



EUROPARC Federation Annual Report

January - December 2012



EUROPARC
F E D E R A T I O N

EUROPARC is the umbrella organisation of Europe's protected areas. It unites national and regional parks, nature and biosphere reserves, marine and landscape protected areas, together with a large number of Natura 2000 sites in 35 countries, with the common aim of protecting Europe's unique variety of wildlife, habitats and landscapes.

Verbindung Re-connecting Reconnexion

*Cover Photo: Müritz National Park (DE)
Beech Forest UNESCO Natural Heritage.
Picture: U. Meßner*

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Thomas Hansson
Picture: Mine Dalemans



President's Remarks

2012: A year of Challenges, Reconnections and Commitments

Dear Colleagues,

At our 2012 EUROPARC conference we explored the theme "Re-Connecting". This highly successful conference brought together about 600 protected area representatives, who committed to reconnect society and biodiversity. We had the privilege to celebrate with the European Commission the 20th anniversary of the LIFE programme, the main European fund for nature, and of the Habitats Directive, which brought us the N2000 network, that our members significantly manage. For all who experienced the conference I am sure you want me to acknowledge the great work our host Regionaal Landschap Kempen en Maasland did... for those who missed it: make sure you are in Hungary in 2013!

One of the important areas of work for EUROPARC, during 2012, has been the continuous talk with Eurosite, about building one joint network for protected areas. Much progress has been made, especially following the decision of the general assembly to build a single network together, using the existing legacies of the two organisations.

I was also delighted to see the Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas celebrating its 100th certified park-member: we now have 107 certified parks and another 24 are going for the Charter in 2013! We can see sustainable management significantly increasing throughout the protected areas network and more successful partnerships between biodiversity business and communities

being built all over Europe. This fantastic achievement shows what the Federation can reach when the collective wisdom of our members is used to benefit the protected areas community across Europe. Furthermore, this successful work is contributing to implement the EU Biodiversity strategy as well as the Convention on Biological Diversity and relevant Aichi and POWPA targets.

It has been great privilege serving as your President this past year and I hope, with the great support of the council, directorate, sections and working groups, that we will continue to offer a good service to our members, supporting their valuable and often challenging work for nature and people in Europe. An even stronger commitment is now needed, as the public economic situation is tough. Despite these difficult times, I am honoured to see how members are keen to invest their time, energies and expertise in the Federation. This fills us with new enthusiasm to continue to support the daily work of protected areas managers, to facilitate the reconnection of people with nature, and to promote the implementation of the international priorities for biodiversity and sustainable development.

I'm consequently convinced that building on our legacy and being committed to work together, EUROPARC Federation, with the precious help of its partners, will continue to deliver successful results for biodiversity and society. Nature conservation works!

Thomas Hansson - EUROPARC President



Team with
I. Schops and
D. Cameron at
Hoge Kempen
Barefoot Path
Picture:
EUROPARC

Who we are

The EUROPARC Federation is a non-governmental organisation, founded in 1973. It has since grown to become Europe's largest protected areas network and in 2012 has over 400 members spanning 35 countries.

EUROPARC is built on the principle that Europe's natural heritage can be better conserved and managed through international cooperation. To this end the organisation seeks opportunities for networking, exchange and collaboration in all areas of protected area work. Of equal importance is communicating efficiently as a protected area community, particularly concerning the challenges and opportunities that impact on the management of Europe's shared natural heritage, as well as the importance of the fundamental ecosystem services provided. Europe's protected areas are essential for sustaining a healthy environment for society now and in the future.

Members that make up the Federation's network are responsible for the management of Europe's biodiversity. They represent European, national and regional protected area designations including Natura 2000 sites, national and regional parks, nature and biosphere reserves, marine protected areas and many more. EUROPARC members also have responsibility to contribute to the implementation of relevant Commission directives, including the management of Natura 2000 sites.

EUROPARC is committed to the continual improvement in the management of nature conservation and sustainable development, to build a coherent green network across Europe.

More information: www.europarc.org



EUROPARC Team 2012
Picture: EUROPARC Federation

What we do

The EUROPARC Directorate report

The Directorate of the EUROPARC Federation is committed to fulfilling the aims of the organisation and to deliver its strategic goals.

The work of the Federation is overseen by the EUROPARC Council and President. They bring a wealth of experience and expertise to bear on the work of the Federation and also represent EUROPARC across Europe.

Where the Council is the driver, the Directorate of the EUROPARC Federation is the engine of the organisation. The small team of five, split between the headquarters in Regensburg (DE), and an office in Brussels (B) manages a number of important European projects and represents the Federation and its members' interests.

The work of the Federation is also supported by efforts from working groups on sustainable tourism, values of protected areas, health, wilderness and transboundary cooperation.

The efforts of the Council, the Directorate, the working groups and all others, individuals and members, who support the Federation, are to be commended. Work carried out is summarised in this section.

*Cepkeliai-Dzukija National Park
Lithuania
Picture: Eugenijus Drobelis*

Communicating our message

Communicating messages about the values and benefits of our natural heritage for society is crucial if support for action is to be harnessed. Fostering societal acceptance and understanding about biodiversity and the role of protected areas in Europe is fundamental if we want to increase recognition of the importance of protecting nature.

Communications, therefore, continued to play a pivotal role in the work of the EUROPARC Federation in 2012. There is a wealth of knowledge and experience held within the network that members can access. Following the conference in 2011, more active communication was provided in 2012.

Key activities 2012

Publications, promotion and publicity

In order to keep the EUROPARC network and a wider public informed about protected area management across Europe the following regular publications were produced: 11 E-News, one Annual Report, one EUROPARC Journal "Protected Areas In-Sight", one Conference Report, one Charter Newsletter, and two Charter-eNews.

The social media presence of EUROPARC has been particularly successful, media and institutions are connecting to the Federation in an informal way through Facebook and Twitter. With more than 950 "likes" on Facebook and 450 followers on Twitter as well as more than 1000 Tweets posted, the social media are a valuable tool in our communication mix. Together with the website, they have contributed to an increased visibility of the Federation and Europe's protected areas.

Visits to the EUROPARC website increased by 22,63 % from 49,700 in 2011 to over 61,000 in 2012, from 187 countries.

Articles about the activities of EUROPARC appeared in numerous publications around the globe. Eleven press releases on volunteer management, networking, the economic impact of protected areas in Europe, Alfred Toepfer Medal and Scholarship, to name just a few, were sent to press across Europe.

Events and representation

EUROPARC represented its members' interests at around 40 international events throughout the year. These included the following events organised by the Federation:

The European Day of Parks 2012 under the theme **"See the sky, touch a tree, feel the air and find yourself"** was celebrated in a variety of initiatives and activities in some 84 parks in 21 countries. The high number of interaction through social media with some 3067 hits showed the interest and participation of our members.

The exhibition "100 years of Living Parks" was opened by the Mayor of the City of Regensburg in the Museum of Natural Science Eastern Bavaria. It featured for 4 weeks photos and texts throughout May. Weekly presentations introduced the international-region-local approach of the EUROPARC Federation to visitors from the town and region. A highlight was the presentation for the European Day of Parks of Martin Šolar, director of the Triglav National Park.



100 years of Living Parks exhibition poster

EUROPARC 2012
hosting team of
RLKM with
director I. Schops
and EUROPARC
President
T. Hansson.
Picture:
Mine Dalemans



Council Member Ignace Schops's award as a full member of the Club of Rome gained international media coverage as did his participation at the Rio +20 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Thomas Hansson, together with the Council Member Ignace Schops and the President of the Czech Section, Michael Hošek, took part in the IUCN World Congress in Jeju, where they raised European protected areas' success and challenges, sharing experiences and visions with the highest representatives of the world protected areas forum.

The EUROPARC seminar series at Gut Siggen (DE) continued this year, thanks to the Alfred Toepfer Stiftung (DE). The week was again a great opportunity for internal EUROPARC meetings of the Council, sections, working groups and staff. In a final session, the EUROPARC Federation identified priorities for the Federation's work looking at shared benefits, capacity building, training & education, and the development of the Federation's protected areas network. The Siggen seminar content was provided by Council Member Eric G. Baird who trained 16 participants from 8 countries in tools and methods for "conflict management in protected areas". Participants' feedback of the seminar showed very positive results and EUROPARC is most grateful to the Alfred-Toepfer-Foundation F.V.S. for hosting its seminar and meetings at Gut Siggen.

EUROPARC CONFERENCE.12

GENK - BELGIUM

The EUROPARC 2012 conference, hosted by Regionaal Landschap Kempen en Maasland, took place at the C-mine event centre in Genk, Belgium. The conference opened with celebrations for the 20 years of the EU Habitats Directive and the LIFE programme with the presence of European Commissioner for Environment Janez Potočnik and the Flemish Minister for Environment Joke Schauvliege. Some 600 international experts from the field of nature conservation attended the presentations, workshops and field trips under the theme "(Re)Connecting society with biodiversity".

EUROPARC's annual General Assembly in Genk was well attended and Dominique Lévêque (FR) was re-elected as council member. The GA agreed to come together with Eurosite and form a new united network purpose-built, to meet nature's needs in the years ahead, and will invest in the development and implementation of the "Networking for Nature" strategy.

Three Council and two section meetings took place in 2012 to discuss the work of the Federation and to ensure better planning and cooperation.

In September, the EUROPARC Library was officially inaugurated at the University of Klagenfurt (A) by



*Participants of Siggen Seminar on Conflict Management in Protected Areas.
Picture: EUROPARC*

President Thomas Hansson in order to support students 'research in the "Protected Areas Management" Master programme.

Internal networking and partnerships

EUROPARC developed the strategy "Networking for Nature" with Eurosite during 2012. Furthermore, priority was given to continuing the collaboration with EHF partners and with the EC on Natura 2000, LIFE programme and sustainable tourism. While the Federation continued to be in close contact with its MoU partners WCPA, US National Parks Service (US), ParksForum (AUS/NZ), Slow Food and the International Ranger Federation IRF, new contact and exchange were agreed upon with the WTTC (World Travel and Tourism Council) and European Business and Biodiversity Campaign.

We would like to thank all our partners, particularly those with whom we have established a MoU, for the fruitful cooperation of this year and for their active engagement to promote new joint initiatives for the future.

Over the year EUROPARC was approached by several organizations interested in collaboration. A full list of partners can be found at www.europarc.org/our-partners-and-funders. The Federation looks forward to improving its collaboration with existing partners and to building fruitful relationships with new partners over the next 12 months.

The year ahead

In 2013 EUROPARC celebrates its 40th anniversary "40 years Working for Nature". It will continue to build on the communications work developed in previous years and develop new positive and constructive messages for biodiversity to a wide range of audience.

The activities in 2013 will need additional funding and marketing activities, in order to incorporate and promote our anniversary messages. The development of new projects and planned communication initiatives will adapt depending on available funding. Communicating the message through existing and new internet based services and networks, and regular updates of the website will further improve EUROPARC's presence in the public and its service to members.

The EDoP in May will also deliver the "40 years Working for Nature" message and have theme "My park. My passion. My story." engaging protected area staff and visitors in events that give an opportunity to express how people care about their parks. The Siggen Seminar will take place in September offering training in management planning. The EUROPARC 2013 conference, hosted by the Hortobágy National Park, will take place in October in Debrecen, Hungary, on the theme "40 years Working for Nature".

More information: www.europarc.org
Contact: Communications Officer, office@europarc.org

Members of
EUROPARC come
from protected
areas in 35
countries.
Picture:
Mine Dalemans



Representing members' interests in Europe



With the review of most EU financial instruments and the approval of crucial regulations for nature conservation, 2012 has marked a very significant year for the future of the environment in Europe: EUROPARC invested significant energies and resources to contribute to ongoing debates and to raise the voice of PAs within the EU institutions.

In parallel, a specific effort has been made to make sure our network was actively involved in the most relevant EU policy debates: opinions and expertise have been collected throughout the year, and information on EU policy and funds disseminated widely.

Key activities 2012

We represented our members in Brussels at almost 40 different events and meetings with EU institutions and partner organisations. EUROPARC became a member of one of the advisory groups set up by DG Agriculture and we ensured our support to the work of the European Habitats Forum (EHF) – the wide network of NGOs with a specific interest in biodiversity and nature conservation - bringing our expertise in

the Green Infrastructure and N2000 management working groups, as well as in the Natura 2000 expert group of DG Environment and in the Tourism and Sustainability Group of DG Enterprise. In partnership with other NGOs we gave our contribution to the debate on the CAP reform and, among other relevant activities, in 2012 we had the opportunity to provide our inputs for the report made by the European Environmental Agency on Protected Areas in Europe.



Opening Ceremony of EUROPARC 2012 with high profile guests.
Picture: Mine Dalemans

Success and challenges

Through active and coordinated policy work, in 2012 the visibility of the Federation significantly increased, with a better recognition of its role by EU institutions and partner organisations.

This is proved by the high level meetings we had in 2012 with the Commissioner for the Environment and other EU officials and MEPs, and by the various opportunities we had to contribute to policy developments such as for the new LIFE programme, for the debate on financing N2000, or the EC initiatives for the promotion of sustainable tourism in Europe.

2012 marked also the 20 years of the Habitats directive and the LIFE programme. A celebration evening was organised in the EU Parliament in partnership with EEB, IUCN and WWF to highlight the value of the Natura 2000 network and the need to set appropriate financial resources.

The conference organised by DG Enterprise, for the International day of Tourism, gave us the opportunity to present results and good practice from our Charter Park network to a wide international audience of tourism businesses and institutions.

In 2012 we also contributed with the Wild Europe Initiative to the approval of a shared definition of

wilderness and we have been working for the inclusion of wilderness priorities within EU relevant policies.

The year ahead

In 2013 the EUROPARC celebrations for the 40 years will be a great opportunity to organise a major event in Brussels for the International day of Tourism, inviting our wide network of Charter Parks to the European Parliament. We are also planning to have a seminar with the Committee of the Regions, to present successful actions and projects on climate change adaptation in protected areas.

EUROPARC will also contribute to the policy debate on green infrastructure, and follow closely the final developments of CAP reform. Furthermore we wish to re-establish our partnership with the Council of Europe, submitting our candidature for participatory status as an INGO, to contribute more actively to the Protected Areas Award and to other initiatives on the Landscape and Bern Conventions.

We will also continue to work with the EHF network and continue to contribute to DG Environment and DG Enterprise working groups.

For more information contact *Federico Minozzi*:
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After a great week at the camp, Junior Rangers say Good Bye – until 2013
Picture: F M



Investing in Young People

EUROPARC is working strenuously to support protected areas to involve youth all over Europe and to improve the quality of environmental education. Young people are at the heart of the local communities living in and around protected areas. They are also the future advocates, guardians and potential employees of these areas.

The EUROPARC Junior ranger programme today involves about 40 parks in 18 European countries, more than 100 rangers and mentors and about 2000 young people every year.

Key activities in 2012

The international camp has been also this year our main event for young people. In 2012 we also made a big effort to make the network more lively by setting up a new dedicated Facebook page. Furthermore, following the outcomes of the "Action for youth in Parks" project, which was funded under the Youth in Action programme, new guidelines for the EUROPARC Junior Ranger programme were drafted with the help and support of mentors and rangers.

Success and Challenges

The 2012 international Junior Ranger camp was again a great success. Organised for the first time in transboundary cooperation, between the Prealpi Giulie Natural Park (IT) and the Triglav National Park (Slo), celebrating the 10th birthday

of the Junior Ranger programme, which was launched in 2002. Under the title "Path Finder: Find your way through park information", we worked together to discover how parks communicate with young people, we analysed what do the Junior Rangers think about park communication, and which are the suggestions and inputs they can give to improve it.

The EUROPARC Director came to visit the camp, and took the opportunity to meet with the rangers and, together with the directors of the two hosting parks, to award the 30 Junior Rangers for their successful participation.

The Junior Ranger dedicated Facebook page has been really welcomed by young people and their rangers, and it's now the main focal point to disseminate and share news and events across the JR network.



In 2012 the Junior Ranger programme became more popular, with new parks in Malta, Netherlands, Sweden and Finland getting involved and many others showing their interest.

The year ahead

In 2013 the Junior Ranger programme will be at the core of the “40 years working for nature” celebrations with two main events in programme: the international camp, which will be entirely organised by the EUROPARC Federation in partnership with the Bavarian Forest National Park and a youth conference, which will take place in Hungary, in parallel with the main EUROPARC conference.

In the course of the year, the new guidelines for the Junior Ranger programme will be published, and a mascot contest will be launched among JRs to select the new best friend of the programme.

You can find more on our website and Facebook page.

Contact Federico Minozzi for more information:
f.minozzi@europarc.org



*Junior Rangers and their mentors
 at Lahemaa National Park (EST).
 Picture: Liina Niinemägi*

Charter
Awardees at
EUROPARC
2012 with
President
Thomas
Hansson
Picture:
Mine Dalemans



Sustainable tourism in Protected Areas



EUROPARC has been involved in the field of sustainable tourism since the development of its European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas in 1995. The Charter is a practical management tool developed by the Federation. It enables protected areas to develop and manage tourism sustainably, alongside private enterprises and communities.

Networking in 2012

In 2012, the network of certified protected areas grew to 107, in 13 European countries. During the Charter Award ceremony, at the EUROPARC Conference 2012 in Genk, a special 100th Charter Park certificate was awarded to: Monte Rufeno Nature Reserve, Italy.

EUROPARC is proud that the Charter is gaining more and more international

recognition, being valued by the EC and

UNEP, and highlighted as an example of good practice in the CBD guidelines and in the TEEB studies noting that "another successful cross-border example is the "European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas (ECST)" - a contract awarded by the EUROPARC Federation

for European national parks, biosphere reserves and nature parks"¹.

The growing interest in the Charter is also the positive result of the ongoing effort to further promote the values of the Charter. This was supported by an active participation of ECST experts in events across Europe - see also EUROPARC Consulting's brief on page 38 of this report.

EUROPARC is grateful to all verifiers, to the Sustainable Tourism Working Group and to EUROPARC Consulting for their ongoing hard work and support throughout the year. Progress in this field of work was made possible thanks to the generous support of the funders.



¹ UNEP/ CBD "Tourism and biodiversity: review of the implementation of the Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development", 2012, p.11



*Typical Oak Tree
at Monte
Rufeno, the
100th Charter
park.
Picture:
Filippo Belisario*

Project work

EUROPARC Federation was involved last year in two international projects, each concerning sustainable tourism and all taking the Charter forward. EUROPARC would like to thank the entire Charter network for its help and support to deliver great outcomes for each of these projects:

PARKS & BENEFITS

PARKS & BENEFITS, a Baltic Sea Region Programme project (2009-2012), came to an end in 2012 after a final partner meeting in the South-Rügen Biosphere Reserve (DE) at the end of 2011. The project introduced and strengthened sustainable nature tourism approaches in the Baltic Sea Region and gave the opportunity to communicate the mutual benefits to protected areas and to their surrounding regions for regional development. The project results will hopefully have a significant influence on the future cooperation of protected area managements and their local tourism stakeholders. The project was a great success and resulted in the publications "The Guide to Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas" and "Public-Private Sector Partnerships: Mutual Benefits for Business and Protected Areas".

The value of the "Charter" in identifying sustainable tourism destinations

This project, funded by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN), was developed to generate and analyze specific data collected from Charter Parks, in order to identify economic and other values protected areas gain from tourism, and to evaluate the contribution of the Charter to make tourism destinations more sustainable. Five partner parks were involved in the project and the final report is now available on the EUROPARC website. Among the main results there are the so called "magic numbers", a data set providing evidence of the scope and breadth of Charter areas and sustainable tourism across Europe. In addition, accompanying case studies provide further insights about the significance of the Charter.

For the future, EUROPARC will strengthen its networking activities to improve the communication across the Charter network and will work to further promote the benefits of the charter with partner institutions and organisations. EUROPARC will also continue to encourage new protected areas in Europe to get involved in the Charter process and to develop new international projects on sustainable tourism.

Website: www.european-charter.org

Contact: info@european-charter.org

TransParkNet
field trip at
Pasvik-Inari
Trilateral Park
Picture:
EUROPARC



Transboundary Cooperation - Joining forces for nature's benefit

In its tenth year, the EUROPARC Transboundary Parks Programme is well established within the Federation with a lot of experience working across borders. Today 19 protected areas in 11 countries have been awarded the EUROPARC Transboundary Certificate for their model collaboration in border regions. Mutual support, exchange of ideas and best-practice examples as representations at transboundary events, strengthen the growing network and help to promote the importance of cross-border collaboration for the benefit of nature conservation.

Key activities 2012

In 2012 the annual TransParkNet meeting took place in the Transboundary Area Pasvik-Inari. It provided the opportunity to experience this trilateral cooperation between Inari-Vätsäri Wilderness Area (FIN), Øvre-Pasvik National Park (NO) and Pasvik Zapovednik (RU) in practice. At this year's meeting the effectiveness of cross-border cooperation was addressed, as there was the need to involve new members in the programme.

The Transboundary Area Saxon-Bohemian Switzerland (CZ/D) received the certificate at the

General Assembly and was welcomed into the transboundary family. Also Maas-Swalm-Nette Nature Park was successfully re-evaluated after five years of intensive cooperation: they will receive their certificate during the EUROPARC 2013 conference.

Arto Ahokumpu was elected as the new chair of STEC, after Martin Šolar stepped down from this position and a new working group was formed, consisting now of six members from our certified Transboundary Areas. They started their intensive work immediately and are eager to work on the further development of the programme.



Sunrise
impression from
Swiss-Bohemian-
Switzerland
Nationalpark.
Picture:
Václav Sojka

A complete revision of the framework and guidelines of the Transboundary Parks Programme was finished and new documents will be published soon. Amongst them are the Magic Numbers which, for the first time, summarise and visualise the benefits of the Transboundary Certificate for protected areas. Copies of good practice examples and the magic numbers of transboundary cooperation can be downloaded from the EUROPARC website.

In order to raise awareness of the common responsibility for border regions, EUROPARC and representatives of its certified Transboundary Areas were present at events in France and Germany to introduce the programme to a wider audience.

The year ahead

In 2013 the promotion of the EUROPARC Transboundary Parks Programme will continue and closer cooperation with other organisations outside the network will take place.

Applications of new parks and for re-evaluations are already within sight. The newly formed working group will address potential transboundary areas to further strengthen the network as well as to develop a new project proposal, bringing partners together for a common transboundary project.

The 5th TransParcNet meeting will take place from 4th to 7th June in the Nature Park Maas-Swalm-Nette (NL/D) with a focus on intercultural communication and creativity in cross-border project management.

More information:

www.europarc.org/what-we-do/transboundary-parks

Contact: Petra Schultheiss:

p.schultheiss@europarc.org



Participants of the
volunteer meeting
in Lithuania.
Picture:
Nature
Conservation
Agency of Latvia



Volunteer Management in European Parks



Since October 2010, a network of ten sections, environmental organisations and parks from eight countries within the EUROPARC network are collaborating towards higher quality of volunteer management in European Parks.

Activities 2012

The project offers a variety of training and learning opportunities for volunteer coordinators and experienced volunteers. In summer 2012, eleven volunteer coordinators developed further their knowledge and competencies in a specific **training for trainers** provided by The Conservation Volunteers (UK). The participants were trained in running similar training events back in their home countries.

In addition, in 2012 several **learning exchanges** between park staff or volunteers took place among the protected areas covered by the project partners. These one to three weeks placements gave the invaluable opportunity to coordinators from Latvia, Lithuania, United Kingdom and Germany to learn from each other and discover in different cultural context how volunteering is managed in other parts of Europe.

Success and challenges

The new Guidelines for quality management of volunteering, which were drafted in 2012, are surely one of the most interesting results of this project. The guidelines are the result of the identified need to find and support a common understanding of quality volunteer management in European PAs.

A specific research project on the impact of volunteering in PAs is currently in progress to analyse the benefits that volunteering can bring to those participating, and to the relationship between those responsible for managing protected areas and the communities in and around them.



Volunteers need good support by their coordinators. Drawing from the Volunteering Workshop at EUROPARC 2012

The year ahead

In 2013, the project will come to its end, with all the products being finalised and made available for the network. The drafted guidelines will be revised, translated in eight languages, and a consultation open to protected areas and park networks will be conducted in order to collect further inputs before approving the final version. The results of the research on the impact of volunteering, and a guidebook with training material for volunteer coordinators, will also be published.

A third training workshop for volunteer coordinators will be held in Mallorca, and a final partner meeting will take place in Latvia in June, while opportunities will still be offered to volunteers and park staff for international learning exchanges. Two national seminars will take place in UK and Iceland to further promote quality management of volunteering in PAs. Furthermore, a specific workshop on volunteering is being organised at the EUROPARC Conference 2013 and a special edition of the e-news will be published in December, focusing on volunteering, to provide more insights on the project outcomes for the benefits of the wider EUROPARC network.



For further information:

www.volunteers-in-parks.eu

Contact Bettina Soethe of EUROPARC Germany:

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Volunteering plays a crucial role for the successful management of protected areas in Europe, Nature Park Drömling (DE) during Big Green Weekends 2012. Picture: Sabine Wieter

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Scholars of 2012
with Ansgar
Wimmer,
chairman of Alfred
Toepfer Stiftung
F.V.S., at the award
ceremony.
Picture:
Mine Dalemans



EUROPARC Awards 2012 – recognising achievements

Alfred Toepfer Natural Heritage Scholarships

Each year the EUROPARC Federation, with support from Alfred Toepfer Stiftung F.V.S., awards three Alfred Toepfer Natural Heritage Scholarships to promising young conservationists, who are committed to working for the benefit of protected areas. The aim of the scholarships is to enhance international cooperation and to 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. After the trip the scholars are expected to present the Federation with a report.

The three winners in 2012 were Dávid Bogyó (Hungary), Tilen Genov (Slovenia) and Willem Laermans (Belgium). Dávid is interested in wetland restoration and the protection of migratory birds and will visit in Finland for research on best practices and to gain ideas for similar projects in Hungary. Tilen wants to gain expertise in effective Marine Protected Area Management and with his involvement in a Slovenian dolphin project wants to become acquainted with the work of two conservation projects in Ireland and Wales. Willem will focus on the restoration and the protection of wilderness. In Transylvania, Poland, Bosnia and Hungary, he wants to study wilderness protection projects by local residents and see the possibilities to replicate them in densely populated regions elsewhere in Europe.

Contact: Heike Blankenstein
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Dr A. Mitchell receives the Alfred Toepfer Medal medal at EUROPARC 2012 from T. Hansson. Picture: Mine Dalemans



Alfred Toepfer Medal

The Alfred Toepfer Medal, named after the founder of the EUROPARC Federation, Dr h.c. Alfred Toepfer (1894-1993), is an annual award, given at the EUROPARC conference to an outstanding individual who has made a significant contribution to nature conservation in Europe.

This year, Dr Arthur Mitchell was honoured with the medal for his tireless efforts in pioneering landscape management approaches in the Mourne Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Thanks to his lobbying, Northern Ireland's first body dedicated to protected area management, the Mourne Heritage Trust, was established. Another achievement on the European level was that the Mournes achieved the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas; the first UK organisation to do so.

As a medical doctor Dr Mitchell used to work in rural areas and developed a close affinity with nature, where he experienced the correlation between a healthy environment and people's health. Here, his dedication for nature conservation arose and transformed into his advocacy and ceaseless campaigning on nature's behalf. At EUROPARC 2012, Tony Gates, friend and former colleague of Dr Mitchell, gave the tribute speech expressing his hope of having Dr Mitchell's dream come true: the designation of national parks in Northern Ireland.

*Contact: Petra Schultheiss:
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More information on both the award and scholarships: www.europarc.org/what-we-do/

Wide horizon:
Causeway
Coast and
Glens
Picture:
Wilf Fenten



Our working groups – harnessing expertise

The EUROPARC Federation brings together experts from our membership and around Europe to focus on issues important to protected areas. These working groups consider policy issues, bring together best practice, develop new methodologies and look to future agenda and development. They are convened as appropriate to consider relevant topics. They meet as required and have been an excellent breeding ground for new ideas and innovative solutions.

Each working group is mandated to examine subjects of relevance to protected areas in Europe and deliver activities and output that would benefit the wider membership. These groups are a strong “working arm” of the Federation, where issues of importance to the protected areas of Europe are examined and developed an protected areas FOR protected areas, with high membership participation and involvement.

Council members have liaised with working groups in order to give guidance and support to ensure the topic remain relevant to EUROPARC strategic aims. EUROPARC Council will agree new mandates for working groups in early 2013.

In 2012 four working groups were active in addition to a lobbying forum of interested members keen to support an active role for EUROPARC work with European institutions.

Over 35 members have participated in working groups analyzing topics as diverse as the European definition of wilderness or the guidelines for transboundary certification.

Health and Protected Areas

The Health and Protected Areas Working Group met, covering their own costs, in Copenhagen in 2012. They are gathering good case studies to show that protected areas can better learn not just to deliver positive messages and programmes, but align themselves to better access health budgets in order to undertake such work. The working group have continued to develop project ideas, considering a protected areas health charter, making links to the health sector and following up with the Healthy Parks Healthy People initiative: www.hphpcentral.com. A further seminar is planned hopefully for 2013.

Transboundary

In the latter part of 2012 the Transboundary Working Group was convened. They have already developed an exciting programme of work looking at developing new strategic partnerships for transboundary especially with IUCN, promoting the "magic numbers" of the transboundary, showing how it works on the ground, and developing project ideas for future funding application.

Wilderness

The Wilderness Working Group, of which EUROPARC is a founding member, agreed the definition of Wilderness in Europe, they also have worked on the Wilderness register which will be a database at European level. The group are also actively involved in the WILD 10 congress due to take place in Spain in 2013.

Economics and Ecosystem Services

The Economics and Ecosystem Services Working Group have been examining options for financing ecosystem services in protected areas and also seeking examples of financing tourism infrastructure.

Sustainable Tourism

The ever busy Sustainable Tourism Working Group dealt with a number of issues pertaining to the Charter and to the Federation's relationship with other sustainable tourism external bodies. In particular, they have looked at clarifying the roles and functions with the Charter process and developed a more sustainable budget to run the Charter. EUROPARC is grateful for all who have worked in this group, meeting their own costs and with the support of their member organisations.

The EUROPARC Federation is rightly proud and extremely grateful for the commitment and participation of those who work voluntarily to improve the management of our shared natural heritage through international cooperation. Even in these difficult financial times, members have found means to remain in touch and advance the support of protected areas in Europe.

In addition to Working Groups EUROPARC also retains two standing committees, Charter for Sustainable Tourism and Transboundary. These committees make sure the certification programmes offered by EUROPARC are held to a high standard. It is their excellent work that has ensured these programme are held in high regard by international organisations. All members of both committees give a huge commitment to the work and their long service to the EUROPARC Federation is acknowledged and appreciated.

Without the work of this army of volunteers across the range of topics relevant to protected areas, the EUROPARC Federation would not be able to accomplish the work to support its members and the management of Europe's protected areas.

A full listing of members involved in working groups and committees is found on the EUROPARC website:

www.europarc.org/who-we-are/our-working-groups

*Sustainable Tourism Working Group
face-to-face meeting in AONB Forest of
Bowland, UK, March 2012.
Picture: Lasse Loven*



Challenging

Our European network

EUROPARC Federation Section Reports

Over the years the Federation has supported the creation of seven regional and national sections. The sections fulfil many of the **EUROPARC** Federation's aims, whilst reflecting the priorities and characteristics of the areas they cover. They undertake a huge volume of work to a high professional standard and both support and stimulate the work of the Federation as a whole. Only Federation members can form or be members of sections of **EUROPARC**. Full section reports can be obtained from them individually but a summary of their achievements is detailed in this chapter.



*Spring in Thayatal National Park (A)
Picture: D. Manhart*

Young Ranger
Project Group of
EAI in the Mendip
Hills AONB,
August 2012
Picture:
Richard Blackman



EUROPARC Atlantic Isles

EAI brings together EUROPARC members in the four countries of the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland and Iceland. The Section and members continue to play an active role in the life of the Federation.

Activities 2012

Coastal protected landscapes

EAI's coastal and marine working group met twice in 2012, focusing on issues relating to seascape character assessment and marine planning, especially in relation to the creation of offshore wind farms. Work is designed to implement our manifesto for coasts and seascapes.

Sustainable tourism

EAI's sustainable tourism network also met twice, including a meeting during the Bowland Symposium in the Forest of Bowland. Major items of discussion included working with tourism businesses and green certification, as well as the European Charter, notably the re-evaluation process.

Volunteering

EAI was an active partner in the EU GRUNDTVIG funded project 'Volunteer Management in European Parks' and hosted a training seminar in Epping Forest in May 2012. The Section also attended project partner meetings and sought to generate interest and participation by UK protected landscapes.

Young rangers

EAI has set up a small project group with a view to establishing a young ranger network for the UK's protected landscapes. The group, funded by the a small grant from the Youth in Action programme, met in the Mendip Hills AONB in August, with further activities planned for the first half of 2013.



EUROPARC
Atlantic Isles



*Seals connecting
on the Farne
Islands,
Northumberland
Coast AONB
Picture:
Richard Blackman*

Communication

EAI has continued to produce regular E-Newsletters to inform members on projects, policy updates and news from across its UK and European networks.

EUROPARC and Eurosite

EAI is wholeheartedly in favour of the creation of one new network organisation and has supported the moves towards this goal in the course of 2012.

Success and challenges

The Section's role

EAI continued to define and refine its role in 2012, focusing on providing opportunities for networking, sharing expertise and training for all protected landscapes in the four countries of the UK, as well as Ireland. Thematic networking proved successful in 2012. The European dimension remains valuable and important despite the political climate surrounding the EU in the UK.

The year ahead

Activities and main focus

The economic climate in the UK and Ireland continues to be difficult and budgets will remain constrained in the years ahead. Nonetheless, the provision of networking and training opportunities for the exchange of expertise tailored to our members' needs, whilst drawing on the added value of the Federation's pan-European work programme, remains a priority; as is development of our own capacity. As an organisation we are seeking to acquire new sources of funding to provide these services.

EAI will also highlight and promote the 40th anniversary of the EUROPARC Federation. As it is a natural evolution for the Federation, we will also support the development of the new organisation to be formed by EUROPARC and Eurosite and contribute to its successful start. It is vital that the opportunities for protected areas provided by European cooperation can be maximised.

Further information: www.europarc-ai.org

*Contact: Richard Blackman, Development Adviser,
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Transboundary
award
ceremony at
EUROPARC 2012.
Picture:
Mine Dalemans



EUROPARC Czech Republic

The EUROPARC Czech Section has a stable membership and groups together EUROPARC members, who manage large protected areas across the country (four national parks and Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic), Palacký University in Olomouc and individual honorary member Mr. Jan Štursa. The Czech Section is used as a cooperation platform at the national level and coordination body for joint activities with other EUROPARC sections as well as the EUROPARC Federation.

Activities 2012

Transboundary Parks Programme

Czech Republic successfully completed transboundary certification for all national parks this year! National Park České Švýcarsko (CZ) together with Protected Landscape Area Labské pískovce (CZ) and National Park Sächsische Schweiz (DE) fulfilled all evaluation criteria and were awarded the EUROPARC Transboundary Certificate at the annual EUROPARC conference 2012 in Genk.

Representation in the EUROPARC Council

For a one year period, the President of the Czech Section, Michael Hošek, represented the other EUROPARC Sections in the Council. His position

was quite demanding considering the crucial topics under discussion, including the merger with Eurosite and the debate about the status of sections within the EUROPARC organisation.

Seminars

The 2012 autumn plenary session was accompanied by a seminar focusing on experience with the application of IUCN management categories in Czech Republic. Speakers from Austria, Poland and Slovakia presented their national approaches and set the problematic of categorization into the wider context. The theme of the seminar corresponded with the translation into Czech of the IUCN publication "Guidelines for Applying Protected Area Management Categories" (Dudley, 2008).



*Sandstone Landscape, National Park České Švýcarsko and Protected Landscape Area Labské pískovce (CZ)
Picture: Václav Sojka*

This was realized as one of the activities of the Czech Section in 2012. The Czech Section also coordinated the participation of an expert speaker in the seminar “Protected areas as part of green infrastructure” organized by the Nordic-Baltic Section in March in Roosta, Estonia.

Success and challenges

The most successful event of 2012 was undoubtedly the transboundary certification of the last national park to be certified České Švýcarsko and the first certified Protected Landscape Area Labské pískovce. As there are several Protected Landscape Areas within the Czech state territory, bordering other large-scale protected areas abroad, it will be challenging to start certification procedures for some of them in the near future.

The year ahead

In 2013 the section will continue in its regular activities and events will be organized marking the 40th EUROPARC Anniversary “40 years Working for Nature”. Besides, the first national park designated in the Czech Republic, Krkonoše Mts. National Park, celebrates the 50th anniversary of its designation in 1963 and on this occasion the scientific conference “Mountain Protected Areas in a Changing World” will take place from May 21 – 24 2013 in Špindlerův Mlýn Resort, Krkonoše Mts. For more information visit the conference website <http://konference.krnep.cz/konference/1/informace/>.

Further information: www.europarc.cz

*Contact: Michael Hošek, President of the Czech section, Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic,
michael.hosek@nature.cz*



EUROPARC
ČESKÁ REPUBLIKA

Extra ordinary
assembly.
Picture:
Federparchi



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 the EUROPARC Federation. The Federation represents the reference point in a network of continuously developing relations and, in full independence, 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. Federparchi was created in 1989 as a coordinating organization of several Regional Parks, to be transformed afterwards, in 1996, in the Italian Federation of Parks and Natural Reserves, which involves today most part of Italian protected areas and regions, provinces, municipalities, environmental associations. In 2008, Federparchi took up the purpose of EUROPARC Italian section, becoming “Federparchi – EUROPARC Italy”, thanks to the awareness that only with an international perspective can the mission of being good nature conservationists and promoters of sustainable economic development be achieved more successfully.

Activities 2012

In 2012 Federparchi held an extraordinary assembly and board elections. Giampiero Sammuri was confirmed as President of the association: Italian protected areas appreciated his strong commitment to biodiversity and in strengthening lobbying activities. Regular activities were successfully developed: dissemination and support in applications for

the European Charter (in 2012: 4 new Charter Parks and 7 new candidatures), retraining parks operators, enhancing and extending effective environmental education, collaborating in national and international projects. Particular attention was paid to the organization of public events: Federparchi undertook to disseminate a new vision of Italian Parks based on a social dimension of biodiversity policy, several seminars and conference were held



Participants of seminar Marine Protected Areas.
Picture: Federparchi

successfully and attracted a very large audience.

Success and challenges

The economic crisis in Italy has put the existence of parks at stake: Federparchi succeeded in affirming the idea that investing in parks is not a waste, but a way to overcome the old economic system. The action was successful and no job cuts in protected areas were made. The challenge for 2013 is to involve the whole of civil society in this issue, organizing Italian Protected Areas National Conference next autumn. Federparchi will invite national stakeholders from all over the country to give a new impulse to "green economy", to put forward the proposition that parks, health, and education are key elements for overcoming the economic crisis and sustainable solutions mean increasing quality of life.

The year ahead

2013 will see the celebration of EUROPARC's 40th, and Federparchi has already begun to disseminate information in the first edition of its newsletter. During the PAs National Conference a special event will be devoted to the celebration. Offices will be particularly committed in developing projects, as usual; among others: Brazil Proximo (cooperation with Brazil, with Tuscany Region), Performance plans for Protected areas, Vividaria (environmental education in primary schools), Social Accountability for Parks (a tool for efficient certification from an ethical point of view; to release the idea that PAs are economic entities that in pursuing their own interests help improve the quality of life of members of society) Italian Fund for Biodiversity (establishing the fund and developing synergistic actions in favour of the environment and biodiversity), ECST applications (among all, the Agreement with the Ministry of Environment to develop the Charter in the National Parks).

Further information: www.europarc.it

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 **Federparchi**
FEDERAZIONE ITALIANA PARCHI E RISERVE NATURALI



Children
environmental
education at
regional
Nature Park
Caps et Marais
d'Opale (F).
Picture:
EUROPARC
France



EUROPARC France

Key Activities 2012

The following could be achieved due to the work of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas Working Group:

- Development of a training course dedicated to the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism (ECST), introducing protected area managers who are not yet members of the Charter network to the implementation stages of the three Charter parts, as well as learning from Charter parks about their experiences with parts 1 and 2 of the Charter and presenting the current state of work on part 3
- Design of an ECST-tool and dissemination to the Charter areas and protected areas in France, which are applying to become members of the Charter network
- Thanks to the preparation of a pilot model for part 3 of the Charter in cooperation with tour operators led by the IPAMAC Association (Inter-Parcs du Massif Central) the following could be achieved:

- Introduction of constructive consideration as to how certified Charter Parks and tour operators can build a partnership within the framework of part 3 of the Charter
- Evaluation of results from 15 Charter parks according to the principles of the current Charta Part III in cooperation with 20 tour operators, who would like to operate in accordance with sustainable tourism practices in the parks

Active participation in the EUROPARC 2012 conference

Leading a workshop

- Dominique Lévêque, vice-president of the French section, led the workshop „Agriculture and nature“, within the context of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform and based on the conclusion that CAP gradually changed from being a subsidised production structure to becoming a market oriented system. The workshop focused on the question how opposing needs of agriculture



EUROPARC
SECTION FRANCAISE



Regional Nature
Park Vercors.
Picture:
Luc Mortier

and nature could be brought together.

- Considering the current financial constraints it is nowadays necessary to develop alternative methods of financing protected areas, which integrate business into the preservation of biodiversity. Efforts in this area have to be continued and increased. Having established that biodiversity is an essential factor for investors, the workshop „businesses and biodiversity“ led by Jean-Luc Beghin, vice-director of ENR'x, came to the conclusion that it is necessary to:
 - Be innovative
 - Evaluate and build long-term sustainable partnerships
 - Manage local projects within a global strategy
 - Share profits
 - Establish a win-win relationship

Events celebrating 20 years of Natura 2000

At the Genk Conference the French section presented a poster, which showed the involvement of regional and national parks in the management of Natura 2000.

Successes and challenges

In 2012 seven French parks acquired European Charter status, raising the number of French protected areas within the Charter network to 23. In 2013 a further four parks are in line to receive Charter status and a further six parks will prepare their applications for 2014.

Information: www.europarc-fr.org

Contact: Anne L'Epine, anne.lepine@parcnational.fr



Path signing at National
Park Guadeloupe (F).
Picture: EUROPARC France

Junior-Ranger in
Hainich National
Park.

Picture:
A.Morascher/junior-
ranger.de/EUOPARC + WWF



EUOPARC Germany

EUOPARC Germany provides a common voice for German national parks, biosphere reserves and nature parks. It strengthens their prominence, sets standards for the quality of site management, provides services for protected areas as well as citizens, and serves as an exchange forum for politics, nature conservation associations and the media.

Activities 2012

Junior-Rangers in holiday mood

With its Junior Ranger Programme EUOPARC, in cooperation with WWF, has been a successful operator in the field of environmental education for years. Currently more than 40 protected areas participate in the work with children by following jointly agreed principles and quality criteria. With key topics such as biodiversity, climate change, nutrition as well as nature and environmental protection, the nationwide programme is aimed at children and young people aged between 7 and 12 inviting them to join regional groups, where they can discover nature hands on with a "real" ranger from the protected area. Since 2011 the Junior Ranger Discovery Magazine also contains offers for excursions and holidays. As a combination of puzzle book and travel guide the magazines from 12 different areas wants to enthuse children and their families for the Nationale Naturlandschaften (*national natural landscapes*). Special offers awaken a spirit of discovery.

The environmental education programme has been extended by an online educational game. Interested children can now also meet Lars and Lotta, the programme's likeable characters, online. The platform takes children with it on a journey through the national natural landscapes. The starting point for the educational games is a „ranger station“ from which the adventures set off. One can choose between four different natural landscapes from the North to the South of Germany, which actually exist in real life: the coast, the lowlands, a mid-range mountain area and the Alps. The online games are suitable for both leisure and school use. This way the natural landscapes can easily be explored from home or incorporated into lessons as an innovative and practice-orientated teaching method.

With this additional virtual offer EUOPARC hopes to interest children in a more real nature experience. The online learning platform can be used free of charge: www.junior-ranger.de



Volunteers plant trees in Biosphere Reserve Bliesgau.
Picture: Teresa Feld

For COP 11 in Hyderabad, EUROPARC Germany was invited to present results of the first evaluation project of German national parks during a side even. Here, reporting obligations, management strategies and financial instruments for protected areas were discussed with international attendees.

Success and challenges

'Werkstatt N'- EUROPARC does an excellent job

At the beginning of 2012 EUROPARC was delighted to receive two awards carrying the quality mark 'Werkstatt N' from the Council for Sustainable Development. The awards are given to honour model initiatives in the field of sustainability.

Thus, for the second time the Junior Ranger Programme was awarded, as well as EUROPARC's „A point of honour: Nature – volunteers in parks“ project which is done in

cooperation with more than 40 protected areas all over Germany. EUROPARC supports around 3,000 volunteers every year, who work for a wide range of nature protection and environmental projects.

The year ahead

In 2013 EUROPARC Deutschland celebrates the anniversary of the volunteer programme entitled '10 years of a point of honour: Nature – I'll join in!'. Planned are monthly activities, which will make the public more aware of this topic.

The stakeholders mainly wish to show that the success of the programme is based on high quality volunteer management.

Further information: www.europarc-deutschland.de/

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Ehrensache Natur

Nationale
Naturlandschaften



Seminar on
green
infrastructure.
Picture:
Giedrius
Norvaisas.



EUROPARC Nordic-Baltic

The Nordic-Baltic section, which was established in 2003, represents organizations from 8 Nordic and Baltic countries: Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Iceland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The main goal of the section is to promote exchange of information and expertise and encourage cooperation between the members, in order to improve the management of protected areas. The section follows the key aims of the EUROPARC Federation and maintains active connections between members and the Directorate of the Federation.

The section secretariat during the period 2012-2014 is hosted by Estonian Environmental Board / Keskkonnaamet with the President Kaja Lotman and coordinator Nele Söber.

Activities 2012:

Our main activities in 2012 were:

- Seminar "*Protected areas as part of Green Infrastructure*" in Estonia, 7.-8.03.2012;
- Section member meetings in Estonia 6.03.2012 and in Belgium during EUROPARC Conference 23.10.2012;
- Meeting of the working group "*Protected areas and Health*" in Denmark, 12.-13.06.2012;
- Issuing section newsletters 4 times in a year (see <http://nb.europarc.org/what-we-do/newsletter>);
- Communicating GRUNDTVIG project "*Volunteer Management in European Parks*" activities and results to section members;

- Meeting of present and previous Presidents of the section in Estonia 19.-20.11.2012;
- Negotiating with the candidate for the next presidency of the section

Success and challenges

2012 was a busy year for the new secretariat in terms of getting to know the section and its work and also communication with other sections and the EUROPARC Federation. The previous secretariat was of big help as well as the Federation itself!



*Cake from seminar on green infrastructure.
Picutre: Nele Söber.
Picture: EUROPARC Nordic-Baltic*

The section was successful in receiving 3 new members: Mols Bjerge National Park, Abisko National Park and Hamra National Park. Thus we hope that the awareness of the section has increased.

Challenges lay ahead as there is uncertainty on how the sections will work once EUROPARC and Eurosite will have formed a new organisation.

The year ahead

In 2013, the section celebrates its 10th anniversary. Section member and founder of the section – Metsähallitus – will organize a celebratory event in May. The whole year is also closely connected with the EUROPARC Federation 40th anniversary celebrations.

The section organizes at least two seminars and two member meetings in a year. This year's seminars will include themes such as protected areas governance and cultural heritage in protected areas. The section continues issuing regular newsletters and fostering the work of the working group "Protected areas and Health".

Further information: www.europarc-nb.org

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*T. Hansson with Nele Söber and Kaja Lotmann in Saaremaa, Estonia.
Picture: EUROPARC Nordic-Baltic*



*"Immaterial Heritage" workshop participants at Park Moncayo, Aragon (SP).
Picture: Javier Puertas*



EUROPARC Spain

The Spanish section was founded in 1993 and is championed by FUNGOBE (Fundación F.G. Bernaldez for Natural Areas). There are currently 26 members, all of them public administrations. The Programme of Work for Protected Areas (PoW) 2009-2013, a contribution from the Spanish protected areas to the Convention on Biodiversity, has formed the backbone of the section’s activities since 2008.

Key activities 2012

In 2012 many activities from the current PoW took place including:

- Guidebook on Cultural and Spiritual Values of protected areas was published, with the support of the Council of Tenerife. This guidebook, driven by Asociación Silene, is advocating the need to effectively include the intangible heritage in protected areas.
- Two seminars about health and protected areas were held in Iruelas Nature Reserve and Arribes de Duero Nature Park, with the support of the Natural Heritage Foundation of Castilla y León.

- The working group that developed the project management quality for conservation in protected areas, supported by the Biodiversity Foundation, has developed three new working papers focusing on planning, forest management, and management in the context of global change. In addition, two workshops were held in the Sierra Nevada National Park and Nature Reserve El Foix, respectively.
- In 2012 a total of 38 Spanish protected areas were part of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism and 287 tourism companies were participating in the second phase. On the other hand, 28 protected areas were endorsed with “Q Standard for public use”.
- The section’s Annual Conference was held together with the Government of Region de Murcia. More than 100 managers attended the conference, which included about 40 oral presentations and posters.





*Technical visit during the XVII Conference EUROPARC Spain (Regional Park Calbanque, Murcia).
Picture: Javier Puertas*

- 35 students completed the 12th Master Degree in protected areas and several of its thematic courses were held in Spain: conservation, economic development, plans for public use in protected areas, and communication. This year a participant came from the Galapagos National Park (Colombia).
- In the framework of the European Day of Parks 2012 the section co-operated with Spanish Association of Nature Photographers in organizing the first photo contest EUROPARC-Spain, and we could also organize a public panel discussion on the value of the parks to connect people with nature.
- The tasks of monitoring and evaluating the project "Volunteer Management in European Parks" have continued, including our collaboration on the workshop on volunteering which was held during the EUROPARC 2012 Conference.
- EUROPARC-Spain has collaborated with the Republic of China, through the German Agency for Cooperation in China, in the organization of two technical visits to different Spanish wetlands.

Success and challenges

This year the "Yearbook 2011 of the state of protected areas in Spain" was developed and published, offering a background report on protected areas in Spain and its evolution. Several public and private organizations supported in 2012 the section's activities, such as the Ministry of Environment, Biodiversity Foundation, Abertis Foundation and La Casa Encendida. We enjoy working closely with our members and the wide EUROPARC Federation network.

The year ahead

The main task of the section in 2013 is to continue the implementation of the PoW, strategic document that will be internally assessed throughout the year. Several activities will be developed to celebrate the 20th anniversary of EUROPARC-Spain and share with society the benefits and values of our protected areas.

More information: www.redeuroparc.org

Contact: Marta Múgica de la Guerra,
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*The dynamic
Dinaric Arc Parks
team at the
kick-off meeting
in March 2012.*

*Picture:
WWF MedPO*



Our consultancy arm EUROPARC Consulting

Key activities 2012

Promoting our work

2012 was a great year for EUROPARC Consulting with regards to communication. In addition to Facebook, the company promoted its work in regular articles; a new study-tour flyer; on its website; and via the online network Linked-In. Attendance at a number of international events, closer relations with colleagues in the EUROPARC network and a partnership with the European Platform for Business and Biodiversity also improved Consulting's profile.

Covering new ground – the Dinaric Arc Region

The year also saw the business participating in a number of exciting projects across Europe. One of the highlights was the WWF Mediterranean Programme's Dinaric Arc Park project. Starting with the kick-off meeting in March and ending with a very successful conference in Bosnia Herzegovina at the end of November, every moment so far has been enjoyable. The project has enabled EUROPARC

Consulting to reach out to 75 protected areas in the region. "It is really wonderful to meet so many enthusiastic new colleagues and to be part of a project that uses nature conservation to bring the Dinaric Arc countries closer together", enthuses Wilf Fenten.

Implementing sustainable tourism

Sustainable tourism continued to be a focal point for EUROPARC Consulting's work in 2012. The year began with the launch of the handbook "Practical, profitable, protected: A starter guide to developing sustainable tourism in protected areas", produced by EUROPARC Consulting, ECEAT – Projects and the Latvian Country Tourism Association. During the summer a lot of effort went into developing a sustainable tourism strategy for the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site (WSWHS). Consulting also took 17 WSWHS partners on a study-tour to the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site (JCWHS) in the UK. In November it began an independent evaluation of the "Our Land" initiative, a project promoting nine designated landscapes in the South East of England.

EUROPARC Consulting GmbH specialises in the policy and practice of protected area management. The company's managing director, Wilf Fenten, his small team of dedicated staff and a group of international experts in protected area management provide clients with a number of services in this field, providing great expertise in a wide range of subjects. Working across many different European countries, EUROPARC Consulting fully subscribes to the EUROPARC Federation's philosophy - helping protected areas to build relationships and skills on an international level. In 2012 the company contributed 17,500 € to the Federation's great work with Europe's magnificent, protected spaces.

Work with the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas kept the team busy throughout the year. In total 15 protected landscapes applied and 18 reapplied for Charter status. They were declared successful after an intense Charter Evaluation Committee meeting in July. Working so closely with so many dedicated people from the Charter network is always an honour and a privilege for EUROPARC Consulting.

The year ahead

After a wonderful 2012, 2013 is so far promising to be just as exciting for EUROPARC Consulting. This year the team aims to prepare even more tenders than in 2012. The business is also currently waiting for news regarding some applications that were submitted last year. EUROPARC Consulting's current work will, of course, continue whilst new activities will see the

company exploring different fields of work in protected area management and enable it to expand its geographical reach, for example, to the Nordic-Baltic and Dinaric Arc regions.

In 2013 EUROPARC Consulting is particularly looking forward to joining in the festivities marking the 40th anniversary of the EUROPARC Federation and 20 years since the start of the European Charter process. These celebrations will strengthen relations across the EUROPARC network even more, so that together we can rise to the challenge of ensuring the conservation of Europe's natural heritage.

More information: www.europarc.org,
www.facebook.com/europarc.consulting

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EUROPARC
CONSULTING



Our members

EUROPARC membership in 2012

40 years ago the first protected areas came together for the protection of our common European natural heritage. Since then, the EUROPARC Federation has grown to the biggest network of European Protected Areas. It doesn't matter if you climb to the top of Nevosa in Portugal, if you relax in Finland on the banks of Pallasjärvi or if you watch cormorants over the river Danube, everywhere you can recognize the tireless commitment of our members to protecting our common European natural heritage, realising that first vision of our network's founders.

Working together offers a wealth of opportunities to network, develop partnership opportunities and make contact with like-minded professionals. By the end of 2012 around 400 members shared our idea of international co-operation to further the conservation of Europe's natural and cultural heritage. Together the members of the EUROPARC network are responsible for the management of thousands of protected areas across the continent, which includes a substantial portion of Europe's Natura 2000 sites.

Although the financial difficulties are getting bigger for most of our members we appreciate greatly the level of membership continuity. In 2012 we gained 20 new members. We lost six

members who resigned. Unfortunately we had to strike off 34 members who had not paid their fee for the last two years. As a measure of stabilisation the General Assembly 2012 decided not to increase the membership fees in 2013 and 2014.

Participation of the membership in EUROPARC activities throughout the year was excellent. Around 600 attendees visited the Annual Conference (BE) and made it the largest single networking event of the year. 34 protected areas successfully completed their Charter evaluation in 2012, and we are delighted that many Charter areas are applying for a re-evaluation after five years. Other events included a conflict management seminar at Siggen (D), the TransParcNet meeting in Pasvik Inari Trilateral Park (FIN, N, RUS), the international Junior Ranger Camp in Triglav National Park (SLO) with cross border involvement from Prealpi Giulie Nature Park (I) as well as numerous working groups and section meetings. Members are also active in a number of transnational projects and have contributed regularly to EUROPARC's publications.

More information:

www.europarc.org/who-we-are/our-members

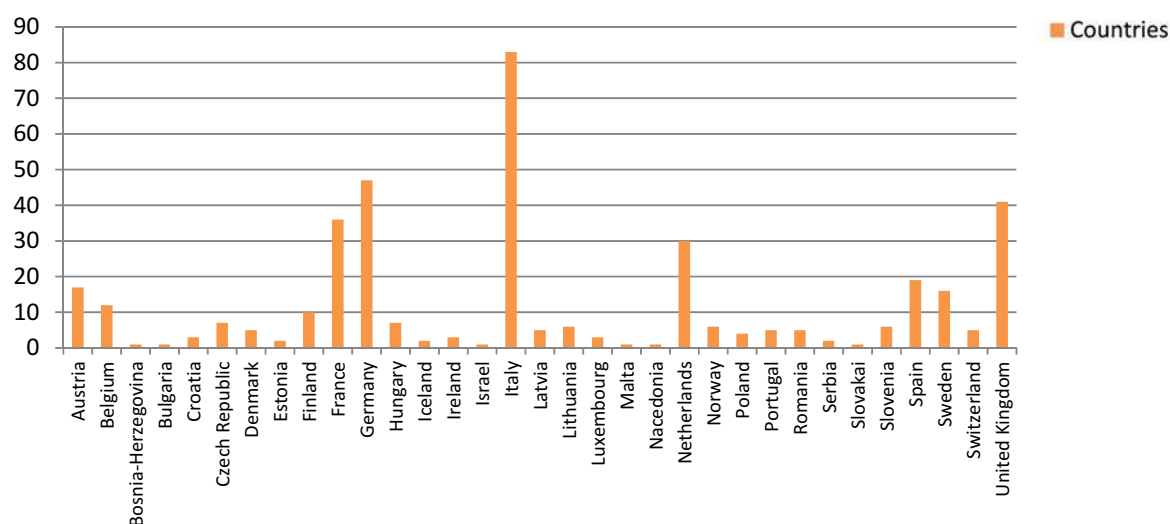
Contact: Heike Blankenstein:

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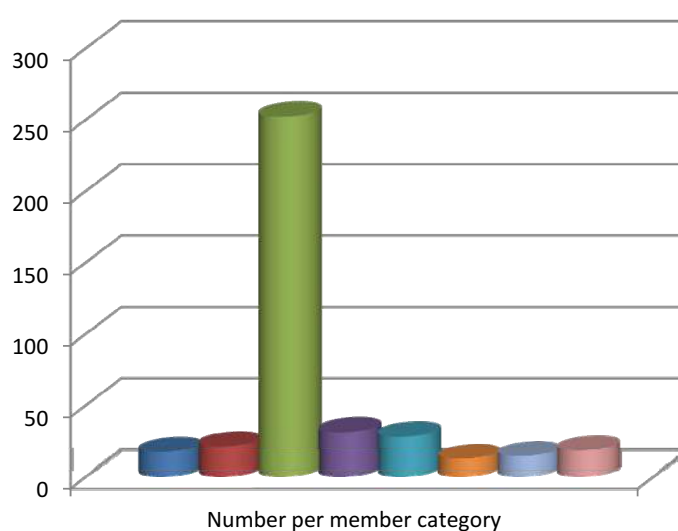
Looking forward to increase collaboration: Participants of TransParkNet meeting 2012, Trilateral Park Pasvik-Inari. Picture: EUROPARC

Number of EUROPARC members per country



EUROPARC member categories

- Group A: States a. National Governm. Organisations
- Group B: Provinces, Régions, Länder, Comunidades, etc.
- Group C: National Parks, Nature Parks a. o. Protected Areas
- Group D: Other offic. agencies, associat., institutes a. corp. bodies
- Group E: Non-governmental organis. on a nat. or internat. level
- Group F: Supporting organisations
- Group H: Honorary members
- Group I: Supporting individuals



Financial Report

BALANCE SHEET

	2012	2011
AKTIVA		
Assets		
Total fixed assets	5 995,00	6 713,00
Shares in affiliated companies (EP Consulting)	118 000,00	118 000,00
Total current assets	248.508,45	229.009,70
Total Assets	372.503,45	353 722,70
PASSIVA		
Profit Reserve	293 954,67	294 619,97
Liabilities		
Provisions	23 525,02	14 050,00
Accounts payable	55 023,76	45 052,73
Total Equity and Liability	372 503,45	353 722,70



EUROPARC
F E D E R A T I O N

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

	2012	2011
Income		
Membership fees	310 783,00	309 119,65
Grants		
EC core grant	0,00	0,00
Project grants	49 696,76	167 470,83
Other income	41 765,61	29 822,81
Appreciation in value, EP Consulting		118 000,00
Total Income	402 245,37	624 413,29
Simplified Expenditure		
Total Personnel costs	237 795,93	261 598,37
Total Office costs	23 912,07*	32 741,01
Total Travel and Subsistence	39 066,15	44 219,45
Total Other direct costs	20 097,04*	-
Total Overhead costs	33 044,02*	54 000,82
Total Project direct costs	17 472,14	60 546,83
Total External Assistance/ Professional Fees	31 523,32*	45 094,63
Total costs	402 910,67	498 201,11
Result	-665,30	126 212,18

NOTES

* The financial management system was upgraded in 2012. This is reflected by a different allocation of costs under headings. The new system was presented to members at the General Assembly 2012 in Genk. While some headings include different costs in 2012 than in 2011, the new heading „Total Other direct costs“ was introduced. Due to this change, special attention has to be given when comparing the costs of 2011 and 2012. For more information, please contact the Executive Administrator, members@europarc.org.

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* Please note that these are contacts from 2012. Current news on www.europarc.org.

Commitment Engagement Einsatz

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