



NATURA 2000 - STANDARD DATA FORM

For Special Protection Areas (SPA),
Proposed Sites for Community Importance (pSCI),
Sites of Community Importance (SCI) and
for Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)

SITE

BG0002053

SITENAME

Vrachanski Balkan

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1. SITE IDENTIFICATION

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1.1 Type A	1.2 Site code BG0002053
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1.3 Site name

Vrachanski Balkan

1.4 First Compilation date 2005-10	1.5 Update date 2015-07
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1.6 Respondent:

Name/Organisation:	Ministry of Environment and Water, "National Nature Protection Service" Directorate
Address:	Sofia Maria Luiza Blvd. 22 1000 Sofia
Email:	r.dimova@moew.government.bg

1.7 Site indication and designation / classification dates

Date site classified as SPA:	2007-03
National legal reference of SPA designation	Site classified as SPA by Council of Ministers Decision No. 122/02.03.2007 (promulgated SG 21/2007).
Explanation(s):	Site classified as SPA by Council of Ministers Decision No. 122/02.03.2007 (promulgated SG 21/2007). Issued designation order by the Minister of Environment and Water with prohibitions and restrictions on activities contradicting the conservation objectives of the site – Order No. RD – 801/04.11.2008 (promulgated SG 105/2008).

2. SITE LOCATION

2.1 Site-centre location [decimal degrees]:

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Longitude

23.4661

Latitude

43.1736

2.2 Area [ha]:

30879.7377

2.3 Marine area [%]

0.0

2.4 Sitelength [km]:

0.0

2.5 Administrative region code and name

NUTS level 2 code
Region Name

BG31	Северозападен / Severozapaden
BG31	Северозападен / Severozapaden
BG41	Югозападен / Yugozapaden

2.6 Biogeographical Region(s)

Alpine (76.6%)

Continental (23.4%)

3. ECOLOGICAL INFORMATION

3.2 Species referred to in Article 4 of Directive 2009/147/EC and listed in Annex II of Directive 92/43/EEC and site evaluation for them

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Species					Population in the site					Site assessment				
Group	Code	Scientific Name	S	NP	Type	Size		Unit	Cat.	Data quality	A B C D		A B C	
						Min	Max		C R V P		Pop.	Cons.	Isol.	Glob.
B	A086	Accipiter nisus			p	3	5	p		G	C	B	C	C
B	A168	Actitis hypoleucos			r	4	4	p		G	C	B	C	C
B	A168	Actitis hypoleucos			c				P	DD	C	B	C	C
B	A229	Alcedo atthis			p	2	2	p		G	C	B	C	C
B	A465	Alectoris graeca graeca			p	30	50	p		G	C	A	C	C
B	A053	Anas platyrhynchos			c				P	DD	D			
B	A053	Anas platyrhynchos			p	2	2	p		G	D			
B	A055	Anas querquedula			c				P	DD	D			
B	A091	Aquila chrysaetos			p	5	6	p		G	B	A	C	A
B	A089	Aquila pomarina			c				P	DD	C	B	C	C
B	A215	Bubo bubo			p	20	20	p		G	B	A	C	A
B	A087	Buteo buteo			c				P	DD	C	B	C	C
B	A087	Buteo buteo			p	15	20	p		G	C	B	C	C
B	A403	Buteo rufinus			p	10	11	p		G	C	A	C	A
B	A243				c				P	DD	C	B	C	C

		Calandrella brachydactyla												
B	A224	Caprimulgus europaeus			c				P	DD	C	A	C	C
B	A224	Caprimulgus europaeus			r	50	50	p		G	C	A	C	C
B	A031	Ciconia ciconia			r	12	12	p		G	C	B	C	C
B	A030	Ciconia nigra			r	7	7	p		G	C	A	C	A
B	A080	Circus gallicus			r	4	8	p		G	C	A	C	C
B	A081	Circus aeruginosus			c				P	DD	C	B	C	C
B	A083	Circus macrourus			c				P	DD	C	B	C	C
B	A084	Circus pygargus			c				P	DD	C	B	C	C
B	A231	Coracias garrulus			r	1	1	p		G	C	B	C	C
B	A122	Crex crex			r	34	34	p		G	B	A	C	B
B	A239	Dendrocopos leucotos			p	3	6	p		G	C	B	C	C
B	A238	Dendrocopos medius			p	6	12	p		G	C	B	C	C
B	A429	Dendrocopos syriacus			p	80	120	p		G	C	B	C	C
B	A236	Dryocopus martius			p	15	20	p		G	C	A	C	C
B	A027	Egretta alba			c				P	DD	C	B	C	C
B	A026	Egretta garzetta			c				P	DD	C	B	C	C
B	A379	Emberiza hortulana			r	227	227	p		G	C	A	C	C
B	A511	Falco cherrug			r	1	2	p		G	B	A	C	A
B	A511	Falco cherrug			w		1	i		G	B	A	C	A
B	A511	Falco cherrug			c		1	i		G	B	A	C	A
B	A103	Falco peregrinus			c	1	1	i		G	B	A	C	A
B	A103	Falco peregrinus			r	5	12	p		G	B	A	C	A
B	A099	Falco subbuteo			r	3	5	p		G	C	B	C	C
B	A099	Falco subbuteo			c				P	DD	C	B	C	C
B	A096	Falco tinnunculus			p	25	40	p		G	C	B	C	C
B	A096	Falco tinnunculus			c	13	40	p		G	C	B	C	C
B	A442	Ficedula semitorquata			r	56	56	p		G	B	B	C	B
B	A125	Fulica atra			c				P	DD	D			
B	A078	Gyps fulvus			p	2	4	p	P	G	B	A	B	B
B	A078	Gyps fulvus			c	10	30	i	P	G	B	A	B	B
B	A092	Hieraetaetus pennatus			r	1	1	p		G	C	B	C	C
B	A338	Lanius collurio			c				P	DD	C	A	C	B
B	A338	Lanius collurio			r	620	620	p		G	C	A	C	B
B	A339	Lanius minor			r	15	25	p		G	C	B	C	C
B	A246	Lullula arborea			p	275	275	p		G	C	A	C	C
B	A242	Melanocorypha calandra			p	15	15	p		G	C	B	C	C
B	A230	Merops apiaster			r	9	9	p		G	D			
B	A230	Merops apiaster			c				P	DD	D			

B	A210	Streptopelia turtur			85	85								X	
B	A311	Sylvia atricapilla			1000	1000								X	
B	A333	Tichodroma muraria			2	2					X				
B	A283	Turdus merula			1625	1625								X	
B	A285	Turdus philomelos			1000	1000								X	

Group: A = Amphibians, B = Birds, F = Fish, Fu = Fungi, I = Invertebrates, L = Lichens, M = Mammals, P = Plants, R = Reptiles

CODE: for Birds, Annex IV and V species the code as provided in the reference portal should be used in addition to the scientific name

S: in case that the data on species are sensitive and therefore have to be blocked for any public access enter: yes

NP: in case that a species is no longer present in the site enter: x (optional)

Unit: i = individuals, p = pairs or other units according to the standard list of population units and codes in accordance with Article 12 and 17 reporting, (see [reference portal](#))

Cat.: Abundance categories: C = common, R = rare, V = very rare, P = present

Motivation categories: **IV, V:** Annex Species (Habitats Directive), **A:** National Red List data; **B:** Endemics; **C:** International Conventions; **D:** other reasons

4. SITE DESCRIPTION

4.1 General site character

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Habitat class	% Cover
N20	1.0
N17	1.0
N09	14.0
N06	
N16	56.0
N07	
N23	1.0
N21	2.0
N10	13.0
N08	5.0
N22	1.0
N12	2.0
N19	3.0
N15	1.0
Total Habitat Cover	NaN

Other Site Characteristics

The site includes Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park with the bigger part of the Vrachanska Mountain and the massif of Lakatnik Rocks. It occupies the area between the pre-Balkan and the main Balkan Mountain chain and rises south of the town of the town of Vratsa and the Vratsa plain. Its limit to the south is the deeply cutting gorge of the Iskar river. Its western limit is Druzhevska saddle. It is about 30 km long and 10-15 km wide. The base rock is carbonate ? Triast and Jura limestones, which are quite characteristic for karst development. A big part of the territory of the Vrachanski Balkan is occupied by surface karst forms, like hollows, potholes, whirlpools, etc., situated among secondary grasslands and large beech forests. Concerning the vegetation, there is a clear vertical distinction of two belts: up to 700 m ? oak, from 700 m to 1000 m ? beech. The characteristic geological and morphological structure of the Vrachanski Balkan ? the presence of big areas occupied by vertical rocks and screes ? define the comparatively broad distribution of chasmophyte plant communities (such, adhering to rocks) of Mediterranean type. As a rule this type of vegetation is xerophytic, heliophilic and prefers limestone rock terrain. Typical for the mountain are the forests of *Fagus moesiaca* with undergrowth of *Daphne laureola* and the forests of *Carpinus betulus* with undergrowth of *Daphne oleoides*. At some places there are forests and groups of trees of Austrian pine /*Pinus nigra*/ with relict character. On the screes there are communities of *Acer monspessulanum*, *Juglans regia*, etc. The territory supports over 700 species of vascular plants, which is almost 1/5 of Bulgaria's flora. Fifty six of them are declared protected, as they are rare and threatened with extinction, and 26 are protected by the Biodiversity Conservation Act.

4.2 Quality and importance

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Vrachanski Balkan is one of the most interesting land forms, clearly standing out on the background of the other shares of the Western Balkan and the pre-Balkan. With its diversity of rocky crests, rounded tops, valleys, saddles, pot-holes and other forms, as well as with the relatively great difference in its altitude (from 200 to 1482 m) and diverse broadleaved and coniferous vegetation, it contributes to the existence of rich ornithofauna. It supports 139 bird species, 27 of which are listed in the Red Data Book for Bulgaria (1985). Of the birds occurring there 58 species are of European conservation concern (SPEC) (BirdLife International, 2004), 3 of them being listed in category SPEC 1 as globally threatened ? the Corncrake *Crex crex*, 17 in SPEC 2 and 38 in SPEC 3 as species threatened in Europe. The area provides suitable habitats for 47 species, included in Annex 2 of the Biodiversity Act, which need special conservation measures, of which 40 are listed also in Annex I of the Birds Directive. Vrachanski Balkan is of global importance for the Corncrake, which breeds there in considerable numbers. The area is one of the most important sites in Bulgaria on European Union scale for 5 bird species that breed there. These are the Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus*, Long-legged Buzzard *Buteo rufinus*, Saker Falco *cherrug*, Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* and Eagle Owl *Bubo bubo*. The Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*, the Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*, the Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio* and the Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* have also representative breeding populations in the region.

4.3 Threats, pressures and activities with impacts on the site

The most important impacts and activities with high effect on the site

Negative Impacts			
Rank	Threats and pressures [code]	Pollution (optional) [code]	inside/outside [i o b]
H	C01.01.01		i
H	F03.01		i
H	C01.01.01		o
H	B01.02		i
H	G01.04		i
M	C01.07		i
H	A04		i
H	D01.04		i
M	E01		o
M	D02.01		i
H	E03.03		i
H	K01.01		i
H	E03		o
H	F06		i
H	D01.04		o
L	J02.05.02		o
M	J02.05.02		i
H	D01.01		o
M	E01.03		i
M	D01.01		i
H	A03		i
H	D02.01		o
H	A04		o
M	A07		o
H	E03.01		i
H	A10.01		o

Rank: H = high, M = medium, L = low

Pollution: N = Nitrogen input, P = Phosphor/Phosphate input, A = Acid input/acidification,

T = toxic inorganic chemicals, O = toxic organic chemicals, X = Mixed pollutions

i = inside, o = outside, b = both

Positive Impacts			
Rank	Activities, management [code]	Pollution (optional) [code]	inside/outside [i o b]
H	A05.01		o
H	B01.02		i
H	A03		i
H	A04		i
H	F06		i
H	B		i
H	F03.01		i

4.5 Documentation

Initial proposal and description of the site made by G. Stoyanov - Birds of Prey Protection Society, 1000 Sofia, 40 "V. Levski" blvd., tel: 963 40 37, e-mail: bpps@abv.bg; K. Donchev, L. Profirov - Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds, Bulgaria, 1111 Sofia, P.O.Box 50, phone (+359 2) 9715855, fax (+359 2) 9715856, www.bspb.org . Data revised by a team of Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (<http://www.bas.bg>). Documents: BDZP/BirdLife Balgariya. 2005. ? Nacionalna banka za ornitologichna informacia 1988-2005?, Balgarsko Druzhestvo za zastita na pticite; Botev, B. and Tz. Peshev, (eds). 1985. Red Data Book of Republic Bulgaria. 2: Animals. Sofia: Bulgarian Academy of Science. (In Bulgarian.); Iankov, P. 2002.(red.). Svetovno zastrasheni vidove ptici v Bulgaria. Nacionalni planove za dejstvie za opazvaneto im. Chast 1. BDZP-MOSV, Prirodzashtitna poredica, Kn. 4, Sofia: 204-219.; Georgiev, V. 1995. Pticite na Vrachanska planina. Diplomna rabota, Biologicheski fakultet pri SU ?Sv. Kl. Ohridski?, Sofia, 64 s.; Michev, T., C. Petrov, L. Profirov, P. Iankov, S. Gavrailov. 1989. Razprostranenie I prirodzashtiten status na skalnia orel *Aquila chrysaetos chrysaetos* (L.), 1758 v Bulgaria. ? Izv. Muz. IU. Bulgaria, 15, 79-87.; MOSV. 2005. Arhiv na zastitenite teritorii v Balgaria. Baza danni (nepubl.); Nikolov, B., I. Hristov, P. Shurulinkov, I. Nikolov, A. Rogev, A. Ducov, R. Stanchev. 2001. Novi danni za niakoi slabo izucheni vidove gorski sovi (*Strix uralensis*, *Glaucidium passerinum*, *Aegolius funereus*) v Bulgaria. -

Nauka za gorata, Kn. 1/2, 75-86.; Petrov, C. 1997b. Beliast shturkel (*Ciconia ciconia*) v Bulgaria. Prirodozashtitna poredica, Kniga 2, BDZP, Plovdiv.; Petrov, C., P.Iankov, T. Michev, B. Milchev, L. Profirov. 1991. Razprostranenie, chislenost I merki za opazvane na chernia shturkel, *Ciconia nigra* (L.) v Bulgaria. ? Izv. Muz. IU. Bulgaria, T. 17, 25-32.; Simeonov, S., T. Michev. 1985. Suvmremno razprostranenie I chislenost na buhala (*Bubo bubo*(L.) v Bulgaria. ? Ekologia, 15, 60-65.; Stoianov, G. 1996. Gnezdova ornitofauna na skalnite biotopi na Iskurskia prolom. Diplomna rabota, Biologicheski fakultet pri SU ?Sv. Kl. Ohridski?, Sofia.; BirdLife International. 2000. Threatened birds of the world. Barcelona and Cambridge, UK: Lynx Edicions and BirdLife International, 695pp. Birdlife International. 2004. Birds in Europe: Population estimates, trends and conservation status. Cambridge, UK: Birdlife International (Birdlife Conservation Series No. 12).373pp.; BSPB/BirdLife International. 2005. World Bird Database ? Important Birds Areas.Bulgaria. Cambridge. (unpublished); Georgiev, V., B. Milchev, B. 2000. Birds of the Vratza Mountains. II Breeding bird atlas. ? Ann. Univ. Sofia ?St Kliment Ochriski? 91: 83-109.; Guidelines for evaluation of protected zones according, which include habitats for birds to art.7, par.3, under the art.6 par.1.3 and 1.4 of the Biodiversity Act. 2005. (In Bulgarian.); Kostadinova, I., M. Mihailov, (comp.) 2002. Guide for NATURA 2000 in Bulgaria. BSPB nature conservation series No5. BSPB, Sofia, 80pp. (In Bulgarian.); Kostadinova, I. 2005. Application of C criteria for Identification of Important Bird Areas of European Union importance in Bulgaria. Preliminary implementation and analysis of the gaps. ? In: Petrova, A. (ed.), Current state of Bulgarian biodiversity ? problems and perspectives. Pp. 533-548. Bulgarian Bioplatform, Sofia Kouzmanov, G., G. Stoyanov, R. Todorov. 1996. Sur la Biologie et la Protection de l'Aigle royal *Aquila chrysaetos* en Bulgarie. - In: Meyburg, B.-U. & R.D. Chancellor eds. 1994. Raptor Conservation Today, WWGBP/ The Pica Press, 505-515.; Michev, T., Tz. Petrov, L. Profirov. 1989. Status, breeding, distribution, numbers and conservation of the White Stork in Bulgaria MOEW. 1998. CORINE Biotopes Database of the sites of European Importance for the biodiversity. Bulgaria, MOSV (nepubl.); Osieck, E. 2000 Filling in the requirements of the EU Birds Directive: Lessons from the ?Dutch Case??. In: European IBA Workshop. 29 March - 2 April 2000, Brussels, Belgium. Proceedings. BirdLife International, 86-99; Waliczky, Z. 2000 ?Important Bird Areas of European Union Importance: explanation of the EU Criteria applied in IBA 2000? In: European IBA Workshop. 29 March - 2 April 2000, Brussels, Belgium. Proceedings. BirdLife International, 12-16

Link(s): <http://natura2000.moew.government.bg/Home/ProtectedSite?code=BG0002053&siteType=BirdsDirective>

5. SITE PROTECTION STATUS (optional)

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5.1 Designation types at national and regional level:

Code	Cover [%]	Code	Cover [%]	Code	Cover [%]
BG05	98.0	BG06	1.3	BG03	0.7
BG00	2.0	BG01	5.0		

5.2 Relation of the described site with other sites:

designated at national or regional level:

Type code	Site name	Type	Cover [%]
BG03	NOVATA CAVE	+	
BG06	VEZHDATA	+	0.2
BG06	BOROV KAMAK	+	0.5
BG05	VRACHANSKI BALKAN	+	98.0
BG01	VRACHANSKI KARST	+	5.0
BG03	TEMNATA DUPKA	+	
BG06	LAKATNISHKI SKALI	+	0.3
BG06	VOLA	+	0.3
BG03	VRATSATA	+	
BG03	LEDENIKA CAVE	+	0.3
BG03	RITLITE	+	0.4

designated at international level:

Type	Site name	Type	Cover [%]
Other	IBA	=	100.0

5.3 Site designation (optional)

The site includes ? Vrachanski Balkan ? the second largest park in Bulgaria, which covers 98% of the territory of the site. The park was designated in 1989 and declared as Nature Park of international importance in 1997. Its mission: to preserve biodiversity and the beauty of nature, to preserve cultural and historical heritage and to assure the recreation of

tourist and locals. The park territory covers 28,844.8 ha ? 20,733.4 ha of those are forest areas and 8,111.4 ha are agricultural areas. The park represents most of the Vratsa mountains and the massif of Lakatnik`s rocks. In the frame of this Park about 1,440 ha are protected as a Strict Reserve ?Vrachanski Karst? with 477 ha buffer zone. It is designated for protection of a karst region with very interesting rock formations, and Vratsata, the highest vertical limestone walls (over 400 m) on the Balkan Peninsula and in Europe at low altitude. The park?s characteristic limestone karst is the richest cave region in Bulgaria. Over 500 caves and precipices are located here. They are unique because of their beauty and cave-dwelling organisms. Few of the caves, as well as three typical rocky landscapes are protected by the national nature conservation law. In 1998 Vrachanski Balkan was designated as CORINE Site, because of its European value for rare and threatened habitats, plant and animal species, including birds. In 2005 it was designated also as Important Bird Area by BirdLife International.

6. SITE MANAGEMENT

6.1 Body(ies) responsible for the site management:

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Organisation:	Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park Directorate;Regional Inspectorates of Environment and Water -Vratsa, Montana, Sofia; Danubean River Basin Directorate;
Address:	_____
Email:	_____

6.2 Management Plan(s):

An actual management plan does exist:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	Name: Management Plan for Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park, adopted by Council of Ministers Decision No. 750/14.10.2011 (promulgated SG 82/2011). Link: http://www.moew.government.bg/files/file/Nature/Protected_areas/0_Sadarjanie.pdf
<input type="checkbox"/> No, but in preparation	
<input type="checkbox"/> No	

6.3 Conservation measures (optional)

Management plan for the Nature Park.

7. MAP OF THE SITES

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INSPIRE ID:

Map delivered as PDF in electronic format (optional)

Yes No

Reference(s) to the original map used for the digitalisation of the electronic boundaries (optional).