

EUROPARC Annual Report

June - December 2008



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EUROPARC is the umbrella organisation of Europe's protected areas. It unites national parks, regional parks, nature parks and biosphere reserves in 39 countries, with the common aim of protecting Europe's unique variety of wildlife, habitats and landscapes.



Cover Photo: Mourne AONB. Picture: Mourne Heritage Trust



Malham Cove in the Yorkshire Dales.
Picture: EUROPARC Consulting

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Erika Stanciu Picture: A. Beckmann



Carol Ritchie Picture: EUROPARC

Director's Report Forward: Future: Change:

Verändening

President remarks

Dear EUROPARC Colleagues,

When the Director called to ask for a few words for the foreword of EUROPARC's 2008 Annual Report, I wondered what I could add to the valuable information already in the document or what I could highlight from the varied activities implemented by the Federation and its Sections in the second half of 2008.

It is indeed difficult to summarise these outcomes in a few lines as they involved so many members and covered such a wide range of areas from regional member support, such as producing quality criteria for protected areas in Germany and seminars on relevant topics in many other countries, to significant contributions to international work, for example the Spanish Manual for assigning IUCN Protected Area Management Categories or the Tourism Charter Network.

Last year was an intense and difficult year for us and I am pleased to see that the Annual Report reflects the special efforts made by the new Director, Carol Ritchie, the deputy-director, Richard Blackman, and the rest of the staff at the Headquarters to maintain the momentum of the Federation; implement changes derived from the governance review; deliver on existing projects; and to begin working much closer to the Sections.

In summary, 2008 was the first time when:

• more than 100 new members joined the Federation in one year, due to the decision

merging of EUROPARC Italy and Federaparchi as well as their members;

- EUROPARC Sections worked together to develop and implement a successful project proposal;
- we awarded a trilateral 'Following Nature's Design' certificate for transboundary protected areas:
- our members were able to learn more about Eastern European protected areas through colleagues from the Carpathian countries who joined us at EUROPARC 08 following the annual Carpathian Protected Area Meeting

But much, much more happened as well in the second half of 2008 and I invite you all to read more about these and other important EUROPARC activities in this report.

Does the "term" used by me – "first time" – imply an ambitious vision for the future? Maybe, but I really believe if we are to have many other "first times" in our work then we have to build on these new foundations to create a new future for the Federation.

I hope that you will find reading the 2008 Report of the EUROPARC Federation inspiring and look forward to having you on board for an equally exciting year in 2009.

Wishing you all a great 2009!

Erika Stanciu

Since taking up post in June 2008, I met as many members as possible over the intervening 6 months, and listened to your thoughts, ideas and concerns about the future of the Federation. I am extremely grateful to the welcome and hospitality offered throughout my travels and for your considered input into the future of EUROPARC.

Much of the summer was taken up with preparations for the conference, general assembly and election that took place at Poiana Brasov (RO) in September. During the General Assembly the governance review culminated in the memberships' overwhelming acceptance of new statutes. Plans are now well advanced for EUROPARC 09 in Strömstad, Sweden, from 9th-13th September 2009, where I hope you all will join us to celebrate 100 years of National Parks in Europe, by considering a shared inheritance; a common future.

In the second half of 2008 we initiated many changes in the communication of the Federation, both in design and output. I hope these changes are not just a new look but a new and effective means of exchanging news and views across our 500 members in 39 countries.

The NatuRegio project reached its third year in 2008 and will have long term benefits in up-skilling environmental professionals in Romania and Bulgaria. In addition, the Junior Ranger programme has received a well needed revival with committed Junior Ranger leaders meeting in December to consider future developments.

We have also continued with the work of the Charter for Sustainable Tourism. The increasing uptake of the Charter is testament to its effectiveness as contribution to a sustainable economy in and around protected areas. Transboundary work, is another area of work that the Federation remains committed to, supporting cross border protected areas in the common management of their areas.

Finally, the EUROPARC Federation remains indebted to the Alfred Toepfer Stiftung for their continued generous support of the Alfred Toepfer scholarships and medal.

More details EUROPARC's activities from July to December 08 can be found in this annual report, which I commend to you in the hope that it emphasises the extensive work the Federation undertakes to support and promote Europe's protected areas.

As a result of input from our members, I am more convinced than ever of the role the EUROPARC Federation has in proclaiming anew the role and benefits of protected areas for the 21st century. In 2009 this goal will be achieved through a rationalisation of our strategy, with focused work areas; the creation of new international and collaborative projects; and close collaboration with our Sections, Members and partner organisations.

Carollitchie

Carol Ritchie, Director

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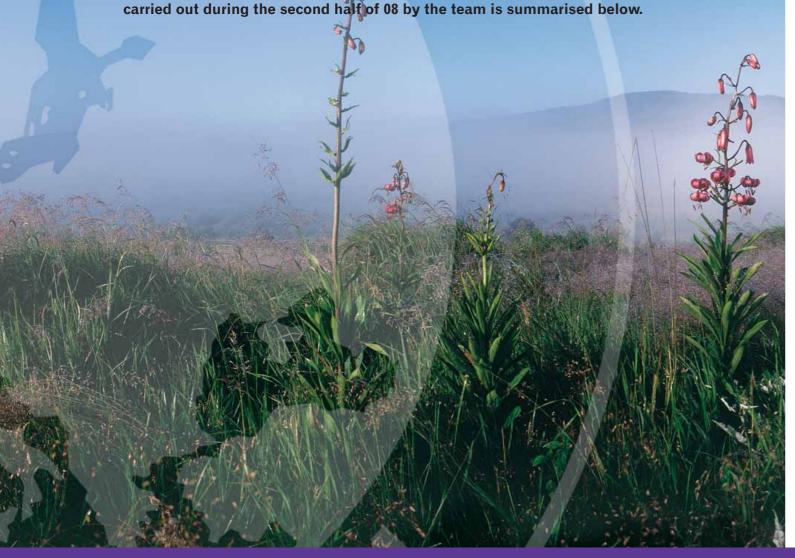
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The Directorate Report



Directorate team. Picture: EUROPARC

The Directorate of the EUROPARC Federation is the engine of the organisation. With a small team of six and additional assistance from our intern, we are responsible for all strategic and operational functions. The team manage all aspects of a number of important European projects and represent the Federation and our member's interests across a range of agenda. The work



Communications

Highlights in the Federations communication during the second half of 2008 included the relaunch of the new EUROPARC website, the production of the new-look annual report as well as the introduction of a monthly e-news about EUROPARC activities.

Internal Communication

The annual EUROPARC Conference

The EUROPARC conference in 2008, held in Poiana Brasov, Brasov, Romania, from 24 - 27 September, was a great success. Over 250 protected area professionals from 26 countries gathered, listened and debated under the theme "High conservation values, high management standards".

The conference report will be ready for members in the middle of February 09.



At the ordinary and extraordinary general assembly of the Federation, the hustings and the election of council members for the next three years took place as well as the amendment to current procedures, financial report, budget outline, annual report, governance review and annual business report. The assembly minutes will be available in the middle of February 09.

EUROPARC 2009 in Kosterhaven National Park will take place from 9 to 13



September 2009 near Strölmstad, Sweden. Hosted by Sweden's own centenary national park, the conference will explore '100 years of nature conservation in Europe – past and future challenges'. More information will be available at www.europarc.org/sweden-09 soon.

Publications

One Newsletter was produced in September 08 and from August members were sent a monthly update from the EUROPARC Headquarters in the form of the newly introduced monthly E-News.

A second issue of the EUROPARC Bulletin - Nature

and National Parks was not produced in 2008 as changes to this publication are planned in 2009.

Council meetings

Three council meetings took place at Brasov, Romania, at the EUROPARC Conference in September due to this years Council elections. One meeting was held with the old Council Members, one hand over meeting took place and in addition the new Council met to discuss topics on the EUROPARC agenda.

External communication

The EUROPARC internet site

Since the launch of the newly designed internet site www.europarc.org in September, thanks to generous financial contribution from the Alfred Toepfer Foundation, the website has been updated regularly. The website has received over 7300 visitors since October 08 and will be developed further in 09.



The European Day of Parks (EDoP)

The theme for the EDoP 09, "Youth – the future of our parks", was decided upon in December 08. As usual the events for the EDoP will be organised on and around the 24th of May in 2009, which we commemorate as it was the day the first National Park was founded in Sweden in 1909. More information at www.europarc.org/annual-events.

Celebrating 100 years of National Parks in Europe

In 2009 Europe celebrates the 100th anniversary of the establishment of its first National Park in Sweden. To mark this occasion EUROPARC is developing the project "Celebrating 100 years of National Parks in Europe" together with ECO Consulting Romania and with support from Klagenfurt University. The project aims to bring the idea of National Parks and nature conservation in Europe and their relevance to European society over the last 100 years closer to the general public. If funding permits it will fulfil this aim through a series of outcomes including a publication, a time-line and a travelling exhibition. Read more at www.europarc.org/current-activities.

Relations with other organisations

Over the last half a year EUROPARC has enjoyed partnerships with many organisations. A full list can be found at www.europarc.org/our-partners-and-funders.

The Federation looks forward to continued cooperation with existing partners and to building fruitful relations with new partners over the next 12 months.

The year ahead

2009 foresees many changes to communication within the Federation. Those changes begin with the Annual Report's change in schedule, which will be released at the beginning of each year to coincide with the financial year, and will continue with the design, title and content of the EUROPARC Bulletin, which will now only be produced once a year (April/May). The Newsletter will also be redesigned and be released twice a year (August and November).

A major target for 2009 is to develop a communication strategy for the Federation and furthermore the Headquarters also intends to work more closely with members and sections to improve communication within the network.

Presence at trade fairs and other events

EUROPARC represented its member's interests at the following events over the last 6 months:

18 – 23 Aug	Nordic Baltic Seminar	Norway
15 – 21 Sept	European Ranger Seminar	Hungary
24 – 27 Sept	EUROPARC Conference	Brasov (RO)
04 Oct	WCPA meeting	Barcelona (ES)
05 – 14 Oct	IUCN Congress	Barcelona (ES)
7 Oct	EU Open Days of Regions and Cities 2008, European Day of Tourisr	m Brussels (B)
8 Oct	Conference: European Biodiversity: the Private Solution	Brussels (B)
08 – 10 Oct	ALPARC General Assembly	Bled (SL)
11 Oct	Parc naturel regional des Causses du Quercy, Annual General Meeting	Sauliac-sur-Célé (F)
16 – 19 Oct	WfN Evaluation Seminar	Podyjí National Park (CZ)
23 – 24 Oct	European Habitats Forum	Brussels (B)
10 Nov	Ranger Rendezvous	Scotland, UK
11 – 15 Nov	International training for MaB Stakeholders in SEE	Central Balkan National Park (BG)
12 – 14 Nov	Jobs for Nature Forum	Lyon (FR)
9 Dec	Charter Information Seminar	Brussels (B)
10 Dec	Meeting of the PESTO PWG (European Charter)	Rome (IT)
10 D ec	Presentation of Wild Heart of Europe	Brussels (B)
11 D ec	EEB Biodiversity Seminar	Brussels (B)
12 – 14 D ec	Junior Ranger Summit	Grafenau (DE)
17 D ec	NatRegio Project Coordination Meeting	Hannover (DE)

Contact: Morwenna Parkyn

Alfred Toepfer Scholarships and Award





Alfred Toepfer Natural Heritage Scholarships

The aim of the Alfred Toepfer Scholarships, donated by the Alfred Toepfer Foundation in Hamburg, is to support promising young people who have practical experience in the field of nature conservation and are committed to working for the benefit of protected areas. The scholarships, each worth 3.000 EURO, enable them to undertake a study visit to one or more protected areas in an unfamiliar European country and to gather experience which their future careers will profit from.

In 2008, the EUROPARC Federation awarded three Scholarships at the EUROPARC conference in Brasov. The awards were presented to Razvan Deju (Romania), David Rodriguez (Spain) and Rachel Bland (UK).

Razvan is involved in the "Bison Reintroduction Program" in Vanatori Neamt National Park (Ro). He will visit protected areas in other Carpathian regions (Poland and Slovakia) to share experiences about successful bison reintroductions under similar natural circumstances.

Rachel is currently working for a national park in England. She will visit two national parks and two National Marine Parks in Greece to gather practical advice for future development strategies in the field of forest fire management and marine spatial planning.

David is doing a PhD in the field of protected area management. The aim of his field visit to the Republic of Moldova is to collect data about the current state of the country's protected area network.

Meanwhile EUROPARC is working together with the Alfred Toepfer Foundation on a new structure and conditions for the scholarships to make them more effective. The updated information will be available at www.europarc.org/awards-and-grants in March 2009, where the 2007 scholarship reports can also be viewed.

The Alfred Toepfer Award

The Alfred Toepfer Medal - named after the founder of the EUROPARC Federation, Dr Alfred Toepfer - is awarded annually, in recognition of a particular individual's service to the nature and national parks of Europe. The medal is presented at the annual EUROPARC conference.

In 2008 the winner of the Medal was the retired Romanian forester, Mr Walter Frank. He was awarded the medal for his fantastic work with Romania's ancient beech forests and his continuous cooperation with the Romanian Forestry Administration to ensure that these valuable natural and ancient forests are placed under protection.

Contact: Diane Gallrapp

Two of the three Alfred Toepfer scholarship winners. Picture: FUROPARC



The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas is a practical tool for ensuring that tourism contributes to a balanced economic, social and environmental development of protected areas in Europe. It is a voluntary agreement encouraging good practice to meet agreed requirements for the sustainable development and management of tourism in protected areas.





Sierras de Francia Picture: Parque Natural

European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas

Key activities July - December 2008

New evaluations and re-evaluations

Twelve applications were approved by the Evaluation Committee and have received their Charter Certificate at the EUROPARC General Assembly in September 2008 in Poiana Brasov, Romania. In addition, five Charter protected areas submitted their application for re-evaluation in the first half of 2009. At its last meeting in June 2008 the Evaluation Committee decided to further elaborate and update the Guidelines for Charter Candidates.

Charter Part II – Working with tourism businesses

The certification of Charter Partners, within the framework of Charter Part II, has started in the UK, Spain and France. In the UK, the Forest of Bowland AONB is acting as a pioneer and so far 17 operators have become European Charter Partners. In Spain six protected areas are participating in the implementation and around 79 tourism businesses are involved. In France, 60 tourism businesses in the region of the Massif Central in France, represented by IPAMAC, Massif Central Inter-Parks Association, are now partners.

European Charter Net

In December 2008 a European Charter information seminar was organised, which

promoted the Charter as a model and tool to sustain rural areas through these changing and challenging times. Over 60 representatives from the EU Commission, European regions and other organisations attended the event at the Euro region Alpes Méditerranée office in Brussels.



European Charter Information Seminar. Picture: EUROPARC

Marketing and Communication

CharterNet communication activities in the second half of 2008 included the publication of the 5th European Charter Newsletter, four Charter News Emails, press releases promoting the brochure "Joining Forces" and the information seminar in Brussels. Together with the European CharterNet and Marketing & Communications working groups a sitemap for the Charter website was produced and a first design route was established.

Networking & Partnerships

The Apuseni Nature Park (RO) and the Frankenwald Nature Park (DE) as well as the Muranska Planina National Park (SK) and the Harz National Park (DE) were selected for the first Charter partnerships aimed at extending the Charter Network to the East. They will visit each others parks in 2009.

New projects promoting the Charter

The INTERREG IV B project proposal, "Parks and Benefits", involving 19 partners from the Baltic Sea region, including the lead partner the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (DE) Ministry for Agriculture, Environment and Consumer Protection, was successful. As a partner, EUROPARC will participate in the kick-off meeting in March 2009.

In addition, an application for an INTERREG IVC project is in preparation. The project aims at strengthening, promoting and enlarging the existing Charter Network, further developing sustainable tourism implementation and the creation of partnerships for sharing ideas and exchanging expertise. The development of market oriented sustainable tourism products in Charter protected areas will strengthen and diversify tourism activities and will attract more visitors, increasing the economic income of the region.

Success and Challenges

During the 2008 businesses year the network was strengthened and further developed through different activities and a regular exchange of information took place between EUROPARC and the Network. The information seminar held in Brussels helped establish new contacts and increase the Charter's profile at a regional, national and international level.

With 58 Charter protected areas and over 15 Charter Candidates engaged in the Charter process the constantly revision and adaption of the Charter methodology is necessary. To be able to do this EUROPARC will continue the good communication within the network and stimulate the exchange of expertise and know-how.

The year ahead

At least 10 protected areas are likely to join the Charter Network in 2009. Several regional government authorities and EUROPARC Sections are strongly promoting the Charter. Further development of the Charter is dependant on the successful outcome of the INTERREG IVC application.

The European CharterNet will continue to create a higher profile for the Charter on European level; produce is newsletter + newsmail; and update + relise www.european-charter.org.

EUROPARC will be presenting the European Charter at a joint stand together with the TUI AG at the Reisepavillon 09 and an international workshop organized in Eastern Europe will strengthen the link to the new European countries.

Contact: Petra Dippold

EUROPARC is the umbrella organisation for Junior Ranger programmes in Europe. The Programme (www.europarc.org/junior-ranger) provides young people with opportunities to participate in the work of protected area rangers. The aim of the network is to increase network partners in Europe by providing information on how to set up a Junior Ranger programme; coordinating the work across Europe; by providing leader training and an annual international camp.





Junior Ranger group picture at Balmoran Picture: EUROPARC

EUROPARC Junior Ranger Network

Activities July - December 2008

The 7th International Junior Ranger Camp

In 2008, the Cairngorms National Park (Scotland) organised the 7th EUROPARC Junior Ranger international camp 31 Junior Rangers and their mentors from eight countries attended the event. Highlights were: canoeing on the River Dee, conservation work with the Ranger services, the Balmorals Royal residence, "The men who planted trees" from the Puppet State Theatre and the Highland Games in Aboyne. This fantastic experience yet again emphasised how enjoyable and useful Junior Ranger camps are.

The Junior Ranger Summit

In December 08 the Federation organised a special Junior Ranger summit, hosted by the Bavarian Forest National Park and attended by 8 Junior Ranger experts from around Europe. The participants discussed the future of the Junior Ranger Programme and Network and the direction it should take in the future. They looked at the programmes guiding principles; essential components; patenting the Junior Ranger brand; the organisation of the international camps; and elements of networking.





Junior Rangers helping Rangers of the Cairngorms National Park Picture: EUROPARC



Success and challenges

The main successes of these few months were the 7th international camp and the summit in December, which gave us the opportunity to look back and analyse the progress of the Junior Ranger project and to consider our main future challenges.

The year ahead

The Federation will concentrate on developing the Junior Ranger Programme in 2009 based on the results of the 08 summit. This will include revising/approving the guidelines; increasing the strength and extent of the network; improving the communication between Network members, training for Junior Ranger group leaders; developing new programmes, such as the Marine Junior Rangers; and fundraising.

The international Junior Ranger Camp 2009 will be hosted by the "Parc Natural de Aigüamolls de l'Empordá" in Catalunya (ES) from 25 July to the 1st August. The park is a magnificent example of the coastal wetlands, including salt-water wetlands, fresh water ponds, reed beds and dunes. More details about the camp will be available on the website.

The Mendip Hills AONB (UK) have offered to organise the camp in 2010.

Contact: Federico Minozzi







Čertovo Jezero in Šumava National Park (CZ). Picture: Šumava National

NatuRegio – Trainees for Nature in Bulgaria and Romania Naturegio

The project "NatuRegio - Nature conservation and regional development in South-East Europe" (www.naturegio-bg-

ro.de) selects 10 young professionals, from the field of nature conservation in Romanian and Bulgarian to go through a focused training scheme over the course of one year. These professionals then each develop and implement a project in the field of nature conservation and regional development in their home countries.

The project is now in its third year and continues to be coordinated by the NNA (Alfred Toepfer Academy for Nature Protection), Euronatur, Lüneburg University and EUROPARC. Funds are provided by the German Federal Environmental Foundation (DBU) and the Alfred Toepfer Foundation.

Key activities July - December 2008

The 2008/09 project year started in June 2008 with the selection of the trainees from Romania and Bulgaria. From August and December 2008 the trainees benefited from an induction into the project; a language course; a study tour in Germany and their first placement in Germany.

A call out for applications for NatuRegio year 2009/2010 was sent out in December 08.

The year ahead

In 2009 the training scheme for the 08/09 participants will continue with seminars on current

nature conservation themes in Bulgaria and Romania as well as with their placements in a German protected area or nature conservation institution. They will also develop a project proposal on a theme of their choice, which will be evaluated by a jury, who will give points and then award the participants between 3 000′ and 15 000′ according to these points. All trainees will have implemented these projects by August 2009.

Additionally, the project year 2009/10 will start in February 09 with the selection of trainees for the next running year. The selected trainees will start the programme at the end of March.

Contact: Diane Gallrapp

Wilderness in the European Union

The protection of wilderness areas and the promotion of their value are important for our current and future well-being. EUROPARC can make a valuable contribution to the development of environmental governance at European level and has sought to do this in the framework of the Wild Europe Initiative, a partnership of several nature conservation organisations with a strong interest in wild lands or nearly wild areas (www.europarc.org/wild-europe-initiative).

Key Activities July - December 2008

Over the summer and autumn of 08 EUROPARC and the Wild Europe Initiative undertook further advocacy work to promote a resolution on wilderness areas. They called on the European Commission to develop appropriate recommendations providing guidance to EU member states on the best methods for ensuring the protection of present and potential wilderness or wildland. This would make an important contribution to halting the loss of biodiversity. More than 100 organisations, including 30 EUROPARC members have signed up to the resolution.

A meeting of EUROPARC members interested in the subject of wilderness was held in Brasov during EUROPARC 08. This reviewed issues arising from the resolution, discussed some subjects relating to the management of Natura 2000 sites and how these link to wilderness concepts and looked ahead to the Czech EU Presidency conference in May 09 and plans for an international colloquium in the Šumava National Park in January 09.

The year ahead

An international colloquium looking at whether non-intervention is an appropriate management tool for Natura 2000 sites will take place in Šumava National Park (CZ) in January 09.

EUROPARC is a partner in the consortium of organisations led by IUCN – Regional Office for Europe preparing a major international conference on behalf of the European Commission as part of the Czech Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The conference, on the subject of wild and nearly wild areas in the European Union, will be held in Prague, in May 09.

Contact: Richard Blackman

Changement

The project WFN, recognized by the
Jury of the German National Committee
for the UN Decade of "Education for
Sustainable Development" as a UN
Decade project for 2008/2009, aims to
raise the quality and quantity of
internships and work
placements in protected
areas across
Europe.

WORKING
FOR
NATURE

Working for Nature interns and mentors at the final seminar in October. Picture: EUROPARC





The Lake District National Park organised a practical workshop for WWF DCP participants. Picture: EUROPARC Consulting

more simply known as "Protected Areas for a Living Planet" (PA4LP), is the result of partnership between WWF and the EUROPARC Federation. It aims to establish a network of protected area practitioners that are well trained, and to develop local capacity through acquired learning within the Carpathian protected areas.

A significant part of the work is carried out EUROPARC Consulting GmbH.

Launched in 2008, this programme,

Working for Nature - Nature for Working (WfN)

Key Activities July - December 2008

Internship platform and network

After going on-line in December 2007 the website went through a considerable revision in 2008, making it more user friendly. In addition, a lot of effort was put into developing a network of relevant contacts and partners to ensure the constant promotion of the platform.

In 08 EUROPARC followed-up possibilities to establish WfN within a network of like-minded partners and for this reason was part of the steering committee of "Jobs for nature/La nature pour metier". This event took place in Lyon (F) in November 2008 and was coordinated by the French organisation Atelier technique des espaces naturels (ATEN).

Pilot placements in European Protected Areas

The 12 pilot internships in different European countries that were coordinated and funded by EUROPARC came to an end in Summer 08. The interns supported their host park in its daily activities or within particular projects for 3 months and also promoted the idea behind Working for Nature. Interns reported on their expectations and experiences at www.workingfornature.org/blog.

In October 2008 EUROPARC organised an evaluation seminar for the interns and their mentors. The feedback was very positive and participation in the WfNature scheme seems to be highly valued as a unique personal and professional opportunity.

Based on the results of this evaluation and thanks to the active and valuable contributions of the participating interns and mentors, EUROPARC has elaborated some "Guidelines for successful internships in protected areas". The guidelines, available to download at www.workingfornature.org/blog/, aim to improve and facilitate internship realisation across Europes' Protected Areas and to ensure that the internship is as useful as possible for both the employer and the intern.

The year ahead

area.

The WfN online internship platform will continue to run and be updated in 2009. EUROPARC encourages all protected areas to advertise their placements on the site as there are a large number of people interested in participating in a placement in a foreign protected

WWF Danube Carpathian Eco-region programme

Key Activities July - December 2008

Internship platform

The first element of the work programme involved providing training events for protected area practitioners. Two seminars took place, both located in Poiana Brasov, Romania. The first session, in May, looked at protected-area planning and management planning with stakeholder engagement. The second seminar topic "Sustainable Tourism" took place in June and dealt with development and support for sustainable tourism and eco-tourism; visitor management; communication techniques; community engagement; increasing public awareness and more.

In October the groups from the above workshops met in the UK on a study tour to observe the principles they had studied in practice. The aims: to gain new knowledge and skills; identify specific ideas and transferable skills; share experiences and problem solving methods; learn specific techniques and methods in Management Plan assembly and the theory and practice of sustainable tourism development; to engage in networking.





confidence and ability in looking after their protected areas, and developing their skills in training others. Based in Slovakia in October it was quite a challenge to address management planning, project management and training skills in a few days.

The year ahead

EUROPARC Consulting are delighted that such positive foundations have been laid. Now lessons can be learned, benefits accrued and effects felt. It is hoped that 2009 will see further building upon the progress made, to benefit the Carpathian ecoregion's protected areas.

Contact: Wilf Fenten



Triglav National Park. Picture: Triglav National

Transboundary Protected Areas: Following Nature's Design

To encourage best practice and facilitate daily cooperation between European protected areas at borders. EUROPARC has developed "Transboundary Parks – Following Nature's Design", an innovative and unique system of basic standards for transboundary cooperation. Six transboundary protected areas, involving 12 protected area administrations, are currently certified under the initiative.

Activities July –December 2008

2008 saw the first certification of a trilateral partnership under the EUROPARC 'Following Nature's Design' certification system for transboundary protected areas. The Inari – Vätsäri Wilderness Area (FIN), Řvre – Pasvik National Park (N) and Pasvik Zapovednik (RUS) were awarded their certificates at the EUROPARC 2008 conference in Brasov, Romania.

Efforts were also undertaken to promote the benefits of working for certification and to encourage further transboundary protected areas to apply. Detailed consideration was also given to the re-evaluation process as the first certified area became eligible for re-evaluation in the course of the year. In addition, a project outline for a European "Transboundary Protected Area Network" was drafted during 2008.

Certification of a trilateral partnership at EUROPARC 08 in Poiana Brasov (RO)

The year ahead

The project outline mentioned above will be further developed in the course of 2009, starting with the first full meeting of the EUROPARC Transboundary Protected Area Network, and funding sought.

Currently the Transboundary Protected Areas currently being verified under the EUROPARC Following Nature's Design initiative are Triglav National Park / Julian Alps Biosphere Reserve (SLO) and Prealpi Gulie Regional Nature Park (I). The Bavarian Forest and Sumava National Park will be applying for verification in 2009.

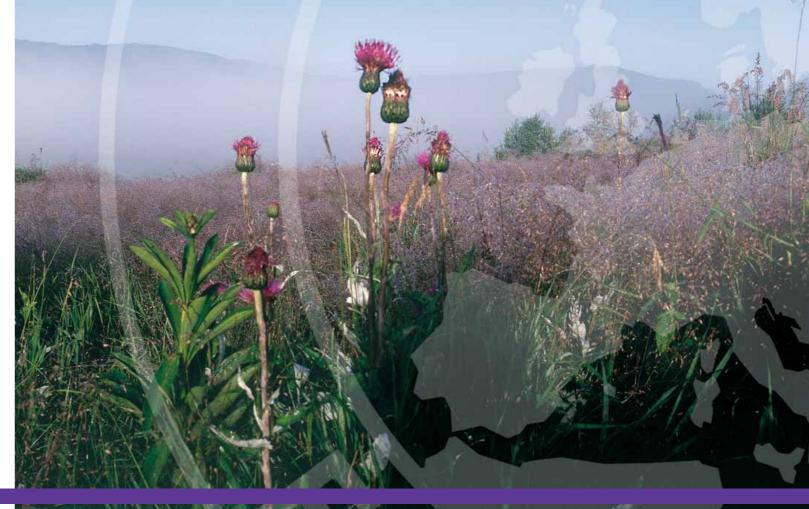
Contact: Richard Blackmann



EUROPARC Federation Section Reports 2007/2008

Diverse Cultural Landscape in Bohemian Forest

The Federation over the years has supported the creation of seven regional and national sections. Responding to members need to share European experience, the sections fulfil many of EUROPARC Federations aims, whilst reflecting the priorities and characteristic of their areas. These sections undertake a huge volume of work to a high professional standard and both support and stimulate the work of the Federation as a whole. Full section reports can be obtained from them individually, but a summary of their achievements are detailed below.



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Silent Valley and Ben Crom, Mourne AONB. Picture: Mourne Heritage Trust

EUROPARC Atlantic Isle Section (EAI)

Encompassing Iceland, Ireland and the countries of the United Kingdom, the section currently has 68 members, with a Board of 10 Trustees and employs one part-time Development Officer.

Key activities July - December 08

A strategic review and a new vision

EAI is committed to reviewing its own resources and constitution in order to ensure it is well placed to deliver its work. A fundamental review took place, leading to new capacity-generating initiatives as well as redrafted Articles of Association more suited to our needs.

In addition, the EAI have embarked on a major review of protected landscape policy, in order to generate a new vision for landscapes in the 21st century. 60 years on from the 1949 Wildlife and Countryside act, and at the centenary of the first National Park in Europe, an exciting and challenging statement on what protected landscapes are for, what they should achieve, and how they can contribute to wider goals is being produced.

Workshops and seminars

In September a meeting was organised by EAI in Scotland that brought together all the major stake-holding organisations that will shape the future of protected landscape policy in Scotland. The workshop allowed EAI to get a better idea about what it could do for its Scottish members, and is part of an ongoing initiative to improve our contact with our members.

In October 2009 EAI held a very successful seminar in Belfast with a record attendance of 85, looking at how to encourage the contribution of sustainable tourism to the rural economy in Northern Ireland. Speakers from Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, England, Wales, Germany, the Netherlands and Italy presented good practice examples.

Publications

The report Connection Land and Sea – improving the management of coastal protected landscapes, published in July 08, is the culmination of some thorough research into how to manage protected coasts to the benefit of both the landscape and the seascape.

In addition, the Section's regular news bulletin was published bi-monthly.

Partnership collaboration

EAI got involved with both the INTERREG IVC PESTO proposal (the Section has put themselves forward as a contractor, after one of our members became a full partner), as well as the Grundtvig Volunteers in Parks project initiated by EUROPARC Germany.

Success and challenges

The greatest challenge for the Section lies in working for a large membership across three nations and, in the UK, four different administrations. Varying political emphases, funding mechanisms, priority issues and so on create a rich and complex context in which to operate. Finding new and greater resources to build the Section is one of our top priorities.

The year ahead

In 2009 the EAI will hold seminars on the implementation of the European Landscape Convention, the relationship between health and protected landscapes, and moving from management indicators to outcomes. It aims to increase the number of protected areas involved with the Charter for Sustainable Tourism and to explore how the Section can act as a catalyst for developing a new consensus on a common vision for protected landscapes in the UK.







EUROPARC Czech Republic

The Czech Section is made up of protected areas and institutions of the Czech Republic was founded in 2000. Its main goal is to co-ordinate work and co-operation in the field of nature conservation in the Czech Republic.

Organisation and membership

The Section currently has six members (for details see www.europarc.cz) who were represented by the Section's previous president, Tomáš Rothröckl, director of the Podyjí National Park Administration and by the new President, Handrij Härtel, from November 08.

Key activities July - December 08

Junior Ranger Programme

In 2008, the Junior Ranger Programme was organised again in Krkonoše and Šumava National Parks and Jizerské hory Protected Landscape Area in a similar framework to previous years. Young rangers from these three protected areas participated in the international camp in the Cairngorms National Park (Scotland, UK) organised by the host park and EUROPARC.

Working for Nature - Nature for Working

Podyjí National Park participated in the Federations Working for Nature - Nature for Working project (WfN), hosting a three month placement for a young biologist from Spain who helped with the assessment of transboundary GIS data.

In October 2008, WfN was brought to a close by a seminar for participants in Podyjí National Park. During the seminar the outcomes of the project were discussed and evaluated.

Pupils experience nature in the European protected areas

Three Czech National Park administrations (Krkonoše, Podyjí, Šumava) took part in this project. School groups visited the parks in summer 08.

Plenary session of Europarc Czech Republic and The year ahead Conference

The plenary session of the Czech Section was held on 9 September 2009 in Olomouc within the framework of a conference organised by the Palacký University (EUROPARC member) in cooperation with the Czech Section and the Czech Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection. The theme was "Research in nature conservation". Results of this successful conference will be published in the Příroda journal during 2009.

Resolution on Wilderness in the European Union

All members of the Czech Section joined the "Wilderness in the European Union" resolution in the second half of 2008. The Section is involved in preparations for the Wilderness Conference, which will take place in the Czech Republic on 27-29 May 2009.

Elections of the president and vice-president of the Czech Section

On 11 November 08, Handrij Härtel (Czech Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection) was elected, for the period 2008-2011, as the president of the Czech Section and Zdeňka Křenová (Šumava NP) as the vice-president.

In January 2009 the Czech Section is organising the international colloquium "The appropriateness of non-intervention management for protected areas and Natura 2000 sites" in Srní, Šumava National Park together with Sumava and the Bavarian Forest National Park. The outcomes of the colloquium will be used as a basis for the Conference on Wilderness and Large Natural Habitat Areas in Europe in Prague in May. The conference is being organised by the Czech Presidency of the EU and the European Commission.

In addition, the DVD presenting Czech protected areas produced in 2007 will be updated, the Czech Sections website will be redesigned and events focussing on the 100th anniversary of European national parks will take place in Czech protected areas for the European Day of Parks.



Participants of the first Grundvig Workshop. Picture: EUROPARC Germany

Hainich Nationalpark (DE) Picture: Thomas Stephan

EUROPARC Germany (EG)

In 2007 EUROPARC Germany focused on the development of protected area management. Here strategic and conceptual work was used together with practice related services. One of the elements of quality management is the continued implementation of the successful umbrella brand: National Natural Landscapes (NNL) (D: Nationale Natural Andscapes).

Organisation and membership

The umbrella organisation for Germany's National Natural Landscapes (NNL) continues to grow, with experts and individuals from different national bodies developing projects and supporting decisions to benefit NNL's. Two members joined the section in this reports time period.

Key activities

Quality criteria for German national parks

The results of the research and development scheme "the development of quality criteria and standards for German National Parks" were adopted by the relevant federal states in September 08. They will form the basis of future national park evaluations, 10 are planned in 09 and 2010, and set important standards for the management of German protected areas.

National Natural Landscapes

EG could invest more time in the development of the umbrella brand NNL, including the website www.nationale-naturlandschaften.de, since December 08, thanks to the support of the German Federal Foundation for the Environment and the German Ministry of the Environment.

Events

On 10th November 08 around 100 guests, invited among others by EUROPARC Germany, gathered in the regional branch of the Thuringian government to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Hainich National Park and 5 years of the project "volunteers in parks".

In addition, around 270 representatives from the fields of politics, conservation, science and economics met at the 3rd PCC (www.potsdamer-klimakonferenz.de) on the 21.10.08 on the theme "From knowledge to action: Mutual responsibility for climate change".

Conference and positions paper on bioenergy

Stopping climate change and saving biodiversity are two important aims for EUROPARC Germany. It is obvious however that uncontrolled growth in the field of bioenergy is incompatible with the aims of German government's national strategy for biodiversity and it's sustainable development strategy. EUROPARC Germany's Council prepared a position paper on the topic, which focuses on the future of the NNL, in December 08.

International cooperation

EUROPARC Germany is managing the Grundtvig financed project, with representatives from eight European, to promote learning partnerships. The project aims to strengthen the "volunteer in parks" network and will examine the management and role of volunteers in participating countries. Workshops for volunteer programme coordinators and the exchange of volunteers between protected areas participating in the "volunteer in parks" initiatives are progressing.

The year ahead

In 2009 the NNLs will celebrate "30 years of UNESCO Biosphere Reserves" in Germany as well as the "year of the Biosphere Reserve", the patrons of which are the German Chancellor Angela Merkel and the Minister of the Environment, Sigmar Gabriel. Also on the 14 May EG will welcome participants to the conference "Biodiversity in NNL's – diversity strengthens!" in Dessau, Saxony.

In addition, 2009 will see the kick off of the German Junior Ranger Programme, developed together with the WWF, across the nation.



Dieter Althaus, first Minister of Thuringia, Anne Schierenberg, project coordinator of "Volunteers in Parks" and Dr. Eberhard Henne, Council Member of EUROPARC Germany pick the winners of the competitiong at the parlamentary evening. Picture: Alexa Brunet

Nationale Naturlandschaften





Cubs volunteering in Abruzzo, Lazio e Molise National Park Picture:

Federparchi - EUROPARC Italy

The new Italian Section "Federparchi – EUROPARC Italy" (FEI) came into being in the last 6 months, bringing 126 new members to the Federation.

Key activities July - December 08

The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism

Three Italian Parks were certified this year as new Charter Parks. In addition, Sibillini National Park has started the revision process to obtain the Charter renewal in 2010, and Abruzzo National Park and the Delta del Po Emilia-Romagna Regional Park will soon apply for Charter status.

In the second half of 08 the FEI have started to intensify the involvement of all the Italian Regions in the Charter with the aim to encouraging each region to promote the application of the Charter within their Protected Areas network.

Moreover, FEI have become partners in the initiation of a new international project, Interreg IVC, which is concerned with sustainable tourism and aims to improve the exchange of experiences and good practice examples between European protected areas.

Volunteers in Parks:

The application submitted to the Grundtvig Programme "Learning Partnership" at the beginning of 2008 was successful and the project "European Volunteers in Parks" began in August 08. Four Italian Parks are involved in the project. In November, FEI, together with EUROPARC Germany, organised the first international workshop, hosted by the Flusslandschaft Elbe Biosphere Reserve (DE). Next year 2 more workshops will take place, one in Italy (Abruzzo NP) and one in Latvia, as well as the first exchange of volunteers between the parks involved. More information about the project will be available on the web in 09.

Protected Areas and Slow Food

FEI is just about to sign an agreement with the organisation Slow Food Italy to mark the start of a new collaboration. The organisations will work together on the creation of a network of "Rural Communities" in parks; the protection and support of high quality agricultural products from within protected areas; introducing activities in protected areas concerned with 'taste education' aimed at school pupils; developing a new project for parks, which will train local producers and people working in the field of tourism to promote new bottom up initiatives on quality certification.



The year ahead

The most important fields of work for the Section, over the next 12 months, will be getting new protected areas involved in the Charter process; the management of the European Volunteers project and the organisation of the next international workshop in Italy (April 09); the development of activities together with Slow Food; and to further enhance the partnership with the French Federation of Regional Parks in order to encourage the involvement of French regional parks in the EUROPARC Federation.



Local produce of the Monti Sibillini National Park. Picture: Giorgio Tassi



Participants of the Nordic Baltic Seminar in Norway. Picture: EUROPARC

EUROPARC Nordic-Baltic

The EUROPARC Nordic-Baltic Section (NBS) was established in April 2003 to promote the aims and strategy of the EUROPARC Federation, to ensure good connections between the Federation and members in the north of Europe and to create good communication and initiate joint activities in this region.

Organisation and membership

The presidency of the NBS rotates every 3 years and is currently (from 2006 – 2008) with the Nature Protection Board of Latvia (NPB). Mr Rolands Auzins, director of the NPB, is the President and Miss Evelina Selander from Swedish Environmental Protection Agency coordinated the Section's activities in the second half of 2008.

At the end of 2008 the Section boasted 38 members in the following eight countries: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden. Membership of the Section is free of charge.

Key activities July - December 08

A seminar on "Local Participation in the Management of Protected Areas – "How Can Protected Areas Become a Resource to the Local Society?" was organised from 18 to 21 August 2008 in Dovrefjell-Sunndalsfjella National Park. The event was attended by 40 people from 9 countries.

The Section's Members Assembly took place in the framework of the EUROPARC Conference 2008 in Romania. It was attended by 24 people and included a report from the president of the Section about past three years and information about the latest EUROPARC Council activities from Mr. Rauno Vaisanen, who will no longer be a Council Member. Rolands Auzins, however, was elected at the conference to be a EUROPARC Council Member for the next three years.

The Sections president, its previous coordinator, Ms. Laura Jukame, it's current coordinator and Mr Thomas Hansson, who will become section president in 2009, met in Riga in November 08 to discuss different aspects of the Section's administration and future plans.

The Sections new website was launched in 2007 and has been maintained regularly since then. It contains basic information about the EUROPARC Federation and Nordic-Baltic Section; news from the Section and its members, including information about events, and a project partner search tool.

The year ahead

The biggest change in the Section in the next 12 months will be the change of presidency at the end of 2008: this will be handed over to the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) for the period 2009 – 2011. Mr Thomas Hansson was approved as president for this period by Section members this year and Evelina Selander will continue her post as coordinator. The SEPA will be responsible for initiating new projects and arranging any events next year.

The next Section meeting will take place in Stockholm, Sweden in February 2009.



Participants of the Nordic Baltic Seminar in Norway. Picture: EUROPARC Nordic-Baltic



EUROPARC España

blicaciones 1993-2008



Celebrating 15 years of EUROPARC Spain



EUROPARC Spain at the IUCN Conference in Barcelona

EUROPARC Spain

The Spanish Section of the EUROPARC Federation was founded in 1993. The Spanish Section is championed by the Foundation F.G. Bernáldez for Natural Areas. The Section is situated within the Foundation and is established on its statutes. The Spanish section is governed by a General Assembly and an elected Council.

There are currently 24 members who meet on a voluntary basis and fund and support the activities of the Section. It also has a Council, General Assembly, and a Technical Office.

7 employees run the Technical Office.

Key activities July - December 08

Work Plans

Several public and private foundations and many public administrations (Fundación BBVA, Fundación Biodiversidad, Fundación de las Cajas de Ahorros, la Obra Social de Caja Madrid) contributed to the funding and development of the annual work plan 2008.

In December 2008 the Section approved a work programme for Spanish protected areas for 2009 – 2013 as a contribution from EUROPARC-Spain to the Programme of work of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Projects, programmes and awards

The Section continued a project funded by the Fundacion Biodiversidad, aiming to improve access to information in protected areas as well as an initiative aiming to establish conservation standards for projects in protected areas.

It also continued supporting Spanish Charter Parks and had a key role in the development of the Charter Phase II by leading the elaboration of guidelines for tourism companies.

Moreover, EUROPARC Spain became a partner in the Grundtwig Programme "European Volunteers in Parks", initiated by EUROPARC Germany and supported the development of a Master's Course on Protected Areas in three Spanish Universities. Thanks go to the Fundacion de Cajas de Ahorro (FUNCAS) for awarding 10 500 euros to the project "Information points network of Delta del Ebro Nature Park" developed in the framework of the European Day of Parks.

In addition, EUROPARC Spain would like to show their gratitude to the Obra Social de Caja Madrid and CEAPAT-IMSERSO for their support and collaboration concerning the award to promote accessibility in protected areas. The first award of 20.000 euros, was given to the project "Nature for all" from the Andalucian network of protected areas.

Publications

Two new technical handbooks were published in 2008. Other publications edited in the period June-December 2008 were the Bulletin 26, a map of Spanish protected areas, the proceedings of the Annual Conference ESPARC 2008 and a CD for the 15th anniversary of EUROPARC Spain.

International events

Since July 2008 EUROPARC Spain have participated in the IUCN World Conference of Nature, Barcelona, October 2008; in the meeting organised by The Nature Conservancy "Water? What Water? Making Protected Areas Work for Freshwater Conservation"; and have visited the USA National Parks Service.

The year ahead

The main challenge for the Section in the next 12 months is the promotion and implementation of the "Programme of work for the Spanish protected areas 2009 -2013". The Section will be the main catalyser for all of the activities in the programme.

In addition, the Section will reinforce it's collaboration with the Spanish Ministry of the Environment on the Spanish database of protected areas as well as the Common Database on Designated Areas.

Moreover, the annual Section conference "ESPARC 2009" will take place in Cantabria from 10-14 June. The theme will be "Rural Development and Conservation". Further, Activities surrounding the European Day of Parks in Spain will be devoted to 100 years of national parks in Europe.

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Bowland AONB (UK). Picture: Charlie Hedley

EUROPARC Consulting

EUROPARC Consulting GmbH (www.europarc-consulting.org) is the consultancy arm of the EUROPARC Federation. The company specialises in the policy and practice of protected area management and is uniquely placed to provide advice, training and expertise. Members benefit from EUROPARC Consulting's expertise, which are offered at a competitive rate. Profits made by EUROPARC Consulting are invested back into the EUROPARC Federation.

Key activities July - December 2008

The work load since the beginning of 2008 has been increasing steadily for the business. Anne Webster now provides project support for the enterprise. The company is still seeking to increase its profile on an EU level and have sent in tenders for EU projects.

European Charter for Sustainable Tourism

EUROPARC Consulting is responsible for supporting and assisting Charter Candidates through their application process. In addition they manage the verification process to ensure its independence and objectivity. In total, 12 evaluations and one re-evaluation took place in 2008. The next verifier training seminar is planned for February 09 in Germany.

EUROPARC Atlantic Isle Seminars

These seminars are organised twice a year by EUROPARC Consulting and are proving increasingly successful. In 2008 we planned and organised two seminars in the UK, one in Cardiff ("Protected areas in the 21st century – what does the future hold?") in March and one recently in Belfast ("Making sustainable tourism a foundation of the rural economy").

Strangford Lough (Northern Ireland) - Report on future protected-area management structure(s)

This consensus-building project looked at managing this protected area in ways which achieve social, economic and environmental well-being and sustainable development..



Working with UK Government Agencies

Three UK agencies (Natural England/Scottish Natural Heritage/Countryside Council for Wales) have commissioned EUROPARC Consulting to carry out a review: the preparation of advice for coastal protected landscapes on addressing the connection between land and sea in planning and management processes. The project included the provision of a thorough report and our contribution in a workshop in Bristol (UK).

Conference support, EUROPARC Conference, Poiana Brasov (RO)

EUROPARC's consulting arm also provided the necessary seminar and workshop coordination and conference reporting for the conference organisers in Poiana Brasov in 08.

Protected Areas for a Living Planet (WWF Danube Carpathian Ecoregion programme)

Since early in 2007, EUROPARC and WWF have worked closely together on this capacity building and training programme

The work in 2008 consisted mainly of organising two seminars in Braţov (RO), one study tour in the UK, through three protected areas in the North of England, and a major training event for Training Champions ("training the trainers" in Slovakia).

Increasing number of small-scale projects

During 2008 EUROPARC Consulting carried out a number of small-scale projects. They included a four-day training course at Skopje University in Macedonia, a similar course in Banja Luka (BH), a journalistic assessment of a Northern Ireland AONB management plan and a workshop report for UK ANPA.

The year ahead

EUROPARC Consulting is successful in many countries where there are members of the EUROPARC Federation. However, the company has enough capacity now to double again its turnover and hope to continue increasing their workload in 09 as well as to extend their expertise to other countries.





Financial Report 2007*

BALANCE SHEET

	2007
AKTIVA	
Assets	
Total fixed assets	2 210,00
Total current assets	346 048,09
Total Assets	348 258,09
PASSIVA	
Profit Reserve	249 736,55
Liabilities	
Provisions	32 683,78
Accounts payable	65 837,76
Total Equity and Liability	348 258,09

NOTES

- * The financial report from 2008 will be available from April 09.
- *' The EUROPARC Federation represents the membership as a member of the World Conservation Union(IUCN), Federation of European and International Associations established in Belgium(FAIB), European Habitat Forum EHF.
- ** Personnel and travel costs related to these projects have been recorded in the overall personnel and travel costs of the EUROPARC Federation.

 Direct project costs relate to all other costs associated with these projects.
- *3 Youth and Education work includes Junior Ranger Network, Junior Ranger International Camp, Natu-Regio.

INCOME & EXPENSES STATEMENT

		2007
Income		
Membership fees		286 005,00
	non fee paying members	-14 609,49
Grants	EC core grant	118 609,00
	project grants	293 673,51
Other income		-3 965,81
Total Income		679 712,21
Expenditure		
Personnel costs		315 596,95
Office costs	grafenau	31 250,50
	brussels	4 928,43
Travel and Subsist	ence	
council travel		27 552,10
staff		27 552,10
others		35 044,96
Memberships		
IUCN, FAIB, EHF*1		986,01
Projects - Direct C	osts*²	
Transboundary Parks		4 562,40
TACIS		4 481.00
Project Developmen	t Task Force	0,00
Alfred Toepfer Schol		6 799,69
Youth and Education		39 176,23
Working for Nature		16 521,32
WWF Danube- Carpa	athian	13 615,75
Natura 2000		0,00
NNP Natura 2000 No	etworking Programme	73 256,21
Pupils experience na		3 388,90
CharterPark		13 309,32
Other costs		
Professional fees		10 228,05
Depreciation		2 366,92
Insurance		2 949,67
Total expenditure		633 566,51
Result		46 145,70

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Important EUROPARC Contacts*

The Council

President: Mrs Erika Stanciu

Mr Pio Forte erikas@zappmobile.ro Pio.Forte@unicreditgroup.eu

Council members:

Mr Rolands Auzins Rolands.auzins@dap.gov.lv

Mrs Marian Jager-Wöltgens majjager@hetnet.nl

Mr Juan del Nido Martin nidmarju@jcyl.es

Mr Gabor Szilagyi gabor@hnp.hu

Treasurer:

Auditor:

Mr David Cameron DavidCameron@cairngorms.co.uk

Dr. Eberhard Henne

monika.syhring@lua.brandenburg.de

Dr Valter Zago president@europarc.it

The EUROPARC Directorate

EUROPARC Headquarters:

Postfach 1153 94475 Grafenau Germany Tel: 0049 8552 96100 40 rue Washington 1050 Bruxelles Belgium Tel: 0032 2 6477340

Brussels Office:

office@europarc.org www.europarc.org

Director:

Miss Carol Ritchie c.ritchie@europarc.org

Project Manager:

Miss Diane Gallrapp d.galrapp@europarc.org

Office Manager:

Miss Sabine Schlögel s.schlögel@europarc.org Deputy Director:

Mr Richard Blackman r.blackman@europarc.org

Project Officers:

p.dippold@europarc.org

Communications Officer:

Miss Petra Dippold

Miss Morwenna Parkyn m.parkyn@europarc.org Mr Federico Minozzi f.minozzi@europarc.org

EUROPARC Sections

Atlantic Isles:

Mr Dan Bloomfield dan.bloomfield@europarc-ai.org www.europarc-ai.org

Federparchi - EUROPARC Italy:

Ms Stefania Petrosillo segreteria@europarc.it www.europarc.it

Czech Republic:

Mr Handrij Härtel handrij@seznam.cz www.europarc.cz

EUROPARC Nordic-Baltic:

Miss Evelina Selander evelina.selander@naturvardsverket.se www.europarc-nb.org

EUROPARC Germany

Mr Axel Tscherniak info@europarc-deutschland.de www.europarc-deutschland.de

EUROPARC Spain

Mrs Marta Mugica oficina@europarc-es.org www.europarc-es.org

EUROPARC Consulting

Mr Wilf Fenten

w.fenten @ europarc.org www.europarc-consulting.org

*Please note that these are the contacts of the EUROPARC Federation as of January 09.



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