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## **Pirin National Park (Bulgaria)**

### **No 225bis**

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#### **1. BASIC DATA**

*Official name as proposed by the State Party:*

Pirin National Park as World Heritage Property

*Location:*

Blagoevgrad District  
Republic of Bulgaria

*Brief description:*

The extension provides for inclusion of the formerly excluded central alpine zone and the exclusion of two ski zones, placed in a buffer zone, that compromise the integrity of the park. It also makes other small alterations, through inclusions and exclusions, to shape the World Heritage Site boundaries to conform to those of the national park and issues of integrity.

*Background information:*

The property is nominated on the basis of criteria (vii), (ix) and (x). This is an extension of the park which was inscribed on the World Heritage List at the 7<sup>th</sup> session (Florence 1983) of the World Heritage Committee on the basis of criteria (vii), (viii) and (ix).

*Date of ICOMOS approval of this report:* 17 March 2010

#### **2. THE PROPERTY**

The cultural heritage of the property comprises relics of successive territorial occupations and uses over millennia, including Thracian tumuli, remains of a pre-Roman fortress in the Yulen Reserve and medieval churches (pp.23-24).

More important representations of these assets exist elsewhere in Bulgaria, including in World Heritage Sites: two Thracian tombs, the Ancient City of Nessebar, Madara Rider and Boyana Church.

The nearby historic towns of Melnik (an architectural reserve, much rebuilt after a 1913 fire) and Bansko (with more than 100 cultural and historic monuments) and the Rila Monastery inscribed on the World Heritage List, all closely associated with the 18<sup>th</sup>- 19<sup>th</sup> century Bulgarian National Revival, lie outside the existing and proposed boundaries of the World Heritage Site. Historically, an important trade route crossing the lowest saddle of the North Pirin and caravans carrying cottons, tools and

wine passed through its 'Wine Gate' (p.23; WCMC). Traditional use included hunting and harvesting, tobacco-growing and mountain grazing. The region is also strongly associated with sheltering freedom fighters for independence from the Ottoman Empire and retains intangible cultural heritage such as songs. Cultural and historical heritage is addressed in section 1.18 and annex 7.12 of the park management plan.

#### **3. ICOMOS CONCLUSIONS**

ICOMOS considers that none of these associations appears to have the significance needed to justify cultural criteria.