



EUROPARC
F E D E R A T I O N



EUROPARC Siggen Seminar – Report 2011

Gut Siggen, Germany, 9th – 16th July 2011



Published November 2011

The EUROPARC Federation - Waffnergasse 6 - 93047 Regensburg - Germany
Tel: 0049 (0)941 599 35 98 0 - Fax: 0049 (0)941 599 35 98 0 – Email: office@europarc.org
www.europarc.org

EUROPARC Sigger Seminar – Report 2011

Gut Sigger, Germany, 9th – 16th July 2011

The EUROPARC Federation is the largest non-governmental organisation representing national parks and other protected areas across Europe. Together, the members of the EUROPARC Federation are committed to the protection and sustainable management of Europe's natural heritage. Nature knows no boundaries and EUROPARC facilitates international co-operation to further improve and conserve our shared natural heritage and to ensure the values and benefits of protected areas are at the heart of Europe.

The Alfred Toepfer Foundation FVS is a private non-profit foundation established in 1931 by Alfred C. Toepfer. The Foundation is committed to promoting European unification as well as ensuring cultural diversity and understanding between the countries of Europe. It is mainly active in the domains of European integration, international understanding, art and culture, science, nature conservation, and youth work.

The Foundation and the EUROPARC Federation have worked closely together for a large number of years. The Foundation has charitably donated money for three Alfred Toepfer Scholarships awarded by the Federation to young conservationists each year. They have been a member of the Federation for 14 years.



The EUROPARC Federation took up the generous offer of the Alfred Toepfer Foundation to host the first series of Sigger Seminars in 2010. The second, which we are writing about in this report occurred from 9th – 16th July 2011.

For these seminars EUROPARC is given free use of the Foundation's seminar centre, the Sigger Estate, on the German coast of the Baltic Sea. The seminar series will benefit the EUROPARC Federation and its members and help to take the organisation's mission forward.

The week was split into two halves, with the first two days this year were dedicated to much needed project development by the EUROPARC Directorate and a meeting of the Sustainable Tourism Working Group. The second half saw a seminar on the topic of Branding Biodiversity based on the Master Class with the same name from the sustainable communications company Futerra.

1. Project and strategy development – looking to the future of the EUROPARC Federation

The financial crisis, the unfortunate loss of the income from the EU's NGO grant in 2011 and the conclusion of a number of projects at the beginning of 2012 called for innovative thinking in the EUROPARC Directorate this year. Securing new projects for the further strategic development of the Federation was therefore a necessity this summer.

In total the Directorate of the Federation submitted seven new project applications this year with various partners across Europe. In Sigger the team and former president, Erika Stanciu, and former council member, Paulo Castro, worked hard on writing up applications for two of these projects. The first was for a project about bringing sustainable tourism to small islands and the second was about wilderness areas.

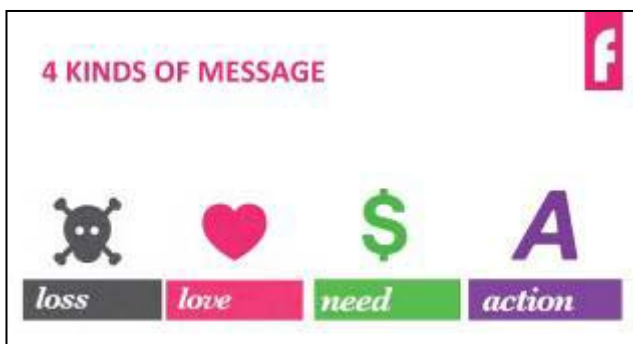


Whilst the directorate was at Siggen they also took time to start looking at the new EUROPARC Federation strategy from 2013 until 2015. The initial collection of ideas began and a process was developed regarding how to get the maximum possible participation from the EUROPARC network.

Joining the Directorate in the first half of the week were some of the members of the sustainable tourism working group. Paulo Castro, Lassi Loven and Richard Partington used the relaxed atmosphere at Siggen to start taking apart the structure of the European Charter with regards to who is responsible for what and when things get done. A comprehensive organigram was the fruit of their labour. They also began to look at the next steps for the working group and its development.

The EUROPARC Federation would like to thank all those that attended for their hard work, the staff at Siggen for their help, support and friendly service, Janice Burley for her great facilitating and finally the Alfred Toepfer Foundation for enabling us to provide our members with this great opportunity.

2. A new nature message – love, not loss!



At the EUROPARC Conference in Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park (IT) last year the key word was ‘communication’. Protected areas across Europe are constantly communicating what they do and why they do it but there seems to be a consensus that the message is still not reaching the right or enough people. So what are we doing wrong and how can we make our communication more effective?

At the EUROPARC Siggen seminar this year EUROPARC began helping its members look for the answers to these questions. As the Communications Officer of the Federation I was also particularly looking for ways to improve the way we communicate to our members and outside of the Federation Network. The seminar, entitled ‘the New Nature Message’, focused on an innovative model of communication developed by the UK based sustainable communications agency Futerra looking towards creating a brand for nature and biodiversity.

Futerra’s founders spent months researching psychology and different groups of people to produce their ground-breaking paper ‘Branding Biodiversity’. The simple message set out in this short but clear document is that current communications in the field of nature protection are focused too much on negative messages and geared towards people who are already passionate about the environment (biocentrics). If we want to reach the rest of the public and politicians, the humanists (nature only has a true value if related to people) and the egoists (they are only interested in nature if it has a direct value to them), another approach needs to be taken that concentrates on love not loss.

Helen Spoor joined us at the Siggen to take the 18 participants from 11 different countries, all working in the field of communications for EUROPARC members, through a Branding Biodiversity Master Class. The course was based on a combination of theoretical presentations and practical examples enabling participants to apply what they have learnt to a real life example after each session.

Participants were informed about the current situation, ‘the Landscape’, regarding the communication of biodiversity and what can be done to change the existing approach. Helen spoke about big brands and how they reach so many people and how their strategies can be applied to biodiversity and nature to form



a brand based on wonder and awe. Creating such a brand relies upon the way we communicate to different groups of people and those trying to communicate the message of biodiversity or nature should be aware that people are influenced by a number of things and need a different level of input before they take action. Most of all we should be aware of the fact that many people are unwilling to change and we will need a lot of patience to work with these individuals. Trying to tap into the way they live their lives and using that to persuade them to do more for biodiversity or nature is crucial here.



Using two briefs to create a communications campaign the attendees then looked more in detail at: the objectives of the campaign (what do we want to achieve?); the audience (who are we communicating to and how do they relate to nature/biodiversity?); the message itself (what do we want and how should we say it?); presentation channels (how can we reach the audience?); and finally, measuring the success of the campaign (what should be measured and how?).

On the second day of the seminar the groups were given time to prepare a pitch (presentation) for their campaign. Two groups were trying to sell their campaign to politicians and two others to the general public. The aim here was to combine all of the knowledge that they had gained on day one and to get them to think about how to approach these different target groups in a fun way. Futerra's theory is that to reach politicians the message needs to be based on need; it should focus on the economics of nature or biodiversity and the fact that biodiversity underpins all of society. To reach the general public however a love message should be used; a message based on the awe and wonder that we experience when in contact with nature.

The final two sessions of the seminar, led by professional facilitator Janice Burley, looked more closely at examples of communications that participants had brought with them and ways of improving them. It was also an opportunity to exploring the communication material produced by the EUROPARC Federation for its members. The communications expert evaluated and gave valuable feedback on four publications that will be taken into consideration in the future. One other outcome was interest in forming a communications forum where communications officers from EUROPARC members can exchange advice and information on the subject.



The second in the series of the EUROPARC Siggen seminars was another resounding success. Once again the atmosphere at the Siggen estate and its helpful and friendly staff contributed to this. EUROPARC would like to take this opportunity to once more thank the Alfred Toepfer Foundation for providing us with this unique and fantastic chance to further the work of the Federation and its members. We would also like to thank Helen and Janice for their time and input into the seminar. Without them the seminar would have been a lot less informative, inspiring and fun.

EUROPARC would encourage all its members to read Futerra's publication *Branding Biodiversity* and to think very carefully about the messages they are conveying to their target groups. Love and need are not complicated terms to understand but if communicated well to the right target groups they can really make a difference.

A summarized presentation from the seminar is now available on the [Siggen pages of our website](#).

3. Benefits for the EUROPARC Federation

The annual series of Siggen seminars will be beneficial to the EUROPARC Federation and its members in a number of ways. The project development has not only given us great experience with applying for different types of projects but has also helped us see the areas where the Federation can be developed in the future. If the projects are successful, they will naturally benefit not just the Federation Directorate but their outcomes will be distributed to and used by the wider membership. During the process of writing project applications the Directorate always has the advantages for its membership in mind.



The discussion about the strategic development of the Federation and the work of the Sustainable Tourism Working Group will contribute to the strategy of the Federation for beyond 2012 and enable us to support our members in their field of work even more strongly than before.

The communications seminar in the second part of the week was hugely beneficial to those attending and to the Directorate itself. All parties have come away with a new concept of communicating nature and its values and benefits which will no doubt be seen in future publications and appear in various communication strategies. In addition, the participants reviewed several pieces of communication produced by the Federation and have provided great ideas about how these can be improved or developed. One outcome of the seminar will be the formation of a group for communications officers within the network so that ideas on the subject of communications can be exchanged more easily.

In addition, EUROPARC's members will benefit directly from the event. The seminar in particular, provides members who attend with new knowledge and ideas, about topics that are important to them. These will feed back into their home regions across Europe. The outputs from both parts of the seminar will be tools that can be used to improve site management. Most importantly the Siggen Seminar brings members together from across Europe to work as an international team, to exchange ideas and input directly into the EUROPARC Federation.

Crucially the benefit of continuing these seminars annually is that it will ensure that members can actively contribute to the ongoing strategic development of the Federation.

4. Reactions and feedback

The whole week was very successful. The location itself made it an extra special experience and added to the productive atmosphere. Siggen is an oasis of calm, with very attentive staff and beautiful grounds, which made it possible to do a lot of activities outside. The proximity to the sea was a bonus!

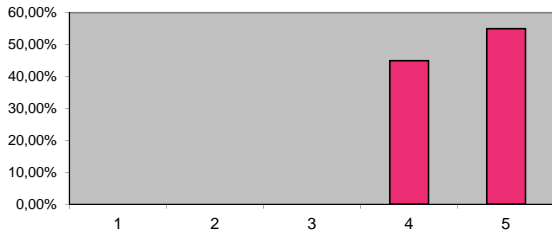
We particularly had a lot of positive feedback from the participants of the communications seminar. A summary of the evaluation can be seen in Annex A.



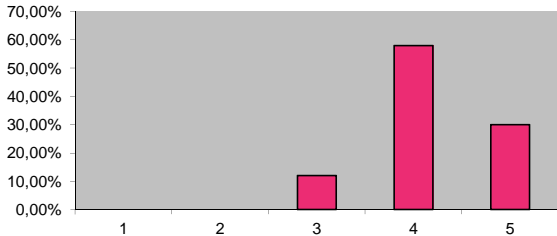
Quantitative Questions

Questions	1	2	3	4	5	Total
1)	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	45,00%	55,00%	100,00%
2)	0,00%	0,00%	12,00%	58,00%	30,00%	100,00%
3)	0,00%	3,00%	15,00%	29,00%	53,00%	100,00%
4)	0,00%	6,00%	12,00%	47,00%	35,00%	100,00%
5)	0,00%	0,00%	5,00%	30,00%	65,00%	100,00%

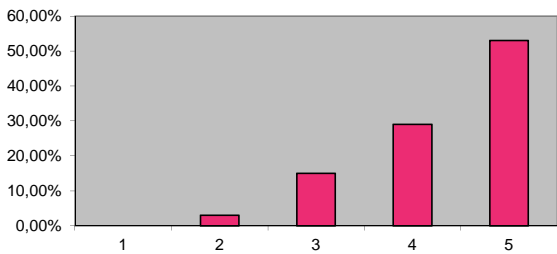
Q1: How useful did you find the masterclass activities? (1 = not at all, 5 = very useful)



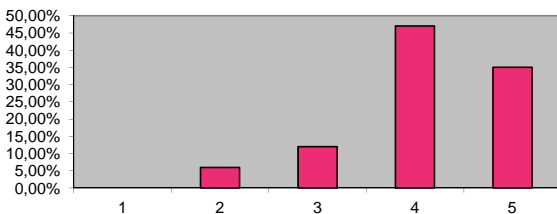
Q2: During the masterclass, was it clear what you were being asked to do/discuss? (1 = not engaged or motivated at all, 5 = very engaged and motivated)



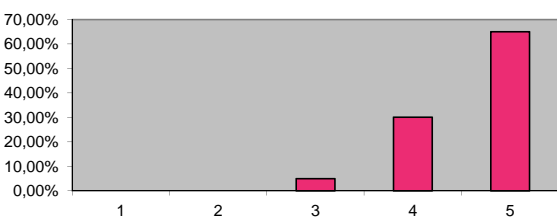
Q3: Do you feel there was opportunity to put forward your own thoughts and contribute to the discussions? (1 = not confident at all, 5 = very confident)



Q4: Do you think the masterclass met your objectives? (1 = not equipped at all, 5 = very equipped)



Q5: Overall, how well do you think the masterclass was run? (1 = very confusing, 5 = clear at all times)



Qualitative Questions

Q1(a): What did you like best about the session?

Great case studies used to highlight the different steps and the possibility of working on practical examples
 Very interesting topic
 It is very useful to be reminded that people are not all nature enthusiasts and that we need to change behavior using the money argument, not only love.
 The interaction within the group
 Helen's initial presentation
 The methodical analysis of the tools and the different stages of a campaigning interactive, it's like a dialogue.
 groups. The time plan was flexible and was adjusted to our needs. I also liked the process.
 a campaign
 which was also very useful
 It was nice meeting the other participants
 The presentation and the interactive method
 learning entertainment
 The structure was good, it's nice to have time for each step separately
 The possibility of actively participating

Q1(b): What did you like least about the session?

There was not enough time for questions regarding each step.
 Can't think of anything, Helen is a really good trainer.
 The masterclass was quick, but due to time constraints

The case study was a bit too simplified and far from real work examples. We were in a hurry to produce the pitch and there was little time to discuss our own work
 We were not presented with enough examples from real life, going into the details of the campaign design process
 Didn't quite understand if examples came only from Futerra or if they were from other agencies/general
 Some groups could have gotten more out of it, maybe the groups could work together in another room as when the theory was presented
 I enjoyed the atmosphere, the creative thinking while preparing the pitch and the good mix of people
 Reading were sent to us beforehand and sometimes there was too much talking about those things we should have read before the masterclass, it was a bit too much listening!
 Nothing, everything was good
 Some of the sections were really really fast

There was a big focus on the process analysis, little time for the creative process itself nothing
 Not enough printed materials for all participants
 The topic is very complex, you could think of a 2 day course about new and social media (just to mention one aspect). Why not planning a modular 3-4 days seminar with a stable group and some homework in between?
 The difference between strategic and tactical objectives isn't quite clear and also the difference between tactical objectives and channels isn't totally clear to me.
 The informal atmosphere

Q5: Any more comments you want to add?

At the end of the masterclass it would be good to have some feedback regarding how to improve the pitch
 A very big thank you
 It would have been nice to have analyzed more in detail some of the pitches to learn more about them.
 It would be good to ask the participants about their communications experience and aims and have more time for discussion
 Some materials could be printed out and given to the groups - specifically the "over to you" sections.
 It was nice that all presentations were scheduled at the end
 I liked the different examples of campaigns about different nature problems.
 There were lots of examples, but it may be worth to add some examples of good and bad practice
 There should be more focus on how to bring the love-message: try to make baselines/drawings/campaigns...
 Everything was good.
 I could use some more facts about different groups of audiences and perhaps a case with more concrete details. It's fine to make it up ourselves but it takes time and energy from the real discussions we should be having!

Q10: Quote

A very inspiring day that has provided me with useful tools and practical experience to make changes to my communications.
 It's a very down-to-earth and useful masterclass, would very much recommend it to people interested in strategic communications or specific campaigns.
 More talk = More Action?
 Remember to measure your success
 "Dialogification" makes us more active and alert.
 Thanks for making it hard work inspiring.
 I'm not too creative, the masterclass made me think and act creative in a very good atmosphere
 I really appreciated the focus on solving practical issues you may come across in campaigning building process.
 I found it very interesting, effective and lots of fun to work in intercultural teams. More of it, please! :)



Published November 2011

The EUROPARC Federation - Waffnergasse 6 - 93047 Regensburg - Germany
Tel: 0049 (0)941 599 35 98 0 - Fax: 0049 (0)941 599 35 98 0 – Email: office@europarc.org
www.europarc.org