Innovating capacity building: competence-based training for Protected Area managers

Mind Factory 19, Austria
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Mind Factory 19

EUROPARC

Intros & interactive inspirations!

Communicating our work, our passion

Experience harvest

Building capacity in Europe

We are what we learn

Alternative problem solving

Competence-based approach

LIFE ENABLE

We are what we do

Changing our mindsets

Wrapping up

Appreciative Inquiry

Where next?

Objectives

Information gathering
Our objectives

By the end of this Mind Factory, we will be better able to communicate the need for and value of tailor-made capacity building for Europe’s nature.

We will aim to build a deeper understanding of ...

- Why capacity building is important
- How competence-based approaches to capacity building work
- How competencies can be applied to improve the quality & effectiveness of Protected Areas’ management
About EUROPARC

• The largest network of European Protected Areas
• 385 Members representing thousands of PAs in 37 countries
• Staff in Regensburg-DE (HQ), Brussels-BE, Barcelona-ES, The Netherlands, UK & Italy
• 8 National/ inter-national sections

EUROPARC’s members manage more than 30% of Natura 2000 sites
EUROPARC is committed to:

- Investing in digital communications
- Use of new technologies to support networking
- Capacity building to improve nature management practices

LIFE eNatura2000 mobile app
Europe is ... an anomaly

- Europe is the 2nd smallest continent or 6th largest (of 7!) & occupies one-fifteenth of total land area
- 4 major biomes, the most common being Deciduous Forest
- Europe has no simple unity of geologic structure, land form, relief or climate
- 50 countries spanning 7 time zones
- Population 742,648,000 (2017) – one-tenth of the world's population
- 225 indigenous languages

Photo by Andrew Stutesman on Unsplash
Europe is made up of …

... ‘infinite riches in a little room’ (Christopher Marlowe)

An enabling environment?

✓ Emerald Network – 46 Member States + observers
✓ The European Union – Council (27 MSs), Parliament (751 seats) & Commission (32,000 staff)
✓ The EC’s LIFE Programme – €196.2m (2018)
✓ Research e.g. H2020
✓ Capacity building networks & organisations

The Natura 2000 network of protected sites:

✓ Designated under the Birds (79/409/EEC)4 & Habitats Directives (COM/88/0381)5
✓ > 28,000 sites covering > 1m km
✓ Unique in the world

The project and all actions are made possible with support from the LIFE financial instrument of the European Community.
Europe’s diversity is its richness, but also our challenge

- Conservation targets & scale of ambition
- Nature conservation practice needs to be more consistent & continuously improving
- Europe’s multilingualism poses real challenges for pan-European capacity building programmes

- Differences in culture & socio-economic variables:
  - Site condition – pressures & threats
  - Devolved & flexible / hierarchical & fixed management
  - Divergent attitudes to citizen participation
  - Austerity policies / average monthly salaries
  - Access to finances
  - Access to & use of technology

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Group exercise

Information gathering

Have you had in-work training?

What forms did it take?

How effective was that?

To what extent did it meet your expectations & needs?

If yes, why did it work? If it didn’t, why not?

Photo by Kvalifik on Unsplash
Competencies

The combination of observable and measurable knowledge, skills & attitude to do something well.

How an individual performs depends on their personal attributes

Global Register of Competencies for Protected Area Practitioners (Appleton M.R., 2016) – The PA Competence Register

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Our approach

Natura 2000 & PA
Management > core functions

Technical report

Communication
Collaboration
Cooperation
Inclusion
Education
Integration
Project development
Project management

Core competencies / transferrable skills

Area based coordination function
- Management planning
- Supervision
- Coordination
- Technical advice
- Communication
- Monitoring - Reporting

Operational planning
- Implementing measures
- Site monitoring
- Site monitoring & Reporting
- Site protection

Network administration

Site level action

Site based management function

Overlapping responsibilities

1. Staff levels (as from the Global Register)
2. Core competencies / transferrable skills
3. Communication
Collaboration
Cooperation
Inclusion
Education
Integration
Project development
Project management

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Group exercise – part one

We are what we do - experience harvest

Take a few minutes to describe what you do in a ‘typical day’

What types of things do you do just now and then?

Pick 3 tasks – describe the types of challenges you have to deal with
Group exercise – part two

We are what we do - experience harvest

Can you identify some common challenges? Write these up.

What do you do to solve these challenges?

Which challenges are more problematic?

What can EUROPARC do to help?
Communication is a core competence required by all PA managers.

What forms of communication do you use? Create a list

Sharing an example: the LIFE ENABLE Communication Plan

Sharing a learner’s experience – Martina Hervat

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Ways we solve problems ...

Photo by Olav Ahrens Røtne on Unsplash
Traditional approach to problem solving

Normally involves:

- Identification – stating what the issues/problems are
- Analysis – Looking for causes of the problems & how they arise
- Solving - Seeking a remedy (solution)
- Taking action - implementing the solution

Focus on negative/bad, rather than positive/good aspects

What if there is no clear solution?

Is there a risk that problems (& their impacts) are amplified?

What is the likely impact on energy, goodwill & motivation?
Appreciative inquiry – what is it?

• An alternative way to think about problems
• Rewires brains!
• Used by groups/teams to move forward & improve ways of working
• As a process, it shifts focus to what works well, rather than what doesn’t work
• Helps us to understand why
• Creates new ways to work that avoid problems
• Empowers people to resolve problems & change behaviours
The four stages of Appreciative Inquiry

- **Discovery** – acknowledge & appreciate ‘what is.’
- **Dream** – Imagine what ‘will be.’
- **Design** – Decide what ‘should be’ & how we can move from current reality to the ideal position that we have imagined.
- **Delivery** – Create ways to ‘achieve the dream’ and apply thinking in to practice.

The 4-D cycle of AI: more info available at: appreciativeinquiry.champlain.edu

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Appreciative inquiry – how could you apply it?

Focus on what works, rather than what doesn’t – your collective successes

Rather than ask, what are the problems ...

... **ASK:** “What do we do that works well?”

Use it as a framework to:

- Be proactive rather than reactive
- Change mindsets & create different ways to work together

*Discover, dream, design and deliver more for Europe’s nature*

The 4-D cycle of AI: more info available at: appreciateinquiry.champlain.edu
Group exercise

Think of your successes!

✓ What have you been most proud of in your work?

✓ What made that result possible?

✓ How could you replicate this experience to benefit other areas of your work?
Introducing LIFE ENABLE

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**European Nature Academy – general design**

- **Basic level**
  - Access to generic reference & learning materials (via MOOC)
  - Participation in an introductory course
  - Completion of tasks & assignments
  - Online networking via ZOOM

- **Foundation level**
  - Participation in an introductory course
  - Completion of tasks & assignments
  - Online networking via ZOOM

- **Structured courses**
  - Multiple individual learning programmes

- **Practitioner Level**
  - Participation in an advanced learning programme
  - Assessment for evidence of applied learning
  - Possible F2F element

**Teaching web platform**

- **M.O.O.C.**

**Est. average participants' time inputs = 120h**
- Induction - 10 h
- 5 modules - 25h ‘scheduled & interactive learning time’ (5h x 5)
- 2 Webinars - 5h (2.5h x 2)
- Module tasks & assignments – 30h (6h x 5)
- Own learning/reading/networking – 20h (4h x 5)
- Final assignment 30 h
Think through problems to develop workable solutions

- Cost-effective
- Flexible
- Inclusive
- Replicable

What you can expect!

- A new & innovative online platform European Nature Academy
- Demonstration videos/best practices
- Filmed ‘master class’ tutorials
- Practical assignments
- Applied learning
- Tailor-made new technology – a dedicated smartphone app
- Networking with your peers
Competent Natura 2000 Managers know how to communicate & engage stakeholders.

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Looking ahead...

2022
- Developing content, materials & tools
- Promotion, selection & recruitment 1st tranche

2023
- Delivery for 1st tranche
- Recruitment of trainee trainers

2024
- Delivery for 2nd tranche
- Evaluation – project results & impacts

Effective Natura 2000 & Protected Area managers know their subject & how to work with people!
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Wrapping up – some conclusions

- Technical specialist knowledge is not enough – you need to know how to apply it
- **Natura 2000 & PA management are processes**
- Communication & stakeholder engagement are core fields of expertise
- **Participatory management needs to be learned** … that needs continuity of investment & can benefit from use of new tools and methods

**Competent Natura 2000 & PA managers ...**

- Know how to develop, apply & work with participatory processes
- Are able to engage local communities & diverse stakeholders
- Respect socio-economic contexts
- Are open & willing to think synergistically
Competent nature managers – what do we need in the longer term?

At individual & organisations levels …

• Continuous professional development
• ‘On the job’ (lifelong) practical learning courses
• Peer to peer networking & experience sharing

Meet future challenges …

• Be proactive, not reactive
• Develop increasingly integrated approaches
• Invest in people now for tomorrow
No need to wait – get started now!

Have you done yours?
https://propark.ro/individualtna/

THANK YOU!

FIND OUT MORE

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