

2019



EUROPARC FEDERATION

ANNUAL REPORT



EUROPARC FEDERATION

EUROPARC is the voice of Protected Areas in Europe. We unite national, regional and periurban parks, nature and biosphere reserves, marine and landscape protected areas, together with a large number of Natura 2000 sites in 40 countries. We want to see a Sustainable Nature: Valued by People with Protected Areas being the substantial component to deliver that vision.

Cover photo: Prealpi Giulie Natural Park, Italy

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Apuseni Nature Park
© Peter Lengyel

President's remarks

It was only 3 years ago, when Fedenatur took the courageous decision to close their organisation and join efforts with EUROPARC. Some may recall that joyful moment at the General Assembly in Portugal! In that short time our Periurban friends have complimented the work of EUROPARC bringing new perspectives from the natural parks closest to cities. The creation of the Periurban commission held the legacy of Fedenatur, but have move forward culminating in an excellent production of a **policy paper on the role of Periurban parks**. This was well referenced at the Seminar-Dialogue on EU policies 2019. Here parks, Natura2000 managers and EC officers met to discuss common topics from the perspective of management in the Protected Areas and that of policy makers in Brussels, thereby, increasing mutual knowledge and contributing to bringing the EU institutions closer to citizens. It was especially heartening to have representatives from 2 additional DG's present, ie. DG Region and DG Growth showing the cross cutting and integrated nature of work in Europe's Protected Areas which is a particularly present in our Periurban parks.

In addition to Periurban, our other 3 thematic commissions, in Sustainable Agriculture, Health and Protected Areas and N2000 continued in 2019. They have been working over the year, bringing forward extensive work and ensuring members' participation. Position papers produced through the work of the commissions include, a call to highlight the importance of **N2000 and Protected Areas in the European election**, the role of Periurban parks across a range of EU policies and the **Jūrmala communique on health and Protected Areas**.



The Jurmala communique and launch of a new Healthy Parks, Healthy People Europe programme was just one of the highlights of the excellent conference, hosted by the Latvian Environment Agency near Kemer National Park. We all left with a healthier outlook with our Green Prescriptions for Protected Areas in Europe.

You can remind yourself here.

We progressed with our capacity building and knowledge sharing, which have been among our core activities over 2019. Trainings, workshops, webinars, videos, events and campaigns have been organised and very well received. A big effort in particular, has been made to ensure and support the active involvement of young people in Protected Areas, to build their capacity in becoming future leaders and advocates of nature conservation.

EUROPARC continued to be active in sustainable tourism with the European Charter for Sustainable tourism in Protected Areas, bringing a wider representation and participation by members in the work of the federation. For the first time, a special award for businesses and tour operators working in the framework of the Charter, were recognised. The EUROPARC Star Awards recognised the contribution of businesses in 4 areas; contributing to conservation, community development, communication and innovation, and were awarded at the Charter Award Ceremony 2019.

These were just some of the highlight for me for 2019, there is much more to be found in the remaining pages of this year's Annual Report, for which I thank the contribution of my fellow council members, commissioners, sections and our ever valiant team in the Directorate.

Yours

Ignace Schops
President

EUROPARC Directorate in
Regensburg, December 2019



Managing places for nature
Making nature more connected
Grow the protected area network
Inspiring people



Working for nature

Enhancing the management of places for nature, facilitating the exchange of good practice and promoting international cooperation. In Brussels, EUROPARC works to ensure that Protected Areas have higher visibility at European level and achieve greater recognition of their role and function.

Managing places for nature

Protected Areas are better managed through international cooperation.

EUROPARC has International NGO Observer status under the terms of the Bern Convention and attends the Group of Expert meetings. In 2019 EUROPARC was represented at a joint meeting with the biodiversity and climate change experts in Trondheim Norway. The experts discussed many current issues, including, the transfer of the UK N2000 sites into the Emerald Network following Brexit. EUROPARC presented the LIFE project NaturAdapt and moderated a session showcasing climate change adaptation and mitigation measure, where EUROPARC members, Natural Park and Reserve of the Montseny Biosphere and the LIFE Forest C02, Murcia (Spain) as well as Minsmere Nature RSPB Reserve (UK) presented. The sessions were very well received by the joint expert groups.



EUROPARC and DG Ecn Seminar-Dialogue in Brussels October 2019



Policy Paper "Our Natural Heritage: the key to Europe's Future"

With the policy document "Our Natural Heritage: the Key to Europe's Future" EUROPARC called to action European Political Groups, National Parties and individual candidates to the European Parliament. The policy paper highlights the importance of Protected Areas for sustainable economic development and the need to include biodiversity conservation, restoration and climate policies in all major European programmes. It also recognizes the role of Protected Areas in rural development and hopes to promote and support the framework of the EU Youth Strategy. Lastly it underlines that the European Green Infrastructure Strategy should be developed based on Protected Areas' network, including Natura 2000 sites, periurban protected areas and transboundary parks.

Read it here.

Putting Policy into Practice

EUROPARC Seminar Dialogue 2019

For the third edition of our *Seminar Dialogue, Partnerships for biodiversity: European policies and the role of Protected Areas*, 30 participants came together on the 29th of November. EUROPARC members representing the work of Protected Areas, regional and national authorities, but also private businesses successfully working with EUROPARC Sustainable Destinations presented their cases. From Brussels, we welcomed several officers from the European Commission DG Environment (ENVI), DG for Regional and Urban Policy (REGIO) and DG for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (GROW).

The importance of managing nature between transboundary protected areas, the involvement of youth in protected areas and the need to improve conditions to facilitate the movement of young people to the rural world was discussed. Additionally, we talked about the importance of carrying capacity within protected areas, to better manage the impact of activities on the natural environment, and how sustainable tourism can bring socio-economic opportunities to Europe.

The European Commission shared with us priorities and current projects, provided its vision of cross-border cooperation and programme priorities, and gave our members the opportunity to hear the latest policy updates from the several Directorate-Generals there represented.



Making nature more connected

Demonstrating the importance of green corridors in land use planning and promoting land connectivity in an around Protected Areas.

Periurban Parks

At the General Assembly in Latvia, the Periurban Commission launched the position paper **“Periurban Parks: Their place in the EU Policies”**. The policy paper wants to make policy-makers and the general public realise that Periurban parks can help in dealing with many of the different challenges faced today by cities, such as climate change, mental and physical health and social issues. It also aims to make local authorities actively involved in the protection of the remaining valuable nature in the city’s vicinity and make the EU and national and regional authorities recognise the contribution of Periurban Parks to biodiversity protection, ecosystem services, agriculture, health, urban and cultural agendas with appropriate financial, legal and political engagement.

Green infrastructure

EUROPARC is convinced that in order to truly achieve Green Infrastructure, Transboundary areas, Periurban Parks, and Ecological corridors need to be key parts of the concept. The EUROPARC Periurban Parks Commission analysed the importance to building Green Infrastructure of single Periurban parks towards the setting-up of a large green territorial system. The policy paper on Periurban Parks and the EU policies, underlines that they are key areas of land to build green infrastructure around cities and act as multi-functional areas that connect the wider countryside with the city.



Wolf in Rodopi National Park, Greece

Transboundary cooperation

In the network of EUROPARC Transboundary Areas (TransParcNet) the cross-border cooperation between the National Parks Thayatal and Podyjí produced **“7 steps for effective cross-border management of river ecosystems”**, based on the concrete efforts for the protection of the canyon-like valley of the border river Thaya between Austria and the Czech Republic.

You can read it here.

Putting Policy into Practice

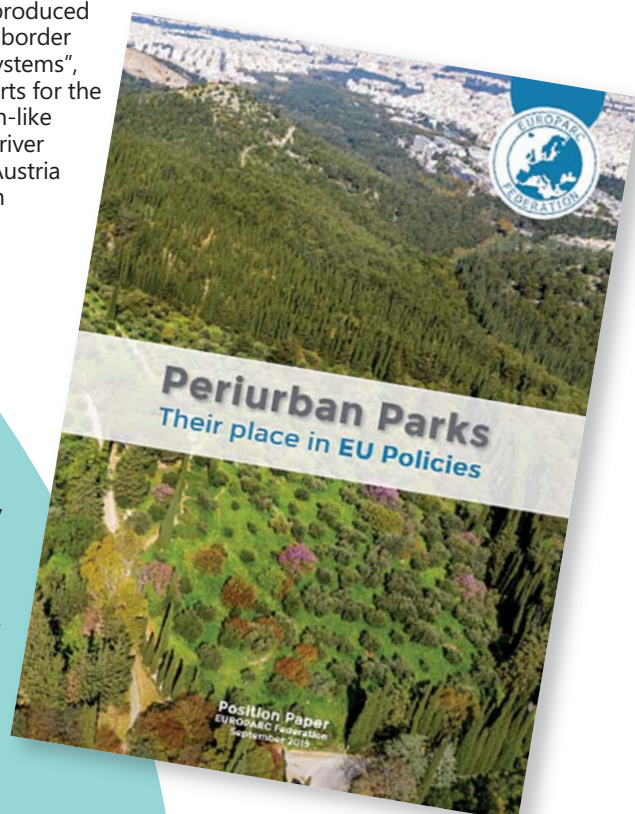
Large Carnivores

EUROPARC is an active member of the EU Platform for the coexistence between people and large carnivores. In 2019 the platform made a number of recommendations for the European Commission, managing authorities and stakeholders on how to work together to include relevant measures in their PAFs and in the CAP and national funding.

You can find more info here.

EUROPARC organised a webinar on large carnivores in Transboundary Parks. Wolves, lynx and brown bears require large stretches of land to live. Human activity, habitat loss and the decrease of prey, pushed these species to the very remote areas of Europe, however the tide is turning. The webinar looked at monitoring and conservation activities for large carnivores across borders.

You can see the webinar here.



Grow the Protected Area network

Enlarge and grow the Protected Area model, especially in the marine/coastal and periurban environment.

Within the Marine agenda, a dedicated workshop was hosted within EUROPARC Conference on the topic "Sustainable fisheries in Marine Protected Areas: how can we make them possible". This workshop was presented by representatives of Natural England and the Marine Conservation Society (United Kingdom). The case studies presented were combined and published in EUROPARC's Knowledge Hub, in the Marine and Coastal Section. Another case study on the topic of Community managed MPAs was also uploaded to the Knowledge Hub by COAST - Community of Arran Seabed Trust and Flora and Fauna International (United Kingdom). Additional contacts were established with Lonxanet Foundation for Sustainable Fisheries (Spain), dedicated to the co-management of MPAs with involving artisanal fishermen and that we intend to involve in future projects and events.

Policy/lobby work

Working on the future EU strategies on Biodiversity and Environment, EUROPARC and the European Habitat Forum identified the following key requests to the EC: For the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, the focus should be wider than fisheries impacts and it should ensure that more ambitious programmes of measures are developed and implemented. This includes making the necessary funds available. It should cover a wide range of direct management measures addressing both individual threats from specific activities and cumulative impacts on marine ecosystems, to reach the Good Environmental Status of EU seas as soon as possible after 2020.

Read all recommendations here:

You can read the recommendations here.

Parks and Mayors meeting

In 2019, Park Authorities' Presidents, Chairs, Mayors and others were invited to reflect on the specificities of their important role, consider the areas of influence, the expertise required, and discuss how they can contribute to influence and implement policies relevant for their PAs. We also discussed the opportunity to set a dedicated platform for policy debate and information exchange.



Kornati National Park, Croatia

Inspiring People

Promote the values and benefits of Protected Areas, through inspiring celebrations, European level programmes and Awards.

European Day of Parks

2019 was the 20th edition of the European Day of Parks! It was launched in 1999 to highlight Protected Areas in Europe. On and around the 24th of May 2019 we invited Parks to reconnect with nature by highlighting their favourite Natural Treasures!



Many responded, consequentially forming one of the biggest celebrations of the European Day of Parks yet, with 413 events in 33 countries! It gave visitors throughout Europe a change to rediscover all wonders nature has to offer.

To make this a successful international event, promotional materials were created in 33 languages, giving parks the opportunity to showcase everything they do for nature. The event was a big hit on social media as well, resulting in 1050 posts on Facebook alone! Additionally, over 200 online articles pointed out the importance of saving and appreciating these **natural treasures**.



More information can be found here.

Alfred Toepfer Medal

The Alfred Toepfer Medal is a recognition for those who have made a significant contribution to nature conservation in Europe, awarded at the our Conference. In 2019 **Kaja Lotman**, the Estonian champion in **management of traditional semi-natural biotopes** and conservation in a broader landscape received the medal. Especially the idea of grazing on and **restoring coastal meadows** is attributed to Kaja Lotman as one of her most significant achievements. She currently works as a nature conservation advisor in Estonian Environmental Board.



Kaja Lotman received the Alfred Toepfer Medal

2019 International Junior Ranger Camp

Every year, EUROPARC organises the International Junior Ranger Camp: Junior Rangers between 13 to 17 years old gather in one Protected Area to share experiences and meet new friends from all over Europe. In 2019 50 young people from 9 different countries and 15 Protected Areas came together in Lahemaa National Park in Estonia to celebrate the 18th International Junior Ranger Camp. They were officially welcomed by the Director of the Environmental Board, Mr. Riho Kuppert, together with his deputy, Ms. Leelo Kukk, who gave an overview of the role, priorities, and functions of protected areas in Estonia.

During the camp they learned the functions and relevance for biodiversity of different habitats: bogs, forests, meadows, coastal areas. Experts, mentors and rangers explained different techniques for species and habitats monitoring, management and conservation and did some practical work to restore local paths.

The camp helped young people to reconnect with nature while learning and having fun together for a week in the Lahemaa national park. We would like to take this opportunity to thank once again the Lahemaa National Park, the Environmental Board of Estonia and all mentors who did an amazing work to put the camp together.



Natura 2000 Awards

In the framework of a service contract with the European Commission, we continued to contribute to support the management and to promote the EU Natura 2000 Awards. For this we widely promoted the guidelines and encouraged our network to apply, as a great chance to "get the recognition you deserve" for successful Natura 2000 management in 6 different categories: Conservation; Socio-Economic Benefits; Communication; Reconciling Interests/Perceptions and Cross-Border Cooperation and Networking as well as a European Citizens' Award. We are proud to have seen a large interest from Protected Areas and some very good candidatures!





International Junior Ranger Camp 2019, © Margit Turb

Youth+ Programme

Young people, previously involved in Junior Ranger programmes, are now becoming youths (18+). They are keen, motivated and passionate about their Protected Areas and want to remain involved. This is why Youth+ was developed!

You can read more about the programme [here](#).

Junior Ranger Programme Toolkit

Youth has a special place at EUROPARC. We know that they will be the nature conservationists of tomorrow, so it is important to get them involved! To help Parks set up a Junior Ranger programme, EUROPARC created a toolkit with guiding information on how to start, regional examples, as well as case studies

You can find it [here](#).

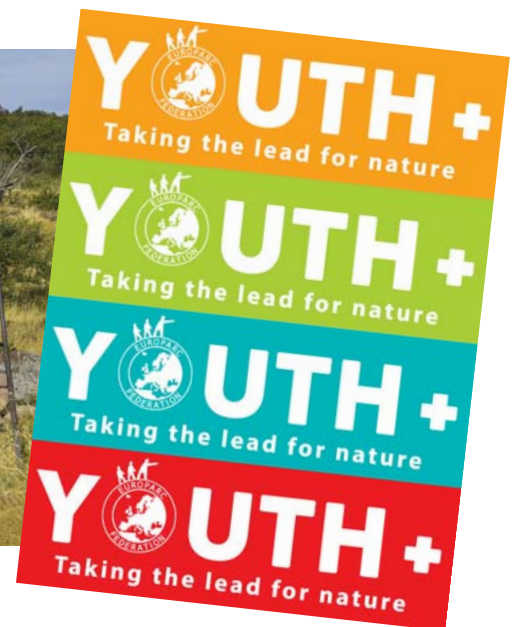


International Youth+ Camp

Youth+ Camp

The 3rd edition of the international Youth+ Camp was hosted by Kullaberg Nature Reserve in Sweden. 20 youngsters from across Europe came together to put in practice their conservation skills, but also to gain new communication & advocacy techniques and, together, further develop the Youth+ Programme.

Additionally, the young nature enthusiasts helped build a stonewall to manage visitors, learned how to safely capture and identify marine species, attended a storytelling workshop by Thea Peters from IVN and a communications training session to define a communications plan for the youth+ programme by Bárbara Pais.



A huge thank you to IVN for all the support, and to the Kullaberg Nature Reserve team for hosting the Camp. A special thank you to Tor and the Kullaberg Junior Rangers who made it an amazing experience!

Helping people and organisations learn

Collaborative work
Staff development
Alfred Toepfer Natural Heritage Scholarships
Training



**EUROPARC
promotes collaborative
work and capacity building of Protected
Area staff, through networking meetings and
technical workshops, developing new digital learning tools
and producing guidelines developed by members for members.**

*TransParcNet Meeting
© Stefania Petrosillo*

Collaborative work

Bringing people together, creating a stronger network.

Transboundary Parks Programme

The Transboundary Parks Programme is a special verification and certification system that aims to promote and facilitate cross-border cooperation between European Protected Areas. Throughout Europe there are different laws, administrations and rules between EU Member States which can make working across borders challenging. But how challenging is it to work with your neighbour, if he is outside EU?

This topic and the cooperation between parks in Finland and Russia has been one of the most inspiring themes discussed during the TransParcNet meeting 2019, hosted by Oulanka National Park (Finland) and co-organised with Paanajärvi National Park (Russia). Over 50 participants from 14 countries gathered in Oulanka, representing protected areas already awarded by the EUROPARC Transboundary Parks Programme or interested to join the network. Additionally to the TransParcNet Meeting, the Transboundary Cooperation Task Force met several times, both in person and online to discuss the development of the programme.

A new TB area joined the network in 2019. We have been very happy to welcome in the TB family the "Binntal Veglia Devero Nature Parks" consisting of the Alpe Veglia and Alpe Devero Natural Park in Italy and the Landschaftspark Binntal in Switzerland, and to award them during the EUROPARC Conference 2019!

Read more about it here.

Field trip at TransParcNet, © Sari Alatossava



Transboundary Parks

EUROPARC

www.europarc.org/transboundary-parks-programme

30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall

For the first time, the TransParcNet decided to declare their engagement in a common document, and they did so for a very important occasion. The Berlin Wall fell on the 9th November 1989: on the 30th anniversary, the European Transboundary Parks published a Declaration highlighting the need to cooperate across frontiers: "...on this

occasion, we strongly declare our commitment for peace, dialogue and nature protection and our availability to support, in the frame of our institutional goals and skills, any initiative aimed at fostering cooperation between European states within and beyond the European Union."

Read the declaration here.

TransParcNet meeting in Oulanka National Park, Finland, © Stefania Petrosillo





Staff development

Promoting the exchange of experiences, information and ideas



The project and all actions are made possible with support from the LIFE financial instrument of the European Community



Supporting e-learning and capacity building for Natura 2000 Managers

LIFE e-Natura2000.edu, or LIFEedu for short, continues to attract significant attention and interest from the EC and project collaborators. As lead partner, whilst EUROPARC continued to collaborate with and coordinate inputs from the 5 project partners, 2019 was also the main production and design phase of the project.

In March, the main LIFEedu team – Carol Ritchie, Teresa Pastor and Neil McIntosh - met with FUNGOBE/ EUROPARC Spain to discuss two of the three core competence courses, 'Building Alliances for Natura 2000' and 'Competent Inclusive Communication'. The EUROPARC project team met then in Siggen for 3 days of curriculum development. With support from Fernando Pinillos and Barbara Pais,

production and filming of videos for the EUROPARC course took place in Regensburg over one week in early September.

During the Conference in Latvia, the call for applications for project participants was launched. This generated a high response: all places available on the three core competence modules were oversubscribed by 3:1, demonstrating the high demand for dedicated capacity building for PA managers. In December, 75 participants were selected from 19 countries across Europe.

As a LIFE programme project, high value is placed on networking. At the invitation of the organisers, Neil McIntosh represented EUROPARC and the LIFEedu project during the 3rd Atlantic Biogeographical Seminar in Antwerp in June (120 participants from across the EU) and a global conference 'Capacity Building for Conservation' (180 participants from across the world).

All videos can be found here.



New digital tools for members

Making use of digital and accessible tools to share information and develop capacity is at the core of EUROPARC's work.

Webinars are a very important aspect of EUROPARC's work. They are cost effective and accessible to virtually all. In 2019 six webinars were organised. Over 650 people came together virtually to discuss topics ranging from agriculture to health.

If you haven't had the chance to participate directly, you can access the recordings of each webinar, read a brief resume of each or even download the presentations:

Alfred Toepfer Natural Heritage Scholarship

Each year the EUROPARC Federation, with support from Alfred Toepfer Stiftung, awards three Alfred Toepfer Natural Heritage Scholarships (ATS) to promising young conservationists, who are committed to working for the benefit of Protected Areas. The aim of the Scholarship is to enhance international cooperation and advance the quality, innovation and European dimension of Protected Area management. Each scholarship is worth €3.000 and enables successful applicants to undertake a study visit on a particular theme to one or more Protected Areas in a European country.



The 2019 winners were:

Marie Micol is a Future Landscapes Project Assistant at National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. At the moment, she is also finishing her Postgraduate Diploma in Conservation and Forest Protection at Harper Adams University. Through the study visits to parks and nature reserves in France, Italy, Germany and the United Kingdom, Marie aims to develop a framework for landscape management approaches, replicable in different regions based on the different perceptions of "landscape" across Europe.

Myrthe Fonck has been working as Ecologist and nature advisor at Zuid-Kennemerland National Park in The Netherlands for the past two years. Her main activities include advisory tasks regarding nature and recreation management, research and strategy. During her study visits to the UK, Sweden and Italy, Myrthe wants to investigate the potential of citizen science for nature conservation, and understand the requirements for successful citizen science projects.

Matthew Ross works as Learning & Discovery Ranger at Peak District National Park, which means that he delivers and coordinates school visits, Junior Rangers, family events and community outreach. To improve his work, Matthew would like to study how different parks engage their visitors, especially young people and urban communities. For his study visits, he chose Sächsische Schweiz in Germany and Duna-Ipoly Nemzeti Park near Budapest because of their particular Periurban Park status.



Alfred Toepfer Scholarship winners 2019

Training

Increasing expertise on EUROPARC programmes and developing new training for Protected Area managers.

Siggen Seminar

Through the generous support of the Alfred Toepfer Stiftung E.V.S. EUROPARC annually offers a training Seminar in Northern Germany, free for EUROPARC members

Following the launch of the Youth Manifesto, the Siggen Seminar 2019 was focussed on working with Youth. 19 participants from 10 countries got together to learn how they can change priorities to generate more youth involvement and share their experience working with youngsters within the framework of the Junior Ranger Programme and the youth manifesto implementation. Additionally it was possible to review what is currently happening in terms of youth involvement in Protected Areas across Europe, hear updates from the implementation of the Youth Manifesto, identify current needs, expectations, challenges and ambitions of Youth, Protected Areas and Rangers and brainstorm on new actions and initiatives.

The full report of the seminar can be accessed [here](#).



Workshops at Siggen Seminar



ERASMUS + “Sustainable Tourism: Training for Tomorrow (STTft)” project is creating for the first time an integrated sustainable tourism training content (including case studies and best practice) on all key principles and actions of the Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas. As well as EUROPARC, the project brings together partners working on different fields in the sustainable tourism sector: Hasselt University (BE), the University of Hull (UK), Asociacion de Ecoturismo en Espana (ES) and 2 EUROPARC members: Ente Parchi Emilia Occidentale (IT) and Montagne de Reims Nature Regional Park (FR).

A single platform aimed at all key tourism stakeholder groups working in European Protected Areas is being developed. A project meeting took place in Madrid in 2019, where the content production for the online training platform on Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas aimed at both learners in professional contexts and trainers was planned and subsequently completed. Find out about the project and sign up for the training platform on

www.sttft.eu



STTfT

Sustainable Tourism:
Training for Tomorrow



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



Partner Meeting in Madrid for Sustainable Tourism Training for Tomorrow



Promoting Sustainability

Parks are catalysts for sustainability at a local, regional and national level.

EUROPARC seeks to mainstream Protected Areas as models for sustainable development, to deliver social, economic and environmental benefits: providing Parks methodologies and quality standards and working closely with EU institutions to raise the voice of Protected Areas.



**Sustainable Agriculture
Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas
Nature and Health
Climate Change
Future topics**

*Crops in Bayern., Germany
© Joao Romba
(rombaimages.pt)*

Sustainable agriculture in and around Protected Areas

Promoting nature friendly agricultural practices across Europe

The Commission of Agriculture in Protected Areas continued supporting the Directorate in the dialogue with the European Institutions, in the participation of meetings and events, and in preparation of documents and the webinar about the connection between agriculture and environment protection, the new CAP and the new EU policies in the framework of the Green Deal.

To continue establishing the important link between agriculture, nature and the different policies in place, EUROPARC organised a **webinar** on the topic. During the webinar policy officers from the EU Commission shared different EU perspectives and policy changes of the coming CAP. The webinar finished with a practical example of nature conservation governance in Latvia.

Additionally, the Commission finalized the recommendations to the Council for a new tool and award to support good partnership between Protected Areas and farmers. This tool will be tested on the field in a future pilot project.



Pnr-Scarpe-Escout © Samuel-Dhote

See the webinar here.



Members of the Commission of Agriculture in Protected Areas met in Pilat Regional Park, FR.

Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas

Sustainable Tourism is Good for Parks and Good for People.

European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas

In 2019 there were 16 verifications, corresponding to 4 new applications from Parks in Estonia, Italy, and Spain. In what concerns the re-evaluations, we had 12 Parks from Finland, France, Italy, Lithuania, Portugal and Spain. Portugal submitted a Methodology for the Charter Partner Part II process to engage and award Tourism Businesses. By the end of the year the first 11 tourism businesses from ECST of Alto Minho have been awarded. We have now tourism businesses awarded in Finland, France, Italy, Portugal and Spain summing to almost 700 Charter Partners. We have now awarded around 20 Charter Partners Part II in France and Spain.

Charter Network meeting

The biannual European Charter Network Meeting was held in Greece at the Tzoumerka National Park. There were around 100 participants from the network as well as from other countries outside Europe. It was a very productive meeting with several workshop conclusions. Special attention was given to ecotourism as a driving force for rural areas.

[Read the full report here.](#)



EUROPARC
Sustainable Tourism
in Protected Areas



Meeting of the Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Greece

Policy/lobby work

In 2019 we continued our dialogue with the European Commission and the other NGOs about the CAP reform, a very complex topic that involves many different actors and interests. Not only did the EUROPARC Brussels office attend several events, it also organized specific occasions for meetings and discussions. Among them the webinar that offered to the participants direct information from two policy officers of DG AGRI (Mr Krzysztof Sulima) and DG ENVI (Mr Jérémie Crespin) and a "breakfast interview" with Ms Caroline Pottier, policy officer at the DG ENVI, about the environmental aspects of the new CAP proposal.

[See it here.](#)



Charter Award Ceremony in Brussels 2

Charter Awards

The Brussels office maintains regular contacts with the Tourism Unit of the DG GROW-European Commission. The EUROPARC Charter Award is the most important occasion for EUROPARC's dialogue on tourism with the European Institutions. Here, the work of Protected Areas towards achieving sustainability in tourism is presented. 65 participants gathered to celebrate the successful applications of 16 EUROPARC Sustainable Destinations.



CEETO: EUROPARC's role as Communication Manager of CEETO project was focused on the project promotion and support to project partners.

In this regard, the project updates were presented at the 2019's editions of the EUROPARC Charter Network Meeting and the European Charter Awards. Likewise, a dedicated workshop on Sustainable Tourism was organised in coordination with CEETO at EUROPARC Conference, and a stall in the Conference's Market Place with information on the project was exhibited.

Special efforts were made this year for the promotion of the CEETO film "A Sustainable Journey", produced by EUROPARC. Among these actions, extensive promotion through EUROPARC communication channels was carried out, and the submission of the film to 6 International Film Festivals was done in order to reach larger audiences and get recognition.



The STAR awards was set up by EUROPARC with inputs from across the EUROPARC Charter for Sustainable Tourism network. It seeks to celebrate, champion and acknowledge the effort and investments made by tourism businesses to be more sustainable and help care and protect their natural and cultural heritage. There are over 500 partners across Europe, working in close collaboration with EUROPARC network of Sustainable Destinations. These businesses commit to being less impactful on the environment, but also to work alongside the park, and to play a supporting role in their community.

For this first edition of EUROPARC Star Awards, EUROPARC invited all current partners to submit, apply and share with the network the actions they are implementing to become more sustainable. The winners were awarded at a ceremony in the Brussels. All finalists were entered into a public vote in January 2020 to find the overall winner.



Star Winner - Hotel Caminetto

Read their inspirational stories here.

Nature and Health

Highlighting the benefits of nature for human health and bringing together Protected Areas and the health sector

The Jurmala Communiqué, was released at the conclusion of the EUROPARC conference 2019. It is the first step towards the creation of the Healthy Parks, Healthy People Europe programme. Our parks and Protected Areas are a health-promoting asset. They have a crucial role in nurturing healthy ecosystems that sustain our societies, and the EUROPARC Conference 2019 gave the opportunity to analyse these roles, needs and opportunities in detail.

Watch the webinar here!

Sports in Arche de la Nature

The communiqué expressed the EUROPARC members wishes, to deliver better health outcomes for people and to make Parks and Protected Areas more relevant to an increasingly urbanised Europe. Additionally, the case for further investment and a strategic approach to Parks and Protected Areas was supported.

The communiqué indicated actions across 5 areas: Policy, Partnerships, Practice, Support and leadership, and expressed the vision that Healthy Parks Healthy People Europe would support EUROPARC members to build stronger relationships with the health sectors in their countries.

Following the outcomes of the EUROPARC Conference 2019 in Latvia, the webinar 'Healthy Parks, Healthy People Europe' discussed the potential of Parks & Protected Areas as 'Natural Health Centres'. Here, the Jurmala Communiqué was introduced, as well as best practice examples.



See the full text of the communiqué here.





10 Good Principles for Outdoor Sports in Protected Areas

Plan your visit sustainably

When we enter a Protected Area, we all make an impact on the natural environment no matter how small this might be. It is important not just to care for ourselves but the nature around us. Nature is inviting you into her home, be a good guest!



Come on foot, bike or public transport as a priority.



When using private vehicles, try to share the ride.



Circulate with caution and park in the spaces reserved.

How to make the most out of your visit and to take care of the Protected Area?

1 You are a privileged guest.
Stay in the trails, respect the natural environment and regulations to guarantee the beauty of the place.

3 If you come with a dog,
take extra care of it. Follow the regulations. Dogs can disturb other species.

5 Everyone wants to enjoy the place.
Give way to other users; anticipate that they often do not feel or see you coming, respect speed limits.

7 Night is for species to be alone.
Avoid going in the night for your safety and let the animals live in peace.

9 Avoid excessive noise.
Enjoy the quietness and calm, animals need quietness as we do.

2 Plan your activity carefully.
Gather the information you need to enjoy your activity and the place; you will appreciate it better.

4 Take care of yourself and others.
and be prepared to help others, regardless their sport.

6 Help us to keep this place clean.
Leave no trace and take with you the waste you make.

8 Keep "secret places" secret!
Use social media and GPS tracks with responsibility and according to official regulations.

10 See it, Say it, Sort it!
If you see something wrong, tell the park. Open your eyes, appreciate nature and enjoy!

Get Out & Get Into Nature

www.outdoor-sports-network.eu
www.europarc.org



Outdoor sports

"Spending time in nature and practicing outdoor sports is good for our health" said Dr William Bird, one of the keynote speakers at the EUROPARC Conference. However, what if this causes too much pressure on the natural area? This was discussed by the Periurban Commission at the EUROPARC Conference in Latvia with the Workshop: How do we manage green exercise and the increase of outdoor sports in Periurban Parks?

The discussion focused on two main aspects: what can be done in terms of planning to better manage the increase of public use and what protocol can a park apply to minimise damages when organising a mass sports event?

Read the outcomes here



Policy/lobby work

On the occasion of the **2019 European Week of Sports**, the EUROPARC Federation and the **European Network of Outdoor Sports** (ENOS) together launched the 10 Good Principles for Outdoor Sports in Protected Areas (PAs) during their respective Conferences. The Principles aim to promote good conduct among outdoor sports practitioners. For that, the Good Principles have been adapted in different digital formats and languages so they can be endorsed by all Protected Areas across Europe. The Principles are now available in: French, Spanish, Catalan, German, Czech, Italian and Portuguese.

See the 10 principles here.

Climate Change

Supporting Protected Areas on climate change mitigation and adaptation.

NaturAdapt – A dynamic collective learning process for Climate Change Adaptation

Helping Protected area managers adapt to climate change

Since autumn 2018, the EUROPARC Federation has been involved in the LIFE Natur'Adapt project. The main goal is to support Protected Area managers in adopting new planning and governance tools that account for Climate Change.



Policy Work

Climate change has been one of the key topics mentioned in our policy paper "Our Natural Heritage: the key to Europe's future" for the EP elections: *"Put Climate Policies high on the priority list, ensuring the integration of Nature Conservation in general, and valuing the role of Protected Areas in particular, in the EU Climate strategies and Targets" because "Europe needs action for climate. Protected Areas are key element to tackling climate change, because by protecting ecosystems they provide natural solutions for mitigation and adaption.*

Understanding the needs of managers in a changing climate, a European survey

As part of LIFE Natur'Adapt, the EUROPARC Federation led a European survey on climate change adaptation in Protected Areas. About 500 nature conservation professionals participated and shared their insights. It enabled us to identify their expectations and needs to better integrate climate change into their management practices as well as existing adaptation initiatives.

A summary of the results is available in English on our website.

Discussing climate change adaptation with our members

The results of this survey, as well as experiences from Cascais Ambiente in Portugal and from Teide National Park initiated a very interesting discussion with our members on how to adapt Protected Area management in a changing climate. This technical workshop and the world café that followed involved over 60

participants. The highlights have been compiled in an article published here on our website.

NaturAdapt is a 5-year project developed with the support of LIFE, Office Français pour la Biodiversité et le Ministère Français de la Transition Ecologique et Solidaire.

Leading a Climate Change Task Force

With the support of Réserves Naturelles de France (RNF), the EUROPARC Federation is leading a task force to support the emergence of a debate on climate change adaptation at a European level and within EUROPARC's network. Its 8 members have been selected among 80 enthusiastic candidates. The first assignment of the task force is to protected area translate technical needs in the face of climate change into a strategic vision for policymakers. It should be published in autumn 2020.

Fast-tracking climate change adaptation and fostering exchanges

The EUROPARC Federation also intensified its efforts to fast-track the discussion on climate change adaptation in Protected Areas and to foster exchanges among the European community of park managers. Among others, we presented the results of the LIFE Natur'Adapt project at the annual congress of RNF in June in France, at the annual congress of NAAONB in July, in the United Kingdom and at the 10th Meeting of the group of experts on Protected Areas and ecological networks of the Bern Convention in October in Norway.

Along that same line, we also kicked off a series of webinars on the topic with a first episode which attracted over 100 participants.



Workshop on Climate Change at the EUROPARC Conference in Latvia

Future topics

Exploring new topics to support Protected Area managers' contribution to sustainable development

EUROPARC joined a new project in 2019: The **Erasmus SDG.imp** project aims at developing decision making capacities and promotes the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals by providing a high quality learning system and decision support materials for regional stakeholder and entrepreneurs. It seeks to increase the capacity of regional decision makers, including protected areas regarding the implementation of SDGs something we believe of interest to our members.

It is coordinated by Institut für Ländliche Strukturforschung an der Goethe-Universität Frankfurt. The comprehensive partnership bridges the gap between science and practice as it represents research and consulting organisations (Institut für Ländliche Strukturforschung – IfLS, Panstwowa Wyższa Szkoła Informatyki I Przedsiębiorczości w Łomży - PWSIP), adult education organisations (Biosphären-Volkshochschule – BVHS and Community for Lifelong Learning - CPIP), a LEADER Local Action Group (Asociacion para el Desarrollo Rural del Litoral de la Janda - GDR) and an institute of ICT and education technologies (Baltijos edukaciniu technologiju institutas - BETI) as well as EUROPARC. Furthermore, large-scale protected areas will participate as associated partners.

An online learning resource will be created with multiplier events in the project partner countries. EUROPARC will host an international conference to detail the project conclusions in Brussels, as well as advice on the learning platform content and communications and dissemination of project activities.

www.sdgimp.eu/

Retezet National Park © Mihai Moiceanu





Working Together – building our organisation

Being an effective and efficient network means looking for continual development in the fields of governance, human resources, finances and communications.

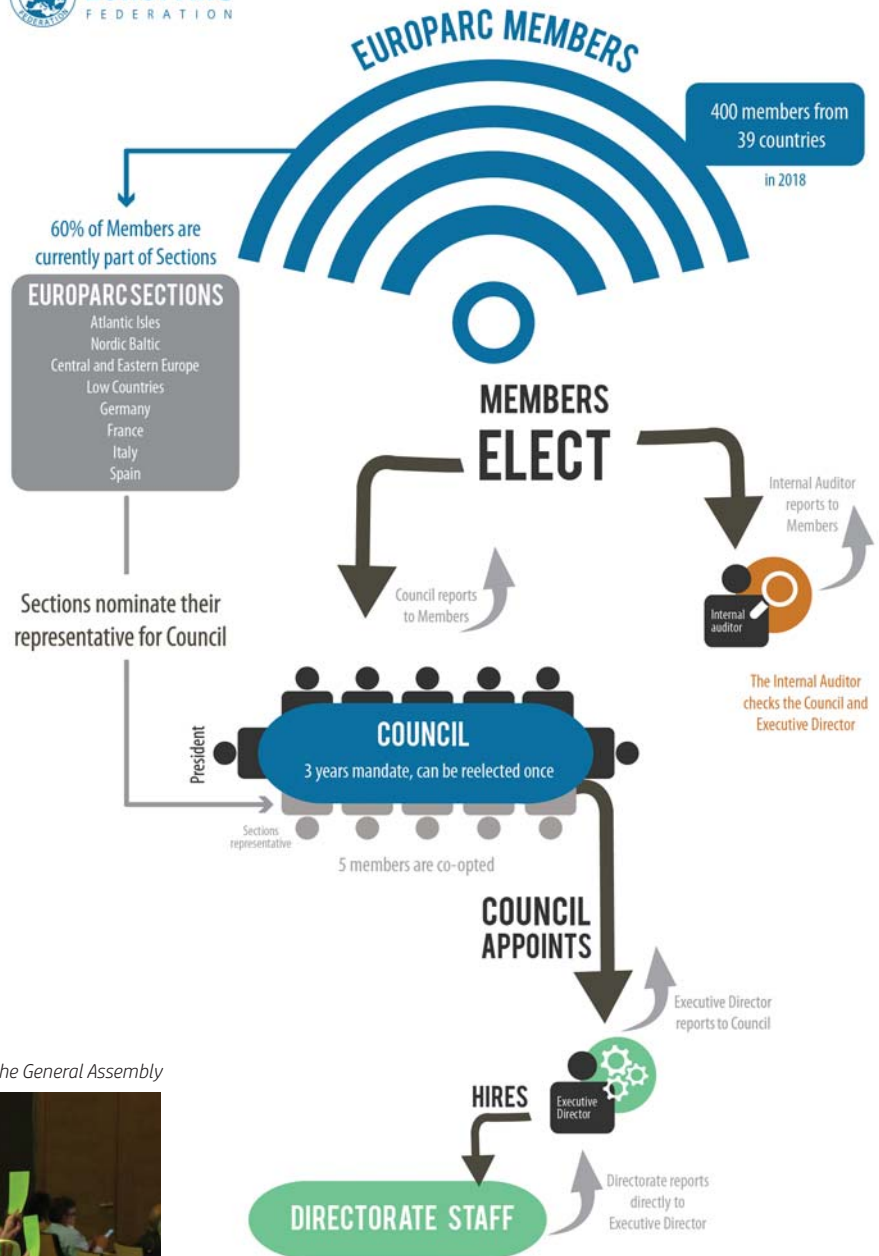


Governance - how we work
People Power - Human Resources
Federation Finances
Talking and Listening

Governance – how we work

Improving the governance system of the EUROPARC Federation to meet good governance principles and increase efficiency

EUROPARC Governance Structure



President Ignace Schops at the General Assembly

General Assembly 2019

As always, the EUROPARC Conference was opened with the General Assembly meeting. After the President, the Treasurer, the Youth Representative and the Internal Auditor presented their reports, members got an update on the work of the Directorate, the Sections and EUROPARC Commissions. Especially exciting was the LIVE call with Russia, where our member Zapovedniks was running a Youth Festival to raise environmental awareness with youngsters and Rangers from all over Russia. **The different reports can be accessed here.**

Council meetings

3 meetings took place respectively in Barcelona (ES), in the Pilat Regional Park (F), and in the Kemer National Park (LT), as well as 3 E-meetings.

Voting during the General Assembly



Over 2019 the Council primarily worked on the following topics:

- An internal review of the council effectiveness was undertaken by the internal auditor and reported at the General Assembly.
- The council chaired the internal fundraising commission and published the fundraising strategy.
- A new EUROPARC manual was produced, with all current internal policies and procedures reviewed and updated.
- An initial plan for the review of the current strategy and the development of a new strategy was also agreed on.

People Power – human resources

Developing the potential of human resources and the communications flow between all components of the Federation.

Directorate

EUROPARC's team is spread out all throughout Europe. Through biweekly team meetings we manage to stay up to date with all the different projects everyone is involved in. The team was also expanded with the arrival of Cristina Popa, EUROPARC's new finance and administration officer.

Section meetings

In order to coordinate work and agree priorities with the 8 EUROPARC Sections, 2 Meetings with Section representatives were organised, one in England and one in Latvia, together with 2 online meetings. In particular it has been a chance for mutual updates on projects and initiatives, but also a chance to look together at current strategic priorities, the possibility to develop new joint projects and a chance to agree a coordinated plan to develop the new EUROPARC Strategy.

EUROPARC Commissions

EUROPARC Commissions are groups of experts within the EUROPARC network, that are brought together to advance, study and develop a specific topic relevant for the work of Protected Areas. Discover the work of the Commission on

Health and Protected Areas on page 20, the work of the "Protected Areas and Sustainable Agriculture Commission" on page 17 and the "Periurban Commission" on page 6. Smaller internal Commissions and Task Forces are also often created to

deliver a specific output, which, after completion, are then dissolved. This is for example the case for the Fundraising for the Fundraising Commission at the bottom of this page.

EUROPARC Offices and Sections

- Nordic-Baltic
- Atlantic Isles
- Central and Eastern Europe
- Low Countries
- Germany
- France
- Italy
- Spain
- EUROPARC members not represented by a Section
- Countries not represented in EUROPARC network



Federation Finances

Finding new ways for funding and sustaining financially the Federation's activities.

EUROPARC membership

Being a member of the biggest network of European Protected Areas gives a wealth of unique opportunities to support your work. From management tools and capacity building events, to experience exchange with like-minded professionals, as well as having your issues represented at a European level, each brings a flow of ideas, support and creativity to all aspects of protected area work.

In December 2019, EUROPARC had 405 members from 30 countries. We had 3 resignations and gained 19 new members from 11 countries: Belgium, Finland, France, German, Greece, Italy, The Netherlands, Norway, Russia, Slovenia and Turkey.

Fundraising Commission

A fundraising commission was established by the council, to scope and develop a Fundraising Strategy, looking primarily at new and non-traditional sources of income. At the General Assembly 2019, the EUROPARC Fundraiser Commission presented its outputs. The commission recommended looking into securing the Federation's finances through the increase of income from private and corporate donations. This tool can help us increase our resilience through more diversified source funds, build new connections with non-members and become more independent from the administrative burden of grant applications and

subsidies. Donors will need to operate at a European level, share our vision and are supporting members activities at the local level. Of course, a code of ethics will need to be developed. These outputs were presented and will be taken into account when formulating the new strategy.

Financial Report

Balance Sheet

	2019	2018
Assets		
Assets		
Total fixed assets	7 813,99	11 737,12
Total current assets	342 593,96	363 127,31
Total Assets	350 407,95	374 864,43
Liabilities		
Profit Reserve	188 374,88	185 346,95
Liabilities		
Provisions	20 343,79	18 224,39
Accounts payable	141 689,28	171 293,09
Total Equity and Liability	350 407,95	374 864,43

Income and Expenditure

	2019	2018
Income		
Membership fees	325 360,50	326 300,50
Grants		
EC core grant	189 021,24	156 850,83
Project grants	302 308,70	226 563,99
Other income	108 118,66	151 618,67
Total Income	924 809,10	861 333,99
Simplified Expenditure		
Total Personnel costs	594 663,75	509 070,82
Total Office costs	27 500,00	25 160,00
Total Travel and Subsistence	114 709,53	118 046,38
Total Other direct costs	65 492,81	84 522,06
Total Overhead costs	58 879,10	45 827,75
Total External Assistance/ Professional Fees	60 535,98	76 431,11
Financial Assets Depreciation		
Total costs	921 781,17	859 058,12
Result	3 027,93	2 275,86

Talking and listening

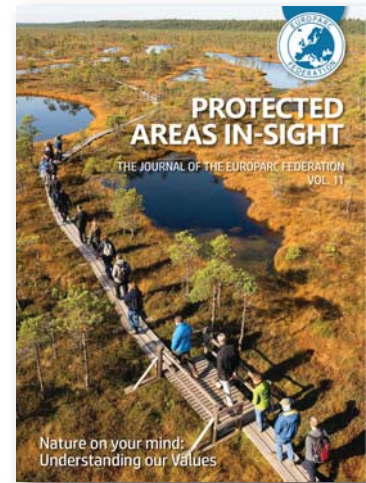
Developing smarter communications.

Every year at the **EUROPARC Conference**, Protected Area professionals gather to discuss, network and learn. In 2019 the conference was held in Latvia where 370 participants from 40 countries gathered for four days, with one guiding question: how can we put nature on our minds? Conference delegates focussed on the role of nature in human health. Together, they developed the "EUROPARC Green prescriptions": nature based solutions they found to 'diseases' in their respective areas of work.

GO LIVE Videos: A video interview was recorded and published in EUROPARC Website and YouTube channel to illustrate and complement the case study "Enhance controlled grazing for fire prevention in Collserola Natural Park". Likewise, a video for the promotion of the EUROPARC Conference 2019 was produced with the collaboration of Cairngorms National Park, Scotland, and Kemer National Park, Latvia, in order to promote the event.

Additionally, a new video gallery was created EUROPARC Website to collect all the videos produced by the Federation, excluding projects, in a single repository. It also allows the display of the Videos within the Knowledge Hub under the sections to which they can be relevant.

Through our regular updates on social media and our website our online presence keeps growing. Additionally, our Tools & Training and Knowledge hub pages keep Protected Areas informed on best practices throughout Europe. All this caused a 16% increase of views on our website in comparison to 2018, amounting to **212,421** views. Through our daily postings on social media we are also reaching an ever growing audience: the Federation got over **800.000** impressions (551.299 on Facebook and 282.900 on Twitter).



Protected Areas in Sight

Every year, the EUROPARC journal 'Protected Areas In-Sight' brings you the highlights of our annual Conference and best practice on a wide range of topics, relevant for all nature and protected area professionals. In 2019 you will find "in-sights" into the connection between **nature and human health**, and an overview on how the initiative is being implemented around the globe. It is available in English, French and German.

Find all editions here.



EUROPARC's Neil McIntosh and Federico Minozzi present the Green Prescriptions





Paulo Castro, the Treasurer of the EUROPARC Federation at the ART&TUR Festival Award ceremony



The film **"A Sustainable Journey"**, produced in 2018 by EUROPARC Federation in the framework of CEETO Interreg CE project, was extensively promoted during this year and presented in six different International Film Festivals dedicated to tourism, sustainability and/or nature. The film was awarded in 4 of these festivals with the following recognitions, managing to reach a larger audience that is usually out of the scope of our network, and brought the topic of sustainable tourism and, specifically, examples of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas beyond our professional boundaries:

- 1st place - "TERRES DE L'EBRE- Best Movie Promoting Sustainability" in the Terres Travel Festival – Films & Creativity, Spain;
- 1st place in the Documentary section, "Sustainable and Responsible Tourism" at the Amorgos Tourism Film Festival, Greece;
- 1st place in the category "Environment and Ecology" at the ART&TUR Film Festival, Portugal;
- 2nd place in the category "Short Docs (up to 30")" at the ART&TUR Film Festival, Portugal;
- 1st price in the category "Sustainable and Responsible Tourism Category" at the ITTF Africa 2019.

Events EUROPARC attended

EUROPARC Federation had the honour of being invited to present the Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas at the fourth annual AUA Ecotourism Conference, in August 30-31 in Yerevan, Armenia. It focused on the role of protected areas in ecotourism and sustainable tourism development, which ensures protecting the environment and enabling nearby communities to benefit from growth in tourism, to which the experience of the Charter was much appreciated. The conference discussions helped identify the key advantages and gaps in Armenia with respect to advancing sustainable tourism connected with protected areas.

We hope the connections and links established will see greater participation of Armenia's protected areas in our European network.

EUROPARC attended the Communicate 2019: Riding Waves, Changing Worlds conference 12&13 NOVEMBER, BRISTOL ZOO GARDENS, an annual environmental communication conference. Here, a diverse group of delegates develop their skills, share best practice and debate latest issues in science communication, nature conservation and engaging people with the natural world. It was an excellent opportunity for EUROPARC to be amongst communication specialists to refresh our thinking and approach to our messages and media. We expect to integrate the learning gained here into the communication work of the Federation.



Executive Director Carol Ritchie receives the Terres de L'Ebre award for the film "A Sustainable Journey"

www.europarc.org/sections

Our European Network

Over the years, the Federation has supported the creation of regional and national sections. The EUROPARC sections fulfill many of the Federation's aims, working to implement the strategy, whilst reflecting the priorities and characteristics of the areas they cover.

EUROPARC Atlantic Isles
EUROPARC Central and Eastern-Europe
EUROPARC France
EUROPARC Germany
EUROPARC Italy
EUROPARC Low Countries
EUROPARC Nordic-Baltic
EUROPARC Spain



EUROPARC Central and Eastern Europe



EUROPARC Central and Eastern Europe

2019 was the second year for EUROPARC Central- and Eastern-Europe having Hortobágy National Park Directorate in charge of presidency. The Hungarian colleagues took over the honour of leading the section during 2018 spring at the beautiful Balaton Uplands National Park, Hungary. Although, during the first part of the year most of the section members were buried into local duties and tasks, spring and early summer brought us new ideas.

During late May, section members joined to the beautiful event of European Day of Parks. Visitors could join guided trekking tours, rowing in canals, cycling tours, motor-boating and pupils could take part in small contest of different nature conservation topics and could get an insight of the work of nature conservation professionals.

Every year, the section has two major and important events. One of them is the annual Members Assembly, where most of the members are represented and have the right to have a say into the future of the section. In 2019, we met in the Kiskunság National Park, Hungary. The most important and urgent task was to elect the representative of the section, while the previous president stood back. The membership elected Csaba Bereczki from Hortobágy National Park Directorate with one voice.

Every time, the Members Assembly is connected to workshop or mini-conference on a relevant nature conservation topic. In 2019, section members had the opportunity to share experience about dealing with invasive alien species. One of the most threatening issue within the section (and whole Europe) is the quick spread of invasive alien species, thus it was a good opportunity for all of us to learn from each other and see the latest result of

eradication or mapping methods. During the practical workshop the experts of Kiskunság National Park Directorate taught the participants the most relevant eradication techniques against IAS trees and plants.

The other important event was the EUROPARC Conference in Latvia, where the section was represented by many members. During a short talk with the colleagues presented we discussed the next tasks of the membership, and decided to refresh the contact information of the whole section in order to reach each other more easily and, if it is possible, to have young representatives from every section members. This update is still on.

The biggest challenge of the section is still how to engage more members in active section work. Hopefully, the update of contact information will help us to have effective communications with our members.



EUROPARC Atlantic Isles

Activities

One of EAI's main activities is a programme of Learning and Development achieved with a series of webinars, site visits and workshops.

The webinars run this year have been:

- Nature and Public Health: the role of nature in improving the health of a population
- Sustainable fisheries in Marine protected Areas
- Waterfalls, peat pipes & gullies: hydrological restoration of challenging blanket bog sites a Pennine PeatLIFE perspective
- Coastal Pioneers
- Demonstrating UAV Use: Pennine PeatLIFE - A Progress Report
- A peatland-tailored User Guide for Restoration Monitoring
- Peatland Code Q & A

The webinars have reached an audience of over 250 people, and all are available online for further viewing.

During the summer months EAI organised two coastal site visits one in Dorset looking at coastal realignment and the other to the Durham Heritage coast looking at history, legacy issues and opportunities, management challenges, Beach Care, HLF SeaScapes project, inshore management, democratic deficit. Both provide opportunities to look at and discuss issues, network and share ideas.



Dorset site visit

In May EAI held a workshop on the EUROPARC Youth Manifesto and this was organised alongside the EUROPARC Sections meeting with attendees from throughout the UK and Europe. Presentations made by Defra, Yorkshire Dales and the Cotswolds

The final activity for the year was the success in gaining Erasmus funding for European mobilities and in September a group of 18 staff and volunteers visited Latvia and the EUROPARC Conference. The group had the most remarkable time and the report of their visit can be found at the link down below.

Successes and Challenges

During the last year EAI has spent time trying to broaden and engaging a wider audience within its member organisations which we have begun to make some successes in achieving, EAI are now prioritising the recruitment of new members.

EAI also hosted the sections meeting by providing convivial surroundings in Charlbury Oxfordshire for a days meeting exploring how sections can work more closely together and understand each other's activities and programmes. This was successful and helped to facilitate further co-operation between sections. The EAI section is now exploring ways that it can work in partnership with the Baltic Section.

The main challenge still seems to be access to funding and getting resources to deliver a relevant and useful programme of activities especially in light of the potential of loosing access to European Funding.

Brexit remains an unknown as to whether it will be a challenge or an opportunity but EAI will continue to act as the conduit between the UK and European colleagues and enable European experience and learning to be shared

Further information about all the trips can be found on the EAI website.



EUROPARC
Atlantic Isles

EUROPARC France

In 2019, the French Section continued its activities on the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism (ECST), and was involved alongside EUROPARC in European lobbying.

In 2019, the French Section continued its enlargement to include the 3 networks of Francophone Nature Parks (Wallonia, Switzerland, Luxembourg), and welcomed the French periurban parks, new members of EUROPARC following the merger with Fedenatur. The Section continued its activities mainly focused on sustainable tourism and agriculture and was involved alongside EUROPARC in European lobbying actions.



Key activities in 2019

Participation in the setting up of European projects and networks

The Federation of Regional Nature Parks of France participated in the meeting of the Working Group on the creation of a Platform of Nature Parks of EUROPE, in Regensburg, in January; then in the meeting of the networks of Germano-/French-speaking Nature Parks (Germany, Austria, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Wallonia, France) in Luxembourg at the end of October. These meetings provided an opportunity to discuss the experiences and challenges of each network, to envisage collaborations and to work on the elaboration of a common positioning note promoting the Natural Parks of Europe with a view to improving the knowledge of these Protected Areas by European authorities and their integration into European policies and funding schemes. The Federation has agreed to take over the leadership of the European Nature Parks Platform for the year 2020.

The Parc de la Montagne de Reims continued its involvement in the Erasmus+ project "Training for tomorrow" within Europarc, with the creation of multilingual online training tools on sustainable tourism. This platform is based on the practical experiences of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism.

Participation in European and international networking and lobbying activities

The French Federation of Regional Nature Parks (FPNRF) participated in several events of the EUROPARC network:

- Seminar of the Sustainable Agriculture Commission chaired by P. Schmelzle, with the participation of F. Drugmant, FPNRF Agriculture Officer;
- Lobbying and promotion meeting for Natural Parks at the European Commission, in Brussels, at the end of October, with the presence of A. Philippeau, in charge of Natura 2000 inter-networks.
- The Inter-Parcs Massif Central (IPAMAC) represented the network of the French Section at the ECST Seminar in April in Greece.

Key successes and challenges in 2019

Participation in the governance of EUROPARC

Some members of the French Section (AFB, Federation, Parks) took part in the Europarc Conference / General Assembly in September in Latvia (E. Brua, O. Holm, P. Schmelzle, I. Zarlenga, J. Decuignières).

Commitments in the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism

The Joint Committee for the examination of applications for Part 3 of the ECST, which met in November, proposed the renewal of the commitment for 2 Travel Agencies.

The Loire Anjou Touraine Regional Nature Park has obtained the renewal of its commitment to Part 1 of the ECST.

The French Section took part in the **Star Awards**, the Sustainable Tourism Partners Awards, alongside Spain and Italy to promote the actors involved in Parts 2 and 3, by setting up a national jury composed of a National Park and a Regional Natural Park with a representative of EUROPARC, and by awarding the prize to the Parks. The travel agency **Sud Randos** received the prize in the category "**Building my Community**".

Read the story of Sud Randos here.



Contact: Katy MONIER / kmonier@parcs-naturels-regionaux.fr

EUROPARC Deutschland e. V. becomes Nationale Naturlandschaften e. V.

Nationale
Naturlandschaften



The umbrella organisation of the National Natural Landscapes has been representing Germany's national parks, biosphere reserves, nature parks and certified wilderness areas under a new name since 1 January 2020. The name change is accompanied by a strengthening of the umbrella brand, which is groundbreaking for the association.

The task of the non-profit umbrella organisation is to support the conservation and continuous development of the National Natural Landscapes. To this end, the association initiates and coordinates nationwide projects and programmes in the fields of youth and education, civic involvement, sustainable tourism, business cooperation and specialist expertise. All activities are developed and implemented in a participatory manner together with the association members. Three of the projects from 2019 are presented here.

Quality management of German national parks

With their unique, undisturbed landscapes and ecosystems, Germany's currently 16 national parks represent a particularly valuable natural heritage. To preserve it, effective protected area management is required, the quality of which can be assessed on the basis of specific criteria and standards. NNL e.V. supports the national park administrations in evaluating the quality management of their areas.

Mid-2019, a project was launched with significant participation of NNL e.V., with the aim of revising the quality criteria and standards for national parks and completing current topics such as wilderness, socio-economic monitoring or accessibility and inclusion.

Exchange of knowledge and experience at the MAB Youth Forum © Anand Anders



Experiencing nature and participation opportunities for all

Quality is also the highest guideline in the area of experiencing nature. The current project for barrier-free nature experience will further improve the accessibility of interesting offers in nature for guest. Exhibitions, viewpoints and guided tours should be easily accessible for all guests. The project is gathering experience in four model regions. Voluntary involvement in nature conservation should also be possible for everyone. The umbrella organisation is continuously pursuing this goal with the "Ungehindert engagiert" ("unimpededly engaged") project together with various partners. One of the offers of support are texts in easy language. These texts are primarily intended for people with reading and learning difficulties. In 2019, the thematic priorities of climate protection and bog habitat were added. The demand is growing.

MAB Youth Forum 2019

On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the designation of the first two German biosphere reserves Mittelbe and Thüringer Wald, NNL e.V. organised the first German-speaking MAB Youth Forum (Man and the Biosphere, MAB) in September 2019 on the topic "UNESCO biosphere reserves - living and managing sustainably". Young adults who live in biosphere reserves and/or are active in them were invited to the Rhön Biosphere Reserve. Workshops and excursions to local and sustainably managed businesses offered space for knowledge exchange and the expansion of specialist knowledge. A one-day project-forging enabled the participants to develop ideas for the promotion of biosphere reserves, which in the end they presented



Inclusive nature conservation, here: rare dune heaths. © Anett Roisch

themselves. Prize money will be awarded to support the three winning project ideas in 2020 in their further development.

All participants support the continuation of the MAB Youth Forum. It was supported by the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation with funds from the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (Bundesamt für Naturschutz mit Mitteln des Bundesministeriums für Umwelt, Naturschutz und nukleare Sicherheit).

Future challenges

The strengthening of the umbrella brand will be pursued further by raising the profile of the National Natural Landscapes. As part of the establishment of a nationwide brand identity, the visual brand image and brand tonality are to be revised and modernised this year. The aim is to increase the appreciation of the National Natural Landscapes among the population. In future, the umbrella organisation will continue to intensify cooperation between its members, act as a central networking and advice centre and support their work as a source of inspiration. The projects and programmes coordinated by the office are to be continued, taking into account current requirements. The umbrella organisation also wants to further expand European cooperation in the future and looks forward to continuing the good partnership with the EUROPARC Federation.

For more info go here.



Dr Bird Campus Biomedico

Federparchi-EUROPARC Italy

The Italian Federation of Parks and Nature Reserves, founded in 1989, joins bodies managing national and regional parks, marine protected areas, regional and state nature reserves, and consists of regional coordination offices. Since June 2008, Federparchi has also been established as the Italian Section of Europarc Federation. The Federation represents the Parks in the relations with the State, Regions, local Authorities, the European Union, and with any other public and private subject interested in the aims of the association and its members. Federparchi was created in 1989 as a coordination organization of several Regional Parks, and became, in 1996, the Italian Federation of Parks and Natural Reserves, today Federparchi involves many Italian Protected Areas and some Regions, Provinces, Municipalities, environmental associations; in 2019 it counts more than 150 members. In 2008, Federparchi took up the role of Europarc Italian Section, changing its name and becoming "Federparchi – Europarc Italia", thanks to the awareness that only in the international prospect the mission of being good nature conservers and promoters of an economical sustainable development could be better achieved.

Dr Bird Campus Biomedico



Federparchi

FEDERAZIONE ITALIANA PARCHI E RISERVE NATURALI



Activities 2019

During 2019 Federparchi (the Europarc Italian section) activities have been focused on the support given to the Italian protected areas, their biodiversity and their capacity to manage efficaciously, effectively and safely their targets. Moreover the Italian section continued to lobby and engage national and local institutions; carrying on studies, projects and services for members and partners.

One of the most important results was the celebration of Federparchi 30th anniversary. The celebration was held in May and Federparchi profited of the European Day of Parks for a special agenda of activities and initiatives; among them a delegation of Federparchi Council has been invited in a special official and dedicated meeting with the Italian President, Mr. Sergio Mattarella.

Regarding the Part 1 of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism, Federparchi supported new protected areas within the network and some of them were awarded during the Bruxelles Ceremony held in December 2019. The awarded (new or renewed) areas are 5 National Parks (PN dello Stelvio, del Pollino, dei Monti Sibillini, dell'Alta Murgia, dell'Appennino Tosco Emiliano) and 2 Regional Parks (Parco Regionale della Maremma and Parco delle Colline Metallifere) and 1 Marine Protected Area (Area Marina Protetta Torre Cerrano). Italy is the European country with the highest number of ECST awarded Areas.



Italian President S. Mattarella with G. Sammuri

Another important event was the meeting organized by Federparchi and "Campus Bio-Medico" University of Rome which took place in December at the University lecture hall entitled "Parks & One Health. Challenges and alliances for well-being and sustainability". The meeting was appointed also by doctor William Bird (Intelligent Health CEO), who attended also the Europarc Conference held in Latvia in September 2019

Success and challenges

2019 has been a great year for the ECST Part 2 application in Italy: almost 120 local entrepreneurs have been awarded by Parks (6 National Parks and 3 Regional Parks) and more than 210 tourist business companies are awarded and involved with the ECST Part 2 all over Italy.

Another important success is the definition of the Part 3 ECST methodology, it has been approved by the Federparchi Council and hence it will be soon sent the Europarc Federation Council for its approval. We are confident that the within the end of the year some Italian Tour Operators will be positively engaged by some Italian Parks.

Low Countries Section



EUROPARC Low Countries

After this interesting journey the young people themselves took the stage! Junior Rangers, Youth+, Jeugdbond voor natuurstudie and milieueducatie JNM explained what was already existing and what they would wish for the future. This was followed by short pitches with inspiring examples.

During the second part of the program 3 workshops were organised. Each participant could take part in 2 different workshops.

Workshop 1: How do you start with a program for young people – like junior rangers – if there aren't many youngsters active in your area - Thea Peeters, Senior Projectleider IVN Natuureducatie, Coördinator C&E NP Weerribben-Wieden

Workshop 2: How do you involve young people aged 18+ in your park? What do you expect from young people in terms of participation in your management structures? What do the youngsters expect? What is needed to give young people a voice? How can they take part? - Catrien Scholten, Gebiedscoördinator en secretaris Nationale Parken Zuidwest-Drenthe

Workshop 3) Examples of inspiring projects with young people, programs for schools and for the outdoors. How do you start and what are the results? - Andre Mulders, Coördinator Rangers Nationaal Park Hoge Kempen.

The participants exchanged their experiences and got inspired!

President Hendrik Oosterveld was very pleased with the results of the workshops and the enthusiasm of the participants. He asked the involved parks to continue to involve young people and to get them involved with the governance of the parks.

At the Europarc Conference in Jurmala, Latvia on the 25th of September the Low Countries Section held a meeting with 35 participants to discuss the actual topics and plan the activities for the next year. Hendrik Oosterveld gives feedback about the Europarc council meeting that took place on the 24rd of September and was held together with the section representatives.

Hendrik Oosterveld highlights the importance of getting young people involved with the National Parks governance as was stated in the 'Youth Manifesto' at the Europarc Conference in Scotland in September 2018. The junior Ranger program and the Youth Plus program are both important to achieve this. The Low Countries section will continue to work on this.

In 2020 one central theme is selected to work on; Climate and nature in relation to health. How can we reconnect people to nature? Can we find good examples, best practices to learn from? In May 2020 a meeting will be organised in the Netherlands to explore this theme further and find inspiration in some existing examples.

On Wednesday, March 27th 2019 the Low Countries section organised in cooperation with "Nationaal Parken Bureau voor Nationale Parken en (regionale) landschappen" a very successful gathering about the involvement of young people in National Parks and (regional) Landscapes. The meeting was held in Hoge Kempen National Park in As (Belgium) with 44 participants from many different organisations.

At the Europarc Conference in Scotland in 2018, the Youth manifesto had been presented.

Young people are asking to increase their involvement in Nature conservation and Landscape management.

The main question for many Parks is how to involve young people and what are the best ways to do this successfully.

Are there any best practises we can use? How do young people themselves look at this? What is their suggestion?

The session was opened by Hendrik Oosterveld: president of the Low Countries section, president of 'Samenwerkingsverband Nationale Parken' and 'Nationaal Park Drentsche Aa'.

The first question raised was – Which program's for young people do currently exist in the Netherlands and Belgium? An overview was given by Thea Peters, coordinator Education 'Nationale Parken Nederland' and André Mulders, coordinator Education 'Nationaal Park Hoge Kempen'.





EUROPARC Nordic Baltic Section members in Kullaberg Nature Reserve. Photo credit: Metsähallitus.

EUROPARC Nordic-Baltic

The EUROPARC Nordic-Baltic Section started the year with the new presidency by Metsähallitus Parks & Wildlife Finland. Metsähallitus Parks & Wildlife Finland took the reins for the second time in the history of the Section.

A Members Assembly and Get-together was organised in Kullaberg Nature Reserve in Sweden hosted by the great team of Kullaberg with a little help from the Coordination of the EUROPARC Nordic-Baltic Section, Metsähallitus Parks & Wildlife Finland. The event took place on 27-28 May 2019. In the Members Assembly, country focal points were named for six of the eight countries in the Section. The aim is to have a country focal point for all the countries. The country focal point acts as a liaison between the Section Coordination and members in a particular country. The Coordination presented results of a questionnaire sent out to the members concerning what kind of activities members would like the Section to do. Mostly members are interested in seminars, projects and training and capacity building. The protected area issues important for members to be addressed together were nature conservation, visitor management and communication issues. The added value that members feel they are getting from the Section work is sharing experiences and best practices.

EUROPARC Nordic-Baltic Section members at the Members Assembly. Photo credit: Metsähallitus.

The participants of the event were given information on the Kullaberg Nature Reserve and their experience in European Charter for Sustainable Tourism. The participants visited the Kullaberg Visitor Centre and had a chance to take in the breath-taking views of the Reserve. To top it all, a porpoise safari was made in speed boats. A great experience!

A Members Meeting was organised during the EUROPARC Conference 2019 in Jūrmala, Latvia on 25 September 2019. As a guest speaker, Olivier de Sadeleer presented the EUROPARC Climate Change Task Force. An important topic for protected areas, especially in the Northern Europe. All country focal points were named and better communication with the members is expected as the outcome.



Our challenge continues to be how to engage more members in active Section work. There is a core of active members, but it has proven difficult to increase the core. Despite of this, the work continues, and finding new ways to activate our members will remain one of the focuses of the future work.



EUROPARC Nordic Baltic Section members enjoying great food and company in Sweden. Photo credit: Metsähallitus.

EUROPARC Spain



Visita Hayedo Montejo Master 2019

The Spanish Section of Europarc had 24 members in 2019. The Programme Society and Protected Areas is our road map through 8 lines of action: landscape integration, ecosystem services, transfer of scientific knowledge, strategic communication, diversification of governance and funding models, greening of sectoral policies and international cooperation. Technical Office, managed by the Fundación Fernando González Bernáldez, catalyzes the active involvement of thousands of people who make such a great network possible.

Key activities in 2019

Programme Society and Protected Areas 2020: Promotion of the strategic programme. The second edition of the Inspiring Experiences Awards was launched.

PROCONECTA 21: In June, the Seminar on integration of protected areas in the territory was held, the first action of this project that will be developed in 2020.

Sustainable Tourism: General support to the parks and enterprises involved in the Charter and specific support to Urdaibai Biosphere Reserve (Bask country) for the candidature of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism. The plan for public use of the Marismas de Txingudi (Bask Country) has also been developed.

Carrying capacity: Studies in Gorbeia Natural Park and Protected Biotope San Juan de Gaztelugatxe (Bask country) to support management decisions.

Health: Collaboration with the insurance company DKV in the project "Healthy Forests". Identification of 70 new healthy itineraries in 55 protected areas, **available here.**

LIFE RedBosques: the project aims to improve the management of Spanish mediterranean forests included in Natura 2000. This year there have been 3 courses on old-growth forests. Among other communication actions three videos have been produced. **More info here.**

Participation in European projects: LIFE e-Natura2000.edu, coordinated by EUROPARC Federation, CERES (Sudoe programme), coordinated by Forespir (France). These projects started in 2018 and will be developed in the next 2 years.

Training: The main activity is the Master on Protected Areas, 19th edition: 30 participants, 12 from Latin America, field trip to Mariñas Coruñesas e Terras do Mandeo Biosphere Reserve (Galicia). There has also been an edition of the communication and photography short courses.

Publications: During 2019 we published eleven e-bulletin, two Journals and Yearbook 2018.

Adding alliances: Collaboration agreements have been signed with the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces, and with the Spanish Federation of Mountain and Climbing Sports.

Yearbook 2018 – the state of Protected Areas in Spain: updating about Spanish protected areas and their management challenges. The report was presented on the European Day of Parks, in Madrid.

Successes and challenges

The main challenge for the organisation is to keep giving support to members according to their current priorities (Natura 2000 development, sustainable tourism, sustainable socio-economic development) and to develop inspirational projects under the Programme Society and Protected Areas 2020, involving multiple sectors, particularly academia and municipalities.

All publications available on: www.redeuroparc.org/publicaciones

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