



EUROPARC Federation  
Headquarters

Waffnergasse 6  
DE-93047 Regensburg

Tel: +49 (0)941 5993598-0  
Fax: +49 (0)941 5993598-9  
Internet: [www.europarc.org](http://www.europarc.org)



PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE USE

## 3000€ Nature Scholarships Provide Chances for Young European Conservationists!

*Regensburg February 20* - The Alfred Toepfer Natural Heritage Scholarships 2014 are open for applications! The award provides three young European conservationists with €3000 to undertake a study visit to one or more Protected Areas in European countries other than their own. It is given by the Alfred Toepfer Foundation and the EUROPARC Federation. The deadline for applications is 1<sup>st</sup> of May.

The €3000, donated by the Alfred Toepfer Foundation (D), gives successful scholars the chance to gather experience and strengthen their networks. The Scholarships enhance international cooperation and advance the quality, innovation and European dimension of the management of natural areas, such as national parks. At the end of their study visit the scholars should produce a report on their findings which will be shared with practitioners in charge of managing Europe's natural heritage.

Applicants must be under 35, of European nationality and themes for applications must be connected to the management of natural areas. Applications can be filled in online at: <http://europarc.org/what-we-do/alfred-toepfer-natur/2014-scholarship-reg/>

All organisational aspects, such as the selection of candidates, are carried out by the EUROPARC Federation.

The application must address specific themes selected by EUROPARC which are faced by Protected Area management. In 2014 these themes are:

- Importance of values of Natura 2000 sites and Protected Areas on reducing impacts of climate change
- Implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy in the European Protected Areas
- Sustainable development in Protected Areas – contribution to a resource efficient, green and competitive low-carbon economy
- Contribution of Protected Areas to safeguard the European citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and wellbeing

This year individuals interested in applying for the Alfred Toepfer Scholarships can do so from now until 1<sup>st</sup> of May. Guidelines, registration and more information can be found at: <http://europarc.org/what-we-do/alfred-toepfer-natur>

When the study trips are complete the scholarship holders will present EUROPARC with a report of the findings of these research visits, which will be published on the organisation's website and distributed to its members. The winners will also attend the annual conference of the Federation to officially accept their prize from EUROPARC President and a representative of the Alfred Toepfer Foundation in front of around 300 Protected Area practitioners.

This year the EUROPARC Annual Conference: "Understanding the value of nature", will take place from 28th September until Wednesday, 1st October 2014, in Killarney, Ireland.

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#### Additional information:

\* The EUROPARC Federation ([www.europarc.org](http://www.europarc.org)) is committed to the protection and promotion of Europe's Protected Areas and all they offer. We are the foremost and largest NGO representing European Protected Areas, uniting national parks, regional parks, nature parks and biosphere reserves in 36 countries, with the common aim of conserving Europe's unique variety of wildlife, habitats and landscapes.

\* The Alfred Toepfer Foundation is a charitable association with activities across Europe in the fields of culture, science, education and nature conservation. A particular focus of the Foundation is promoting European understanding whilst conserving cultural diversity

\* More information about the Alfred Toepfer Scholarships and the application form can be found at:

<http://www.europarc.org/what-we-do/alfred-toepfer-schol>

\* For more information, please contact our executive administrator, Meldra Langenfelde

Contact: Meldra Langenfelde [m.langenfelde@europarc.org](mailto:m.langenfelde@europarc.org)

EUROPARC Federation, Waffnergasse 6, 93047 Regensburg, Germany

Tel: 0049 (0)941 599 35 98 3

[www.europarc.org](http://www.europarc.org)

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**Dea Mijakovac**  
Communications Officer

EUROPARC Federation  
Waffnergasse 6 93047 Regensburg Germany  
[www.europarc.org](http://www.europarc.org)

T: +49 (0)941 599 35 98- 0 (ext. 3)  
E: [d.mijakovac@europarc.org](mailto:d.mijakovac@europarc.org)  
S: [dea.mijakovac.europarc](mailto:dea.mijakovac.europarc)