

26 February 2013

To
The Prime Minister
Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria
1594 Sofia, 1 Dondukov Blvd, Bulgaria, gis@government.bg

The President of the the Republic of Bulgaria
1123 Sofia, 2 Dondukov Blvd, Bulgaria, priemna@president.bg

✓
99-00-39
28.02.13

Your Excellencies,

Re: Amendments to the Management Plan of Pirin National Park

We are writing to you as representatives of two organisations deeply in love with Bulgaria, its rich wildlife, wonderful mountain scenery, fine food and wine, lively music and folklore scene. The British-Bulgarian Society celebrated its Diamond Jubilee last year. Balkania Travel Limited, in its 19th year continues to specialize in tours to Bulgaria featuring its history, traditions and culture, its natural beauty and rich biodiversity. Attached please see our brochure for 2013.

This letter is in support of Bulgarian NGOs and other organisations who are extremely concerned about current plans to rush through amendments to the Management Plan of Pirin National Park about be adopted by the Government. As far as we are informed those amendments will decrease the level of restriction regimes regarding the construction of new ski infrastructure in Natura 2000 and UNESCO World Heritage sites.

We understand the desire to continue the development of Bulgaria as a world class winter sports destination, but the evident lack of consensus with nature preservation and sustainable tourist development organisations is disturbing. Particularly unsettling are accusations of incidences of law infringement, lack of competition and public scrutiny and regulatory control. The apparent haste with which the proposed amendments are being pushed through in the current unsettled political climate, gives rise to deepening mistrust and goes against a constructive public discussion.

Bulgaria is home to many of Europe's outstanding natural treasures, one of which is the Pirin National Park, and it has a special responsibility to preserve this wealth not only on behalf of Bulgarians but also, as a member of the European Union, on behalf of all Europeans and the world.

We therefore urge you to terminate the amendment procedure in line with your government declared policy for the development of sustainable tourism in Bulgaria.

Yours faithfully

Ogden
Balkania Travel Ltd.

Dr.
Chairman, British-Bulgarian Society