.

The contemporary relief of Pirin Mountain had shaped during the Pleistocene when Alpine glaciers (cirque glaciers) formed in the mountain. Therefore, the Pirin relief is distinguishable for its alpine character, represented by significant segmentation, steep slopes, high ridges and deep river valleys, occurrence of glacial cirques and lakes. Its highest point is the third highest peak on the Balkan Peninsula – Vihren Peak (2,914 m). The lowest point of the Park is located at the Park entrance near Bansko (950 m). All glacial relief forms, including 35 cirques, 113 caves, screes, moraines, and rock faces, fall within the boundaries of Pirin National Park. In addition, the permanent lakes situated in Pirin NP are 118. They form six main habitat groups. Under a normal precipitation regime, the total lake water surface is 2,085 ha or 0.51% of the Park territory. Popovo Lake with an area of 124 ha is the largest lake and at the same time, it is the deepest one. The Banderishko Lake is the second largest in the mountain.

The rivers of Pirin are characterized by clean water and exceptional diversity of macrozoobentos taxa – with 37 taxa being registered in Zelezina River alone. These rivers supply some 70,000 people inhabiting the municipalities adjacent to the Park with drinking water, water for irrigation of the arable lands, and for hydropower generation.

Almost the equal presence of marble (45% of the park's territory) and granite (55% of the park's territory) dominate Pirin geology. This strongly influences the repartition of soils and vegetation (***see maps 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 in Annex 2***)

Biotic factors

Numerous studies and inventories have been carried out in Pirin National Park. They provide solid evidence of its exceptional biodiversity. The table below illustrates the diversity and conservation value of the Park, by taxonomic groups:

	Species in NP Pirin	Species in Bulgaria	Local endemic in NP Pirin	Bulgarian endemic	Balkan endemic
Algae	165	3000	2	-	-
Fungi	375	4900	-	-	-
Mosses	329	668	-	-	-
Lichens	367	709	-	-	-
Vascular plants	1315	3850	18	17	86
Mollusca	89	447	5	3	5
Fishes	6	207	-	-	-
Amphibian	8	16	-	-	1
Reptiles	11	11	-	-	-
Birds	159	485	-	-	5
Mammals	45	89	-	-	2

Flora

In terms of its flora and vegetation, Pirin is one of the unique Bulgarian and Balkan mountains. The geographic isolation of the mountain, the large altitudinal range, the various types of rocks and the complex geomorphologic structure have contributed to the formation of exceptional combination of plant species. Despite the centuries of use of the mountain natural resources, the flora is well preserved.

The lower plants comprise:

- 165 species of algae that form 30% of all Bulgarian algal species; and
- 329 moss species and 367 species of lichens – more than 52% of the Bulgarian lichen flora.

The fungi species identified so far are 375. Of them, six are included in the European Red List of the threatened macromycetae and six – in Appendix I of the Bern Convention.

Of the vascular plants, 1,315 species have been discovered on the territory of Pirin NP. Of them 114 are endangered and are listed in the Bulgarian Red Data Book. The flora of Pirin represents about one-third of the total Bulgarian flora.

One of the most important Bulgarian plant speciation centers is situated in Pirin. The endemic component here is widely represented: 18 local endemic taxa, 17 Bulgarian endemics (more than 50% of the Bulgarian endemic plants) and 86 Balkan endemics occur.

The analysis of the floral element shows that the Park's flora has largely preserved its autochthonous character. The sub-Mediterranean and Euro-Asiatic floral elements participate almost equally. Also Euro-Mediterranean and Boreal floral elements are widely represented. The Arctic-Alpine floral communities that are typical to the highest part of the mountain, characterized by cold climate, are not so numerous. The ruderal species and weeds are relatively few in number. No invasive alien species have been recorded to date.

Plant species protected under different international conventions include four species listed in the Bern Convention appendixes, 21 – in CITES (all species of *Orchidaceae* and *Amaryllidaceae*) and in the 21 are in the IUCN Red List.

In addition, analyses have shown that the Pirin NP flora is characterized by the presence of a significant number of endemic taxa.

The table below shows of the conservation significance of the vascular plants in Pirin NP:

Conservation status of vascular plants of Pirin NP	# of species
Bulgarian Red Data Book	114
Total number of endemics	121
Local (Pirin) endemics	18
Bulgarian endemics	17
Balkan endemics	86
Bern Convention	4
IUCN Red List	1
Council Directive 92/43	4
CITES	21

Vegetation

The inventory of the Pirin plant communities which took place in the 2001-2002 period identified 24 plant communities occurring in six categories of habitats.

Main groups of plant communities in Pirin NP	# of communities	Surface (ha)	Area (% of park territory)
Communities around lakes and rivers	3	177.50	0.40
Subalpine shrub communities	4	17,812.30	44.10
Grassland (meadows, subalpine and alpine pastures)	7	7,490.40	18.56
Forests communities	8	17,325.50	42.93
Rock habitats communities	1	4,866.60	12.05
Anthropogenic vegetation	1	174.10	0.40
Total	24	47,846.40	118.00¹

More than half of Pirin forests are natural aged forests with an average age of 140 years. The coniferous species making more than 90% of all forests, largely dominate. Particularly significant are the spacious stands of the two Balkan endemic pine species: Macedonian pine (*Pinus peuce*) and Bosnian pine (*Pinus heldreichii*). Other forests include stands dominated by Austrian pine (*Pinus nigra*), Scotch pine (*Pinus sylvestris*), silver fir (*Abies alba*), Norway spruce (*Picea abies*) and European beech (*Fagus sylvatica*). The endangered in Bulgaria yew (*Taxus baccata*) occurs rather rarely in the Park.

The rock habitats, as well as the meadow communities of the sub-alpine and alpine zones of the Park, which constitute the main part of the proposed extension of the World Heritage Property contain the majority of the endemic plants. Although these areas were the last to be included in the Park, the communities there are very well preserved and their long-term sustenance is crucial for many of the endemic taxa.

¹ Due to some overlapping between plant communities the area exceeds by 18% the total park surface.

Fauna

The invertebrates are the most diverse animal group in Pirin National Park. Thousand of species have been identified, but a comprehensive inventory is far from being accomplished. Currently only *Arthropoda* and *Mollusca* are investigated in detail; these two groups comprise 2,091 species, of which 216 endemics, 176 relicts and 15 included in the World and European lists of threatened species.

Because the rivers in the park are high mountain rivers only six fish species occur within the Park's territory. This is 5% of the freshwater ichthyofauna in Bulgaria. Two of them – vairone (*Leuciscus souffia*) and Balkan trout (*Salmo trutta*) are relicts included in the appendixes of the Bern Convention and EU Directive 92/43.

Pirin provides shelter to eight species of amphibians and 11 reptiles. Three are glacial relicts: the common frog, the viviparous lizard and the adder. The Balkan wall lizard is Balkan endemics.

Because of the diversity of landscape, habitat and natural plant communities, Pirin protects 177 bird species or 44% of the total Bulgarian ornithofauna. Of these, 143 species are under protection according to the national legislation, two are included in the IUCN Red List, 148 – in the Bern Convention and in CITES – 29. The most important representatives of the ornithofauna are the three glacial relicts: Tengmalm's owl, white-backed woodpecker and three-toed woodpecker. There are five Balkan endemic species: the subspecies of white-backed woodpecker, shore lark, alpine accentor, crested tit and rock nuthatch.

Conservation status of birds in Pirin NP	# of species
Relicts	3
Endemics	9
Protected by the national legislation	143
Listed in the Bulgarian Red Data Book	31
Endangered species	22
Listed in the IUCN Red List	2
Listed in the BONN Convention	54
Listed in the BERN Convention	148
Listed in the CITES	29
Listed in the DIR 79/409	40
Listed in EMERALD	37

More than half of the Bulgarian mammals - 45 species, inhabit Pirin. Of them 19 are under protection of the national legislation, 2 are included in the IUCN Red List, 37 – in the Bern Convention, 24 – in the EU Directive 92/43 and 3 – in CITES. One species of the vertebrate fauna is a glacial relict – snow vole (*Chionomys nivalis*), and two other - Gunter's vole (*Microtus guentheri*) and chamois (*Rupicapra rupicapra ssp. balcanica*), are Balkan endemics.

Conservation status of mammals in Pirin NP	# of species
Relicts	1
Endemics	2
Protected by the national legislation	19
Listed in the Bulgarian Red Data Book	5
Endangered species	3
Listed in the IUCN Red List	2
Listed in the BONN Convention	14
Listed in the BERN Convention	37
Listed in the CITES	3
Listed in the DIR 79/409	24

Conservation value of Pirin flora and fauna

Significant numbers of species of each systematic group are endangered, protected by national regulations or under international legislation.

	BG Red Data Book	IUCN Red List	Bonn Conv. Ann. II	Bern Conv. Ann. II	CITES	EU Directives	Threatened
Algae							
Mosses						2	
Lichens							
Vascular plants	114	1		4	21	4	
Invertebrates	277	3		2			3
Amphibians				2		1	
Reptiles				1	1	1	
Birds	31	2	54	148	29	40	25
Mammals	5	12	14	37	3	24	3

2.b History and Development

Thracians, Romans, Byzantines and Slavs inhabited Pirin Mountain and its adjacent territories in succession. The remains of ancient fortresses, Thracian tumuli, medieval colonies, consecrated grounds, churches and chapels testify to several historical epochs. Remains of a fortress dating back to the pre-Roman times have been discovered in the Yulen Reserve. In the past Pirin was also a part of an important trade road connecting Melnik and Bansko. The so-called Wine Gate found in the lowest saddle of Northern Pirin was the main entrance for caravans carrying cotton, tools, wine, etc.

The Age of the Bulgarian Revival (XVIII-XIX centuries) is an important period of an industrial and cultural prosperity of the region. The crafts and the commerce, the timbering and the tobacco industry were developed. Monastery schools and later secular ones were built. Important national construction and painting schools originated in this region. Melnik and Bansko Arts School developed during the Middle Ages existed until the beginning of the XX c. The most outstanding examples of the Bansko Arts School are preserved in the Rila Monastery (World Heritage Property) and in the town of Bansko.

Bulgarian considers Pirin region a cradle of the national liberation movement against the Ottomans. Famous Bulgarian revolutionaries and educators were born and worked for the prosperity of the region – Paissy Hilendarski, Neophit Rilski, Yane Sandanski, Gotze Delchev, etc. Among all regions in Bulgaria, Pirin gained its independence from Ottoman Empire the latest – in October 1912, when the Balkan war was declared.

The stormy and changing history of this region often with tragic consequences for the local people could not break their spirit nor their patriotism and pride. Even today they jealously keep the messages of their past – their alive memory and heritage. Very often the Pirin songs are described as 'heavy' and full of tragedy. They were quite common at the table or work, at meetings, celebrations and customs. The so-called family songs include the wedding (engagement, taking the bride, giving gifts to guests, etc.) and mourning ones. The current landscape and vegetation of Pirin are a direct consequence of the last ice age and the subsequent retreat of the glaciers, completed by traditional human activities. For many centuries, local population has used the natural resources in a very sustainable way; even the centralized agriculture system of the communist period had little influence on the quality of the natural ecosystems. Moderate and well-controlled sheep and cattle grazing have probably contributed to the high biodiversity by maintaining open grassland areas within the forests and the *Pinus mugo* belt.

Before the establishment of the Park, there was limited use of the forests in some areas. The most important factor of changes has been the construction of a roads and development of tourism facilities.

While the most valuable forest stands were included in the 1983 boundaries of the WHP, the alpine zone was excluded to a large extend. The inclusion of this zone is a major contribution to the current nomination under the natural criteria mentioned below.

History of conservation (See also Annex 3):

During the last 50 years, conservation state of the area has been gradually growing to reach its current state. The establishment of the protected area followed the below steps:

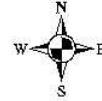
- In 1934 Bayuvi dupki reserve was declared.
- On November 8th, 1962 with an order of the Forestry Board of the Council of Ministers declares Vihren People's Park. The park's area is 6736 ha and includes the highest parts of Banderitza and Damjanitza parts of Pirin Mountain.
- In 1974 with an order of the Ministry of Forests and Nature Protection the park was enlarged to 26 413,8 ha and the name was changed to Pirin People's Park. The added territory is 19 677,8 ha.
- In 1976 another small enlargement was made and an area of 34 ha was added to the park. Thus the park territory become 26 479,8 ha. Later re-calculation concluded that the actual area is 27442,9 ha (without changes of the boundaries!).
- In 1977 the reserve Bayuvi dupki-Dzindziritza was declared as a Biosphere reserve under the UNESCO "Man and Biosphere" Programme.
- In 1979 an independent management structure – Park Directorate within the Ministry of Forest and Forest Economy, was established in Bansko. The territories of the reserves Bauvi dupki and Malka Dzindziritza were merged in one reserve "Bayuvi dupki – Dzindziritza" with and area of 2 873 ha.
- In 1983 Pirin was designated as a World Heritage Site with an area of 27442,9 ha. Subsequent changes of the area and legal status of Pirin NP as World Heritage Site were not communicated to the World Heritage Centre.
- In 1987 with Order 1036/ 17.11.1987 of the Nature Protection Committee of the Council of Ministers two small territories in the region of Dobrinishte - 10.1 ha and also in

Sandanski - 6 ha were excluded from the boundaries of Pirin National park with the aim to adapt the boundaries of the park to specific features of the terrain (existing road). With the same order new 12 639 ha were added to the park.

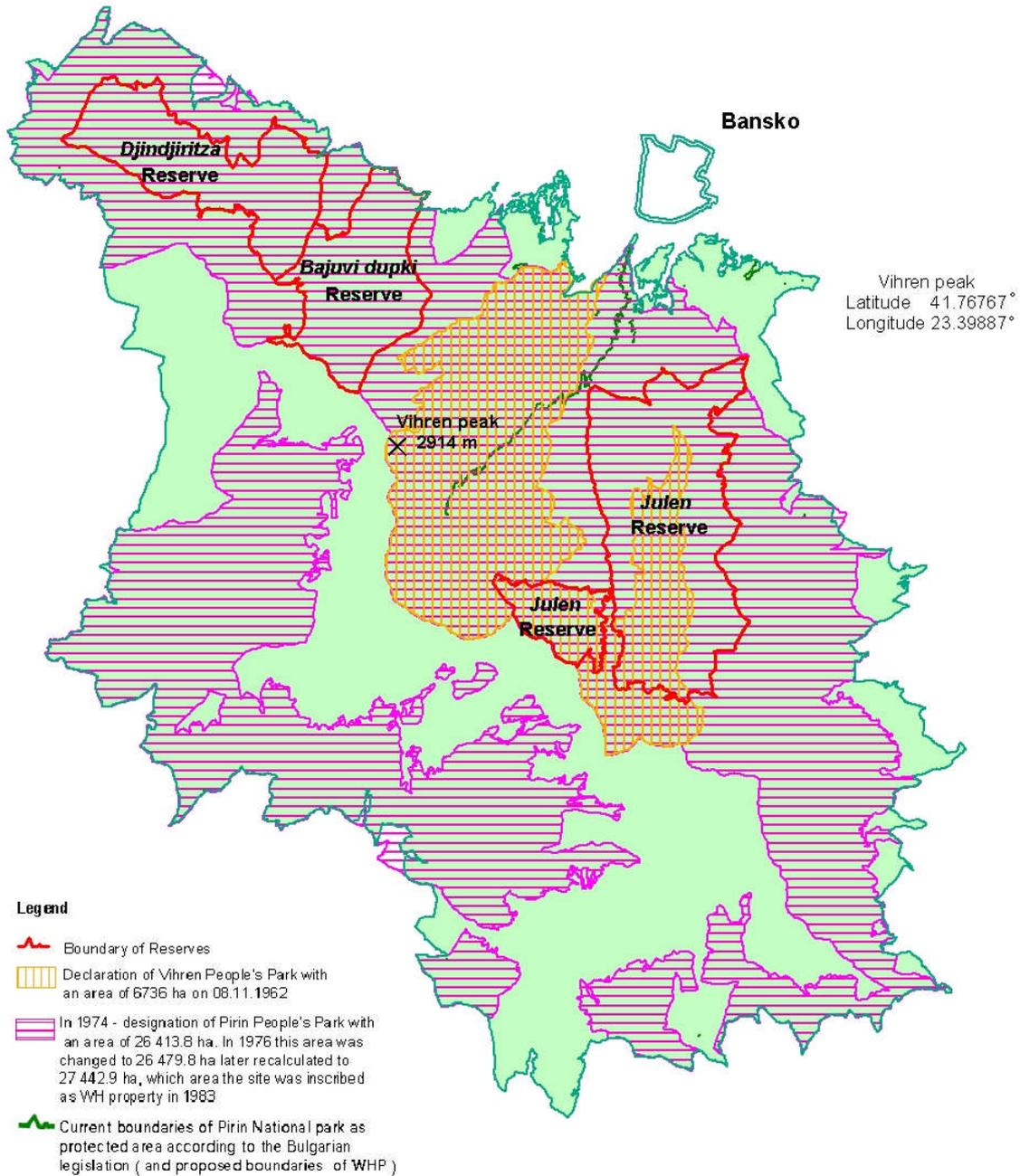
- In 1994, with an order of the Minister of Environment and Water was designated Yulen nature reserve with an area of 3156,2 ha on the territory of Bansko municipality. It is the most recent reserve declared in Pirin.
- In 1998, after the enforcement of the Protected Areas Act, a modern protected area's classification in compliance with the international norms was introduced. The category of the site changed and it became a National Park. In 1999, by an order of the Minister of Environment and Water, Pirin National Park was finally declared with an area of 40 332,4 ha. As a result of recalculations of the area of the Park, carried out later and without border changes, the area was concluded to be as pointed in the Management plan, namely 40 356,0 ha. With the same order the Kulinoto ski zone – 58.1 ha and the Sandanski Resort area – 76.4 ha were excluded from the National park. According to the Protected Areas Act, protected areas, which fall in the National Park category, are exclusively state property. Therefore, this area of 40 356,0 ha is exclusive state property and falls within the administrative boundaries of seven municipalities: Gotse Delchev, Bansko, Razlog, Simitli, Kresna, Strumyani and Sandanski.

Below is given a A4 map showing the evolution of the boundaries of Pirin NP as protected area and WHP

NATIONAL PARK PIRIN



Evolution of the boundaries of NP, boundary of the WHP from 1983 and current boundaries of Pirin National park as protected area according to the Bulgarian legislation



3. Justification for Inscription

3.a Criteria under which inscription is proposed

The nomination of the Pirin National Park is proposed under to criteria VII, IX and X in compliance with the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention.

Criterion VII

The nominated property is a compact mountain range characterized by a great diversity of forests, meadows and rock landscapes with sharp summits and narrow valleys. The contemporary landscape diversity of the Pirin Mountain reflects its geological diversity. It has been strongly influenced by the Pleistocene glaciations. There are 35 glacial rock cirques in the highest parts of Pirin. The largest are the Popovoezeren, Vasilashki, Valyavishki and Banderishki Cirques. However, the most spectacular one is the cirque surrounding the Georgiiski Lakes. Most of the 113 caves in the Park are vertical and situated mainly in the cirques: Kazanite, Banderishki, Kamenitsa, Banski Suhodol and Bayuvi Dupki.

Numerous high mountain lakes (180) occupy the bottoms and the terraced slopes of the cirques: the biggest one is the Popovo Lake with an area of 124,000 sq. m and a depth of 30 m. Snow patches of perennial firn occur on shadowed places on the slopes of northern exposition cirques – Golyam Kazan, Kutelo, Banski Suhodol.

Because of the glacier lateral erosion, the interconnecting ridges became narrow and sharp – Koncheto, Strazhite, etc. Pyramidal and conic summits formed above the highest parts of neighboring cirques – Vihren, Kutelo, Kamenitsa, etc. Relatively short alpine glaciers descended below the snowline during the Pleistocene. They transformed the upper parts of previously existing river valleys into U-shaped glacier valleys. At lower elevation, rivers still flow in narrow gorges, which have contributed to preserve the central part of the Park from adverse human influence.

The natural appearance of the Pirin Mountain, with its compact forest belt dominated by a complex network of alpine summits and ridges offers favorable conditions to many living organisms but also to humans to experience and enjoy the well-preserved natural landscape.

The most important and visible geo-morphological features form the following categories:

- the marble rocks – natural habitats unique at the European and global scale
- the granite rocks – covering considerable areas in the whole park and shaping the specific alpine landscape
- the typically glacial forms of relief - cirques, glacier beds, terraces
- the pyramidal, needle or cone shaped remote mountain summits

The unique combination of these elements within one mountain makes the Pirin National Park a geological phenomenon of a national and international importance. In addition, the rock formations and the other alpine parts of Pirin are difficult to access and therefore are very well preserved.

A few hundred meters below the treeline small populations or single trees of very old Macedonian pines occurs on carbonated soils. Exemplary are the Baykuchevata Macedonian pine – a 1,350 year old tree (the oldest in Bulgaria), and the small forests of aged

Macedonian pines in the site of Sveshtnitsite (the Candels) and Orlite (the Eagles). The strange shapes of these aged trees add specific value to the spectacular landscape.

Criterion IX

The Pirin National Park hosts an exceptional biological diversity with a high percentage of endemic, rare and relict species. It is a remarkable example of a territory that stimulated the evolution of significant number of taxa, and which nowadays provides a refuge for significant populations of numerous endemic plant and animal species. This is due to the particular geographic location of Pirin within the Balkan Peninsula, its geological and geomorphologic diversity, the large altitudinal range, and the ancient and continuous isolation of Pirin from the neighboring mountain ranges.

The Pirin NP flora comprises numerous phytogeographic elements belonging to 60 floral regions, as well as their combinations. The endemic species are largely concentrated in the northern part of the mountain. However, some of them, especially the Balkan endemics, are widely distributed throughout the Park. The marble massifs of the Vihrenski and Sinanishki section of Northern Pirin are of high importance for the speciation process; they constitute the core area of the proposed additional territory of the property.

Eighteen Pirin (local) flora endemic species have evolved on the territory of the Park; 17 Bulgarian endemics and 86 Balkan endemic species can be found here as well. The local endemics include: the Urumov's and Kozuharov's oxytropis (*Oxytropis urumovii*, *Oxytropis kozuharovii*), Pirin poppy (*Papaver degenii*), Pirin poa (*Poa pirinica*), Jordanoff's turnip (*Brassica nivalis jordanoffii*), Banderitsa lady's mantle (*Alchemilla bandericensis*), Pirin lady's mantle (*Alchemilla pirinica*), Kellerer's asyneuma (*Asyneuma kellererianum*), Pirin sand-wort (*Arenaria pirinica*), Pirin sedge (*Carex pirinensis*), Vihren fleabane (*Erigeron vichrensis*), Davidof's mullein (*Verbascum davidoffii*), Lesser Pirin fescue (*Festuca pirinica*), Stojanov's yellow gallium (*Galium demissum stojanovii*), Pirin cow parsnip (*Heracleum angustisectum*), Javork's yellow-rattle (*Rhinanthus javorkae*), Pirin wild thyme (*Thymus perinicus*), and Kosanin's daphne (*Daphne kosaninii*).

The occurrence of a large number of relict species is also specific to Pirin. The pre-glacial relicts include predominantly tree species, such as the silver fir (*Abies alba*), Norway spruce (*Picea abies*), Macedonian pine (*Pinus peuce*), yew (*Taxus baccata*), European hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*), etc.

Today in Pirin, some of the speciation processes are still active and this makes the mountain particularly important as a global biodiversity center. Its conservation is of special international significance.

The 3,400 known species of invertebrate dominate the Pirin fauna. This represents more than 26.7% of the families in Bulgaria. Of these 294 or 14.1% are rare species, belonging mostly to the families Araneae - 41.1% and Lepidoptera - 27.8 %. Within nine of groups 217 endemics are determined that is 10.4%. The highest endemism level is registered within the classes Myriapoda - 50%, Plecoptera - 40.0% and Mollusca - 37.5%. The local endemics amounting to 39 species represent the highest conservation value.

In terms of the relict species, Pirin ranks the second in Bulgaria after Rila. However, it has to be mentioned that the biodiversity of Rila was better investigated than the one in Pirin. Of 176 relict species (8.4% of the invertebrate fauna), 149 are glacial relicts (84.6%); of the invertebrate relicts the heteropterans are 17.6% and the araneans - 14.6%.

The importance of Pirin as a vertebrate fauna sanctuary is recognized nationally and internationally. The presence of a number of umbrella and cornerstone species evidences the conservation value of Pirin:

- Among the amphibians, such are the common frog (*Rana temporaria*) and viviparous lizard (*Lacerta vivipara*). These are glacial relicts that inhabit the highest part of Pirin are with a limited distribution not only in Bulgaria but also all over Southern Europe. The populations occurring in Pirin are among the most considerable in Bulgaria.
- Among the reptiles, one of the flagship species inhabiting the lowest parts of the park is the Aesculapian snake (*Elaphe longissima*). It is included in the Bulgarian Red Data Book, as well as in several international conventions.
- The highest number of species of conservation importance characterizes the birds of Pirin. In Pirin are one of the most important nesting habitats of species included in the Bulgarian Red Data Book like the capercaillie, the Tengmalm's owl, the black woodpecker, the white-backed Woodpecker, the three-toad woodpecker, the hazel grouse, the golden eagle, the woodcock, the goshawk and the sparrow hawk. Occasionally in the park could be observed other species also included in the Bulgarian Red Data Book such as short-toed eagle (*Circaetus gallicus*), lesser spotted eagle (*Aquila pomarina*), Levant sparrow hawk (*Accipiter brevipes*), and long-legged buzzard (*Buteo rufinus*). In the park very rarely nests the world threaten corncrake (*Crex crex*). Pirin is one of the most important nesting sites for the Balkan endemic sub-species like crested tit (*Parus cristatus borisi-regis*), horned lark (*Eremophila alpestris balcanica*), Alpine accentor (*Prunella collaris subalpina*) – a sub-endemic that also occurs in Western Turkey, nutcracker (*Nucifraga caryocatactes wolfi*), garden warbler (*Sylvia borin pateffi*), long-tailed tit (*Aegithalos caudatus macedonicus*). Pirin NP is one of the few areas where can be observed Bulgarian rare bird species like the wallcreeper (*Tichodroma muraria*) and the Alpine chough (*Pyrrhocorax graculus*).
- The mammal world of Pirin is also remarkable because of the occurrence of some Bulgarian Red Data Book mammals like the Balkan chamois (*Rupicapra rupicapra ssp. balcanica*), the bear (*Ursus arctos*), the wolf (*Canis lupus*), the pine marten (*Martes martes*) and the otter (*Lutra lutra*), the latest occurring very rarely.

	Rare	Endemics	Relicts
Plants	98 species In particular <i>Artemisia eriantha</i> , <i>Draba korabensis</i> , <i>Gentianella precox</i> , <i>Orchis militaris</i> , etc.	18 species in particular: Kozuharov's oxytropis (<i>Oxytropis kozuharovii</i>) Vihren fleabane (<i>Erigeron vichrensis</i>) Lesser Pirin fescue (<i>Festuca pirinicus</i>) Pirin wild thyme (<i>Thymus perinicus</i>)	in particular: <i>Anemone narcissiflora</i> , <i>Arenaria pirinica</i> , <i>Bartsia alpina</i> , <i>Diphasiastrum alpinum</i> , <i>Galanthus nivalis</i>
Invertebrates	294 species of Araneae and Lepidoptera	39 species of Coleoptera and Mollusca	176 species of Heteroptera and Araneae

Vertebrates	Wallcreeper (<i>Tichodroma muraria</i>) and Alpine chough (<i>Pyrrhocorax graculus</i>)	Crested tit (<i>Parus cristatus borisi-regi</i>) horned lark (<i>Eremophila alpestris balcanica</i>), Alpine accentor (<i>Prunella collaris subalpina</i>), nutcracker (<i>Nucifraga caryocatactes wolfi</i>)	Tengmalm's owl (<i>Aegolius funereus</i>), three-toed Woodpecker (<i>Picoides tridactylus</i>)
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Criterion X

The territory of Pirin NP ensures the survival of 24 plant communities providing favorable habitat for many rare and endangered species.

The vast forest belts of the Balkan endemic Macedonian pine (*Pinus peuce*) constitute the most original and valuable habitat. The Macedonian pine is a relict included in the IUCN Red List that evidences its importance at the global level. Within the boundaries of the National park especially well developed are the mixed Macedonian pine forests occurring at elevations between 1600 and 2200 m, mainly on stony acid soils over silicate bedrock. These forests are recognized for the diversity of plant species in the undergrowth. The dominant undergrowth species are whortleberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*), Siberian juniper (*Juniperus sibirica*) and dwarf pine (*Pinus mugo*). Rare Bulgarian species like the yellow gentian (*Gentiana lutea*), the dotted-flower gentian (*Gentiana punctata*), the Banderitsa lady's mantle (*Alchemilla bandericensi*), and others also occur there. Many animals, from invertebrate to birds and large mammals find shelter in the vast Macedonian pine forests. Worth mentioning are:

Common name	Scientific name	Bern Conv Annex II/III	Bonn Conv. Annex II	DIR 92/43
Greater shrew	<i>Sorex araneus</i>	•		
Pygmy shrew	<i>Sorex minutus</i>	•		
Forest dormouse	<i>Dryomys nitedula</i>	•		•
Wild cat	<i>Felis silvestris</i>	•		•
Brown bear	<i>Ursus arctos</i>	•		•
Wolf	<i>Canis lupus</i>	•		•
Snow vole	<i>Chionomys nivalis</i>	•		
Hazel grouse	<i>Bonasa bonasia</i>	•		
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	•		
Mistle thrush	<i>Turdus rusticus</i>	•	•	•
Coal Tit	<i>Parus ater</i>	•		
Common treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>	•		
Serim	<i>Serinus serinus</i>	•		
Common crosbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>	•		

In the Bosnian pine habitats could be observed other rare and endemic species like *Polygala acarnanica*, *Centaurea achtarowii*, *Verbascum davidoffii*, *Hieracium stefanoffii*, *Rhinanthus javorkae*, *Kernera saxatilis*, *Festuca penzesii*, *Laserpitium siler*, and many others.

More than 36 types of Macedonian pine forests and 14 types of Bosnian pine forests have been described within the Park. Of special interest is the community formed by Macedonian and Bosnian pine with herbaceous undergrowth comprising relatively drought resistant species, like *Festuca dalmatica*. The uniqueness of this community lies within the combined

presence of the two endemic tree species occurring on relatively limited area in the northern part of the Park.

Another unique habitat type in Pirin NP is the complex of rocks, screes and alpine meadow formations. They are distributed mainly in the alpine zone and to a lesser extent below the treeline. The bedrock type, the relief exposition, the water regime determines the ecological conditions. Therefore, they form a mosaic of plant and animal communities that tolerate dry, cold and windy habitats. Widely represented is, for example, the genus *Saxifraga* with some endemic species; several local and Balkan endemic species are found here, like *Thymus perinicus*, *Papaver degenii*, *Arabis ferdinandi-coburgii*, *Potentilla appenina* ssp. *Stojanovii*, *Dianthus microlepis*, as well as some typical alpine species, like *Androsace villosa*, *Rhodax alpestris* (*Rhodeola rosea*), *Silene acaulis*, etc.

The alpine meadows and rock habitats offer food and refuge for important populations of the Balkan endemic subspecies of chamois (*Rupicapra rupicapra* ssp. *balcanica*), as well as to several important birds like:

Common name	Scientific name	Bern Conv Annex II	Bonn Conv. Annex II	DIR 79/40
Golden eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	•	•	•
Eurasian crag-martin	<i>Hirundo rupestris</i>	•		
Wallcreeper	<i>Tichodroma muraria</i>	•		
Haselhuhn	<i>Bonasia bonasia</i>	•		
Rock partridge	<i>Alectoris graeca</i>	•		•
Rock thrush	<i>Monticola saxatilis</i>	•	•	•
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	•	•	
Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapillus</i>	•	•	
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	•	•	

3.b Proposed Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

Pirin offers unique high-mountain scenic landscape at the cross-road between the central European, Mediterranean and Ponicic biogeographical regions.

The uniqueness of Pirin ensues from its relative isolation from the other mountain chains. Compared with them the Mediterranean influence, penetrating along the river valleys of Struma and Mesta Rivers, here is stronger. This results in the unique combination of the widespread Mediterranean species (12%) and the much less represented Arctic-Alpine species (less than 1%), although the relief of the mountain is a typical Alpine one.

In the time of the last glaciations during the Tertiary, overall ice cover had not been formed in Pirin and the highest parts of the mountain remained refuges for glacial relict species, which are still present today, thus additionally increasing the conservation value of the mountain.

In terms of flora, Pirin is among the most unique Bulgarian and Balkan mountain ranges. The shaping of the contemporary composition of the flora and the formation of the vegetation cover has continued after the last glaciating, when the species preserved so far in the refuges have re-colonized their former habitats.

Exceptional biological diversity and high percent of the endemic component characterize Pirin. Pirin endemic species are fourteen higher plants, which is more than half of all the

Bulgarian endemic plants; 17 higher plants and two animals are Bulgarian endemic species; 86 higher plants and 6 representatives of the vertebrate fauna are Balkan endemic species. Despite the fact that only two groups of invertebrates have been studied in Pirin – Arthropods and Mollusks, the richness of the invertebrate fauna is indisputable: 216 endemics and 176 relicts.

One of the greatest riches of Pirin is its forest. Forest of natural character, aging over 140 years, and covers more than half of the territory of the protected area. More than 90% of the forests are coniferous, and the occurrence of the two endemic species – Macedonian pine (*Pinus peuce*) and Bosnian pine (*Pinus heldreichii*) – diversifies this clearly differentiated coniferous belt.

Of all the habitats described on the territory of Pirin, the rock habitat is the most representative for the unique character of the mountain. Refuges of the unique rock flora and fauna are the 35 cirque valleys, the 180 glacial lakes, the pyramidal and conic summits and the picturesque rock phenomena.

The identification of Pirin NP as a CORINE Site in 1998 confirmed its value as a key territory of a high conservation importance. Because of the priority habitats and species occurring in Pirin, the site has also been proposed to become a Natura 2000 site. Pirin has been designated an Important Bird Area that will allow the long-term preservation of threatened bird species in their natural habitats.

The Pirin NP has been inscribed as one of the 114 Important Plant Areas of Bulgaria under the criteria of occurrence of threatened species, threatened habitats and floral richness.

The Biosphere Reserve Bayuvi Dupki–Dzindziritsa designated in 1977 is also located in the Park. The opportunity for designation of the whole territory of the National Park with its adjacent settlements as a Biosphere Reserve will be considered in future.

The core zone of the Pirin Mountain has been largely preserved of the human impact. Some of the most accessible highland zones have been used for several centuries for agro-pastoral activities. These activities have contributed to increase the species and habitat diversity below and above the treeline; their continuation contribute to the achievement of the conservation goals.

3.c Comparative analysis

In the Balkan Peninsula, the numbers of well-preserved protected areas with a great variety of habitats, a large altitudinal range and with a significant alpine zone clearly above treeline are not numerous. Pirin National Park is one of the few such territories that have succeeded to preserve their landscape, unique plant and animal species and their habitats.

It can be compared with Durmitor (Montenegro), Prokletje Mountain (Albania, Montenegro, Kosovo), Shar Planina (Serbia, Macedonia), Pelister Mountain (Macedonia), Rila Mountain (Bulgaria) and Olympus (Greece). All of them have been declared National Parks, at least partially. However only Durmitor National Park in Montenegro has been registered since 1980 as World Heritage Property, while Olympus is included in the Greek tentative list, but essentially under cultural criteria. In Rila the Rila Monastery, included in a Natural Park, was declared as World Heritage property but exclusively under cultural criteria.

It is difficult to make a detailed comparative study; most of the documentation regarding these sites exists only in local language and very few experts have been visiting the other

sites. Moreover, several of them have been inaccessible during in the last decade due to the regional political instability. However, from the available information it appears clearly that all those mountains are quite isolated, separated from each other by lowland or mountain ranges of lower altitude. This explains the level of local endemism, which is particularly high in Pirin. Pirin displays also a variety of bedrock with clearly separated limestone and silicate parts, which is not the case in Rila, Pelister or Durmitor.

Probably the most comparable site morphologically would be the Prokletje Mountains, but the distance between the two sites and the historical factors have lead to the development of a significantly different flora.

Comparison Pirin Mountain – Prokletje Mountain (SCG)

- Prokletje NP is a group of mountains with a total area of 95,999.60 ha. Its large territory – almost double the size of the Pirin NP area – contributes to the great variety of the main bedrock and landscape.
- The relief of both parks was re-shaped during the Pleistocene when the mountains were subjected to Alpine-like glaciations.
- Regarding hydrology, both parks are a main source for drinking water for the population of the adjacent municipalities, as well as for the hydro-energy.
- The lower plants in Pirin are more diverse than in Prokletje. For comparison, the lichens in Pirin are 367 of which 25 are rare, while in Prokletje there are only 99 of which 25 are rare species.
- The much larger territory of Prokletje NP provides shelter to 1,609 vascular plants, while in Pirin they are 1,315. Regarding the endemic plants, the number is almost equal: 20 local endemic plants in Prokletje and 18 in Pirin.
- The vegetation of the both park is consisted of deciduous and coniferous. The endemic species of Macedonian (*Pinus peuce*) and Bosnian pine (*Pinus heldreichii*) form well visible belts but in Pirin, in particular the stands are quite larger. In Pirin, the oak trees are not present, while in Prokletje they form a large belt.
- Regarding the ornithofauna in Pirin are observed 159 bird species and in Prokletje 180. Most of the birds are similar and are included in the national and European nature protection legislation.
- There are 45 species of mammals in Pirin, which is more than in Prokletje – 38 species.

Comparison Pirin Mountain – Rila Mountain (BG)

- The territory of Rila NP is twice larger than that of Pirin NP.
- The geological fundament belongs to the Rhodopean supergroup but the bedrock of Rila Mountain consists mainly of metamorphic and granite rocks, while the limestone dominates in Pirin.
- Both parks include zones for strict protection – reserves that are also subject of the UNESCO Man and Biosphere Programme.
- In both parks, the Alpine glaciation has contributed to the formation of a large number of glacial lakes: in Pirin they are 180 and in Rila – 140.
- The vegetation is quite similar but in Rila the Bosnian pine (*Pinus heldreichii*) is not present.
- The total number of vascular plants in Rila is 1,400 against 1,315 in Pirin but for a twice-smaller territory.
- The local and Balkan plant endemic species in Pirin are 18 and in Rila only 3.

- The invertebrates are well represented in the both parks: in Rila these are 2,934 and in Pirin – 2,091 species.
- The number of bird species in Pirin is 159 while in Rila only 99.
- The mammals in Pirin are also more numerous than in Rila: 45 species in Pirin and 38 in Rila.

Comparison Pirin Mountain - Durmitor Mountain

- Both mountains include IUCN category II protected areas. They offer a great variety of climate, landscape habitats and biocenoses.
- Geologically rock massifs of different age have formed both sites. Limestone formations and so-called Durmitorean flysch are characteristics of Durmitor, while in Pirin the marble dominates in the north, while granite rocks cover significant territory. This explains the development of significantly different and to some extent unique flora and vegetation.
- Post-glacial landscape features dominate at higher elevation in both cases; however, due to the different geology, there are 186 glacial lakes in Pirin, while there are only 16 in Durmitor. At lower elevation, Durmitor most typical feature is the 61 km long Tara Canyon, carved in the sedimentary rock layers.
- The large and well-preserved forests are typical to both parks, but are dominated to a large extent by different species. Typical for Pirin are the Macedonian and Bosnian Pine forests, while Durmitor is famous for its virgin Austrian pine forests.
- Both mountains display a significant number of regional and local endemic plant species; however the distance and the difference in physical features implies that the flora, while showing a typical Balkan mountain composition, differ significantly.
- The vertebrate faunas are quite similar in both sites with the same flag species like chamois, bear, wildcat, etc. A higher specificity can be expected in the invertebrate fauna, due to the much more limited mobility of the organisms; however it was difficult to obtain precise information for this group.

While criteria are sufficient to justify the inscription of Pirin National Park as a whole intact territory as natural World Heritage Property, the possibility of declaring a serial site, which will include key, mountain sites of the Balkan Peninsula deserves some future exploratory work.

3.d Integrity

So far only 2/3 of the Park's territory falls within UNESCO WHP. The proposed extension of the property's territory aims at including most of the park's territory in the UNESCO site. The inclusion of the rich and diverse alpine area is extremely important to ensure coherent structure with improved protection and management. Moreover, the extension will allow including the main habitats of most of the endemic and protected species and will also guarantee their conservation and protection. The habitats of the Balkan chamois, the brown bear, the wolf, as well as the sub-alpine pastures are vast territories that fall to a great extent within the proposed extension of the property.

Regarding its plant species the nominated property has preserved completely its original features. No exotic or invasive species occur in the Park. The diversity of endemic, rare and protected plants species is well preserved. They are mainly located at the highest parts of the mountain known to be the core speciation center. This is a strong argument for including these territories within the boundaries of the World Heritage Property.

No permanent human settlements exist in the National Park. The territory is mainly used for tourism and some traditional activities such as grazing, mushrooms and wild berries gathering, fuel wood, etc. Grazing in the highlands pastures is traditional and does not threaten the territory, but has a rather positive influence – prevents the forest expansion and contributes to the biodiversity and landscape conservation. Mushrooms and berries gathering is allowed only in specific zones and for species that are not under restrictive regimes. The quotas allowed do not threaten the respective species populations.

The impact of winter and summer tourism is limited to defined zones: the winter tourism is around the ski runs, the summer tourism - around the tourist trails and huts.

The protection of a bigger as possible territory of the National park (without the two ski zones) as a World Heritage property is extremely important for the conservation of the unique features of the landscape and biodiversity. Therefore, the proposed extension and inclusion of the central alpine zone in the property will contribute to the preservation of the Park integrity and better management.

As far as the two ski zones, above the town of Bansko and the village of Dobrinishte are concerned, the same do not meet the criteria for Outstanding Universal value and therefore are proposed for exclusion from the World Heritage Property. Still, their incorporation into a buffer zone of the WHP will ensure its better preservation.

As for the rest small territories, proposed for exclusion from the World Heritage Property (in Sandanski, Razlog and Dobrinishte), besides the fact that they have no conservation value, the same are already out of the scope of the national park, its management plan and National park Directorate.

4. State of Conservation and Factors Affecting the Property

4.a Present state of conservation

The proposed property is a National Park (IUCN category II) according to the Bulgarian legislation, which ensures its actual protection and management. One of the two reserves Bayuvi Dupki – Dzindziritsa (IUCN category I) falling within the property of the World Natural Heritage of UNESCO has been under a strict protection regime for more than 70 years that has contributed to its preservation as in-situ conservation laboratory.

As almost all European mountains, Pirin has been used by many generations of local farmers in a very sustainable manner. The human activities have contributed to the formation of current biologically rich mosaic of forests and pastures below the treeline.

Initially the territory of the Park as a protected area consisted mainly of forests. Possible explanation for this is that at the time the understanding of protected areas gave priority to protection of forests as wildlife reservoirs. The long-lasting traditional use of the sub-alpine and alpine parts of the mountain had a much lower impact, which resulted in their better preservation.

The sub-alpine pastures, which dominate the territory proposed for enlargement, preserve rich biological diversity. The traditional use of pastures by domestic animals prevents their overgrowing by shrubs, as well as the penetration of invasive plants.

Most forests, especially in the higher altitude zones of the Park, are quite well preserved. Some logging has taken place mainly in the lower part, and most of the areas have regenerated naturally. Non-native species were never introduced in the Park.

Regarding the flora, most populations of plant species, are quite stable. Many rare, protected and threatened species occur on the territory of Pirin NP and their numbers do not show signs of decline. Mainly the species of decorative value like the lion's paw (*Leontopodium alpinum*), the Pirin poppy (*Papaver degenii*), etc., as well as those that occur in proximity to the tourist centers and trails are vulnerable to human collection. Collection of medicinal plants in the Park is permitted for private use and does not seriously threaten any species.

Over the last 100 years, the fauna in Pirin NP has not significantly changed.

- Of the large mammals registered on the territory of Pirin, only the lynx (*Lynx lynx*) has disappeared. The species has been extinct from the territory of the whole country during the last century. Its disappearance is not due to worsening of the ecological conditions in the Park and its surrounding areas.
- Similar is the case with the vultures – Egyptian vulture (*Neophron percnopterus*), griffon vulture (*Gyps fulvus*) and black vulture (*Aegypius monachus*). They used to occur in Pirin in the past and became extinct in 1968, probably due to the decline of the transhumance livestock breeding and respectively the reduction of the feeding grounds. Such is the doom of the other vulture species in the territory of the country – their populations have reduced significantly. However, during the last years vultures are observed in the last years, but not nesting couples are registered. Probably they use the Park territory only for feeding.
- The populations of other raptors have also declined to a certain extent. It should be mentioned that this decline is not due to worsening of the ecological conditions in the Park, but rather to the drastic decrease of some human activities like transhumance livestock breeding and respectively the decrease of the feeding basis. Possible reason for this decline in the population numbers could also be the practice for poisoning some carnivores, such as the wolf in the territories adjacent to the park, which existed in the past.
- The populations of the songbirds are very good and their numbers increase over the whole territory of the NP.

The water quality of the rivers and lakes is very good and most rivers flow in natural conditions. In the past, there was occasional stocking with alien species of trout – rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) and brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*). This activity stopped long time ago.

Sometimes, natural hazards such as fires, avalanches, wind throws and landslides affect the property. However, they are mostly local phenomena and sometimes even contribute to natural processes and ecological dynamics. They also make the access more difficult, especially in winter, thus reducing the human impact.

The contemporary understanding of protected areas management includes all the active measures necessary to ensure the global conservation of the area for the future generations.

The addition of large new territories will significantly contribute to the integrity of the property.

The proposed extension of Pirin National Park as a World Heritage Property is a serious step towards achieving this objective.

On the other hand, the proposed buffer zone to the World Heritage Property will ensure additional layer of protection.

4.b Factors affecting the property

(i) Development Pressures

Agriculture – There are no agricultural practices, be it farming or animal breeding, which could be a real threat to the achievement of management goals in the closest vicinity of the Park. There is a trend for decreasing the traditional grazing within the National Park.

Forestry – One of the traditional forest uses is the fuel wood harvesting with a permit issued by the Park Directorate. This practice has no negative effect on the ecosystems as only fallen or dry timber is extracted. These are limited quantities, only meeting the local population needs of fuel wood. This type of activity does not bring significant damages to the forest ecosystems within the Park.

The National Park Directorate issues annual permits for use of timber by local population. The implementation of these activities and their scope is based on an annual plan of the park administration, preceded by inventory of the forest areas.

Those annual plans are approved by the minister after consultation with the National Nature Protection Service Directorate within the Ministry of environment and water.

Illegal logging is occasionally registered, but it is not widespread practice within the National Park. It is mainly concentrated in isolated small areas (near the towns of Bansko and Razlog).

The National Park Directorate concluded agreements with representatives of other local authorities, structures of the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food supply, State Forestry Agency which aimed at establishing of a system for control on and combating poaching and other illegal activities in the forests.

There is a stable trend towards diminishing the number of violations within the Park's territory related to illegal logging and respectively the sanctions imposed because of that on the territory of the national park.

Year	Number of statements, drawn up against violators
2006	6
2007	6
2008	3

Use of non-timber forest products

The collection of wild fruits, mushrooms and medicinal plants is a traditional activity for the National Park. The gathering and the use of medicinal plants, wild fruits and mushrooms is allowed in regions designated by the National Park Management Plan. According to the Management plan the collecting of medicinal plants is allowed for personal usage. A plan for gathering of these natural resources is prepared after a comprehensive inventory on the state of the existing resources. The preparation of this plan is foreseen in a special Regulation for the activities in protected areas, that are exclusively state property.

In this plan are determined the places where the collection could be provided and also the quantities in compliance with the Management plan zoning and regimes. Annually this plan is updated on the basis of the state of conservation of the habitats of those species.

The allowed quantities of the herbs are determined on the basis of what part of the plants will be gathered.

For gathering of mushrooms and wild fruits for economic purposes the National Park Directorate issues a special permissions where are pointed the admissible qualities and areas, where those not timber products could be collected.

There is no negative trend observed in the National park in result of these activities.

Annually on the territory of the park, a monitoring over the medicinal plants and mushrooms is carried out. The purpose is to determine the quantities, the suitable places and technologies for gathering.

The methodology for monitoring of these resources includes establishment of the coverage (in percentages), the biological and also exploitation reserve of the plants and their distribution.

The results from the monitoring over the mushrooms and medicinal plants provided in 2006 and 2007 show that with the biggest distribution on the territory of the park is the *Vaccinium myrtillus* L. which is mostly used by the local population.

Amongst the mushrooms, the highly appreciated for gathering was the *Boletus edulis*.

In 2007 with a special order of the Director of the National park, the gathering of mushrooms was forbidden because of the lack of the quantities required.

Hunting and angling – Hunting in the Park is prohibited. Nevertheless, the Management Plan allows measures for regulating the population of certain species but only in specific cases and following the prescriptions of the Hunting and Game Protection Act.

The site Management Plan also designates lakes and parts of rivers, within the National Park, in which angling could be practiced observing special requirements and restrictions (concerning time, sites, angling techniques and quantities). The National Park Directorate updates the regulations regularly. Annually the Director of the park issues order in which the lakes which are allowed for fishing and also those that are forbidden are pointed. The restrictions are related with restocking which was carried out recently in the particular lake or restricted quantities of fish.

Nowadays, the restocking of lakes and rivers is well controlled by the National Park Directorate and is made only with native fish species.

A restocking with Balkan throat was provided during the past three years in several lakes on the territory of the park – “Dolno vasilashko lake”, “Goljamo valjavishko lake”, “Tevno lake”. The restocking material was with known origin and supplemented with all the necessary documents. Protokols was elaborated for the work conducted.

The violations related to fishing during the last three years are as shown in the table.

Year	Violations
2006	2
2007	2
2008	-

Soil erosion - Soil erosion occurs on isolated spots in the treeless zone, but it is not of anthropogenic origin. Soil erosion also occurs in the regions where skiing runs and facilities were constructed, particularly the ski zone above the town of Bansko. For those cases, special measures for re-cultivation of the terrain are foreseen and currently implemented.

According to the contract, the concessionaire is obliged to apply anti erosion and recultivation measures in order to restore the affected areas. The investment program of the concessionaire, which was approved by the MOEW, envisages considerable investments for implementing re-cultivation activities. In that relation, specific projects were developed for each of the ski runs.

During the last years the restoration and recultivation activities of the terrains where the ski runs are located have been also provided. All the activities were approved by the park administration.

The MOEW provides control over the implementation of these measures. The experts from Pirin National park Directorate established during their field visits that recultivation measures are applied on the ground and the results are sufficiently good.

The following activities were provided - grassing of the terrains, construction of wooded thresholds, strengthening of the steep terrains and construction of other facilities which are used in case of erosion.

Feral cats and dogs – In line with the countrywide trend, the numbers of feral cats and dogs in the Park is growing. This threat concerns mainly the possibility of crossbreeding between dogs and wolves, and domestic and wild cats and the disturbance during the reproduction period of game and ground-nesting bird species. The Management Plan and the public hearings have stressed the problem of the feral dogs. Special measures were not undertaken so far but the problem will be addressed in the future.

Existence of buildings, facilities and construction:

Skiing facilities

In the past years, within the park a number of infrastructure elements have been built to answer its present requirements. The skiing zone above the town of Bansko, including skiing runs and lifts partly located on the territory of the National Park, was built in 1986. Later on, considering the shortcomings of this zone such as the number of tourists exceeding the capacity of existing facilities, a Territorial Management plan was developed. It envisaged a significant enlargement of the skiing and visitor facilities, as well as the restoration of forests on the spot of abandoned skiing runs. According to the national legislation, the project for development of the skiing zone was subject to an EIA. After certain amendments, it was approved and is presently implemented almost entirely. Old and new facilities are located on an area of 99.55 ha.

In 2001, this zone was leased on concession with the purpose of constructing and exploiting the envisaged lifts, drags and other facilities. So far, the abandoned ski run has not been restored.

The MoEW exercises the direct control over the concessionaire following the concession contract. Construction activities are implemented in line with annual investment programmes approved by the MoEW and after approved final and technical designs for each site.

There is a similar situation with the skiing zone in the area of Dobrinishte village, where facilities have been constructed, though of much smaller scale.

As a result of the construction activities, carried out in the ski zone above the town of Bansko, the territories used to be disturbed. Therefore, the State party considers that these territories do not fit to the requirements for outstanding universal value of the World Heritage Convention. Though the ski zone in the region of Dobrinishte is not that well developed, to some extent its territory is also damaged. Therefore, with the current

nomination, the State Party proposes the two ski zones to be excluded from the World Heritage site and to be designated as a buffer zone of the property.

Though the two ski zones are proposed for exclusion from boundaries of the World Heritage property, the same will be kept within the boundaries of the Pirin National park and will proceed being part of the protected area, according to the Bulgarian legislation.

According to the Management Plan of Pirin National Park, both skiing zones fall within the Tourist zone of the protected area. Being part of the Tourist zone the corresponding regimes determined for it are applied for them as well.

The Management Plan does not stipulate any enlargement of the existing skiing zones or construction of new ones.

Summer tourism facilities

Mainly the existing huts within the park offer accommodation for tourists. The Management Plan does not foresee increase of the existing tourist accommodation facilities and construction of new huts. Most huts are located in the existing Tourist Zone and Construction Zone determined by the Management Plan.

As far as the camping is concerned, it is allowed in a few areas determined with the Management plan.

Summer tourism is concentrated mainly on marked trails and the tourist flow does not have a negative impact on wildlife and vegetation. In some areas and periods or for certain events, there might be exceptional concentration of visitors, which could have an impact like trampling the vegetation, dumping of garbage, etc.

The winter tourism is concentrated only in the two already mentioned skiing zones, determined as Tourist Zone in the Park Management Plan.

Roads and communication

The road network is limited and not very well maintained. It is used by both tourists and for maintenance and supply of the huts within the National Park with food and fuel. There is also a network of forest roads, which is currently used for monitoring, guarding and fire control activities. The Park rangers mainly use this network.

The temporary use of heavy machines during the construction period - was limited to the skiing zone above Bansko, causing some disturbance to the vegetation and a few animal species.

The use of helicopters and heliskiing is prohibited by the Management Plan and by the respective legislation.

Grazing

The grazing is a traditional means of livelihood for the communities surrounding the Park. During the last two decades a significant decrease in the number of the grazing animals (sheep and cattle) within the National Park has been registered in comparison to the past. Grazing is allowed in the Zone for sustainable use of open territories and in the Tourism zone. Goats are not allowed to graze within the Park and grazing in forests outside the meadows and pastures is prohibited.

Annually a full inventory of the grazing areas is provided. On the basis of the information received annual grazing plans are developed in compliance with the zoning of the territory provided with the Management plan. The National Park Directorate issues annual permits for grazing on the basis of these annual plans.

In the recent few years a return of the shepherds to the territory of the Park and particularly the highland meadows is registered.

In order to maintain or restore the traditional grazing and breeding of domestic animals in the Park territory and to improve the livelihood of the local population, the National Park Management Plan encourages the reconstruction of some previously existing grazing facilities as shepherd shelters.

The National Park directorate in cooperation with the Bulgarian Swiss biodiversity conservation project restored 8 shepherd shelters. They were restored in order to make possible the removal of the huts built by the shepherds. The shelters were allowed to be used for free in order to improve the living and working conditions of the shepherds. They also provide shelter for the tourists in case of bad weather.

There is quite high increase of the applications for grazing submitted in 2008 in the Park Administration. There is also an increase in the number of the grazed animals.

This interest is due to the announced programs on behalf of the Ministry of agriculture and food in partnership with the park Directorate. Those programs aim at supporting and recovering the local traditional practices. They are also directed to maintaining of the highmountain meadows and their biodiversity and to stop the expansion of the bushes and the trees.

(ii) Environmental pressure

Wastes

In the last years, there has been an increase of the quantities of solid waste disposed by visitors in the park, e.g. plastic bottles, boxes, packages and others.

This problem is concentrated mainly in the tourist zone (e.g., around picnic areas and resting places, tourist trails, huts). Some activities, directed to periodical collection of the waste are carried out, but this is still a problem, which has to be further addressed.

Wastewaters from huts and other buildings on the territory of the park are collected in septic holes (cesspits), some of which are not maintained and exploited in the best possible way. Therefore, some measures should be undertaken, which require the construction of the necessary wastewaters collection and treatment facilities.

The main source of wastewater within the National Park is the skiing zone above the town of Bansko. In relation to the above, the concession contract obliges the concessionaire to construct wastewater treatment facilities.

Climate change

So far, there are no negative changes in the populations of different species, resulting from the climate change. However, there is a probability of future increase of forest fires, similar to the ones already observed along the Mediterranean coast.

On the other hand, the Pirin Mountain, with its large altitudinal range, could play a significant role in response to global warming, allowing plant and animal species to migrate and to choose suitable habitats.

(iii) Natural disasters and risk preparedness

The large territory and diverse relief of Pirin NP are prerequisites for occurrence of some natural hazards such as fires and avalanches. These are considered predictable and it is possible to undertake preventive measures.

Fires

The natural fires are a comparatively rare phenomenon in the National Park. On the other hand, there are registered cases of fires ignited by people, intentionally or not. Having in mind the increasing number of visitors, fires should be considered potential threat. Annually are developed Fire Prevention Plans for Pirin NP. They are based on preliminary information about the local conditions provided by the NP staff (rangers) for each Park sub-region. All Park regions have the necessary equipment for fire control. Yearly training and instructions of staff and volunteers are organized by the Pirin NP Directorate together with the respective departments of the Ministry of Interior – National Fire and Emergency Service, National Police Service, the State Agency for Civil Protection, etc. From May until October, the NP staff is on duty also on weekends and during the national holidays. The Park users are also involved in implementing the envisaged fire precaution measures. Campaigns for public awareness regarding forest fires are regularly organized.

Avalanches

Since centuries, avalanches have been part of the natural processes in the Park and in some cases they lead to changes in the existing communities. The largest avalanche on the Balkans is located within the NP boundaries, on the northern slope of the mountain. It presents serious hazard to the tourists practicing winter sports in the newly developed skiing area. Therefore, an analysis of the avalanche hazard was provided, as well as an assessment of the possibilities and prevention measures including announcing and marking of potential avalanche areas, developing of methods for monitoring of avalanches, training of the staff for cases of natural hazards. When necessary, the NP Management Plan allows for installation of avalanches prevention facilities, but only after their approval by the MoEW and in coordination with the NP Directorate.

(iv) Visitors/tourism pressures

Tourists frequently visit Pirin National Park during both summer and winter season. Summer tourism develops mainly close to the road accesses and is mostly focused on marked trails, thus limiting the impact on the ecosystems, as the pressure is not too high. The trails are also in good condition. Their usage doesn't possess a threat to the species and their habitats. Sometimes along the trails, gathering of decorative plants occurs but this does not affect considerably their populations. Mountaineering, rock climbing and caving are also very popular; they do not threaten the property and its natural values. Winter tourism is largely limited to the defined skiing zones around the skiing facilities. The character of the practiced ski sport by itself does not result in a negative impact on the ecosystem. However, the construction work, including deforestation and soil leveling, has led to advanced local soil erosion and had influenced the sensible plant and animal species. National Park Directorate annually provides monitoring over the tourist flow in order to ensure its better management and determine its influence over the biological diversity. The park administration is trying to ensure additional funding for the preparation of a Strategy for management of the tourism, which is also settled as a priority in the

Management plan. The aim is to optimize the tourist flow by more even distribution over the Parks territory in order to avoid adverse pressure over particular areas.

(v) Number of inhabitants within the property

There are no permanent inhabitants within the boundaries of the Park. The table below provides information on the population number in the adjacent municipalities:

Municipality	# of inhabitants	Year of last census
Gotse Delchev	32,748	2001
Bansko	13,471	2000
Razlog	22,197	2001
Simitli	16,353	2000
Kresna	6,432	2000
Strumjani	7,340	2001
Sandanski	42,442	2000
Total	140,983	

5. Protection and Management of the Property

The mentioned conventions and European directives are the starting points for determining of the main purposes and measures of the effective National Park Management Plan:

- United Nations Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage
- European Landscape Convention
- United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
- Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention)
- Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Bonn Convention)
- Council Directive 92/43 on the Conservation of Natural Habitats of Wild Fauna and Flora
- Council Directive 79/409 on the Conservation of Wild Birds
- Seville Strategy for Biosphere Reserves, March 1995 – UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme

The management of the property is closely related to the implementation of the following Bulgarian nature conservation acts (*See Annex 4*):

- Protected Areas Act (1998)
- Biodiversity Act (2002)
- Medicinal Plants Act (2000)
- Hunting and Game Protection Act (2000)
- Act on waste management (2003)
- Fishing and Aquatic Cultures Act (2001)
- Concessions Act (1995)
- Water Act (1999)
- Forestry Act (1997)

The main management framework for the Pirin National Park is the approved 2004-2014 Management Plan. It considers the existing national and international legislation and guarantees the integral management of the territory. Expanding the World Heritage

Property boundaries in a way almost to overlap that of the National Park (without the two ski zones) will simplify the Management Plan implementation.

The management of the Pirin National Park is under the responsibilities of the MoEW and especially of its National Nature Protection Service that is responsible of the coordination and control of the protected areas. The Pirin National Park Directorate is responsible for the direct management and applies the government policy concerning the National Park.

5.a Ownership

According to the Protected Areas Act, the territory of the National Parks is an exclusive state property.

According to the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria (art. 18, p. 1-2) the territory of the protected areas of international importance is exclusive state property, including the terrain where sites and facilities have been constructed regardless of their ownership, i.e. it cannot be disowned or transformed into another kind of property. The National Parks being defined such by the Protected Areas Act.

5.b Protective designation

See Annex 3

The statute and the area of the Pirin NP was a subject of several changes:

- **Governmental Decree #1388/29.01.1934** of the Ministry of Agriculture declares the state property Bayuvi Dupki as a reserve. In 1977, the Bayuvi Dupki reserve was included in the list of the Biosphere Reserves of the UNESCO Man and Biosphere Programme.
- **Order # 3074/ 08.11.1962** of the Forestry Board of the Council of Ministers declares Vihren People's Park with an area of 6,736 ha, including *"...the watersheds of the rivers of Banderitsa and Damjanitsa, sections 18-54 of the Bansko forestry station with an area of 2,908 ha and 3,828 ha of the alpine zone of Pirin..."*
- **Order # 3011/ 30.09.1974** of the Ministry of Forests and Nature Protection declares Pirin People's Park with an area of 26,413.8 ha. Its purpose is as follows: *"...For the conservation of the specific character of the central parts of Pirin mountain, where the alpine character, the existing habitats and the endemic and relict plant and animal species are of scientific and cultural value, and because of the possibilities for development of national and international tourism, outlined by the approved general principles of the territorial planning of "Ski Region Pirin"... The reserves of Bayuvi Dupki, Seimen Tepe and Malka Dzindziritsa must be included within Pirin People's Park, preserving their already defined reserve regime according to the Law on Nature Protection..."*
- **Order # 594/ 03.03.1976** of the Ministry of Forests and Nature Protection excludes an area of 34 ha. *"... Because of the exploitation of recently discovered resources of marble and under Article 22 of the Law on Nature Protection, the following subsections are excluded from the territory of Pirin People's Park: 306-a, b, c, 1, c, g, s - Pirin railway station with a total area of 34.0 ha ..."* (the order is not available).
- **Order # 976/26.12.1979** of the Nature Protection Committee of the Council of Ministers, enlarged the territories of the Bayuvi Dupki and Malka Dzindziritsa reserves so that they formed one reserve - Bayuvi Dupki-Dzindziritsa with a total area of 2,873 ha.

- **Since 1983** Pirin People's park was designated a World Heritage Property with an area of 27,400 ha (27,442.9 ha).
- **Order # 1036/ 17.11.1987** of the Nature Protection Committee of the Council of Ministers declares that new 12,639 ha are included into the territory of People's Park Pirin: "... of which: 1) Forested lands with a total area of 4,369.,9 ha. 2) Agricultural lands – highland pastures located between the forested lands, included in People's Park with a total area of 8,276 ha. Excludes from the borders of People's Park Pirin 16.,1 ha from: 1) Dobriniste Forestry station – sections: 36- g (part), 39- b (part), 3 with total area 10,1 ha. 2) Sandansky Forestry board - sections 177- a with area of 6.0 ha. The grazing of domestic animals except goats is allowed within the high mountain pastures" (the order is not available).
- **Order # RD- 223/ 26.08.1994** of the Ministry of Environment and Water designates the reserve Yulen with an area of 3156,2 ha on the territory of Bansko municipality.
- **Order # 395/ 15.10.1999** of the Minister of Environment and Water Pirin People's Park is categorized a National Park according to Paragraph 2 of the Transitory and Concluding Regulations of the Protected areas Act (This area was later recalculated to 40 356,0 ha, without border changes). The Kulinoto ski zone and Sandanski resort area were excluded from the national park. The reserves and managed reserves within the National Parks retain their regimes defined with the declaration orders.

Pirin in other international projects and agreements:

- **Pirin as a CORINE site**

The CORINE project implemented in the 1994-1998 period had the following goals:

- Elaboration of a detailed database for biodiversity and habitats of European biodiversity importance;
- Identification of sites to be included in the European Natura 2000 network;
- Re-assessment of the priorities for conservation of biodiversity set by the National Biodiversity Strategies;
- Elaboration of monitoring framework for key habitats and species of high conservation importance.

The identification of Pirin NP value as a CORINE Site (F 00002700) has also confirmed it is a key territory of a high conservation importance. Pirin as CORINE site includes not only the present Park's territory but also the adjacent areas, and its total size is 77,909 ha. The information is available in Arc GIS database (.shp file and geodatabase) and in coordinate system WGS_84UTM_35 N. The information is kept by the NNPS of MoEW.

See map 2.6 in Annex 2.

- **Pirin as an Important Bird Area (IBA)**

The IBA Programme has been implementing by the Bulgarian Society for Protection of Birds (BSPB). The programme's goal is to establish and protect a network of sites called Important Bird Areas. Resulting from the implementation of this programme about 114 IBA were declared. Pirin was included in the IBA List in 2005. The boundaries of Pirin as an IBA include not only the national park's territory but also part of Southern Pirin.

See map 2.7 in Annex 2.

- **Pirin as a Natura 2000 site**

Being a member state of the European Union, Bulgaria is developing its Natura 2000 network. The Bulgarian Biodiversity Act foresees the establishment of Natura 2000 in Bulgaria. Regarding Pirin, the whole territory of Pirin National Park is proposed as Natura 2000 site, according to Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora and Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds. Many of the territories surrounding the Park are also designated as Natura 2000 sites according to the EU Habitat Directive.

See map 2.8 in Annex 2.

- **Pirin as an Important plant area (IPA)**

In 2003, the Plants along the Borders Project, funded by the Regional Environmental Center provided a pilot analysis of the Important Plant Areas in Bulgaria. The experts have identified:

- endangered plant species
- endangered habitats
- list of potential Important Plant Areas in Bulgaria
- potential trans-boundary Important Plant Areas

As a result, the project has identified 114 Bulgarian Important Plant Areas including Pirin Mountain. The Pirin Mountain is an Important Plant Area according to the following criteria: endangered species, endangered habitats and floral diversity.

The project does not set the borders of the Pirin site. The proposal is that only the National park in its present borders is declared an Important Plant Area.

- **Pirin within the UNESCO MAB Programme**

In 1997, the Bauyvi Dupki-Dzindziritsa Reserve was designated a Biosphere Reserve under the UNESCO Man and Biosphere Programme. The reserve is a strict reserve and meets the requirements of IUCN category I. Human intervention is not allowed except guarding, visits with scientific purposes and hiking along marked trails that are defined by an Order of the Minister of Environment and Water. Therefore, the reserve does not meet the requirements of a Biosphere Reserve set by the Seville Strategy.

5.c Means of implementing protective measures

According to the Protected Areas Act, the National Parks are exclusively state property and being such the MoEW and its regional departments provides their management, guarding and control over the activities, carried out in them.

In 1999, the Pirin National Park Directorate was established as a structure of the MoEW in order to ensure the on-site management.

According to the Protected Areas Act, the National Park Directorate:

- provides the management of the site;
- assigns the implementation of supporting, restoration and regulation activities, as well as activities related to the tourist development;
- issues annual licenses for grazing, licenses for use of timber by the local population within the activities for forest maintenance and restoration;
- issues licenses for gathering of mushrooms, medicinal plants and wild fruits in quantities and from places, determined by the Management Plan;
- provides control over the fulfillment of the regimes for use of the natural resources, determined by the management plan;
- provides control over activities, carried out by other organizations, institutions and people on the territory of the Park;
- organizes monitoring over the components of the environment;
- maintains database for the site;
- imposes sanctions for violations.

In order to provide effective control over the activities carried out in the National Park and the compliance with the regimes and norms of use, determined by the Management Plan, the territory of the Park was divided in several Park Regions. Every Park Region is managed by chief inspector – the head of the guard. Mobile guards of the park’s staff permanently monitor and control the activities carried out in the whole territory.

For each violation, registered in the National park the respective sanctions foreseen by the national law are imposed.

The National Park Directorate concluded agreements with representatives of other local authorities, structures of the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, which aimed at establishing of a system for control on and combating poaching and other illegal activities in the forests, as well as cooperation and joint actions in cases of fires. The PAA requires development of management plans for the protected areas within the National Park category. The approved Pirin NP Management Plan provides the framework for the conservation of the ecosystems and biodiversity of the property. The MP has been developed and is enforced over the whole territory of the National Park. It provides zoning of the territory of the Park and determines special regimes and norms for the uses in the particular zones according to their conservation value. In that connection, the MP divided the Park’s territory in six zones with specific management regimes.

In compliance with the Management Plan, the National Park Directorate annually prepares plan for activities to be carried out in the site, which are in the following directions:

- Conservation of the biological diversity;
- Sustainable use of resources;
- Information provision;
- Public relations, interpretation and promotion;
- Environmental education;
- Scientific researches and monitoring aimed at conservation and maintenance of the biodiversity in Pirin NP;
- Improving the conditions for tourism and the tourist infrastructure;
- Supporting the development of the adjacent territories;
- Institutional development and training of the National Park Directorate.

There is no buffer zone surrounding the Park.

There is no legal framework for designation of buffer zones around the protected areas, which belong to the National Park category. In the past, buffer zones were designated only around protected areas, which are “strict reserves” and “managed reserves”. According to the last changes in the specific Bulgarian legislation - Biodiversity Conservation Act, those buffer zones, were transformed into protected areas from the category of “protected site”. The zoning of the Park, as well as the special regimes for use, determined for each of the zones, according to the Management Plan of the site, provide conditions for adequate protection of the most valuable zones, which are strictly protected and form the core zone of the property.

5.d Existing plans related to municipality and region in which the proposed property is located

Below are some of the main plans and strategies that envisage the construction, resources use and other activities on the Park’s territory:

Plans	Date of issue/ termination
For the Blagoevgrad District	

Regional development Plan of Blagoevgrad District (to be revised each seventh year)	2007-2013
Municipal Territorial Development Plans (to be revised each seventh year) for the adjacent municipalities of the National park. Municipalities of Bansko Municipality of Razlog Municipality of Simitly Municipality of Strumjani Municipality of Kresna Municipality of Sandanski Municipality of Gotse delchev	2007-2013 (open plans, which are revised annually)
Strategies for development of the municipalities including strategy for development of tourism	2007-2013
General Urban Development Plan of the skiing zone with center the town of Bansko	1999
Territorial Development Plan of tourism and skiing zone with center the town of Bansko	2000
Projects for the water supply infrastructure of the Park and the adjacent zone	1999
Building and regulation plans concerning the zone adjacent to the Park	
Forest Development Projects for the State Forestry Enterprises in the zone adjacent to Pirin National Park (subject of revision on every ten years) State Forestry enterprise „Saqndanski“ State Forestry enterprise „Katunci“ State Forestry enterprise „Strumjani“ State Forestry enterprise „Kresna“ and State Forestry enterprise „Simitly“ State Forestry enterprise „Dobrinishte“ State Forestry enterprise „Goce Delchev“ State Forestry enterprise „Razlog“	Period for action: 2008 – 2018 2000 – 2010 2000 – 2010 1999 – 2008 for both new plans are being developed in the present 2001 – 2011 2006 – 2016 2003 -2013

5.e Property management plan or other management system

Following the prescriptions of the Bulgarian Protected Areas Act the property, being as well a National Park, is managed according to Management Plan approved by the Council of Ministers and revised each tenth year (**See annex 5**).

In 2001, the Minister of Environment and Water mandated the Bulgarian-Swiss Biodiversity Conservation Programme for elaboration of the First Pirin NP Management Plan following its re-categorization according to the new Protected Areas Act. On 6th of August 2004, the Management Plan was approved by the Decision #646 of the Council of Ministers. The present Management Plan will be in force until 2014 but every fourth year, public hearings regarding its implementation will be organized and amendments made.

The definition of objectives of the management plan followed the requirements of the Protected Areas Act and the adopted national categories system, which on its side follows

closely the World Conservation Union (IUCN) management category system. The whole Pirin NP is an IUCN Category II protected area.

The purposes of the management plan include:

- To provide the necessary information on the types of habitats, localities and species, which are subjects of European directives
- To resolve the complex tasks for protection of the biodiversity and landscape diversity, as well as the recreation activities
- To develop the database and the geographic information system (GIS) of Pirin NP
- To identify the responsible for different aspects of the management of the protected area and the zones included persons/ institutions
- To determine the regimes and the relevant norms for use of the zones and areas within the Park territory
- To determine the priorities and measures for development and use, and the activities for implementation of the prescribed tasks
- To provide the necessary information for applying for funding of priority programs and projects
- To determine the participants, partners and their position in the realization of the Plan

The Management Plan formulated the following long-term objectives of the National Park:

1. Conservation, protection and maintenance of the ecosystem and landscape naturalness and intactness;
2. Provide opportunities for environmental education and interpretation;
3. Stimulate scientific studies;
4. Incomes generation for the local communities as a result of the opportunities and advantages of the National Park;
5. Improving the management policy and the specialized warding of the National Park;
6. Observing the legal and institutional framework.

The management of the property follows the approved zoning of the territory. Six zones with respective objectives and restrictions have been identified and mapped accordingly:

(See map 2.5 in Annex 2):

Zone Ia – Reserve Zone includes territories of the Bayuvi Dupki-Djindjiritsa and Yulen Strict Reserves according to the Orders for their designation. The activities allowed include:

- a) Guarding
- b) Life-rescue operations
- c) Visits with scientific purposes
- d) Hiking only along the marked trails, including with education purposes
- e) Collecting seed material, wild plants and animals for scientific purposes or for their reintroduction at other places, in quantities, mode and time excluding the disturbance of the ecosystems
- f) Carrying out of sanitary activities only with the permission of the MoEW issued after receipt of a positive scientific reference from the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and positive decision of the National Council on the Biological Diversity

Zone I b – Zone of Limited Human Intervention includes territories without changed or with only modestly changed habitats with preserved natural features and processes, localities of threatened habitats of species of conservation significance. The activities allowed are:

- a) Guarding
- b) Life-rescue operations

- c) Scientific research
- d) Hiking tourism only along the marked trails, including with education purposes
- e) Collecting seed material, wild plants and animals for scientific purposes or for their reintroduction at other places, in quantities, mode and time excluding the disturbance of the ecosystems
- f) Extinguishing fires and carrying out of sanitary activities in the forests, damaged as a result of natural disasters and calamities with the permission of the NPD, issued upon approval of the Scientific Council

Zone II a – Zone of Conservation of the Forest Ecosystems and Recreation includes territories of the Pirin NP covered by forest vegetation, including dwarf-pine. The activities allowed are:

- a) Guarding
- b) Life-rescue operations
- c) Extinguishing fires and fire-safety activities according to the action plan of the NPD
- d) Maintaining the tourist trails and the safety facilities
- e) Passing of domestic animals on trails defined by a project
- f) Scientific research
- g) Hiking and recreation
- h) Nordic skiing following marked trails only
- i) Collecting mushrooms, herbs and wild fruits for personal needs
- j) Maintenance and restoration activities in the forests in cases of strictly proven necessity
- k) Regulating the numbers of certain animal species
- l) Angling

Zone II b – Zone of Sustainable Use of Open Areas and Recreation includes the pasture areas of the Pirin NP, traditionally related to the pasture stockbreeding and maintained by this activity. The activities allowed are:

- a) Guarding
- b) Life-rescue operations
- c) Extinguishing fires and fire-safety activities according to the action plan of the NPD
- d) Maintaining the tourist trails and the safety facilities
- e) Scientific research
- f) Hiking and recreation
- g) Collecting mushrooms, herbs and wild fruits for personal needs
- h) Maintenance and restoration activities in cases of strictly proven necessity
- i) Regulating the numbers of certain animal species
- j) Stocking with Balkan Trout and angling at places, defined by the NPD
- k) Grazing of sheep, cows and horses with a permit from the NPD

Zone III – Tourism Zone includes territories of the Pirin NP in the regions of Bansko and Dobrinishte with existing intensive tourist pressure and existing sports facilities. The activities allowed are:

- a) Guarding
- b) Life- rescuing operations
- c) Extinguishing fires and fire-safety activities according to the action plan of the NPD
- d) Waste collecting and transporting the hard refuse, coordinated with the NPD;
- e) Scientific research
- f) Hiking and recreation
- g) Specialized tourism (horseback riding, cycling, skiing, etc.)
- h) Collecting mushrooms, herbs and wild fruits for personal needs

- i) Maintenance and restoration activities
- j) Regulating the numbers of certain animal species
- k) Stocking with Balkan Trout and angling at places, defined by the NPD
- l) Grazing of sheep, cows and horses with a permit from the NPD
- m) Sports

Zone IV - Zone of buildings and facilities includes the regions of the existing huts, lodges, bungalows, Park administration buildings, transformation stations, water catchments, openings for air electric power lines, fire-prevention openings, roads, existing skiing runs and facilities, as well as the ones that are under constructions according to the approved projects, the sites of new construction envisaged by the projects and included in the management plan, and constructions for the purposes of the National Park determined by the Plan. The zone allows the long-term use of the existing tourist resources and sports facilities with maximum preservation of the landscape qualities. All the activities regarding constructions and reconstructions of infrastructure have to be coordinated with the National Park Directorate.

The above-described zoning guarantees biodiversity and landscape protection within, as well as the use of the National Park.

There is a special **Regulation for management, assignment of activities for maintenance and restoration, providing of tourist services, guarding and control in protected areas exclusively state property.**

According to this Regulation the corresponding structures of the Ministry of environment and water that are responsible for the management and control of protected areas exclusively state property (National Park Directorate) are obliged to develop, as follows:

1. Management plan of the protected area;
2. Annual plans for the activities related to usage of the natural resources in the protected area, including as follows:
 - Plan for maintenance and restoration activities in the forests;
 - Plan for grazing and usage of hay;
 - Plan for usage of medicinal plans;
 - Plan for gathering of mushrooms and wild fruits;
3. Annual plans for activities in protected areas, provided by the competent authorities and funded by the Enterprise for management of environmental activities;
4. Annual plan for monitoring over the components of the environment.

The Management plans was developed in compliance with the Regulation for management plan preparation.

The annual plans for the activities related to usage of the natural resources in the protected area are being developed in compliance to the ecological status of the protected area and the zoning and regimes, provided by the Management plan.

The scope for the use of natural recourse is being determined after a special assessment over the status of the corresponding resource, prepared on the basis of an analyses over the data received as a result of the monitoring activities, provided annually by the NP Directorate.

The plan for grazing and usage of hay, the plan for usage of medicinal plans and the plan for gathering of mushrooms and wild fruits are being approved by an order of the competent authority, in the case of Pirin NP this is the Director of the NP.

With the annual plans are being determined:

1. The places and territories for grazing of livestock, the usage if hey, gathering of wild fruits, mushrooms and medicinal plants

2. the breeds of domestic animals, which could be grazed within the property; the species of the wild fruits, mushrooms and medicinal plants, which could be collected;
3. the number of the animals that could be grazed, respectively the quantities of wild fruits, mushrooms and medicinal plants that could be collected;
4. the period for grazing and respectively for collecting of wild fruits, mushrooms and medicinal plants;
5. the means for grazing as well as for usage of hay and collecting of wild fruits, mushrooms and medicinal plants.

The plans for maintenance and restoration activities in the forests, related to the usage of fuel wood are being developed annually by the Regional departments of the MOEW (the Pirin NP Directorate) on the basis of assessment for the state of the forests. Those plans are approved by the minister after consultation with the National Nature protection service directorate within the MOEW.

The annual plans for activities in protected areas, provided by the competent authorities include activities funded mainly by the state budget, the State Enterprise for Management of Environmental Activities (SEMEPA) and other sources. **See information available in point 5.f.**

The annual plans for monitoring over the components of the environment are being developed by the regional structures of the MOEW, respectively the Pirin NP Directorate in coordination with the Executive Environmental Agency which is the institution responsible for the overall monitoring of the environmental components.

5.f Sources and levels of finance

The state budget covers the salaries and social security tax of the staff of the Pirin NP administration.

The main source of funding for the implementation of conservation measures envisaged by the PAs Management Plans is the State Enterprise for Management of Environmental Protection Activities (SEMEPA). The Environmental Protection Act stipulates the establishment of SEMEPA and its main aim is to provide funding of activities in the protected areas. Yearly, the regional structures of MoEW, in this case the Pirin NP Directorate, are planning of and applying for the necessary funds to implement activities within the respective PAs. The PAs Management Plans envisage these activities.

SEMEPA is providing funds for activities in the following areas:

- Maintenance and restoration activities targeting conservation of rare and threatened species of plants and animals and their habitats;
- Development of education and public relation programmes and information materials;
- Scientific studies and monitoring;
- Maintenance and restoration activities within exclusively state owned PAs including WHPs;
- Fire prevention and activities against fire;
- Building of information centers and points.

The table below provides information about the budgets for staff and management, as well as for activities in Pirin NP.

Year	Resources provided by the state budget for staff (incl. insurance) and management (in BGN)	Resources provided by the SEMEPA (in BGN)
2004	513 762	706 600
2005	469 399	482 030
2006	608 153	149 170
2007	594 076	87 100
2008	583 341	96 000

The funds from the state budget are covering the following:

- a. Salaries;
- b. Additional payments;
- c. Social insurances;
- d. Special clothing;
- e. Expenses for repair of cars, fuel, etc.
- f. Telephone and post services;
- g. Insurance of the property;
- h. Office and other materials;
- i. Capacity building.

In the recent years, national and international agencies have contributed to specific activities and projects:

- In 2004, Pirin NP applied and got funding for a project of interpretation trail suitable for disadvantaged people. The National Trust Eco-Fund funded the project;
- In 2001 the Bulgarian Swiss Biodiversity Conservation Programme provided funding for elaboration of Pirin NP Management Plan;
- In 2005, the Bulgarian Biodiversity Foundation is providing funding for the implementation of some measure, like the establishment of the scientific and consultative council and to promote the participation of the local stakeholders, within the frame of the SDC funded Pro-biodiversity Partnerships: Nature beyond Conservation Project;
- In order to develop the current nomination file MoEW submitted a Preparatory assistance request to the World Heritage Center. The requested assistance contains consulting services for nomination file preparation for extension of the Pirin NP WHP.
- In 2006 the Municipality of Razlog in partnership with Pirin NPD received funding from the PHARE Program of the EU, for the implementation of a project, called "Environmental protection and sustainable development in transboundaries areas". The project envisages the establishment of an interpretative-educational trail.
- In 2006 the Pirin Tourist forum, a Bulgarian NGO in partnership with Pirin NP Directorate received funding from the PHARE Program of the EU for the realization of a project, called "Green paths in Pirin, East Macedonia and Thrace". The project envisages the establishment of educational trails and informational points.
- In 2007 the National Park Directorate in cooperation with Razlog municipality carried out a project for construction of three eco trails, with funding ensured by the PHARE project for transborder cooperation between Bulgaria and Greece "Beside the springs of Mesta river Nestos" .
- In 2008 the National park Directorate applied for funding with a project called "Sustainable management of forests and environmental protection by means of establishing a fire protection system and information center". The project was

approved and will be funded by a financial mechanism of the European Union. The same will be implemented within the period 31.01.2009 - 31.01.2010.

- In 2008 the National park won funding for a project within the Program for European territorial cooperation between Bulgaria and Greece for the period 2007 – 2013 (INTERREG IV A). The project envisaged the establishment of tourist complexes - camping areas in the region of Pirin chalet, Sinanitsa chalet and in the region of Mozgovitsa and will be implemented till the end of 31.01.2010.

Besides, in partnership with the Association for Sustainable development – Kustendil, the National park Directorate is looking for funding in order to realize a project, envisaging construction of water filtration facilities in three chalets, located within the National Park. This project is envisaged as implementation of some of the activities, foreseen in the Management Plan.

Activities related to conservation and protection of species and natural habitats in protected areas will be provided mainly by using funds from the “Operational Program Environment” and also other financial instruments of the EU. The regional structures of the MOEW, including the National park administrations (i.e. Pirin National park Directorate) have been determined as beneficiaries.

More than 100.000 million Euro will be ensured within priority 3 “Conservation and restoration of the biodiversity” under the Operational Program “Environment” for the period 2007-2013.

In this relation, it should be mentioned that in the end of 2008 was launched the first call of proposals under this priority. The call was for projects which main subject is “Conservation and restoration of biological diversity in Bulgaria”.

The total amount of the financial support, which is about to be provided within the upper mentioned procedure is 13 098 930 BGN. Other similar procedures will be launched soon, as well.

There is no entry fee to the Park.

5.g Sources of expertise and training in conservation and management techniques

Team of specialists from different institutions (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, NGOs, and municipal experts) formed to proceed with the necessary inventories and studies and to work with the NPD to develop the Management Plan. The Plan makes provision for the establishment of a permanent Scientific Council to advise the Park staff on conservation matters.

The Pirin NP Management Plan envisages organization of annual trainings and seminars for the staff. As there is no specialized institution to provide trainings for the protected areas staff, the MoEW organizes annually training for the Park staffs and for the other regional structures. The main training topics include:

- Specialized training in flora and fauna
- Specialized training in PR
- Language courses
- Specialized training in elaboration and maintenance of GIS data base
- Introduction to and implementation of the national and international environmental legislation (including World Heritage Convention)
- Exchange visits and participation to trainings provided by the Alpine PA Network, Bulgarian Biodiversity Foundation, Pirin Tourism Forum, etc.

Different national and international organizations provide additional training, like the Workshop on Forest and NP organized during the preparation of the MP and supported by the Government of Switzerland.

The directors of the three Bulgarian National Parks have also regular meetings and meetings with the staff of the National Nature Protection Service within the MoEW.

5.h Visitor facilities and statistics

The Pirin NP provides the following tourist facilities:

- 13 main tourist itineraries (including the international itinerary E-4) and 17 secondary ones exist. The main itineraries are marked according to the standards of the BTS; signboards in Bulgarian (transliterated in Latin letters) indicate the direction and the duration of the itinerary. The secondary trails are not marked.
- The hiking in the Bayuvi Dupki-Dzindziritsa and Yulen reserves is strictly controlled. According to the Protected Areas Act, hiking in the Bulgarian strict and managed reserves, including for educational purposes (in Pirin NP these are particularly Bajuvi Dupki-Djindjirica and Yulen reserves), is permitted only following the marked trails, inscribed in the Order for Declaration of the Minister of Environment and Water and/or the MP. In 2004, such trails were designed for both reserves within Pirin National Park. As for the visits with scientific purposes, a special permission issued by the MoEW is required. Besides the permission, guide from the NPD must accompany the group. There are restrictions concerning the number of the people in the group – it should not exceed 15.
- Some of the winter tourist trails were equipped with facilities which to ensure the security of the visitors. For example, along the trail starting from Demjanica chalet up to Tevno lake, special metal rope parapets were built;
- A wooden platform which to ensure the access of tourists to the the oldest tree in Bulgaria - the Baikusheva mura (a *Pinus peuce* species) was built in order to prevent the negative influence of the tourists on the roots and the soil around the tree.
- In 2004, two new trails were inaugurated: the Demjanishka River Tells Stories Interpretative Trail and an educational trail for disabled people in the site of Rolbana.
- The following information points were established:
 - Information Centre in the NP Directorate Office in Bansko. The Centre offers various informational materials, exhibition, meeting hall with a possibility to make different multimedia projections, library for visitors.
 - The main entrance to the Park in Bansko
 - Information office in the Village of Dobrinishte
 - Information and guarding point at Vihren hut
 - Information and guarding point at Demjanitsa hut
 - Information and guarding point at Yavorov hut
 - Guarding point at Gotze Delchev hut
 - Information and guarding point at Pirin hut
 - Information and guarding point at Kamenitsa hut
 - Information point in the town of Dobrinishte (built in 2008).

The Mountain Rescue Service (MRS) is responsible for the visitors' safety in the mountain. The central office of the MRS is in Bansko, but there are nine stations in the different huts in the National Park: Vihren, Demjanitsa, Tevno Ezero, Bezbog, Kamenitsa and Yavorov. The NPD also has offices in the towns of Sandanski and Kresna and provides information and guarding at the site Varbite.

Different tourist constructions and facilities in the Park offer accommodation. Their capacity is for 1,997 tourists a night.

Type of facilities	Number of Beds
Huts	885
Hotels	214
Cabins	123
Buildings of different administrative institutions	615
Camping Grounds –	160
Total –	1,997

There is no statistics on the visitor number and their pressure on Pirin NP. So far, only the hut keepers maintain some statistics. They provide the data to the headquarters of the Bulgarian Tourist Union where from the National Park Directorate obtains the processed data.

The table below shows the number of people that used to be accommodated in the accommodation facilities (chalets and shelters) within the national park for the period 2002 and 2006, as well as the number of nights for the same period

	2002		2003		2004		2005		2006	
	Number of people	Number of nights								
Accommodation facilities - Chalets and shelters										
Vihren challet	1483	2056	1389	2062	2807	3110	2050	2711	972	1005
Banderitsa challet	1202	1890	1030	1888	2905	3040	1450	1982	633	761
Demjanitsa challet	1287	2020	1252	1320	No data	No data	1152	1192	975	1147
Shelter Tevno Lake	566	566	586	752	No data	No data	580	743	462	622
Sinanitsa challet	1225	1398	1315	1405	1310	1397	350	350	No data	No data
Pirin challet	1438	1656	600	600	620	970	620	960	750	750
Yavorov challet	1553	1971	1610	2383	1873	2401	1401	1670	1518	1875
Kamenitsa	1111	1111	1464	2920	978	1529	1250	1250	2568	2568
Malina challet	300	300	105	105	200	375	200	200	420	420
Shelter Spano pole	No data	No data	20	80	70	120	250	250	350	350

5.i Policies and programmes related to the presentation and promotion of the property

The National Park implements series of activities that aim to promote Pirin as WHP and to raise the general public awareness on conservation issues. So far, an emphasis is given to the work with schoolchildren. The main events organized/ information materials produced are described below:

- 1. Annual photography competitions** on different topics like landscape phenomena, water, etc.
- 2. Events for children in the open** held in different mountain huts, which include photography and painting competitions. Photos and paintings are used to produce different informational materials, calendars, etc.
- 3. Days of Pirin** – since 2002 the Park Directorate in partnerships with the adjacent municipalities organize annually local events to raise the awareness about the National Park. These involve meetings with local people, concerts, exhibitions, hikes in the mountain, etc.
- 4. Issuing Orbel Bulletin** that informs local people about the activities of Pirin NP Directorate, presents the Park plants and animals, other protected areas, joint partnership events, etc.
- 5. Educational activities** tailored for different target groups. Educational materials such as posters, brochures, etc. are distributed.
- 6. Leaflets** offering information about norms and regimes in the different Park zones, fire hazard season and prevention measures, general information about the Park.
- 7. Information and promotion brochures in Bulgarian and English:**
 - Demjanishka river tells stories; Yulen, Bayuvi Dupki – Dzinidziritca reserves (in Bulgarian)
 - Remarkable Plants in Pirin NP Check-list (in Bulgarian)
 - Wonderful Pirin Video (in Bulgarian), 2002 – author Drago Mateev, duration 90 min.
 - Book on Pirin Habitats (in Bulgarian)
 - Pirin National Park– presentation brochure in Bulgarian and English
- 8. Education exhibitions in the NPD Information center**
- 9. Opening of interpretative educational trails**
- 10. Publication in regional and national media**
- 11. Periodical regional Olympiads**

5.j Staffing levels

Currently (2008) the Pirin National Park Administration includes 54 permanent employees. Each year during the fire hazard season, the Park Directorate contracts additional people as fire prevention staff.

The structure of the staff is the following:

I. Director

II. Management and Control Department

- Head of Management and Control Department
- 5 Chief Inspectors of the Park Regions
- Senior Control and Security Experts
- Junior Control and Security Experts

III. Experts Department

- Head of the department

- Chief Maintenance and restoration activities Expert
- Chief Infrastructure Expert
- Junior GIS Expert
- Junior Flora Expert
- Junior Fauna Expert
- Chief Education Programmes and Information Centers Expert
- Chief Tourism Expert

IV. Accounting, Economic Activities and Human Resources Department

- Head of the department
- Legal advisor
- Junior human resources expert
- Junior Accounting and Cash Specialist
- Junior Cash Specialist
- Technical Assistants -4

The administrative structure complies with the requirements of the Protected Areas Act and the regulations for its implementation.

6. Monitoring

The Environmental Executive Agency of the MoEW is the institution responsible for the overall monitoring of the environmental components and for the establishment and maintenance of the National Biodiversity Monitoring System (<http://monitoring.biodiversity.bg/>).

In the period 2004 -2006 was elaborated and approved a national framework for observation and information of the biological diversity in compliance with the European directives, related to conservation of species and habitats.

In 2007 with an Order of the minister of environment and water a National Biodiversity Monitoring System in Bulgaria (NBMS) and a practical manual for collection and storage of data were approved. A special regulation was also adopted.

In the National Biodiversity Monitoring System are also determined the subjects of the monitoring and the monitoring schemes.

Most of the habitats and species to be monitored are located within protected areas.

The following species on the territory of the park are being monitored within the NBMS.

Plants - *Leontopodium alpinum*, *Gentiana lutea*, *Gentiana punctata*, *Oxytropis urumovii*, *Papaver degenii*, *Thymus perinicus*, *Erigeron vichrensis*;

Fish species - *Salmo trutta morpha fario*;

Birds - *Tetrao urogallus*, *Alectoris graeca*, *Bonasa bonasia*, *Bubo bubo*, *Aegolius funereus*, *Aquila chrysaetos*, *Falco peregrinus*, *Picoides leucotos*, *Falco cherrug*, *Buteo rufinus*, *Circaetus gallicus*;

Reptiles - *Lacerta vivipara*;

Mammals - *Rupicapra rupicapra*, *Capreolus capreolus*, *Sus scrofa*, *Ursus arctos*, *Canis lupus*.

Besides, in the three national parks, including Pirin National park a program for Complex Environmental Monitoring (CEM) is provided, which envisages also monitoring over the abiotic components, such as waters (lakes and rivers) and soils. Within the CEM, some additional elements are also monitored. These are: the state of the forests; some resource species of plants, such as *Vaccinium myrtillus*, the influence of the grazing, the tourist flow and its impact on the environment.

The information compiled by the National Park Directorate is submitted on annual basis to the Executive Agency. The monitoring of Pirin started in 2004 and the data has been sent to the Executive Agency and to the National Nature Protection Service.

6.a Some key indicators for measuring state of conservation

Subject	Indicator	Periodicity	Data storage institution
Plants (endemics)	1. site	annually, seasonally	NPD, EEA
	2. area of the locality	annually, seasonally	NPD, EEA
	3. population density	annually, seasonally	NPD, EEA
	4.% of blossoming plants	annually, seasonally	NPD, EEA
	5.% of fruit plants	annually, seasonally	NPD, EEA
	6. general status of the locality	annually, seasonally	NPD, EEA
Soils	1. pH	every 5 years	NPD, EEA
	2. cations		NPD, EEA
Lake water	1. pH	once a year	NPD, EEA
	2. dissolved oxygen		NPD, EEA
	3. biological oxygen consumption		NPD, EEA
	3. transparency		NPD, EEA

6.b Administrative arrangements for monitoring property

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.

Within the Pirin NPD the monitoring is organized as follows:

- the rangers provide to the experts on Flora, Fauna and Forests the required information on monthly basis
- at the end of the year the Flora, Fauna and Forests experts summarize the information provided by the rangers and send a report to the EEA
- the report contains also an assessment of the environmental status of the Park

It is expected that with the establishment of the Scientific Council monitoring will become better placed into the daily focus of the NPD and will become an effective managerial tool.

6.c Results of previous reporting exercises

Since its designation in 1983 and until the emergence of the problems resulting from the skiing development projects in 1999, the WHP was not specifically monitored. During the last years, the Pirin National Park as World Heritage Property has been a subject of reactive monitoring on behalf of the World Heritage Center. For this purpose, two international missions have been organized in 2002 and 2004.

In 2002, the World Heritage Center of UNESCO, mandated by the 25th Session of the World Heritage Committee held in Helsinki in 2001, and in response to the request of Mrs. Dolores Arsenova - Minister of Environment and Water, organized a mission in the Pirin National Park and World Heritage Property. The joint mission was a result of the numerous concerns expressed by the Bulgarian non-governmental organizations regarding the potential threats

by the new project for the development of the skiing zone above the town of Bansko, proposed at this time.

The main objective of this mission was to clarify the actual area of the property and the location of the skiing zone in relation to its boundaries.

Although there were approved plans for the construction of the skiing zone above the town of Bansko, already before the initial designation of the property, the report of the mission stated that the new construction was dividing one of the largest and most valuable territories of the Park into two parts. It had strongly affected the intactness of the property and posed barriers to the daily and seasonal migrations of the animal species like bears, deer, etc.

As a result of the observations and consultations carried out, the mission has made the following recommendations:

- The Government shall provide a map with the property boundaries and provide additional information regarding the envisaged enlargement of the ski zone;
- As an official declaration of the future management intentions to elaborate a Temporary Management Plan of the Property until the elaboration and approval of a permanent one.
- A Scientific Council for the World Heritage Property should be established.

The report of the first mission recognized that enlargement of skiing constructions has not been permitted in other World Heritage Properties and that the existing and proposed construction are not connected to ecotourism development.

The second joint mission with the participation of experts of UNESCO and the World Conservation Union (IUCN) was held in February 2004. A set of recommendation were issued regarding:

- Recommendations concerned with the World Heritage Property, zoning and buffer zones – approval of the Management Plan in the shortest terms possible. Providing a map of the boundaries of the property, and making proposal for technical assistance for elaborating nomination for updating the boundaries of Pirin NP as a World Heritage Property. The zoning of the territory of the NP should be in accordance with the Management Plan requirements.
- Recommendations concerned with the protection of the property;
- Recommendations concerned with the management;
- Recommendations concerned with the communications enhancement.

In part fulfillment of the recommendations of the two missions, the MoEW submitted to the World Heritage Center a request for international assistance with the objective to elaborate a nomination file for the extension of the Pirin National Park as a World Heritage Property. The Management Plan of Pirin NP, which frames the planning and implementing of activities, as well as the guarding and control over the territory of the Park was approved in August 2004.

Detailed maps explaining the changes in the status of the National Park and the WH property were provided by the MOEW to the World Heritage Center in January 2005. A Scientific Council (SC) was established in 2005 according to the requirements of the Management plan. The SC is an advisory body providing required expertise to the Park administration for an improved management of the National Park. The SC provides the necessary scientific basis in the taking of decision by the park's administration or on the solving of concrete problems. The SC comprises experts dealing with the different components of the biodiversity and environmental sciences.

Another important advisory body, envisaged in the Management Plan of the National Park - Consultative Council (CC) was established in November 2005. The Rules of Operation of the CC were officially approved at its first meeting, held in April 2006. The CC is an independent body of the Pirin National Park Directorate. Its composition follows the "quota" principle and therefore includes representatives of the four main stakeholder groups: 1)

state administration including park's one, 2) local administration (adjacent municipalities), 3) business and 4) NGOs.

The Consultative Council of Pirin National park is a consultative body to the National Park Directorate, which supports the Directorate in the implementation of the Management plan (MP). The CC prepares statements regarding the implementation of the management plan and emerging problems referring to the Park protection and management, use of lands, forest and water resources. The CC provides standpoints on research activities, awareness and educational programs, informational service, and other activities of the park's administration.

Within a previous nomination cycle for extension of Pirin National Park as WHP, in Pirin National Park a mission with representative of IUCN was held in September 2007. As a follow up, in the IUCN technical evaluation report about Pirin National park from 2008, as well as the draft decision from the 32 session of the World Heritage Commission, the following recommendations were given:

- to be approved the extension of the World Heritage property, as proposed by the State Party in 2007 nomination file in order to strengthen the integrity and management of the World Heritage Property;
- to be excluded the ski zones above the town of Bansko and Dobrinishte from the WHP and also transformed into a buffer zone of the WHP in order to give an added layer of protection of the property;
- to be excluded from the WHP the Kulinoto ski zone and Sandanski resort area as their values and integrity are no longer compatible with World Heritage status.

The recommendations in the report and the draft decision also envisaged some obligations for the State Party, such as:

- to ensure that the adverse effects of the development of ski facilities and extension of tourism zones are minimized or mitigated to the extent possible;
- no further development of ski facilities or extension of the tourism zones to be allowed within the revised boundaries of the extended property;

According to the documents mentioned above any further development of ski facilities or extension of the tourism zones within the revised boundaries of the extended property, or any further developments outside the extended property that would adversely affect the Outstanding Universal Value and integrity of the property, would result in the inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

The State Party was also requested to keep the World Heritage Centre informed of any developments, including in the new buffer zone, which may affect the Outstanding Universal Value or integrity of the property.

7. Documentation

7.a Photographs, slides, image inventory and authorization table and other audiovisual materials

Id. №	Format	Caption	Date photo	of	Photographer	Copyright owner	Contact details of CR owner	Non exclusive cession of rights
1.	35mm	Belemeto	September		NATIONAL	NPD	Bulgaria	yes

			2008	PARK DIRECTORATE (NPD)		Bansko 2770 4	
2.	35mm	Leontopodium alpinum	July 2008	NPD	NPD	Bulgaria str.	yes
3.	35mm	Gazei peak	December 2008	NPD	NPD	Pirin National Park Director ate	yes
4.	35mm	Pinus silvestris	September 2008	NPD	NPD		yes
5.	35mm	Polejan peak, Julen nature reserve	September 2008	NPD	NPD		yes
6.	35mm	"Sveshtnika" natural monument	September 2008	NPD	NPD		yes
7.	35mm	"Vihren peak	September 2008	NPD	NPD		yes
8.	35mm	Vlahinski lake	September 2008	NPD	NPD		yes
9.	35mm	Damjanica river	September 2008	NPD	NPD		yes
10.	35mm	"Gorno Gazeisko" lake	September 2008	NPD	NPD		yes

Annex 6: Slide transparencies

7.b Texts relating to protective designation, copies of property management plans or documented management systems and extracts of other plans relevant to the property

In annex we attach the following documents:

Annex 1: Sufficiently scaled map of Pirin National Park World Heritage Property (1:25 000), bearing topographic features, showing the proposed extension, exclusion, proposed buffer zone of the WHP and the boundaries of the already inscribed property;

Annex 2: Thematic A3 Maps:

- 2.1 Soils
- 2.2 Plant communities
- 2.3 Forest vegetation
- 2.4 Habitats
- 2.5 Zoning
- 2.6 Map of Pirin National Park and Pirin as Corine site
- 2.7 Pirin National Park as Important Bird Area;
- 2.8 Map of Pirin National Park as Natura 2000 site and surrounding territories, as Natura 2000 sites.

Annex 3: Hard copies of the orders for designation or changes of Pirin National park as protected area according to the Bulgarian legislation.

Annex 4: Nature protection legislation (on a CD).

Annex 5: Hard copy of Pirin National Park Management Plan.

Annex 6: Photos with sights from Pirin National park, slide transparencies and electronic version of these sights on a CD. Image inventory and photograph and audiovisual authorization form, according to Annex 5 of the Operational guidelines.

Annex 7: Nomination file for changes in the boundaries of Pirin National Park WH Property (on a CD).

7.c Form and date of most recent records or inventory of property

Below are listed the main recent scientific reports for Pirin NP. The reports are available in hard and electronic in Bulgarian at the National Park Directorate.

Title	Author	Year of investigation
Management structure	Eng. Toma Belev	2001-2002
Existing projects on the territory of the Pirin NP Quality of the water – hydrochemistry and hydrobiology	Arch. Dimitrina Berberova	2001-2002
Existing zoning of the karst and caves in the Pirin NP	Alexey Zalov	2001-2002
Geology and geomorphology of Pirin NP	Boyan Rashev	2001-2002
Soils of Pirin NP	Eng. Ivan Petrov	2001-2002
Ecosystems and biotopes in Pirin NP	Dr. Tenyu Meshinev Dr. Iva Apostolova	2001-2002
Characteristics of the Pirin NP forests	Eng. Ivan Petrov	2001-2002
Assessment of the forest protection measures	Dr. Yancho Najdenov	2001-2002
Vascular plants in Pirin NP	Dr. Petar Zelev Eng. Dobromira Dimova Dr. Evgeni Tsavkov	2001-2002
Lichens in Pirin NP	Dr. Dobri Ivanov	2001-2002
Algae in Pirin NP	Dr. Petar Zelev	2001-2002
Mosses in Pirin NP	Dr. Petar Zelev	2001-2002
Medicinal plants in Pirin NP	Slavcho Savev	2001-2002
Diversity of the invertebrate fauna in Pirin NP	Dr. Hristo Delchev and others	2001-2002
Diversity of the vertebrata fauna in Pirin NP	Dr. Vassil Popov	2001-2002
Buildings and infrastructure in Pirin NP	Arch. Yuliya Kenareva	2001-2001
Agriculture in Pirin NP	Hristina Yancheva	2001-2002
Endangered local breeds in Pirin NP	Atila Sedefchev Vergil Mourarov	2001-2002
Hunting and angling in Pirin NP and adjacent territories	Eng. Karanfil Dzambazki and Roumen Kolchagov	2001-2002
Tourism, recreation, sport and services in Pirin NP	Lubomir Popyordanov	2001-2002
Analysis of the data of a sociological poll in Pirin region regarding the attitude of the local people towards environmental protection	Dr. Roumyana Stoilova	2001-2002

Cultural and historical heritage	Simana Markovska Georgi Georgiev	2001-2002
Landscape of Pirin NP	Arch. Dimitrina Berberova	2001-2002
Status of the environmental components in Pirin NP	Eng. Margarita Klecherova	2001-2002
Characteristic and assessment of the Bajuvi dupki-Dzindziritsa Biosphere Reserve	Arch. Tzena Stoichkova	2001-2002

7.d Address where inventory, records and archives are held

Pirin National Park DIRECTORATE

Address: Bansko, 4 Bulgaria str.

Tel: 00359 7449 8204

Fax: 00359 7449 8202

E-mail: pirin_np@mail.bg

Web address: www.pirin-np.com

7.e Selected bibliography

1. Sakaljan, M. (editor) National Strategy for Biodiversity Conservation. Vol. 1, Sofia, 2001
2. Bondev, I. Vegetation Map. In: Atlas of National Republic of Bulgaria. Sofia, 1973 (*in Bulgarian*)
3. Bondev, I. The treeline of beech forest. In: Geography of Bulgaria. Vol. 1, Sofia, 1982 (*in Bulgarian*)
4. Georgiev, G. Forests of Pirin Mountain. Sofia, 1939 (*in Bulgarian*)
5. Georgiev, G. Lakes of Pirin Mountain. In: Review of Bulgarian Geographical Society. Vol. 6, Sofia, 1938 (*in Bulgarian*)
6. Geography of Bulgaria. Vol.1, Sofia, 1966 (*in Bulgarian*)
7. Kitanov, B. Pirin's Flora. Sofia, 1990 (*in Bulgarian*)
8. Stoyanov, N., Stefanov, B. Bulgarian Flora. Sofia, 1948 (*in Bulgarian*)
9. Yordanov, D. (editor) Flora of National Republic of Bulgaria. Vol. 1, Sofia, 1963 (*in Bulgarian*)
10. Velenovsky, J. Flora Bulgarica. Pragae, 1898
11. Kozuharova, E. Plants of the Balkan peninsula: In: The Next Millennium. Vol. I, Neriman Ozhatay, 2001
12. Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia. Prokletije of Metohia, Belgrade, 2003 (in Serbian with an English summary)
13. Peev, D. Rila Management Plan. Sofia, 2001
14. Spiridonov, J., Kaneva, Z. From CORINE biotops to EMERALD Network. In: Protected areas in the southern Balkans. Hellenic Ministry of the Environment and public works, Athens, 1998, pp. 58-61
15. Peev, D. Analysis of a potential network of the Important Plant Areas in Bulgaria. In: Proceedings of Planta Europa Conference IV, Valencia, 2004, p. 310 - 319
16. Peev, D., Petrova, A., Spiridonov, G., Meshinev, T., Apostolova, I., Tsoneva, S., Valjovska, N., Kaneva, Z. Bulgaria. In: Important Plant Areas in Central and Eastern Europe. Plantlife International, London, 2004, p. 68-69.

8. Contact Information

8.a Preparer

Name: Mrs. Tsvetelina Ivanova

Title: Chief Expert protected areas

Institution: Ministry of environment and water - Bulgaria
National nature Protection service Directorate
Address: BLVD. "Marija Luiza" 22
1000 Sofia

and

Pirin National Park Directorate staff
Address: 4, Bulgaria str.
City, Province/State, Country: Bansko 2770, Blagoevgrad District, Bulgaria
Tel: 00359 749 88203, **Fax:** 00359 749 88204, **E-mail:** pirin_np@mail.bg

8.b Official Local Institution/Agency

8b.1. Pirin National Park Directorate
4, Bulgaria str., Bansko
City, Province/State, Country: Bansko 2770, Blagoevgrad District, Bulgaria
Tel: + 359 749 88203, **Fax:** + 359 749 88204, **E-mail:** pirin_np@mail.bg

8.b.2. Regional Inspectorate of Environment and Water – Blagoevgrad
1, Svoboda str., Blagoevgrad

8.c Other National/Local Institutions

Below are given contact persons and addresses of officials responsible for projects related to the Pirin NP

Institution/organization	Project	Contact person	Contact details
Ministry of Environment and Water, National Nature Protection Service	Natura 2000	Tsvetelina Ivanova, Chief Expert	22, bul. Maria Louiza 1000 Sofia Phone: +3592 940 61 06 E-mail: tzvety@moew.government.bg http://www.natura2000bg.org/natura/engdatabas/site_list.php
Wilderness Fund Society	CORINE	Jeko Spiridonov, Board Chair	7, Gotze Delchev blv. Sofia 1612 Phone: +3592 927 17 59 E-mail: office@wf-bg.org
Bulgarian Society for Protection of Birds	IBA	Irina Kostadinova, IBA & Natura 2000 Programme Officer	P.O.Box 50, Sofia 1111 or Musagenitza complex. block 104, entrance A, floor 6 Phone: +359 2 971 58 55 E-mail: irina.kostadinova@bspb.org http://www.bspb.org
Botanical Garden, Bulgarian academy of science	IPA	Dr. Antoaneta Petrova, Director	P.O. Box 664, Sofia 1000 Phone: +3592 967 28 23; E-mail: petrovabotgar1@abv.bg

UNESCO National Committee "Man and Biosphere Programme"	MAB	Dr. Ana Petrova Chair	MAB committee for Bulgaria Institute of Botany, BAS 23, Acad. G. Bonchev Street 1113 Sofia Phone: +359 2 9792155 E-mail: petrova@iph.bio.bas.bg
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8.d Official Web address

http:// www.pirin-np.com

Contact name: Tsvetelina Ivanova

National Nature protection Service Directorate

Ministry of environment and water of Bulgaria

Tel. 003592/940 61 06

Fax. 003592/ 940 61 27

E-mail: tzvety@moew.government.bg

9. Signature on behalf of the State Party

Djevdet Chakarov

Minister of Environment and Water