

Volunteer management in European Protected Areas

It is amazing to hear Eveliina Nygren (volunteer manager at Natural Heritage Services of Finland) telling that she has delivered training to more than a hundred staff members developing volunteering in Finland, after having taken part in one of the project's train-the-trainer seminar. The Natural Heritage Services of Finland has directly benefitted from the methods and contents delivered in the train-the-trainer seminar, one of several products of the EU-project. Stories like these show how the project has effectively contributed to ensure wider European capacity support for volunteer managers in Protected Areas all over Europe; a need clearly rose during a previous EU-Project "European volunteers in parks" (2008-10).

The EU-Project “Volunteer Management in European Parks”, with several national and international awareness raising seminars, with a research on the impact of volunteering, and with its wide communication activity, contributed to further a culture of active citizenship and lifelong learning in Protected Areas of Europe. Furthermore, delivering trainings, learning exchanges, and having produced a large number of innovative tools – among which guidelines and training material for quality management of volunteers – the project has directly supported volunteer coordinators in their daily work on the ground, and leaves a great legacy to continue improve volunteering across Protected Areas in Europe.

Dr. Elke Baranek, Managing Director of EUROPARC Germany, lead partner of the EU-project, highlights: “It is a great step forward having developed further possibilities for civil citizenship in Europe’s Protected Areas. With this project, the links between citizenship and learning opportunities in Protected Areas have been established, and we are looking forward to developing future cooperation and projects on this topic.”

-END-

342 Words

