



EUROPARC Federation Annual Report

January - December 2013



EUROPARC
F E D E R A T I O N

A map of Europe with various regions highlighted in white and blue, and numerous black stars indicating agency locations. The text is overlaid on the top left of the map.

40 Jahre Arbeiten für die 40 Years Natur Working for 40 ans Nature au service de la nature

EUROPARC Protected Area members – **PasE** - (highlighted in white) with respect to the overall European Protected Areas - **PAs**- (highlighted in blue), and agencies (black symbols).

Picture: European Documentation Centre on Nature Park Planning (CED PPN), DIST, Polytechnic of Turin

EUROPARC is the umbrella organisation of Europe's protected areas. It unites national and regional parks, nature and biosphere reserves, marine and landscape protected areas, together with a large number of Natura 2000 sites in 35 countries, with the common aim of protecting Europe's unique variety of wildlife, habitats and landscapes.

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EUROPARC President
Thomas Hansson
Picture: EUROPARC



President's Remarks

Dear colleagues, friends and partners,

2013 was a very special year for the EUROPARC Federation, celebrating 40 Years Working for Nature. The organisation took time to not only look back on what has been undertaken and learned, but also to look into the future and see how to better represent the members and respond to the challenges faced by Protected Areas in Europe.

In considering our history, EUROPARC returned to the original resolution that founded the organisation in 1973, and stated, "*... form a European Federation with the object of exchanging ideas and experiences, of co-ordinating plans and measures, of making possible the creation of parks which straddle political frontiers...*"

The wish to improve the management of Protected Areas in Europe, now with the addition of N2000 sites, through international cooperation, networking and shared experience, still remains embedded in the DNA of the organisation. Indeed, as the past president Erika Stanciu (RO) expressed, "*The strength and success of the EUROPARC Federation in the future, is that it is a living network which can help Protected Area professionals and their supporters to plan and act together, and one in which managers look beyond their own boundaries and transfer knowledge and experience to become important players in the social and economic development of their countries.*"

The culmination of our 40th anniversary celebration was our annual conference in Debrecen, Hungary. The Federation's Directorate team worked closely with our host the Hortobágy National Park, with whom we shared the 40th year celebrations. The conference looked at how we look after the essential qualities of our Protected Areas, including N2000 sites, and the needs of those who prepare management strategies, plans and actions for Europe's most cherished areas.

It was affirmed that being part of the EUROPARC Federation network is very useful to generate new ideas across the management systems of Europe. EUROPARC is indeed the "research and development" department of each of its members. We were reminded that being a member of the Federation fosters professionalization. As well as the sterling work of the Directorate, EUROPARC working groups and sections, have the opportunity to scale learning outwards, in a pyramid of investment in knowledge that multiplies as it is shared across the network. The more that is put in, the more we get out. **Their work is also summarised in this report.** This is the strength of the Federation over the last 40 years, which has enabled it to encompass topics, from tourism and habitat management, to sustainable development and working with young people.

As EUROPARC moves forward, we have realised again the importance of looking after nature, and affirm that it can be looked after better, through working together. With the wonderful resource of the connections between people and places across Europe, we have initiated projects leagues ahead of their time, in sustainable management – from business and biodiversity to transboundary and tourism. This 40th year anniversary reminded us however, that it is the people, the members, who are the most important aspect of the

organisation. Even when we do not always agree, their passion endures, and we need to keep that fresh and alive. In the future, as well as looking for new ways of working we must also be patient. Change can be evolutionary and we must progress it together, for Natura 2000 and for Protected Areas across Europe.



Thomas Hansson
EUROPARC President

More information:
People. Passion. Protected Areas. 40 Years Working for Nature.
<http://europarc.org/download/1550.pdf>



EUROPARC Directorate Team
Picture: EUROPARC

What we do

The EUROPARC Directorate report

The Directorate of the EUROPARC Federation is committed to fulfilling the aims of the organisation and to deliver its strategic goals.

The work of the Federation is overseen by the EUROPARC Council and President. They bring a wealth of experience and expertise to bear on the work of the Federation and also represent EUROPARC across Europe.

Where the Council is the driver, the Directorate of the EUROPARC Federation is the engine of the organisation. The small team of eight, split between the headquarters in Regensburg (DE), an office in Brussels (BE) and Scotland (UK), manages a number of important European projects and represents the Federation and its members' interests.

The work of the Federation is also supported by efforts from working groups on sustainable tourism, values of protected areas, health, wilderness and transboundary cooperation.

The efforts of the Council, the Directorate, the working groups and all others, individuals and members, who support the Federation, are to be commended.

Work carried out is summarised in this section.

A photograph of a mountain landscape. In the foreground, a group of hikers with backpacks are walking along a rocky path. In the background, there are large, rugged mountains with patches of snow. A calm lake in the foreground reflects the mountains and the hikers.

Parco naturale delle Alpi Marittime (IT)
Picture: Nanni Villani

Communicating our message

In 2013, the EUROPARC Federation celebrated its 40th anniversary, 40 Years Working for Nature. EUROPARC, known as the "Federation of Nature and National Parks of Europe" was founded in 1973 with the aim to help Protected Areas to fulfil their role as preservers of the natural beauty of Europe. In the 40 years of the Federation, great people have contributed to its development, growth and achievements. **Until today,** the Federation is proud of these contributors from across Europe who helped to shape the Federation and make it become what it is today: the umbrella organization of Protected Areas in Europe.

Communicating messages about the values and benefits of our natural heritage for society is crucial if support for action is to be harnessed. Fostering societal acceptance and understanding about biodiversity and the role of Protected Areas in Europe is fundamental if we want to increase recognition of the importance of protecting nature. Communications, therefore, continued to play a pivotal role in the work of the EUROPARC Federation in 2013.

Key activities 2013

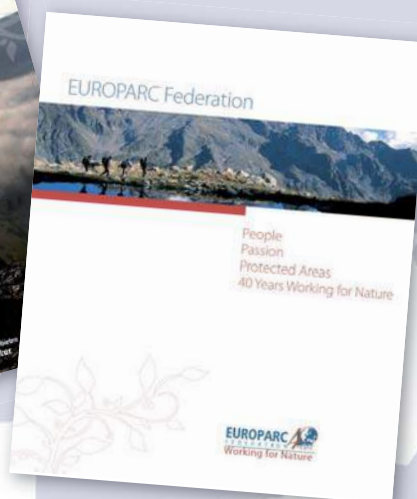
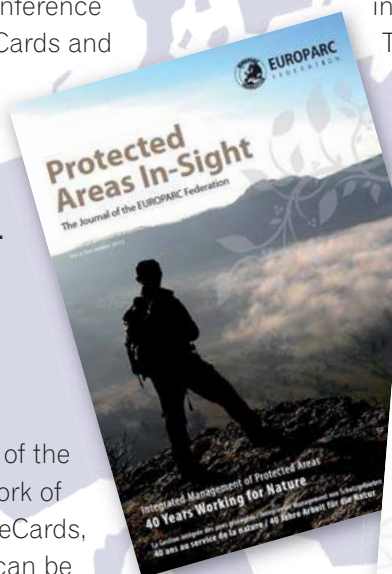
Publications, promotion and publicity

In order to keep the EUROPARC network and wider public informed about Protected Area management across Europe the following regular publications were produced: 12 eNews, one Annual Report, one EUROPARC Journal "Protected Areas In-Sight", one Conference Report, three Charter-eNews, 12 eCards and a special anniversary publication.

In 2013, EUROPARC published a special anniversary publication, **People. Passion. Protected Areas. 40 Years Working for Nature.**, celebrating its 40th birthday and reflecting on the history and great achievements of working together. Throughout the year, customized eCards, showing a specific aspect of the seasons, whilst highlighting the work of members were also produced. All eCards, which you can download for free, can be found on our website. The EUROPARC

eNews saw its redesign as well, introducing monthly feature topics, involving our members' news more and having the whole concept of monthly direct mailing more visually appealing.

The social media presence of EUROPARC has been particularly successful, media and institutions are connecting to the Federation in an informal way through Facebook and Twitter. With more than 1811 "likes" on Facebook and 687 followers on Twitter as well as more





EUROPARC
Siggen Seminar
participants 2013
Picture:
EUROPARC

than 1500 Tweets posted, the social media are a valuable tool in our communication mix. Together with the two websites and other online accounts, they have contributed to an increased visibility of the Federation and Europe's Protected Areas. During 2013, 59.424 people visited only the website: www.europarc.org. It was regularly updated throughout the year and frequent news items were posted.



The anniversary year was marked with a special visual identity and umbrella theme **40 Years Working for Nature**, with various new promotional material being produced. From bags, hoodies, pins, eCards, new eNews design, Facebook covers, corporate papers, cake, banner to a new roll up. A special logo was also introduced for our 1st Youth Conference.

Articles about the activities of EUROPARC appeared in numerous publications around the globe. Ten press releases on volunteer management, networking, the economic impact of Protected Areas in Europe, communication of N2000 sites and Alfred Toepfer Medal and Scholarship, to name just a few, were sent to press across Europe.

Events and representation

EUROPARC represented its members' interests at international events throughout the year. These also included the following events organised by the Federation:

The **European Day of Parks 2013** under the theme *My Park. My Passion. My Story.* was celebrated in a variety of initiatives and activities in some 65 Protected Areas in 16 countries, counting more than 300 activities. The high reach number through social media with some 7000 interactions showed the active interest and participation of our members.

The **EUROPARC seminar series at Gut Siggen** (DE) continued this year gathering 34 participants in total over the course of a week, thanks to the Alfred Toepfer Stiftung F.V.S. (DE). The week was a great opportunity for internal EUROPARC meetings with council, sections, working groups and staff. Mike Appleton who has been involved in Protected Area management for over 25 years, provided basis for work and discussion with a workshop on *The Purpose and Process of Management Planning for Protected Areas*. Participants' feedback of the seminar showed very positive results and EUROPARC is most grateful to the Alfred Toepfer Stiftung F.V.S. for hosting its seminar and meetings at Gut Siggen. In a final session, EUROPARC Federation identified priorities for the Federation's work looking at shared benefits, capacity building, training and



*EUROPARC Visual Identity for the 40th Anniversary Year
Picture: EUROPARC*

education, and the development of the Federation's Protected Areas network.

The **EUROPARC 2013 Conference** hosted by the Hortobágy National Park, took place in the town of Debrecen, Hungary. Some 300 international experts from the field of nature conservation attended the presentations, workshops and field trips under the theme **Integrated Management of Protected Areas**. The conference opened with celebrations of the 40th anniversary of both, the UNESCO Natural World Heritage of Hortobágy National Park and the EUROPARC Federation. Participants from all over the continent met internationally recognised experts and discussed highlighted topics on the integrated management of Protected Areas.

Alongside, EUROPARC hosted the **First International Youth Conference**, for participants

from the age of 17 to 21. The Conference ran in parallel with the main EUROPARC 2013 conference.

The annual **General Assembly** took place during the conference and one of the important items on the agenda was the topic of EUROPARC and Eurosite's merger status, presented in the report and recommendation from Council regarding the future of the Federation following the work of the Organisational Development Committee. Members voted in favour and supported the Council's proposal to continue developing a European Protected Area network, committed to the principles agreed in the Networking for Nature Framework, built on the strengths of the EUROPARC Federation and inviting the Eurosite members to participate with EUROPARC to fulfil that goal.



*EUROPARC Directorate Team at the EUROPARC 2013 Conference
Picture: EUROPARC*

The 8th **Charter Network Meeting** and awards ceremony was a huge success in Brussels, with 70 people attending.

Three council meetings took place in 2013. The aim of these meetings is to discuss the work of the Federation and ensure better planning and cooperation.

Internal networking and partnerships

EUROPARC enjoyed stronger relations with all of its Memoranda of Understanding partners in 2013. Representatives from Parks Forum and the IRF participated in and gave presentations at the conference this year. EUROPARC also signed two more MOUs, a renewed version with the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) and a new one with the the Baikalsky State Nature Biosphere Reserve, BETA and the Global Nature Fund. We would like to thank all of our partners, for the fruitful cooperation of this year and for their active engagement to promote new joint initiatives for the future.

Over the year, EUROPARC was approached by several organizations interested in liaisons and collaboration. A full list of partners can be found at www.europarc.org/our-partners-and-funders. The Federation looks forward to improve its collaboration with existing partners and to build fruitful relations with new partners over the next 12 months.

The year ahead

In 2014, EUROPARC will be launching the big membership consultation campaign: ***Our future dialogues***. The future direction, priorities and governance of EUROPARC will be considered by its members, in a comprehensive and participatory consultation for creating a new strategy. The consultation includes an online survey and a series of regional meetings managed as focus groups.

The year will continue to build on the communications work achieved in previous years and develop new positive and constructive messages for Protected Areas and biodiversity to a wide range of audience. A new communications team with the new officer and trainee will keep bringing further innovation to the communications of the organisation.

The development of new projects and planned communication initiatives will adapt depending on available funding. Communicating the messages through existing and new internet based services and networks, and regular updates of the website will further improve EUROPARC's presence in the public and its service to members.

Some of the interesting events happening in 2014 include:

The European Day of Parks in May 2014 will be coordinated and organized under the theme ***Parks for Nature. Parks for well-being. Parks for peace.***, in memory of the 100 years since the First World War. The initiative will be addressed to all Protected Areas in Europe, with an active involvement of EUROPARC Sections and other regional networks of Protected Areas.

The **Siggen Seminar** will take place in June and focus on the new EU programming period 2014-2020 and relevant EU funding for the management of Protected Areas. The seminar will include formal training sessions, practical activities and will be an opportunity to exchange experiences on project management and development among PAs managers from different countries.

EUROPARC 2014 conference, will take place in Killarney, Ireland, on the theme ***Understanding the value of nature***.

More information: www.europarc.org

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*ProPark
presenting the
project at the
workshop
session,
EUROPARC
Conference 2013
Picture:
EUROPARC*

Efficient Managers for Efficient Natura 2000 Network



Among so  other parties, EUROPARC partnered with ProPark for a three year project, "Efficient Managers for Efficient Natura 2000 Network" (2012 – 2015), mainly financed by the European Union DG Environment's LIFE+ Communication programme.

The aim of the project is to increase the management capacity and support for Natura 2000 sites in Romania by developing site managers' communication skills and support the integration of biodiversity concerns in territorial planning processes, in and around Natura 2000 sites.

EUROPARC in this project is greatly involved in developing the good practice guidance incorporated into an interactive toolkit, manual and programme for the high quality communications' trainings to improve the skills and capacity of site managers to communicate Natura 2000 issues. The project runs until 2015.

A further component of this project is to support the improvement of territorial planning in Romania. This incorporates biodiversity concerns. By providing guidance to the most important economic sectors that are using land and natural resources, they will learn how to actively contribute to the development of regional territorial plans which are looking at biodiversity concerns and the objectives of the Natura 2000 network.

More Information:

<http://europarc.org/what-we-do/efficient-n2000-netw>

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European
Parliament
Picture:
EUROPARC

“Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development”. Information and updates on relevant EU policy developments, funding opportunities and events have been widely and regularly disseminated among the network.

Success and challenges

The workload EUROPARC was able to handle this year is, per se, a success, and the most successful initiative was the eighth Charter Network meeting, which took place in Brussels on the 6th of November, with the Charter award ceremony in the European Parliament.

In 2013, the Federation also obtained the recognition by the Council of Europe, with the achievement of participatory status as INGO and the involvement in the Expert Group on Protected Areas: an opportunity to increase the cooperation on Natura 2000 and Emerald Network, on the European Diploma of Protected Areas, on Transboundary certification and on the European Day of Parks.

Furthermore, a very interesting piece of research was produced in cooperation with the European Documentation Centre on Nature Park Planning on the overlap between EUROPARC members and Natura 2000 sites, showing the crucial role that nationally designated Protected Areas have in the management of EU Natura sites.

The year ahead

In the course of 2014, a review of the advocacy and policy strategy along with the new action plan is planned and will be produced to guide our work for the coming years. 2014 will also be the year of the European elections and of the new European Commission: new contacts with the EU Parliament will be established and partnerships with IUCN and other organisations further developed, to reorganize an intergroup with a focus on biodiversity and climate change.

EUROPARC will continue to cooperate closely with EU institutions and partner organizations for the development and implementation of relevant policies, keeping our members informed with new dedicated informational material and sharing with decision makers, the good practices and case studies from Protected Areas from all over Europe. Our active role in the EHF will be maintained and we will continue to contribute to the work of the EC expert groups of which EUROPARC is a part. EUROPARC will also strengthen the cooperation with the CoE.

In partnership with other organisations, EUROPARC will work to coordinate the representation of European Protected Areas at the IUCN World Parks Congress.

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* The event is described in more details on the Sustainable Tourism section of our website: <http://europarc.org/what-we-do/european-charter-for>

Junior Ranger
Camp at the
Bavarian Forest
National Park
2013 (DE)
Picture:
EUROPARC



Investing in Young People

In 2013, EUROPARC has increased its work to actively support Protected Areas in involving youth all over Europe and to improve the quality of environmental education. To celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Federation, we looked this year at the role of young people in nature conservation over the next 40 years: young people are at the heart of the local communities living in and around Protected Areas, they are also the future advocates, guardians and potential employees of these areas.

Key Activities 2013

Two main events were organised this year to promote the engagement of young people in Protected Areas; the International Junior Ranger Camp 2013 and the first EUROPARC International Youth Conference. Furthermore, new guiding principles for the management of the Junior Ranger programme were published and the Junior Ranger Facebook page further improved and regularly updated.

Success and challenges

Junior Ranger Camp 2013

– Parks in Europe: discover how they work

The International Junior Ranger Camp took place this year in the Bavarian Forest National Park, where it began more than ten years ago. For the whole week, participants had the chance to discover the park and learn how Protected

Areas in Europe work. At this, biggest camp, that EUROPARC ever hosted, with support from the Bavarian Forest National Park

Administration, 50 enthusiastic participants from 11 different countries and 15 Protected Areas contributed to the fun and success of the event.

This year we had a closer look at different categories of Protected Areas in Europe, including Natura 2000 sites, and what their tasks and responsibilities are. From “rangering”, visitor management, nature conservation to communication: participants, Junior Rangers and their mentor Rangers, experienced hands-on activities of managing a park. Bog restoration, path building, learning about the daily tasks of a ranger and looking into different ways of communicating messages of Protected Areas to “the outside world” were on the agenda.



*Youth Conference
Participants at the
1st EUROPARC
Youth Conference
in Debrecen (HU)
Picture:
EUROPARC*

Youth Conference – Looking to the future: it's in our hands!

The 1st EUROPARC Youth Conference was a great success, with the young people of Europe giving a loud and clear message to European managers and directors of Protected Areas: "We want to be heard!"

The Youth Conference was organized by the EUROPARC Federation, with the kind support of Alfred Toepfer Stiftung F.V.S., and run alongside its 40th anniversary celebration conference held in Debrecen, Hungary in partnership with the Hortobágy National Park Directorate. The main aim of the Youth Conference was to look at the role of young people in nature conservation over the next 40 years and these were the three clear messages that the youth sent to park managers of Europe at the end of the event:

- "We want green/nature (environmental) education to be a part of mainstream schooling throughout all of Europe and we want you to talk to your governments to help make this happen!"
- "We want there to be youth representation on the managing committees/boards of Protected Areas and for this voice to be taken seriously!"
- "We want you to create effective partnerships between parks, the public sector and private commercial organisations for the mutual benefit of all!"

The main challenge will now be to answer the expectations youth have raised this year...

The year ahead

In 2014, the International Junior Ranger Camp will take place in the Krkonoše Mountains National Park (CZ) and will be a great opportunity to investigate how Protected Areas work on transboundary cooperation.

For more information about our Junior Ranger programme activities visit our website and the dedicated Facebook page.

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*Drawing a mascot for the
Junior Ranger Mascot
competition 2013
Picture: EUROPARC*

Passione passione

The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas

EUROPARC has been involved in the field of sustainable tourism since the development of its European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas. The programme was born in 1995 and enables Protected Areas to develop and manage tourism sustainably, together with private businesses and local communities. The Charter has grown to be one of EUROPARC's most successful programmes, with more and more Protected Areas being interested in joining the network of certified Charter Areas.



*Awarding ceremony of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in the European parliament, Brussels (BE)
Picture: EUROPARC*

Key Activities 2013

In 2013, the network of certified Charter Areas grew from the previous 107 to 119 Protected Areas in 13 European countries.

An exciting change this year was the Charter Award Ceremony, which for the first time took place in the European Parliament instead of the EUROPARC Conference. EUROPARC, on the occasion of celebrating 40 Years Working for Nature, decided to raise the Charter to further prominence in Europe and therefore hosted, together with the Marche Region, a one day event, entirely dedicated to the Charter in Brussels.

More than 70 people, amongst them representatives from Charter Areas, Charter verifiers, tourism business partners and politicians of the European Parliament, met in the morning at the Marche Representation for the 8th European Charter Network Meeting on Tourism and Biodiversity in Protected Areas. The afternoon was



designated to the Charter Award Ceremony, festively taking place in the European Parliament and kindly hosted by MEP Gaston Franco. Stefan Leiner from DG Environment and Ilona Lelonek Husting from DG Enterprise and Industry joined for this session. They commended EUROPARC and its members on their achievements of raising sustainable tourism development in Protected Areas to prominence in Europe. 19 Protected Areas received their Charter Award that late afternoon and some special awards were given to people and organisations whose work has been of great importance for the ongoing achievements of the ECST.

The event was a great success, welcomed with enthusiasm from all people involved. It certainly set a standard for future celebrations, highlighting the importance of EUROPARC, its members and programmes for biodiversity conservation and sustainable regional development in Europe.

Another important change this year took place in the administration process of the Charter. End of 2013 the responsibility for the Charter administration came into the EUROPARC headquarter. This will ensure that all administrative services to Charter applicants and already certified Charter Areas come from one source and are available in five European languages. EUROPARC Consulting, with their great expertise, will continue supporting the Federation with the management of the verifications.

The growing interest in the Charter, the efforts to continuously improve and develop the values of the Charter are the positive results of the ongoing committed work and support of all verifiers, the Sustainable Tourism Working Group, the Evaluation Committee and EUROPARC Consulting throughout the year.

The year ahead

In 2014, the promotion of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas will continue in order to strengthen its networking activities and develop the Charter part II with tourism business and Charter part III with tour operators.

Due to the changes in the administration process of the programme, 2014 will be a year of revision and improvement of the already existing and effective tools that allowed the Charter to gain the success it obtained in the previous years.

EUROPARC will certainly continue to promote the benefits of the Charter with partner institutions and organisations, encourage new Protected Areas in Europe to get involved in the Charter process and develop a new international project on sustainable tourism.

More information: www.european-charter.org

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National Park
Neusiedler See
congratulating
the 10 years
of the
Transboundary
Programme (AT)
Picture:
National Park
Neusiedler See
(AT)



Transboundary Parks Programme: Frontier on the map – cooperation in mind



The celebration year of the Federation marks also the 10th anniversary of the Transboundary Parks Programme and the 5th edition of the TransParcNet meeting, the annual get together of EUROPARC's Transboundary Areas. New Protected Areas join the programme every year and experience mutual support, exchange of ideas and best-practice examples in cross-border collaboration in the network of certified parks. Until today, 23 Protected Areas in 13 countries were awarded the EUROPARC Transboundary Certificate for their model collaboration in border regions. With its growing network, EUROPARC will continue to promote the importance of cross-border cooperation for the benefit of nature conservation.

Key activities 2013

In 2013, the annual TransParcNet meeting took place in the certified Transboundary Area Maas-Schwalm-Nette Nature Park. This time 32 people from 15 countries followed the invitation, and came together at the Dutch-German border. In a landscape of heath lands, rivers and bogs the participants discussed project ideas, reflected on cultural differences and learned about examples of climate change research and mitigation in their fellow parks.

At the annual Conference in Debrecen three transboundary areas received their EUROPARC Transboundary Certificate. Maas-Schwalm-Nette Nature Park (NL/DE) and Pasvik-Inari Trilateral Park (FI/NO/RU) developed their cooperation further over the last five years and rightly deserved the renewed award. With the latest addition to the transboundary family, Hainaut cross-border Nature Park, the EUROPARC network of certified Transboundary Areas expanded westwards, reaching the Belgian-French border.



Enjoying the view over Maas-Schwalm-Nette Nature Park (DE)
Picture: Silke Weich, Maas-Schwalm-Nette Nature Park (DE)

During the transboundary side-meeting at the conference, the vision and mission for the Transboundary Working Group were adopted, next tasks agreed and available locations within the network for future TransParcNet and other meetings discussed.

With a change in procedures, the need for new guidelines for re-evaluation visits in the Protected Areas was identified. Verifiers and working group are currently developing a new document that will give guidance to verifiers and assure that re-evaluations will be better comparable to each other in the future.

In order to raise awareness of the common responsibility for border regions, EUROPARC and representatives of its certified Transboundary Areas were present at events in France, Austria and the Netherlands to introduce the programme to other Protected Areas and organisations working in the field of cross-border cooperation. Furthermore communication about the programme was strengthened in social media and on the EUROPARC website as well as in newsletters outside the network.

The year ahead

In 2014, the promotion of the EUROPARC Transboundary Parks Programme will continue and closer cooperation with other organisations outside the network will be strived for.

Applications from new parks and re-evaluations are already in sight. The working group will focus on further developing first project ideas raised at the TransParcNet meeting and promoting the Transboundary Parks Programme through new information material and personal contacts.

The 6th TransParcNet meeting will take place from 3rd to 6th June in the Hainaut cross-border Nature Park (BE/FR). Topics will be cross-border Protected Areas and green infrastructure, as well as the new 2014-2020 EU-programmes and opportunities within them for Transboundary Protected Areas.

More information: <http://www.europarc.org/what-we-do/transboundary-parks>

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Participants of the TransParcNet Meeting 2013
Picture: Silke Weich, Maas-Schwalm-Nette Nature Park (DE)



Verifiers during evaluation of the Hainaut cross-border Nature Park (B/FR)
Picture: Hainaut cross-border Nature Park (BE/FR)



Erika Stanciu
receiving the
Alfred Toepfer
Medal at the
EUROPARC
Conference 2013
Picture:
EUROPARC

EUROPARC AWARDS 2013

The Alfred Toepfer Scholarship Programme 2013

Alfred Toepfer Natural Heritage Scholarships 2013

Each year the EUROPARC Federation, with support from the Alfred Toepfer Stiftung F.V.S., awards three Alfred Toepfer Natural Heritage Scholarships to promising young conservationists, who are committed to working for the benefit of Protected Areas. The aim of the scholarships is to enhance international cooperation and to advance the quality, innovation and European dimension of Protected Area management. Each scholarship is worth €3.000 and enables successful applicants to undertake a study visit on a particular theme to one or more Protected Areas in a European country. After the trip the scholars are expected to present the Federation with their findings and a report.

The three winners in 2013 were – Catherine Wynn (UK), Maris Noor (EST) and Sabine Nouvet (UK).

- Catherine is going to investigate the proposed management of the newly extended Sharr Mountain National Park in the region of Kosovo with the application of the Viable Systems Model.
- Maris is going to visit the Neusiedler See-Seewinkel National Park in Austria and the

Javakheti National Park in Georgia. She will try to find out from her colleagues in fellow PAs, what are the best ways of communicating the necessity of nature values protection, especially to the landowners and other stakeholders.

- Sabine is going to study the management of natural resources in national parks of the French Alps. In particular, she will focus on the successful examples of agri-environment schemes that have been developed in cooperation with farmers and their shepherds with the objective of restoring the alpine habitats of designated sites.

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The Alfred Toepfer Medal 2013

The Alfred Toepfer Medal, named after the founder of the EUROPARC Federation, Dr h.c. Alfred Toepfer (1894-1993), is an annual award, given at the EUROPARC conference to an outstanding individual who has made a significant contribution to nature conservation in Europe.



2013 AIS Scholars
receiving the
awards from the
director of the
Alfred Toepfer
Stiftung F.V.S.,
Andreas Holz (DE)
Picture:
EUROPARC

– recognising achievements



This year, at the EUROPARC 2013 Conference, thanks to the kind support of the Alfred Toepfer Stiftung (DE), the Medal has been awarded to Ms Erika Stanciu, former president of the EUROPARC Federation, trainer and Protected Area expert in capacity building issues.

The achievements of our 2013 Alfred Toepfer Medal winner are numerous. As one of Europe's leading conservationists, Erika Stanciu's drive and vision for nature conservation contributed to the mobilization of NGOs and individuals for the designation of part of the Protected Areas that are now covering over 22% of Romania, her home country. Moreover, the Protected Areas of the nominee's country are covering some of the last remains of Europe's wilderness and until recently, as the head of WWF's Carpathians/Forests and Protected Areas Program, Erika Stanciu has coordinated and sought funding for all Protected Area and forestry work in Romania, Bulgaria and Ukraine.

At the EUROPARC Conference 2013, it was the Nordic Baltic Section, who gave the tribute speech, expressing their deepest appreciation and pride to have nominated Erika Stanciu.

Fostering environmental activism was not an easy task in Romania, due to the little tradition in

political lobbying. Building a consortium of support had to include scientific credibility as well as community cooperation. Being able to straddle both aspects with educational background, she was able to identify the opportunity to align with European community requirements and persuade those with an interest in the nature to agree around this task.

Erika Stanciu understood perfectly the need for sufficient trained professionals and managers to sustain and coordinate the Protected Areas in Central Europe and thus, she created and developed the ProPark Foundation. ProPark is dedicated to strengthening Protected Area management, by providing professional training and support, in the same time encouraging and inspiring a new generation of young people, eager to maintain the environmental activism. EUROPARC strongly and successfully cooperates with Ms Stanciu and ProPark on a regular basis and in different projects.

More information on both the award and scholarships: www.europarc.org/what-we-do/.

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EU-Grundtvig:
"Volunteer
Management in
European Parks"
- Project partners
at the final
partner meeting
in Latvia
Picture:
EUROPARC



Volunteer Management in European Protected Areas



2013 has also been the last year of the EU-Grundtvig project "Volunteer Management in European Parks" (2010-2013). A project that has been developed to support volunteer coordinators in parks, both in their daily work on the ground and in contributing further to a culture of active citizenship and lifelong learning in Protected Areas by means of professional and integrative volunteer management.

Key Activities 2013

The project has clearly contributed to a more professional and more integrative volunteer management in European Protected Areas:

- Having established a reliable network of protected areas working for further professionalization of volunteer management in European parks,
- Having delivered training to nearly 50 volunteer coordinators in Europe's Protected Areas,
- Having offered 17 learning exchanges between European PAs on volunteer management,
- Having realised an online platform about volunteer management,
- Having developed "Guidelines for Quality Volunteer Management in European Protected Areas"

- Having contributed to raise the awareness of EU decision makers, PAs managers and wider public with six national seminars and an international conference in Brussels both on lifelong learning and green volunteering,
- Having undertaken an international "research on impact of volunteering in European Protected Areas".

Building on the gaps and needs identified during these years, EUROPARC wishes to continue to support PAs in professionalizing volunteer management. We would like to take this occasion to thank EUROPARC Germany and all the partners who actively contributed for the success of the project.

More Information: www.volunteers-in-parks.eu

Contact: Bettina Soethe
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EUROPARC Working Groups

The EUROPARC Federation brings together experts from our membership and around Europe to focus on issues important to Protected Areas. These working groups consider policy issues, bring together best practice, develop new methodologies and look to future agenda and development. They are convened as appropriate to consider relevant topics. They meet as required and have been an excellent breeding ground for new ideas and innovative solutions.

Each working group is mandated to examine subjects of relevance to Protected Areas in Europe and deliver activities and output that would benefit the wider membership. These groups are a strong “working arm” of the Federation, where issues of importance to the Protected Areas of Europe are examined and developed by Protected Areas for Protected Areas, with high membership participation and involvement.

Council members have liaised with working groups in order to give guidance and support to ensure the topics remain relevant to EUROPARC's strategic aims.

In 2013 four working groups were active in addition to a lobbying forum of interested members keen to support an active role for EUROPARC work with European institutions.

More than 40 members have participated in working groups dealing with topics as diverse as gathering case studies on the interaction of Protected Areas and health or the renewal of the Charter methodology.

Economics and Ecosystem Services (EES)

The Economics and Ecosystem Services Working Group assembled regularly in 2013, worked on a position paper on Economics and Ecosystem Services and a self-conception of the Working Group. A questionnaire was sent to EUROPARC and Eurosite members in order to learn about the

knowledge of Protected Area managers about the ecosystem services and gather case studies / good practices of using EES for managing and funding Protected Areas.

Health and Protected Areas

This rather innovative area of work in the Protected Area world has been taken forward by our Working Group in two face-to-face meetings in Scotland and in Siggen. With the help of the EUROPARC membership, case studies are being gathered, that demonstrate the important work that Protected Areas are doing in the field of health. The Working group will continue to promote the contribution of European Protected Areas to citizens' health on an international level and develop a toolkit for Protected Areas in the near future.

Transboundary

The Transboundary Working Group continued promoting the Transboundary Parks Programme at different events. Furthermore information material about the programme is now available in six European languages, thanks to the translation support of the working group members. A database with cross-border projects, already realised in the network, has been setup, and helps to find experienced partners and is an inspiration for projects in the future. To keep the Transboundary Parks Programme updated, new guidelines for re-evaluation are currently being developed.

Hans Schiphorst
chair of the
Economics and
Ecosystem
Services Working
Groups at the
EUROPARC
Conference
Workshop session
Picture:
EUROPARC



Sustainable Tourism

The Sustainable Tourism Working Group had a comprehensive work programme for 2013. They looked into a possible internationalisation of the Charter, established contacts with other organisations working in the field of sustainable tourism development and started an analysis of a pan-Mediterranean approach for the Charter. Furthermore, they worked on Charter management procedures to, among other things, achieve stronger involvement of the sections. In order to keep the quality of the Charter high, criteria and documents are being continuously updated. The first version of a Charter strategy 2020 is almost ready and will be further discussed and developed throughout 2014.

Wilderness

A huge success for the Wilderness Working Group, a joint EUROPARC and WWF Danube Carpathian Programme group under the umbrella of Wild Europe Initiative, was that after almost three years of work, the definition of Wilderness in Europe was accepted by the European Commission. The definition is now included in the EU Guidance on the management of wilderness and wild areas in Natura 2000 "Guidelines on Wilderness in Natura 2000 - Management of terrestrial wilderness and wild areas within the Natura 2000 Network". Working group members also attended the Wild 10 Congress in Salamanca/Spain and contributed to the resolutions that are highlighting achievements in wilderness management on our crowded

continent, but also directions and demands for future action.

The EUROPARC Federation is rightly proud and extremely grateful for the commitment and participation of those who work voluntarily to improve the management of our shared natural heritage through international cooperation. Even in these difficult financial times, members have found means to remain in touch and advance the support of Protected Areas in Europe.

In addition to Working Groups EUROPARC also retains two standing Committees, Charter for Sustainable Tourism and Transboundary. These committees make sure the certification programmes offered by EUROPARC are held to a high standard. It is their excellent work that has ensured these programme are held in high regard by international organisations. All members of both committees give a huge commitment to the work and their long service to the EUROPARC Federation is acknowledged and appreciated.

Without the work of this army of volunteers across the range of topics relevant to Protected Areas, the EUROPARC Federation would not be able to accomplish the work to support its members and the management of Europe's Protected Areas.

More information:

www.europarc.org/who-we-are/our-working-groups

Contact: **Petra Schultheiss**

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Our European network

EUROPARC Federation Section Reports

Over the years, the Federation has supported the creation of seven regional and national sections. The sections fulfil many of the **EUROPARC Federations'** aims, whilst reflecting the priorities and characteristics of the areas they cover. They undertake a huge volume of work to a high professional standard and both support and stimulate the work of the Federation as a whole. Only Federation members can form or be members of Sections of **EUROPARC**. Full Section reports can be obtained from them individually, but a summary of their achievements is detailed in this chapter.



*Parco naturale delle Alpi Marittime
(IT) Picture: Nanni Villani (IT)*

Dorset Coast
(UK)

Picture: Richard
Blackman,
EUROPARC
Atlantic Isles (UK)



EUROPARC Atlantic Isles

EAI brings together EUROPARC members in the four countries of the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland and Iceland. The Section and members contributed to and played an active role in the life of the Federation.

Key Activities

Training events

EAI held a very well-received training seminar in Leeds in March on "The uses of apps and new media in protected landscapes". Aware of the pressures on member organisations' budgets and staff time, EAI also moved to set up a webinar series, with the first event successfully held in November on the theme of "Protected landscapes: Delivering Social and Economic Benefits".

Sustainable tourism

EAI's sustainable tourism network met in May to explore the issue of green certification for business partners, aided by leading academics and practitioners. Links have been forged with the Green Tourism Business Scheme to bring benefits to European Charter members.

Volunteer management

EAI continued its role as an active partner in the EU Grundtvig funded project "Volunteer Management in European Parks", with five UK protected landscapes participating in the Mallorca training seminar, members from Wales and Northern Ireland taking part in learning exchanges with Iceland and Spain, and a national review workshop held with The Conservation Volunteers in London.

Young rangers

EAI's project group, funded with support from the Youth in Action programme, met in the Northumberland Coast AONB in February. The deliberations there led to the publication of a good practice guide on running Junior Ranger programmes.



EUROPARC
Atlantic Isles



Watching cranes
at the EUROPARC
Conference in
Hortobágy Puszta
(HU)
Picture:
EUROPARC

Health & Protected Areas

EAI has been an active member of the Federation's health working group and is coordinating the compilation of a set of case studies from across Europe, to be published in 2014.

Coastal protected landscapes

EAI's coastal and marine working group worked primarily on the exchange of information for coastal protected landscapes on the subject of marine planning. A workshop planned for 28th October with the Marine Management Organisation to explore this issue and also integrated coastal management had to be postponed due to the storm that hit southern England on the day.

Information sharing

EAI published 11 E-News bulletins in 2013 to inform members on projects, policy updates and news from across its UK and European networks. Our Twitter account @EFAtlanticIsles, which is linked to the EAI website, became more important for communicating information.

The year ahead

Activities and main focus

EAI's main priority for 2014 will be to provide continued training opportunities to facilitate the exchange of expertise amongst colleagues from all protected landscape designations. Using new forms of technology to ensure timeliness, cost-effectiveness and quality will be central to this provision. Similarly, we will also seek to develop projects and provide networking opportunities on our priority themes. Capacity development and ensuring the Section's financial sustainability are also high on the agenda.

We will continue to draw on the added value of the Federation's vibrant pan-European network, and look forward to contributing to the Federation's consultation on strategic development.

More information: www.europarc-ai.org

Twitter: @efatlanticisles

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Former president
of the section,
Michael Hošek -
at the conference
Mountain
Protected Areas
in a Changing
World (CZ)
Picture:
Jakub Kašpar,
EUROPARC
Czech Republic



EUROPARC Czech Republic

The Czech Section of the EUROPARC Federation (EUROPARC Czech Republic) continued its work in 2013 in the same composition of members. The Section has a stable membership and groups together EUROPARC members, who manage large Protected Areas across the country (four national parks: České Švýcarsko, Krkonoše, Podyjí and Šumava), the Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic, Palacký University in Olomouc and an individual honorary member Mr. Jan Štursa.

The Czech Section is used as a cooperation platform at the national level and coordination body for joint activities with other EUROPARC sections as well as the EUROPARC Federation.

In 2013, one of the section's members – The Krkonoše Mts. National Park, celebrated its 50th anniversary. To honor this significant number they organized an international scientific conference on "Mountain Protected Areas in a Changing World" in the Špindlerův Mlýn in May. EUROPARC Czech Republic, as well as the Federation, attended the Conference represented by the Presidents of both associations – Mr. Michael Hošek and Mr. Thomas Hansson.

Since the former president of the section, Mr. Michael Hošek moved to the Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic to take his new position at the Ministry of the Environment, EUROPARC Czech Republic elected its new President – Mr. Jakub Kašpar from the Krkonoše National Park.

Representatives of EUROPARC Czech Republic were also present at the TransParcNet Meeting 2013 in Maas-Swalm-Nette, a cross-border park in the Netherlands and Germany and at the Annual Conference of the EUROPARC Federation in Debrecen, Hungary.



Krkonoše
Mountains
National Park,
KRNAP (CZ)
Picture:
Jakub Kašpar,
EUROPARC
Czech Republic

In December 2013, Krkonoše National Park introduced a list of first internships for the staff of members of the Czech Section, in the frame of the Staff Exchange Programme within the section.

In 2014, the section will continue with its regular activities and events, and work in close cooperation with the Federation, to strongly support the membership campaign and the survey conducted by the Federation.

More Information: www.europarc.cz

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EUROPARC
ČESKÁ REPUBLIKA

*EUROPARC President Thomas Hansson
in Labský Důl, core zone of the
Krkonoše Mts. National Park (CZ)*
Picture:
Jakub Kašpar, EUROPARC Czech Republic





Federparchi-EUROPARC Italia



The Italian Federation of Parks and Nature Reserves, founded in 1989, joins bodies managing national and regional parks, marine Protected Areas, regional and state nature reserves, and consists of regional coordination offices. Since June 2008, Federparchi has also been established as the Italian Section of EUROPARC Federation. The Federation represents the reference point in a network of continuously developing relations and, in full independence, represents the Parks in the relations with the State, Regions, local Authorities, the European Union, and with any other public and private subject interested in the aims of the association. Federparchi was created in 1989 as a coordination organization of several Regional Parks, to be transformed afterwards, in 1996, in the Italian Federation of Parks and Natural Reserves, which involves today most part of Italian Protected Areas and Regions, Provinces, Municipalities, environmental associations.

Key Activities

In 2013, the Italian section focused on the following activities:

- Relation and cooperation with international, national and local institutions
- Production of studies, projects and services for members
- Education, training and communication
- International cooperation

Success and challenges

RELATION WITH INTERNATIONAL, NATIONAL AND LOCAL INSTITUTIONS

- The Italian section contributed to the amendment of the National Law of Protected

Areas (L. 394/91), whose discussion is ongoing in the Italian Parliament;

- They have also reached a framework agreement with the Ministry of the Environment on several topics, including the Natura 2000 sites, IUCN red lists and the promotion of European Charter for Sustainable Tourism;
- Managed to avoid the financial reductions for the park staff and president, as it was initially planned in the "National spending review";
- Reached an agreement with Italian networks of municipalities ANCI for a fair and full cooperation between park authorities and local authorities;
- Worked in close relation to the IUCN Italian Committee and Secretariat.



Text  s Foto
Picture:

STUDIES, PROJECTS AND SERVICES FOR MEMBERS

- The Italian Charter (ECST) network has grown to 20 Charter areas, with 30 Protected Areas involved. A national seminar on the topic of "Stakeholder Participation in the Charter process" took place. In 2013, Federparchi also received a special recognition from the EUROPARC Federation, for its proactive work on promoting the Charter in Italy.
- Thirteen Italian Parks have adopted the methodology of the sustainability report to verify their economic, environmental and social performance.

Throughout the year, EUROPARC Italy took part in various other projects marking positive results:

- Project "Parks for Kyoto" reported good results. From the beginning of the project, more than 80.000 trees were planted and 50.000 tons of CO2 saved;
- As a part of the "Sustainable campers" initiative: 175 mapped areas for campers in Protected Areas created;
- Project "Diving for all": 8 diving instructors were trained for teaching blind people to dive;
- Project "Eco-golf": promoted sustainable management of golf with Federgolf;
- Project "Let's live the Protected Areas": new technologies to promote virtual trekking were introduced;
- Project "Life Arctos": monitoring and protection of bear populations in parks was introduced;
- Project "Wild boar": management and control of wild boar populations in parks continued.

EDUCATION, TRAINING, COMMUNICATION

- The collaboration with IUCN produced good results, having the Italian Vertebrates and Italian Flora published on the IUCN Red List;
- In collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, the national conference "Nature in Italy" along with some other events was organized;
- Project "Vividaria": from the beginning of the project (6 years), 30.000 children and 300 schools involved.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

- Project "Volunteer Management in European Parks": promoting volunteering in 18 European Protected Areas;
- Project "Brasil proximo": 3 visitor centres, 4 nature trails and tourism planning in progress in Brazil;
- Project MEET: promotion of eco-tourism in Mediterranean based on ECST methodology.

The year ahead

In 2014, Federparchi will continue to increase the number and level of its activities in order to promote the importance of Protected Areas, as one of the instruments to overcome the effects of the economic crisis of the country. The key issue is the idea that nature conservation, local development and quality of life are not competitors but colleagues.

More information:

<http://www.parks.it/federparchi/newsletter.php>

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Visitor animation in
the Parc naturel
régional des Grands
Causses (FR)
Picture:
Parc naturel
régional des Grands
Causses (FR)



EUROPARC France

For the French Section, 2013 marked the handover of the Presidency and Secretariat from the “National Parks of France” to the “Federation of Regional Natural Parks”. The year also marked a lot of work and strong progress in the part III of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism methodology.

Key Activities

Progress on the work with the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism

In 2013, the French Section continued to work on the development of the methodology with a particular focus on defining the framework for the Charter part III. This framework was presented and discussed during the EUROPARC annual seminar in Siggen, later continued at the Annual Conference and at the 8th meeting for European Charter for Sustainable Tourism that took place in Brussels.

The work of the Sustainable Tourism working group enabled the French Section to carry out different projects and studies concerning the ECST:

- Collaboration with the IPAMAC and their input concerning the adaptation of part II for the Tourism Offices: by creating a tool, new channels to disseminate the principles of the ECST and applying them in business and management.
- The feedback and results from the two members of the French section, (the National Park of Cevennes and the Cevennes Ecotourism Association), were very useful for the 2nd part of the Charter. They served as the base upon which the section made a proposal for a method of assessment of the partner businesses' action plans, enhancing the ECTS “toolbox” created in 2012.
- Capitalization of eco-tourism experiences in Mediterranean National Parks and National Regional Parks conducted under the frame of ECST. These will be presented at the seminar in March by Parcs nationaux de France within the European MEET project on sustainable tourism in Mediterranean Protected Areas.
- Working on assessing the effects of engaging companies in the ECST approach, particularly on the effects perceived within the company, but also within their territory.



EUROPARC
SECTION FRANCAISE



*Enjoying the nature at Parc naturel régional du Perche (FR)
Picture: Parc naturel régional du Perche (FR)*

Success and challenges

In 2013, three French parks (Ecrins National Park, Millevaches en Limousin National Park and Périgord-Limousin National Park) were awarded with the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism, bringing the total number to 26 French Protected Areas signatories of the Charter.

The year ahead

In 2014, the French Section is expecting to have another four parks certified with the Charter and an additional three to start preparing for the application process. 2014 will also allow the French Section to test the pilot model for the part III of the Charter, and experiment the principle of National Joint Committee (recognition of the private sector and the adequacy of its services/products according to the principles of the Charter). The progress of this pilot model, along with the national adjustments, made by

EUROPARC's sections will require much stronger collaboration between the sections themselves in order to ensure the stability of the methodological framework of part III. Feedback from research involving the Charter will be of much use, as the actions and the identification of best experiences of the European MEET project, will be presented at the seminar organized in March by PNF. The French section will also work closely with the Federation in the membership campaign to create a new strategy for the organisation.

More information: www.europarc-fr.org

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kmonier@parcs-naturels-regionaux.fr



*Rambling in the water at PNR Massif des Bauges (FR)
Picture: PNR Massif des Bauges/Isabelle Golliet (FR)*

Volunteering
red helping
bear's
breach incidence at
Biosphere Reserve
Südost-Rügen (DE)
Picture:
Picture library
Department of the
Biosphere Reserve
Südost-Rügen (DE)



EUROPARC Deutschland e.V.

EUROPARC Deutschland e.V. and the members of the EUROPARC Federation look back on an eventful and successful year 2013.

Key Activities

The volunteering programme celebrated its 10th anniversary with numerous events. Monthly anniversary activities took place throughout the whole year to acknowledge the work of the many volunteers in the various regions without whom the programme would be impossible.

There is a large number of project ideas in the German National Natural Landscapes that could make a valuable contribution to nature and the climate, but they are often not implemented due to the lack of funding and staff. At the same time increasing numbers of companies and private individuals are looking to get involved in nature and environment conservation as sustainable activities are gaining importance and recognition in society. That is why EUROPARC Deutschland e.V., with funding from the Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt, initiated the "Marktplatz Natur" (Nature's Marketplace) scheme, an internet platform that lists the supply and demand for German nature and climate protection under the coordination of EUROPARC Deutschland e.V. The selection ranges from environmental education and community

projects, climate protection, biodiversity and the maintenance of the cultural landscape to corporate involvement and competitions.

Success and challenges

"Ehrensache Natur - Freiwillige in Parks" ("Honouring Nature – Volunteers in Parks") was presented with three awards in 2013: at the beginning of the year the Council for Sustainable Development awarded the "Werkstatt N" quality seal. The committee honoured the volunteering programme as being an exemplary initiative for sustainability. At the end of August EUROPARC Deutschland e.V. received the Deutscher Naturschutzpreis (German Nature Conservation Prize) 2013 for the "Ungehindert engagiert – Menschen mit geistiger Behinderung entdecken, erleben und erhalten den Lebensraum Wasser" ("Fully committed – People with learning difficulties discover, experience and preserve aquatic habitats") project. The prize, awarded by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation and Jack Wolfskin, grants the winner 86.000 EUR. The project enables people with disabilities to volunteer together with people



Coca-Cola-staff
engaging
themselves for
nature protection
area „Schönerlinder
Ponds“ at Nature
Park Barnim
Picture:
EUROPARC
Germany

without disabilities to make a commitment to nature conservation. Official recognition as a UN Decade Project on Biodiversity was further cause for celebration in November.

The three year “Volunteer Management in European Parks” project, funded by the EU, has successfully promoted and professionalised volunteer management on a European level. Under the leadership of EUROPARC Deutschland e.V., ten EUROPARC network partners from eight countries were coordinated in the initiative that drew to a close in October 2013. The project resulted in guidelines and working materials being provided to support local volunteer management, three training courses for almost 50 volunteer coordinators and 18 international exchanges between volunteer coordinators and experienced volunteers. Furthermore, the results of a study performed during the project on volunteering in European conservation areas were presented and national events on “Lifelong learning and volunteering in conservation areas” were held. The experiences of working together for three years in the EU project provide a solid basis for future joint projects to promote citizens' commitment in European conservation areas.

The year ahead

To further develop and expand the professionalisation of volunteer management in National Natural Landscapes the experiences gathered in the last ten years, which were for example discussed in depth at an expert conference, will be incorporated into the new volunteering programme phase. Young people are being focused on as a new target group for involvement in National Natural Landscapes. The approaches to the planned transition from Junior Ranger to Youth Volunteer are being further developed and corresponding programme content will be devised.

More information:

www.europarc-deutschland.de

www.ehrensache-natur.de

www.volunteers-in-parks.eu

www.europarc-deutschland.de/marktplatz-natur/

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Ehrensache Natur

Nationale
Naturlandschaften



Participants at the seminar "Protected areas governance" in Soomaa National Park (EE)
Picture: Urmas Tartes



Nordic-Baltic Section

The Nordic-Baltic Section represents organizations from 8 Nordic and Baltic countries – Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Iceland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The main goal of the Section is to promote the exchange of information, expertise and encourage cooperation between the members, in order to improve the management of Protected Areas by following the key aims of the EUROPARC Federation. Section secretariat is during 2012-2014 organized by Estonian Environmental Board/Keskkonnaamet. The Section president is Kaja Lotman and the coordinator is Nele Söber.

Key Activities

Focusing on 10th anniversary

The main activities in 2013 were connected with the celebration of the section's 10th anniversary. These included:

- Seminar "Protected Areas governance" in Soomaa National Park (EE), organized in early April, tried to answer the question whether the effectiveness of the Protected Area depends on good governance. In the Nordic-Baltic countries Protected Areas are governed by different models and approaches. Therefore, the seminar focused on several examples from the section and other parts of Europe.
- 10th anniversary seminar in Nuuksio National Park at Nature Centre Haltia (FI), 28. - 29. 05. 2013. The event highlighted the section's nature conservation success stories over the 10 years.

- Creation of the flash video of section's members, to show the natural values in each member country.

The section additionally:

- issued 4 newsletters (see <http://nb.europarc.org/what-we-do/newsletter>);
- organized 2 member meetings;
- participated in the "Health and Protected Areas" working group meeting.

Success and challenges

Challenges ahead are related to finding new members for EUROPARC and then for the section itself. A positive effect is on the way, and there are more success factors than difficult challenges. A good example comes from Estonia, the Matsalu National Park, who



10th anniversary
seminar in Nature
Centre Haltia (FI)
Picture:
Nele Söber



is the first Estonian park preparing for the application for the Charter and entering the programme. Positive effects from the region come also from the Latvian-Estonian transboundary cooperation with high hopes in future collaborative activities! In 2013, the section secretariat visited Iceland to bring Icelandic members closer to the section and made good progress.

The year ahead

The 2014 will be the year of the Nordic Baltic representation at the Council. The section received the honorable task to overtake the representation of all of the sections in the EUROPARC Council! A further and stronger collaboration between sections is planned, in order to benefit from each other's outcomes and experiences.

Negotiations for the section's next presidency will finalize during 2014. The new presidency country and leading organization will be confirmed at the last members meeting, which will be held during the EUROPARC Conference 2014.

The section is planning to organize 3 seminars on cultural heritage, wooded meadows and health issues in Estonia.

More information:

<http://www.europarc-nb.org/home/>

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Celebration of
the European
Day of Parks
2013
Picture:
Javier Puertas



EUROPARC Spain

The Spanish Section was founded in 1993 and is championed by FUNGOBE (Fundación F.G. Bernaldez for Natural Areas). There are currently 26 members, all of them public administrations. The Programme of Work for Protected Areas (PoW) 2009-2013, a contribution from the Spanish Protected Areas to the Convention on Biodiversity, has formed the backbone of the Sections' activities since 2008.

Key activities

Here are some of the activities carried out throughout 2013 by the Spanish Section:

- Report on "Health and Protected Areas in Spain", produced as one of the results of a project lead by Castilla y Leon and supported by Fundación Biodiversidad.
- The 11th edition of the EUROPARC Spain Guidebook (Manual): "Forest Management Plans as tools for conservation in Protected Areas". This manual aims to provide forest managers with a practical tool for developing Forest Management Plans, which contribute to more effective achievements of the conservation objectives of the Protected Areas in which forests are located.
- In the framework of the European Day of Parks 2013, the Spanish section co-operated with the city of Madrid, through its Department of Environment and Health Mobility. Around 600 people enjoyed the day's activities, held in the biggest per urban park of Madrid city, "la Casa de Campo".
- The 13th edition of the Masters programme (Master of Protected Natural Areas 2013), was organized jointly with the three universities from Madrid and EUROPARC Spain. 32 young trained graduates and professionals from different Spanish regions and 11 Latin-American countries attended the programme.





*Participants of the Masters Programme of Protected Natural Areas 2013
Picture: EUROPARC Spain*

Success and challenges

The Work Programme of Protected Areas 2009-2013, introduced by EUROPARC-Spain, ended this year. The outcomes are very positive, offering interesting results: 25 regional seminars, 7 manuals and monographs, 20 guidance documents, 7 training courses, 30 technical assistance...

2013 was a birthday year for the Spanish section too, celebrating the 20th anniversary on November 13, in Seville. What a wonderful two decades of collaborative work enhancing the role of Protected Areas in society. Through the website of EUROPARC Spain, all the information from the "big" day, along with the programme and a selection of photographs can be downloaded.

An interesting video of the day is also available: <http://www.youtube.com/user/redeuroparc>

The heads of the competent environmental authorities signed the declaration of EUROPARC Spain on the commitment of Protected Areas to society in times of crisis, called the "Commitment of Seville."

The year ahead: 2014

In 2014, EUROPARC Spain will promote the implementation of the Strategic Programme for Protected Areas 2020, with the support of environmental administrations, private actors and other entities to develop their activity in our Protected Areas.

More information: www.redeuroparc.org

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*Celebration of the European Day of Parks 2013
Picture: Javier Puertas*



Protected area experts on a study tour through Southern France as part of the Dinaric Arc Parks programme
Picture: EUROPARC Consulting



Effective, experienced and efficient Our consultancy arm EUROPARC Consulting, excels once more



EUROPARC
CONSULTING

Key activities

Promoting our work

Despite budget cuts all over Europe, EUROPARC Consulting continued to raise its profile in many countries. In addition to Facebook, the company promoted its work in regular articles; on its website; and via the online-network LinkedIn. Attendance at a number of international events, closer relations with colleagues in the EUROPARC network and a partnership with the European Platform for Business and Biodiversity also improved Consulting's profile. Good exposure at the EUROPARC Conference in Debrecen, Hungary, and other international venues helped to increase our visibility.

Covering new ground – the Dinaric Arc Region

The year also saw EUROPARC Consulting participating in a number of exciting projects across Europe. One of the highlights is still the WWF Mediterranean Programme's Dinaric Arc Park project. The project has enabled EUROPARC Consulting to reach out to around 75 Protected Areas in the region. As part of the capacity-building and learning process of this ambitious

programme, we took a group of 20 protected-area practitioners from 14 Protected Areas in the Dinaric Arc region and two representatives from WWF Mediterranean region (WWF MedPO) in May last year to Provence, France, to learn more about sustainable tourism and the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism.

One of our aims is to persuade as many Protected Areas in this region as possible to become, first of all, members of the EUROPARC Federation and then aim for European Charter status. 10 Protected Areas have already joined the Federation. "It shows once more," says Wilf Fenten, "how international co operation is not just good for business but also for protected landscapes."

Reaching across the Channel - international COOL tourism project

Also in 2013, EUROPARC Consulting started work on the COOL Tourism Project, an INTERREG programme to develop and promote the tourism offer in rural areas of the Cross Channel region in France and the UK.

EUROPARC Consulting GmbH specialises in the policy and practice of Protected Area management. The company's managing director, Wilf Fenten, his small team of dedicated staff and a group of international experts in Protected-Area management offer clients a number of services in this field, providing great expertise in a wide range of subjects. Working across many different European countries, EUROPARC Consulting fully subscribes to the EUROPARC Federation's philosophy - helping Protected Areas to build relationships and skills on an international level. **In 2013, the company contributed another €20,000 to the Federation's great work with Europe's magnificent, protected spaces, bringing the total since 2008 to over €140,000.**

This European partnership of eleven local authorities and organisations in the east and south of England, and in the north-west of France, is based on the original idea for a rural tourism project by Visit Kent and Pas de Calais Tourism. It is being delivered with the support of the European cross-border co-operation programme INTERREG IV A, France (Channel) – England, co funded by the European Regional Development Fund.

The project looked at opportunities to grow the rural tourism sector and identify obstacles and challenges. EUROPARC Consulting will help to create low-impact, environmentally friendly sustainable tourism that cherishes, not destroys, and builds environmental awareness, whilst taking into account the needs of the environment, local residents, businesses and visitors. Ultimately, all tourism should be fully sustainable. "We very much hope that all this work will lead to a practical COOL business toolkit for small and medium-size enterprises so that they can support and be supported by sustainable tourism in rural areas", said Wilf Fenten.

Implementing sustainable tourism

Sustainable tourism continued to be a focal point for EUROPARC Consulting's work in 2013. Work with the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas kept the team busy

throughout the year. In total 15 protected landscapes applied and 18 reapplied for Charter status. They were declared successful after an intense Charter Evaluation Committee meeting in July. Working so closely with so many dedicated people from the Charter network is always an honour and a privilege for EUROPARC Consulting.

The year ahead

Every year seems to become more challenging. Competition is fiercer now, but we are prepared to go for even more tenders this year. Please check that EUROPARC Consulting is on your tender list so that we can bid for any work you may need. EUROPARC Consulting's current work will, of course, continue whilst new activities will see the company exploring different fields of work in protected area management and enable it to expand its geographical reach.

All this will strengthen the EUROPARC network even more, so that together we can rise to the challenge of ensuring the conservation of Europe's natural heritage.

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Watching Cranes
in the Hortobágy
National Park, at
the EUROPARC
Conference
Picture:
EUROPARC



Our members

EUROPARC membership in 2013

The 2013 was a birthday year not only for EUROPARC, but for some Sections and members, too. EUROPARC Spain celebrated its 20th anniversary and the Nordic – Baltic section proudly turned 10. We are also very proud of several of our members that have marked important years of their work, throughout Europe.

Working together offers a wealth of opportunities to network, develop partnership opportunities and make contact with like-minded professionals. By the end of 2013, around 360 members from 36 different countries shared our idea of international co-operation to further the conservation of Europe's natural and cultural heritage. Together, the members of the EUROPARC network are responsible for the management of several hundred Protected Areas across the continent, which includes a substantial portion of Europe's Natura 2000 sites.

Although the financial difficulties are still present for most of our members, we are satisfied with the level of membership continuity. In 2013 we gained 27 new members from 16 different countries (Austria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Italy, Macedonia, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Spain and United Kingdom). Unfortunately, we lost ten members due to resignation and we had to strike off 47 members

who had not been paying their membership fee for the last two years.

Participation of the membership in EUROPARC activities throughout the year was excellent. Around 300 attendees visited the Annual Conference in Hungary. 19 Protected Areas successfully completed their Charter evaluation in 2013 and have been awarded during the Charter event in Brussels. Now, there are in total 119 certified Charter Parks from 13 European countries. We are happy that most of our Protected Areas that have been awarded with the Charter, recognize the importance of this programme, and after a 5-year period, apply again for the re-evaluation.

Other events included the TransParcNet meeting in Dutch-German Nature Park Maas-Schwalm-Nette, the international Junior Ranger Camp in Bavarian Forest National Park (DE) with the biggest number of participating Protected Areas – 14 in total, as well as numerous working groups and section meetings. Members are also active in a number of transnational projects and have contributed regularly to EUROPARC's publications.

More information:

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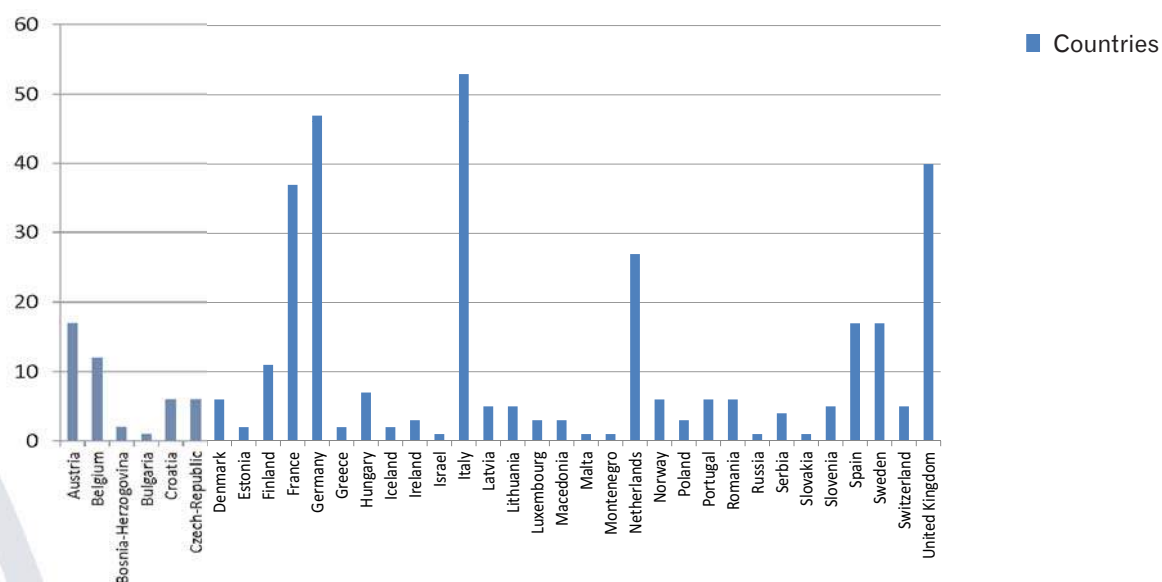
Brigida Napolitano;

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General Assembly
session 2013
Picture:
EUROPARC

Number of EUROPARC members per country



EUROPARC member categories

■ Group A: States and National governmental organisations

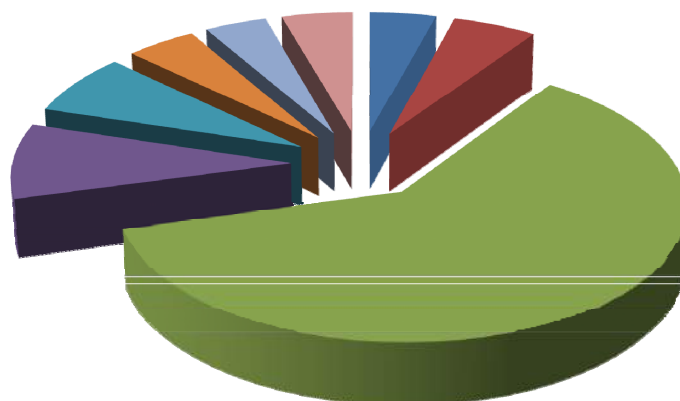
■ Group B: Provinces, Régions, Länder, Comunidades, etc.

■ Group C: National parks, nature parks a.o. Protected areas

■ Group D: Other official agencies, associations, institutes a. corp. bodies

■ Group E: Non-governmental organisations on a national or international level

■ Group F: Supporting organisations



Financial Report



BALANCE SHEET

	2013	2012
AKTIVA		
Assets		
Total fixed assets	5 995,00	6 713,00
Shares in affiliated companies (EP Consulting)	118 000,00	118 000,00
Total current assets	248.508,45	229.009,70
Total Assets	372.503,45	353 722,70
PASSIVA		
Profit Reserve	293 954,67	294 619,97
Liabilities		
Provisions	23 525,02	14 050,00
Accounts payable	55 023,76	45 052,73
Total Equity and Liability	372 503,45	353 722,70



EUROPARC
F E D E R A T I O N



INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

	2013	2012
Income		
Membership fees	310 783,00	309 119,65
Grants		
EC core grant	0,00	0,00
Project grants	49 696,76	167 470,83
Other income	41 765,61	29 822,81
Appreciation in value, EP Consulting		118 000,00
Total Income	402 245,37	624 413,29
Simplified Expenditure		
Total Personnel costs	237 795,93	261 598,37
Total Office costs	23 912,07*	32 741,01
Total Travel and Subsistence	39 066,15	44 219,45
Total Other direct costs	20 097,04*	-
Total Overhead costs	33 044,02*	54 000,82
Total Project direct costs	17 472,14	60 546,83
Total External Assistance/ Professional Fees	31 523,32*	45 094,63
Total costs	402 910,67	498 201,11
Result	-665,30	126 212,18

NOTES

* The financial management system was changed in 2012. This is reflected by a different allocation of costs under headings. The new system was presented to members at the General Assembly 2012 in Genk. While some headings include different costs in 2012 than in 2011, the new heading „Total Other direct costs“ was introduced. Due to this change, special attention has to be given when comparing the costs of 2011 and 2012. For more information, please contact the Executive Administrator, members@europarc.org.

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* Please note that these are contacts from 2013. Current news on www.europarc.org.

40 Jahre Arbeiten für die Natur 40 ans au service de la nature 40 Years Working for Nature

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