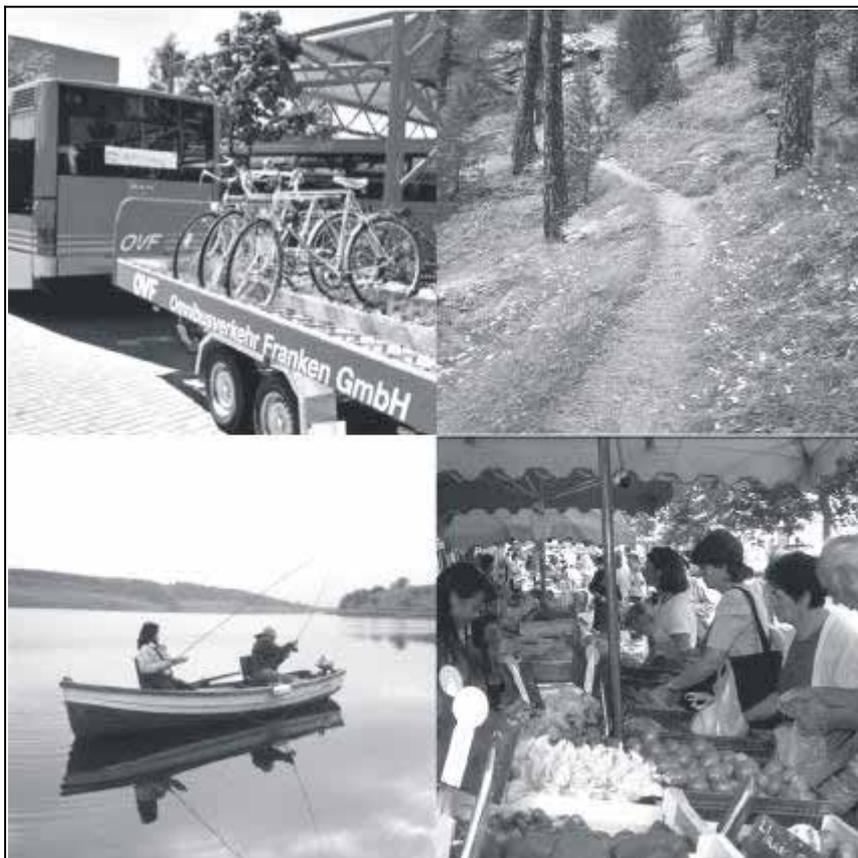


Barbara Engels and Anja Hesse (Eds.)

“Sustainable Tourism Development in European Protected Areas”

Networking Meeting of the European Charter Parks
15.-18.3.2003, Vilm, Germany



“Sustainable Tourism Development in European Protected Areas”

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15.-18.3.2003, Vilm, Germany**

**Editors:
Engels, Barbara
Anja Hesse**



Cover Picture: Naturpark Frankenwald; La Garrotxa National Park; Forest of Bowland AONB,
Regional market in the Parc naturel regional du Lubéron

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1. Preface

At the heart of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas is a partnership between a park and all those with a stake in the development of tourism in and around that park. Whilst the Charter contains elements of a quality label, the process is more important. Parks need to demonstrate they are on the road to sustainable tourism through the production of a strategy and the implementation of a five year action plan.

Developed by the EUROPARC Federation in a project led by the Federation of Regional Nature Parks of France in cooperation with partners including the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation in Germany, the Charter has - up to 2003 - been awarded to 17 parks in seven European countries. All went through a comprehensive verification process, which determined whether they were developing tourism sustainable. More than 20 further parks across Europe have either started or are about to commence work with the Charter, seven of whom will be evaluated in 2004.

With so much expertise to be tapped in the field of sustainable tourism in Europe's protected areas the idea of bringing this network of people together to exchange experience and develop best practice - training through networking - thereby making a contribution to both protecting nature and making tourism truly sustainable, has become highly important. To bring dynamism to the network and make a reality of sharing ideas and experience, the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation very kindly offered to host a meeting of the Charter Parks Network.

Held in March 2004 on the Island of Vilm in the South East Rügen Biosphere Reserve, Germany, the workshop brought many of those practitioners who played a leading role in developing the Charter together with representatives from parks coming into the process. Members of the Charter Evaluation Committee, verifiers and representatives of national park federations and EUROPARC Sections also participated. It was exactly the mix of people that a successful network should have.

The workshop focused on the development of the Charter and how to improve it as well as on a number of areas of interest to the parks - working with local stakeholders particularly local businesses, visitor management and using the Charter as a communication (and management) tool. A list of actions was developed to take the Charter forward and to communicate the work of the parks. Above all the workshop succeeded in giving the parks a sense of ownership of the Charter whilst demonstrating the benefits of working together in the EUROPARC Federation network to exchange expertise and ideas, develop solutions to common problems and thereby helping to enhance protected areas' management of sustainable tourism in Europe.

This report reflects a lively and productive workshop. Our thanks go to all those who participated and helped make the event a success.

Richard Blackman
EUROPARC Federation

Barbara Engels
Federal Agency for Nature Conservation

2. Case Studies

2.1. Introduction

Richard Blackman, EUROPARC Federation

Nearly everyone has had to travel a long way to get to Insel Vilm, but we are more-or-less equidistant between La Garrotxa, Mourne Mountains and Syöte National Park!

I hope that in addition to a valuable and useful exchange of ideas and experience, this networking meeting will serve to activate and bring life to the network of Charter Parks. We have an excellent mixture of people who have been with the Charter from the beginning and others coming into the process. I am very much looking forward to hearing about your work over the next few days and am sure it will bring life to the Charter.

Before moving on to my presentation I would like to extend the EUROPARC Federation's thanks to the Bundesamt für Naturschutz for making Insel Vilm available for this meeting and also to Barbara Engels and Beate Job-Hoben, who have been driving forces in the organisation of this meeting.

Current status of the Charter

Many of you are familiar with the how the Charter was created. For those who are not, we can look briefly at a number of key dates in the development of the Charter.

Key Dates



**EUROPARC
Federation**
www.europarc.org

- **1991:** EUROPARC Working Group set up to study sustainable tourism in protected areas.
- **1993:** Publication of 'Loving Them to Death?'
- **1995:** Start of the pilot project for the development of a 'European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas'
- **2001:** Revised edition of 'Loving Them to Death?' published
- **2001:** Award of the Charter to first seven protected areas
- **2002:** Award of the Charter to a further six protected areas
- **2003:** Award of the Charter to a further four protected areas

Class of 2001 (7 parks)

17 Charter Parks



EUROPARC Federation
www.europarc.org

2001

- Nationalpark Hohe Tauern (A)
- Naturpark Steinhuder Meer (D)
- Naturpark Frankenwald (D)
- Parc naturel de la Zona Volcánica de La Garrotxa (E)
- Parc naturel régional du Lubéron (F)
- Parc naturel régional du Vexin français (F)
- Parco Naturale Alpi Marittime (I)



Nationalpark Hohe Tauern (A)



Class of 2002 (6 parks)



EUROPARC Federation
www.europarc.org

2002

- Naturpark Insel Usedom (D)
- Parc naturel régional des Marais du Cotentin et du Bessin (F)
- Parc national et Réserve de biosphère des Cévennes (F)
- Parco Nazionale dei Monti Sibillini (I)
- Parque Natural da Serra de S. Mamede (P)
- Parque Nacional da Peneda-Gerês (P)



With the second award of the Charter to six parks at EUROPARC 2002, the pilot phase of the Charter's development came to an end, and a registration process was opened.

Class of 2003 (4 parks)



Mourne were the first not involved in the pilot project to be awarded the Charter.

The registration process has been a little slow in getting known, but in 2004 we will have seven organisations being evaluated (assuming they all submit their applications on time):

Registered with a view to 2004 evaluation

- Syöte National Park (FIN)
- Sierras de Cazorla, Segura y las Villas Nature Park (E)
- Alcornocales Nature Park (E)
- Sierra de Grazalema Nature Park (E)
- Sierra de Aracena and Picos de Aroche Nature Park (E)
- Sierra Nevada National / Nature Parks (E)
- Alsace Region (F) - *Nature reserves of Delta de la Sauer, la forêt d'Offendorf, l'île de Rohrschollen, la forêt d'Erstein, l'île de Rhinau, la Petite Camargue alsacienne*

Registered (with a view to 2005 evaluation)

- Forest of Bowland AONB (UK)
- Naturpark Pfälzerwald (D)
- Harz and Hochharz National Parks (D)

Likely to register in the near future for evaluation (2005 or 2006)

Finland: 1

France:4

Greece:1

Italy: 2

Spain: 2

UK: 4



Application and Verification Process

 **EUROPARC Federation**
www.europarc.org

- **Registration** as a candidate park with the EUROPARC Federation
- Completion and submission of the **application** documents
- **Verification** by an expert in sustainable tourism in protected areas (examination of the documents, verification visit)
- Consideration and decision by the EUROPARC **Evaluation Committee**
- **Award** of the Charter certificate to successful parks:
 - official recognition by EUROPARC
 - a commitment by the park

The EUROPARC work programme

The EUROPARC Strategy, Section II Strategic Tasks ‘to develop and implement a strategy for supporting protected areas in their management of tourism through the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas’.

As such the Charter has priority status in the EUROPARC work programme. Resources – in terms of staff and finance - are still rather limited so we have not been able to go as fast as we would have liked.

Working with the French Federation and others to secure funding.

Who does what in the EUROPARC Federation?

Who does what in the EUROPARC Federation?

- **Council:** overall responsibility
- **Office in Grafenau:** day-to-day coordination, development and planning, communications, web site, networking (30% of Deputy Director's time)
- **EUROPARC Consulting:** manages and oversees the evaluation process and links with verifiers
- **Evaluation Committee** (re-formed 2003):
chaired by Patrizia Rossi, with Richard Denman, Michael Iward, Josep Maria Prats and Manfred Pils



**EUROPARC
Federation**
www.europarc.org

Absolutely central to the Federation are the Parks, who are managing tourism sustainably in protected areas. The expertise on the ground / practitioners.

- Part 2 of the Charter, recognition of tourism businesses
Development presents a challenge! EUROPARC certainly cannot recognise individual businesses. Need to devolve this to the parks.

Charter, Part II

Considerable interest in developing part II of the Charter

- Research into existing eco-labels (at national level) which could be recognised by the EUROPARC Federation
- In addition draw up a set of short criteria concerning relationship between protected area and tourism enterprises
- Subsidiarity: possibility of parks to draw up their own schemes to certify local businesses. For example, Les Cévennes within the IPAMAC consortium



**EUROPARC
Federation**
www.europarc.org

Events ahead

Events ahead ...



EUROPARC Federation
www.europarc.org

- **May 2004:** Meeting of verifiers in Alpi Marittime Nature Park
- **Spring 2004:** Evaluations of candidate Charter Parks
- **July 2004:** Meeting of Evaluation Committee
- **29 Sept - 3 Oct 2004:** EUROPARC 2004, includes award of Charter, networking opportunities and meeting of the Charter Parks



The Network

As I see it the idea of the network has been to exchange experience, share innovative ideas, work together on strategies and solutions to deal with common problems, and develop cooperation.

There is a session in the working groups on the network where you will have the chance to air your views on the network. The opinions of the parks are fundamental.

We also feel that it is important that the Charter parks grasp the initiative – it is not a top down affair! EUROPARC's role to facilitate and help where possible

Full activation of the network can certainly begin through this meeting.

Closing thoughts

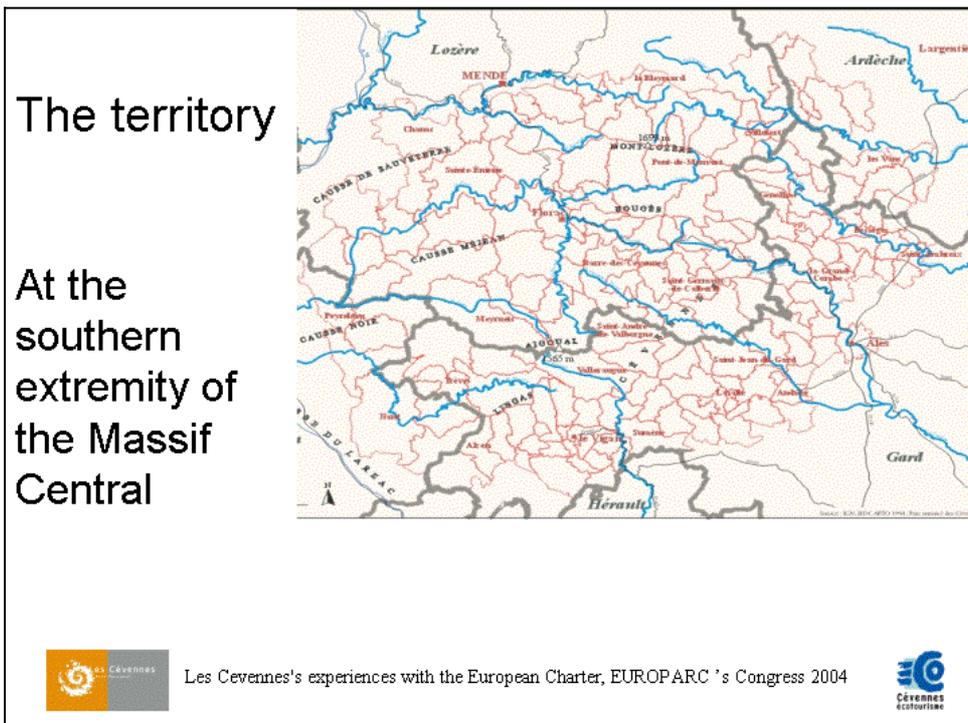
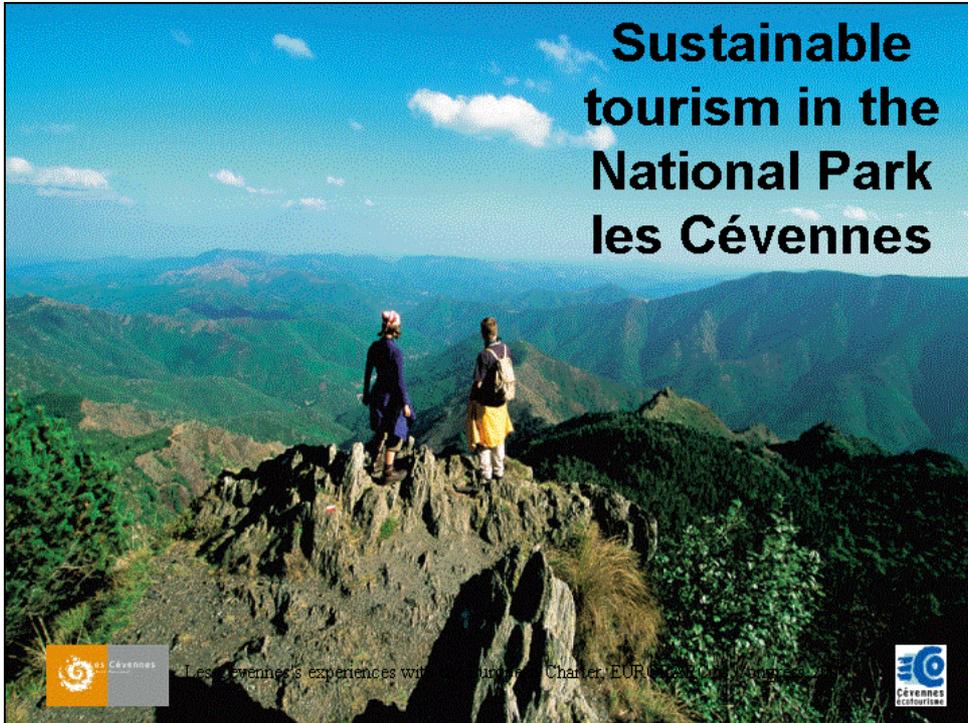
The Charter is more than a text and certainly more than the procedures and mechanics of the Charter which I have just outlined.

It is far more about the work that you do in the protected areas in managing tourism sustainably and contributing to sustainable development in your regions that is most important.

This has up till now not been reflected in the information available. Case studies and workshop report will help to reflect and draw attention to your work. This in turn will help to strengthen the Charter and the work towards our common goals.

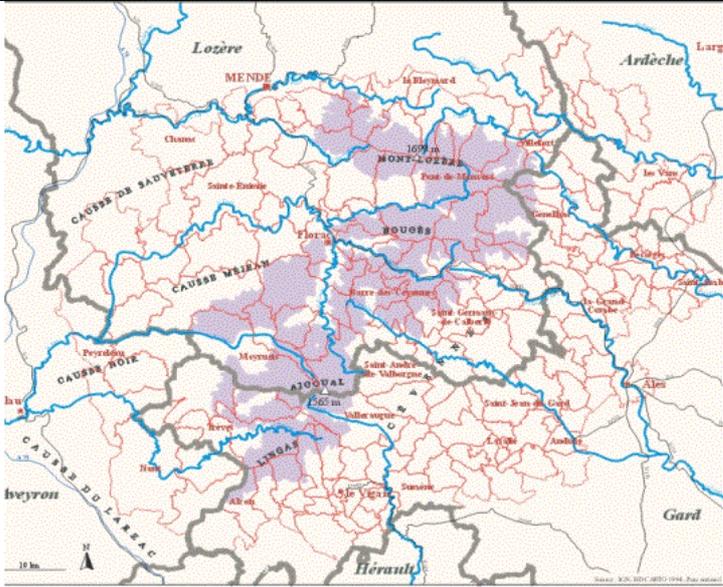
Further information: www.european-charter.org info@european-charter.org

2.2 Sustainable tourism in the National Park les Cévennes
Marylène Pin, Cévennes Ecotourisme



Central zone
(more strictly protected)

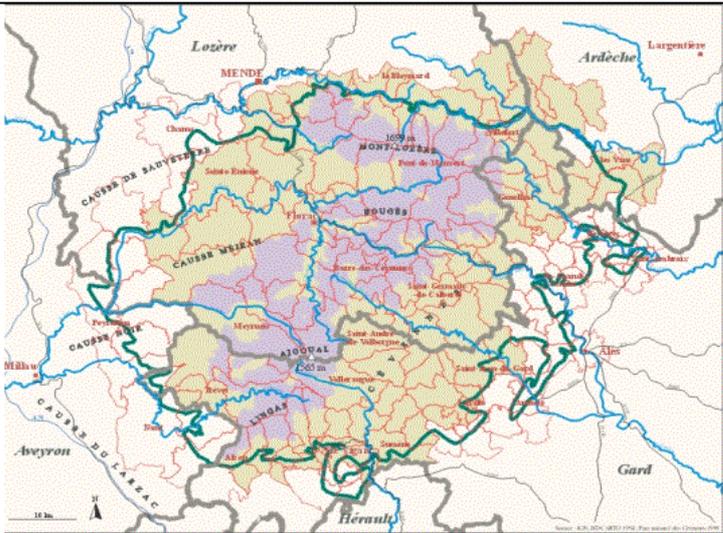
- 910 Km sq
- 600 inhabitants
- 110 farmers (stockbreeders and cultivators)




 Les Cévennes's experiences with the European Charter, EUROPARC 's Congress 2004
 

« Espace Parc » :

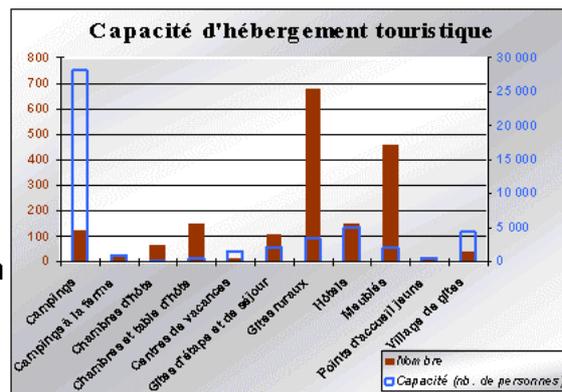
- 3300 Km sq
- 178 districts
- 40 000 inhabitants




 Les Cévennes's experiences with the European Charter, EUROPARC 's Congress 2004
 

Tourism, the first industrie of the territory

- 50 000 beds
- 1 million visitor per year, and 250.000 « for » the PNC
- Average trip duration : 10 days
- Average expenditure/day/per-son : 30 €
- Average turnover of the accommodation sector : 80 -100 M €



Les Cévennes's experiences with the European Charter, EUROPARC 's Congress 2004



And also,

- A rich architectural and cultural heritage, outstanding landscapes



Les Cévennes's experiences with the European Charter, EUROPARC 's Congress 2004



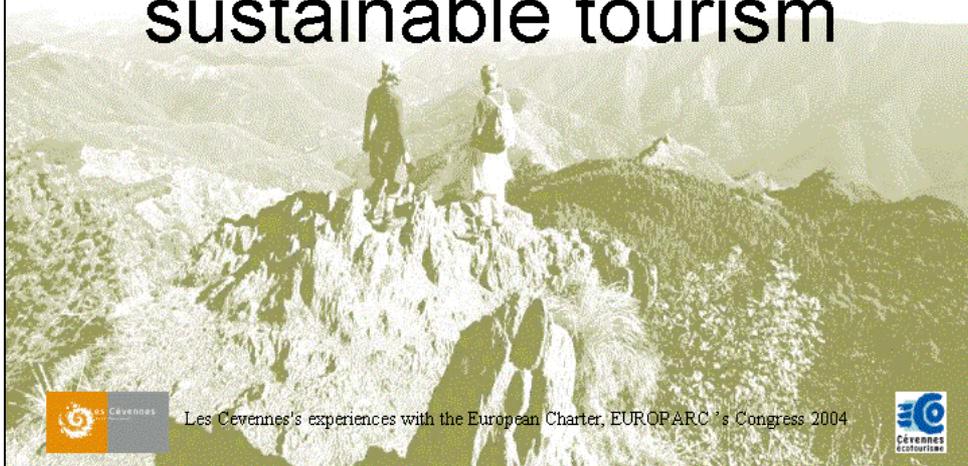
- A specific architecture, strong identity of accommodations
- Specific customers « protected space »
- A need and a wish from professionals to be supported
- The preference of a quality process rather than a label process



Les Cèvennes's experiences with the European Charter, EUROPARC 's Congress 2004



To go with volunteer enterprises towards sustainable tourism



Les Cèvennes's experiences with the European Charter, EUROPARC 's Congress 2004



A meeting «Tourisme durable »

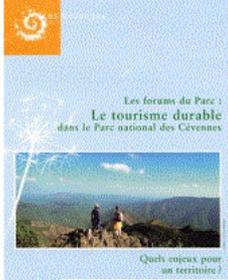
- On the 6th of december 2001
- 230 people among them 140 tourism enterprises

The PNC agreement :

- October 2002 after the EUROPARC expertise

The organisation of the professional network

- Cévennes Ecotourisme
- 1 employ, 43 memberships




Les Cévennes's experiences with the European Charter, EUROPARC 's Congress 2004




Cévennes Ecotourisme, main partner

- Raised from an existing dynamic and informal network composed by tourism guides and accommodations owners (Formation Label Panda)
- Free access to any volunteer tourism enterprises
- Main partner of the PNC for the implementation of the charter (linked by a convention)

Les Cévennes's experiences with the European Charter, EUROPARC 's Congress 2004



The « Cévennes Ecotourisme »'s missions

- Support, technical help and advices to enterprises engaged in the charter process
- To attend enterprises to the implementation of their commitments once they have signed
- Creation of specific and adapted tools and training courses
- Creation of ecotourism products
- Representation and promotion of the network and valorization of the experience of the charter's implementation



Les Cévennes's experiences with the European Charter, EUROPARC 's Congress 2004



The agreement procedure

Main characteristics :

1. The capacity to adapt the process to any enterprise reality
2. Responsabilization, global and complete approach of the enterprise within its context
3. High guarantee level of the agreement procedure thanks to the intervention of experts
4. Reinforcement of the commitments through a 3 years contract passed between the PNC and the enterprise
5. Annual balance and check points with the enterprise



Les Cévennes's experiences with the European Charter, EUROPARC 's Congress 2004



The agreement procedure

6 main steps :

- 1/ Become a member of Cevennes Ecotourisme
- 2/ Audition of the enterprise
- 3/ Examination of the enterprise's project by a special committee of experts and further evaluation if required
- 4/ Building up of the strategy and action plan for the 3 coming years
- 5/ Statement of the Tourism Commission of the PNC
- 6/ Agreement of the enterprise through the contract's signatures with the PNC



Les Cevennes's experiences with the European Charter, EUROPARC 's Congress 2004



Benefits for the enterprises

- Global approach (economy, environnement and social analyse)
- Technical, financial and personnalised support
- Network benefits : mutualisation of means, experiences exchanges, collective training, guide of good practices
- Reconignition of the high quality level of its activity within sustainable tourism at the european level
- Use of the image and the logo of the PNC for personal promotion



Les Cevennes's experiences with the European Charter, EUROPARC 's Congress 2004

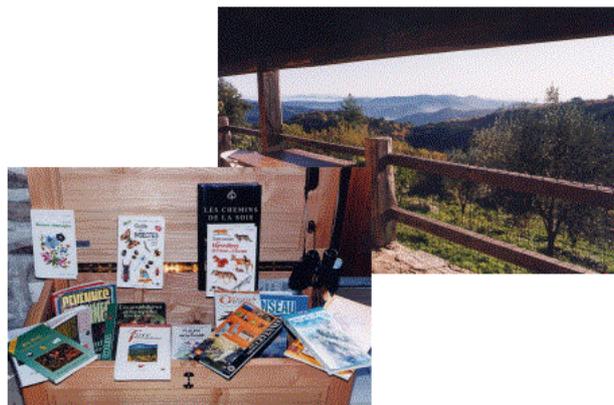


News and future stakes for the process



An entreprise's commitment : Mercoire en Cévennes

- A farming exploitation
- 3 gîtes « rural cottages »
- Label « gîtes Panda »
- A personalized welcome
- Paths and book guides



Les Cévennes's experiences with the European Charter, EUROPARC 's Congress 2004



Common commitments to each enterprise

- To be a member of Cévennes Ecotourisme, to assist to formation training and to share my experience « sustainable tourism » with the network
- To use and to promote local produces and local craft in my enterprise
- To inform and sensibilize customers to environmental, social and economical sustainable principles and to the specificities of les Cévennes and their safeguard.



Les Cévennes's experiences with the European Charter, EUOPARC 's Congress 2004



Proper commitments

- To create my own website to promote widely my activity
- To offer to customers the « malles de découverte Panda » as well as the « Panda's paths » with their guide books, near to Mercoire
- To improve the activity by increasing the production and the selling of farm products, by elaborating theme trips, and by widening the distribution of my leaflets at the regional scale.
- To follow the engaged associative action of protection and safeguard of Mercoire and its terraces (conservatory orchard of mulberries) and the research of a legal statut to strenghten the protection of the village (urbanistic pression)
- To rebuild a ruined house to create a place to welcome exhibitions in order to diversify customers and to use for the project sustainable energies (solar, wood) and ecological materials



Les Cévennes's experiences with the European Charter, EUOPARC 's Congress 2004



Nowadays

- 43 enterprises memberships to « Cévennes Ecotourisme »,
- A guide of « environnemental good practices » to tourism enterprises
- A leaflet to promote the network
- 15 « audits » realized
- 6 enterprises have signed the charter the 5/02/2004
- Standing out of partnerships (Cévennes Ecotourisme, PNC, local and regional tourism organizations, local authorities...)



Les Cévennes's experiences with the European Charter, EUROPARC 's Congress 2004



Stakes within 5 years

- Between 50 and 100 enterprises involved in the process
- Confirmation of the commitment and support from part of the local authorities
- Promotion of the PNC's experience and of the enterprises to other territories
- Recognition of the tourism enterprises by european customers and visitors
- Necessity to work at the european level to strengthen the procedure (recognition by EU)

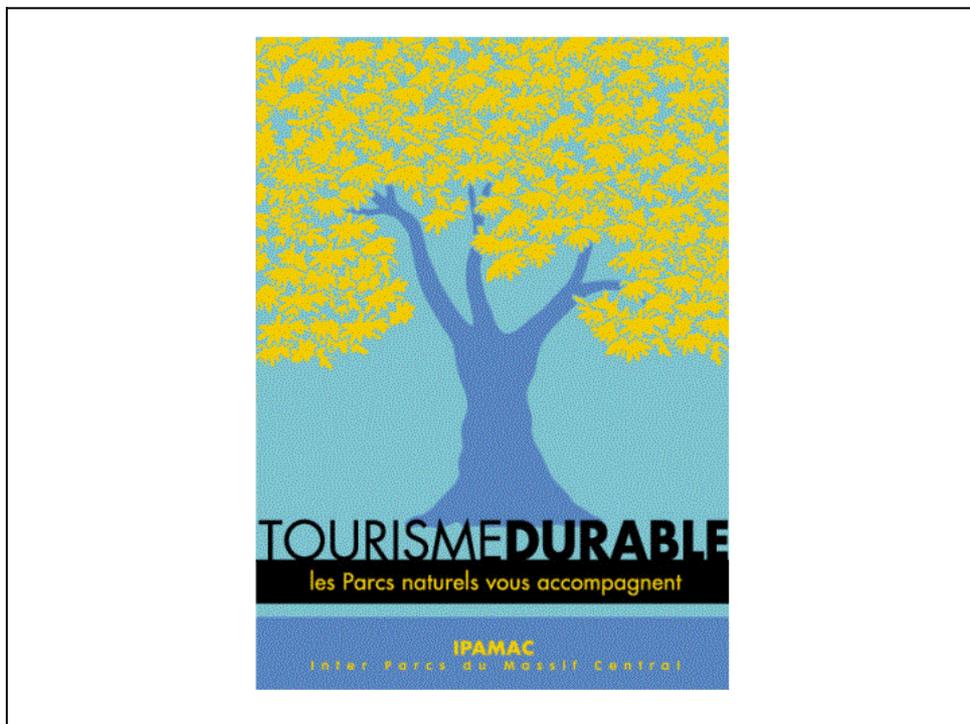
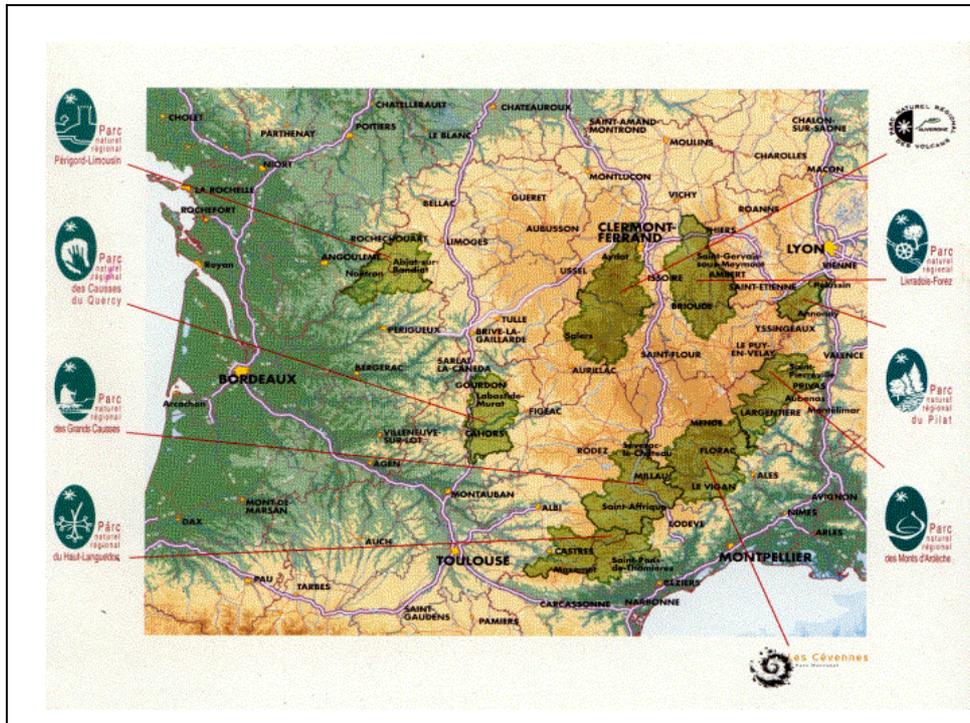


Les Cévennes's experiences with the European Charter, EUROPARC 's Congress 2004



2.3 Application of the European Charter for sustainable tourism for touristic enterprises

Sandrine Charnay, IPAMAC – Inter-Parcs Massif Central



Following Europarc's and the French Federation of Regional Nature Parks initiative,

the Massif central Nature Parks (8), (grouped together to create an association (IPAMAC)), (7 Regional Natural Parks and the Cévennes)National Park.

with support from the French government,

has, for the last two years, worked on **an experimental methodology in order to associate tourism enterprises in the European Charter for Sustainable tourism in protected area procedure.**

This methodology commits **all the partners and the volunteer enterprises** to realise a **concrete action plan** which must **respect principles of sustainable tourism.**

- respect capacity limits
- contribute to conservation and enhancement of the natural and cultural heritage
- protect natural resources
- support the local economy
- promote local participation
- develop appropriate, quality tourism
- promote public access to protected areas for everyone
- develop new types of jobs
- promote environmentally friendly behaviour
- be a role model for the other economic sectors and influence their practice

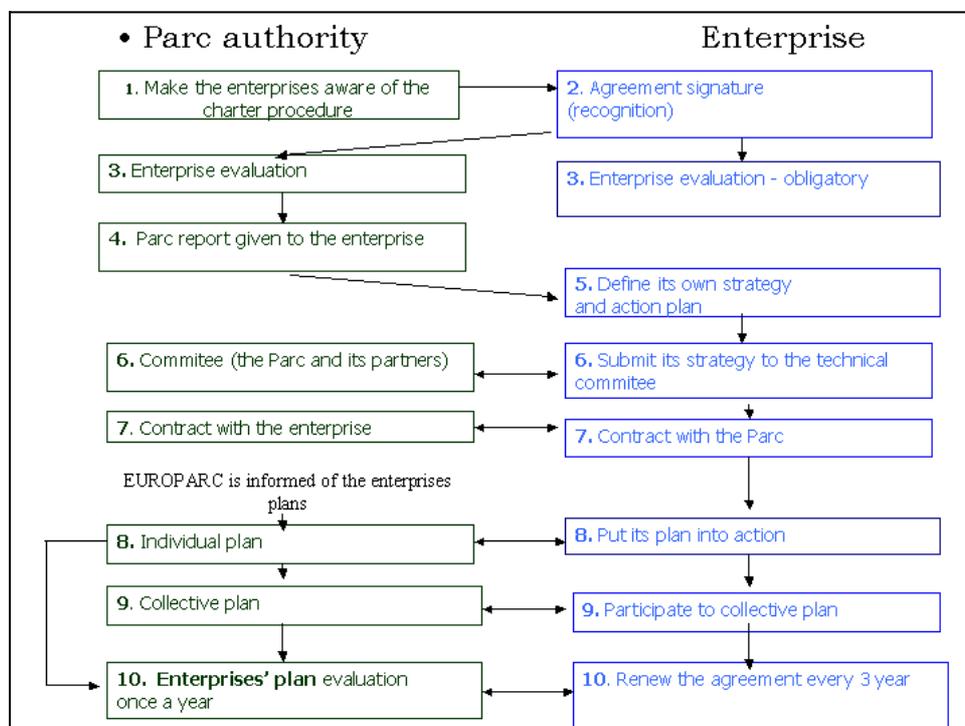
The IPAMAC methodology is based on those 10 principles which have been developed in concrete and pragmatic actions.

This application of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in protected areas for the tourism business tend to define an **action plan which will contribute to achieving the aims of the area.**

The enterprise commits itself to adopt environmentally friendly methods, to enhance the natural and cultural heritage and to raise the environmental awareness of its clients, to have a social thought etc...

This method has been written by a steering committee with representation of managers of protected areas and people from the tourism sectors.

14 enterprises have participated to this experimental work. The following scheme illustrate our procedure. Each step of the procedure is developed precisely in a methodological guide.



Key words

- ⇒ **A progress approach**
- ⇒ **Partnership and confidence between the Parc Authority and the local touristic enterprises**
- ⇒ **An individual and collective approach**
- ⇒ **Coherence between the local policy and the enterprises action plan**

Main benefits for the enterprises

- ☺ Increase the business opportunities (new customers, products based on the environmental and cultural resources, enlarge the touristic season, etc...);
- ☺ Improve the quality
- ☺ Being linked to the local development policy
- ☺ Offering a high level touristic information on the protected areas.
- ☺ Rationalize energy expences (water, electricity...)

Questions

- How make sure that this methodology would be recognize by Europarc (Subsidiarity principle on Europarc's advice)?

- How strengthen the procedure to reach a suffisant number of « recognized » chartered enterprises (help of EUROPARC?)

- How strengthen , at a european level, the recognition of such a quality process among the several european labels (ecolabel, agenda 21...)?

2.4 The Application of the European Charter of Sustainable Tourism in La Garrotxa Natural Park

Josep M. Prats, Parc Natural de la Zona Volcanica de la Garrotxa



The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in La Garrotxa

- 28 actions for promoting excellence in sustainable tourism.
- Planning of tourism development for 5 years (2001-2006)
- On partnership with the Park: Turisme Garrotxa, Fundació Garrotxa Líder, Consell Comarcal and town councils



Main action: To create tourism products based on a network of footpath

Promoters: La Garrotxa Nature Park + Turisme Garrotxa.

Financing: La Garrotxa Natural Park + Turisme Garrotxa + Leader Plus Program

Budget: 204.834 EUROS



Aim

- To improve and expand opportunities for tourism and create new commercial opportunities by targeting new markets.

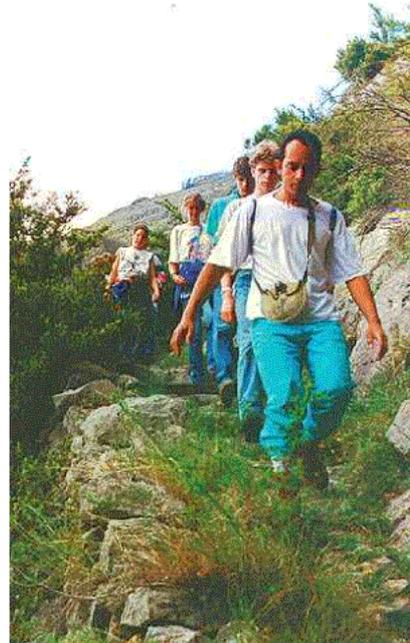
Choice

To create new tourism products based on walking.



Steps

- 1. Market research and diagnosis of competitiveness (2002)
- 2. Action plan to adapt the offer to the demand (2003-2006).



Step I: Market research and diagnosis of competitiveness

Carried out by: *Idees i assessorament turistic*
Cost: 11.852 EUROS

Actions

1. Research into the current offer: tourist resources, infrastructure and services.
2. Identification of the current and potential demand:
 - Survey of current customers
 - Survey of tour operators (27)



Research into the current offer, tourist resources and services: actions

- Establish the natural and cultural sites to be included in a network of footpaths.
- Identify the sites, their state of conservation, fragility, improvements needed, potential and all aspects needed in order to use them as a part of the offer.
- Analysis of tourism products being offered at the moment.
- Special emphasis on the analysis of the present footpath network.



Key results

	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESS	STRATEGY
Territory	<i>Potentially very attractive</i>	<i>Poor valuation</i>	Enhance valuation
Footpaths	<i>Many footpaths</i>	<i>Local scope Uniformity Lack of co-ordination Lack of maintenance</i>	A new model (based on Swiss network) -historical footpath -renewed signposting -Maintenance
Tourism services	<i>Existing throughout the territory</i>	<i>Little homogeneity Mid-Low class Little professional experience</i>	Awareness Training to improve competitiveness

Analysis of the demand:

The present demand

- To improve knowledge of the tourist offers in La Garrotxa:
- › Research into the current offer and consumers.
 - › How its quality is perceived by consumers.
 - › Definition of the present make-up of consumers.
 - › Discover ways of advertising and commercialisation.

The potential demand

- Objectives:
 - › To know the key elements of the most successful offers.
 - › To approach La Garrotxa's potential as a destination for walkers.
- Methodology:
 - › Questionnaire sent to specialised European tour operators (e-mail). Effective answers: 27.
 - › Telephonic interviews to improve the answers.

Analysis of the demand

Key results regarding customers

Current customer

- 2 hours walk
- flat paths
- families or couples
- stay in a single place
- weekend, summer holidays, (1-2 days stay)

New customer

- 8 hours walking per day (15-20 Km)
- Climb of 300 to 900 m
- Couples or groups
- Different accommodation
- Visits in spring, autumn and winter- 8 days average

Step II: Action plan to adapt the offer to the demand

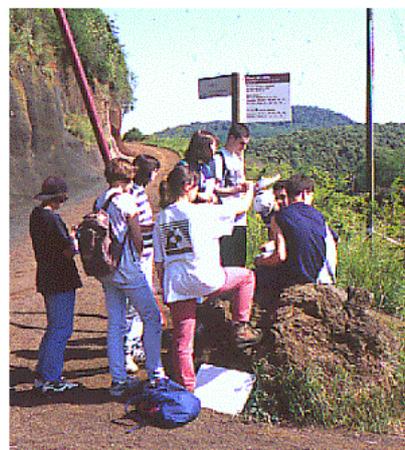
- 1 Establish a model of management for a network of footpaths
- 2 Create a network of footpath
- 3 Create new products
- 4 Marketing and communication



To establish a model of management for the footpath networking

Actions Program

- › 1. Define a management model : signposting, footpaths, how to create routes, maintenance..
- › 2. Constitute an organism responsible for the management of the footpath network: with experts and representatives from tourist and conservationist sectors.
- › 3. Write a management handbook containing models of signposting and criteria for footpath



To establish a model of management for the footpath networking

Current action:

- Management handbook containing models of signposting and criteria for footpaths.
- By *Idees i Assessorament Turístic*.
- Time: 2003-2004
- Cost: 4.814 EUROS



To create the network

Actions

- › 1. The creation of an inventory of the more interesting and suitable footpath for a networking
- › 2. An inventory of key natural and cultural resources to be found in the footpath network.
- › 3. An inventory of services and facilities.
- › 4. Selection and definition of the current network



Creating the network

1 Inventory of footpath

By: Xavier Campillo

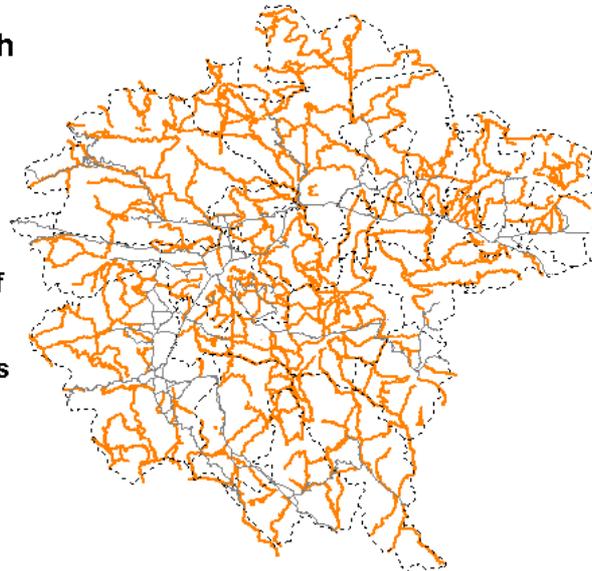
Time: 2003

Cost: 20.000 □

Results: An intricate network with thousands of paths

77 of them are identified as historical footpath

Map A: 77 historical footpath



Creating the network

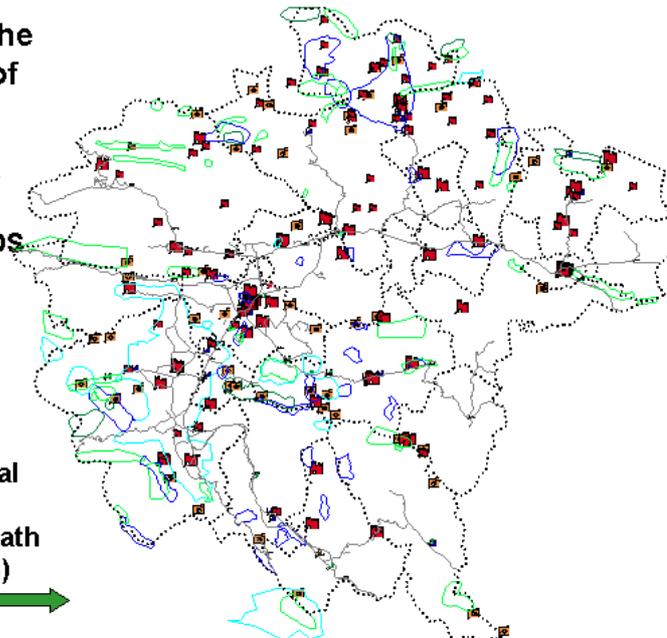
2. Selection of the basic network of footpaths

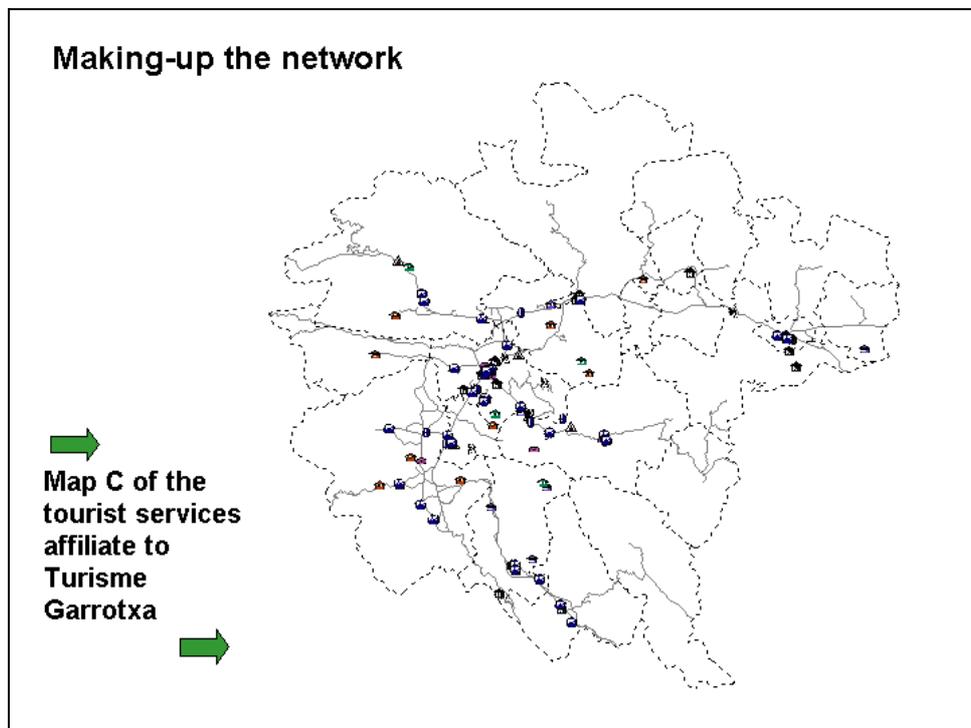
By : Verd Volcànic

Time: 2003-2004

Cost: 41.640 EUROS

Inventory of key natural and cultural resources to be found in the footpath network... (Map B)





Creating the network

To apply a scale to give a value to all the paths of the network

Quadre de valorització

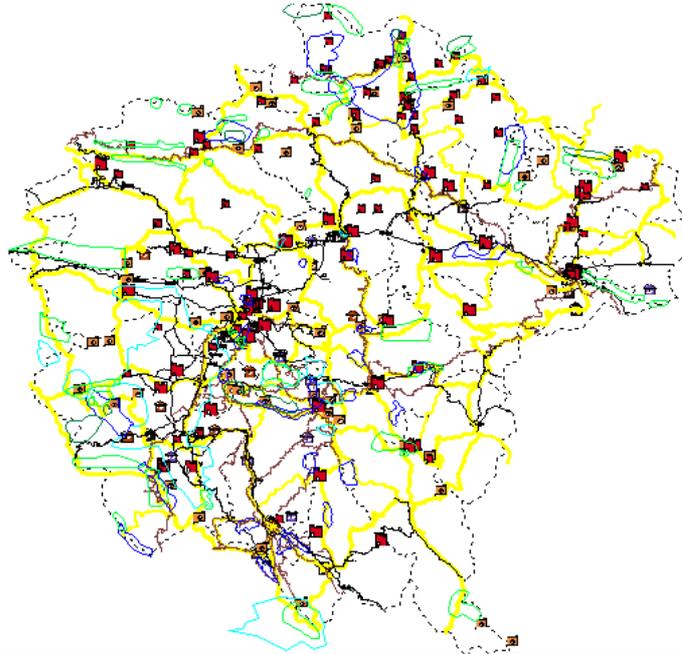
CRITERIS				
Hi ha proper al camí algun establiment de Turisme Garrotxa?	Cap	1 a 3	+3	
	1	3	5	
Hi ha proper al camí algun servei bàsic de la comarca?	Cap	1 a 3	+3	
	1	3	5	
Passa prop d'un recurs de molt alt interès?	No	Sí		
	1	5		
Passa prop d'altres recursos d'interès?	Cap	1 a 5	6 a 10	+ 10
	1	2	3	5

En els nuclis urbans es dona la màxima puntuació perquè tenen més de tres serveis bàsics

Creating the network



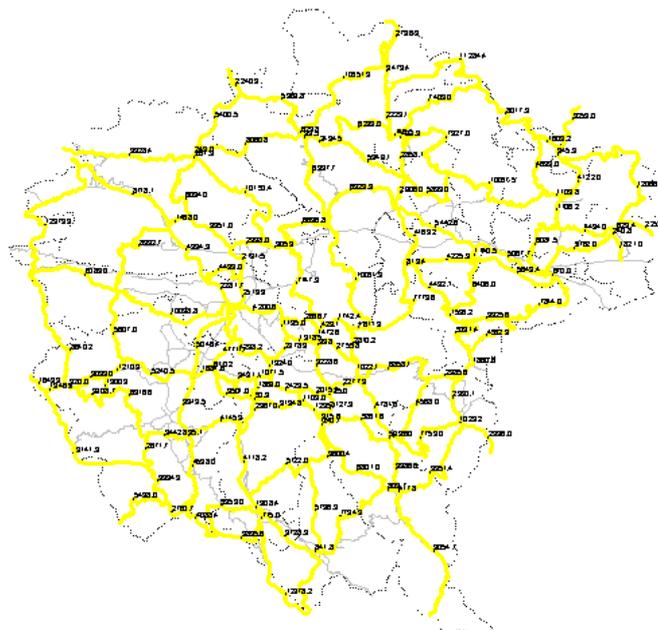
Superposition of maps: A+ B+ C
+ result of the application of the scale = network

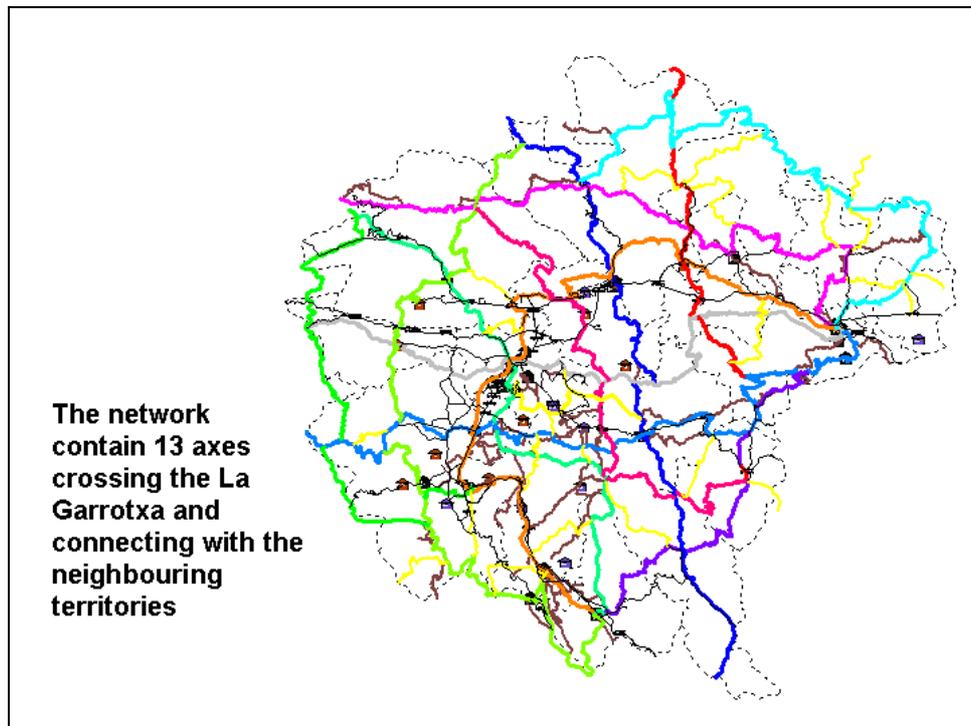


Creating the network

Footpath network of La Garrotxa:

653'58 Km,
81% historical





Analysis of the proposed network

Strengths

- Homogenous covering of the territory (no relevant spaces)
- Linking all the towns and villages
- Giving access to all the main tourist resources
- Giving access to all the tourist services of *Turisme Garrotxa*
- Linking with basic services and equipment (bus stops, car parks..)
- Linking with all neighbouring territories
- Satisfying the needs of different kind of users (families, tour operators, scientific and cultural walking, holidays, etc.)

Weakness

- Low density in some areas due to a lack of historical paths.
- Irregular distribution of tourist businesses
- Areas with more density of tourist services and resources that lead to greater difficulties when creating a coherent network.
- This proposed network will face severe difficulties in the field due to the presence of obstacles such as roads, industries and lost of paths.
- Lack of public transport or insufficient services.

Prevision of actions 2004-2007

1. Creation of the network

- Signposting
- Improvement of Infrastructures : rebuilding of walls, bridges and old paved paths.



Prevision of actions 2004-2007

2. Creation of the products

- Creation of packages: Itinerary, accommodation, services, complementary activities...
- Training of all the agents involved in the package.

Five Cross Country International
<http://www.crosscountry.com/5000/5000.html>

Cross Country International
 Walking Vacations

Area	Americas/UK/EEC	Japan/Australia	India/USA/Canada	Other Areas
Business Unit	Delaware	USA	USA/Canada	USA/Canada

Switzerland's Mont Blanc Walk

Considered to be one of the finest routes in the Alps, the Mont Blanc circuit allows you to experience the fantastic area in a relaxing way. It offers an unusual variety of spectacular scenery, from fertile pastures, the Mont Blanc Massif to rugged peaks, mountain chalets and alpine villages. These nature reserves have protected the area's wild flora and fauna that abound in the higher reaches.

Your trip starts in Argentiere, nestled in a beautiful valley at the foot of the highest range in Europe, the Mont Blanc Massif.

On a clear day, a walk up the Aiguille de Tignes (2842 meters above sea level) is certainly one of the most "top of the world" you'll ever do, and will allow you to see the southern slopes of the Mont Blanc Massif. Cross the border into the town of Argentiere. During the next walking day, you will cross the Col du Tour (2420 meters) to the village of Pralognan. 1227 meters above sea level, which is the most modern and beautiful of the four mountain villages in the area.

Call us now and we'll be able to assist you in securing your trip. Our private shower trails are also open at hand above the Pralognan. Come with us to the Tignes gorges in the Tignes gorges in an ascending walk. The walk starts in the valley along the Tignes road to Lac Chapeau.

If you wish to see the general conditions, do not hesitate to contact us via the website or our office.

[Click Here To Download A Brochure](#)
[Send This Walk To Your E-Mail Inbox](#)

New 2006 Dates and Prices!

2006 Dates	June 25 - July 1
July 25 - 31	July 25 - 31
Aug 2 - 8	Aug 2 - 8
Aug 25 - 31	Aug 25 - 31

2006 Prices: 1200€ per person, double (with 100€ tip). Includes 6 nights hotel accommodation, breakfast and dinner each day, 3 guided walks, 2 days of car hire, and more. See our website for more details.

Mont Blanc, Geneva, Alps, Switzerland
 1200€ per person, double (with 100€ tip). Includes 6 nights hotel accommodation, breakfast and dinner each day, 3 guided walks, 2 days of car hire, and more. See our website for more details.

[Click Here For Full Itinerary](#)

Prevision of actions 2004-2007

3. Marketing and commercialisation

- Creation of different kinds of information and marketing materials: books, leaflets, maps, web...
- 2. Marketing: fam-trips, press-trips, fairs...
- 3. Design of a specific strategy to sell packages: ¿creating of an incoming service agency?



THE AREA:

- **3 District Councils**
- **2 Planning divisions**
- **Population 50,000 (2001)**
- **24 settlements**
- **3 towns with a population over 5,000**



THE LANDSCAPE:

- **29,000 ha of farmland**
- **1500 farm units (average 20ha)**
- **20,000 ha of moorland & mountain**
- **5,000 ha of woodland & forest**
- **72 km of coastline**
- **Rivers, lakes and reservoirs**



BUILT HERITAGE:

- **350 Historic monuments**
- **2 village Conservation areas**
- **400 listed buildings**
- **1,700 derelict vernacular buildings**



MOURNE HERITAGE TRUST:

- **Established 1997 to address management need**
- **Company limited by guarantee and a charity**
- **A partnership - of all stakeholders**
- **Community led management**
- **Core funding from central and local government**
- **Board of Trustees (21)**
- **Professional staff (13)**
- **Subscription membership (80 Friends of Mourne)**



MISSION:

“to sustain and enhance the environment, rural regeneration, cultural heritage and visitor opportunities of the Mourne Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and contribute to the well-being of Mourne’s communities”.



PARTNERS:

- **Department of the Environment**
- **Department of Agriculture**
- **Northern Ireland Tourist Board**
- **3 District Councils**
- **Local community**
- **Other stakeholders / interest groups**



MANAGEMENT STRATEGY:

**Operational Plan 2001 to 2004 is delivering
5 key Programme areas:**

- **Environmental Protection & Enhancement**
- **Visitor Infrastructure & Visitor Management**
- **Built & Cultural Heritage**
- **Sustainable Tourism Development**
- **Rural Regeneration**



MOURNE NATURAL RESOURCE RURAL TOURISM INITIATIVE (NRRTI)



BACKGROUND

- EU Funding Programme (PEACE II)
- MHT Selected as Delivery Partnership for the Mourne Area (Dec 2001)
- 5 Areas Identified Across Northern Ireland : Fermanagh, Sperrins, Causeway Coast and Glens, South Armagh and The Mourne



KEY NRRTI PROGRAMMES

- Public Infrastructure & Visitor Management Projects
- Accommodation, Farm Based Tourism, Activity Based Tourism Initiatives
- Events & Community Tourism Projects
- Training, Marketing, Branding & Visitor Monitoring
- Regional Co-operation – with other NRRTI areas and cross border



PROGRESS TO DATE

- £2,485,270 grant available
- Sustainable Tourism Strategy for Mourne prepared
- NRRTI Programme launched March 2003
- Commitment Deadline 31 December 2004
- Commitment to date £600,000
- Expenditure Deadline 31 December 2006
- No expenditure to date



The EU Charter in Mourne?

- The Charter was developed by the Europarc Federation on behalf of the European Union
- The Federation – winner of the World TUI Environmental Award in 2001- is a pan-European body representing some 500 national parks, nature parks and biosphere reserves.



How The Charter Works

Quality

- Encourages good practice
- Agreed requirements must be met

Partnership

Involves all those implicated in tourism, in and around the protected area, in its development and management



What are the aims of the Charter?

- To increase awareness of, and support for, Europe's protected areas as a fundamental part of our heritage, that should be preserved for, and enjoyed by, current and future generations
- To improve the sustainable development and management of tourism in protected areas, which takes account of the needs of the environment, local residents, local business and visitors



What are the main requirements of the Charter?

- A permanent structure for working in partnership with others
- A strategy for Sustainable Tourism
- A set of actions which address identified sustainability issues



Where are the other Charter Parks?

- 17 protected areas in 7 European countries
- 7 Countries are : Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Spain and Northern Ireland
- Mourne AONB is the first Charter Park within Ireland and the British Isles !



What are the benefits to protected areas?

- Basis for strengthening relationships with local tourism stakeholders and wider tourism industry
- Higher profile in European arena as an area devoted to sustainable tourism
- Public relations opportunities with visitors, locals and national media
- Opportunity to work with and learn from other European parks in a network
- Greater credibility amongst potential funding partners
- Helpful internal and external assessment, which may lead to new ideas and improvements



Steps to the Charter Park status for Mourne and Slieve Croob

- Incorporated into Trust's Operational Plan (2001-2004)
- Formation of a strategic partnership
- Incorporated into District Council's strategies
- Discussion with Government – NRRTI
- Strategy process started June 2001
- Study visit to Vexin & Vercours (Jan 2002)

.....



.....

- Draft Strategy - Public consultation
- Draft Action Programme - Public consultation
- Final Strategy (Dec 2002)
- Charter Application – May 2003
- Charter assessment and verification visit June 2003
- Approved by Europarc Panel – July 2003
- Awarded at Stryn, Norway– August 2003



Weaknesses Identified

- Maintain and extend awareness in Mourne of sustainable tourism development through publications and workshops and media
- Establish a Sustainable Tourism Forum for Mourne and Slieve Croob, engaging a broad range of actors (increase private sector involvement)
- Ensure opportunities for people with disabilities/special needs are catered in the development of Tourism
- On-going monitoring and evaluation (internal and external reviews of actions against the strategy to ensure compliance with the Charter).



Future Actions Now Underway

- Extending awareness in Mourne of sustainable tourism development through publications and workshops and media.
- Developing a Sustainable Tourism Manual for businesses in Mourne and Slieve Croob based on the Alpi Maritime model
- Establishing a Sustainable Tourism Forum for Mourne and Slieve Croob, engaging a broad range of actors (increase private sector involvement).
- Hosting a conference on sustainable Tourism for local businesses
- Developing a green tourism accreditation scheme
- Actively engaging with the family of Charter Parks across Europe to further develop best practice



THE FUTURE: Northern Ireland's First National Park



2.6 Syöte National Park Finland and Tourism in the Syöte Area

Jouni Aarnio, Metsähallitus – Forest and Park Service

Photos: Jouni Luhta and Metsähallitus
 Pictures: Juha Pasa, Mari Linnell and Ilkka Karttunen



SYÖTE NATIONAL PARK FINLAND



- was founded in June 2000
- area 300 km²
- 25 000 visitors a year
- visitor centre
- 80 kilometres marked hiking tracks
- 34 kilometres skiing trails
- 4 special nature tracks
- 12 wilderness huts
- 5 lean-to shelters






“Syöte National Park is characterised by hills with old spruce forests on summits and slopes. In addition, the value of the protected forests in the area is increased by the abundance of aspen. Sloping and hilltop mires add variety to the landscape.”




◊ Photos: Jorma Luhta and Metsähallitus
◊ Pictures: Juha Paso, Mari Linnell and Ilka Karttunen
◊

SYÖTE NATIONAL PARK
FINLAND
METSÄHALLITUS

RICH NATURE

- National Park belongs in the network of Natura 2000
- EU directive species are flying squirrel, brown bear, wolverine, lynx, red-flanked blue tail, golden eagle, white-tailed eagle, capercaillie, hazel-grouse
- Main EU directive habitats are western taiga and aapa mires



Capercaillie



Flying squirrel



Red-flanked blue tail

RICH CULTURAL HERITAGE

- Many prehistoric relics
- Slash-and-burn cultivation
- Old traditional meadow economy
- History of reindeer economy, tar-burning and early forestry



◊ ◊ ◊ ◊ ◊ ◊ ◊ ◊



TOURISM IN THE SYÖTE AREA

- 200 000 visitors a year in whole area
- 25 000 visitors a year in Syöte National Park
- 20 tourist enterprises
- tourism activities: slalom, skiing, reindeer and dog safaris, hiking, mountain biking, horse riding, fishing, snow mobile safaris



THREATS

- suffering of the important habitats
- suffering of the rare animals and plants
- traffic of the snow mobiles
- erosion because of hiking and biking
- conflicts between different groups of people



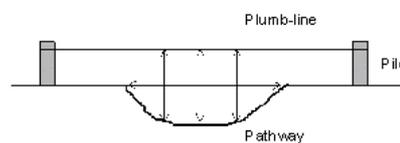
SOLUTION

- to develop and to promote ecotourism
- to develop co-operation with tourist enterprises
- to promote sustainable developing
- to develop partnership
- monitoring the numbers of visitors
- continuous erosion follow-up



SOLUTION

- to create erosion monitoring method



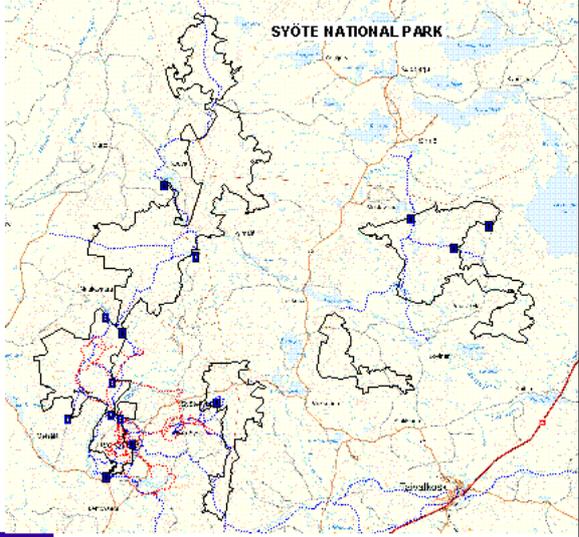
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 **SOLUTION**

- to create visitor monitoring method



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 **SOLUTION**

- to arrange education and training for local tourist enterprises



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SOLUTION

- to direct visitors by building pathways and resting places in the Park



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SOLUTION

- to create and put into practice quality criteria of nature tourism



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SUSTAINABLE NATURE TOURISM

1. Considering nature

- * Nature tour must be adjusted to the natural limits
- * Unspoilt nature is the main attraction in nature tourism



SUSTAINABLE NATURE TOURISM

2. Small is beautiful

- * The recommended maximum size for groups is 15 people
- * Too large groups disturb wildlife





SUSTAINABLE NATURE TOURISM

3. Under your own steam

*** By moving under their own steam, tourists can ensure they disrupt the natural environment as little as possible**

*** The best ways for groups to explore natural surroundings are for instance on foot, on skis, on snowshoes, by bicycle or by canoe**



SUSTAINABLE NATURE TOURISM

4. Sensitivity to natural surroundings

*** Visitors should not leave behind any permanent traces in the natural environment**

*** Visitors should be able to take away anything they brought with them**





SUSTAINABLE NATURE TOURISM

5. Respecting living things

- * Visitors must not deliberately harm or kill plants or animals
- * This principle of respect for living things means that hunting cannot be considered as true nature tourism



SUSTAINABLE NATURE TOURISM

6. A learning experience

- * In nature tour visitors typically learn about an area's natural features, conservation measures, and local history
- * Publications marketing nature tourism services should stress how staff are well trained with regard to environmental issues





SUSTAINABLE NATURE TOURISM

7. Walking on the wild side

* Nature tourism activities focus on the experience of being in natural surroundings - rather than on personal achievements, consumption, or the idea of overcoming nature

* This excludes activities like rockclimbing, which is better described as adventure tourism



SUSTAINABLE NATURE TOURISM

8. Benefiting the local economy and respecting local cultures

* The economic benefits of nature tourism spread more widely through local communities where firms working in tourism obtain locally the goods and services they provide

* Learning to appreciate local cultures is also key element of nature tourism





SUSTAINABLE NATURE TOURISM

9. Promoting nature conservation

- * Tourism may directly support nature conservation financially
- * Another way to promote conservation is to organise activities where clients actually work directly in nature conservation



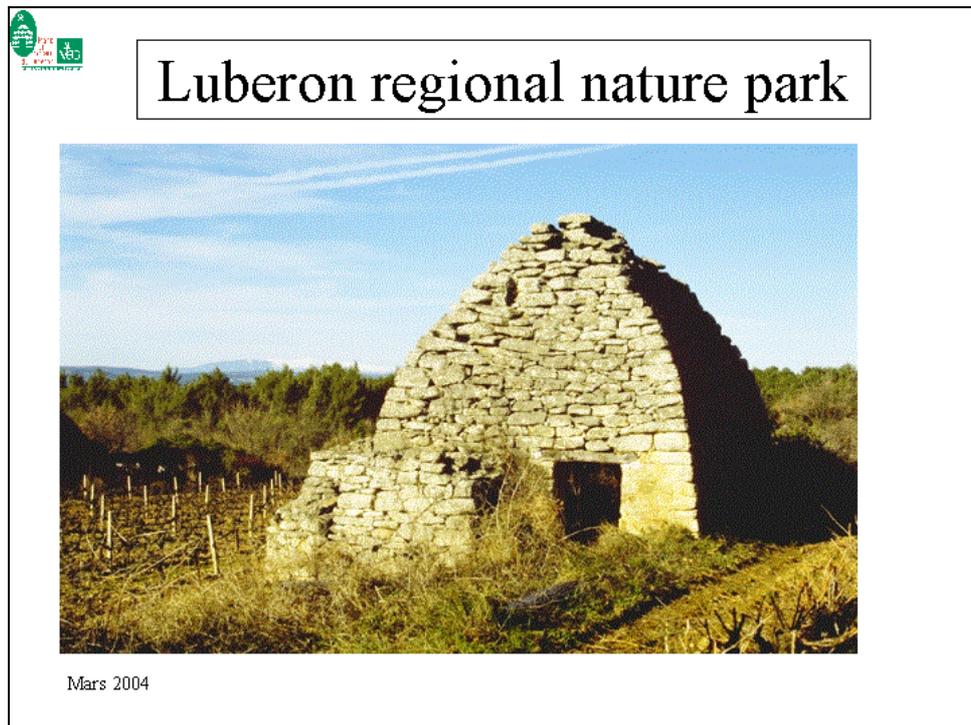
SUSTAINABLE NATURE TOURISM

10. Safety first

- * Clients' safety is of paramount importance in nature tourism
- * Firms must ensure that their safety procedures are well observed and updated



2.7. Luberon regional nature park
Jacques Decuignieres, Parc naturel regional du Luberon



As its name indicates, the Luberon regional nature park (Luberon RNP or LRNP) is named after the Luberon range, a Mediterranean mountain located in Provence, France. It is one of the four RNPs of Provence (region Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur).

First it is necessary to explain what a French RNP is, compared with the concept of national park. Without considering too detailed features, it is necessary to have in mind that a RNP is not a sanctuary for wildlife (where human activities are restricted or impossible), even if the protection of nature is one of its basic missions.

A RNP territory may include populated areas. In fact, the object of a RNP is to propose a good balance between the protection of environment, the different aspects of local heritage, (including the nature but also the built heritage, the local culture including for example local cuisine) and a contribution to a rural sustainable development.



some figures

- one of the 4 regional parks in Provence
- created in 1977
- the current charter : 1997 – 2007
- 150,000 inhabitants in its area
- 70 communes, including 4 towns
- 165,000 ha (408,000 acres)

Mars 2004

Therefore, the main challenge for the Luberon RNP is to protect wildlife, landscapes and built heritage in a territory that has been inhabited for thousands of years. In addition, the Provence is attractive and more and more people wish to live here, especially since the arrival of the TGV railway (fast train) carrying people from a Paris to Avignon within 3 hours.

Some villages have increased by 12% (or more) within 10 years under the influence of big nearby cities (Marseille, Aix en Provence, Avignon).

The Luberon RNP has been created in 1977 because of its natural heritage considered for long as exceptional (due to its location between alpine and Mediterranean climate influences) and also because of threats already perceptible 30 years ago.

Its heritage includes a Biosphere Reserve (MaB), a geological natural reserve and 280 km² (69,000 acres) are concerned by Natura 2000.



also in the Luberon area

- the geological nature reserve of Luberon
- MaB : Luberon Biosphere Reserve
- Natura 2000 areas in the massif

Mars 2004



« syndicat mixte de gestion » *association of local authorities*

- the « communes » (municipalities)
- the Region Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur
- 2 « départements »
- the Ministry of Environment
and councils :
local associations, scientist consultants
council of local development

Mars 2004



some « classic » missions

- studying and protecting the environment
- environment education (children and parents)
- contribution to forest management
- prevention of river floods
- promotion of local products
- training sessions of new farming techniques

Mars 2004



and some more for the inhabitants

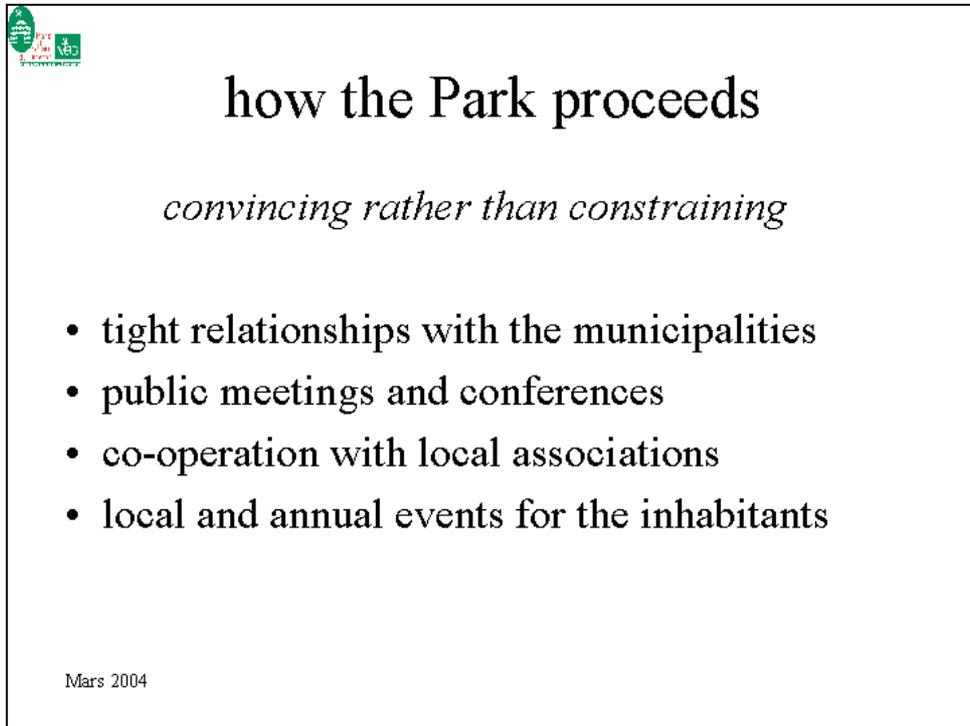
- technical assistance to municipalities
- local land planning and regulation
- preservation of rural public services
- development of rental housing in villages
- architecture advice for private people

Mars 2004

Another basic characteristic of a RNP: the laws give few possibilities to forbid and prosecute. That leads to another approach: *convince rather than constrain*.

No doubt it is difficult and not always successful but it is made possible by tight relationships with the municipalities and other local stakeholders.

Public conferences, meetings and park's events, co-operation with local associations and other local institutions (forestry rangers, volunteers for fire prevention) are also necessary. In the long run, that has proved its effectiveness, despite some difficulties and failures.





how the Park proceeds

convincing rather than constraining

- tight relationships with the municipalities
- public meetings and conferences
- co-operation with local associations
- local and annual events for the inhabitants

Mars 2004

Another distinctive aspect of the French RNPs:

a ten-year charter states the different missions agreed by the different local stakeholders. At the expiry period and prior to its possible renewal, the results are evaluated with respect to the missions. The communes and other local authorities (and now the population itself) give their appreciation and therefore take their part in the decision to approve (or not) a new charter for the Park.

On the base of a ten-year programme, the park's missions may change along the successive decades.



fundings

- annual per capita contributions of partners
- leading of projects
 - short term projects
 - 3 year programmes (CPER, ADEME)
 - European programmes (Leader, Life, Objective 2)

but also
- ... and self-financing (23 %)

Mars 2004



tourism in Luberon

- located in a Mediterranean region
- easy access by train, plane and roads
- an active tourism present for tens of years
- rather well preserved landscapes
- a wide array of tourism potentialities

Mars 2004



Luberon park and tourism

- the Park as an “upstream” partner
- partnerships with private as well as public
- the European charter as a pattern

- Luberon viewed as a distinctive destination
- attractive also thanks to long term actions
- ... and the Park’s charter for 27 years

Mars 2004



But ...

- an atomized tourist offer
- somewhat unadequate
- lack of environment awareness
- increasing costs of living and land
and ...
- emerging quality competitors
- shorter stays leading to decreasing benefits

Mars 2004

In the Luberon, tourism gives a good example of such changes:

Although tourism fall-outs have taken the first or the second place in the local economy, the local stakeholders hardly realize it.

Despite it has been present for years in the Luberon, tourism was not originally acknowledged and the first charter (1977-1987) did not even mention it. The second charter's version indicated the existence of tourism activities mainly to emphasize the necessity to limit them.

The current charter (1997-2007) clearly mentions its importance, in relation with the local economy and the daily life. It states that the Luberon is now considered as a definite and distinctive tourist region but it recommends a tourism designed for families and individuals, respectful for nature, local heritage and for the inhabitants' daily life.

As an "upstream" tourist operator the Luberon park has to face some difficulties:

As local authorities used to pay little attention to it, the tourism had been growing for years without support and long term vision.

It has resulted in an atomized offer, now becoming somewhat inadequate.

The Park also has to face a weak consciousness of environment and its protection.

Moreover, the inhabitants have to cope with the increasing costs of building land and also higher prices in restaurants and shops supposedly because of tourism.

In other respects, due to emerging competitors and because tourists stays are now shorter, the tourist economy no more develops as it did in the past.

However, the tourist affluence is still important in the summer, and the main challenge remains to "divert" visitors from Gordes (and other famous spots) elsewhere in the Luberon and to induce them to take advantage of other seasons.



The main goals for tourism can therefore be listed:

- to prevent heavy concentration of tourism in some spots,
- to scatter the tourist flows and their relevant fall-outs onto the whole territory,
- to develop a tourism compatible with the inhabitants' daily life.

Thanks to the prescriptions of the Park's charter and to private initiatives, the accommodation capacities are mainly scattered on the Luberon rural area:

- ca. 850 gîtes, B&B and self accommodation, etc. (23% of accommodation),
- less than 100 hotels and apartment hotels (18%),
- only 2 holiday villages, few youth hostels or similar (5%),
- 44 camping sites or similar, (54%).

No doubt it contributes to despatch the tourist flows but also brings now some drawbacks: accommodation providers tend to prefer top-of-the line visitors, making the Luberon less "accessible" for other people. It also gives a somewhat negative image.

It is difficult to co-ordinate tourism actions, especially to elaborate tourist products and to dispose of appropriate accommodation capacities in off-season: (many Gîtes and B&B are closed from October to end of March).

Many accommodation providers pay more attention to short-term results and emerging changes in tourist demand are not always taken into consideration.

The Park can fortunately rely on other significant assets and different partnership networks. It also takes advantage of its upstream position to promote an alternative tourism.

The European charter for a sustainable tourism has immediately been considered by the Park as a positive approach, complementing its charter and therefore it decided in 1999 to apply for a future recognition. It was awarded in 2001, together with 6 other European parks.

The ECSTPA gave a framework to bring up its different propositions for a sustainable tourism, especially in the context of agreements with the Region and the départements.



some contributions of the park

- farmers' markets
- alternative tourism in the ochre massif
- village museums for diversion of tourist flows
- cycling in the Luberon
- Panda, alternative and sustainable accommodation
- increasing tourism offer for disabled people

Mars 2004

The following actions have been either achieved or carried on both with reference to the Park's charter and the ECSTPA.



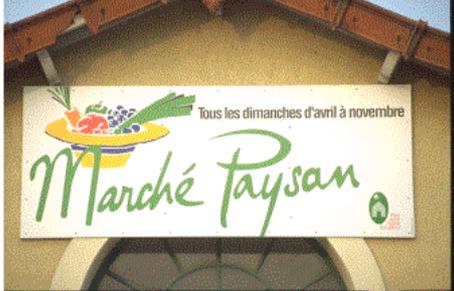
Project 1:
“tasteful Luberon”
farmers’ markets in 6 villages of the Luberon

- self-managed associations of producers showing off the Luberon products
- attractive events during the tourist season

Mars 2004

The Park together with farmers and their associations have created the first “marché paysan” to encourage direct relations between local producers and consumers in order to promote the Luberon’s products.

After 21 years, farmers’ markets are still held once or twice a week in six villages from April to November which contributes to their liveliness. They are under the control of self-managed associations of farmers (300 on the whole) showing off the Luberon produce. Every Sunday one of the markets and a lavender museum in the vicinity are integrated in a one-day bus tour. Although tourists and inhabitants are satisfied, a decreasing number of farmers and a dissimilar offer are noticed on different spots. It seems necessary for the Park to support the “made in Luberon” origin and to reinforce relationships between local restaurants and farmers. Contacts are also in progress with local associations promoting the provençal cuisine.



“tasteful Luberon”



Mars 2004



farmers' markets in the villages of the Luberon

- no middlemen,
the producers sell their products to the customers
- once or twice a week in 6 villages
- produce coming from the surroundings in the area
- protected by a Park's registered label

Mars 2004



farmers' markets in the villages of the Luberon

the results

- 300 producers
- 21 year success for the oldest
- together with the museum of lavender on Sunday
- buses carry tourists to that market every Sunday
- also contribute to relationships between “natives” and newly arrived people

Mars 2004



farmers' markets in villages of the Luberon

difficulties and actions in progress

- they do not cover the whole area of the park
- dissimilar offer on the different markets
- increasing fraudulent imitation
- a decreasing number of farmers
- reinforcement of relationships with local restaurants
- promotion of the local cuisine and its products

Mars 2004



Project 2 :

**Okhra conservatoire des ocres et pigments appliqués
the revival of traditional know-how**

- a global vision and a pragmatic approach
- dedicated to the revival of ancient techniques

Mars 2004

The ochre massif is an outstanding site of colourful hills and valleys offering infinite varieties of ochre sands, from green to red and yellow.

Hundred thousands of visitors come to Roussillon to discover that exceptional but endangered heritage. The industry extracting the ochre sands collapsed during the past 50s because of the competition of chemical colorants. Mines and factories were abandoned.

In 1995 Barbara and Mathieu Barrois revealed their interest for the revival of that industry and its ancient know-how. The Park together with the municipality supported their project.

These entrepreneurs were eager to learn from engineers, scientists, as well as retired workers having worked in local factories. In the prospect of a future “cultural enterprise”, artists and volunteers soon joined the Okhra project.

Barbara and Mathieu adopted a pragmatic approach and 3 objectives:

- the revival of an industrial heritage, becoming profitable again,
- the production of top quality products giving to Okhra a distinctive trademark,
- the development of modern techniques based on traditional know-how.



Okhra

- abandoned but accessible mines and factories after collapse of the ochre industry during the 50s.
- entrepreneurs ready to involve themselves in a cultural enterprise
- the municipality and the Park support the project
- technical advice from engineers and scientists
- support of artists and volunteers

Mars 2004



Okhra

- **3 objectives :**
 - a lively and profitable heritage
 - the top quality of the products as a distinctive trademark
 - the development of new techniques

Mars 2004



Okhra
the results

- more than 23,000 visitors after 3 years
- 200 training sessions every year
- a successful tourist destination
without damage for the fragile ochre massif

Mars 2004

The results:

more than 23,000 visitors after 3 years since the inauguration in 2000; 200 training sessions dealing with the ancient techniques, the use of ochre and other natural products for wall coating, paintings, etc.

In addition, the Okhra conservatory is now a tourist destination. It contributes to divert people from the ochre massif and from other sites, thus reducing the pressure onto endangered spots.

Today Okhra stills co-operates with the local authorities and with the Park but it has gained its financial autonomy.



the Okhra conservatory



Mars 2004



Okhra

seven functions in action

- reception of visitors
- the factory, lively industrial heritage
- technical sessions (to improve and transmit the know-how)
- innovative research and development
- conservation of knowledge (books, materials, samples,)
- sales in accordance with the market's demand
- management

Mars 2004



Project 3:
small but beautiful
museum of Vachères

- an obsolete museum
- a small village of 200 people in the middle of nowhere

But ...

- a valuable heritage kept on site
- a protected area in the Park's natural geological reserve
- an efficient cooperation between public institutions, the municipality and the inhabitants
- an decisive support of public funds

Mars 2004

Vachères, a small village of 200 people in the remote Haute-Provence had an obsolete museum but it could boast of a valuable archaeological heritage. Moreover, it is located in the heart of the Luberon geological Reserve.

The Park has always wanted to create alternative places of interest. On the other hand the municipality and the inhabitants worried about the village's revival.

It brought its technical support for the project of refurbishing the museum and its assistance in fund raising.



Museum of Vachères
the results

- an attractive museum with original exhibitions
- managed by the municipality
with the help of a part time technician and
volunteers
- *but only 2,000 visitors in 2003 ...*

Mars 2004

The results:

an attractive and modern museum with original exhibitions and valuable pieces.

But only 2,000 visitors came in 2003 ...

In fact, it appears that volunteers have become less enthusiastic in the long run and the help of an assistant has been required.

With a part time technician and the contribution of the municipality's staff enable it has been possible to increase the opening days.

It was also necessary to promote the museum. So it is now integrated in a "passport" that gives access to different village museums in Haute-Provence, with reduced entrance fares.

That will improve the situation but a restaurant would help to keep the tourists in Vachères ...



Museum of Vachères

difficulties and solutions in progress

- lack of accommodation and local amenities
- remote location making difficult to divert tourists from famous sites
- long term involvement of public institutions
- a small restaurant as a part of one-day tours
- a network of (various) village museums
- a global promotion (“passport”)

Mars 2004

The Park pays particular attention to keeping heritage in small villages where it can contribute to its revival and to local economy.

Other village museums now exist in the Luberon:

- in St Maime, the museum reminds its miners’ past;
- in Lagarde d’Apt, various astronomic instruments have replaced nuclear missiles in a former launching pad. The site and its equipments are accessible for disable people;
- in Lauris, the gardens revive and enrich the tradition of dyeing plants.

Networking co-ordination and promotion of those museums are in progress.



other village museums and tourist sites

- St Maime :
keeps the memory of the miners
- Lagarde d'Apt :
has replaced nuclear missiles by telescopes
- Lauris :
revives and enriches the tradition of dyeing plants

and soon a conservatory of the provençal cuisine

Mars 2004



Project 4 : the Luberon by bike and Vélo Loisir en Luberon

- a sustainable and profitable tourism
- in step with an increasing tourist demand
- ... and with the park's charter

Mars 2004

The Park is eager to develop a sustainable tourism for the benefit of small villages and private operators.

It was decided in 1995 to create “the Luberon by bike” a cycling circuit around the Luberon massif, using not a cycling road but little byways.

The municipalities preferred that solution in order to incite the cyclists to stop in different villages, to discover the local heritage and thus to contribute to local economy. But that decision had an inconvenience: crossing hilltop villages instead of riding in the plains made the itinerary more difficult for the families...

The big loop was achieved in 2002, with a 235 km circuit (146 miles) around the Luberon and 2 local loops were added to the main circuit (one around the ochre massif and the other in Haute-Provence).





the Luberon by bike

- municipalities willing to develop a type of tourism that brings incomes to the villages, ...
- but respectful of the way of life of their inhabitants

Mars 2004



the Luberon by bike

- municipalities willing to develop a type of tourism that brings incomes to the villages, ...
- but respectful of the way of life of their inhabitants

Mars 2004



the Luberon by bike
the results (1)

- a 235 km circuit around the Luberon
- 2 local loops added to the main itinerary
- 360 km (220 miles) of little byways
- signposts in both directions all along the itineraries
- designed for families, without map or guidebook
- *and a new cycling road under construction*

Mars 2004



the Luberon by bike
the results (2)

- VLL, an association created by professionals
- accommodation, bike rental, luggage transport, guided round trips, ...
- direct benefits for local stakeholders and trades
- an offer well adapted to off season stays

Mars 2004

The results:

- a new offer of sustainable products,
 - direct benefits for local stakeholders and trades,
 - a tourist offer in step with an increasing demand, even for off-season stays.
- the creation of “Vélo Loisir en Luberon”, a new association of private operators. They represent a comprehensive offer of accommodation, bike rental, luggage transport, guided trips...

New projects are planned or in progress:

- the development of new products based on cycling activities.
- a cycling road is now under construction in the Northern Luberon for the benefit of both the inhabitants and the visitors,
- in order to transfer the project to the municipalities and to the private sector, the Park is now studying the fall-outs of these investments for the territory,
- at the same time, it is encouraging an extension of the networking association and the training of its members for better qualification.

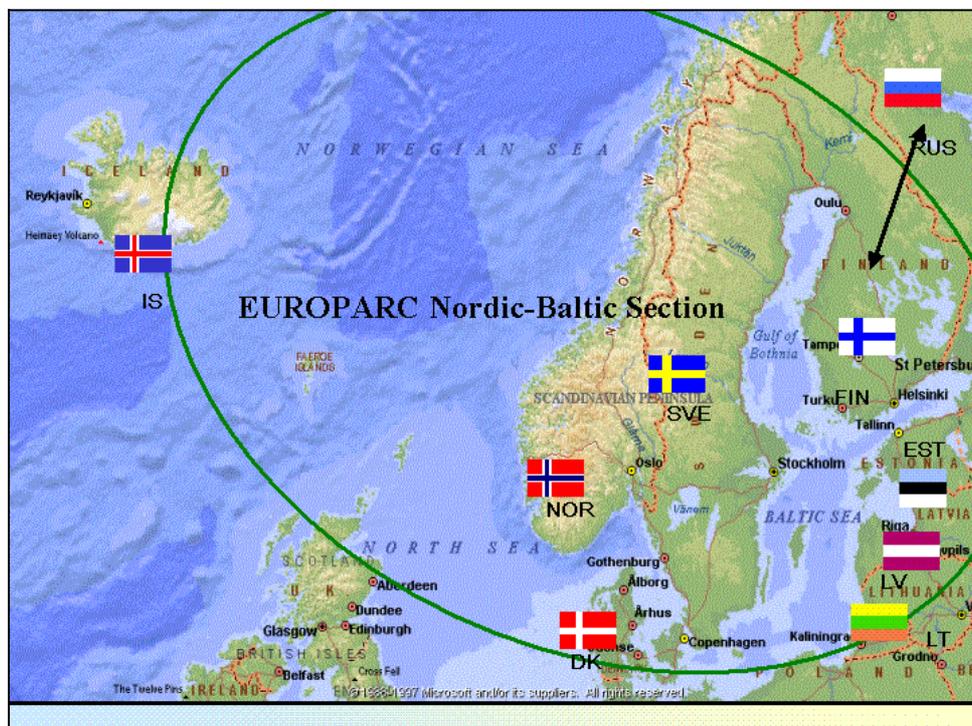


the Luberon by bike
the next challenge

- transfer of responsibilities to municipalities and to professionals
- steady benefits to maintain the infrastructure
- better qualification of new professionals
- creation of new tourist products based on cycling

Mars 2004

2.8. **EUROPARC Nordic-Baltic Section**
Bo Storränk, Metsähallitus EUROPARC Nordic Baltic Section



The Nordic-Baltic Section



EUROPARC
Federation
www.europarc.org

- was formally established in April 2003 by a decision of the EUROPARC Council
- the establishment was preceded by a Nordic-Baltic seminar in January 2003, hosted by Metsähallitus, FIN
- the Coordinator started his work in June 2003 at Metsähallitus, FIN
- from June 2003 to May 2004, the position of the Coordinator is funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers, after that Metsähallitus will host the President and Coordinator for an additional year
- the first meeting of the Section was held in August 2003, at the EUROPARC conference in Stryn, Norway
- next meeting will be held in Dzukija National Park, Lithuania, on April 14-16, 2004

Aims of the Nordic- Baltic Section



EUROPARC
Federation
www.europarc.org

facilitate exchange of information and expertise between the members of the Section

facilitate exchange of information and expertise between the Section and other EUROPARC sections as well as the EUROPARC Office

implement joint projects and other activities in the Nordic and Baltic regions

increase the membership of the EUROPARC Federation and the Nordic-Baltic Section

Membership



EUROPARC
Federation
www.europarc.org

- 21 members (17.03.2004)
- representing governmental institutions, protected areas, 1 association of protected areas and 1 individual supporting member
- members from Finland (9), Sweden (2), Norway (2), Iceland (1), Estonia (1), Latvia (2) and Lithuania (4)
- there is a potential for an increase of the membership
- web site: www.metsa.fi/europarc

Work programme



EUROPARC
Federation
www.europarc.org

- was approved by the Section in December 2003
- outlines the objectives of the Section and identifies priority areas of cooperation in a mid-term period of time
- three priority areas (PA I-III) of cooperation have been identified;
 - Management of Protected Areas and the Natura 2000 network (PA I)
 - Transboundary Cooperation (PA II)
 - Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas (PA III)

EUROPARC Projects



EUROPARC
Federation
www.europarc.org

*European Charter for Sustainable Tourism
in Protected Areas*



EUROPARC
FEDERATION
EUROPEAN CHARTER
FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN
PROTECTED AREAS

www.european-charter.org

**PA III
Sustainable Tourism in Protected
Areas**



EUROPARC
Federation
www.europarc.org

- According to the work programme, the Nordic-Baltic Section will;
 - a)facilitate the use of best practices and modern tools such as the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas (*goal*)
 - b)encourage its members to make use of the experiences provided by the Charter process
 - c)..... the Section will also facilitate other initiatives and projects related to sustainable tourism in protected areas

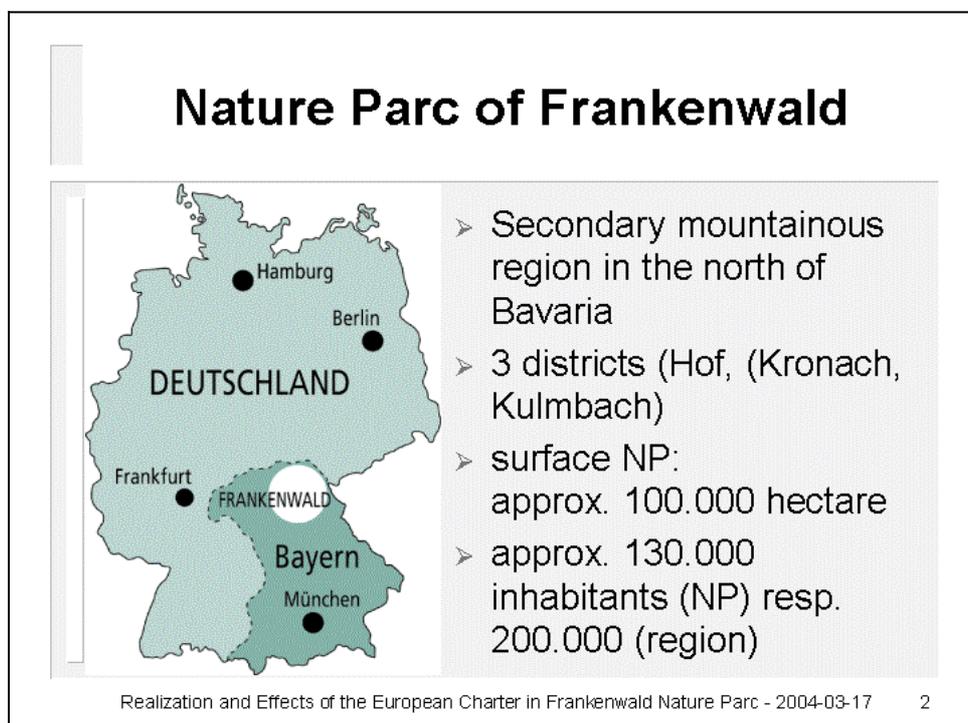
Two examples of initiatives in the Nordic countries



EUROPARC
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www.europarc.org

- Metsähallitus' Principles for Sustainable Nature Tourism
- Nature's Best / Naturens Bästa

2.9. Sustainable Tourism in the Franconian Forest
Stefan Fredlmeier, Frankenwald Tourism Service Center



Nature Parc of Frankenwald



- NP and the touristic region are almost identical!
- character: natural and industrial region
- touristic pillars:
 - nature
 - activities & sports
 - wellness/cure

Realization and Effects of the European Charter in Frankenwald Nature Parc - 2004-03-17 3

Facts & Figures (2002)

- capacity: 9.250 lits
- 241,6 thousand arrivals (-0,7%)
- 1,01 million overnight stays (-4,0%)
- EUR 149 million gross product (DWIF, for 2000)
- EUR 75,5 million net product (i.e. 2,1% of the overall regional product; DWIF, for 2000)
- 1.960 jobs (DWIF, for 2000)

Realization and Effects of the European Charter in Frankenwald Nature Parc - 2004-03-17 4

Tendencies of the Touristic Promotion of the NP

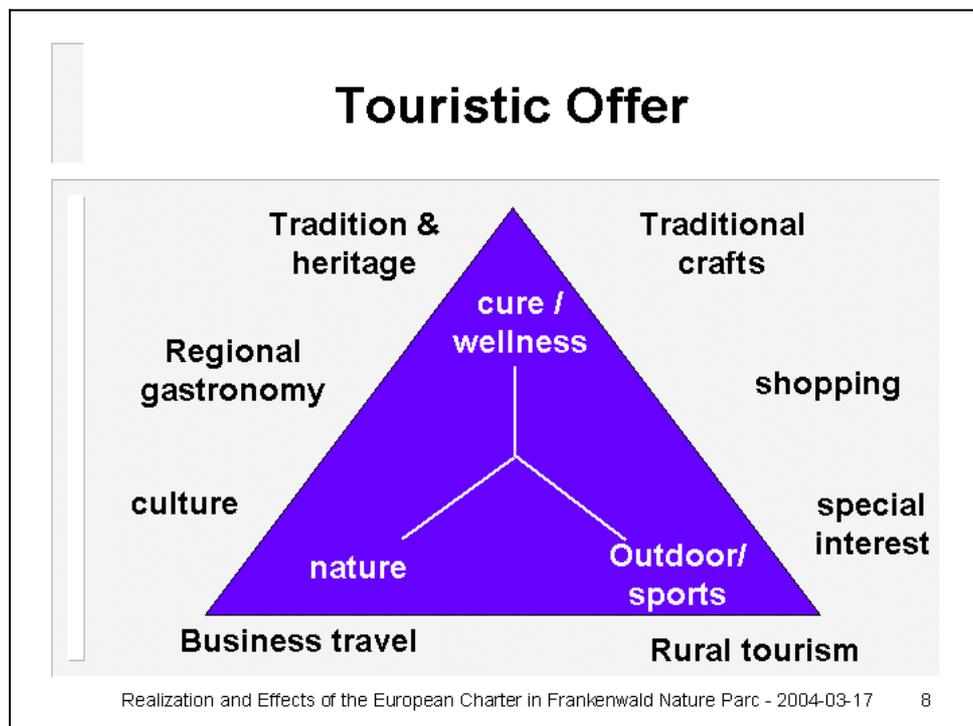
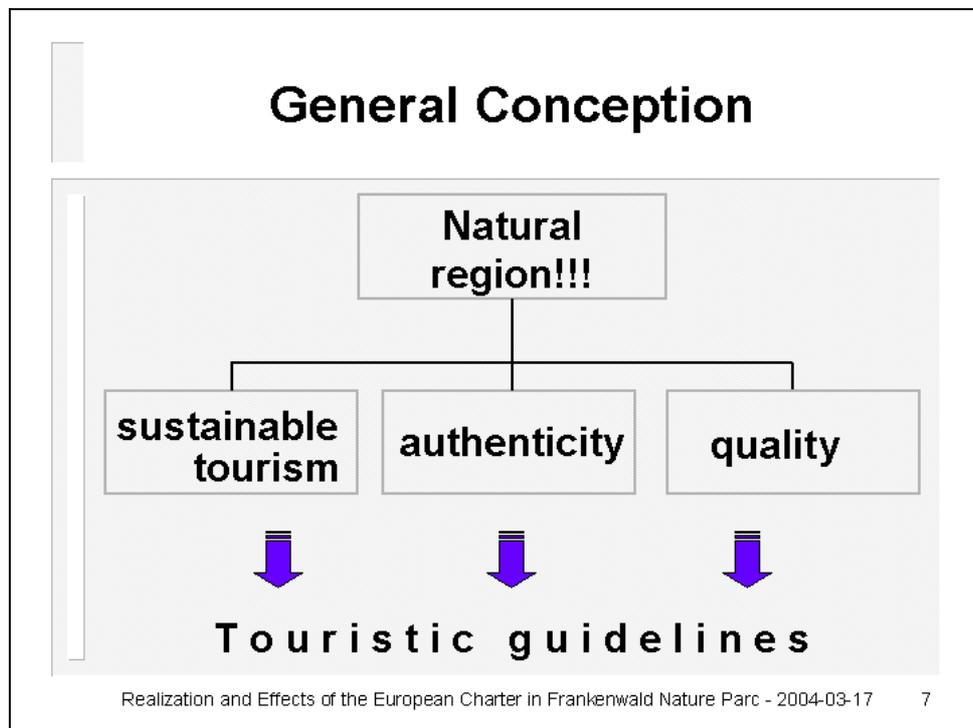
- growing sensibility of tourists towards the negative impact of tourism on nature
- more and more protected areas promoted and commercialized as touristic destination
- protected areas: privileged objects for promotional programmes (state, EU, NGO)

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Touristic Integration of the NP

- Frankenwald: Nature Parc since 1973
- institutional corporation and practical cooperation of the NP and FRANKENWALD TOURISM Service Center
- since 1998: project "European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas"

Realization and Effects of the European Charter in Frankenwald Nature Parc - 2004-03-17 6



The Project "European Charter" - The Targets -

- Harmonize protection of nature and touristic development
- create a network of interaction among the main touristic agents
- develop "Nature Parc" as a label of quality
- improve the position in the touristic competition

Realization and Effects of the European Charter in Frankenwald Nature Parc - 2004-03-17 9

The Project "European Charter" - The Approach -

- Decide and apply for participation
- find partners
- form roundtables with external moderation
- analyze the strengths and the deficits
- fix an agenda (aims, activities)
- develop touristic guidelines
- sign the European Charter

Realization and Effects of the European Charter in Frankenwald Nature Parc - 2004-03-17 10

The Project “European Charter” - Benefit and Results -

- Internal organization
- touristic offer
- marketing and communication

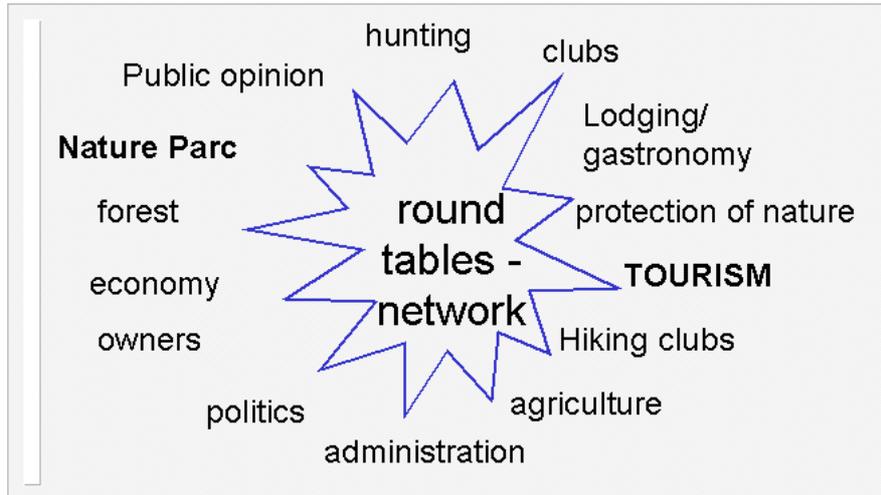
Realization and Effects of the European Charter in Frankenwald Nature Parc - 2004-03-17 11

Internal Organization

- Network of different partners and mutual representation (p.e. in the managing committees)
- NP programme also pushing touristic projects
- European Charter as „entrance ticket“ for promotional programmes like LEADER +

Realization and Effects of the European Charter in Frankenwald Nature Parc - 2004-03-17 12

Internal Organization



Realization and Effects of the European Charter in Frankenwald Nature Parc - 2004-03-17 13

Touristic Offer

conception and development:

- conception of outdoor activities always in cooperation with the institutions for protection of nature
 - mountainbiking
 - hiking
 - nordic walking



Charter +: canalization

Realization and Effects of the European Charter in Frankenwald Nature Parc - 2004-03-17 14

Touristic Offer



mobility:

- promotion of "Frankenwald mobil" (network of trains and buses for touristic transport during weekends and public holidays)

Charter +:
less individual
traffic

- cooperation with Deutsche Bahn („Fahrtziel Natur“)

Realization and Effects of the European Charter in Frankenwald Nature Parc - 2004-03-17 15

Touristic Offer

lodging:

- 200 beds max.
- general classification with ****
- special qualification for hiking and cyclotourism



Charter +: better and specialized accommodation, corresponding to the landscape

Realization and Effects of the European Charter in Frankenwald Nature Parc - 2004-03-17 16

Touristic Offer

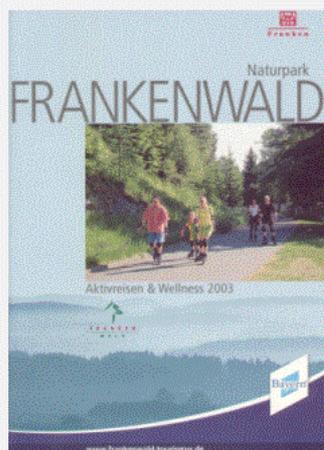


gastronomy:

- regional products
 - individual offers on common menu
 - touristic offer
- "Unsere Frankenwald-Küche - natürlich regional"**
- Charter +: use of regional products and link to agriculture***

Realization and Effects of the European Charter in Frankenwald Nature Parc - 2004-03-17 17

Marketing & Communication



- „Nature Parc“ integrated in the touristic CD and CI
 - study: “NP” positive for 80-90% of the tourists in Frankenwald
 - compatibility with “Viabono”
- Charter +: automatic and better promotion of „NP“***

Realization and Effects of the European Charter in Frankenwald Nature Parc - 2004-03-17 18

The Project "European Charter" - Results -

- Stable network of the regional agents
- efficient cooperation between NP and FTsc
- clear analysis of strength and deficits, due to
 - the external moderation
 - exchange programs with other Charter parcs
- touristic guidelines with a fixed agenda
- more offers, fewer restrictions
- easier access to programmes of promotion

Realization and Effects of the European Charter in Frankenwald Nature Parc - 2004-03-17 19

The Project "European Charter" - Experiences -

- A good network is basic for success
- NP and tourism have to proceed together
- good offers of high quality are better than restrictions
- don't just produce paper, but use the Charter as agenda and means of pressure
- don't die in beauty - sustainable tourismus has to be commercialized!

Realization and Effects of the European Charter in Frankenwald Nature Parc - 2004-03-17 20

The Touristic Market

Interest and demands of tourists:

the best offer
(price - quality)



Interest of the commercial agents:

fast return on investment and profit

- On the market, the best price-quality-relation wins!
- sustainable tourism too is a commercial product

Realization and Effects of the European Charter in Frankenwald Nature Parc - 2004-03-17 21

Long Term Impact *of the Charter*

- Influence on the internal structure:
BIG
- Influence on the touristic offer:
BIG
- PR effects in the professional field:
BIG
- PR effect in public:
LOW

Realization and Effects of the European Charter in Frankenwald Nature Parc - 2004-03-17 22

Questions Waiting for Answers

- *Who knows the European Charter?*
- *What do we want to let know?*
- *Who will understand?*
- *What about the relation towards other labels?*

2.10. The German Charter Parks – New ways for co-operation
Thomas Wilken, Kontor 21

The German Charter Parks –
 New ways for co-operation

Thomas Wilken, KONTOR 21

EUROPARC
 FEDERATION

EUROPÄISCHE CHARTA
 FÜR NACHHALTIGEN TOURISMUS
 IN SCHUTZGEBIETEN

© KONTOR 21

Relationship to the European Charter (T. Wilken)

- Member of the steering committee (1995-2002)
- Member of the verifier team
- Organizer of the Charter conference in Hanover (2002)
- Production of the Charter brochure and further material
- Leader of two model projects to prepare German parks for the European Charter

EUROPARC
 FEDERATION

EUROPÄISCHE CHARTA
 FÜR NACHHALTIGEN TOURISMUS
 IN SCHUTZGEBIETEN

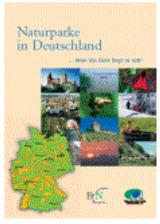
KONTOR 21

Focus

- tourism in protected areas
- sports and activity tourism
- health an wellness tourism

Services

- tourism strategies and action plans
- marketing concepts
- feasibility studies
- research
- workshops and conferences
- publications






Agenda

1. Basic information about the German Charter parks and candidate parks
2. Status of co-operation before the Charter process
3. Actions for better co-operation
4. Results
5. Conclusions



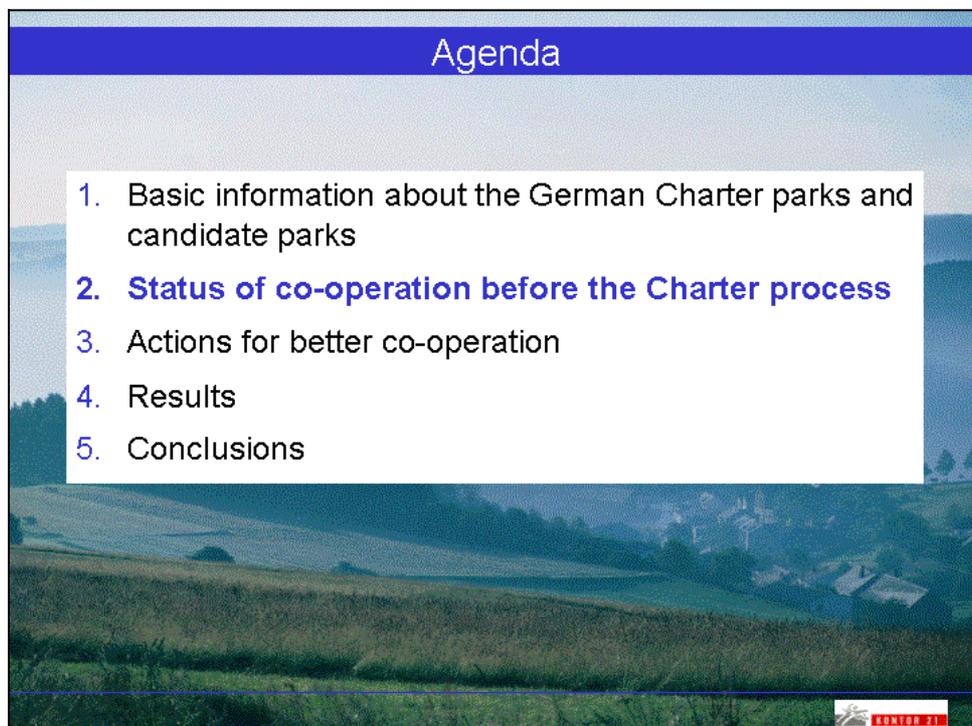
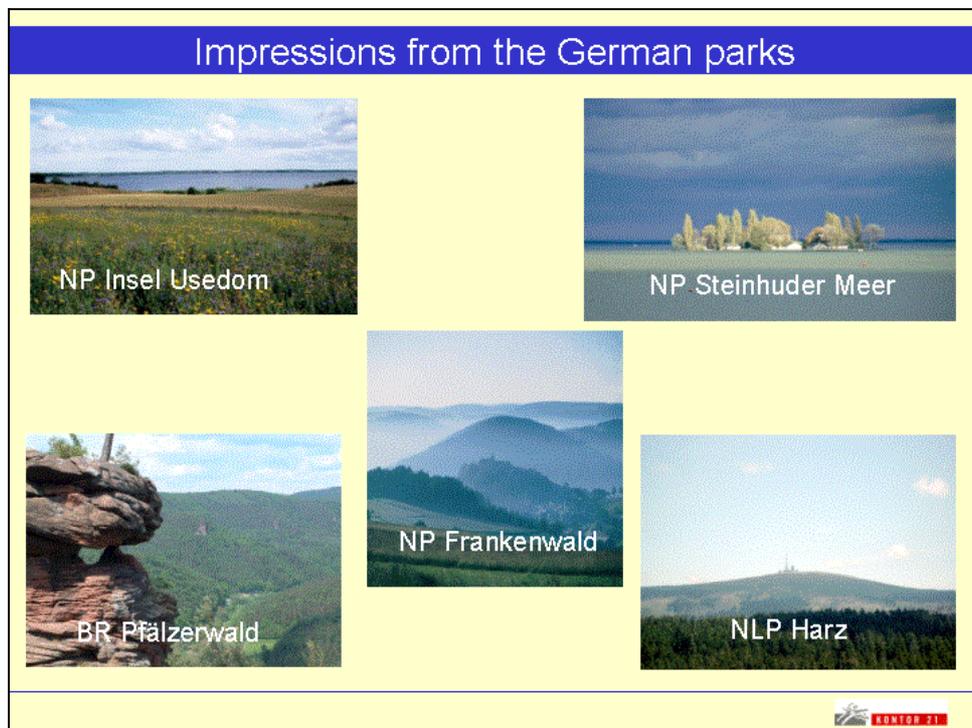
Agenda

1. **Basic information about the German Charter parks and candidate parks**
2. Status of co-operation before the Charter process
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Background information

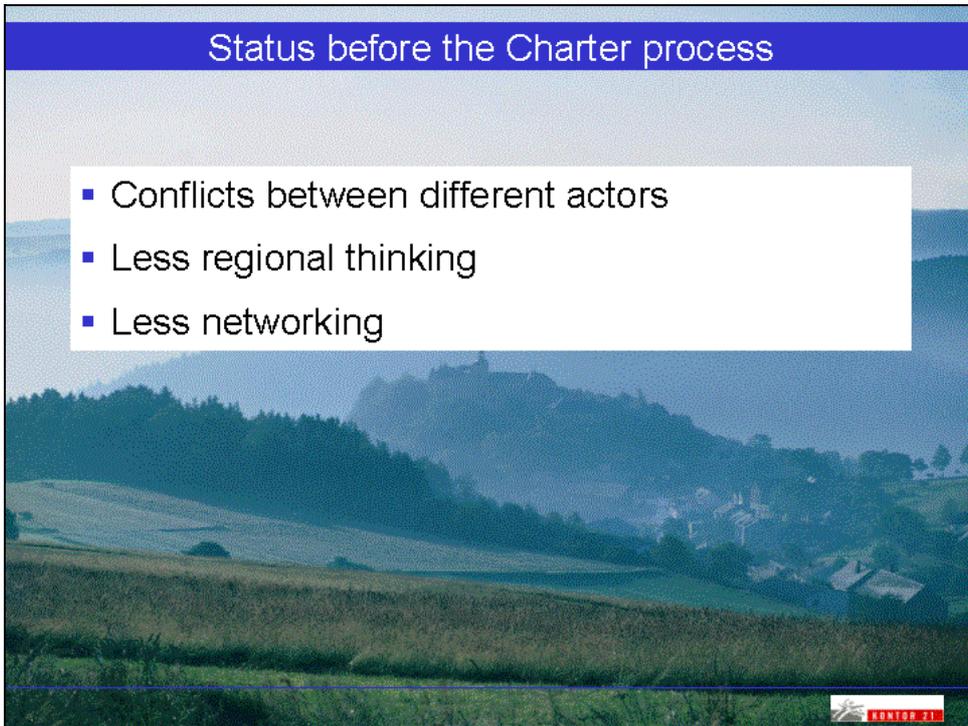
- Project 1: Nature parks
Frankenwald, Steinhuder Meer,
Isle of Usedom (1998-2001)
- Project 2: Biosphere reserve /
Nature Park Pfälzerwald,
National Parks Harz and
Hochharz (2003-2004)
- Model projects to test the
European Charter
- Financed by the Federal Agency
for Nature Conservation



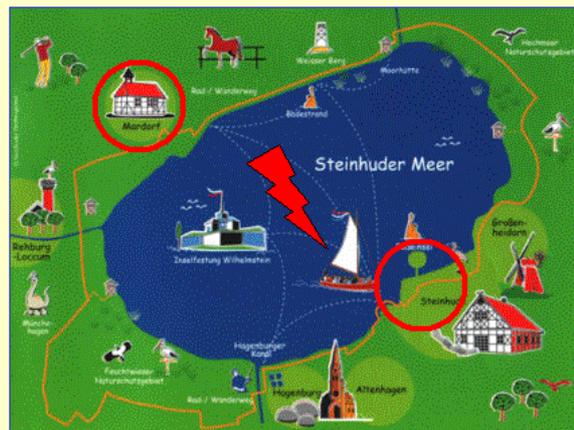


Status before the Charter process

- Conflicts between different actors
- Less regional thinking
- Less networking



Steinhuder Meer Nature Park



- Three different administrative districts
- Less regional thinking in tourism marketing



Harz National Parks



- Former border between FRG and GDR
- Two different states (Lower Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt)
- Three different administrative districts



Harz National Parks



Reunion is not easy...



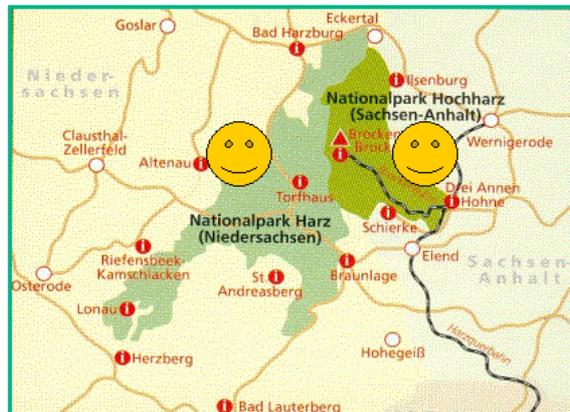
Harz National Parks



but...



Harz National Parks



...possible!



Biosphere Reserve Pfälzerwald – Vosges du Nord



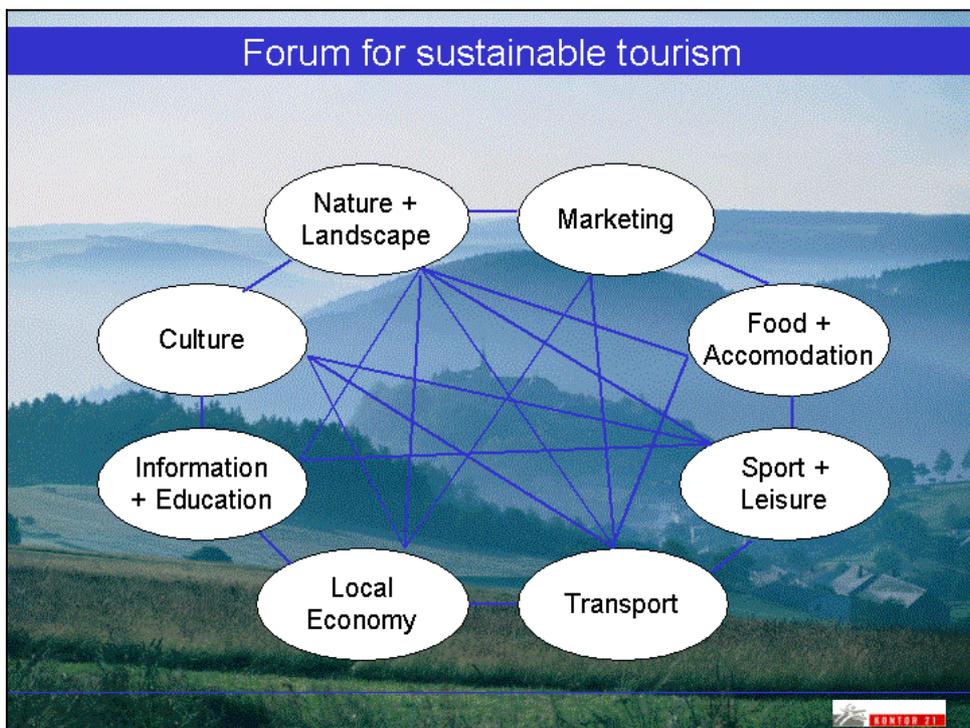
- Five administrative districts
- Two countries: Germany and France

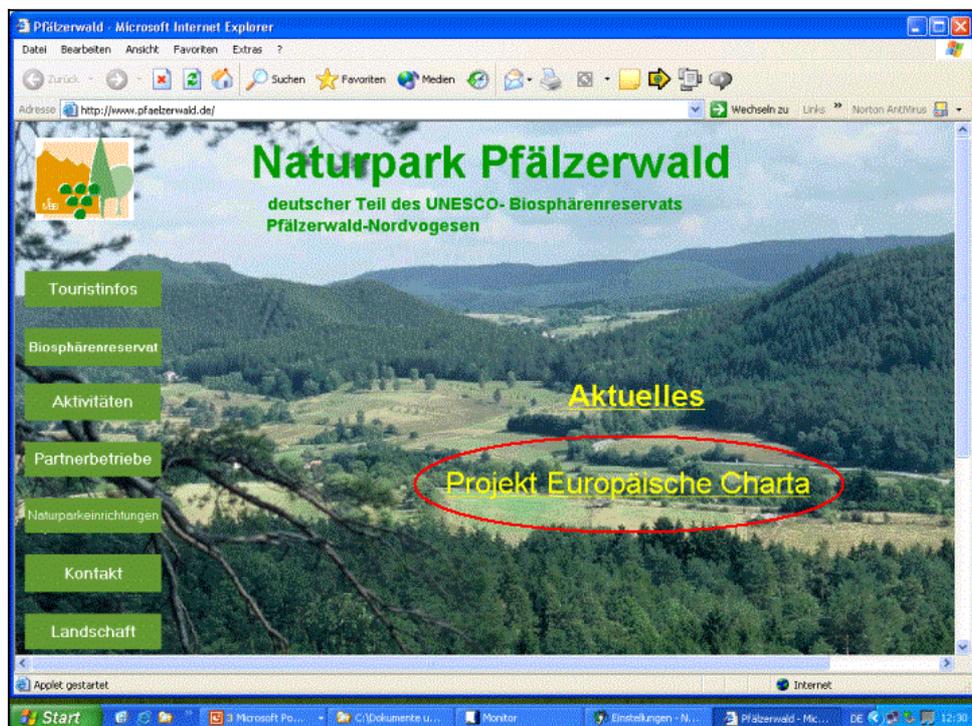
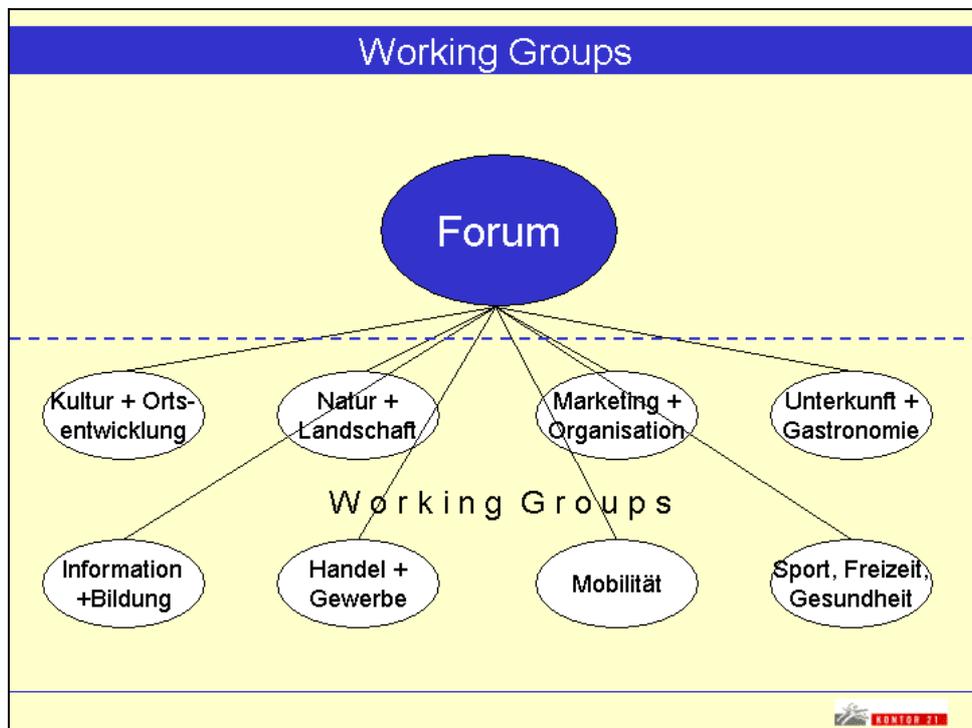


Agenda

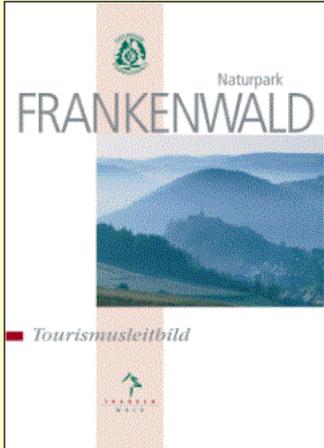
1. Basic information about the German Charter parks and candidate parks
2. Status of co-operation before the Charter process
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4. Results
5. Conclusions



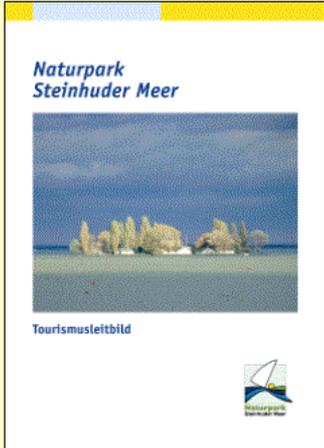




Presentation of the tourism strategy



Naturpark
FRANKENWALD
Tourismusleitbild



Naturpark
Steinhuder Meer
Tourismusleitbild



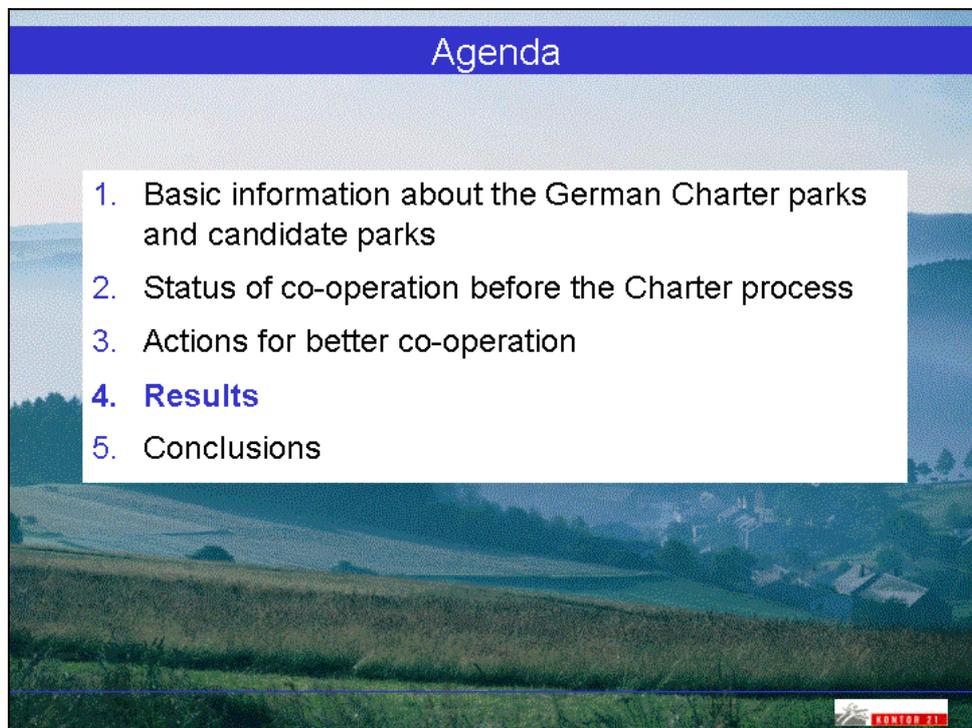
Partnership between German Charter parks





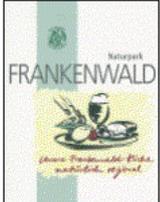
Agenda

1. Basic information about the German Charter parks and candidate parks
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4. **Results**
5. Conclusions



Results

- Tourism strategies are broadly accepted by all relevant stakeholders
- Co-operation in all parks has been strongly improved
- Forums meet regularly
- Forums are accepted as coordination board for regional tourism development
- Many very successful partnership projects





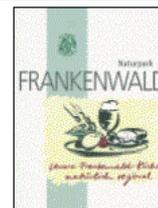


Agenda

1. Basic information about the German Charter parks and candidate parks
2. Status of co-operation before the Charter process
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5. **Conclusions**

Conclusions

- Building up partnership needs time and is a long term task
- A forum or similar body has to be established
- At least in the beginning external moderation is needed
- Starting small projects at an early state is helpful
- The whole region will benefit from better co-operation



**2.11. Summary of the contribution of the „Parc National des Cévennes”
Arnaud Cosson, Parc National des Cévennes**



**Summary of the contribution of the
« Parc National des Cévennes »**

EUROPARC Conference, Vilm, March

Parc National des Cévennes

Arnaud Cosson, assistant director
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Roland Jaffuel, tourism development officer
E mail roland.jaffuel@espaces-naturels.fr
Cévennes Ecotourisme
Anne-Sylvie Pfister, president
E mail lecauvel@lecauvel.com
Marylène Pin, development agent
E mail info@cevennes-ecotourisme.com

*« The experience of the
Parc National des Cévennes in
the implementation of the
European Charter for
Sustainable Tourism with
tourism businesses (Part 2) »*

Signatory of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas (Part1) in October 2002, the “Parc National des Cévennes”, in partnership with the “association des parcs du Massif Central” (IPAMAC), immediately began to work with tourism stakeholders in the area, on the implementation of Part 2 of the Charter. The first six tourism businesses signed the Charter in February 2004. The key points that facilitated this implementation process are outlined as follows :

1/ A favourable « ground » for the programme:

The “Parc National des Cévennes”, the only inhabited French national park, was created in 1970 in a region of character, with an environmental, cultural and landscape heritage of exceptional quality. The Park has three missions: the protection of heritage, the enhancement of and public access to this heritage, and the implementation of sustainable development actions with an economic, social or cultural character.

Tourism rapidly became apparent as an important domain, at the meeting point of these three missions. It has become even more so since the Rio Summit in 1992, and the report commissioned by EUROPARC in 1993, entitled «Loving them to death ? » that recommended the elaboration of a chart for sustainable tourism in protected areas. In fact, tourism has become the principal sector of economic activity in the territory of the Park, a sector where the necessity of putting into practice the notion of sustainable tourism is evident: the tourism attraction of the area is based on the natural, cultural and landscape heritage, which is susceptible to the “threat” of the influx of approximately 1 million visitors that frequent it each year.

The implementation of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism (Parts 1 and 2) seemed therefore a logical « institutional » procedure for the “Parc National des Cévennes”. However, four essential conditions had to be present to put this programme into practice.

The first is that the programme must respond to a real need in the region: in the Cévennes, where the tourism businesses are very small, spread out over the entire area and therefore often isolated, a number of tourism professionals had expressed the need for an individualized accompaniment that was only partially answered by existing programmes.

The second condition is the acknowledgement of the legitimacy of the “Parc National des Cévennes” (for which it is not, *a priori*, the principal vocation), to conduct such a tourism development programme: strengthened by several years experience concerning the implementation of a tourism development plan, notably concerning hiking and way marking, the Park has acquired local recognition from the different institutional organizations and consular services acting as authorities in the domain of tourism.

The third condition concerns the experience of working together developed between the Park and certain tourism businesses of the region: this experience has been forged year after year notably from leading the “Gîtes PANDA” development programme with the organizations “Gîtes de France” and the WWF.

The last condition, which can be linked to the previous one, is the presence in the area of tourism stakeholders who have an objective view of their business and their relationship with the region, and who are “mature” enough to subscribe to a programme that, at first sight, seems far removed from the day to day preoccupations of a director of a tourism business.

2/ The implementation of Parts 1 and 2 of the European Charter in the Cévennes :

Very briefly, the stages of this implementation developed as follows :

2001

- The structuring of a network of tourism businesses willing to subscribe to the sustainable tourism programme with the “Parc National des Cévennes” : the association CEVENNES ECOTOURISME.
- Forum of information concerning the Charter and public exchange (230 participants, 140 businesses represented).

2002

- Assessment by EUROPARC and signature in October of the Charter by the National Park.
- Elaboration and testing of a method of recognition of tourism businesses on 14 businesses, within the “association des Parcs du Massif Central”(IPAMAC).
- Consolidation of CEVENNES ECOTOURISME, notably with the recruitment of a full-time development agent, and the elaboration a three-year programme of action.

2003

- Implementation of the method of approval with the first 6 businesses (a process lasting approximately six months.
- Increase in the number of businesses becoming members of CEVENNES ECOTOURISME.
- Leading and accompaniment of members (meetings, practical guide...).

2004

- Recognition, on the 5th February, of the first six businesses in the terms of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism, after confirmation by EUROPARC of the principle of subsidiarity enabling the “Parc National des Cévennes, signatory

of Part 1, to recognize as “charter businesses” in the terms of Part 2, the businesses within Park territory.

- About ten other tourism businesses should be recognized before the end of the year.

3/ « Focus » on the accompaniment of the businesses :

The application of Part 2, which should respond both to the framework of the European Charter and the demand for accompaniment expressed by the region’s tourism stakeholders, has necessitated the elaboration of a method to facilitate the resolution of certain difficulties.

- An innovative concept combined with a concrete and pragmatic approach.

The implementation of Part 2 is a procedure of the global qualitative progress of the tourism offer of a region towards sustainable tourism, which necessitates a global and personalized approach to each business. Over and above the necessary explication of the concept of sustainable tourism and the 12 principles of the Charter, this programme can be distinguished from the « labelling » procedures with which tourism service providers are generally familiar: there is no exclusion, *a priori*, of a business, and no assessment grid with discriminatory or qualifying criteria. The Forum that launched the programme, as well as the numerous explication meetings and on-site testing of the 14 businesses willing to take part, have been necessary to communicate on the procedure, refine the way in which it should be presented, and create the link between the programme and the day to day preoccupations of tourism businesses.

- A guarantee of respect concerning the programme initiated by EUROPARC, combined with a tailor-made adaptation to the needs of each business.

According to the principle of subsidiarity, EUROPARC considers the Parc National des Cévennes as guarantor of conformity with the European Charter, of the procedure that it leads concerning Part 2 of the programme. This has necessitated a clear repartition of roles between the Park, the association CEVENNES ECOTOURISME, and the tourism stakeholders concerned. To summarize, the Park is the guarantor and the association assures the permanent interface between the park and the businesses. The stakeholders are the veritable motors and actors of the programme as they have subscribed, with the Park, to the programme of action that they have themselves elaborated.

Another necessary element has been the creation of a technical committee of independent experts in order to guarantee neutrality, and an independent recognition commission to judge the consistency of the stakeholders project with the European Charter. The recognition of the business is translated, *in fine*, by the signature of a three-year contract with the Park, and by an annual follow-up of the advancement of the engagements agreed to by the business.

- An accompaniment process combined with a development of responsibility of the businesses engaged in the programme.

The response to the need of an individualized accompaniment process expressed by the tourism service providers of the region was the condition, *sine qua non*, of the implementation of Part 2. However, it was important to guard against a form of assistance through state aid. This is the reason that the Park has privileged a partnership procedure, and assisted the association CEVENNES ECOTOURISME in the acquisition of a full-time development

agent. The agent develops an individualized accompaniment for each stakeholder engaged in the programme, as well as researching into and elaborating answers and support material (formation, practical guides...) for the collective accompaniment needs that are progressively coming to light. Thus it is the association, created by the tourism stakeholders, that is at the centre of the accompaniment process and more generally leading Part 2 of the Charter. Several thematic workgroups have also recently been formed within the Association in the objective of experience sharing and developing reflection.

The method of business recognition, developed within IPAMAC, and implemented by the Parc National des Cévennes comports the following 7 stages :

- Membership of CEVENNES ECOTOURISME.
- Personalized audit of the business by CEVENNES ECOTOURISME.
- Examination of the audit report by a pluri-disciplinary committee followed by recommendations.
- Eventual thematic assessments.
- Drafting of a strategy and three-year action plan by the business, with the aid of CEVENNES ECOTOURISME.
- Opinion given by the Tourism Commission of the “Parc National des Cévennes” on the consistency of the business’ action programme with the principles of the Charter.
- Contract between the stakeholder and the Park, having the value of recognition in terms of the Charter, specifying the engagements over the three-year period agreed by the business.

After signature of the contract, CEVENNES ECOTOURISME, with the support of the Park, accompanies the stakeholders in the realization of their action programme.

This method evidently is not static and can be adapted if necessary, as long as the principles of individual adaptation to each business, development of responsibility and confidence, independent expertise, and accompaniment/ follow-up procedures are respected.

4/ Perspectives, in guise of a conclusion:

As with all processes of sustainable development, the implementation of Part 2 of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism needs time to develop, as it concerns first and foremost the alteration of a way of thinking that requires an important implication of the person involved, over and above that required by the tourism business.

The success of the method in little more than 6 months for the first six businesses proves that it is relatively pragmatic, whilst respecting the spirit, le principle of subsidiarity, and the framework of the Charter initiated by EUROPARC. These 6 signatures are only a beginning, and mark the starting point of the most important phase of the procedure, which is the accompaniment of the stakeholders in the realization of their programme of action.

The complete and total success of the application of Part 2, and therefore of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in general, will depend on the answers that are collectively found, by each person at his/her own level, to the following questions :

- How can a « saturation » of the accompaniment capacity of the association CEVENNES ECOTOURISME be avoided ?

- How can the balance be assured between a rapid answer to the real expectations of stakeholders, and a certain «slowness » experienced in terms of the programme, that is necessary to guarantee its quality ?
- How can the programme be consolidated, and acknowledged as important by all the partners of the local tourism sector ?
- How can the number of protected natural areas involved in the application of Part 2 of the Charter be increased, in order to obtain an important «critical mass » on a European level ?
- How can the image and acknowledgement of businesses recognized by the European Charter of Sustainable Tourism be reinforced at the European level, at a time when the European Commission promotes certain “eco-labels” in parallel ?

3. Working Groups

3.1. Introduction

The aim of the working groups' sessions was to discuss:

- common problems
- strategies/solutions and how these can be transferred to other parks
- strategies how to develop the Charter within the parks
- future cooperation among the Charter Parks

Three different themes had been identified for the workshops:

- The Charter as a tool for marketing and communication
- Working with tourism enterprises and lokal stakeholders
- Visitor management and monitoring

3.2. Working Group 1: The Charter as a tool for marketing and communication

Questions:

- Have you used the Charter as a marketing / communications tool? If so, how? If not, why not?
- How do the organisational structures with regards to marketing in your park look like?
- Which role does your park/ do tourism organisations play in marketing?
- How does the Charter parks' marketing look like? How do you "sell" the park?
- How can the Charter help to initialise/strengthen communication processes among the stakeholders in the park?
- How can the Charter processes be linked with other regional processes? Where do you see synergies?

Chair: H el ene Hasl e

Participants:

Richard Blackman, H el ene Hasl e, Anja Hesse, Michael Iwand, Laure Sagaert, Frank Steingass

Results:

- **Marketing**
 - Too early for group to have an opinion
- **Communication**
 1. Internal
 2. External
 3. Within the Network

1. Internal Communication

- Leaflet
 - Common for all parks:
 - introduction to charter/ short definition/ European coverage
 - Emphasis on ongoing process of Charter

- Customised for each park
- Role of the Leaflet
 - educative role regarding sustainable tourism development
 - widening of parks work role: higher visibility of tourism
- regular training sessions
- Internet
 - every charter park / mutual links

2. External Communication

- participating in fairs and events: e.g.: Reisepavillon –Profile within tourism sector...
- Fundings:
 - Participating in working group for sustainable development at the European Commission Group
 - To be a Charter Park provides credibility to collect funds. e.g. Marais du Cotentin, Scarpe-Escaut, Feder Funds

3. Within the Network

- Website of Europarc: better structure of the website
- To promote the existing members forum of Europarc website and dedicate it to sustainable tourism
- A Charter letter
- Links to all Charter Park websites
- Mailing List: events, news, publications...
- Gathering of information about the parks

3.3. Working Group 2: Working with tourism enterprises and lokal stakeholders

Questions:

- Outline the ways you have worked with different stakeholders: local businesses, local communities, local government, NGOs.
- What are the main obstacles to developing cooperation with local stakeholders and how do you overcome them?
- Outline some characteristic projects.
- How has the Charter improved the climate in which you operate?
- How has the cooperation with/among stakeholders changed since you started working with the Charter?
- What are the main conflicts between tourism and the park/nature conservation?
- What is/can be the role of “Local Agenda 21” /other processes?

Chair: Josep Maria Prats

Participants:

Richard Denman, Patrizia Rossi, Sandrine Charnay, Jouni Aarnio, Tim Ormrod, Marylène Pin, Catherine Lasalle, Barbara Engels, Ulrich Köster

Results:

Outline the ways you have worked with different stakeholders: local businesses, local communities, local government, NGOs. *And*

How has the cooperation with/among stakeholders changed since you started working with the Charter?

Syöte National Park, Finland:

- Meeting of all relevant stakeholders twice a year; a network/discussion forum with the businesses about the park (including accommodation enterprises)
- Face to face discussions with each enterprise once a year (to give the enterprises the information where there can take their clients)
- A book has been produced for enterprises to help them to tell their visitors about the park
- There is an enterprise association which is controlled by the park. There are mainly guided tour operators. A verification system has been established to certify the tour operators (certification of accommodation enterprises is not yet in place). The system builds on three steps:
 1. the enterprise makes the application
 2. the Park verifies it via a) a written exam and b) a practical exam
 3. a partnership contract between the Park and the enterprise; There are three levels: Level 1: Enterprise is allowed to access the Park; Level 2: promotion by the Park via website links; Level 3: a real partnership (benefits for the enterprise: link on the Parks websites, advertising in the Park's visitor centres, free publication from the)

The enterprises have to qualify for overall Metsähallitus quality and sustainability criteria.
Re-evaluation is envisaged every three years. Currently 5 tour operators are verified.
- Publication "Nature based tourism in Syöte National Park".

Cévennes National Park, France:

- « Cevennes ecotourisme » is the only professional tourism association; it has 43 members with which the Association is in direct contact. The challenge is to extend the communication to all the 910 tourism professionals active in the area. The objective of "Cevennes ecotourisme" is to help in environmental and economic matters.
- The best way has shown to be face to face communication; at the moment, this can be managed as there are only 43 members; if the association grows this close one to one relationship at high level has to be maintained.
- The park supports "Cevennes ecotourisme" by giving 10% of the overall budget (totalling 75.000 €); the rest is coming from LEADER+ and from the French government. At the moment: no membership fee, but this is being considered.
- Together with IPAMAC (the association of 8 parks within the Massif Central) criteria to certify enterprises have been established (see presentation of Marylene Pin/Sandrine Charnay). At present, the Park has not enough staff to do the full checking, but they hope to overcome it. 6 enterprises have been certified by now.

Parc naturel régional du Vexin français, France :

- The French federation (of natural regional parks) has a label “Parc naturel”; the criteria are set out by the Federation and adapted locally.
- A network of tourism enterprises exists. There is a direct relationship with the park (no association). Meetings take place once per month (ca. 20 people attend).
- There are small training sessions taking place.

Alpi Marittime, Italy:

- has created an association to ensure continuity for the work between the park and the tourism businesses (since 2003);
- 40 members (the Park, 7 public bodies/municipalities and enterprises); membership fee is 100 €/year, the Park supports the association with 5.000 €/year (total budget: 25.000 € + INTERREG money to pay a coordinator for 3 years);
- the members have to subscribe to sustainable tourism principles; they get a sticker “Engaged in sustainable tourism principles”; they receive training

La Garrotxa, Spain:

- collaboration before engaging in the Charter
- Park: no authority for tourism
- There is a tourism association

Summary:

There are big differences between the parks regarding their cooperation with tourism enterprises and other stakeholders. This ranges from direct contacts (Syöte National Park), regular meetings (such as seminars, training courses) to specific associations (Cevennes ecotourisme, INMarittime Ecoturismo, Turismo Garroxta)

What are the main obstacles to developing cooperation with local stakeholders

- Financial means
- The number of enterprises (from very low (Alpi Marittime) to very high (Cevennes))

and how do you overcome them?

- Create mutual confidence
- The Park as an authority (Syöte)
- Show the advantages to the enterprises (via associations)

How has the Charter improved the climate in which you operate?

- In all parks the climate has significantly improved
- The Charter has proven to be an/the essential tool to communicate with tourism stakeholders

What are the main conflicts between tourism and the park/nature conservation?

- There is a “tension” between both;
- Sustainability as the only way to overcome the tension; but this needs tools to check the results of the actions (at the end of the process)
- Carrying capacity has to be defined

What is/can be the role of “Local Agenda 21” /other processes?

- Forest of Bowland: the profile of the Charter must fit in the defined “local Agenda 21”

General remark: A better definition of the approach to develop the Second part of the Charter is needed.

Remark from IPAMAC: All charter Parks are invited to test the IPAMAC manual with guidelines for the work with tourism enterprises.

3.4. Working Group 3: Visitor management and monitoring

Questions:

- Outline some of the specific challenges that your park has faced, and how you have worked to overcome them.
- Did you/your park experience conflicts between ecological, economic and social sustainability goals?
- How do you carry out the analysis of the current status/ the monitoring in your park?
- Who is responsible for status quo analysis and/or monitoring?
- Have you developed indicators to measure the impact of visitors on the area? If yes, please give an overview.
- Do you assess visitors’ wishes and needs? If, so how? Do these results influence the product development (link to group 2)?

Chair: Don McKay

Participants :

Jacques Decuignieres, Beate Job-Hoben, Don McKay, Oswald Marr, Volker Naser, Bo Storrang, Ilka Wedekind

Results:

1. Outline some of the specific challenges that your park has faced, and how you have worked to overcome them?

- a) Visitor-Management in sensitive areas. For examples: Close down some paths in sensitive areas and provide other paths and other activities in less sensitive areas
Provide opportunities for visitors to enjoy guided walks and information boards
- b) Planning recreation routes especially for mountain bikers together with all stakeholders helps to avoid problems
- c) Installation of a web-site on available recreational services
- d) What are the expectations of our visitors

2. Did you/your park experience conflicts between ecological, economic and social sustainability goals?

- a) Problem for the inhabitants: Prices for goods and services rose in the tourist seasons

- b) Problem: protection of wild life and the interests of some inhabitants (hunters, reindeer-owners)
- c) Only the tourist areas get economic benefit. So there is a need to spread the benefits of tourism more widely

3. Who is responsible for status quo analysis and/or monitoring? How do you carry out the analysis of the current status/the monitoring in your park?

- a) Monitoring depends on the sensitivities of the park.
- b) Visitor monitoring:
 - electronic equipment for counting the visitors
 - visitor interviews and questionnaires
 - sample surveys of people outside the park carried out by telephone
 - focus groups
 - manual counts (rangers)
 - GIS-System
- c) Ecological monitoring
 - GIS
 - Area photographs over time
 - Measuring erosion problems
 - Map flora and fauna
 - Making information known annually

4. Have you developed indicators to measure the impact of visitors on the area? If yes, please give an overview.

- many of the parks are at the beginning of developing indicators
- most parks have some indicators and are improving these on the basis of experience
- examples: scientific surveys (counting and mapping plants, animals and birds; reproductive capacities of birds and animals; erosion problems on paths)
- traffic counts, monitoring toll barriers
- counting bed nights
- counting numbers of people on guided walks

5. Do you assess visitors wishes and needs? If, so how? Do these results influence the product development?

In response to visitor demand:

- in France Panda gites offers a package for nature study
- Many areas provide an experience of local cuisine with local products prepared using local dishes/recipes. It helps traditional agriculture and landscape conservation
- Provide a good quality of accommodations to cater for visitor needs, such as for cycling groups, hikers etc.
- Facilities for special groups: walkers, cyclists, horse-riders, handicapped
- Providing a good quality of visitor information and interpretation

4. Developing the Charter Network

Working Group 1:

see Chapter 3.2.

Working Group 2:

What does your park / do you as a protected area tourism specialist want to gain from the Charter Parks network?

- Exchange experiences: a) on Park managers' level and b) on working level (thematic/technical meetings)
- Comparison of tourism strategies/plans
- Meeting to prepare application for funding
- Coordination of regular contacts between the parks
- Ensuring contact between EUROPARC and the parks

How do you see the network developing?

- How many parks can join the Charter every year? (capacity?)
- What is the optimum/the critical size for the Charter network?
- What about a balance between the countries? (CEE countries will be necessary to get EU money)
- Renewal of the Website (include questionnaires, studies and reports, the report of this meeting)
- Marketing for the Charter
- Use of EUROPARC sections/national federations to organise the network

Proposals for next actions:

- use the General Assembly in Spain for a next meeting
- establish a Newsletter
- discuss funding possibilities
- organise regular meetings

Working Group 3:

What does your park/ do you as a protected area tourism specialist want to gain from the Charter Parks network?

- raise the standing/ importance of the Charter and Charter Parks
- in turn we will raise the importance of sustainable tourism
- explain to visitors what the "Charter Park" means
- we need to be able to give examples of best practice throughout Europe

How do you see the network developing?

- number of Charter Parks increase
- but danger of expanding numbers if don't have strong linkages
- need project(s) as glue to keep us together
- value for money -return for investment needs to be good for generating more funds
- EUROPARC consulting we want to see them attending seminars

What would you/ your park be prepared to contribute to the network?

- we could have lead parks for special subjects
 - e.g. new tourism products
 - wildlife management
 - visitor management
 - local products

lead park could hold seminars – attendees pay own travel accommodation free!
exchange visits

- existing charter parks can encourage other to apply for Charter Park
- need to ensure Charter Park process is made more important for all EUROPARC members

5. Conclusions and next steps

Conclusions

- (1) The Charter has proved to be a valuable tool for implementing sustainable tourism in protected areas.
- (2) The Charter is not a quality label, although ‘quality’ is a guiding principle. The value of the Charter is the process.
- (3) The future of the Charter is to keep the network open, not limiting the numbers of parks. Although, there are some factors which might be limiting: such as the capacity for coordination, evaluation, handling the network. (Charter Parks from CEE countries might be necessary to get future EU funding.)
- (4) Coordination of the network and the promotion of the Charter to new applicants can be delegated to regional “bodies” (EUROPARC Sections or national Federations).

The overall aim of future steps is to reinforce the networking activities in two directions: both widening and deepening the network.

The planned actions will focus on:

- information exchange
- common projects and funding
- communication of the Charter to professionals and consumers

Volunteers to contribute to the following actions are most welcome!! (please contact the “lead person”)

Action 1.: In formation of the meetings outcomes

Information all about the conclusions and steps.

Lead: BfN

Action 2.: EUROPARC Members Forum

- Make use of the EUROPARC member forum for dissemination of information and for contact among the parks.
Lead: Frank Steingass.
- Inform all about how to use it.

Action 3: EUROPARC website

- Information about the parks “questionnaire” Lead: BfN and Parks
- Report of the meeting . Lead: BfN
- Section on strategies. Lead: EUROPARC and parks
- Map: lead BfN

EUROPARC cares for regular updates of the websites!

Action 4: The Charter Parks’ websites

- A special section on the Charter with links to all parks, the commitments and general information about the Charter. (English and mother-language) Lead: Jacques Decuignieres and EUROPARC webmaster
- “A short phrase to encapsulate the message of the Charter”
Lead: Don Mc Kay

Action 5: Newsletter

- parks send information to EUROPARC and EUROPARC compiles them and send its back to the Parks (twice a year February and June). Addressed to: Charter Parks, Candidate parks, the evaluation committee, verifiers + selected individuals/organisations (French and German federation, BfN, EUROPARC sections)
Lead: EUROPARC and the parks

Action 6: Mailing list

- Establish an “e-mail group” with all the stakeholders (see step 5). The mailing list should be used by all to disseminate information on events, publications, seminars, etc.
Lead: EUROPARC

Action 7: Meetings

- Next meeting at the general assembly in Roses Catalonia (29.09.-03.10.04). In the framework of the official Charter side-meeting (03.10.04, morning session) subject: funding, e.g. INTERREG III (revision of planned actions)
Preparatory group: Sandrine Charnay, Patrizia Rossi, Ullrich Köster, (Tony Gates?)
- Further meetings. Thematic meetings on a topic to be selected. Lead: J. Dequinières (Meeting could take place in the Lubéron in 2004 or 2005).
2005: Forest of Bowland. Topic to be decided.
- Nordic-Baltic Section will discuss the possibility to arrange a thematic meeting
Lead: Bo Storrånk

Action 8: Funding

- See step 7 a)
- Funding possibility by EU Committee of the Regions (Research programme); to be developed (First step: letter of interest to be send to the CoR)
Lead: EUROPARC and French Federation
- Date to remember 29.03.04 EU Seminar on funding opportunities in the tourism sector (http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/services/tourism/conference2004/index_en.htm).

Action 9: Communication

- Action 9: Communication
- Fairs and conferences: Charter Parks should try to use the opportunities offered by fairs and conferences when present there (e.g. Reise pavillon Hannover) to communicate the Charter both to professionals and consumers

Action 10: Elaboration of the Charter Part II

- All parks are invited to test the application of the IPAMAC Guidelines on the second part of the Charter (tourism enterprises). The document is available at IPAMAC (Sandrine Charnay: inter-parcs-massif-central@wanadoo.fr)
- Commission a translation of the document into German.
Lead: Frank Steingass.

6. Questionnaires

6.1. Luberon nature park - parc naturel regional du Luberon, France

Please, give a short description of your park (What does the natural landscape/cultural landscape, significant landmarks and touristic highlight look like?)

Created in 1977

Its name was given by the Luberon range, 75km long in the heart of the territory.

The territory is famous with the ochre massif, Mediterranean landscapes and small medieval villages, most of them built on hilltops.

It is a tourist area and some spots welcome each year hundred thousands of visitors.

With 155, 000 people it is inhabited area including four towns, the largest amounting to 25,000 inhabitants.

The tourism was present here before the park was created.

The challenge is :

- to prevent too heavy concentration of tourism in some places,
- to protect environment and landscapes, together with the way of living of local people,
- to contribute to make housing affordable for the young and coming populations,
- to scatter the tourist flows and benefits on to the whole territory.

What are the main Charter-Projects?

- cycling around the Luberon and local loops using little byways,
- protection, refurbishment and valorization of the building heritage in villages,
- development and networking of village museums,
- to make the Luberon more accessible to people other than “fortunated” tourists.

By whom are the Charter/Charter projects financed?

We got some fundings from the Region and the Ministry of Environment.

But most of the costs are covered by the park.

6.2. Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), United Kingdom

Please, give a short description of your park (What does the natural landscape/cultural landscape, significant landmarks and touristic highlight look like?).

The Forest of Bowland was designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in 1964. The primary purpose of AONB designation is to conserve and enhance natural beauty.

The Forest of Bowland AONB is situated in North West England covering 803 square kilometres of rural upland in the counties of Lancashire (730 sq.km.) and North Yorkshire (73 sq.km.)

The AONB has an estimated total population of approximately 16,000 living mainly in villages, hamlets and farms along the valleys and lower lying land.

The Village of Dunsop Bridge within the Forest of Bowland AONB is said to be the nearest village to the centre of the United Kingdom.

The Moorland Plateaux, a large central upland core of exposed gritstone fells (250-500 mt) dominates the Forest of Bowland AONB landscape. This area represents the most remote and exposed landscape type in the area and is characterised by a gently-rolling platform. Trees are generally absent, landcover is redominantly blanket bog, some rock strata outcrops occur and a vegetation cover of moorland heath and grasses is typical.

The nature conservation value of the Forest of Bowland AONB is illustrated by the designation of significant parts (approx 13%) of the area as Special Protection Area (SPA) or Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The moorland habitat is a major breeding ground for upland birds and the major part of the Bowland Fells is designated a SPA under the European Birds Directive.

Upland farming and game management together, dominate the land use of the Forest of Bowland, including the sites of European Nature conservation significance and play a major part in maintaining/developing the moorland character of heather covered fells and grass moors (black and blanche fells), small woodlands and plantations and tidily managed farms. The more natural areas include extensive blanket bog of international importance and unimproved wet pastures important for nesting waders.

Extensive areas of Bowland are water catchment land (11,000 hectares owned by United Utilities) there are a few small reservoirs in Bowland and at Pendle Hill, the largest at Stocks (3 kilometres long) and water is also abstracted from upland rivers.

Today, the Forest of Bowland is a name that has been given to the AONB but in the Middle Ages, just a portion of the Bowland Fells was actually part of the designated Royal Forest of Bowland. Forests were places for the hunting of game particularly deer, not for trees as the name might suggest and the designation of much of the area as Forest had a controlling impact upon the landscape for centuries, restricting development and prohibiting change.

The predominant sector of employment within the Bowland Census area for people aged between 16-74 is manufacturing 14.3%, wholesale & retail trade; repair of motor vehicles 13.9%, agriculture; hunting; forestry 11.5%, education 11.1%, health and social work 10.9%,

Real estate; renting and business activities 9.9%, construction 7.2%, hotels and catering 6.4% and Other totalled 14.8%

The Forest of Bowland does not have an extensive principal road network, the central upland fells are characterised by a lack of roads. The M6 motorway and the West Coast main railway run north-south close to the western boundary of the AONB with main line stations at Preston and Lancaster and the M65 lies to the south of the AONB. There is limited rail access around the fringes of the area and at Clitheroe where a transport interchange facility is run by Lancashire County Council.

Beacon Fell Country Park and the Bowland Visitor Centre in the south west of the AONB, is the major site based visitor attraction within the AONB, attracting some 300,000 visitors annually.

The creation of a right of access to open country (mountain, moor, heath and down) and Registered Common Land under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) will designate large areas of the Bowland Fells as 'open country'. This increases by approximately ten times the previous official access arrangements within the AONB.

The predominance of day visitors to the AONB and the relatively limited facilities for longer-stay visitors does highlight the need for further sustainable tourism initiatives. Rural business advice to farm businesses in particular, partly funded by the AONB partnership through Lancashire Rural Futures, is encouraging farm diversification and agri-environment schemes and a number of farm business have been developing tourism accommodation and other visitor facilities.

The Forest of Bowland AONB partnership has been working in concert with the rural businesses and communities to enhance opportunities for public enjoyment, understanding and appreciation of the special qualities of the Forest of Bowland area.

The Forest of Bowland AONB registered as a Candidate Charter Park in December 2003 for the EUROPARC Federation European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas.

What are the main Charter-Projects?

The Forest of Bowland AONB is a Candidate for Europarc Charter status and is currently embarking on drawing up a Sustainable Tourism Strategy. A new statutory Management Plan was approved in February 2004 setting out a programme to develop, amongst other things, opportunities for sustainable management of the landscapes and wildlife of the Area, its special features of interest and public access to, and enjoyment of the area.

Main project is:-

Sustainable Tourism Strategy – Sustainable Tourism Steering group formed and contract let to consultants. Projects will be drawn up in accordance with the Strategy.

Other Existing Projects relevant to the Charter but not badged as Charter projects include: -

Lancashire Rural Futures – formerly the Bowland Initiative

A scheme started in 1999 with Objective 5B funding to offer farmers and landowners business and environmental advice and help with entering agri-environment schemes. With Objective 2 funding and contributions from Lancashire County Council and the jointly funded Forest of Bowland budget a successor scheme was rolled out to North East Lancashire and that part of Bowland in North Yorkshire

Information and Promotion Strategy – funding for Promotion and Information Assistant approved in 2003; seminar and workshops held; draft strategy in course of preparation.

Visitor Payback Scheme – Tourism Environment Fund

The Bowland Tourism and Environment fund was established:

To demonstrate that tourism and conservation can be mutually supportive.

To raise funds to enable environmental work to be carried out.

To raise awareness amongst visitors of the fragility of the landscape and the need to protect it.

The collected money is distributed to groups working to improve or maintain the landscape.

The scheme particularly seeks to fund environmental improvements, which although often small in scale make an immediate and highly visible difference.

Bowland Charter Assured

The Bowland Charter Assured Scheme supports outstanding rural enterprises which operate in harmony with their natural and beautiful local surroundings. To be accredited within the scheme, businesses must demonstrate their outstanding products or service, must support the local rural economy, and manage their business in harmony with the environment.

All the businesses within the scheme have received an audit, and all agree to strive to:

Ensure that their activities have minimal impact on the environment.

Actively support the local economy

Support the Bowland Tourism & Environment Fund.

Undiscovered Bowland - Heritage Lottery Funding bid that revolves around both physical and intellectual access to and understanding of Bowland's heritage in terms of its history (ancient and modern) wildlife heritage (partly natural and partly resulting from man's land management activities).

Parish Lengthsman Scheme

The Lengthsman scheme is, in essence, the re-incarnation of an old concept; a locally employed person to maintain roadside verges and drainage, public open space and pathways. The concept was expanded in a pilot project in Bowland to tackle small-scale environmental projects directly or jointly with the local community and the partners involved. The scheme results in a more attractive environment for residents and visitors alike and has now expanded throughout Lancashire with other AONBs also taking up the idea.

Quiet Lanes and Greenways – working with communities to identify networks of roads and paths that might form part of an enhanced network for informal recreation for walkers, cyclists and horseriders. Strategic moorland track restored for cycling and hoseriding. Quiet lanes designated and signed in 3 parishes in 2003/04 and greenway improvements implemented. Further phases planned.

Bowland Open Access Pilot Study

A project to test all relevant aspects of open country legislation on a defined area of private, managed land with a view to identifying any inconsistency and seeking consensus to the satisfaction of all stakeholders.

By whom are the Charter/Charter projects financed?

The Sustainable Tourism Strategy is funded by the Forest of Bowland AONB jointly funded budget, Lancashire County Council, the Lancashire Rural Recovery Action Plan (Regional Development Agency funding), Leader Plus bid pending.

Other projects attract a wide variety of funding from UK government agencies and local councils with contributions from the private sector and additional donations in kind from community groups and local farmewrs/landowners.

6.3. Parco Naturale Alpi Marittime, Italy

Please, give a short description of your park (What does the natural landscape/cultural landscape, significant landmarks and touristic highlight look like?).

Key features:

Natural

The mountain landscapes, characterised by rocky peaks and mountain lakes

The special combination of alpine and mediterranean flora

A rich fauna, including one of the highest concentration of chamois in the Alps, and many birds of prey such as eagles, peregrine falcons, and recently introduced bearded vultures. The recent return of wolves is a theme of potential visitor interest

Thermal spa

Historic and cultural

Hunting lodges and other buildings associated with King Victor-Emmanuel II

Small chapels related to a former pilgrimage trail

Archeological sites including Neolithic remains and Bronze Age tombs

Traditional small rural dwelling houses and agricultural buildings

Non-built heritage includes links to Occitane culture, traditional mountain gastronomy.

Total staff number: 30, a special tourism sector, composed by 1 tourism and communication manager and 3 staff members

Estimated annual visitors number: 300.000

Amount and type of accommodation:

16 hotels with 331 rooms and 640 beds

2 agriturismo (rural accommodation)

10 mountain refuges

3 caravan/campsites

park visitor services: 4 visitor centres, a botanical garden, 4 thematic trail, 5 parking and picnic areas, summer events, winter cross-country ski facilities

Priorities of park management:

- protection and conservation of the natural environment of the park for public enjoyment
- scientific, pedagogic, cultural and recreational use
- conservation of historical and traditional buildings
- traditional agriculture and forestry
- sustainable development of local population.

What are the main Charter-Projects?

Sustainable tourism strategy and action plan: date of completion: may 2000

(Visitor survey (950 questionnaires) and data collected from local tourism organisations)

Partnership structure with local tourism stakeholders: in December 2002 the association "Ecoturismo in Marittime" has been established, 40 members (9 local public administrations and 31 private tourism operators)

Strategic objectives

To protect and gain value from the environment and heritage

- Find ways in which the special appeal of the natural environment can be used more effectively to strengthen the tourism offer

To increase the economic and social benefit from tourism

- The economy of the area is weak. Currently tourism enterprises have a very short season

To protect and improve the quality of life of the local people

- Economic benefits, better local services (transport and retailing)

To improve the quality of the tourism offer in line with market opportunities

- The tourism facilities in the area are generally outdated and the standards are not high. There is a strong need for more creative development and marketing of tourism offers in line with market opportunities.

Some of the actions proposed in the strategy and action plan

- Improve the offer of short stays out of season, events out of the peak season (Festa dei margari, beginning of July, Festa di inizio estate, beginning of June)
- Improve quality for disadvantage people
- Establish and promote walking and ecotourism discovery packages
- Encourage more school and education visits with overnight stays
- Create a single attractive and comprehensive brochure of the area
- Maintain a website
- Establish a logical system of visitor signposting
- Establish a series of training programmes
- Improve communication with local people about tourism issue, running a regular feature about tourism in the park newsletter, with interview with local tourism enterprises and residents
- Using local tourism facilities to improve services for the residents (example: the local shop in S. Anna di Valdieri is also part of the ecomuseum)
- Develop the role of the new Park Centre on the wolf
- Promote the Ecomuseum, the pre-historical sites and the royal buildings
- Promote traditional gastronomy
- Improve actions to save energy and reduce waste
- Seek to develop more agritourism and agricultural product (flower and medicinal plants)
- Agree a plan on future development of spa facilities (Terme di Valdieri)
- Promote the use of public transport (shuttle services)
- Monitoring visitor number
- Points of interest in marginal areas

By whom are the Charter/Charter projects financed?

The park is financed by the Region (Regione Piemonte). All the Charter actions are financed by the park budget.. Budget for tourism activities: only investments: 76.000 EUROS

This does not include staff salaries and ordinary running costs

We also have an Interreg IIC project with French Parc National du Mercantour which gives us additional funding for the charter projects.

6.4. Federation “Rhin Vivant” (Living Rhine): natural protected areas along the Rhine bassin, France

Please, give a short description of your park (What does the natural landscape/cultural landscape, significant landmarks and touristic highlight look like?).

The natural heritage :

Protected areas	Surface in ha
Nature reserves	1482
Reserve projects (Neuhof, Robertsau + extension of the PCA)	1 481,2 + 900
Habitat protection by prefectural decree	2 883,6
Registered and classified sites	4 987,4
Public biological forest reserves	434,8
Protected forests	5 965,3
Hunting reserves	8 446,5
Total	25 680,8

Cultural heritage :

The Rhine basin has a rich cultural and historical heritage. The city of Strasbourg represents an important centre of attractiveness for the region. Being the home of the Council of Europe, the European Parliament as well as the European Court of Human Rights, Strasbourg has been entitled “Capital of Europe” on first of July 2003 by signing a triennial contract. Strasbourg has been registered in the UNESCO World Heritage list in 1989. The city offers an extraordinary choice of museums as well as a rich architectural heritage.

Other sites of remarkable architectural interest (Brisach and New-Brisach, masterpiece of Vauban) or characterized by historic events are situated along the Rhine (the Gallo-roman relicts of Biesheim, the citadel of Fort-Louis, Huningue...).

What are the main Charter-Projects?

Taking into account the characteristics and preoccupation of the territory, sustainable tourism development is based on the following orientations :

- A specific offer : restoration and revaluation of the natural heritage through nature protection ; restructuring of the tourism offer, valuation of the cultural and historical heritage ; and the development of accommodation and gastronomy infrastructure.

- General policy of recapturing and appropriation of Rhenish identity by the local population
- A quality approach, sensitization and improving professionalism of all stakeholders, as well as evaluation
- An intern and extern communication policy
- Cross-Rhenish cooperation

By whom are the Charter/Charter projects financed?

Until 2005, the project will be run within the framework of the program LIFE “Rhin-Vivant” co-financed by : The European Union, the Ministry of ecology and sustainable development, the Region of Alsace, the department Upper-Rhine, the department Lower-Rhine, the Rhinau community, the community La Wantzenau, the community of Offendorf, the community of the Sauer and the City of Strasburg.

After 2005, a financing plan will be worked out by the financial partners of the region to ensure the follow-up

6.5. Cairngorms National Park, Scotland

Please, give a short description of your park (What does the natural landscape/cultural landscape, significant landmarks and touristic highlight look like?).

The National Park is the largest in Britain, encompassing 3800 square kilometres, with the Cairngorm Plateau at its heart. It includes Britain's largest high upland wilderness area and contains 46 Munros. Some of Britain's finest wildlife and fragile environments are contained within its boundaries together with a wide diversity of built and cultural heritage. Geographically it falls into two distinct halves with Badenoch and Strathspey to the west, and, to the east, parts of the upper Dee and Don valleys and the upper reaches of the Angus Glens.

A typical visitor to the National Park is away from home on a holiday, in a party of two adults and no children and a visitor from Scotland. Their main activities are likely to be walking (hill and low level) and general sightseeing. The most common perception that visitors have of the area prior to a visit is of 'a tranquil unspoilt wilderness area where conservation is the main aim'.

The tourism industry in the Park is characterised by a large number of small businesses, with the few larger operators tending to be concentrated in the west. In developing year-round sustainable tourism the industry must address lengthening the season, stimulating shoulder season demand and broadening the appeal of the Park throughout more of the year and to more of the potential audience.

What are the main Charter-Projects?

The Cairngorm National Park Authority has convened a Tourism Development Working Group involving both private and public sector tourism interests. The development of a sustainable tourism strategy to meet the criteria of the European Charter has been identified as one of the 7 key issues for tourism in the Cairngorms area. It is intended to develop the strategy and action within the next 12 months so that an application for Charter status can be made to Europarc in spring 2005.

By whom are the Charter/Charter projects financed?

This is not applicable until the strategy has been developed.

6.6. Parc Natural de la Zona Volcànica de la Garrotxa, Spain

Please, give a short description of your park (What does the natural landscape/cultural landscape, significant landmarks and touristic highlight look like?).

The Natural Park of the Volcanic Region of La Garrotxa is located in the easternmost part of the Pyrenees, in the north-east of Catalonia, covering an area of 14,500 hectares and with a population of 33,000. The Garrotxa volcanic area is the best example of a volcanic landscape in the Iberian Peninsula and one of the most interesting in Europe. It has around forty strombolian and freatomagmatic cones and more than 20 basalt lava flows with special morphologies.

The area is extremely rich in flora, because of its location and biogeographical history, in quantitative terms (about 1,100 species of higher plants have been detected), and qualitative terms (there are several rare plant species in the Catalan flora), with a clear predominance of Mediterranean and Central European species. Nearly 65% of the Natural Park is occupied by wooded formations and especially holm-oak woods, oakwoods and beechwoods but also mixed forests and alder groves.

The fauna of the Natural Park is also diverse and there are species of great interest, particularly invertebrates. In 1996, 240 different species of vertebrates were catalogued, 31 of them mammals, 175 birds, 11 amphibians, 16 reptiles and 7 fish. As regards invertebrates, there are some rare species, but we should bear in mind that knowledge of this group is still limited.

Apart from the referred geological and biotic values, the special beauty of the volcanic area was the other reason for declaring it a protected area.

The attraction of the landscape lies in its contrasts. The typical distribution of land in farming, pastures and forests and the location of rural dwellings as a result of a sensible farming and forest use, has given the volcanic area an ordered, often bucolic, landscape.

Despite its rural character, the main focus of its economy is small and medium-sized industry, which is very diversified and based principally in Olot, the county town.

What are the main Charter-Projects?

We are working in 6 strategic objectives.

1. Develop a specific policy of quality for the whole tourism sector
2. Manage tourist numbers and monitor (or manage the visits?)
3. Promote and develop responsible marketing
4. Train, educate and sensitise both the public and tourism professionals
5. Protect and value natural and cultural heritage
6. Support the local economy and improve the quality of life of the local population

As a main action being implemented, there is a long term and wide scope project about new markets and creation of new products based on footpaths walking.

By whom are the Charter/Charter projects financed?

By the Nature Park, "Turisme Garrotxa" (tourism association) The "Fundació Garrotxa Líder (Leader Plus program) and several municipalities.

6.7. Upper Harz National Park & Harz National Park (Nationalparke Hochharz + Harz), Germany

Please, give a short description of your park (What does the natural landscape/cultural landscape, significant landmarks and touristic highlight look like?).

The Upper Harz National Park & Harz National Park are about to merge. forest-covered highlands in northern germany's plains; extreme weather conditions: harz range being the first obstacle for atlantic weather-straem -> therefore only german highlands with natural timberline (Mount Brocken, 1142 metres above sea level; 1.5 million visitors p.a., known from J. W. Goethe's FAUST (he placed the witch-gathering of the *walpurgis* scene on top of the Brocken after he was deeply impressed by a forester-guided hike to it's summit).

national parks harz + hochharz USP: "mountain wilderness – full of tales"

What are the main Charter-Projects?

we are still in charter aplication procedure – action plan containing projects is to be ready in summer 2004

By whom are the Charter/Charter projects financed?

charter: Federal ministry of Nature Conservation
projects: to be discussed

6.8. Association des Parcs naturels du Massif central : IPAMAC, France

this association is composed of 8 natural parks:

Parc national des Cévennes
Parc naturel régional du Pilat
Parc naturel régional Livradois-Forez
Parc naturel des causses du Quercy
Parc naturel régional des Grands Causses
Parc naturel du Haut-Languedoc
Parc naturel régional des Monts d'Ardèche
Parc naturel régional Périgord-Limousin

Please, give a short description of your park (What does the natural landscape/cultural landscape, significant landmarks and touristic highlight look like?).

The Livradois-Forez, the Pilat, the Monts d'Ardèche, the Cévennes, the Grands Causses, the Haut-Languedoc, the Causses du Quercy and the Périgord-Limousin are natural Parcs situated in the Massif Central area.

The Massif Central natural Parks work towards tourism that accords with the principle of sustainable development.

Localities and gastronomy : a traditional gastronomy of high quality, made up of distinctive cheeses (Fourme d'Ambert, Roquefort, Rocamadour...), a wide variety of charcuterie, foie gras and renowned wines (Saint Chinian, Saint Joseph...) illustrates the flavours and the diversity of these regions... not forgetting aromatic plants and of course the sweet chestnut.

Men and their know-how have built local economies : knife-making at Thiers and at Nontron, paper-making, leather-work, glove-making, pottery...

Pastoral farming : sheep-farming is a traditional activity of the Massif central that is very much present today.

A remarkable historical heritage

The Massif central, a region favoured by Christians in the middle Ages, was home to all denominations (protestants, cathars, Christian pilgrims, and the whole history of the Knights Templar and the Hospitaller).

Numerous monuments testify to this variety: La Chaise-Dieu, the Abbey of Sylvanès, Rocamadour, The Templar and Hospitaller sites on the Larzac, the paths leading to Santiago de Compostella, as well as the Romanesque churches and chapels.

What are the main Charter-Projects?

Eight Parks in the Massif central have formed an association: IPAMAC (Inter-Parcs Massif central) in order to work towards tourism that accords with the principles of sustainable development:

- protection and development of natural and cultural heritage,
- economic and social development
- preservation and improvement of the inhabitants' way of life
- control of the number of tourists and improvement of the quality of what is offered to them.

And to develop high quality products :

- through tourism involving exploration to the local heritage,
- thanks to tourist companies which are concerned for the environment, for the quality of their welcome and for the local economy.

In 2002, the Parc national des Cévennes have signed the EUROPARC charter.

In 2003, the Parc naturel régional du Pilat have signed the EUROPARC charter.

In 2005, the Parc naturel régional Livradois-forez would apply for it.

The 8 Parks have worked on an experimental method to associate tourism enterprises in the the charter program, which will be presented by the Parc national des cévennes and a representant of IPAMAC during the conference.

By whom are the Charter/Charter projects financed?

Each Park has its own local financers.

6.9. Parque Nacional da Peneda-Gerês/ Peneda-Gerês National Park, Portugal

Please, give a short description of your park .

The Peneda-Gerês National Park (PGNP), the first of the protected areas to be created (in 1971), is the only one with the status of National Park. It covers an area of around 70 000 hectares which includes five sub-districts: Melgaço, Arcos de Valdevez, Ponte da Barca, Terras de Bouro and Montalegre. Since 1997 it has been combined with the Galician Natural Park of Baixa Limia- Serra do Xurês to form the Gerês-Xurês Cross-Frontier Park are those of the rivers Cávado and Lima.

It unfolds between the Plateaux of Castro Laboreiro (1.340m), to the North, and Mourela (1.380m), to the East, and has notable mountain ranges such as those of Peneda, Soajo, Amarela, and Gerês. The principal catchment areas areas in the Park are those of the rovers Cávado and Lima.

In terms of geology, the Park area consists mainly of Hercynian granite outcrops and small strips of shale. There also incidences of more recent formations, drift and fluvial deposits and scree slopes, but these are less abundant.

The PGNP is situated in the transitional region between Atlantic and Mediterranean influences, and has various types of climate: Atlantic, Mediterranean and Continental, which, together with the topographical characteristics, give rise to separate micro-climates. These are reflected in the diversity of plant and animal communities, including species characteristic of Mediterranean, Euro-Siberian and Alpine areas.

In economical terms, the dominant activity throughout the territory is livestock farming, with crafting being complemented by grazing. Indigenous breed such as the *‘barrosã’* and the *‘cachena’* cattle, the *‘bravia’* goats and the *‘bordaleira’* sheep are also an important source of income. Other breeds are falling out of use, as is the case of *‘garrano’* (*Equus caballus*), a Luso-Galician horse perfectly adapted to a life of liberty and the *‘castro-laboreiro’* dog, which was used for driving and guarding livestock.

Closely linked to the livestock farming is the forestry wok. It is in the *‘baldios’* – collective lands managed by the local communities – that people forage an assortment of essential commodities: firewood, timber, and the scrub for animal bedding. Timber from the *‘baldios’*, most of which are managed by the PGNP and the local population, also provides an important source of income for the Parish Councils or Assemblies of Partners.

Bee-keeping and making smoked meat products are traditional pursuits which still hold great a importance in the National Park today. On the other hand, activities such as weaving and basket making have had greater difficulty in withstanding the competition of industrial products, and the number of craftsmen preserving these arts are dwindling.

The landscape of the entire region is strongly marked by the presence of deciduous woods dominated by Common Oak (*Quercus robur*) and/or Pyrenean oak (*Quercus pyrenaica*), supplement by other tree and bush species such as the Silver (*Betula alba*), the Yew (*Taxus baccata*), the Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*), and the Strawberry Tree (*Arbustus unedo*). The ground layer is characterized by the great diversity and high importance of its flowering species, of special note being the Gerês Fern (*Woodwardia radicans*) and the Paradisea (*Paradisea lusitanica*). Scrub, bushy plants usually replacing others, also covers large tracts of the National Park and wipes out species which are protected due to their rarity, threatened

status of endemicity, namely the Gerês-iris (*Iris boissieri*), the Thymelaea (*Thymeleae broterana*) and the Thrift (*Armeria sp.*). In addition to this botanical diversity, there are also fauna of great importance.

In the PGPN, the wolf (*Cannis lupus*), the Roe Deer (*Capreolus capreolus*), the Pyrenean Desman (*Galemys pyrenaicus*), the Lataste's Viper (*Vipera latastei*), the Schreiber's Green Lizard (*Lacerta schreiberi*) and the Golden-striped Salamander (*Chioglossa lusitanica*), among others, may be found. The birdlife of the Park is equally rich, including species such as the Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), the Peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*), The Eagle Owl (*Bubo bubo*), the Chough (*Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*), the Dipper (*Cinclus cinclus*), the Winchat (*Saxicola rubetra*), and the Red-backed Shrike (*Lanius collurio*).

Human occupation

The territory covered by the PGPN has been occupied by human since proto-historic times, as is testified by the Megalithic, Celtic, Roman and, naturally Medieval traces.

Among these, we can highlight the megalithic monuments of Castro Laboreiro, Serra Amarela, Mourela and Mezio/Giã complex, the rock drawing of Bouça do Colado and the celebrated menhir/statue of Ermida, an anthropomorphic female sculpture dated from the 2nd millenium B.C

Archaeological sites such as Calcedónia, the forts ofouteiro, Parada, Ermida, Tourém, or the Donões Castle in Montalegre take us back to the Iron Age.

With regard to the romanisation of the Conventus Bracaraugustanus, the Roman "Geira", road number 18 of the "Itinerary of Antoninus", provides one of the PGNP's most relevant monuments. Surviving from the middle ages we have monasteries, castles and even villages, now abandoned.

The "brandas" (higher summer villages) and "inverneiras" (lower altitude winter villages), the "silhas dos ursos" (specific stone constructions built to protect beehives from bears) and the woolf pits, the arcaic rual centres and small hamlets scattered over the slopes or fortified on the hilltops or even, from a later date, the granaries and the community threshing floors, are other important relics of the past.

What are the main Charter-Projects?

- The execution of SIVETUR – a financial support program for the development of projects in tourism's area in the PNPG and its surrounds;
- The construction and running of the environmental education center in Vidoeiro;
- The construction and running of Porta de Lamas de Mouro (an infrastructure destined to welcome visitors and which is based in a space of leisure use and a thematic workshop destined to environmental education related activities);
- The conclusion of the order plan review of the PGNP;
- The order plans of the Albufeiras da Caniçada and from Touvedo and Lindoso publication;
- Conclusion of "Carta de Desporto de Natureza" – (order and regulamentation tools for sport activities);

- Creation of a collection of information and support material for the Environmental Education's activities (educational kits, thematic and faunistic and floral heritage related,...);
- The opening of trails of various types; interpretatives trails, for horses riding, for bicycles,;
- Activities programmes of touristic recreation for the 5 councils which are part of PGNP;
- Various projects related to natural heritage, such as inventaries and cartography creation;
- Various projects related to management of the natural heritage of the PGNP;
- Recovery and recognition of structures linked with the historical and cultural heritage,
- Creation of courses of professional education which are tourism related;
- Elaboration of management plans for the "baldios";
- (...)

By whom are the Charter/Charter projects financed?

Most part of the planned actions foreseen in the European Charter are financed by the PIDDAC (state budget) and by many European Programmes of finance from the European Community, particularly the Programa Operacional do Ambiente (POA), Operação Norte (ON); Interreg and Life.

6.10. Syöte National Park, Finland

Please, give a short description of your park (What does the natural landscape/cultural landscape, significant landmarks and touristic highlight look like?).

The park (300 sq. km) was established in 2000 and it is situated in north-eastern Finland. The park was designated to protect the area's varied forest and mire habitats, and species typically found in old-growth forests. The park's picturesque scenery includes rolling spruce-covered hills and open hillside bogs interspersed with lush wooded gullies.

Syöte lies in one of the snowiest regions of Finland, and the ranks of snow-covered spruce trees are a spectacular sight each winter.

Syöte's extensive old-growth forests are home to predators including bears, wolverines and lynx; and rare birds like the beautiful but elusive red-flanked bluetail.

Syöte's flying squirrels thrive in the mixed forests that have developed where shifting slash and burn cultivation was once practised.

Old-growth forests in the park also provide suitable habitat for a wide range of endangered insects and fungi, including many rare species of bracket fungi that depend on the continued presence of large quantities of decaying wood.

The Syöte Visitor Centre, housed in a log building on the edge of the park, offers visitors a variety of services. A permanent exhibition features the park's fascinating history, beautiful landscapes and varied wildlife. The centre's expert guides can provide information and advice about the area's nature trails, hiking routes and other facilities.

What are the main Charter-Projects?

The Charter verification will be arranged on April 2004.

By whom are the Charter/Charter projects financed?

Metsähallitus – Forest and Park Service and other local stakeholders.

6.11. Parc naturel régional du Vexin français, France

Please, give a short description of your park (What does the natural landscape/cultural landscape, significant landmarks and touristic highlight look like?).

Located North-West of Ile-de-France (Paris area), the Régional Natural Park of French Vexin spreads on 66 000 hectares. As a natural and historical entity, the French Vexin is one of the most typical and well-preserved amongst the three hundred so called “countries” making the French national territory.

A distinctive landscape

The French Vexin is a large limestone plateau covered with silt. It dominates surrounding regions and is clearly delimited by large valleys. A double line of wooded mounds crossed by contrasted erosion induced valleys characterises its surface.

A historical land

Vexin is an inheritance from the Gallic, but tools from up to 300 000 years BC were excavated. Numerous Megalithic, Gallo-Roman and Roman monuments and ways were revealed as well as the Merovingian structure of the villages, and Medieval castles and churches. They are particularly well preserved.

An extremely wealthy patrimony, an architectural lesson opened to everybody

The village have kept an essentially agricultural activity. The characteristics of Vexin housing are the gathering of the villages around square-shaped farms and the continuity of the houses which are often linked together by secondary buildings or walls.

Witness of stone

Windmills, wash houses, fountains, roadside calvaries and pigeon lofts are the modest witnesses of traditions and custom. They emphasize the Vexin landscape and provide numerous landmarks to the attentive visitor. They are the standing memory of old times labour hardship and a necessary link with the men who built them.

Varied natural areas

There are three types of original and biologically rich environments: lawns and fallow lands on dry hillsides, damp areas including marshes and meadows at the bottom of the valleys, woods and moors. This combination of various environments results from a thousand years of harmony between nature and human labour. It lies on a breakable balance. Its protection is one of the objectives of the Park.

Limestone hillsides

Hillsides are covered with limestone grasslands. Numerous rare vegetable species grow there, some of them originating from the Mediterranean region. The wildlife is particularly interesting for its insects and reptiles. Slopes along the river Seine are one of the finest parts of the Park: more than 470 species of plants and numerous insects may be observed.

Wetlands

Damp meadows and alkaline and reed marshes spread at the bottom of the valleys. These fragile environments are true reserves in biodiversity and play an important part in the natural regulation of water flows. Numerous birds, insects and batrachians breed and shelter there. The preservation of these wetlands are therefore a priority in the Parks' actions.

Woods and forests

Woods and forests cover about 15% of the Park's surface. The most frequent species are oaks, birches, chestnut trees and hornbeams.

A living territory

The French Vexin has always been devoted to agriculture. This activity represents about 70% of the Parks's surface and 8% of its active population with about 400 farms with cereals. The Park's goals are to support these minorities and encourage farmers to develop environmentally friendly methods.

The know-how

Up to the XIXth century, the craft and industrial activities of the French Vexin were almost entirely devoted to agriculture or oriented towards building and local consumption needs. Nowadays, the Park accounts about 3600 companies, nearly half of them being craftshops. Since the 1997, the Park leads a craft and commerce restructuration program offering technical and financial development support.

What are the main Charter-Projects?

European charter of sustainable tourism

The natural regional Park of French Vexin aims consists to:

- develop paths and discovering trekking activities
- increase the number of bed and breakfast houses
- create museums that present the know-how and the traditions of the Park
- promote the Park like a touristic destination
- commercialize touristic packages
- observe the touristic statistics.

By whom are the Charter/Charter projects financed?

Region

“Département”

Towns of the Park

6.12. Nature Park Frankenwald, Germany

Management: by the Naturpark Frankenwald e.V. , an association of the communities and administrative districts within the nature park

Foundation: 23.04.1973

Surface: 102.250 ha

Inhabitants: ca. 120.000

Geographical situation: in northern Bavaria, bordering Thuringia, and the Nature Parks Thüringer Wand and Thüringer Schiefergebirge - Obere Saale. The three nature parks together make up a surface of 400.000 ha.

Please, give a short description of your park (What does the natural landscape/cultural landscape, significant landmarks and touristic highlight look like?).

The Nature park Frankenwald is part of the German middle mountain range with the Döbraberg (794 m above NN) being its highest elevation. The territory of the nature park is densely wooded (52% forests) with spruce dominating. The potential forest type would be the peech-fir.

Since a couple of year the State forest administration and private forest owners are working on the reestablishment of mixed forests and on the further the white fir (*Abies alba*) among the conifers. In addition to the forests, stubbed plateaus and meadow valleys – narrow V-valleys and broader are the typical landscape.

Rivers and brooks transect the meadow valleys. The cultivation of the meadows as grassland is one major task to preserve them as a recreational landscape and to prevent them from afforestation and encroachment with scrubs. This represents a main contribution to the conservation of biodiversity.

From the stubbed plateaus the visitor has a beautiful overview on the Frankenwald area. But here as well there is the danger that abandonment of agricultural activities will lead to afforestation.

The Frankenwald builds on greywacke and clay slate. Diabas from the Devon era is sporadically present and the “Franconian line” is sharply setting the Frankenwald’s boundaries towards its foreland (the foothills of the upper Main’s uplands of.

In former times, the wood richness of the Frankenwald had been the basis of many people’s lives. At the rivers’ shores cutting mills had been processing the wood and raftsmen transporting it on Main and Rhein to Amsterdam.

Thanks to Alexander von Humboldt mining in the Frankenwald experienced a short prosperity. Abandoned mining galleries or forge hammers nearby the rivers are still witnesses of ore mining activities. Weavers were living in small houses until the modern textile industry replaced the traditional handicrafts.

The Frankenwald has lived a varied history. On the hills Slavs and Wenden settled and stubbed the forest to build their villages. Their houses were built in well basins and the old settlement structure is often still preserved.. Local building materials as greywacke, wood and slate were used. Houses revettet with slate are still typical for Frankenwald’s cities.

Fort Rosenberg in Kronach, the biggest preserved medieval castle in Germany, Castle Mitwitz, the Castle Lauenstein and several smaller castles are witnesses of an eventful past.

In addition to forts and castles the "Heunischenburg" near Gehülz is a touristic attraction. It is Europe's oldest fortress in stone north of the Alps. According to scientific research the fortress dates back to the 9th century before Christ and has been reconstructed.

The Höllental, a ca. 190 ha nature conservation area, is very popular for nature friends and tourists, therefore the nature park introduced visitor management measures to protect the area. The Bavarian State spa Bad Steben the Frankenwald offers Germany's highest seated spa. The Frankenwald has always been a popular hiking area. In the last years Mountain-biking (300 km trails) as well as Nordic walking offers enjoy greater and greater popularity.

What are the main Charter-Projects?

1. Landscape and nature

- Development and implementation of a differentiated conservation and use concept for the nature park
- Monitoring measures: measures to evaluate the success of nature conservation programmes
- Increase of the mixed forest ratio and recultivation of the meadow valleys planted with spruces
- Extension of the direct marketing of regional agricultural products

2. Culture

- Research of former rafting of timber activities and integration in the offer
- Establishment of cooperation with museums for better marketing
- Conservation and restoration of cultural important buildings and places of interest

3. Leisure and Recreation

- Development of a differentiated offer for the recreational and sports use in the nature park in cooperation with the tourism sector, forestry and nature conservation
- Further development of „hiking“-offer
- Development of an offer „cycling tourism“
- Quality improvement for winter holidays (especially cross-country skiing)

4. Gastronomy

- Establishment of three sectoral offers: „Hiker's friendly hotels“ ; „Cycling friendly hotels“ ; „Family hotels“ with clearly defined standards
- Quality improvement in the accommodation sector
- Further development of the “regional food”
- Resource saving management in hotels and restaurants
- Training opportunities to improve the service quality in hotels and restaurants

5. Tourism

- Extension of quality management systems
- Valorisation and better use of the low season
- Market analysis for own tourism products
- Development of targeted offers

- Workshops for the development of new offers

6. Marketing

- Development of a distinctive profile of the Frankenwald with three pillars: forest, water and culture
- Corporate Design for all Frankenwald marketing products
- Development of catalogues for different target groups
- Improvement of the websites and linking the websites of the nature park and the tourist information

7. Information and education

- Redesign of the nature park's information centres and the nature park's brochure
- Coordination of the information offer concerning nature and culture
- Reinforced training for nature and landscape guides and improvement of their cooperation with accommodation enterprises
- Training for people working in tourism concerning the cultural and natural characteristics of the region

8. Safeguarding and amelioration of living conditions

- Targeted promotion of renewable energies
- Extension of the bus offer
- Enhanced use of natural gas driven Busses
- Traffic calming in the cities
- Conservation and extension of nature-sound walking and cycling lanes

9. Securing the future with sustainable tourism

- Development of a regional brand for tourism and non-tourism products from the Frankenwald
- Extension of the touristic offer of visits in enterprises in the Frankenwald
- Priority given to employment of local people in tourism enterprises
- Extension of environmental management systems in enterprises; e.g. by implementing the EMAS-regulation or ISO

By whom are the Charter/Charter projects financed?

Contributions to financing the Charter projects are made by:

- Administrative districts and communities in the nature park
- Verein Naturpark Frankenwald e.V.
- FRANKENWALD TOURISMUS Service Centre
- EU-funding programmes: the nature park is a local action group (LAG) in the LEADER+-Programme; parts of the Charter aims having been accepted by in the regional development concepts
- Funding by the State of Bavaria in the framework of the general funding for the nature park and in the framework of heritage protection
- Funds from the Federal State, e.g. for cycling lines near Federal road and highways

6.13. Sibillini Mountains National Park, Italy

Please, give a short description of your park (What does the natural landscape/cultural landscape, significant landmarks and touristic highlight look like?).

The Sibillini Mountains National Park has a population of 13,200 people and covers an area of about 70,000 hectares across two regions (Marche and Umbria), three provinces (Ascoli Piceno, Macerata, Perugia), five mountain communities and 18 councils, (Acquacanina, Amandola, Arquata del Tronto, Bolognola, Castelsantangelo sul Nera, Cessapalombo, Fiastra, Fiordimonte, Montefortino, Montegallo, Montemonaco, Norcia, Pievebovigliana, Piveterina, Preci, San Ginesio, Ussita, Visso).

The landscape is extremely varied and in the space of a few kilometres ranges from rocky peaks and steep natural walls of stone to wide undulating ridges, from high plains covered in grazing and pasture to forest-covered mountain slopes, from glacial valleys to deep, narrow gorges formed by running water. There are many peaks over 2,000 metres in altitude, the tallest of which is Monte Vettore (2,476 m), under whose peak the legendary lago di Pilato (Pilate's Lake) is found (1,940 m);

The mix of natural elements and culture have created the Park's fascinating character, among whose fundamental traits are:

- an extraordinary richness of landscapes and floral species. The renowned sea of flowers of Castelluccio and Prati di Ragnolo in the middle of June, the numerous species of fauna including the eagle, the wolf, the great horned owl, the pine marten, the wild cat and the porcupine. There is also the unique presence of the *Chirocephalus Marchesonii*, a small crustacean living exclusively in Pilate's Lake.
- The diffuse presence of
 - o examples of religious architecture. For centuries the area was under the rule of the Papal State, and has been the stage for the blooming of the monastic culture: there are numerous signs of this left in the area, abbeys, sanctuaries, monasteries, hermitages, apart from the rich urban ecclesiastical heritage present in the numerous small hamlets dotted about the area
 - o ancient feudal buildings still visible in the fortified walls surrounding many towns and well preserved by some councils and in the numerous remains of towers, strongholds and castles
 - o numerous historic centres and districts of medieval origin that after the most recent earthquake in 1997 have been able to take advantage of special aid for reconstruction and so are now in a better state today than before
 - o monuments of rural architecture: country houses and villas, troughs, mills, ancient working charcoal pits... all surviving signs of the ancient agricultural traditions of the area, sometimes in an abandoned state;
- Certain "unique" resources, among which are the precious manuscripts of Leopardi kept at Visso and museums and cultural institutes dedicated to illustrious characters
- An area very rich in typical local products : from the lentils and spelt of Castelluccio to the prosciutto Norcia, from truffles to ciauscolo (a local salami), from chestnuts and charcoal to sheep's cheeses, honey, and trout.
- An image of the Park permanently tied to the atmosphere that is breathed high up between the peaks of Monte Sibilla, of Vettore and the high plains of Castelluccio. It was around this magic atmosphere that in ancient times there developed the legends

that gave names to places and that even now form the spirit of the Park: the legend of Sybil, the exploits of Guerin Meschino, the legend of Pilate...

In fact the Sibillini Mountains take their name from Monte Sibilla, where according to some among the many legends that are told, the Sibilla Cumana took refuge after fleeing from the Campi Flegrei at the advent of Christianity. For having dared to contest the role of the Virgin Mary as Mother of God she was condemned to live entombed in a cavern in the Apennines until the end of the world.

Annual Number of Tourists

Maximum number of visits per day (during the weekends of August): 52,000 visitors (including trekkers and tourists)

Number of nights stayed (officially registered): 560,000

Number of arrivals per day (yearly average): 255

Number of arrivals in August: 9,000

Tourism Infrastructure

- 52 hotels (2,304 beds)
- 28 agritourism sites (450 beds)
- 12 refuges (300 beds)
- 6 camp sites(1,550 beds)
- 3 hostels (125 beds)
- 1,414 bed and breakfasts, rooms available etc subscribed to *REC (about 6,000 beds)*

Services born with the Park:

15 Park Houses (visitor centres)

1 Association of 50 guides recognised by the Park that organise a busy calendar of themed excursions (environmental and cultural) during the year

8 Environmental Education Centres specialised in offering organised educational programmes for schools

1 of the 3 ethnographic museums present in the area

In 2001 the Sibillini Grande Anello (a 120km chain of footpaths around the Park called the Big Ring) was opened, which provides access for people with disabilities, and is linked to the refuges and provides walks suitable for families.

What are the main Charter-Projects and by whom are the Charter/Charter projects financed?

The Programme of Actions

The Strategy is formulated in 5 parts, 11 measures and 47 actions.

The Structure of the Strategy in Parts, Measures, Actions

The Strategy has been formulated in 5 parts, in 11 measures and 47 actions

By parts we mean themed areas in which the measures and actions have been grouped together and they are:

1. Tourism Culture
2. Ecology and Conservation of Heritage
3. Increasing the value of the Local Tourism System
4. Social and Economic Development of the area
5. Visitor Management

The principal areas of action are reported in the following

Part 1 Tourism Culture

Measure 1.1 To develop a tourism culture, based on integration of procedures and good practices

1.1.1 Provision of resources and competence within the tourism sector of the Park that should give life to and stimulate the integration of the area

1.1.2 Establishment of the local tourism system of the Park as a pilot programme on a regional and national level

Measure 1.2 To make the local population aware of the opportunities offered by sustainable tourism to create benefits for the local community

1.2.1 Education in schools about the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in the Park

1.2.2 Providing the local population with diverse awareness opportunities (Voices of the Park...) the opportunity to be heard (satisfaction surveys, meetings with the Park Houses...), operations and services that can help increase awareness of the values of the Park or enjoyment of the area (interpretation service, conventions with the European Parks that have signed the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism...) or reduce any problems or inconveniences (ad hoc measures)

1.2.3 Setting up of a monitoring system on the impact of tourism in the Park and on the quality of life of the population as an information tool

Part 2 Ecology and conservation of heritage

Measure 2.1 To conserve the heritage of resources of the Park for present and future generations and to reduce the negative impact caused by visitors

Actions:

2.1.1 Awareness initiative about environmental risk factors and factors linked to globalisation

2.1.2 Actions to increase good environmental practices and for the ecological management of tourism and for the area, also in cooperation with the Plan for Sustainable Agriculture

2.1.3 Incentives for the use of environmentally friendly means of transport or public transport to visit the Park

2.1.4 Special measures for the critical areas of Castelluccio, Lago di Pilato, Foce , Fiastra and Rubbiano (a calendar of events to prevent tourism pressures growing further...)

Part 3 Increasing the value of the local tourism system

Measure 3.1 To characterise the local tourism system of the Park as a “tourism system of values”

Actions:

3.1.1 Elaboration of a programme of initiatives directed towards the Park’s primary targets (students, people with disabilities, elderly people) characterised by developing the inventive and entrepreneurial capacity of each target group, by making available the time and the tools necessary for personal training, by a concerted effort to share ideas, skills and know how, by systematic contact with nature, by a close connection between the Park and its population (demonstrations about sport in nature for young people and disabled people, development of self-managed business activities by disabled people linked with the Grande Anello of the

Sibillini, the initiation of activities that involve the industriousness of elderly people (eg Nativity scenes in the Park)...

3.1.2 The introduction of a working group to give guidelines on the development of local culture (Sibilla...) and to give ever greater strength to projects linked with a tourism of values

3.1.3 Incentives for events, shows and proposals that promote the values of the Park and its unique and rare elements (Sibilla, the story of Benedetto da Norcia, integration between the two Parks, manuscripts of Leopardi, charcoal pits, diversity of flora, authentic products typical to the area, local traditions, crafts...), without trivializing them.

3.1.4 A study of the profile of Park volunteers in relation to the policy of the tourism of values

Measure 3.2 To enable all visitors (whatever the age, potential handicap or personal circumstances) to access and enjoy the Park and its values

3.2.1 Planning of a congressional event during the European Year for Disabled People (2003) on the theme of "Parks and Accessibility" that represents an important moment of awareness, sharing of ideas and knowledge of existing best practices on the theme

3.2.2 Actions to increase the breaking down of barriers for the usage of nature and the area by all

Measure 3.3 To ensure that visitor services reach the expectations of visitors of the third millennium

3.3.1 A redefinition of the procedure of the issue of the Park logo in such a way as to progressively create the basis for a quality mark for tourism services that increases the value of the character of the area

3.3.2 An increase in the quality of the infrastructure, buildings, and tools for the benefit of the tourist in accord with the provisions for local planning documents (the Park Plan, PEES, Environmental Interpretation Plan...), provincial and regional (Docup of the Marche and Umbria regions):

3.3.3 A feasibility study towards a sustainable improvement of sporting activities linked to nature which take place in the Park

3.3.4 Prizes for improving spaces, buildings, structures, outdoor areas (that could be used for tourism) that enrich the local character

3.3.5 Improvement of the gastronomic heritage

Measure 3.4 To make available initiatives designed to train those in the tourism industry

3.4.1 To create a periodical Report about the training of tourism operators, evaluating needs, training credits and necessary training tools

3.4.2 To start a training programme to support the tourism industry

3.4.3 Conventions with Parks that have signed the European Charter for exchanges of study, of work, of experiences...that involve those in tourism and other officials working within the confines of the Park

Measure 3.5 To promote and commercialise the Park as a special destination

3.5.1 Organisation of a campaign promoting the Park, in co-ordination with other institutions and bodies etc (educational, entertainment, artistic expression, various initiatives ...) that drives the Park forward as a special destination, also through the language of art and the language of new technologies

3.5.2 Marketing initiatives for the less seasonal periods, weekend tourists or short stays, foreigners, catering for special interests and activities, educational activities and social tourism to increase the overall tourism presence

3.5.3 Creation of brochures and leaflets to support marketing initiatives

3.5.4 Organisation of “art and nature” to encourage visits in the low season and to discover the meaning of nature

Part 4. Economic and social development of the area in terms of sustainable tourism

Measure 4.1 To increase the per capita spending of visitors, extending the benefits derived from tourism to the whole area

4.1.1. Provision of noticeboards with a calendar of activities and typical products from across the territory at tourism locations, Park House entrances, in the Visitor Centres, in the Eco-museums and in places where tourists gather, shopwindow displays of Park products and the organisation of demonstrations of local craft work and rural activities within the Park

4.1.2. To start numerous marketing initiatives for visitors of local products (farm shops, traditional shops ...)

4.1.3. Progressive creation of a filiera turistica locale

Measure 4.2 To create and promote stable employment, improving and broadening the tourism experience

4.2.1 Incentives to improve and differentiate what is on offer to tourists by revealing the financial opportunities available to the area

4.2.2 Formation of a database on Internet/Intranet of the availability of human resources and the level of competence in the tourism industry present in the Park

Part 5: Management of visitors

Measures 5.1 To increase the usage of the infrastructure, of the buildings and other facilities of the local tourism system of the Park

5.1.1 Creation of a Visitor Management Plan, with particular attention to the management of the Grande Anello of the Sibillini and of the user support services (visitor centres, refuges, eco-museums, family support activities and (kinderheim...) and cultural and recreational events...) and the interpretation of the area

5.1.2. Feasibility study into making visiting the Park easier (transport, supply of road signs and directions within the Park ...)

5.1.3 Introduction of a Park bus to facilitate the movement of visitors within the Park

The Principal Projects started and planned for 2003

a. Creation and start-up of STL

The Sibillini Mountains National Park has promoted the creation of a Local Tourism System in accord with Law 135/2001. Partnerships with local public and private bodies have been set up to create a project of sustainable tourism development that has been financed, in accordance with the above mentioned law by the regions of Marche and Umbria. A specific project of cross-regional character, agreed by the Park with the two regions “the Sibillini Mountains National Park as a workshop of tourism for all, is about actions designed to guarantee the usage of the area for people with disabilities.

b. Organisation of an international conference “The Park is for all. Just like the World”.

Different projects have been included in the programme, aimed at guaranteeing the usage of the area for everyone, giving concrete reality to the project “The Park is for All” and

promoting initiatives for 2003, International Year for People with Disabilities, in particular the international conference “The Park is for all. Just like the World” that concluded with the approval of an important document (the Declaration of Norcia)

c. Civic Forum

In collaboration with the Paraplegic Association in the Province of Terni the project “Civic Forum for a welcoming natural Park” has been set up, to produce an action plan to allow access to nature for people with disabilities as well;

d. Access to the emotions of nature

The Civic Forum has also begun direct action to promote access to educational services and environmental interpretation to people with disabilities with particular attention given to children and young people of school age and to that end there are in progress educational and participational initiatives, some of which have also ended up getting involved with schools;

The financing of such projects is derived 20% from Park funds and 80% from public and private contributions

e. Contributions to tourism operators to improve the standards of tourism facilities

In order to raise the standard of services offered by tourism facilities financing has been approved for improvement work on hotels.

The work has been financed thanks to the acquisition of funds distributed by the Ministry for the Environment.

7. Programme

Monday, March 15th 2004

Arrival at Lauterbach/Mole (Rügen) and ferry to Vilm

18.30 Dinner

20.45 Get-together & Presentation of participants

Tuesday, March 16th 2004

08:00 *Breakfast*

09:00 Opening of the meeting

B. Engels/ B. Job-Hoben; Vilm Colleagues; Partizia Rossi

09:15 Introduction

”The European Charter for sustainable tourism – current status”

R. Blackman (EUROPAC Federation)

10:00 First experiences:

Les Cevennes National Park (France), Massif Central (France) and La Garrotxa (Spain)

Marylène Pin, Sandrine Charnay and Josep M. Prats

10:45 *Coffee break*

11:00 The newcomers:

“Getting ready to join to the European Charter”: Syöte National Park (Finland) Jouni

Aarnio

12:00 Introduction to the working groups

Barbara Engels (BfN)

Aims:

- **Exchange experiences on common problems and solving strategies**
- **Development of ideas for future co-operation**

12:30 *Lunch*

13:30 Guided walk on the Isle of Vilm

15:00 **Working Groups**

Proposed topics:

WG 1: The Charter as a tool for marketing and communication

Chair: Hélène Haslé

WG 2: Working with tourism enterprises and cooperation with local stakeholders

Chair: Josep M. Prats

WG 3: Visitor management/ monitoring

Chair: Don McKay

- 16:30 *Coffee break*
16:45 Working Groups cont. (Special Issue: Developing the Charter-Network)
18:00 close for the day
18:30 Dinner
20:00 Further presentation from the Charter Parks

Wednesday, March 17th 2004

- 08:00 *Breakfast*
09:00 Working groups cont. (results, preparing for presentation)
10:30 *Coffee Break*
10:45 Presentation of working group results; incl. Discussion
12:00 *Lunch*
14:00 “Possibilities for implementing the European Charter within the Nordic-Baltic Section of EUROPARC”
Bo Storränk (EUROPARC Baltic-Nordic Section)

Discussion

- 16:00 *Coffe Break*
16:30 Perspectives on the European Charter
Partrizia Rossi (Chair of the Charter Evaluation Committee)

Discussion

- 18:00 close
18:30 *Dinner followed by evening entertainment*

Thursday, March 18th 2004

- 07:00 *Breakfast*
08:20 Ferry boat to Lauterbach
08:30 Bus to Usedom
10:30 Arrival at Usedom, Klaus-Bahlsen-Haus;
Meeting with Ulrich Wigger (Manager of the Nature Park Insel Usedom) and Mrs. Stelzer (Translator)
10:50 Trip to look-out Kückelsberg, Visit of the southern part of Insel Usedom
12:10 *Departure to Usedom, Lunch at the Hotel “Norddeutscher Hof”*

13:45 Guided tour of the Klaus-Bahlsen-Haus, the Nature Park`s Informationscenter

14:40 Departure to train station

15:26 Departure of the train to Berlin

(Arrival at Berlin Ostbahnhof: 17:37)

8. List of Participants

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Wigger, Ulf	Naturpark Usedom	Bäderstraße 5 17406 Usedom Germany	Tel.: +49 38372 – 7635 - 10 Fax: +49 38372 – 7635 – 11 e-mail: np.use@web.de
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9. Addresses of the Charter Parks and Charter Park Applicants

Institution	Address	Phone/Fax/e-mail	Charter Park Year
Nationalpark Hohe Tauern/ Salzburg	Salzburger Nationalfonds 5741 Neukirchen am Grv. 306 Austria	Tel.: +43 – 6565 – 6558 - 0 Fax: +43 – 6565 – 6558 - 18 Internet: www.hohetauern.at	2001
Parc naturel régional du Vexin français	Maison du Parc 95450 Théméricourt France	Tel.: +33 – 1 - 34 66 15 10 Fax: +33 – 1 - 34 66 15 11 Internet: www.parc-naturel-vexin.fr	2001
Parc naturel régional du Luberon	60, place Jean Jaurès BP 122 84404 Apt Cedex France	Tel.: +33 - 4 90 04 81 15 Fax: +33 - 4 90 04 42 00 Internet: http://pnrl.nexenservices.com/index2.htm	2001
Parc national des Cévennes	6 bis, place du Palais 48400 Florac France	Tel.: +33 - 4 66 49 53 01 Fax: +33 - 4 66 49 53 02 Internet: www.bsi.fr/pnc/	2002
Parc naturel régional des Marais du Cotentin et du Bessin	Maison du Parc – Cantepie 50500 Les Veys France	Tel.: +33 - 2 33 71 61 90 Fax: +33 - 2 33 71 61 91 Internet: www.parc-cotentin-bessin.fr	2002
Parc naturel régional du Vercors	255, Chemin des Fusillés 38250 Lans en Vercors France	Tel.: +33 - 4 76 94 38 26 Fax: +33 - 4 76 94 38 29 Internet: www.parc-du-vercors.fr	2003
Parc naturel régional du Pilat	Moulin de Virieu 2, rue Benaÿ - BP 57 42410 Pélussin France	Tel.: +33 - 4 74 87 52 00 Fax: +33 - 4 74 87 52 02 Internet: www.parc-naturel-pilat.fr	2003
Parc naturel régional Scarpe-Escaut	Maison du Parc 357, Rue Notre Dame d'Amour 59230 saint Amand les Eaux France	Tel.: +33 - 3 27 19 19 70 Fax: +33 - 3 27 19 19 71 Internet: www.pnr-scarpe-escaut.fr	2003
Naturpark Frankenwald	Güterstr.18 96317 Kronach Germany	Tel.: +49 - 9261 - 67 82 40 Fax: +49 - 9261 - 67 82 11 Internet: www.frankenwald-tourismus.de/	2001
Naturpark Steinhuder Meer	Höltyst. 17 30171 Hannover Germany	Tel.: +49 – 511 - 61 62 22 11 Fax: +49 - 511 - 61 61 12 31 28 Internet: www.naturpark-steinhuder-meer.de/left.htm	2001
Naturpark Insel Usedom	Bäderstr. 5 17406 Usedom Germany	Tel.: +49 – 38372 - 76 30 Fax: +49 – 38372 - 763-11 Internet: www.naturpark-usedom.de/	2002

Parco Naturale Alpi Marittime	Corso Dante Livio Bianco, 5 12010 Valdieri Italy	Tel.: +39 – 17 - 19 73 97 Fax: + 39 – 17 - 19 75 42 Internet: www.parks.it/parco.alpi.maritime	2001
Parco Nazionale dei Monti Sibillini	Largo G.B.Gaola Antinori, 1 62039 Visso (MC) Italy	Tel.: +39 – 737 - 97 27 11 Fax: +39 – 737 - 97 27 07 Internet: www.sibillini.net	2002
Parc Natural de la Zona Volcanica de la Garrotxa	Casa dels Volcans., Av. Santa Coloma, s/n. 17800 Olot Spain	Tel.: +34 - 972 - 26 46 66 Fax: +34 - 972 - 27 04 55 Internet: www.gencat.net/mediamb/pnzvg/eng/apnzvg.htm	2001
Parco Natural da Serra de S. Mamede	Rua General Conde Jorge d'Avilez, no.22-1 Apartado 162 7301-901 Portalegre Codex Portugal	Tel.: +35 – 1245 - 20 36 31 Fax: +35 – 1245 - 27 50 1 Internet: www.icn.pt	2002
Parque Nacional da Penada-Gerês	Av. Antonio Macedo 4704-538 Braga Portugal	Tel.: +351 – 253 - 203480 Fax: +351 – 253 - 61 31 69 Internet: www.icn.pt	2002
Mourne Trust	87 Central Promenade Newcastle, Co. Down BT33 0HH United Kingdom -Northern Ireland	Tel.: +44- - 28 - 43 72 40 59 Fax: +44- - 28 - 43 72 64 93 Internet: www.mourne.co.uk	2003
Forest of Bowland AONB	PO Box 9, Guild House Cross Street Preston PR1 8RD United Kingdom	Tel: +44 - (0) 1772 - 534140 Fax: +44 - (0) 1772 - 533423 Internet: www.forestofbowland.com/	Cand. 2005
Cairngorms National Park	14 The Square Grantown on Spey PH26 3HG Scotland	Tel: +44 - (0) 1479 - 873535 Fax: +44 - (0)1479 - 873527 Internet: www.cairngorms.co.uk	Cand.
Syöte National Park	Syöte Visitor Centre Erätie 1 93280 Syöte Finland	Tel.: +358 - (0)205 - 64 6550 Fax: +358 - (0)205 - 64 6551 Internet: www.metsa.fi/natural/nationalparks/syote/	Cand. 2004
Nationalpark Harz/Hochharz	Oderhaus 1 37444 St. Andreasberg Lindenallee 35 38855 Wernigerode Germany	Tel.: +49 – 5582 - 9189-0, - 40 Fax: +49 - 5582 - 9189-19 Internet: www.nationalpark-hochharz.de Tel.: +49 – 3943 - 55020 Fax: +49 – 3943 - 550237 Internet: www.nationalpark-harz.de	Cand. 2005
Biosphärenreservat	Franz-Hartmann-Straße 9	Tel.: +49 – 6325 - 95520	Cand.

Pfälzer Wald	67466 Lambrecht/Pfalz Germany	Fax: +49 – 6325- 955219 Internet: www.pfaelzerwald.de/	2005
Sierras de Cazorla, Segura y las Villas Nature Park	Oficina del Parque Natural C/Martinez Falero, 11 Cazorla (Jaén) Spain	Tel.: +34 – 953 - 720125 Internet: www.juntadeandalucia.es/medioambiente/espacios_naturales/indparques.html	Cand. 2004
Alcornocales Nature Park	Delegación Provincial C.M.A. C/Ana de Viya, 3 3º 11009 Cádiz Spain	Tel: +34 – 956 - 274842 Tel: + 34 – 956 - 274629 Tel: +34 – 956 - 274594 Fax: + 34 – 956 - 259419 Internet: www.juntadeandalucia.es/medioambiente/espacios_naturales/indparques.html	Cand. 2004
Sierra de Grazalema Nature Park	Oficina del Parque Avda. de la Diputación s/n El Bosque (Cádiz) Spain	Tel: +34 – 956 - 716063 Internet: www.juntadeandalucia.es/medioambiente/espacios_naturales/indparques.html	Cand. 2004
Sierra de Aracena and Picos de Aroche Nature Park	Oficina del Parque Plaza Alta, s/n Edificio Cabildo Viejo 21200 Aracena-Huelva Spain	Tel: +34 – 959 - 128404 Fax: +34 – 959 - 128475 Internet: www.juntadeandalucia.es/medioambiente/espacios_naturales/indparques.html	Cand. 2004
Sierra Nevada National / Nature Parks	Dirección Provincial C.M.A. Crtra. de la Sierra, Km. 7 - Pino Genil 18010 Granada Spain	Tel:+34 - 958 - 248302 Internet: www.juntadeandalucia.es/medioambiente/espacios_naturales/indparques.html	Cand. 2004
Alsace Region	Federation "Rhin Vivant" 35 avenue de al paix 67000 Strasbourg France	Tel.: +33 – 388 - 156785 Fax: +33 – 388 - 156919	Cand. 2004