

Protected Areas Act

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Text in Bulgarian: Закон за защитените територии

Chapter One GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section I Protected Area Categories

Article 1

This Act regulates the categories of protected areas, the assigned use thereof and the regime of protection and use, designation and management of the said areas.

Article 2

(1) The purpose of this Act is to conserve and preserve protected areas as a national and universal human wealth and asset and as a special form of conservation of Bulgarian nature, conducive to the advancement of culture and science and to public welfare.

(2) Nature conservation within protected areas shall take precedence over the other activities therein.

Article 3

The State shall establish and ensure the functioning and sustained existence of a protected areas system as part of the regional and global network of such areas in accordance with the international treaties on environmental protection where to the Republic of Bulgaria is a party.

Article 4

(1) (Redesignated from Article 4, SG No. 28/2000) The protected areas shall be dedicated to the conservation of biological diversity in ecosystems and of the natural processes occurring therein, as well as of typical or remarkable non-living natural features and landscapes. The assigned use of protected areas may not be altered save according to the procedure established by Chapter Three of this Act.

(2) (New, SG No. 28/2000) The conservation and use of medicinal plants within the protected areas shall be regulated by a separate law.

Article 5

There shall be the following categories of protected areas:

1. strict nature reserve;

2. national park;
3. natural monument;
4. managed nature reserve;
5. natural park;
6. protected site.

Article 6

(1) The protected areas shall incorporate forests, terrestrial and aquatic areas.

(2) Within the boundaries thereof delimited by the development regulation plans or ring polygons, any nucleated and dispersed settlements falling within any protected areas shall not be part of the said protected areas.

(3) (Amended, SG No. 19/2009, effective 10.04.2009) Any cultural values falling within the boundaries of any protected areas shall retain the regimes of protection and use thereof as established according to the procedure established by the Cultural Heritage Act.

(4) Any protected areas which, at the time of entry of this Act into force, fall within the boundaries of any nucleated settlements, shall retain the status thereof by being categorized under this Act.

Article 7

(1) (Previous Article 7, SG No. 65/2006) The provisions of this Act shall apply to all protected areas regardless of the ownership of the forests, land tracts and aquatic areas therein.

(2) (New, SG No. 65/2006) The definition of prohibitions and restrictions on activities within the inner circle of the sanitary guarded zones which are part of protected territories shall take place pursuant to the provisions of the Water Act .

Section II Ownership

Article 8

(1) The parks of national significance, listed in Annex 1 hereto, and the nature reserves, listed in Annex 2 hereto, which serve to meet public needs of nation-wide import, shall constitute exclusive state property.

(2) (Amended, SG No. 28/2000) The parks of national significance shall be areas referred to in Item 2 of Article 5 herein, hosting natural ecosystems of high diversity of plant and animal species and habitats and having a size exceeding 1,000 hectares. No settlements and dispersed settlements shall be incorporated within the boundaries of any such parks.

(3) The nature reserves shall be areas referred to in Items 1 and 4 of Article 5 herein, hosting examples of natural ecosystems whereof the conservation shall require that the said areas be free of human intervention or be minimally affected by such intervention.

Article 9

(1) Upon increase of the size or upon inclusion of new protected areas in the Annexes referred to in Article 8 (1) herein, the forests, land tracts and aquatic areas owned by natural and juristic persons or constituting private municipal property shall be condemned according to the procedure established by the State Property Act.

(2) Outside the cases under Paragraph (1), designation of a protected area shall not alter the ownership of the forests, land tracts and aquatic areas therein.

Article 10

(1) Any state-owned forests, land tracts and aquatic areas incorporated into any protected areas under this Act, which do not constitute exclusive state property, shall constitute public state property. Any municipal-owned forests, land tracts and aquatic areas incorporated into any protected areas under this Act shall constitute public municipal property.

(2) (Amended, SG No. 24/2007) Foreign States may not acquire right of ownership over forests, lands and aquatic areas within protected areas.

(3) (New, SG No. 24/2007) Foreigners and foreign legal entities may acquire right of ownership over forests and lands within protected areas, which are not an exclusive state property, by virtue of an international treaty, ratified pursuant to the procedure of Article 22, paragraph 2 of the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria, promulgated and entered into force for the Republic of Bulgaria, by complying with the requirements of this Act, the Agricultural Land Ownership and Use Act and the Forestry Act, according to the term and the conditions of the Treaty of Accession of the Republic of Bulgaria to the European Union.

(4) (New, SG No. 24/2007) Foreigners may acquire right of ownership over forests and lands within protected areas, which are not an exclusive state property, by inheritance by law.

(5) (Renumbered from Paragraph 3, SG No. 24/2007) No political party, organization, movement or coalition pursuing political objectives may hold a right of ownership to any forests, lands and aquatic areas within protected areas.

Article 11

The owners and users of any forests, land tracts and aquatic areas within a protected area shall be obliged to observe the regimes established according to the procedure established by this Act, by the designation order for the protected area and the management plan of the said area.

Article 12

(1) Disposition of any corporeal immovables within land-use areas containing protected areas shall be transacted upon presentation of a written declaration by the transferor as to whether the immovable falls within the protected area.

(2) The transferees of any corporeal immovables referred to in Paragraph (1) shall declare upon the transfer that they are familiar with the regime of activities within the protected area.

(3) The standard forms of the written declarations referred to in Paragraphs (1) and (2) shall be endorsed by the Minister of Environment and Water in consultation with the Minister of Justice.

(4) The persons referred to in Paragraph (2) shall notify the regional authorities of the Ministry of Environment and Water of the transfer of ownership within fourteen days after acquisition of the right of ownership.

Article 13

(1) Any sites within protected areas shall be constructed, maintained and used in accordance with the regime of activities as established according to the procedure established by this Act, by the designation order and by the management plan of the protected areas, the spatial-development plans and schematic designs, regardless of the requirements under other laws.

(2) (Amended SG No. 103/2009) Construction of any new sites, and extension, remodelling and alteration of the assigned use of any existing sites wherefor no environmental impact assessment is required shall be performed upon the approval by the Minister of Environment and Water, or officials authorised by the Minister, regardless of the permits required under other laws.

Article 14

(1) (Supplemented, SG No. 19/2011, effective 9.04.2011) The owners and users of any forests and land tracts within

protected areas may not restrict the traffic movement on roads and marked hiking trails traversing the corporeal immovables thereof, unless otherwise provided by a special law.

(2) The persons referred to in Paragraph (1) may not build fences around the corporeal immovables thereof within protected areas with the exception of buildings and the adjoining yards, as well as young-growth stands.

(3) The restrictions under Paragraphs (1) and (2) shall not apply to any sites allocated for national defence and to the armed forces.

(4) (New, SG No. 78/2000, supplemented, SG No. 103/2009) Fencing of any spaces within protected areas other than strict nature reserves and national parks shall be admitted for construction of game breeding centres after obtaining a clearance from the Minister of Environment and Water, or officials authorised by the Minister.

Article 15

(Amended and supplemented, SG No. 43/2008)

When so requested by the authorities of the Ministry of Environment and Water, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, or the Executive Forestry Agency, each acting within their respective competencies, the owners and the users shall be obliged to provide the said authorities with unobstructed access to the corporeal immovables thereof, with the exception of residential buildings, for conduct of the requisite studies, measurements and inspections, and for performance of maintaining and restorative activities provided for according to the procedure established by this Act, by the designation orders for protected areas and the management plans of the said areas.

Chapter Two

ASSIGNED USE AND REGIMES OF PROTECTION AND USE OF PROTECTED AREAS

Section I

Strict Nature Reserves

Article 16

(1) Examples of natural ecosystems, hosting typical and/or remarkable wild plant and animal species and the habitats thereof, shall be designated strict nature reserves.

(2) Strict nature reserves shall be managed for the purpose of:

1. retention of the natural character thereof;
2. scientific research and education and/or eco-monitoring;
3. conservation of genetic resources;
4. conservation of natural habitats and of populations of protected rare, endemic and relict species;
5. development of a network of ecosystems and threatened habitats representative of Bulgaria and Europe.

Article 17

(1) Any activities shall be prohibited in strict nature reserves with the exception of:

1. physical security of the said reserves;
2. visits for the purpose of scientific research;

3. pedestrian traffic movement on marked hiking trails, including such traffic for educational purposes;

4. collection of seeds, wild plants and animals for the purpose of scientific research or for repopulating other sites in quantities, manner and time excluding disturbance of the ecosystems;

5. (New, SG No. 28/2000, amended, No. 77/2002) extinguishment of fires and environmental harvesting in the forests damaged in consequence of natural disasters and calamities.

(2) The hiking trails referred to in Item 3 of Paragraph (1) shall be designated by an order by the Minister of Environment and Water.

(3) (Amended, SG No. 103/2009) Any visits referred to in Items 2 and 4 of Paragraph (1) shall be conducted upon the approval by the Minister of Environment and Water, or officials authorised by the Minister.

(4) (New, SG No. 28/2000, supplemented, No. 77/2002, amended, SG No. 103/2009) The environmental harvesting referred to in Item 5 of Paragraph (1) shall be conducted upon the approval by the Minister of Environment and Water, or officials authorised by the Minister, issued after a favourable scientific opinion of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and a favourable decision of the National Council of Biological Diversity.

Section II National Parks

Article 18

(1) Areas which have no nucleated and dispersed settlements falling within the boundaries thereof and which host natural ecosystems of high diversity of plant and animal species and habitats, with typical and remarkable landscapes and non-living natural features, shall be designated national parks.

(2) National parks shall be managed for the purpose of:

1. maintenance of the diversity of the ecosystems and protection of wildlife;

2. conservation and maintenance of the biological diversity within the ecosystems;

3. provision of opportunities for pursuit of scientific research, education and recreation;

4. creation of prerequisites for development of tourism, environmentally sound livelihood for the local community and other activities in conformity with the purposes covered under Items 1 to 3.

Article 19

National parks shall be zoned into the following use areas:

1. strict and managed nature reserves;

2. tourist zone;

3. zones of chalets, park management and maintenance administrative centres, and sports facilities;

4. other zones according to the specific conditions in the parks.

Article 20

Any strict and managed nature reserves falling within the boundaries of national parks shall retain the regimes thereof as established by the designation orders thereof.

Article 21

The following activities shall be prohibited in national parks:

1. (amended, SG No. 48/2000) any construction, with the exception of hikers' shelters and chalets, water catchments for drinking purposes, treatment facilities, park management and visitor service buildings and facilities, underground communications, repair of existing buildings and roads, and sports and other facilities;
2. any manufacturing activities, with the exception of maintaining and restorative activities in the forests, land tracts and aquatic areas;
3. clear-cutting;
4. applying artificial fertilizers and other chemicals;
5. introducing plant and animal species that are alien to the region;
6. grazing of goats, as well as grazing of livestock in forests outside meadows and pastures;
7. collecting herbs, wild fruits and other plants and animals in designated places;
8. collecting fossils and minerals, damaging rock formations;
9. disturbing the natural state of aquatic areas, watercourses, the banks thereof and the riparian lands and littoral zones;
10. game breeding and hunting, except for control of the population size of animal species;
11. sports fishing and fish breeding in designated places;
12. polluting waters and grounds with household, industrial and other waste;
13. camping and lighting of fire outside the designated places;
14. interfering with biological diversity;
15. (supplemented, SG No. 28/2000) collecting rare, endemic, relict and protected species, except for the purposes of scientific research;
16. other activities specified by the designation order for the protected area and the management plan.

Article 22

The use areas covered under Article 19 herein, the regions, places, manners and other conditions for performance of activities in national parks shall be determined by the management plans of the said parks.

Section III Natural Monuments

Article 23

(1) Typical or remarkable non-living natural features, such as rock forms, rock exposures of scientific value, earth pyramids, caves, potholes, waterfalls, fossil beds, mineral occurrences, sand dunes and others of outstanding value because of the inherent rarity, representative or aesthetic qualities thereof or of scientific or cultural significance, shall be designated natural monuments.

(2) Natural monuments shall be managed for the purpose of preservation of the natural features thereof.

(3) Natural monuments shall be designated with an adjoining area as shall be necessary for the conservation thereof.

Article 24

Any activities that may disturb the natural state of natural monuments or impair the aesthetic value thereof shall be prohibited in natural monuments.

Article 25

Measures for conservation, stabilization and restoration of the natural monuments shall be admitted by permission of the Ministry of Environment and Water in consultation with the owners of the natural monuments and with other institutions concerned.

Section IV Managed Nature Reserves

Article 26

(1) Ecosystems hosting rare and/or endangered wild plant and animal species and the habitats thereof shall be designated managed nature reserves.

(2) Managed nature reserves shall be managed for the purpose of:

1. maintenance of the natural character thereof;
2. scientific research and education and/or eco-monitoring;
3. restoration of populations of plant and animal species and/or habitat conditions thereof;
4. conservation of genetic resources.

Article 27

(1) Any activities shall be prohibited in managed nature reserves with the exception of:

1. physical security of the said reserves;
2. visits for the purpose of scientific research;
3. pedestrian traffic movement on marked hiking trails, including such traffic for educational purposes;
4. collection of seeds, wild plants and animals for the purpose of scientific research or for repopulating other sites;
5. conduct of maintaining, steering, controlling or restorative measures.

(2) The activities referred to in Item 5 of Paragraph (1) shall be specified in the management plan of the managed nature reserve.

Article 28

The provisions of Article 17 (2) and (3) herein shall apply to managed nature reserves.

Section V

Natural Parks

Article 29

(1) Areas hosting various ecosystems with diverse plant and animal species and the habitats thereof, with typical and remarkable landscapes and non-living natural features, shall be designated natural parks.

(2) Natural parks shall be managed for the purpose of:

1. maintenance of the diversity of ecosystems and conservation of biological diversity therein;
2. provision of opportunities for pursuit of scientific research, education, and recreation;
3. sustainable use of renewable natural resources while preserving traditional forms of livelihood, and ensuring conditions for the development of tourism.

Article 30

(1) Nucleated settlements, dispersed settlements and resorts may be located within the boundaries of natural parks, and any production and activities which do not pollute the environment may be pursued therein as well.

(2) Any protected areas of other categories falling within the boundaries of natural parks shall retain the regimes thereof as established by the designation order thereof.

Article 31

The following activities shall be prohibited in natural parks:

1. (amended, SG No. 19/2011, effective 9.04.2011) clear felling in all forests, with the exception of poplar forests, and in coppices; the merging together of barren, unregenerated logging grounds into an area larger than 2 hectares in coppices, with the exception of acacia forests;

2. introducing plant and animal species that are alien to the region;

3. grazing of goats, except in expressly designated places;

4. collecting fossils and minerals, damaging of rock formations;

5. polluting waters and grounds with household, industrial and other waste;

6. camping and lighting of fire outside the designated places;

7. open-cast mining of mineral resources;

8. (new, SG No. 28/2000) extracting and primary processing (dressing) of metalliferous mineral resources through application of chemical and chemico-bacteriological methods and cyanides;

9. (renumbered from Item 8, SG No. 28/2000) activities and construction which are not permitted by the designation order for the park, the management plan of the park and the spatial development plans and schematic designs;

10. (renumbered from Item 9 and supplemented, SG No. 28/2000) collecting of rare, endemic, relict and endangered species, except for the purposes of scientific research;

11. (renumbered from Item 10, SG No. 28/2000) extracting marine resources by dredging or trawling;

12. (renumbered from Item 11, SG No. 28/2000) other activities specified by the designation order for the protected

area and by the management plan.

Article 32

(1) The provisions of Articles 19 and 22 herein shall apply to natural parks.

(2) The provisions of Article 21 (1) herein may apply to natural parks or any parts thereof if adopted by the management plans as endorsed by the Council of Ministers.

Section VI Protected Sites

Article 33

(1) The following shall be designated protected sites:

1. areas with typical or remarkable landscapes, including such resulting from the harmonious interaction between people and nature;

2. habitats of endangered, rare or vulnerable plant and animal species and communities.

(2) Protected sites shall be managed for the purpose of:

1. preservation of the features of the landscape;

2. conservation, maintenance or restoration of habitat conditions corresponding to the ecological requirements of the species and communities subject to protection;

3. provision of opportunities for scientific research, education and eco-monitoring;

4. provision of opportunities for tourism and public appreciation.

Article 34

Any activities contrary to the requirements for conservation of the specific features subject to protection shall be prohibited in protected sites.

Chapter Three DESIGNATION AND MODIFICATION OF PROTECTED AREAS

Article 35

Protected areas shall be designated and modified by the Minister of Environment and Water.

Article 36

(1) Proposals for designation of national and natural parks may be initiated by ministries and central-government departments, by municipalities and regional governors, research and academic institutes and public organizations, and in respect of all other categories of protected areas, also by all natural and juristic persons concerned.

(2) (Supplemented, SG No. 19/2011, effective 9.04.2011) The proposals referred to in Paragraph (1) shall be submitted to the Ministry of Environment and Water which, within one month, shall pronounce on the relevance thereof in conformity with the criteria specified in this Act. Where such a proposal concerns wooded areas, the relevance thereof shall be pronounced following consultations with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and with the Executive Forestry Agency.

(3) The Ministry of Environment and Water shall compile or commission the compilation of a dossier on the designation of the protected area.

(4) The dossier referred to in Paragraph (3) shall contain:

1. justification;
2. maps;
3. area distribution of forests, land tracts and aquatic areas;
4. a draft designation order.

(5) (Supplemented, SG No. 43/2008) The Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the Executive Forestry Agency and the municipalities shall submit data referred to in Items 2 and 3 of Paragraph (4).

Article 37

The Ministry of Environment and Water may shall organize a public discussion of any proposals for designation of national and natural parks, of strict and managed nature reserves. Representatives of the municipalities, the regional governors, the local ecologist and public organizations concerned and other representatives of ministries, central-government departments, research and academic institutes shall be invited to attend any such public discussion. Minutes shall be taken of the observations and suggestions at any such public discussion.

Article 38

(1) Within one year after submission of any proposal for designation of a national or natural park and within six months after submission of any proposal for designation of a protected area of any other category, the Minister of Environment and Water or a persons authorized thereby shall appoint a commission.

(2) (Supplemented, SG No. 43/2008) The commission referred to in Paragraph (1) shall include representatives of the Ministry of Environment and Water, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, the Executive Forestry Agency, of the municipalities, of owners of forests, land tracts and aquatic areas, and the competent regional governors.

(3) (Supplemented, SG No. 77/2002) The commission referred to in Paragraph (1) shall make a decision by a simple majority to grant the proposal and shall prepare a draft designation order, or shall reject the proposal.

(4) (New, SG No. 77/2002) Any members of the commission, who dissent from a decision to grant the proposal and who have signed the minutes with a dissenting opinion, shall provide a reasoning of the said opinion in writing within three days. The dissenting opinion shall be attached to the minutes.

(5) (New, SG No. 77/2002) In the cases under Paragraph (4), the Minister of Environment and Water shall make a final decision on designation of the protected area or on rejection of the proposal.

Article 39

(1) (Amended, SG No. 77/2002) The Minister of Environment and Water shall issue a designation order for the protected area provided that favourable decisions have been made under Article 38 (3) and (5) herein.

(2) Any order referred to in Paragraph (1) shall state:

1. the grounds;
2. the primary objectives;
3. the category;

4. the name;
5. the area distribution of forests, land tracts and aquatic areas;
6. the regime of the principal activities within the protected area.

Article 40

(1) Upon designation of any national park or strict nature reserve on a proposal by the Minister of Environment and Water, the Council of Ministers shall lay before the National Assembly a draft of an Act to Amend and Supplement this Act.

(3) Any designation order for a national park or a strict nature reserve shall enter into force after passage of the Act referred to in Paragraph (1).

Article 41

Protected areas may be modified by means of:

1. declassification;
2. increase of size;
3. decrease of size;
4. recategorization;
5. change in the regime of activities.

Article 42

(1) Any modifications referred to in Items 1, 2 and 3 of Article 41 herein shall require compliance with the same procedures applicable to designation of protected areas.

(2) Any modifications referred to in Item 4 of Article 41 herein shall be effected after obtaining a clearance from the state bodies concerned.

(3) Any modifications referred to in Item 5 of Article 41 herein shall be effected after consultation with the owners of forests, land tracts and aquatic areas and with the state bodies concerned.

(4) Any modifications referred to in Item 1 of Article 41 herein shall be undertaken solely where the protected areas have been completely and irrecoverably destroyed or damaged, do not serve the assigned use thereof, and cannot be recategorized.

(5) In respect of any modifications covered under Article 41 herein, the Minister of Environment and Water shall issue an order.

(6) (New, SG No. 77/2002) The size of any protected area may be updated by order under Paragraph (5) even without compliance with the procedures under Paragraph (1), where the adjustment arises from more accurate measurements and is not associated with modification of the established boundaries of the said protected area.

Article 43

Any orders referred to in Article 39 (1) and Article 42 (5) herein shall be promulgated in the State Gazette.

Article 44

Any protected areas as designated and any modifications thereof shall be recorded in a State Register at the Ministry of

Article 45

(1) In the event of risk of destruction of, or damage to, any areas proposed for designation as protected areas, the Minister of Environment and Water may issue an order prohibiting or restricting the use and construction therein for a period not exceeding two years, with the exception of sites allocated for national defence and to the armed forces.

(2) Any violation of an order of the Minister of Environment and Water referred to in Paragraph (1) shall be penalized as a violation within a protected area according to the criminal liability and administrative penalty provisions of this Act or of other laws.

Chapter Four MANAGEMENT AND PHYSICAL SECURITY OF PROTECTED AREAS

Section I Management Authorities

Article 46

(1) The Ministry of Environment and Water and the regional authorities thereof shall conduct and implement:

1. the management and control in protected areas;

2. (amended, SG No. 28/2000) the management, the commissioning of maintaining and restorative activities, the commissioning of tourism activities, physical security and control in the forests, land tracts and aquatic areas within the protected areas constituting exclusive state property.

(2) The activities referred to in Item 2 of Paragraph (1) shall be performed under terms and according to a procedure established by Rules endorsed by the Minister of Environment and Water.

Article 47

In discharge of the powers vested therein, the Minister of Environment and Water shall perform the following functions:

1. elaborate strategies, plans, programmes, bills and secondary legislative acts for development of the protected areas system;

2. build the protected areas system;

3. (amended, SG No. 23/2002) organize the collection, the maintenance of an up-to-date status and the storage of the data on the protected areas covered under Item 1 of Article 32 (1) of the Cadastre and Property Register Act for the purpose of the creation of a selective map, a register and an information system of the said protected areas;

4. commission the preparation of the management plans of national and natural parks and lay the said plans before the Council of Ministers for endorsement;

5. commission the preparation and endorse the management plans for any protected areas other than such specified in Item 4, and clear the spatial-development plans and schematic designs of any protected areas which do not constitute exclusive state property;

6. assist the activities of owners or users, associations, non governmental organizations and others, intended to conserve, maintain or rehabilitate protected areas;

7. organize control over the activities of all owners and users within protected areas;
8. coordinate the activities of any other ministries, central government departments, municipalities, public organizations, research and academic institutes and others in connection with protected areas;
9. represent the State before international institutions and organizations in the sphere of protected areas;
10. propose to international institutions the inclusion of protected areas in the List of Biosphere Reserves, the World Heritage List, the List of Wetlands of International Importance, and others;
11. organize the physical security of protected areas constituting exclusive state property;
12. order the construction and maintenance of visitor service centres within protected areas for information and educational purposes;
13. establish specialized structures for management of protected areas.

Article 48

The National Park Directorates and the Regional Inspectorates of Environment and Water shall be regional authorities of the Ministry of Environment and Water in respect of protected areas.

Article 49

The National Park Directorates shall be separate public-financed juristic persons directly reporting to the Ministry of Environment and Water.

Article 50

In discharge of the powers vested therein, the directors of the regional authorities of the Ministry of Environment and Water shall perform the following functions in the protected areas within the regions thereof:

1. implement or organize the management of the protected areas;
2. organize the elaboration of management plans;
3. apply the management plans in the protected areas constituting exclusive state property and implement the physical security therein;
4. (amended, SG No. 28/2000) commission the execution of maintaining, steering, controlling or restorative activities, tourism activities within protected areas constituting exclusive state property;
5. (amended, SG No. 28/2000) issue annual grazing permits and timber harvesting permits to the local population within the maintaining and restorative activities in the forests, in the national parks and in managed nature reserves, in accordance with the plans and designs under Chapter Four herein;
6. (amended and supplemented, SG No. 98/2000) issue permits for commercial harvesting of mushrooms and wild fruits, with the exception of fruits of medicinal plants, in the national parks in accordance with the plans and designs under Chapter Four herein;
7. control the activities of owners or users of forests, land tracts and aquatic areas;
8. coordinate and control the application of the management plans in the sphere of scientific research, the maintaining and restorative measures for endangered species and habitats, the awareness raising and educational ecological programmes and other nature conservation activities implemented by other state bodies, municipalities, non-governmental organizations and persons;

9. organize monitoring of the quality of environmental media;
10. (repealed, SG No. 23/2002);
11. organize the functioning of visitor service centres;
12. penalize offenders in the cases as provided for.

Article 51

The functions, the tasks and the structure of National Park Directorates shall be regulated in Rules of Organization and Operation of the said Directorates, which shall be endorsed by the Minister of Environment and Water.

Article 52

(1) (Supplemented, SG No. 43/2008, amended, SG No. 80/2009, supplemented, SG No. 19/2011, effective 9.04.2011) The Ministry of Agriculture and Food , the Executive Forestry Agency, as well as the natural and juristic persons and the municipalities owning any forests, land tracts and aquatic areas within the protected areas other than such constituting exclusive state property shall implement the stewardship, protection and physical security of the said forests, tracts and areas according to the provisions of this Act and of other special laws.

(2) (Amended, SG No. 28/2000, SG No. 43/2008, SG No. 80/2009) The Executive Forestry Agency shall establish specialized Natural Park Directorates for execution of the management plans of the natural parks.

(3) (New, SG No. 28/2000, amended, SG No. 43/2008, SG No. 80/2009, SG No. 19/2011, effective 9.04.2011) The functions, tasks and activities of the directorates referred to in Paragraph (2) shall be determined by rules of organization endorsed by the Executive Director of the Executive Forestry Agency.

(4) (New, SG No. 28/2000) The owners of forests, land tracts and aquatic areas in any protected areas other than such constituting exclusive state property or being natural parks may establish specialized units for conduct of maintaining, steering and controlling activities according to the designation orders and the management plans.

Article 53

The Ministry of Environment and Water and the authorities and the persons referred to in Article 52 (1) herein may grant non governmental and other organizations and associations the right to organize maintaining, steering, controlling, restorative and other nature conservation activities in protected areas.

Article 54

(Amended, SG No. 23/2002)

(1) The Ministry of Environment and Water shall create a selective map, a register and an information system of the protected areas.

(2) The contents of the selective map, register and information system of the protected areas, as well as the procedure for the creation and maintenance thereof, shall be determined by a regulation of the Minister of Environment and Water and the Minister of Regional Development and Public Works.

(3) The data of the selective map and register of protected areas shall be open to the public and shall be provided for use by the Ministry of Environment and Water and the regional authorities thereof against payment of a fee according to a rate schedule approved by the Council of Ministers.

(4) The terms and the procedure for provision of data under Paragraph (3) shall be established by a regulation of the Minister of Environment and Water.

Section II

Management Plans

Article 55

(1) Management plans shall be elaborated for protected areas under terms and according to a procedure established by a regulation endorsed by the Council of Ministers.

(2) The management plans of national and natural parks shall be elaborated within three years, and the management plans of strict and managed nature reserves shall be elaborated within two years after designation. The management plans shall be updated once every ten years.

Article 56

Management plans shall conform to:

1. the requirements to the category of protected area;
2. the protected area regime as established in the designation order thereof;
3. the requirements of international treaties.

Article 57

Each management plan shall contain:

1. a general description of the protected area and of the components thereof;
2. the management objectives in the protected area;
3. the standards, regimes, conditions or recommendations for the performance of activities in the forests, land tracts and aquatic areas; development of infrastructure and construction; organization of management and other activities ensuring attainment of the objectives as set;
4. short-term and long-term action programmes associated with scientific research and monitoring of the environmental media, maintenance of endangered species, communities and habitats, environmental awareness and education, etc.

Article 58

(1) Management plans of protected areas shall be commissioned by the Ministry of Environment and Water.

(2) (Amended, SG No. 103/2009) Management plans of protected areas may furthermore be commissioned by the owners, municipalities, non-governmental organizations or associations and others upon the approval by the Minister of Environment and Water, or an official authorised by the Minister.

(3) The terms of reference for management plans shall be endorsed by the Minister of Environment and Water.

Article 59

(1) In the process of elaboration of management plans of national and natural parks and of managed nature reserves, the planners shall organize public discussions with the participation of representatives of the central and local government authorities concerned, of the owners or associations thereof, of research, academic and non-governmental organizations and others.

(2) The common observations, recommendations and remarks at the public hearings shall be documented in minutes that shall be attached to the draft management plan. The management plan shall take into account the observations, recommendations and remarks as stated.

Article 60

(1) The management plans of national and natural parks and of managed nature reserves shall be laid before the Council of Ministers for adoption by the Minister of Environment and Water after a conclusion by the Supreme Environmental Expert Council with the Ministry of Environment and Water. If the Council of Ministers makes a favourable decision, the Minister of Environment and Water shall sign the management plans.

(2) Representatives of the state bodies, regional governors, municipalities, research and non-governmental organizations concerned shall be invited to participate in the meetings of the Council referred to in Paragraph (1). The notices shall be dispatched in advance, not later than twenty days prior to the date of the meeting, and announcements of any such meeting shall furthermore be posted in a prominent place in the relevant municipalities, at the Regional Inspectorates of Environment and Water and at the Ministry of Environment and Water within the same time limit.

(3) Once every four years, the Ministry of Environment and Water shall organize a public discussion of the implementation of the management plans of national and natural parks, inviting thereto the persons covered under Paragraph (2).

Article 61

(Amended and supplemented, SG No. 28/2000, amended, SG No. 28/2005,
SG No. 94/2005, supplemented, SG No. 43/2008, amended, SG No. 19/2009,
effective 10.04.2009)

The management plans of strict and managed nature reserves, natural monuments and protected sites shall be endorsed by the Minister of Environment and Water after obtaining a clearance from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, the Executive Forestry Agency, and from the relevant municipalities, as well as from the Ministry of Culture, where cultural values fall within the protected area.

Article 62

The plans referred to in Article 61 herein shall be endorsed by an order of the Minister of Environment and Water.

Article 63

Any management plans as endorsed may be modified in connection with the standards and regimes referred to in Item 3 of Article 57 herein according to the procedure established by Articles 60 and 61 herein.

Article 64

The type and scope of activities comprehending use of natural resources, spatial development, construction and other activities within protected areas shall be determined by spatial-development plans and schematic designs.

Article 65

Any plans and designs referred to in Article 64 herein, with the exception of regional-development plans, in any protected areas constituting exclusive state property, shall be commissioned, endorsed and modified according to the procedure established by Articles 61 and 62 herein.

Article 66

(1) Any plans and designs referred to in Article 64 herein for any protected areas not constituting exclusive state property shall be commissioned and endorsed according to the procedure established by the relevant laws.

(2) Any plans and designs referred to in Paragraph (1) shall be endorsed upon:

1. a favourable environmental impact assessment decision in the cases provided for in the Environmental Protection Act;

2. (amended, SG No. 103/2009) the approval by the Minister of Environment and Water, or officials authorised by the Minister, in the cases other than the cases referred to in Item 1.

(3) Any spatial-development plans and designs as endorsed shall be modifiable according to the procedure established by Paragraph (2) in the event of natural disasters, such as fires, floods and others, or upon change of any objective circumstances pre existing upon endorsement of the said plans and designs.

Section III

Physical Security

Article 67

(1) (Amended, SG No. 19/2011, effective 9.04.2011) The physical security of any protected areas constituting exclusive state property and of any Ramsar Convention Sites and any sites under other international treaties and conventions shall be organized by the Ministry of Environment and Water. The forests in all other protected areas shall be protected according to the Forests Act.

(2) The regional authorities of the Ministry of Environment and Water shall organize and implement the physical security of the protected areas constituting exclusive state property in the regions thereof. The said authorities shall organize mobile park security and checkpoints.

(3) (New, SG No. 77/2002) The physical security of particular strict and managed nature reserves outside the boundaries of the national parks may be commissioned by the Minister of Environment and Water to other executive authorities or to municipalities.

Article 68

Any protected areas constituting exclusive state property shall be divided into security sectors of a size not exceeding 1,500 hectares.

Article 69

(1) Physical security in protected areas constituting exclusive state property shall be implemented by park security.

(2) The park security guards shall be under the direct orders of the directors of the regional authorities of the Ministry of Environment and Water.

(3) Each park security guard shall be responsible for the security sector assigned thereto, shall wear a uniform with insignia and firearms.

(4) At a minimum, the guards referred to in Paragraph (1) must have graduated from secondary school.

(5) (New, SG No. 28/2000) Rights under Paragraph (3) shall furthermore vest in other officials of the regional authorities of the Ministry of Environment and Water applying the Protected Areas Act, as designated by an order of the Minister of Environment and Water.

Article 70

(1) (Redesignated from Article 70, SG No. 28/2000) In the sectors assigned thereto, the park security guards shall perform the following functions:

1. guard the forests, land tracts and aquatic areas against illegal use and activities;

2. monitor compliance with the regime in the protected area as established by the designation order and the management plan;
3. check all documents permitting uses, activities and movements within the protected area;
4. monitor compliance with the requirements of fire protection and, in the event of fire, take part in the extinguishment thereof;
5. monitor the protection of waters and grounds against pollution with household, industrial and other waste;
6. monitor the state of forests and, where necessary, notify the director of the regional authority of the Ministry of Environment and Water;
7. (repealed, SG No. 28/2000);
8. protect the flora and fauna;
9. accompany visitor groups, provide information and render assistance to visitors;
10. liaise and interact with the authorities of the Mountain Rescue Service, the fire protection service and the Ministry of Interior;
11. participate in the execution of activities associated with restoration of animal and plant species, of the habitats thereof, as well as of remarkable non-living natural features;
12. perform activities associated with the monitoring of environmental media quality;
13. draw up written statements on ascertained violations;
14. impound any corporeal movables subject to a violation, as well as any corporeal movables which have served for commission of a violation.

(2) (New, SG No. 28/2000) The guards referred to in Paragraph (1) may halt and inspect any means of transport transporting timber, forest and agricultural products and others within the protected area, in the adjoining nucleated settlements and the land-use areas thereof.

(3) (New, SG No. 28/2000) The authorities of the Ministry of Interior shall be obliged to cooperate in the inspections referred to in Paragraph (2).

Article 71

(1) The Ministry of Environment and Water shall contract life assurance and accident insurance for the park security guards.

(2) Any park security guards, who sustain any personal injury in the discharge or in connection with the discharge of the official duties thereof shall be paid a lump-sum pecuniary compensation amounting to ten gross monthly remunerations in the event of a severe bodily injury, and six gross monthly remunerations in the event of a medium bodily injury.

(3) The spouse, the children or the parents of any guard who has been killed in the discharge or in connection with the discharge of the official duties thereof shall be paid a lump sum pecuniary compensation amounting to twelve gross monthly remunerations to each rightful beneficiary.

(4) The rightful beneficiaries may furthermore claim compensation in an action proceeding according to the standard procedure for any uncompensated injury under Paragraphs (2) and (3).

Article 72

(1) Park security guards may use residential premises within the protected areas provided thereto by the Ministry of Environment and Water.

(2) The guards referred to in Paragraph (1) shall be entitled to gratuitous use of up to 10 cubic metres of firewood annually by permission of the director of the regional authority of the Ministry of Environment and Water.

Article 73

The bodies of central and local government, the organizations and the persons shall be obliged to render assistance to the park security guards in the discharge of the official duties thereof.

Chapter Five FINANCING OF PROTECTED AREAS

Article 74

(1) (Amended, SG No. 91/2002) Financing of activities within protected areas shall be supported by the Enterprise for Management of Environmental Protection Activities, whereto the following shall be credited:

1. (repealed, SG No. 77/2002);
2. the fees referred to in Article 76 herein;
3. the fees referred to in Article 77 herein;
4. (repealed, SG No. 77/2002);
5. financial resources to the amount of 5 per cent of the amount agreed under any contract of concession for a protected area constituting exclusive state property;
6. proceeds from performance of activities referred to in Item 4 of Article 50 herein;
7. the proceeds from fines and sanctions collected under this Act and under the Nature Conservation Act, where the penalty decree has been issued by the Minister of Environment and Water or by a person authorized thereby;
8. proceeds from sale of corporeal movables confiscated under Chapter Six herein;
9. donations by resident and non-resident natural and juristic persons;
10. other revenues by virtue of a law.

(2) The financial resources covered under Paragraph (1) shall be expended on:

1. preparation of management plans;
2. maintenance and restoration of rare and extinct wild plant and animal species and of the habitats thereof;
3. construction and maintenance of visitor service centres;
4. educational programmes, promotion and advertising, publication of printed works;
5. scientific research and monitoring;

6. assistance to municipalities, natural and juristic persons owning forests, land tracts and aquatic areas within protected areas to perform restorative, maintaining and other nature conservation activities therein;

7. maintaining and restorative activities in protected areas constituting exclusive state property;

8. other activities associated with management and control of protected areas.

(3) (Amended, SG No. 77/2002) Up to 30 per cent of the financial resources referred to in Item 7 of Paragraph (1) shall furthermore be available for additional incentives to the park security guards according to a procedure established by the Minister of Environment and Water.

(4) (Amended, SG No. 91/2002) The resources covered under Paragraph (1) shall be expended according to the Rules of Operation of the Enterprise for Management of Environmental Protection Activities.

Article 75

(Repealed, SG No. 77/2002)

Article 76

(1) (Redesignated from Article 76, SG No. 28/2000) Fees shall be paid for any authorized uses under Items 5 and 6 of Article 50 herein according to a procedure established by the Council of Ministers.

(2) (New, SG No. 28/2000) No fees referred to in Paragraph (1) shall be paid for timber harvested for construction, repair and heating of the buildings of the authorities referred to in Article 48 herein; for construction and repair of shelters, bridges, fences, marking, erosion control and other public amenities related to tourism, visitor safety and maintenance of protected areas constituting exclusive state property.

Article 77

(1) Admission fees may be introduced by the Minister of Environment and Water for visits to protected areas constituting exclusive state property.

(2) The amount of the fees referred to in Paragraph (1), the procedure and manners for payment of the said fees shall be determined by an act of the Council of Ministers.

Chapter Six ADMINISTRATIVE PENALTY PROVISIONS

Section I Coercive Administrative Measures

Article 78

For the purpose of prevention and cessation of any administrative violations under this Act and of the detrimental consequences thereof, the competent authorities or persons authorized thereby shall apply coercive administrative measures according to the procedure established by Article 79 herein.

Article 79

(1) The Minister of Environment and Water shall suspend:

1. any orders of central-government departments which contravene this Act or are inconsistent with the established regime of activities in the protected areas;

2. the implementation of any spatial-development plans and schematic designs endorsed in violation of this Act.

(2) The directors of the regional authorities of the Ministry of Environment and Water shall:

1. suspend any activities comprehending use of forests, land tracts and aquatic areas and of other resources, as well as any construction within protected areas which violate the management plans, spatial-development plans and schematic designs as endorsed according to the established procedure, or which have not been cleared according to the procedure established by this Act, where no such plans and designs exist;

2. suspend any activities or sites which damage or pollute the environment within protected areas in excess of the permissible limit levels;

3. suspend any orders of the regional forestry boards, state forestry farms and the municipal authorities contravening this Act or breaching the regimes of the protected areas;

4. issue prescriptions for measures to prevent and eliminate the detrimental consequences of violations as committed or environmental damage or pollution within protected areas.

(3) (Supplemented, SG No. 77/2002) The directors of regional forestry boards, state forestry farms and Natural Park Directorates, as well as the municipality mayors shall be obliged to suspend any activities and construction within forests, land tracts and aquatic areas allocated for use within any protected areas constituting state, municipal or private property where performed in violation of the management plans and spatial-development plans and schematic designs as endorsed.

Article 80

(Amended, SG No. 30/2006)

The coercive administrative measures shall be appealable according to the procedure established by the Administrative Procedures Code.

Section II Administrative Violations and Sanctions

Article 81

(1) A fine of BGN 500 or exceeding this amount but not exceeding BGN 5,000 will be imposed on any natural person who:

1. shall perform any activities within a protected area in violation of the regime determined by this Act, the designation order or any endorsed management plans and designs under Chapter Four herein;

2. shall perform any activities within a protected area without a permission or clearance provided for in this Act.

(2) Where the activity referred to in Items 1 and 2 of Paragraph (1) shall be construction, it will be punishable by a fine of BGN 5,000 or exceeding this amount but not exceeding BGN 20,000, and where the said activity is development of areas, it will be punishable by a fine of BGN 2,000 or exceeding this amount but not exceeding BGN 20,000.

(3) Minor cases under Paragraph (1) shall be punishable by a fine of BGN 5 or exceeding this amount but not exceeding BGN 100.

Article 82

A fine of BGN 500 or exceeding this amount but not exceeding BGN 10,000 will be imposed on any official who:

1. shall allow or order, or fail to penalize, any activities or construction within a protected area in violation of the regime established by this Act, by the designation order or by the endorsed management plans and designs under Chapter Four herein;

2. shall fail to clear any activities within a protected area with the competent authorities, where no endorsed plans and projects under Chapter Four herein exist.

Article 83

(1) A fine or a pecuniary penalty, as the case may be, of BGN 1,000 or exceeding this amount but not exceeding BGN 10,000 will be imposed on any sole trader or juristic person who or which:

1. shall perform any activities within a protected area in violation of the regime established by this Act, by the designation order or by endorsed plans and designs under Chapter Four herein;
2. shall perform any activities within a protected area without a permission or clearance provided for in this Act.

(2) Where the activity referred to in Items 1 and 2 of Paragraph (1) shall be construction or development of areas, it will be punishable by a fine of BGN 5,000 or exceeding this amount but not exceeding BGN 50,000.

(3) Minor cases under Paragraph (1) shall be punishable by a fine of BGN 100 or exceeding this amount but not exceeding BGN 1,000.

Article 84

(1) Any corporeal movables subject to a violation and any corporeal movables which have served for commission of any such violation within any protected area constituting exclusive state property shall be confiscated.

(2) The sale of any corporeal movables referred to in Paragraph (1) shall follow a procedure established by a regulation of the Council of Ministers.

Article 85

(1) (Supplemented, SG No. 43/2008, amended, SG No. 80/2009) Any violation covered under Articles 81 and 83 herein shall be ascertained by a written statement drawn up by an official designated by the Minister of Environment and Water or by the Minister of Agriculture and Food, or by the Executive Director of the Executive Forestry Agency, or by the Municipality Mayor. The penalty decrees shall be issued, respectively, by the Minister of Environment and Water, by the Minister of Agriculture and Food, or by the Municipality Mayor, or by persons authorized thereby.

(2) Any violation covered under Article 82 herein shall be ascertained by a written statement drawn up by an official designated by the Minister of Environment and Water, and the penalty decrees shall be issued by the Minister of Environment and Water or by persons authorized thereby.

(3) The ascertainment of violations, the issuance, appeal against and execution of penalty decrees shall follow the procedure established by the Administrative Violations and Sanctions Act.

Article 86

(Amended, SG No. 91/2002, repealed, No. 77/2002)

SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISIONS

§ 1. Within the meaning of this Act:

1. "Land tracts" shall be any tracts of agricultural land within the meaning of the Agricultural Land Ownership and Use Act.

2. (Amended, SG No. 19/2011, effective 9.04.2011) "Forests" shall be any wooded areas as per Article 2 (3) of the Forestry Act.

3. (Amended, SG No. 19/2011, effective 9.04.2011) "Aquatic areas" shall be any areas of the landed estate, the forest estate and the continental shelf, submerged under water.

4. "Dispersed settlements" shall comprehend country house zones, industrial zones and resort complexes.

5. "Parks of national significance" shall be the parks listed in Annex 1 hereto.

6. "Strict nature reserves" shall be the reserves listed in Annex 2 hereto.

7. "Biological diversity" shall be the variability among living organisms from all sources, including terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species, and diversity of ecosystems.

8. "Ecosystem" shall be any dynamic complex of plant, animal and micro-organism communities and their non-living environment interacting as a functional unit.

9. "Habitat of a species" shall be any region defined by specific abiotic and biotic factors, wherein the said species is present at any stage of the life cycle thereof.

10. "Genetic resources" shall be any material of plant, animal or micro-organism origin, containing functional units of heredity and possessing actual or potential value.

11. "Rare species" shall be any species whereof the populations are small in size and, if not immediately then indirectly endangered within the meaning of Item 12.

12. "Endangered species" shall be any species threatened with extinction within the entire or a large portion of the geographic range thereof.

13. "Endemic species" shall be any species restricted to a particular geographic region.

14. "Relict species" shall be any species which was widespread in past geological eras but at present has a small occupancy area or home range.

15. "Spatial-development plans and schematic designs" shall be the spatial-development plans, construction plans and others that are subject matter of other laws.

TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

§ 2. (1) (Amended, SG No. 98/1999 and No. 28/2000) Within three months after the entry of this Act into force, the part of the Rila Park, incorporating the forests in the forest stock of the Municipality of Rila, Region of Kyustendil, according to the forest-management design of the Rila Monastery State Forestry Unit of 1990, Section: 1a - d, f, g, 1, 2; 2; 3; 4 a - e, 1 - 3; 7a - e, 1 - 3; 8 - 12; 14a - c, 1, 8 - 11; 15a, b, 1, 2, 9; 16a - g, m, 1 - 5; 17 - 45; 46a - i, 1 - 5; 47 74; 75d - k; 76; 77a - k, 1, 3 - 5; 78d - l, 6; 79b - p, 2 5; 80 - 82; 83e - s, 4 - 9; 84h - x; 8 (part), 9 - 19; 85; 86a - dd, 2 - 5; 87e - q, 2 - 5; 88a - s, 3 - 6; 89 - 91; 101 - 108; 113 - 117; 119; 120; 121a - f, 1, 2; 400 - 410, of an aggregate size of 14,370. 7 hectares, as well as the high mountain pastures and meadows of the Municipality of Rila, Region of Kyustendil, of an aggregate size of 13,000 hectares, shall be recategorized as a natural park to be known by the name of "Rila Monastery Natural Park".

(2) (Amended, SG No. 28/2000) The provisions of Article 21 herein shall be applied in the management plan of the Rila Monastery Natural Park.

(3) Any protected areas which, at the time of passage of this Act, fall within nucleated settlements, shall retain the protected area status thereof and shall be recategorized according to this Act.

§ 3. (Supplemented, SG No. 28/2000) Within three years after the entry of this Act into force, all protected areas other than such listed in the Annexes to this Act, shall be recategorized where necessary as one of the categories of protected areas referred to in Items 3, 5 and 6 of Article 5 herein.

§ 4. (Amended, SG No. 28/2000) The boundaries of the recategorized protected areas shall be delimited within the

time limits specified in § 2 and 3 herein.

§ 5. (Supplemented, SG No. 28/2000) Until recategorization of the protected areas referred to in § 2 and 3 herein, the pre existing regimes thereof shall subsist unless modified according to the procedure established by Chapter Three of this Act.

§ 6. (Amended, SG No. 28/2000) (1) The Ministry of Environment and Water shall consult the Regional Governors on the draft designation orders for any protected areas in respect of which the procedures had been implemented according to the procedure established by the Nature Conservation Act prior to the entry of the Protected Areas Act into force.

(2) Any designation orders for protected areas referred to in Paragraph (1) shall be issued in pursuance of Article 39 (1) herein.

§ 7. (Amended, SG No. 103/2009) The owners and users referred to in Article 11 herein shall contain the approval of the Minister of Environment and Water, or officials authorised by the Minister, in respect of any activities which the said owners and users plan to perform within the protected areas where no management plan exists or where any such activities are not provided for in the plans and designs under Chapter Four herein, regardless of the permits required under other laws.

§ 7a. (New, SG No. 62/2007) (1) Orders, decrees and other administrative acts for designation of strict nature reserves, managed nature reserves, national parks, nature parks, protected sites, natural monuments, historic sites and buffer zones, and in connection with the amendments thereof, issued by 30 June 2007, shall not be subject to court appeals.

(2) Instigated and Pending court proceedings against the acts referred to in Paragraph 1 above shall be terminated.

§ 8. The Nature Conservation Act (promulgated in the State Gazette No. 47/1967; amended in No. 3/1977, No. 39/1978, No. 28/1982, No. 26/1988, No. 86/1991, No. 85/1997 and No. 11/1998) shall be amended and supplemented as follows:

1. In Paragraph (2) of Article 9, the word "cultivation" shall be replaced by "use by order of the Minister of Environment and Water, which shall be promulgated in the State Gazette".

2. Article 11 shall be amended and supplemented as follows:

(a) in Paragraph (1), sentence two shall be amended to read as follows:

"It shall be impermissible to use wild animals in quantities and for periods of time leading to endangerment of populations or interfering with the normal reproduction thereof";

(b) the following three new paragraphs shall be inserted:

"(2) The wild animal species whereof the populations are endangered shall be placed under a special regime of protection and use by order of the Minister of Environment and Water, after consulting the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, and any such order shall be promulgated in the State Gazette.

(3) It shall be prohibited to capture, kill and use any wild animals by the means and methods specified in the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats.

(4) Any specimens of plants and animals or any readily recognizable part or derivative thereof of any species included in the Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora shall be imported, exported and re-exported by a permit issued by the Ministry of Environment and Water. "

(c) the existing Paragraph (2) shall be renumbered to become Paragraph (5), and the words "Bulgarian Academy of Sciences" therein shall be replaced by "Ministry of Environment and Water".

3. Articles 14 to 20 shall be amended to read as follows:

"Article 14. (1) Individual wild plant and animal species, which are rare or in danger of extinction, are of interest to science, or are the subject of international conventions or treaties whereto the Republic of Bulgaria is a party, shall be

designated as protected.

Article 15. It shall be prohibited to:

1. pick, collect, cut or uproot any protected plants, and to sell and export any such plants;
 2. hunt, capture or kill any protected animals, destroy the lairs, nests or eggs thereof, as well as sell and export any such animals.
- (2) Any exemption from the provisions of Paragraph (1) shall be determined by the order referred to in Article 19 herein.

Article 16. (1) Individual centuries-old or remarkable trees inside or outside nucleated settlements shall be designated as protected.

(2) It shall be prohibited to uproot, cut, prune or destroy or otherwise damage any centuries-old trees that have been designated as protected.

Article 17. (1) Buffer zones, intended to contain the anthropogenic impact on the reserves, shall be designated around the strict nature reserves and the managed nature reserves designated under the Protected Areas Act.

(2) Any activities or construction as specified in the designation order shall be prohibited or restricted in the buffer zones.

Article 18. (1) Any proposals for designation of centuries-old trees and buffer zones shall be studied by a commission consisting of representatives of state bodies and municipalities, natural and juristic persons and non-governmental organizations concerned.

(2) The commission referred to in Paragraph (1) shall be appointed by the directors of the regional authorities of the Ministry of Environment and Water.

(3) The commission referred to in Paragraph (1) shall compile a dossier or shall reject the proposal.

(4) The dossier referred to in Paragraph (3) shall include minutes recording a proposal to designate the sites, the regime of protection thereof and a plat, and shall be submitted to the Ministry of Environment and Water.

Article 19. (1) Any sites covered under Article 14, Article 16 (1) and Article 17 herein shall be designated by order by the Minister of Environment and Water after consultation with the central-government departments concerned.

(2) Any order referred to in Paragraph (1) shall be promulgated in the State Gazette.

Article 20. Designation of centuries-old trees as protected and of buffer zones shall not alter the ownership thereof. "

4. Articles 21 to 27 shall be repealed.

5. In Article 37, after the words "Article 10 (2) ", the conjunction "and" shall be deleted and there shall be added "Article 11", and after the words "Article 12" there shall be added "Article 15 (1), Article 16 (2) and Article 17 (2) ".

6. A new Article 37A shall be inserted to read as follows:

"Article 37A. A pecuniary penalty or a fine, as the case may be, of BGN 1,000 or exceeding this amount but not exceeding BGN 5000 will be imposed on any juristic person or sole trader which or who shall be blameworthy of any violation of Article 4 (2), Article 9 (2), Article 11, Article 15 (1), Article 16 (2) and Article 17 (2) herein. "

7. Throughout the Act, the words "Minister of Agriculture and Forestry", "the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry" and "the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry" shall be replaced by "Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Agrarian Reform", "the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Agrarian Reform" and "Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Agrarian Reform", respectively, and the words "people's councils" and "the Chairmen of the Executive Committees of the Municipal People's Councils" shall be replaced by "the municipalities" and "the municipality mayors", respectively.

§ 9. In the Criminal Code (promulgated in the State Gazette No. 26/1968; corrected, No. 29/1968; amended and supplemented in No. 92/1969, Nos. 26 and 27/1973, No. 89/1974, No. 95/1975, No. 3/1977, No. 54/1978, No. 89/1979, No. 28/1982; corrected in No. 31/1982; amended and supplemented in No. 44/1984, Nos. 41 and 79/1985; corrected in No. 80/1985; amended and supplemented in No. 89/1986; corrected in No. 90/1986; amended in Nos. 37, 91 and 99/1989, Nos. 10, 31 and 81/1990, Nos. 1 and 86/1991; corrected in No. 90/1991; amended and supplemented in No. 105/1991, No. 54/1992, No. 10/1993, No. 50/1995; modified by Constitutional Court Judgment No. 19/1995, promulgated in the State Gazette No. 97/1995; amended and supplemented in No. 102/1995, No. 107/1996, No. 62/1997, No. 85/1997; modified by Constitutional Court Judgment No. 19/1997, promulgated in the State Gazette No. 120/1998; amended and supplemented in Nos. 83, 85, 132, 133 and 153/1998), Article 278C shall be amended as follows:

1. In Paragraph (1), the words "protected natural site" shall be replaced by "protected area or a specimen of a protected plant or animal species".

2. In Paragraph (3), the words "formations, wild animals, birds, plants etc., designated as unique" shall be replaced by "and rock formations, caves, specimens of wild plants and animals endangered on a European or a global scale, designated as protected".

§ 10. In the Agricultural Land Ownership and Use Act (promulgated in the State Gazette No. 17/1991; corrected in No. 20/1991; amended and supplemented in No. 74/1991, Nos. 18, 28, 46 and 105/1992, No. 48/1993; modified by Constitutional Court Judgment No. 12/1993, promulgated in the State Gazette No. 64/1993; amended in No. 83/1993, No. 80/1994, Nos. 45 and 57/1995; modified by Constitutional Court Judgements Nos. 7 and 8/1995, promulgated in the State Gazette No. 59/1995; amended in No. 79/1996; modified by Constitutional Court Judgment No. 20/1996, promulgated in the State Gazette No. 79/1996; amended and supplemented in No. 104/1996, Nos. 62, 87, 98, 123 and 124/1997, Nos. 59 and 88/1998), Paragraph (4) of Article 24 shall be amended to read as follows:

"(4) Ownership shall not be restituted in any agricultural land incorporated into parks of national significance and nature reserves constituting exclusive state property, designated according to the procedure established by the Protected Areas Act, and over land tracts containing subsurface or surface archaeological sites inseparable therefrom."

§ 11. In the Forestry Act (promulgated in the State Gazette No. 125/1997, amended in No. 79/1998), in Article 3 a new paragraph shall be added to read as follows:

"(2) The provisions of this Act shall not apply to any forests and land tracts of the forest stock within any protected areas constituting exclusive state property."

§ 12. In the Transitional and Final Provisions of the Act Restoring Ownership of Forests and Forest Stock Land Tracts (promulgated in the State Gazette No. 110/1997, amended in Nos. 33 and 59/1998), a new clause shall be inserted to read as follows:

"§ 4a. The land commissions shall pronounce on claims for restoration of ownership in any forests and forest stock land tracts falling within the boundaries of national parks after delimitation of the boundaries under § 4 of the Protected Areas Act."

§ 13. In § 2 of the Transitional and Final Provisions of the Stamp Duty Act (promulgated in Transactions of the Presidium of the National Assembly No. 104/1951; amended and supplemented in No. 89/1959, No. 21/1960; State Gazette No. 53/1973, No. 87/1974, No. 21/1975, No. 21/1990, No. 55/1991, No. 100/1992, Nos. 69 and 87/1995, Nos. 37, 100 and 104/1996, Nos. 82 and 86/1997), at the end of sentence one there shall be added "and the Protected Areas Act."

§ 14. The Regional and Planning Act (promulgated in the State Gazette No. 29/1973; corrected in No. 32/1973; amended and supplemented in No. 87/1974, Nos. 3 and 102/1977, No. 36/1979, No. 3/1980, No. 45/1984, No. 19/1985, No. 36/1986, No. 14/1988, No. 31/1990; corrected in No. 32/1990; amended in No. 15/1991; amended and supplemented in No. 63/1995, No. 104/1996, Nos. 41 and 79/1998; corrected in No. 89/1998; amended in No. 124/1998) shall be supplemented as follows:

1. In Article 170, a new paragraph shall be added to read as follows:

"(8) Any illegal construction projects within protected areas as defined by the Protected Areas Act and within water

withdrawal areas shall be subject to compulsory removal and reclamation of the ground for the account of the offender. "

2. In Article 162, the following new Paragraph (5) shall be added to read as follows:

"(5) No construction projects or parts of construction projects within protected areas and water withdrawal areas shall be subject to legalization if performed without a permit or if deviating from the approved designs, as well as in violation of the Protected Areas Act. "

§ 15. The implementation of this Act shall be entrusted to the Minister of Environment and Water, to the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, to the Minister of Finance, and to the municipality mayors.

Lev Re-denomination Act

Promulgated, State Gazette No. 20/1999,

amended, SG No. 65/1999 (effective 5.07.1999).

TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

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§ 4. (1) (Amended, SG No. 65/1999) Upon the entry of this Act into force, all figures expressed in old lev terms as indicated in the laws which will have entered into force prior to the 5th day of July 1999 shall be replaced by figures expressed in new lev terms, reduced by a factor of 1,000. The replacement of all figures expressed in old lev terms, reduced by a factor of 1,000, shall furthermore apply to all laws passed prior to the 5th day of July 1999 which have entered or will enter into force after the 5th day of July 1999.

(2) The authorities, which have adopted or issued any acts of subordinate legislation which will have entered into force prior to the 5th day of July 1999 and which contain figures expressed in lev terms, shall amend the said acts to bring them in conformity with this Act so that the amendments apply as from the date of entry of this Act into force.

.....

§ 7. This Act shall enter into force on the 5th day of July 1999.

TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

to the Act amending and supplementing the Fisheries and Aquaculture Act

(SG No. 36/2008)

TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

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§ 99. Everywhere in the Protected Areas Act (Promulgated, State Gazette No. 133/1998 amended, SG No. 98/1999, amended and supplemented, SG No. 28/2000, amended, SG No. 48/2000, supplemented, SG No. 78/2000; amended, SG No. 23/2002, amended and supplemented, SG No. 77/2002, amended, SG No. 91/2002, SG No. 28/2005, SG No. 94/2005, SG No. 30/2006, amended and supplemented, SG No. 65/2006, SG No. 24/2007, supplemented, SG No. 62/2007) the words "The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry", "minister of agriculture and forestry" shall be replaced by "The Ministry of Agriculture and Food Supply", "minister of agriculture and food supply".

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TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

to the Act amending and supplementing the Forestry Act

(SG, No. 43/2008)

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§ 76. Everywhere in the Protected Areas Act (Promulgated, State Gazette No. 133/1998 amended, SG No. 98/1999, amended and supplemented, SG No. 28/2000, amended, SG No. 48/2000, supplemented, SG No. 78/2000; amended, SG No. 23/2002, amended and supplemented, SG No. 77/2002, amended, SG No. 91/2002, SG No. 28/2005, SG No. 94/2005, SG No. 30/2006, amended and supplemented, SG No. 65/2006, SG No. 24/2007, supplemented, SG No. 62/2007, SG No. 36/2008) the following amendments shall be made:

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7. Everywhere in the Act the words "forestry units" shall be replaced by "forestry farms"

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TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

to the Act Amending and Supplementing the Forestry Act

(SG No. 80/2009)

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§ 66. In the Protected Areas (Promulgated, State Gazette No. 133/1998 amended, SG No. 98/1999, amended and supplemented, SG No. 28/2000, amended, SG No. 48/2000, supplemented, SG No. 78/2000; amended, SG No. 23/2002, amended and supplemented, SG No. 77/2002, amended, SG No. 91/2002, SG No. 28/2005, SG No. 94/2005, SG No. 30/2006, amended and supplemented, SG No. 65/2006, SG No. 24/2007, supplemented, SG No. 62/2007, amended, SG No. 36/2008, amended and supplemented, SG No. 43/2008, amended, SG No. 19/2009) the following amendments shall be made:

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3. Everywhere in the Act the words "Ministry of Agriculture and Food Supply" and "The State Forestry Agency" shall be replaced with "Ministry of Agriculture and Food" and "The Executive Forestry Agency".

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Annex 1 to Article 8 (1) (Amended, SG No. 28/2000 and No. 77/2002)

No.	National Park Name	Administrative Region	Document Type	Document No.	Date
1.	Pirin	Blagoevgrad	Order	395	15.10.1999
2.	Central Balkan	Lovech	Order	396	15.10.1999

		Gabrovo			
		Sofia			
		Plovdiv			
		Stara Zagora			
3.	Rila	Pazardjik	Order	397	15.10.1999
		Sofia			
		Kyustendil			
		Blagoevgrad			

Annex 2 to Article 8 (1)
(Amended, SG No. 28/2000 and No. 77/2002)

No.	Reserve Name	Municipality/ Land Use Area	Document Type	Document No.	Date
I. STRICT NATURE RESERVES					
1.	Silkosia	Kosti Village	Order	1046	23.07.1931
			Order	8455	29.04.1933
			CoMD*	1046	20.09.1934
2.	Parangalitsa	Blagoevgrad	CoMD*	8517	30.12.1933
			Order	1980	07.08.1961
			Order	523	09.06.1987
3.	Bayuvi Douпки - Djindjiritsa	Razlog	CoMD*	1388	29.01.1934
			Order	301	04.02.1976
			Order	976	26.12.1979
4.	Bistrishko Branishte	Vitosha National Park	CoMD*	15422	27.10.1934
			Order	106	24.01.1968
			Order	230	04.04.1980
			Order	66	25.01.1991
5.	Torfeno Branishte	Vitosha National Park	CoMD*	16362	01.10.1935
			Order	602	12.08.1980

			Order	82	08.02.1991
6.	Kaliakra	Bulgarevo	CoMD*	16298	27.09.1941
			Order	356	05.02.1966
			Order	231	04.04.1980
7.	Boatin	Cherni Vit Village	CoMD*	7285	12.06.1948
			Order	1171	24.09.1951
			Order	1700	17.07.1961
			Order	2245	30.12.1956
			Order	4537	17.11.1975
			Order	993	30.09.1983
			Order	67	25.01.1991
8.	Tsarichina	Ribaritsa Village	CoMD*	4942	18.07.1949
			Order	1171	24.09.1951
			Order	2245	30.12.1956
			Order	2809	10.10.1962
			Order	359	09.02.1973
			Order	281	04.05.1979
			Order	1255	22.12.1983
			Order	67	25.01.1991
			Order	500	29.06.1992
9.	Tissata	Kresna	CoMD*	6663	05.12.1949
			Order	440	09.12.1977
			Order	130	22.02.1985
			Order	844	31.10.1991
10.	Doupkata	Fotinovo Village	Order	1700	17.12.1961
			Order	3899	15.09.1975
			Order	587	08.06.1983
11.	Kamchiya	Novo Oryahovo Village	CoMD*	14829	29.06.1951
			Order	1749	27.07.1962
			Order	105	14.02.1980
12.	Gorna Topchiya	Konevets Village	CoMD*	1171	24.09.1951
			Order	754	19.07.1984

13.	Ali Botoush	Gotse Delchev Katountsi Village	CoMD*	1171	24.09.1951
			CoMD*	14825	29.06.1952
			Order	27	13.01.1981
			Order	131	22.02.1985
14.	Djendema	Karlovo	Order	606	28.03.1953
			Order	1700	11.07.1961
			Order	1080	21.10.1983
			Order	67	25.01.1991
15.	Ouzounbodjak	Kosti Village	Order	2245	13.12.1956
16.	Soskovchet o	Smolyan	Order	508	28.03.1968
17.	Skakavitsa	Sapareva Banya Village	Order	508	28.03.1968
18.	Beglika/Vasil Kolarov	Batak	Order	751	11.05.1960
			Order	482	23.06.1992
19.	Elenova Gora	Sahrane Village	Order	2200	30.08.1961
20.	Koupena	Peshtera	Order	2969	24.09.1961
			Order	3539	13.11.1973
			Order	503	11.07.1979
			Order	530	07.07.1992
21.	Chervenata Skala	Bachkovo Village	Order	2631	21.04.1962
			Order	1555	21.10.1969
			Order	1050	17.12.1990
22.	Mantaritsa	Rakitovo	Order	960	08.06.1968
			Order	3812	06.09.1975
			Order	529	07.07.1992
23.	Gornata Koriya	Berkovitsa	Order	508	28.03.1968
			Order	15	08.01.1981
24.	Byala Krava	Kostel Village	Order	508	28.03.1968
			Order	20	05.01.1974
25.	Kastraklii	Borino Village	Order	508	28.03.1968
26.	Kazanite	Mougla Village	Order	508	28.03.1968

27.	Chouprene	Chouprene Village	Order	358	09.02.1973
28.	Steneto	Cherni Ossum Village	Order	214	05.04.1979
			Order	280	04.05.1979
			Order	44	15.01.1991
29.	Sokolna	Skobelevo Village, Asen Village	Order	501	11.07.1979
			Order	9	09.01.1985
30.	Peeshti Skali	Stokite Village, Kruvenik Village	Order	502	11.07.1979
31.	Boukaka	Shoumen	Order	79	5.02.1980
32.	Beli Lom	Tsar Kaloyan, Vetovo	Order	393	12.05.1980
33.	Tsurnata Reka	Sazhdenik Village	Order	876	25.11.1980
34.	Vulchi Dol	Boynik Village	Order	877	25.11.1980
35.	Stara Reka	Karlovo	Order	200	19.03.1981
			Order	67	25.01.1991
36.	Vitanovo	Malko Turnovo	Order	1113	3.12.1981
			Order	1021	30.12.1992
37.	Kitka	Kitka Island	Order	1106	2.12.1981
38.	Vrachanski Karst	Vratsa	Order	854	10.08.1983
			Order	9	9.01.1985
			Order	1449	21.12.1989
39.	Severen Djendem	Apriltsi	Order	995	30.09.1983
			Order	9	9.01.1985
40.	Koutelka	Sliven	Order	1253	22.12.1983
41.	Orlitsata	Medven Village	Order	791	10.08.1984
42.	Kamenshtitsa	Enina Village	Order	792	10.08.1984
				9	9.01.1985
43.	Leshnitsa	Yassenovo Village	Order	793	10.08.1984
44.	Orelyak	Gotse Delchev	Order	129	22.02.1985
			Order	432	24.11.1995
45.	Ibur	Kostenets	Order	148	26.02.1985

			Order	114	24.02.1992
46.	Sokolata	Igralishte Village	Order	115	18.02.1985
47.	Rila Monastery Forest	Rila	Order	307	10.04.1986
			Order	114	24.02.1992
48.	Kozya Stena	Chiflik Village, Lovech	Order	1048	22.12.1987
			Order	67	25.01.1991
49.	Kongoura	Petrich	Order	671	15.06.1988
50.	Sredoka	Malko Turnovo	Order	75	18.01.1989
51.	Tissovitsa	Bulgari Village	Order	169	16.02.1990
52.	Central Rila Reserve	Samokov	Order	114	24.02.1992
53.	Ropotamo	Tsarevo	Order	318	7.05.1992
54.	Yulen	Bansko		223	26.08.1994
55.	Milka	Belene Island	CoMD*	849	28.03.1948
			Order	2245	30.12.1956

II. MANAGED NATURE RESERVES

1.	Patleina	Veliki Preslav	Order	360	15.10.1999
2.	Dervisha	Veliki Preslav	Order	361	15.10.1999
3.	Chamdja	Hristo Danovo Village	Order	362	15.10.1999
4.	Izgoryaloto Gyune	Krichim	Order	363	15.10.1999
5.	Gabra	Tsurvaritsa Village	Order	364	15.10.1999
6.	Kazul Cherpa	Zhenda Village .	Order	365	15.10.1999
7.	Ardachluka	Borintsi Village	Order	366	15.10.1999
8.	Sreburna	Sreburna Village	Order	367	15.10.1999
9.	Bororvets	Raven Village	Order	368	15.10.1999
10.	Chamluka	Momchilgrad	Order	369	15.10.1999
11.	Shabanitsa	Trigrad Village	Order	370	15.10.1999
12.	Vulchi Prohod	Golitsa Village	Order	371	15.10.1999
13.	Momchilovs ki Dol	Momchilovtsi Village	Order	372	15.10.1999
14.	Amzovo	Smolyan	Order	373	15.10.1999
15.	Sini Bryag	Izgrev Village	Order	374	15.10.1999

16.	Momin Grad	Byala Reka Village	Order	375	15.10.1999
17.	Balabana	Elhovo	Order	376	15.10.1999
18.	Dolna Topchiya	Elhovo	Order	377	15.10.1999
19.	Ostritsa	Pernik	Order	378	15.10.1999
20.	Pyassuchnata Liliya	Sozopol	Order	379	15.10.1999
21.	Konski Dol	Satovcha Village	Order	380	15.10.1999
22.	Velyov Vir (The Water Lilies)	Sozopol	Order	381	15.10.1999
23.	Tumna Gora	Kovachevitsa Village	Order	382	15.10.1999
24.	Ouchilishnata Gora	Bozhenitsa Village	Order	383	15.10.1999
25.	Boraka	Surnitsa Village	Order	384	15.10.1999
26.	Vurbov Dol	Asparouhovo Village	Order	385	15.10.1999
27.	Kirov Dol	Dolen Chiflik	Order	386	15.10.1999
28.	Kalfata	Polyatsite Village	Order	387	15.10.1999
29.	Savchov Chayr	Kladni Dyal Village	Order	388	15.10.1999
30.	Haydoushki Choukar	Bouynovtsi Village	Order	389	15.10.1999
31.	Bogdan	Koprivshitsa	Order	390	15.10.1999
32.	Baltata	Obrochishte Village	Order	391	15.10.1999
33.	Lake Atanassovsko	Bourgas	Order	392	15.10.1999
34.	Persinski Blata	Belene Island	Order	393	15.10.1999
35.	Ibisha	Dolni Tsibur Village	Order	394	15.10.1999

*Council of Ministers Decree