



**EUROPARC**  
F E D E R A T I O N

Appendix/Anhang 5

**European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas (Charter): The value of the “Charter” in identifying sustainable tourism destinations.**

Workpackage 3

## **European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas**

**The Building Blocks of the Charter:**

**A revision of the principles of the Charter-**

**Review of the re-evaluation process of the Charter**

***“Die Bausteine der Charta “***

# Building Block of the Charter (draft)

## European charter for Sustainable Tourism in protected areas

The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas is a practical management tool that enables protected areas to develop tourism sustainably. The core element of the Charter is working in partnership with all relevant stakeholders to develop a common sustainable tourism strategy and an action plan on the basis of a thorough situation analysis. The aim of all Charter projects and activities is the protection of the natural and cultural heritage and the continuous improvement of tourism in the protected area in terms of the environment, local population and businesses as well as visitors.

The European Charter Network now counts 107 protected areas from 13 European countries involving over 200 local tourism businesses as Charter partners, local and regional government authorities.

The Charter exists to help protected areas to develop and manage sustainable tourism. To do this it encourages the use of comprehensive and sustainable structures, objectives and actions. It does not seek to measure the absolute qualities of the areas in terms of landscape and facilities, but rather to facilitate development and growth in partnership.

The Charter was developed through actions taken by a number of pilot areas and the advice of an extensive steering committee. The principles and approach behind the Charter were established in 1999/2000 and a verification process introduced.

Besides opportunities to strengthen relationships with tourism stakeholders and influence tourism development at the local level, the benefits for these “chartered” protected areas include:

- a higher profile in the European arena as an area devoted to sustainable tourism;
- public-relations and awareness-raising opportunities with visitors and local and national media;
- an opportunity to work with and learn from other European Charter areas in a network;
- helpful internal and external assessment, leading to new ideas and improvements, and
- greater credibility amongst potential funding partners.

**European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in protected areas (Charter): The value of the “Charter” in identifying sustainable tourism destinations.**

**The project funded by BfN provided the opportunity after 10 years of the Charter to review and consider its functionality, both in the context of a wider policy framework and in reviewing its internal systems, such as the re-evaluation process.**

**One of the project objectives was**

- To analyse the Charter re-evaluation methodology to bring about alignment with sustainable tourism destinations assessment and other relevant criteria, e.g. CBD

Utilizing the experience of the 5 parks in the study, it was envisaged an analysis of the protected area at initial certification and five years later at re-evaluation would be undertaken. This would give a measure

of the change in a given set of indicators across sustainable, economic and visitation indicators over the 5 year period of the charter in the chosen territories.

This involved:

- The EUROPARC sustainable tourism working group in defining the most relevant aspects to be monitored in a re-evaluation of a charter park.
- Work with the parks to agree the monitoring and process of capturing the change in data over the 5 years.
- To analyse and report the findings and produce a report with recommendations to influence future charter re-evaluation
- Based on the finding of work package A2 to assess the viability of the inclusion of sustainable tourism destination indicators in the charter process.

The project working group undertook an analysis of the re-evaluation methodology of the Charter. This resulted in two documents, a conceptual framework of “building blocks” explaining how the principles translate into the key issues of the Charter, and a new “Key Issues “of the Charter framework.

The project working group agreed that 12 new “**Key Issues**” which would replace the old “principles” bringing the Charter system up to date with current thinking on aspects of sustainable tourism. It also included the analysis and comparison between STEPPA, TEEB and CBD to ensure any Charter evaluation system was in line with the recommendations and principles espoused. It was also agreed how minimum criteria for each of those key issues should be set; if not in exact numbers than in description of what does minimum criteria include.

These have been agreed by the project steering group but with the proviso that this new charter system be consulted with the existing Charter network for final revision. A more full set of minimum standards will be developed for each key issue. EUROPARC is committed to undertaking that consultation. Further, once fully accepted, new training for verifiers and charter project leaders will be required.

The new framework based on this analysis is presented below.

# **BUILDING BLOCKS OF THE CHARTER**

**BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS (AGREEMENTS)**

**SUSTAINABLE TOURISM STRATEGY AND ACTION  
PLAN**

**PARTICIPATORY PLANNING – SOCIAL CAPITAL  
(cohesion)**

**SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND REDUCING CARBON  
FOOTPRINTS**

**ENSURE A SAFE, QUALITY VISITOR EXPERIENCE  
FOR ALL**

**PROVIDE APPROPRIATE QUALITY  
COMMUNICATIONS**

**PROTECT THE NATURAL AND CULTURAL  
HERITAGE**

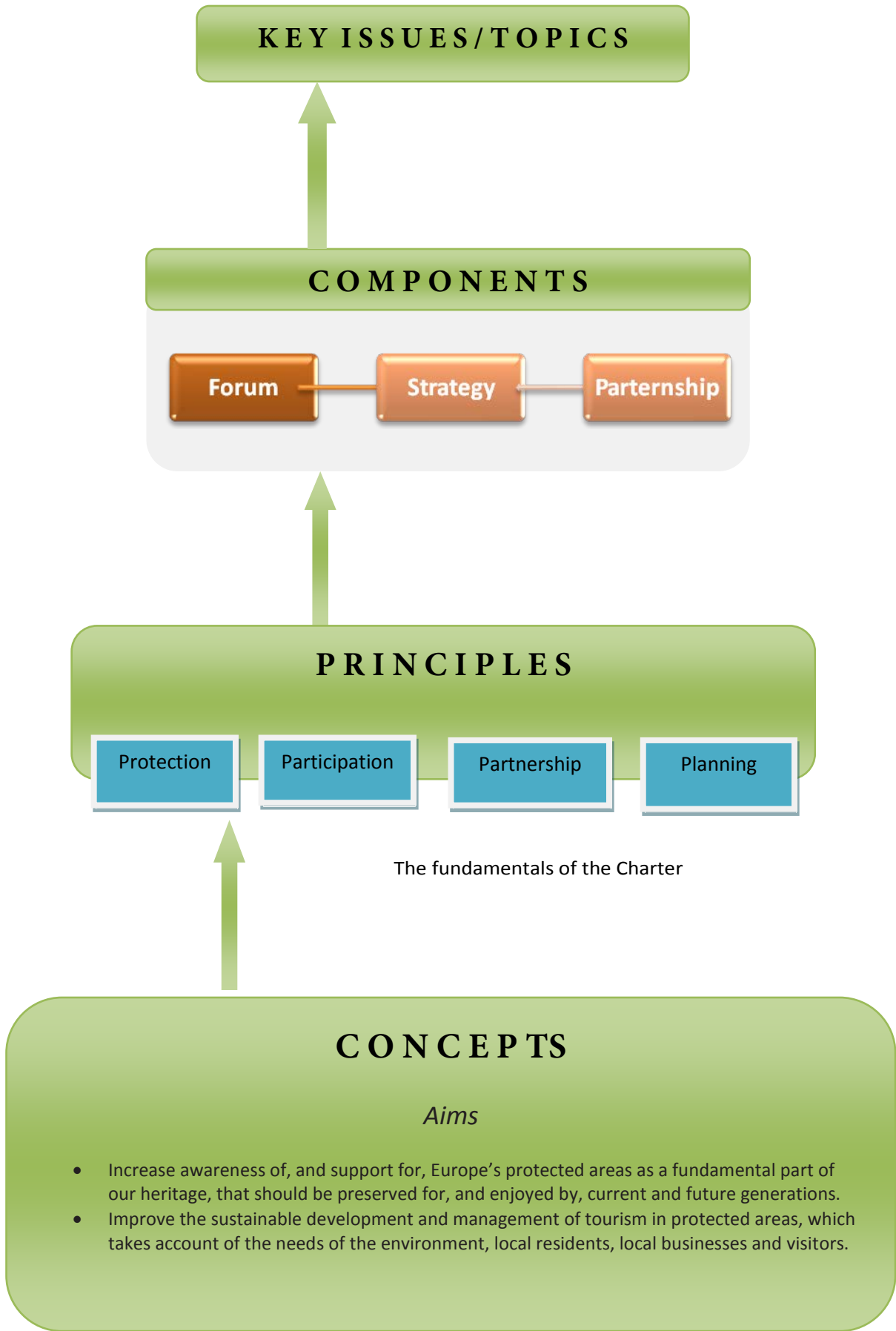
**BENEFITS OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM FOR THE  
(LOCAL) COMMUNITY**

**ENCOURAGE APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT**

**PROVIDE ADEQUATE TRAINING AND CAPACITY  
BUILDING**

**MONITOR ACTIONS AND DISSEMINATE  
ACHIEVEMENTS**

**CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABILITY**



# Guidance and Definitions

## PRINCIPLES

**Protection of the Natural and Cultural Heritage.** The ECSTPA was created as a response to the risk of irreversible damage to protected landscapes by unplanned and maximising tourism development. The basic premise of most protected areas remain the protection of nature. The ECSTPA is underpinned by the principle that with careful planning and design and with the support of communities it is possible to build sustainable local tourist services whilst protecting and enhancing the local environment

**Participation.** Participation by all actors involved in sustainable tourism is founded on the belief that those affected by decisions should be involved in the decision making process. Participation should enhance the collective intelligence and wisdom involved in democratic processes such as making collective decisions, solving social problems, and creating shared visions. To achieve that, participation in the ECSTPA should be undertaken with respect for all views, be active in seeking dialogue with all opinions and be managed effectively to reach consensus.

**Partnership .** The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas is founded on the principle of effective partnership working.. Keys to effective partnership working are clarity, openness, trust, shared goals and values, and regular communication between partners This provides opportunities to view and understand park and tourism issues from different perspectives and is potentially a move towards more integrated and sustainable management. Partnership working is about more than individual organisations meeting together and exchanging views. It is about operating in a way which includes the views and interests of partners in order to move the partnership towards its objective/s

**Planning** *A vision without a plan is just a dream. A plan without a vision is just drudgery. But a vision with a plan can change the world.*

The ECSTPA requires effective planning; that is, the process of deciding what the parties want to do to make tourism sustainable and how to do it. Effective planning takes into account diverse perspectives and impacts, allowing decision-makers to identify and implement the most effective ways to achieve goals. A good plan will provide direction and united purpose for all sustainable tourism stakeholders. The characteristics of a good and effective plan will address the following questions. Why?What? When ? Whom?How / and How much. With sufficient monitoring and evaluation of the plan and its processes.

# COMPONENTS



## FORUM

A permanent forum, or equivalent arrangement, should be established between the protected area authority, local municipalities, conservation and community organisations and representatives of the tourism industry. Regularity of meetings and number in the forum should be sufficient to enable effective discourse and decision making. Links with regional and national bodies should be developed and maintained.

## STRATEGY

The strategy should be based on careful consultation \* and be approved and understood by local stakeholders. It should contain:

- A definition of the area to be influenced by the strategy, which may extend outside the protected area
- An assessment of the area's natural, historic and cultural heritage, tourism infrastructure, and economic and social circumstances; considering issues of capacity, need and potential opportunity
- An assessment of current visitors and potential future markets
- A set of strategic objectives for the development and management of tourism, covering
  - conservation and enhancement of the environment and heritage
  - economic and social development
  - preservation and improvement of the quality of life of local residents
  - visitor management and enhancement of the quality of tourism offered
- An action plan\* to meet these objectives
- An indication of resources and partners to implement the strategy
- Proposals for monitoring results
- Consultation should be seen to have been inclusive and effective bringing in the views of all stakeholder

## PARTNERSHIP

A partnership agreement between the actors involved in the delivery of the sustainable tourism strategy should be in place. These would be in place in the setting up of the forum and laterally in the creation of intra park agreements with tourism business (charter 2) and extra park agreements with tour operator (charter 3). Partnership agreement will take differing forms depending on local culture and legalities but based on the charter principles, agreements should have then following components. Description of the shared vision and/or aims of the partnership

Agreement of the roles and responsibilities

Clarity of function, purpose as well as times span (how long the agreement is in place)

A process for the management of change, ie end of the agreement, change in policy of management on either side

## KEY ISSUES/TOPICS

What evidence should be gathered to identify compliance with these key issues

### **BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS (AGREEMENTS)**

Participation in Charter part 2 0 building partnership with business and other forms of agreements

### **SUSTAINABLE TOURISM STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN**

**A strategy and plan that shows clearly the participation of the forum in its creation and acceptance**

### **PARTICIPATORY PLANNING – SOCIAL CAPITAL (cohesion)**

The existence of a working Forum – an assessment that the quantity and quality of participation is appropriate to that area. Additionally the competence project team –

- Involving local communities in the planning of tourism in the area
- ensuring good communication between the protected area, local people and visitors
- identifying and seeking to reduce any conflicts that may arise

### **SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND REDUCING CARBON FOOTPRINTS**

Charter areas would need to show that negative tourism impacts have been measured and then reduced. This can be objectives within the strategy or separate to it.

encouraging activities, including tourism uses, which support the maintenance of historic heritage, culture and traditions

- controlling and reducing activities, including tourism impacts, which: adversely affect the quality of landscapes, air and water; use non-renewable energy; and create unnecessary waste and noise
- encouraging visitors and the tourism industry to contribute to conservation
- keeping a record of visitor numbers over time and space, including feedback from local tourism enterprises
- creating and implementing a visitor management plan
- promoting use of public transport, cycling and walking as an alternative to private cars (transportation which is not contributing to greenhouse gases)

### **ENSURE A SAFE, QUALITY VISITOR EXPERIENCE FOR ALL**

- Research of the expectations and satisfaction of existing and potential visitors. This should be done at a frequency suitable to the area, and the rationale for the frequency and type of research explained.
- Meet the special needs of disadvantaged visitors
- supporting initiatives to check and improve the quality of facilities and services



### **PROVIDE APPROPRIATE QUALITY COMMUNICATIONS**

- ensuring that the promotion of the area is based on authentic images, and is sensitive to needs and capacity at different times and in different locations
- providing readily available and good quality visitor information in and around the area, and assisting tourism enterprises to do so
- providing educational facilities and services that interpret the area's environment and heritage to visitors and local people, including groups and schools
- providing and supporting activities, events and packages involving the interpretation of nature and heritage

### **PROTECT THE NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE**

- monitoring impact on flora and fauna and controlling tourism in sensitive locations
- encouraging activities, including tourism uses, which support the maintenance of historic heritage, culture and traditions
- controlling and reducing activities, including tourism impacts, which: adversely affect the quality of landscapes, air and water; use non-renewable energy; and create unnecessary waste and noise – Managing activities?
- encouraging visitors and the tourism industry to contribute to conservation
- monitoring impact on flora and fauna (habitats) and controlling tourism in sensitive locations
- N2000

*parks should reference N2000, and listed species and how they are minimizing impact on them*

### **BENEFITS OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM FOR THE (LOCAL) COMMUNITY**

- promoting the purchase of local products (food, crafts, local services) by visitors and local tourism businesses. Minimum levels of promotion need to be defined
- encouraging the employment of local people in tourism
- Shortening the supply chain and keeping it local
- Added value chain

### **ENCOURAGE APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT**

- controlling the siting and style of any new tourism development. *Evidence of the parks ability to be consulted or influence planning development is needed*

### **PROVIDE ADEQUATE TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING**

- providing or supporting training programmes for staff of the protected area, other organisations and tourism enterprises, based on assessing training needs
- Show evidence of networking

### **MONITOR ACTIONS AND DISSEMINATE ACHIEVEMENTS**

- keeping a record of visitor numbers over time and space, including from local tourism enterprises
- creating and implementing a visitor management plan
- annual assessment of the action plan and minimum criteria of key issues
- disseminate results actively through the charter network

### **CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABILITY**

**assess the charter areas contribution to a sustainable region in the areas of**

Environmental

Social

Economic

measure on these three areas need to be developed. refer to report of the comparison of indicators

each charter are should provide one Emblematic example of a sustainable actions.