



## "Living together. Biodiversity and Human Activities: A Challenge for the Future of Protected Areas"



## Final Report

from the EUROPARC Federation conference

September 29<sup>th</sup> - October 2<sup>nd</sup> 2010 - Pescasseroli,  
Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park - Italy

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2010

**EUROPARC**

Parco Nazionale  
d'Abruzzo Lazio e Molise - Italy



# WELCOME TO THE EUROPARC 2010 CONFERENCE



**W**elcome to the Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park, we are very delighted to have you here.

As president i wish to thank the EUROPARC FEDERATION, EUROPARC staff and administration and in particular the president Erika Stanciu and the director Carol Ritchie, for choosing Italy, Abruzzo and our National Park for the 2010 conference.

Greetings to the local Authorities and to the International guests. A special thank you to all that have worked hard to make this event possible.

I would like to wish you a pleasant stay and good work hoping that we may be able to exchange many profitable experiences and ideas for the future of protected areas.

Thank You

Giuseppe Rossi  
*President*

*Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park*





## General Overview

The EUROPARC conference 2010 took place in Abruzzo, Lazio e Molise National Park (IT) from 29th September to 02nd October under the title "Living together. Biodiversity and Human Activities: A Challenge for the Future of Protected Area". 2010 was proclaimed the International Year of Biodiversity and for this reason the EUROPARC conference, its workshops, excursions and speeches were all focused on this important theme.

The EUROPARC conference in the Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park in Central Italy was beautiful, innovating, and offered some great learning and networking opportunities. It was attended by 276 people from 34 countries. Delegates came mainly from Europe but we also had attendance from the USA, Canada, Australia, Africa and Asia.

The majority of participants arrived at Pescasseroli after a long transfer from the airport on Wednesday. The small town and surrounding mountains looked stunning with the trees just starting to show their autumnal colours. The sunshine, which beat down on us for the whole four days, and clear blue skies added to the effect but unfortunately did not manage to hide the fact that we were at 1167 m above sea level: the temperatures dropped to around 8 degrees in the evening.

At 6 pm delegates made their way to the conference venue, a huge marquee next to the park administration, for the official conference opening. It was led by Vittorio Ducoli, Director of the National Park, and began with some traditional singing and continued with speeches from Giuseppe Rossi, President of National Park; Giovanni Chiodi, President of the Abruzzo Region; Mauro Di Dalmazio, Tourism Councillor of the Abruzzo Region; Salvatore Muccillo, Environment Councillor of the Molise Region; Giampiero Sammuri, President of Federparchi - EUROPARC Italy; Deanne Adams, President of International Ranger Federation; Gerard O'Neill, Parks Victoria, Australia; and Erika Stanciu, President of EUROPARC Federation.

In conclusion, delegates made their way to one of four restaurants and had their first taste of the amount of food that we would be receiving each evening: 6 to 7 courses of great food, some local and traditional. The concert "In this World" from the vocal Trio Othiasos ended the evening.

Thursday tends to be the most jammed packed day at the conference. It began with inspiring keynote speeches from and a panel discussion with: Sarat Gidda, Convention for Biological Diversity; Harvey Locke, Vice President of Wild Foundation; Carlo Petrini, President, Slow Food International; Jon Jarvis, Director, National Park Service, USA; and Stefan Leiner, Nature Directorate, DG Environment, European Commission. The session was chaired well by Dr Hans Friederich, IUCN Regional Director for PAN Europe.

During lunch in the sun for some, EUROPARC staff and volunteers set up the marquee for the annual EUROPARC General assembly, which was well attended, and non members had the option to attend the drama workshop "The Animal and the Mask". This was followed by five side meetings on a variety of topics. Dinner was followed by two great traditional theatre performances in the heart of the town 'The Deer' and 'The Bear Ballad'. All who saw these thoroughly enjoyed them.



Friday was the most relaxed day: excursion day. People met in front of the park administration bright and early, grabbed packed lunches and were taken by bus to various points around the national park. Some went hiking, some went horse riding, some biking and others took the opportunity to explore some cultural heritage of the park.

All however seemed to have a great day in the mountains and returned tired but happy for the special evening event, the highlight of the conference for many.

Kept a secret even to EUROPARC staff, nobody really knew what the special event was going to be, which certainly added to the magical evening. Buses took the attendees an hour down to the mountain to the village of Ortona dei Marsi, where they were greeted in the main square by candlelight, accordion music, traditional food (stew and meat on a barbeque) and local wine.

The citizens of Ortona had decorated the village for the occasion and opened up venues selling or giving away local produce. Away from the main square candles led the way through a maze of old cobbled streets up through the village. In between chatting and eating participants could meander as they pleased and were invited to stop at various place to drink mulled wine, admire art, eat cake, buy cheese or souvenirs and admire the old buildings. The evening finished with a breathtaking concert in the church from the Pescasseroli Choir.

The final day was also busy. On Saturday morning people made their way to the workshops venues they had chosen, around but also outside Pescasseroli. The best part of the day was spent intensively discussing and exchanging ideas on a whole range of topics concerning biodiversity and its relations with mankind. The final plenary session in the afternoon included the workshop feedback, the (re)awarding of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism to 17 European protected areas and present giving to all those who worked hard behind the scenes. In addition, the EUROPARC Flag was handed over to the Swabian Alb Biosphere Reserve, who will be hosting next years conference. Finally, Michael Starrett summarized the main message of the conference. He reminded delegates, "We are all doers. We just need to work out what we want and make it happen using effective communication as a focal point, nature as a force for integration, remind people that nature used to be the norm in Europe and should be again and finally that nature needs half; interconnecting at least half of the planet's land and water is necessary to sustain the health, function, and diversity of all life."

The resounding conclusion of the conference was the need for improved communication to others including one clear message, identifying different target groups and using the right language to reach these.

In addition, delegates contributed to the official conference message. In the "Pescasseroli Declaration" protected area practitioners called upon national and

regional governments and the European Commission to:

- *recognise and reflect in their policies, programmes and resource allocations the need to ensure biodiversity is maintained and ecosystem services secured for the future natural health and economic wealth of Europe.*
- *use the skills and experience built up in protected areas to pilot innovative approaches to integrated land use and sustainable rural development;*
- *integrate relevant public policies that will enable protected areas to better fulfil their role as management models with long established community engagement .*

The last event of the conference was of course the Gala Dinner: the evening where delegates put their best frocks on and relax around a table full of good food after an intensive week. During the dinner (another seven course whammy) the Alfred Toepfer Scholarship Awards and Alfred Toepfer Awards were presented. Afterwards a beautiful traditional conference was given by the band Pagus and then a DJ took over. The last on the dance floor at 3 am were the Swedes, Romanians and the Germans.



## Keynote speakers: Words from the platform!

It was important that in this, the International year of Biodiversity, we took a global perspective looking both within and out with the European experience. It was with that in mind that we were honoured to have such a stellar array of speakers from across the globe. Gerard O'Neil, acting Chief Executive of Parks Victoria, represented our Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) partner Parks Forum.

He spoke to us on the opening evening about the real climate change effects being seen in Australia.

Gerard reminded us that considering biodiversity and people is not just a challenge for the future but for now too. He called us to look beyond the mainstream and innovate, citing the Healthy Parks Healthy People programme. Hans Friederich, IUCN Regional Director in Europe, ably moderated the plenary session on Thursday and reminded us that biodiversity is life and how much all of human society depends on it.

Sarat Gidda from the Convention on Biodiversity talked about the importance of implementing the Protected Areas Programme of Work arising from the Convention on Biodiversity that all European countries are committed to.

He recognised protected areas as key partners in delivering this. Harvey Locke, Vice President Wild Foundation, pointed out the fact that national parks are one of the greatest human inventions.

He told delegates that Europe is still a place of great nature and we should be emboldened to communicate that.

However, we need to reverse the most recent

(from the last few centuries) philosophy of people being apart from nature. Stefan Leiner, from the Natura 2000 unit in the DG Environment, European Commission, stated that despite not reacting the 2010 target to halt the loss of biodiversity, in fact the political profile of biodiversity amongst high level politicians has been well achieved.

He outlined possible changes across the EU policy areas arising in the coming years which would strongly impact the interactions between biodiversity and human activities. Jon Jarvis, Director of the National Park Service of the USA, acknowledged that it was good to be back on the international scene and indicated how the US parks system was keen to share and learn from around the world.

Their experience with the Gulf of Mexico oil spill has reinforced the approach to ensuring biodiversity and human activities are co-managed, ensuring that the rehabilitation of the ecosystems was essential for the whole of the Gulf, its people and its economy.

Silvio Barbero, President of Slow Food Italy, MOU partner with EUROPARC, gave an impassioned appeal reminding us all of the deep relationship between food production, the agricultural industry and biodiversity. He emphasized the fact that we all have a responsibility to be aware of the processes of food production and their contribution to biodiversity loss and that new sustainable models must be advanced.

He reminded us that traditional food production methods can be in harmony and maintain an equilibrium with nature.









## EUROPARC General Assembly

This year's General Assembly was held on September 30th during the annual conference. The well attended assembly saw the award of the transboundary certificates, the award of certificates to parks who had been members for more than 25 years, and a tribute to Aitken Clarke, Geraint George and Jordi Falgarona, who passed away this year.

A foundation will be set up in Aitken Clarke's name in the near future. Concerning EUROPARC Federation business some small changes in statutes, including the official decision to move of the Federation headquarters to Regensburg and some changes in the membership fee categories, were accepted by members.

### EUROPARC CONFERENCE 2010



## *Pescasseroli Declaration 2010*

**On the occasion of the EUROPARC Federation's 2010 conference, September 29th- October 2nd  
in the Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park Italy**

2010 is the International year of Biodiversity. Protected areas are the keystones in the preservation of Europe's nature and biodiversity and models of sustainable development.

### **WE, THE EUROPARC FEDERATION, THEREFORE CALL UPON NATIONAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS AND THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

- to recognise and reflect in their policies, programmes and resource allocations the need to ensure biodiversity is maintained and ecosystem services secured for the future natural health and economic wealth of Europe.
- to use the skills and experience built up in Protected Areas to pilot innovative approaches to integrated land use and sustainable rural development;
- to integrate relevant public policies that will enable Protected Areas to better fulfil their role as management models with long established community engagement .

Knowing that protected areas are embedded in cultural and national identities and the biodiversity held within them is our fundamental life support system, the EUROPARC Federation urges appropriate investment in Europe's protected areas to secure the ecosystem services of the future.

Protected areas<sup>1</sup> represent Europe's last natural assets. They cover 25% of the EU land mass and half of all Natura 2000 sites are contained within nationally designated sites. Through their effective management they play a significant role in climate change mitigation, store valuable water supplies, protect soils and agriculture and maintain healthy ecosystems. Importantly they sustain local economies, provide recreation health and well being resources and inspire national and local pride.

And almost a quarter of the European population some 125 Million people are affected directly by Europe's protected areas<sup>2</sup>, with the entire population dependant on the ecosystem services they produce.

**Without these fundamental ecosystem services Europe would be much the poorer.**

Yet government decisions across Europe have the potential to diminish these natural assets through significant cuts in the management of these protected areas. The lack of investment by governments seriously undercuts the ability of protected areas to adequately secure the value of these natural resources, sustain economies and release the ecosystem benefits needed for society.

These decisions by governments, contradict much of the current finding and political debate that are working towards a new strategy to conserve biodiversity; such as,

<sup>1</sup> "A protected area is a clearly defined geographical space, recognised, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values" (IUCN). The European network is essentially composed of National Parks, Regional Parks, Nature Reserves, Marine Reserves, Biosphere Reserves Landscape Protected Areas and the Natura 2000 Sites.

<sup>2</sup> Figure derived from municipalities having their land totally or partially in a protected area. Roberto Gambino - Parks of Europe, ETS Pisa, 2008



These changes are currently in the process of being registered with the authorities and members will be informed in a separate email as soon as the changes take legal effect. During the assembly reports were given regarding the Council, from the treasurer, Pio Forte, the internal auditor, David Cameron, on the activities of the Working Groups, Directorates and sections were given to the membership. Other topics discussed were the lobby work of the Federation, the communications plan, the future collaboration with Eurosite and the Pescasseroli Declaration.



- The TEEB report<sup>3</sup> which underlined the urgency for policy makers to recognize the need to secure positive support for biodiversity management as “All economic activity and most of human well-being, whether in an urban or non-urban setting, are based on a healthy, functioning environment. Nature’s multiple and complex values have direct economic impacts on human well-being and public spending at a local and well as national level”

**and also,**

- The G8 Environment Ministers<sup>4</sup> declaration through the Carta di Siracusa that “ The multiple challenges that the world faces today are an unmistakable indication that we need to strengthen our efforts to conserve and sustainably manage biodiversity and natural resources.”

**And further the agreement of**

- The Council of European Union<sup>5</sup> on a headline target of “halting the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services in the EU by 2020, and restoring them in so far as feasible.”..... reaffirming that “Protected areas and ecological networks are a cornerstone of efforts to preserve biodiversity STRESS the need to fully implement the Birds and Habitats Directives, to speed up the completion of the Natura 2000 Network, both on land and at sea, and to put in place adequate finance.”And “UNDERScores the necessity of stepping up efforts to integrate biodiversity into the development and implementation of other policies... in particular those national and EU policies related to natural resources management, such as agriculture, forestry fisheries...tourism, spatial planning...”

The Council of the European Union further recently stressed “the important contribution of biodiversity as a driving force to combat the economic crisis, to promote job creation and to generate long-term, economic benefits” and “as significant economic loss arises due to the unsustainable use of biodiversity, timely and proper programmes and actions, aimed at strengthening the resilience of ecosystems, must be taken.”

Severe budget cuts (up to 50%) in 2011, for protected areas across many European countries are anticipated. These actions taken at national levels in public spending settlements, reflect a regressive step and risk the valuable work in managing biodiversity, ensuring sustainable development and delivering ecosystem services, that protected areas have built up over past decades.

The EUROPARC Federation believes that Europe’s protected areas have led the way towards sustainable development and conservation of biodiversity. However they can only maximise their contribution if they are adequately recognized, resourced and operate within a supportive framework of public policy, both national and international, with specialized and well trained staff.

**The EUROPARC Federation**

EUROPARC CONFERENCE 2010

<sup>3</sup> TEEB is an independent study, led by Pavan Sukhdev, hosted by United Nations Environment Programme with financial support from the European Commission; Germany, UK, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. Mr. Sukhdev also spearheads the Green Economy Initiative of the UN Environment Programme. The TEEB for Local and Regional Policy Makers report is one of a series of five interconnected reports. These include the Report on Ecological and Economic Foundations, TEEB for Policy Makers and TEEB for Business. A TEEB website for citizens goes live in the lead up to Nagoya and the final TEEB synthesis report will be released at the CBD COP10 meeting at Nagoya in October 2010.

<sup>4</sup> In accordance with Environment Ministers of Australia, Brasil, Cina, Czech Republic, Egipt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Republic of Corea, South Africa and Sweede

<sup>5</sup> DG I 1A EN, Council of the European Union - Brussels, 16 March 2010 - 7536/10



## Transboundary Certificate Awards

**A**t the General Assembly at this year's conference Neusiedler See National Park (AT) and its transboundary partner Fertő-Hanság National Park (HU) were the first parks to be the first re-awarded their transboundary certificate after five years of successful cooperation.

Martin Solar, the new Chair of the Transboundary Steering and Evaluation Committee, began by briefly presenting the concept of the Transboundary Parks- Following Natures Design Initiative.

The initiative developed the Basic Standards for Transboundary Cooperation to help manage and to encourage international cooperation between transboundary protected areas better. Neusiedler See and Fertő-Hanság National Parks were officially handed the certificate by EUROPARC President Erika Stanciu.

They earned this certificate, valid for the next five years, after they fulfilled the basic standards criteria from the initiative, which was confirmed by independent verifiers of the Federation.

After five years the parks will be re-evaluated.







GLANCES AND MEMORIES FROM THE EXCURSIONS



## Workshops: Working together for biodiversity

From the outset the logistics of organising the workshops for the EUROPARC Conference 2010 in the Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park was very challenging. Workshops were spread around the park with ten hotels in Pescasseroli and, through the generous collaboration of the Municipalities involved, another four in surrounding villages.

The EUROPARC Federation seeks to give members an opportunity to contribute their expertise and experience at conference.

One of the main ways they do this is through the five hour long workshops which cover a variety of themes and allow participants to present or just to exchange ideas on a topic. Workshops were also conducted by several academics, external experts, representatives from the Commission and from other international NGO's.

The contributions of all ensured a high standard in the level of discussion within the groups and their active role, created a very efficient and productive atmosphere.

All, participants, Rapporteurs and presenters shared a good amount of information and went through past experiences, present situations and ideas for the future.

The maximum number of 20 people enabled great interaction and contribution from all participants. With great support from the Rapporteurs, participants got to know each other through amusing icebreakers and had the opportunity to further analyse the topic of their workshop. After what was supposed to be a "light" Italian lunch, but in some hotels ended up a five course meals, all workshops worked towards conclusions, answering two final questions set by EUROPARC:

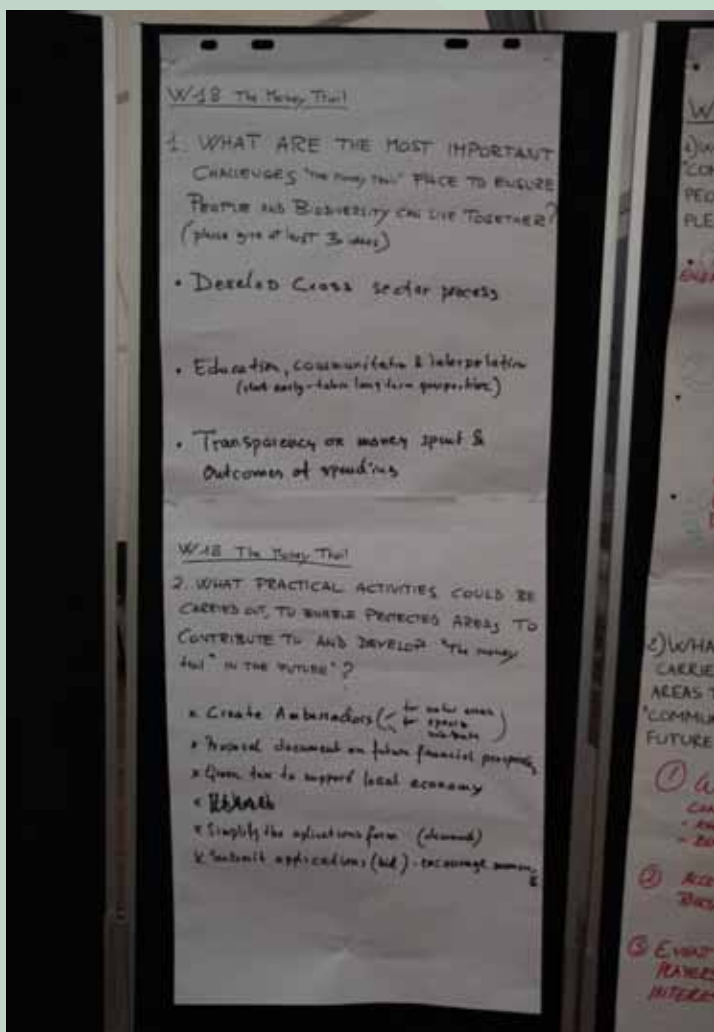
1. What are the most important challenges 'name of workshop' face to ensure people and biodiversity can live together,
2. What practical activities could be carried out to enable protected areas to contribute to and develop 'name of workshop' in the future.

At 3pm all groups amazingly turned up on time back at the marquee with some really good quality feedback.

So in 2010 participants attending workshops really had different experiences.

They had also the opportunity to taste some typical products; learn more about the traditions and environment of the area; and also met with local guides and representatives.

The fantastic and sunny weather made the day even more enjoyable and the incredible support from the park volunteers certainly helped things run smoothly.









## Alfred Toepfer scholarship winners

Each year the EUROPARC Federation in cooperation with the Alfred Toepfer Foundation F.V.S. awards three Alfred Toepfer Natural Heritage Scholarships to promising young conservationists with practical experience in the field of conservation and in the work of protected areas.

In 2010 the number of applicants for the scholarships rose dramatically.

The EUROPARC Council chose between 17 brilliant applications.

The three winners who were selected in June 2010 come from all over Europe: Ekatarine Kakabadze comes from Georgia, Alina Ionita from Romania, and Matthew McGettigan from the United Kingdom.

They are undertaking studies in the fields of transboundary cooperation, rural development and climate change.





## Lassi Karivalo wins the Alfred Toepfer Medal

The Alfred Toepfer Medal is awarded by the EUROPARC Federation each year in recognition of a particular individual who has made a significant contribution to nature protection in Europe.

In 2010 the EUROPARC Council, once again, had to make a tough decision between many excellent nominations.

In the end the decision was made to give this year's medal to Lassi Karivalo (FI).

Lassi, who has just retired from a long career for EUROPARC member Metsähallitus, was nominated by the Nordic Baltic Section for his endless engagement in Nature conservation, something that he has also shown during his many years of dedication to the EUROPARC Federation.

A short presentation on Lassi Karivalos life and work was presented by Lena Malmström from the Nordic Baltic Section.

Among many other things, Lassi not only helped establish the EUROPARC Nordic Baltic Section, but also contributed to the Transboundary work of the Federation, resulting in establishing the Basic Standards for Transboundary Cooperation and the TransParcNet.



## Erika Stanciu

President, EUROPARC Federation

### ***Comment on the conference:***

“The conference, I would just say that it is was wonderful, very well organised, and I think that everybody is really happy. Everybody really enjoyed it and found it useful, plenty of opportunities to speak to each other in a very nice environment.”

### ***EUROPARC has just concluded its annual meeting. What was the main result?***

“Many results came out of the various sessions of the conference. We had interesting and motivating keynote presentations with good overviews, examples and suggestions for conservation in Europe, workshops with meaningful discussions and very good recommendations for the future activities of the Federation. I should perhaps highlight the Pescasseroli Declaration agreed by participants during the conference. The Declaration is a call to decision makers at the EU level and to national governments for political and financial support for Europe’s protected areas.”

### ***As stated in the Pescasseroli Declaration, protected areas are essential tools to help conserve biodiversity.***

#### ***How do you explain this link?***

“Besides the fact that protected areas have as a key objective the conservation of biodiversity within their territory, I think that if the areas are managed in an efficient way they become models of biodiversity conservation also for other areas which are not protected, not only in Europe but in the entire world. It is very important to have core areas defined for non-intervention management within protected areas, but the real challenge is to develop and implement strategies and activities that harmonize all human activities and promote the responsible and respectful use of Nature’s values and resources. That’s what protected areas stand for and that’s why they should be considered essential tools for conserving biodiversity, which is the framework and support of our Life, and Life in general.”

### ***What would you suggest European leaders should do, to try and improve the situation of protected areas and biodiversity in Europe?***

“First of all they should make the effort to listen, to learn and understand what protected areas are and why they are critical not only for nature conservation but also for promoting sustainable development. Then, they should shape legislation for all sectors in a way that environmental concerns are reflected and measures to maintain our natural heritage and natural resources are incorporated. Third, but not least, they should always remember that nature conservation is not a business that brings immediate profit, but needs good financial support to provide the services and benefits that will bring profit through other sectors.”



Therefore, protected areas and nature conservation related activities should not be the last item of budgets - they should be at the top where good business investment for the future should always be.”

### ***EUROPARC’s priorities for the coming year, especially in the area of biodiversity:***

“First of all, let me say that maybe it’s better to use the word “nature”, and I think one of our big priorities is to really try to convince governments and the commission not to give up on parks or protected areas, to put them on their priorities, because these are the bases of our life, in the end, and the models for a harmonious life. So that’s a big priority. Besides, probably we will have to look more into the health issues and nature, to convince people that nature is the best healing place. And probably I would say wilderness, because I have a personal interest in keeping wilderness in Europe, so this is my opinion, there are some other people probably who would think differently and the outcomes of the priorities will be just out this afternoon.”





# Carol Ritchie

## Director EUROPARC Federation

### *Comment on conference*

“It’s been absolutely fantastic, it went without a hitch, the delegates are delighted, I think people have gone away inspired, you can hear in the background the atmosphere, they’re inspired, motivated to try something new and different in their home parks and I think have totally fallen in love with Abruzzo and Pescasseroli, I’ve learned how to say it. We are absolutely thrilled and delighted.”

### *Comment on the title*

“I haven’t really had a chance to get all the feedback from all the workshops, but just from reading the feedback sheets I think that people have really considered deeply the challenges of biodiversity and people living together. But not just the challenges, if you look at the sheets people have come up with loads of ideas of how to take action, I think that’s a very positive message. I think when people arrived here, there was a great expression of concern about finances, I think people are going away thinking, despite the difficult financial moment, there is still work that we can do, communicating and working with others, really establishing the values of biodiversity, and making sure that biodiversity and people can live in harmony, and I think the message is going out.”

### *Role of EUROPARC over the next year*

“One of the new areas that I noticed that people were talking about as a new role for EUROPARC was one of support and advice. I mean obviously we appear as a network to pull together the best practices and the good ideas and innovations that are happening across Europe and share them amongst each other. EUROPARC was founded on the belief of international cooperation and that’s best done through personal contact and the conference is where those contacts take place, and in addition to that fundamental role that EUROPARC has, I’m picking up that people are needing more support and advice and of course the lobbying, to take the needs of protected areas up to a higher level, to a political level, to decision makers, and explain to those decision makers the role and the value and the benefits of those protected areas, and I think that that’s a job that we’re keen to take forward.”

### *Things enjoyed*

“The whole conference, although it was sort of blur I worked so hard, I saw all of the keynote speakers, bringing in some international perspectives for me was very worthwhile, I think it was, we have a phrase in Scots, ‘see yourself as others see us’, it’s interesting for us Europeans to see how we are operating from an Australian, a Canadian, and American perspective, it’s very useful for us to reflect back on how we operate in Europe, so



I thought that was very useful. I really enjoyed the cultural spectacles...in Pescasseroli the other night, and I very much enjoyed the special dinner in Ortona last night, that was just wonderful, and I think that reflects the welcome and the hospitality of the local people, that they were so keen to host us, and to go to the villages around the park and we were delighted. I actually took that opportunity to go to the Maiella National Park...so it was nice to see the neighbouring parks too. But I think with all EUROPARC conferences at the end of the day it’s the people that matter, and the local people have made this the special event that it was.”

## Sarat Babu Gidda

### Programme Officer, In-situ & Ex-situ Conservation Convention for Biological Diversity

#### ***Comment on the title***

“It’s really befitting in the international year of biodiversity that the title of the conference really suits the international celebration the International Year of Biodiversity.”

#### ***Role of EUROPARC in promoting biodiversity***

“Fantastic, the reality is that EUROPARC consists of the protected area professionals and the functionaries, and they are the real people who are implementing, are taking action on the ground, now through this conference, it’s the mix of some older people and the younger generation people, so the older people can pass on to the young people and. From this point of view EUROPARC is really doing a wonderful job and its contribution to the natural park management and achieving the biodiversity conservation is really good.”

#### ***Comment on the conference***

“The other thing that’s really great is the exchange of information, and the amount of different people, and the networking, this is really very important. I am from the Convention on Biological Diversity, and looking at EUROPARC now, because we develop the policies at the global level and I see the parks help the countries in implementing the global policies actually on the ground. I’m quite happy, this conference is really very good and its contributing to the implementation of the global policies and at achieving the objectives at a local, national and global level is really very good.”





## Harvey Locke Vice President for Conservation Strategy of the Wild Foundation, USA

### *Comment on the issues*

“I was very honoured to be asked to give one of the keynotes at the start of the conference. I guess the thing that interests me most about these gatherings in Europe is the question of how Europe will deal with nature in the 21st century, which I think is the question for all of humanity on every continent. Europe I think is important, and I think Abruzzo Park is important, because in Abruzzo Park at least, all the main species are still present, which makes it a very special place.

When I told people in North America I was going to a park two hours from Rome with brown bears and wolves and wild boar and what we call elk and chamois too, people are like well they can hardly believe it.

And of course they're here and it's very special and it demonstrates very clearly the value of natural parks, and in particular the sanctuary part.

A thrill is that I got to walk through the old King's hunting reserve which was the core of the refuge of the national park and see the old beech forests, the upland beech forests which were absolutely wonderful, and we saw evidence of the presence of the carnivores and my wife saw two red deer males and that was wonderful.

This is a very lovely place, and I also enjoyed very much seeing Ortona, which was the old Marsican town that we went to last night.

This is a great place and I've been very honoured and pleased to be here.”

### **How can EUROPARC contribute to the 50%-50% (Nature Needs Half) objective?**

“I talked about a central program for our organization, the Wild Foundation, called Nature Needs Half, which is the idea that we should protect at least half the world in an interconnected way, and of course the full range of protected areas which are deployed in Europe would be the way you'd get there in Europe.

Underlying that is the deeply held belief that parks are essential institutions, and the sanctuary function within parks is also an essential institution, so that we keep the full range of life alive in the 21st century.

I would personally like to also see EUROPARC make symbols of places like Abruzzo or the New Forest of England that I also talked about.

These are places where large intact old systems are still there.

I'm stunned that I can tell people that when I've gone to London, half an hour away there's the new forest, or that I come to Abruzzo and two hours away is Rome, and you know EUROPARC can talk about that stuff more and celebrate it more, and I think it's great that EUROPARC exists and I'm honoured to be here.”



### *Comment on conference*

“It's been first rate, the other thing that I would say about the EUROPARC event is that allowing the delegates some time to go walking, for meaningful walks instead of spending all the time in a bus, was fantastic. Very well organized. I really like the idea of eating in restaurants instead of a big banquet hall.

I think it's been a very well organized event, I've been to a lot of events all over the place, and this has been a real pleasure to be part of.

I'm very impressed with EUROPARC and the job that it's done.”

## Jon Jarvis Director National Park Service USA

### *Comment on issues*

“I think that, first of all, the conference was very well done, it had a great pace to it, but what I learned here was, what to a certain degree I already knew, was that the issues facing protected areas around the world are pretty much the same the world over, but there’s been different models.

Here in Italy and in lots of other places in Europe, these are sort of lived in landscapes, and {the question is } how we learn from that in the US.

We have new models of parks in the US as well, I think the perception is that in the US all the parks are big federally owned things but we have a lot of parks today that have a lot of private land, traditional uses as well, what we have to learn in Europe by me coming here in particular is how to work with communities better, indigenous peoples, first nations peoples, protecting their lifestyles while at the same time managing for these other values like biodiversity.”

### *Opportunities for collaboration between US and European parks, EUROPARC*

“We’ve had a number of agreements that have kind of expired over time, so I want to renew those both with EUROPARC Federation and then perhaps individual parks. What we like to do is we like to create sister park relationships like we’re doing with Arcadia and Dolomiti right now.

Those allow for exchanges of rangers and management staff. It’s great to bring US staff out here, they get exposed to a totally different system. Maybe they don’t feel quite so slighted if they come here and find out how little money there really is and how much money they have. It brings them back with a new perspective as well.

I think it enhances the overall community around protected areas. I see a number of opportunities to do that.

We’re all facing issues like climate change, like connecting people to the outdoors, and I think that one of the areas that has the most potential for all of us is this connection with human health.

We’re all trying to figure that out, and how do we connect the values that we provide in parks and protected areas with the whole medical community, the whole public health community.

We have something to offer them that really has never been tapped. The services we provide are basically free.

A term has grown here in recent years about ecosystem services, but I’d never heard that health is an ecosystem service, that was a new twist, you think about clean water, clean air, green infrastructure and all that stuff, but public health is an ecosystem service that hasn’t really been recognized.”

### *Comment on title*

“{It’s a delicate term} not only in the US. Biodiversity is great if you’re at a scientific conference in a



room full of scientists, but I’m telling you that if I went out into western Montana and used the term biodiversity

{I wouldn’t be well received}, and I think that’s probably true in a lot of countries around the world. We’ve got to start using {different} language, just like ‘protected areas’, ‘protected areas’ is also a negative in that it’s protecting nature from the public, and I think we’ve got to recognize that the public are connected to nature, and so it’s not an either/or, it’s a both, and we’ve got to figure out how to do that, and part of it is language.”

### *Comment on conference*

“Obviously the venue, here in Abruzzo, it’s fantastic, and because of the sort of leisurely pacing of the conference, allowed us to get out in the field and actually see it, a very very impressive area, biologically, geographically and culturally it’s a very impressive area.

In all too many conferences we get jammed into a room with no windows, and talk to each other, ‘death by powerpoint’ we call it.

I think the conference planners did a very good job of sort of pacing it.”



## Else Oestergaard Andersen Thy National Park, Denmark

### **General comment**

“We’re here for the first time, we’re the first Danish national park, we just joined EUROPARC this August. It’s nice to be here, it’s nice to share knowledge with people and learn from others. Of course we have a lot of things in common, troubles...”

### **Cooperation among European parks:**

“I’m quite concerned right at the moment, how can our national park actually help develop the area in a sustainable way, and I think that’s an issue where we have a lot of things together and we can really help each other. I was at a workshop this

morning where we discussed rural development and agricultural policy, but I would say that we can find other ways than just focussing on a big ship in the European Union.”

### **Comment on the conference**

“I would say it’s very well organised, it’s really a huge event, it’s really a lot of participants.

I could be worried whether everyone can actually host a meeting like this, I’m not sure whether we could host a meeting of this size.

The way of mixing workshops and plenary sessions and excursions is really nice.”



## Helen Read (City of London, England)

### **Comment on main issues coming out of conference:**

“From my point of view, it’s the first EUROPARC conference I’ve been to, so it’s fantastic to be able to see what’s happening around Europe and what different countries are doing, and actually to realise that we’ve all got common problems and are trying to find common solutions, and gather information about what’s going on in the rest of Europe, so it’s a fantastic opportunity to find out what’s going on.”

### **Comment on the main areas for European parks’ cooperation:**

“The workshop I’ve just come from is about communication, we’ve been talking about how to communicate the messages about biodiversity and the importance of biodiversity, and I think we’re just discovering that everybody has good

examples that you can find out from and one of the issues that came out was trying to find a data base where you can find out about good practices of communication and examples other people have used, I think there’s a lot of good practice going on, but it’s trying to find out about where it is, so you don’t invent it all over again.”

### **Comment on the conference:**

“I particularly enjoyed the excursion yesterday up in the mountains, we did the forest walk, we saw some nice old-growth forest and saw some lovely trees and beech forests, that was a highlight for me, but also the presentations the first day on the plenary session, having a range of speakers from Canada and America and Australia, so we’ve had mixtures of people from all over the world, so it’s just a good opportunity to listen to well-known people talking about their subject.”

### ***General comment on the conference:***

“I think that the conference has been of great interest, there was a very full program, which however worked very well as far as organization was concerned.

The themes are the themes of today's parks, so rightly the central theme was just that of the relationship between the conservation of biodiversity and the presence of human beings and anthropic activity in these areas, and the reintegration of species.

In particular, I liked the workshops, I participated in the workshop on the commitment of UNESCO, there are the UNESCO classifications, the management of parks, which is precisely at the centre of the topics we were mentioning.

These are always very interesting opportunities to compare ideas amongst people who work in the same field and compare their experiences and are able to talk at a high level, because they are in fact the European experts that are meeting, also world experts, so it's an excellent opportunity, those who didn't participate missed out on something.

Perhaps one comment is that maybe there weren't too many Italians, compared to what there could have been, given that we're in an Italian context, and it shocked me to see very many Northern

Europeans amongst the delegates but very few Italians, it's shame because one misses out on this opportunity for an Exchange of ideas and it's obviously easier to do it in Italy where it costs less than in future conferences to be held who knows where.)”

### ***Comment on how Italian parks can collaborate***

“Certainly now it's a very difficult moment tied to the budget cuts, but the exchange of experiences on the Italian level rather than an International one is in any case...and we'll try to create the informal network of Italian parks anyway.

Surely one thing that struck me was the absence of any representative or representatives from the Environment Ministry, which beyond the formal representation by the Minister or delegate on the Minister's behalf, I haven't even seen the colleagues who work in the environmental sector and this leaves one a little perplexed because these are important working opportunities, and the creation of a national network happens also through events like these, and sincerely.

I was a little disappointed because it's been a working opportunity that has been somewhat lost, we're two hours from Rome and it wasn't that difficult to come at least for one day.”







## Credits:

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