



EUROPARC Annual Report

June 2007 - 2008



EUROPARC
F E D E R A T I O N

EUROPA

A large, light purple circular graphic containing a stylized map of Europe. The word "EUROPA" is written in a large, light purple, sans-serif font across the top of the circle. The map shows the outlines of the European continent and surrounding islands.

EUROPARC is the umbrella organisation of Europe's protected areas. It unites national parks, regional parks, nature parks and biosphere reserves in 38 countries, with the common aim of protecting Europe's unique variety of wildlife, habitats and landscapes.

*Cover photo:
Eddrachilles Bay, Assynt - Coigach, National Scenic Area, Scotland
Picture: Carol Ritchie*



Picture:
EUROPARC

Content

Notes from the President	2
Deputy Director's report: A Year of Transition	3
The Directorate Report	6
Communications	7
European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas	10
Junior Ranger Network	12
NatuRegio	13
Natura 2000 Networking Programme	14
Pupils experiencing Nature	15
Working for Nature - Nature for Working	16
Wilderness in the European Union	18
Governance Review	19
Alfred Toepfer Scholarship and Award	20
Section Reports	21
Introduction	21
The Atlantic Isles Section	22
The Czech Section	24
The German Section	26
The Italian Section	28
The Nordic Baltic Section	30
The Spanish Section	32
Financial Report	34
EUROPARC Contacts	36

Notes from the President

Erika Stanciu
Picture:
A. Beckmann



Last year I left the General Assembly in Český Krumlov knowing that 2007-8 would be twelve challenging months for the Council, for myself, for the Federation as a whole.

Despite the intensity of the changes, many projects, many activities continued or were initiated by the Federation. You can learn about these from the annual report.

The Council looked in a more systematic way to the changes we would need as an organisation. The EUROPARC Federation has grown a lot over the years and is operating in a socio-economic context that brings major challenges to nature conservation and protected areas. We initiated the governance review, agreed on the principles we need as a fundament for our organization and reflected those in the proposal to change the Statutes. We therefore commend to you, new Statutes, that the Council believe should be the framework for a more efficient and flexible Federation. We have learned through the governance review that this is an ongoing process and we should have an organisation that allows for this continuous review if we want to remain a relevant and productive federation.

Towards the end of this year a new director, Carol Ritchie has taken up the baton that was carried for many years by Eva Pongratz. The Directorate, is now in a full process of developing new processes and standards that should help them in the future to be the powerful engine that the Federation needs. All Members and the Sections are kindly invited to give

their full support and a helping hand to the small team.

Our organisation has witnessed a major growth in membership in this last year. EUROPARC Italy and Federparchi have joined efforts and merged the two organizations. As a result, in June 2008 Federparchi became the Italian Section of EUROPARC and brought on board over 120 new members. We are pleased to welcome them to the Federation. A new post will be created within the Directorate with the contribution of the new Italian members for the benefit of the Federation, but also to ensure a good contact with the Italian and Southern Europe constituency.

I do believe that this year was a seminal year for the future of the Federation, opening up new opportunities for the network of more than 500 EUROPARC Members. I appreciate your continued support and look forward to your participation and your expertise across the range of work the EUROPARC Federation is planning throughout 2008-9.

Yours

Erika Stanciu

Erika Stanciu



Richard Blackman
Picture: EUROPARC

Deputy Director's Report: A Year of Transition

When the history of the EUROPARC Federation comes to be written, the business year 2007-08 will be one where much attention will be focused. It was an eventful year and the discussions that took place were at times difficult. However, the year also saw a number of important advances in EUROPARC's work.

Debating the future

It is clear that the EUROPARC network is making a valuable contribution to nature conservation and protected area management in Europe as well as to environmental governance internationally.

Intensive and substantial discussions took place during the year on the future direction, effectiveness and role of EUROPARC. These were a response to two factors:

- Proposal to relocate the EUROPARC head office to Raixa, Palma de Mallorca, Spain.
- Revision of the EUROPARC Federation strategy and work programme.

Taking practical steps for the future: a governance review

The difficult nature of the discussions reflected the need to analyse the governance of the Federation. A governance review was therefore initiated by the Council examining the roles and functions of the EUROPARC Federation's constituent parts. Led by Roger de Freitas, an

expert in governance and environmental issues, the review has paved the way for changes, which should lead to greater maturity and effectiveness as an organisation. Significantly, the review included clarifying the role of the Council and President as well as the role of the Director(ate) in relation to the Council. These points are reflected in the proposed statute changes that are before the 2008 EUROPARC General Assembly in Poiana Brasov. A summary report of the governance review can be found on the EUROPARC website.

Changes at the Directorate

EUROPARC's longstanding Director Eva Pongratz left the Federation after 21 years at the end of November 2007. Our thanks go to her for all her hard work over the years as do our best wishes for her future endeavours.

A new Director, Carol Ritchie, was appointed at the beginning of June 2008. Carol joined EUROPARC from the Pentland Hills Regional Park in Scotland.

EUROPARC's Communications Officer Sindy Bublitz also left the organisation in the autumn of 2007 to be replaced by Morwenna Parkyn in March 2008.

Revising the strategy

A new five year strategy was produced in a participative process with the EUROPARC

membership in the course of 2007 for the period 2008-12. A new rolling work programme was also produced to implement the strategy. Both recognise the importance of the EUROPARC Sections in contributing to and delivering the work programme at European level.

EUROPARC's mission is to be the leading European organisation for protected areas bringing together dedicated professionals, government agencies, decision makers and supporters to increase effectiveness in conserving and enhancing natural and cultural heritage on land and sea for the well-being and benefit of current and future generations.

Whilst the discussions on the future of the Federation took up a considerable amount of energy, the hard work of EUROPARC staff, sections and members ensured that considerable progress was made in the current work programme.

Networking protected areas across Europe

Sharing and developing best practice in the management of protected areas for the benefit of Europe's habitats, species and landscapes continued to be at the heart of much of EUROPARC's work in 2007-08. Its practitioner and expert protected area networks grew and developed in the business year. Much of this work is described in more detail later in this report, but a number of areas stand out:

EUROPARC 2007

The 2007 EUROPARC annual conference, which was held for the first time in the Czech Republic in September on the theme of 'Nature - Bridging Borders' brought together more than 300 protected area experts from some 25 countries. It was a focal point for the year's work programme and provided an excellent context for EUROPARC's continuing work on transboundary cooperation and the 'Following Nature's Design' initiative.

European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas

The network of certified Charter Parks expanded to 46 in 2007. The value of the network was highlighted through its development of the second part of the Charter relating to the integration of tourism enterprises in protected areas. A flexible pan-European approach is now in place and first results will be evaluated in the course of this year.

Natura 2000

The Natura Networking Programme (NNP) ran throughout 2007 and concluded early in 2008. Organised in partnership with Eurosite and the European Landowners Organisation the NNP brought together diverse groups of people for the cause of nature conservation and the improved implementation of the EU Birds and Habitats Directives.

Environmental Education

The number of parks across Europe running junior ranger programmes grew this year and EUROPARC was also able to provide training to rangers in the organisation of junior ranger programmes and activities. As a means of building support for protected areas the importance and benefits of junior ranger schemes should not be underestimated.

EUROPARC continued its active participation in the project NatuRegio: Nature Conservation and Regional Development in South East Europe. This project has succeeded in a very comprehensive way in providing training to younger nature conservationists in Romania and Bulgaria as well as funding and supporting trainees' own projects.

The Working for Nature project, seeking to match young European nature conservationists looking for work experience with European protected areas looking for support, has created an online internship exchange. We were very pleased when the project was recognised by the national

committee in Germany as an official project of the UN Decade for Education for Sustainable Development for the period 2008/09.

Protected area management effectiveness

EUROPARC's new strategy has focused attention on several fields of work directly related to the management of protected areas and the need to share and develop expertise. The first of these topics was tackled at a seminar in April 2008 on the Island of Vilm on 'Management effectiveness and quality criteria in European protected areas – analysing and improving evaluation systems'. There is a lot happening across Europe and this was the first time that all the schemes in operation had been analysed together.

Overcoming the gap between the land and the sea

EUROPARC's coastal and marine working group also met in April 2008 to examine the issues facing coastal protected areas in Europe, and in particular how terrestrial coastal protected areas relate to the sea and how inshore marine areas relate to the land.

Connecting practice and policy

To connect its experience in the practice of nature conservation and related fields on the ground in its member protected areas to the policy networks in the European Union EUROPARC began to develop its presence in Brussels. This will help to ensure that its membership in protected areas across Europe is better connected to developments at EU level and to facilitate their input into European policy development. Plans are being developed with Eurosite to open a joint office in the EU capital.

Wilderness in the European Union

In September 2007 EUROPARC held a round table workshop on wilderness in the European Union bringing together experts from the EUROPARC network with senior representatives of the European Commission and partner NGOs, including PAN Parks. The meeting served as a prelude to a wider campaign as part of the Wild

Europe Initiative. EUROPARC members are currently signing up to a resolution drafted after the round table in partnership with other nature conservation organisations grouped together in the Wild Europe Initiative. This will help support the case for promoting the importance of wilderness in the European Union.

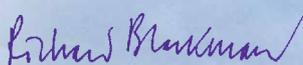
Looking ahead

2008 is the first year of the implementation of the new strategy. EUROPARC will continue to build on its established strengths and fields of work whilst opening up new areas of work in response to challenges faced by protected areas across Europe.

In September 2008 the EUROPARC Federation meets for its annual conference in Poiana Brasov, Romania. This year's event will see a number of changes in the conference format, notably through the introduction of training seminars in addition to workshops, and with a greater amount of time for professional development and exchange of expertise.

Each year EUROPARC celebrates the European Day of Parks on 24th May to celebrate the anniversary of the establishment of the first national parks in Europe. 2009 marks the 100th anniversary of Europe's first national parks and the EUROPARC network will gather in Sweden in September 2009 to mark this momentous occasion.

As an organisation EUROPARC will evolve and mature as changes in governance are introduced and new ways of operating take hold. It will still be a challenge for EUROPARC's small team of professionals to meet all the expectations of such a large organisation, but its dedication and commitment will go a long way to making our common European goals a reality.


Richard Blackmann

The Directorate Report



Directorate team, Picture: EUROPARC

The Directorate of the EUROPARC Federation is the engine of the organisation.

With a small team of 6 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. Despite huge organisational changes this year, the work carried out during 2007-8 by the team is summarised below.

Communications

The EUROPARC strategy states that 'effective communications will be required to ensure internal communication, visibility and the support needed to achieve EUROPARC's objectives and to support the ability to influence policy makers'. Good and regular communication, internal and external, is implicit to the success of the EUROPARC Federation. To that end the EUROPARC Federation appointed a communications officer in March 2008, who along with the new Director will take forward a communications strategy.

Highlights in the Federations communication during 2007/8 included a new design for the EUROPARC website and the annual report. Other EUROPARC publications, such as the European Bulletin, will also be made over towards the end of 2008.

Internal Communication

Internal emailing

Email is the fastest and most cost effective means of communicating within the Federation. The EUROPARC office email address alone receives around 150 emails enquiries from members per month.

Equally as important are outgoing mails. Around 40 news emails were sent from the Directorate to members in the last year. This is in addition to the volumes of communication undertaken by individual staff members.

The annual EUROPARC Conference

Last years conference, in Český Krumlov, Czech Republic was hosted by the Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic and EUROPARC Czech Republic and approximately

300 delegates from 24 countries participated in events surrounding the conference theme 'Nature - Bridging Borders'. Our thanks to them for a stimulating and successful conference.

In addition, the new EUROPARC strategy and work programme was approved by members at the annual General Assembly where it was decided that a governance review of the organisation's structure and functions should be carried out. A summary of that review is available on the EUROPARC website.

For those who wish to gain an insight into EUROPARC's annual conferences, those who want to refresh their memories and those who want to see what they missed, the website www.europarc2007.org is worth a visit.

EUROPARC's 39th annual conference, EUROPARC 2008, will be held in Poiana Brasov, Brasov, Romania, from 24 - 27 September. EUROPARC's Directorate have provided support and assistance to our Romanian colleagues. Information is available at www.europarc2008.com.

The preparations for EUROPARC 2009 in Kosterhaven National Park near Strömstad, Sweden also got under way this year. Hosted by Sweden's own centenary national park, the conference will take place from 9 to 13 September 2009.

Publications

During 2008 two newsletters were produced and emailed to members and partners. The EUROPARC Bulletin - Nature and National Parks' was produced with 1490 copies posted around the world.

Council meetings

The EUROPARC Council met on 4 occasions, in Germany, the Czech Republic, Spain and the Netherlands, during 2007-8 and communicated regularly via email and skype.



In addition, from June this year the Directorate staff, in Grafenau and in Brussels, meet 'electronically' weekly to exchange information and discuss important issues that arise.

External communication

The EUROPARC internet site

With the new appointment of the communications officer in March the EUROPARC website www.europarc.org has been maintained weekly. This involves a regular update of the calendar and news sections with events and information and ensuring that the members list remains current.

A new website design is in production thanks to generous financial contribution from the Alfred Toepfer Foundation and the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (Bundesamt für Naturschutz) and will be presented

at the EUROPARC Conference in September.

The European Day of Parks 2008

The European Day of Parks was launched by the EUROPARC Federation with the aim of raising the profile of Europe's protected areas and generating public support for their aims and work. Events have been celebrated across Europe since 1999 on an annual basis on and around 24 May. In 2008 over 600 events were organised in around 20 countries across Europe.

External emailing

The EUROPARC office email is an important enquiry portal receiving around 200 external enquiries per month.

Presence at trade fairs and other events

EUROPARC represented its member's interests at the following events over the last 12 months:

EUROPARC Federation Event Representation 2007-8

26 - 30 Sep	EUROPARC Conference	Český Krumlov (CZ)
03 Oct 07	Conference: Birdlife International's vision for the future of the EU Common Agricultural Policy	Brussels (B)
24 Oct 07	Meeting of the European Habitats Forum	Brussels (B)
20 - 22 Nov 07	Junior Ranger Trainers Training	Laufen (D)
28 Nov 07	Final conference of the Natura 2000 Networking Programme	Brussels (B)
11 - 12 Feb 08	Meeting of NatuRegio project partners and jury	Schneverdingen (D)
13 - 17 Feb 08	Annual Meeting of the Iberian Charter Network	Cazorla (E)
17 - 20 Feb 08	Reisepavillon 2008 – The international alternative travel fair	Stuttgart (D)
6 - 9 March 08	International Tourism Market (ITB) trade fair	Berlin (D)
27 - 28 March 08	Seminar: Protected areas in the 21 st century – what does the future hold?	Cardiff (UK)
27 - 30 March 08	Feria Andaluza de Turismo y Desarrollo Rural (FERANTUR trade fair)	Sevilla (E)
19 - 24 April 08	NatuRegio: End seminar for second year trainees	Sofia, Bulgaria
20 - 23 April	Workshop: Management effectiveness and quality criteria in European Protected Areas	Insel Vilm (DE)
20 - 21 April 08	Meeting of the EUROPARC Coastal Working Group	Haarlem (NL)
16 May 08	NRDC-IEEP workshop on Meeting the Targets of Marine Protected Areas Networks	Brussels (B)
27 - 30 May 08	EUROPARC Nordic-Baltic Seminar: Public Health and Experience of Nature	Maribo Nature Park (DEN)
26 - 30 May 08	COP 9 (Convention of the Parties)	Bonn (D)
3 - 6 June 08	European Charter Network Meeting	Alpi Marittime Nature Park (IT) Mercantour National Park (FR)
30 June 08	Meeting of the European Habitats Forum	Brussels (B)

Relations with other organisations

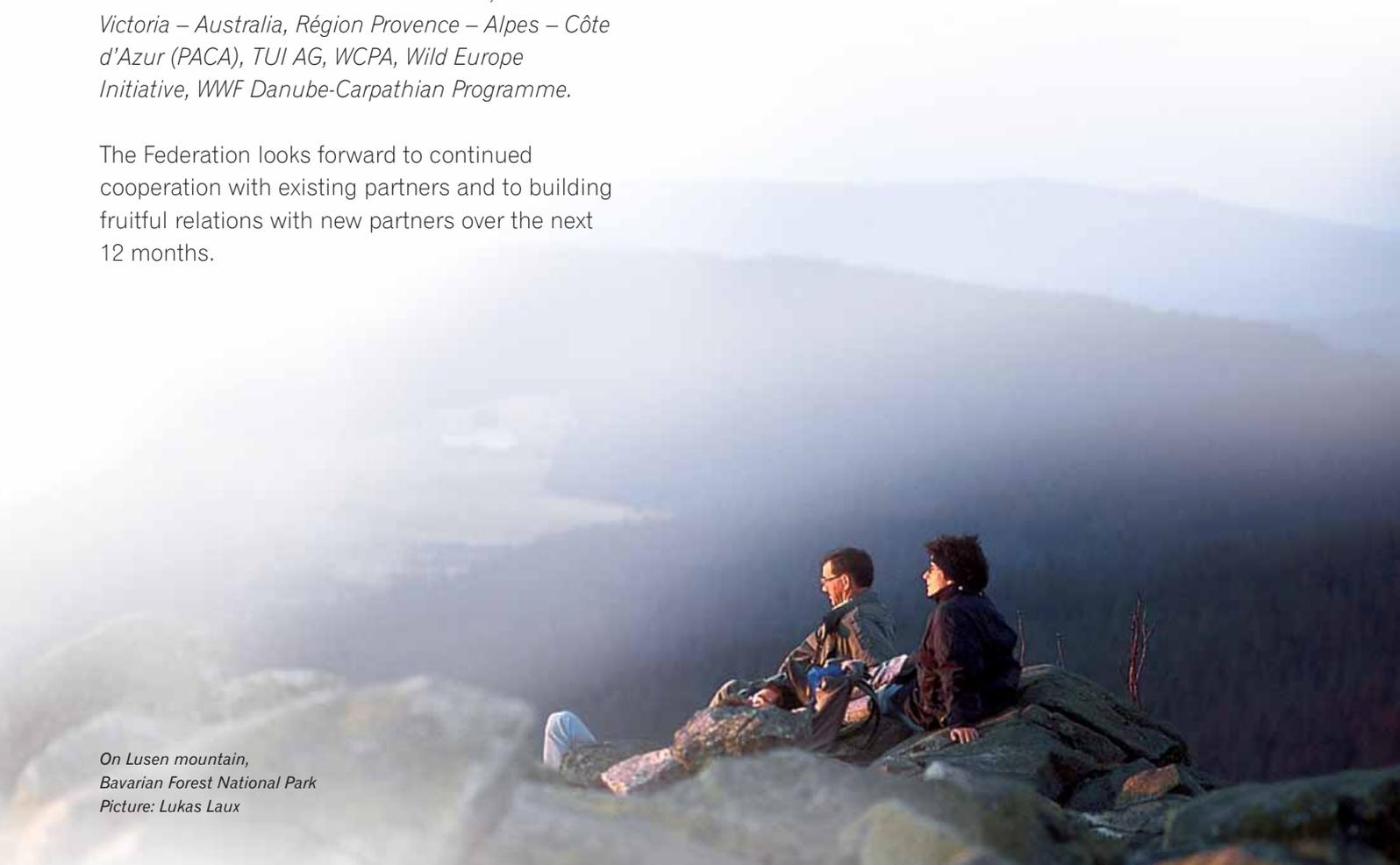
Over the last year EUROPARC has enjoyed partnerships with the following organisations:

Alfred Toepfer Akademie für Naturschutz (NNA), Alfred Toepfer Stiftung, Bayerische Akademie für Naturschutz und Landschaftspflege, Bayerisches Staatsministerium für Umwelt, Gesundheit und Verbraucherschutz (Bavarian State Ministry for the Environment, Health and Consumer Protection), Bundesamt für Naturschutz (Federal Agency for Nature Conservation), CBD Sekretariat – Department of Social, Economic & Legal Matters, Countdown 2010, Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt (DBU) (Federal German Environment Foundation), Euronatur, European Commission – DG Environment, European Commission - DG Enterprise, European Habitats Forum (EHF), European Landowners' Organisation (ELO), Eurosite, Federation of International Associations in Belgium (FAIB), Klagenfurt University - Austria, IUCN, Lebensministerium (Austrian Environment Ministry), PAN GmbH, PAN Parks Foundation, Parks Forum – Australia & New Zealand, Parks Victoria – Australia, Région Provence – Alpes – Côte d'Azur (PACA), TUI AG, WCPA, Wild Europe Initiative, WWF Danube-Carpathian Programme.

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. The new internet site will be online within the next few months and in due course the Federations' publications will also be examined and improved. A major target for 2009 is to develop a communication strategy for the Federation and furthermore, with the changes in the Directorate, the headquarters also intends to work more closely with members and sections to improve communication within the network.



*On Lusen mountain,
Bavarian Forest National Park
Picture: Lukas Laux*

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.



European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas

Activities 2007/2008

New evaluations and re-evaluations

23 new evaluations took place during 2007-8 bringing the total Charter protected areas to 58 in 7 countries. 1 protected area was re-evaluated and a further five Charter protected areas applications for re-evaluation are in progress.

Charter Part II – Working with tourism businesses

The implementation of the Charter Part II has commenced. Methodologies from Spain, the Atlantic Isles and France have been validated. These ensure standardisation in the implementation of the Charter across Europe and compliance with the principles of Part II.

The Working Group Charter Part II has provided a model European Charter Partnership Agreement and Partnership Certificate for Charter protected areas. 16 Charter protected areas have already started implementing Charter Part II.

European Charter Net

The aim of the EUROPARC project 'European CharterNet' is to strengthen and further develop the European Charter and the Charter Network through specific activities and communication methods.

The project started in July 2007 with the support of the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) and with funds from the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety. It will run until July 2009 and is coordinated by the EUROPARC Federation.



A project working group was set up composed of representatives involved with Charter and external experts. The group met three times in the last year.

This group produced an analysis of the CBD Guidelines for Biodiversity and Tourism



Joining Forces Brochure

Development and the European Charter. It demonstrated that the European Charter is an excellent tool for implementing the CBD Guidelines on a local/protected area level. The results were compiled in the brochure 'Joining Forces'.

Marketing and Communication

The Marketing & Communication Work Group agreed its organisational and operational structure. Further, a brochure and exhibition were produced in



Picture:
EUROPARC Spain

English, German and French and launched at the Reisepavillon 2008, in Stuttgart. In addition, a bi-annual Charter Newsletter was published and 8 Charter news emails were sent out to Charter parks in the last 12 months.

Networking

EUROPARC was present at the Expo of Diversity at the COP9 in Bonn in May this year, where the European Charter was presented at the BfN-Forum on Tourism and Biodiversity.

The first transboundary annual meeting of the European Charter Network was hosted by Alpi Martime Nature Park, Italy and Mercantour National Park, France. More than 70 people from across Europe participated in the meeting.

In addition, one side-meeting took place at the EUROPARC Conference 2007; and two network meetings were held in the last 12 months.

Success and Challenges

During the 2007/2008 business year the network was strengthened and further developed through different activities; regular information exchange took place between EUROPARC and the Charter Network; new network contacts were established; and the Charter achieved a higher profile at a regional, national and international level.

The implementation of Charter Part II started well and has already created a European network of

small tourism businesses. The exchange of expertise and experience on the implementation of Part II is crucial for its continued successful development.

The European Charter has now reached a 'critical mass' in terms of the numbers of participating protected areas. It is, therefore, now especially important to maintain the momentum of last years' activities and to define a long-term strategy for the European Charter.

The year ahead

At least 14 protected areas are likely to join the Charter Network in 2009 and more are interested in the programme. An information event in Brussels for decision makers and associations is planned. A partnership between 2 German and 2 Central/Eastern Europe Charter protected areas will be established in an effort to extend the eastern range of the Charter Network.

The Evaluation Committee will continue to update the Guidelines for Charter Candidates and the Charter Part II will be developed further.

INTERREG IV project proposals are under consideration.

The on-going communication activities will also continue in 2009 and the Charter website, www.european-charter.org, will be reviewed and updated.

The Free State of Bavaria (D) and the Bavarian Academy for Nature Protection and Landscape Conservation supported EUROPARC's Junior Ranger activities in 2007/2008 financially, enabling the Federation to gain and fund 5 new junior ranger network partners; arrange a trainers' training event; and to organise a workshop for Junior Rangers and rangers at the EUROPARC Conference in 2007.



EUROPARC Junior Ranger Network 2007 and 2008

Activities 2007/2008

The 6th International EUROPARC Junior Ranger Camp 2007

The '6th International EUROPARC Junior Ranger Camp 2007' was held in the Neusiedler See – Seewinkel National Park (A) in July 2007, thanks to a grant from the Austrian Federal Ministry for Agriculture and Forestry, Environment and Water Management, 5 – 10 July 2007. EUROPARC organised the event together with the national park.

The 7th International EUROPARC Junior Ranger Camp in the Cairngorms, Scotland

The 7th International EUROPARC Junior Ranger camp will be hosted by the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA), Scotland in August 2008. The programme and the event were planned by the CNPA in co-operation with EUROPARC. There will be 10 delegations from 7 countries at the event enjoying both the exciting programme and the impressive beauty of the Cairngorms National Park.

Success and challenges

Funding continues to be a principal challenge in implementing the 2007 EUROPARC Junior Ranger Network activities. However, all activities were carried out. A success was gaining 8 new active network members.

The year ahead

Two protected areas, the Mendip Hills AONB (UK) and the Aiguamolls Nature Park (ES), are planning to organise international Junior Ranger Camps in 2009.



Junior Rangers
Picture: EUROPARC



The project 'NatuRegio - Nature conservation and regional development in South-East Europe' selects 10 young professionals, from the field of nature conservation in Romania and Bulgaria to go through a focused training scheme over the course of one year. These professionals then each develop and implement one project in the field of nature conservation and regional development in Romania and Bulgaria. After a successful pilot year the NatuRegio project was granted funding for another three years. The project is now in its second 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.



NatuRegio – Trainees for Nature in Bulgaria and Romania

Project year 2007/08

The 2007/08 project year started in July 2007 with the selection of five trainees from Romania and five from Bulgaria. Between August 2007 and April 2008 the trainees benefited from an induction into the project; a language course; a study tour in Germany; two seminars on current nature conservation themes in Bulgaria and Romania; and two placements in a German protected area or nature conservation institution for a total of three months.

The trainees developed a project proposal on a theme of their choice in the course of the year and in February all project proposals were evaluated by a jury. The participants were then awarded between 3.000 and 15.000 EUR, depending on the number of points their project ideas were given. All trainees will have implemented their projects by August 2008.



Group photo of the 07/08 NatuRegio trainees, Picture: EUROPARC

The year ahead

The project year 2008/09 started in May with the selection of trainees for the next running year. This year more applicants than usual submitted an application due to an increased promotion of the traineeships. Project partners are currently trying to find suitable placements for the trainees' in Germany.

Further information on NatuRegio can be found at www.naturegio-bg-ro.de

Between 2004 and 2006 EUROPARC, Eurosite and the European Landowners' Organisation (ELO) worked together to implement the Natura Network Initiative (NNi), which aimed at increasing the awareness of site managers and the general public about the Natura 2000 network. The same partners were contracted to fulfil services concerning the 'Natura 2000 Networking Programme' (NNP) on behalf of the European Commission, DG Environment, from January 2007 until January 2008. One of the core aims was to enhance practitioners' Natura 2000 site management skills.



Natura 2000 Networking Programme



*Slovenian training participants experiencing Natura 2000 in Radensko polje.
Picture: Martin Šolar*

Activities 2007/2008

The NNP focused on communication, capacity building and the value of working in partnership. They created a series of 15 training events, themed workshops and practical tools which promoted Natura 2000, good practice in site management and the benefits of European networking.

Thirty Natura 2000 ambassadors were selected from the networks of the project partners' and the programme began with a 'train the trainers' event in May 2007. Here the 30 ambassadors developed action plans for a programme of events at EU member state level.

In addition, the Ambassadors were involved in the organisation and facilitation of five different training events within the EUROPARC network, which reached over 350 individuals.

The NNP closed with a final conference in Brussels in November 2007, where the results of the project (almost 900 trained individuals) were presented to Commission representatives. Further provision of funding for the communication of Natura 2000 issues through a service contract like the NNP was, however, not envisaged.

Successes and challenges

A big challenge where the NNP was concerned was the management of an intense project over 13 months. One of the most important successes was the fact that the NNP brought stakeholders together from different backgrounds to exchange views in an informed debate. Further, many participants changed their perceptions of Natura 2000, which is often considered too technocratic.

*The conference 'Natura 2000 and Tourism',
Picture: EUROPARC*



On the 25th anniversary of Berchtesgaden National Park (D) the former First Minister of the Free State of Bavaria, Dr Edmund Stoiber, stated that all pupils should visit a national park at least once during school. 'Pupils experience nature in protected areas', proposed by the EUROPARC Federation and the PAN GmbH, was born from this suggestion. It aimed at optimising the information and school trip packages offered to schools in Bavaria from protected areas in Bavaria, Austria, Slovenia and the Czech Republic. The project was funded by the Bavarian State Ministry of Environment, Health and Consumer Protection.



Pupils experience nature in European protected areas

Project development 2007/2009

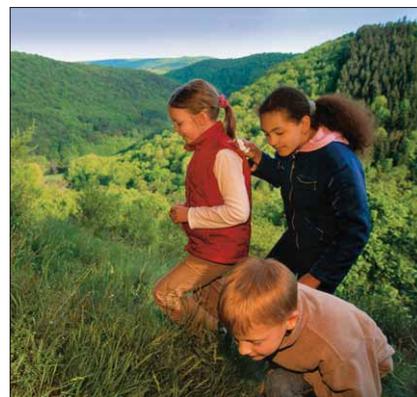
Project implementation for 'Pupils experience nature in European protected areas' started in April 2007. EUROPARC organised transboundary school trips to protected areas with the aim of promoting protected areas as school trip destinations as an alternative to usual destinations such as Rome, Paris, etc. PAN developed an internet portal, www.umweltbildungsangebote.pan-gmbh.com, to promote the environmental education packages more widely.

Several thousands schools in Bavaria were invited to apply for one of ten school trips into 5 transboundary protected areas: Bavarian Forest National Park (D) / Šumava National Park (CZ), Berchtesgaden National Park (D) / Weißbach Nature Park (A), Hohe Tauern National Park (Salzburg and Tyrol), Thayatal National Park (A) / Podyjí National Park (CZ), Krkonoše National Park (CZ) / Karkonosze National Park (PL).

Despite the continuous promotion of the project the interest of schools remained low and only four school classes applied. Subsequently, the Bavarian Ministry has decided not to repeat the project in 2008/2009 and the planned evaluation will not be carried out. The four school groups who did apply were, however, given the opportunity to go on the trips. If enough interest is shown from other schools in taking a school trip in protected areas it might be worthwhile finding out whether parks could continue to offer the programmes.



Pupils experiencing nature brochure



Children experiencing nature in the Thayatal National Park in Austria.

Picture: B. Krobath

Working for Nature
interns and
mentors at the
Bavarian Forest
Nature Park,
October 2007.
Picture:
EUROPARC



Working for Nature – Nature for Working

Activities 2007/2008

Internship platform

Through the development and promotion of an on-line internship exchange at www.workingfornature.org EUROPARC wants to make existing placement offers more easily accessible and encourage their creation.

After going on-line in December 2007 the website went through a considerable revision in summer 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 constant promotion of the platform. Despite this hard work the number of internships advertised still needs to be increased if the platform is to be a success.

Pilot placements

In addition to the internship website, pilot internships have been funded by EUROPARC. Participating host parks were selected in 2006/2007, last year the 12 internships were selected and advertised and 12 interns chosen for them. This part of the project officially started with an induction seminar for the interns and mentors in October 2007 in the Bavarian Forest Nature Park.

In their placements the interns will support their host park, work on projects for 3 months, and promote the idea behind Working for Nature. Interns are already reporting on their expectations and experiences on the Working for Nature blog at www.workingfornature.org. The first feedback is very positive and participation in the Working for Nature scheme seems to be highly valued as a unique personal and professional opportunity. A project evaluation seminar for interns and their mentors is planned for October 2008.



The project Working for Nature - Nature for Working (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. To this end, the project focuses on communication and internship offers. The German Federal Environmental Foundation (DBU) has funded the project from December 2006 to November 2008.

The year ahead

The aim of WFN can only be achieved in the long run if host parks are offered financial incentives over a longer period of time. EUROPARC has had a proposition for a partnership with the Leonardo da Vinci programme, which will make it possible for EUROPARC to provide grants to students wanting to complete a WFN internship. Further ways of realising this co-operation are currently being looked into.

EUROPARC is also following-up possibilities to establish WFN within a network of like-minded partners and is for this reason taking part in the steering committee of 'Jobs for nature/La nature pour metier', an event coordinated by the French organisation *Atelier technique des espaces naturels* (ATEN) and taking place in Lyon (F) in November 2008. The forum strives to gather players involved in the management of natural areas in Europe, to create professional alliances and to initiate or expand their current networking activities.



*Nuria Otmani del Barrio intern
at Peneda Gerês National Park in Portugal,
Picture: Nuria Otmani*



Pentlands Hills
Regional Park
Picture:
Dominic Twist

Wilderness in the European Union

EUROPARC members' vital role

Within its pan-European membership, EUROPARC has many national park core zones and natural ecosystems. In addition to the intrinsic value of wilderness as natural habitats and for biodiversity, these areas also offer wider environmental, social, economic and cultural benefits. The protection of wilderness areas and the promotion of their value are therefore 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.

Bringing experts together

EUROPARC hosted a round table meeting on the subject of 'Wilderness in the European Union' in Český Krumlov, Czech Republic. The meeting brought together key European experts – representatives of the European Commission, the EUROPARC Federation, PAN Parks, the Wild Europe Initiative and IUCN – to examine the concept of wilderness in the European Union, particularly in the context of the Natura 2000 network. The wider aim was to place wilderness on the European agenda, find ways of promoting its

importance and to draw up guidance for the stewardship of wilderness. Consequently EUROPARC Federation and PAN Parks Foundation joined forces with other organisations in the Wild Europe Initiative in the publication of a Resolution on Wilderness Areas. Addressed to the European Commission and the EU member states, the resolution emphasises the importance of protecting Europe's last remaining wilderness areas, many of which are threatened by inappropriately located logging and development. It also calls on the European Commission to develop appropriate recommendations that provide guidance to the member states of the EU on the best approaches for ensuring the protection of present and potential wilderness or wildland and their natural processes. This would make an important contribution to halting the loss of biodiversity.

Building support

Over the summer of 2008 further advocacy work will be carried out in Brussels in partnership with the Wild Europe initiative, drawing on the support of all the networks involved, and to generate momentum in the European institutions for promoting wild lands. A workshop will be held in Brasov during EUROPARC 2008 in September to analyse in more depth the issues arising from the resolution and to plan for a major conference of the Wild Europe Initiative in 2009.



Governance Review

At the General Assembly in September 2007 it was agreed that the organisation should commission a review of the effectiveness of its long-standing model of corporate governance.

The President and other council members invited Roger de Freitas, a London-based adviser with experience of working on governance with voluntary organisations within the environmental sector, to become the guide of the review process. The results of such an overview would be used to improve the performance of the council and other constituent parts of the EUROPARC Federation.

Early in 2008 Roger visited council members and sections, and met staff, to see the organisation at work. At a joint meeting of the council and sections in Barcelona, he worked with the whole group in a morning-long session, to examine how closely the federation matched the clear standards of good governance that have been established for NGOs. Some areas for concern were identified.

As a result of this workshop, council took steps to make necessary changes and improvements to the way it worked.

At its April meeting, the process was carried further with a discussion which allowed council to reflect on its own performance and how it functioned as a team. Members were able to recognise what worked well within the organisation, and within council, and identify areas that needed some attention, both immediately and also into the longer term.

Many of these considerations are reflected in the changes proposed in the statutes by the Council, and aim to provide the EUROPARC Federation with modern, responsive, mature and transparent governance. By so doing it seeks to provide a new platform upon which the EUROPARC Federation can build, to take forward its mission as an advocate on behalf of protected areas of Europe.





The three successful candidates being awarded their Scholarships in 2007, Picture: Radek Drahný

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.

Alfred Toepfer Natural Heritage Scholarships 2007/2008

In 2007, the EUROPARC Federation awarded three Scholarships at the EUROPARC conference in Český Krumlov. The awards were presented to Kveta Cernohlavkova from the Czech Republic, Andrzej Ginalski from Poland and Stephan Krasser from Austria.

Květa completed her studies in biology and education in 2007 and wants to develop a methodology for the Junior Ranger Programme for her scholarship. She will take a tour of protected areas in Germany, Great Britain, Slovakia and Slovenia to learn about different ways of implementing Junior Ranger activities.

Andrzej is doing a Ph.D. in Geography and has worked as a voluntary board member of the 'Society for Nature and Man'. His plan is to visit different national parks in England, Scotland and Wales to collect data for a comparison of Great Britains nature conservation systems with those in Poland and the Czech Republic.

Stephan has a background in biology and is a professional photo designer. He wants to visit conservation areas and observe them objectively by taking pictures according to scientific selection criteria.

Meanwhile the selection process for the 2008 scholarships is underway; the winners will be announced at the EUROPARC Conference in Romania in September. The scholarship reports from the 2006 winners can be viewed at www.europarc.org.

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 2007 the winner of the Medal was Dr. Jan Čerovský from the Czech Republic for 'outstanding services to the protection of nature in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and throughout Europe, commitment to the transboundary and pan-European protection of nature, and environmental education nationally and internationally for more than 50 years'.

EUROPARC Federation Section Reports 2007/2008

*Diverse Cultural Landscape in Bohemian Forest.
Picture page 6 and 21: M. Milfort*

The Federation over the years has supported the creation of 7 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.

Community engagement seminar site visit
Picture: EUROPARC Atlantic Isle



EUROPARC Atlantic Isle Section (EAI)

This was the second full year for the EAI as a company limited by guarantee and registered charity. It saw the successful establishment of the new post of Development Officer as well as the establishment of more robust financial systems and processes.

The Development Officer sustained more regular contact with members through regional meetings. A Strategy and Action Plan to 2012 was agreed in January 2008. A stronger and more professional working relationship has also been developed with funding agencies.

The Section contributed to the development of the EUROPARC Federation, though inputs into the ongoing governance review.

Membership and organisation

The section currently has 66 members, with a Board of 10 Trustees and employs one staff member, the Development Officer, for the equivalent of 3.5 days a week.

EAI Section hosted an annual Members' Day, held at Cannock Chase AONB in July 2007. The first AGM for the new company and registered charity was held with formal meetings and site tours to explore different visitor management themes across the AONB.

Key activities 07/08

Seminars

EAI Section organised 2 seminars in 2007-8. The first focused on 'Community Engagement in Protected Areas: what works and what you need to do'.

A best practice guide resulting from the seminar is in preparation.

The second seminar explored 'Protected Areas in the 21st Century – What Does the Future Hold?' it challenged the current system of protected areas as well as suggest novel alternatives. The EAI was able to feed the results of the discussions into the IUCN's Protected Areas Task Force meeting in May.

Working Groups

The Coastal and Marine Working Group monitored the emerging English Marine legislation and has which seeks to recognise the need for formal recognition of the marine dimension of the English coastal protected landscapes. Additionally EAI is preparing advice for coastal protected landscapes. This will be completed in draft form by July 2008 and will be the subject of a workshop in the autumn.

Four members of the Group have also been active in the establishment of a similar working group for the EUROPARC Federation.

The Sustainable Tourism Charter Network working group met and planned a new work programme, including the development of an EAI Charter pack. Three protected areas are now working towards Charter status and the Yorkshire Dales National Park achieved Charter status in June 2008.

In 2007 the Network drafted a common methodology for implementing Part II of the Charter. This was submitted to the Federation at the end 2007 and approved by the Charter Evaluation Committee in June this year.

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 2008-2009 the EAI aims to increase its services to members including three separate seminar events on urban connections, health and sustainable tourism. The Section also aims to initiate new partnerships with colleagues elsewhere in Europe, possibly around INTERREG IVC or other funding streams.

A new project looking at the implementation of the European Landscape Convention in England will soon commence and we aim to increase the number of protected areas involved with the Charter for Sustainable Tourism.

Finally, we aim to explore how the Section can act as a catalyst for developing a new consensus on a common vision for protected landscapes throughout the UK.



EUROPARC
Atlantic Isles



Devil's Point, Cairngorms National Park
Picture: CNPA

The Czech
Section 2007,
Picture:
EUROPARC
Czech Republic



EUROPARC Czech Republic

The Czech Section was founded in 2000. It's main goal is to co-ordinate work and co-operation in the field of nature conservation in the Czech republic, especially between national parks and protected landscapes areas, on an international level.

In the last year the activities of the EUROPARC Czech Republic Section mainly involved tasks surrounding the EUROPARC annual conference 2007 and General Assembly in Český Krumlov. The Czech Sections Council met for their annual meeting at the beginning of 2008 and the European Day of Parks was organised successfully in May. In addition, member organisations continued to take part in the EUROPARC Federation's international projects.

Organisation and membership

The Section is an association for members of the EUROPARC Federation who are based in the Czech Republic. Membership to the Section is free of charge. The Section currently has 6 members (for details see www.europarc.cz) who are represented by the Section's president, Tomáš Rothrockl, director of the Podýjí National Park Administration.

Key activities 07/08

Preparations for the EUROPARC 2007 conference in Český Krumlov

EUROPARC 2007 was held from 26th to 30th September 2007 in Český Krumlov and was attended by more than 330 representatives of governmental and non-governmental nature protection organisations from Europe and abroad.

The conference, with its motto 'Nature – bridging borders', was held under the patronage of the Deputy Prime Minister of the Czech Republic and Minister of the Environment, Martin Bursík.

The conference Organisation Committee met fortnightly and consisted of representatives from every member organisation of EUROPARC Czech Republic; from the Ministry of the Environment; and the Conference Organisation Agency, a Czech business. The committee was in regular contact with the EUROPARC Federation in Grafenau and with the EUROPARC Council throughout preparations.

More information about the conference can be found at www.europarc2007.org or in the closing report at www.europarc.org.

Junior Ranger Project

Three members of the section have Junior Ranger Programmes: the Krkonoše and Šumava National Park Administrations and Jizerské hory Protected Landscape Administration. In 2007 two young rangers from Krkonoše National Park took part in the 6th International Junior Ranger Camp in Neusiedler–Seewinkel National Park in Austria. A group of Czech Junior Rangers contributed to the proceedings of the EUROPARC 2007 Conference with a presentation for the event 'Shaping the future of the Junior Ranger Movement', by promoting the Junior Ranger Programme, and by helping with the conference organisation. Further, two Junior Ranger summer camps were held in Krkonoše and Šumava National Parks in 2007.

Two Junior Ranger events will be held in July 2008: the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Junior Rangers in Bayerischer Wald NP and the 7th International Junior Ranger Camp in Scotland. Czech Junior Rangers will be attending both of them.

European Day of Parks

This year's European Day of Park celebrations were focused on the theme 'Nature – Bridging borders'. Over 50 events were organised by Czech protected areas. They were centred around the subject 'Co-operation in Caring for European Natural and Cultural Heritage'; chosen to highlight and raise the public's awareness about co-operation between neighbouring protected areas and the necessity of cross-border co-operation in nature conservation. This year's celebrations were widely publicised and supported by the Ministry of the Environment.

Transboundary Parks - Following Nature's Design

In 2007 Podyjí National Park in the Czech Republic and Thayatal National Park in Austria applied to the EUROPARC Federation for transboundary park status. The evaluation of these National Parks was carried out in July and August 2007. The Podyjí/Thayatal transboundary park was awarded the prestigious EUROPARC Certificate "Transboundary Parks – Following Nature's Design" at EUROPARC 2007.

Other EUROPARC projects

In 2007/2008 the Czech Section has been involved in both of the EUROPARC Federation's new projects: Working for Nature – Nature for Working and Pupils Experience Nature. With the project Working for Nature a Spanish trainee came to the park for 4 months and carried out a project using the park's geographical information system (GIS). At the end of October 2008 Podyjí National Park will be hosting the projects closing seminar for all of the trainees and their mentors who joined the project in 2007.

Three Czech national parks (Krkonoše, Šumava and Podyjí) participated in the pilot project 'Pupils Experience Nature' which began in autumn 2007. This summer school classes taking part in the project will visit the above mentioned protected areas.

The year ahead

The General Assembly will be held on 9th September 2008 where a new president for the Czech Section will be elected. Additional to the General Assembly a professional conference will be held in Olomouc from 9th to 12th September 2008 on the theme of 'Research in Nature Protection'. The conference will be hosted by EUROPARC Czech Republic, the Department of Ecology and Environment at Palacký University in Olomouc and the Agency for Nature and Landscape Protection in the Czech Republic.

Also in September a delegation of members of the Czech Section will attend the EUROPARC 2008 annual conference in Brasov, Romania.

In 2009 Czech protected areas will be celebrating 100 years of European national parks within the programme of the 10th European Day of Parks and the Czech Section is committed to supporting the Czech Ministry of the Environment during the Czech Republic's European Union presidency which will start next January.

EUROPARC Board
meets Sections
in Berlin
Picture:
EUROPARC
Germany



EUROPARC Germany

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 Naturlandschaften).

Organisation and membership

The association EUROPARC Germany was founded by German protected areas in 1991 as their umbrella organisation. The Section brings together experts and interested parties from protected areas, foundations, NGO's as well as development associations and other economic bodies to agree on positions and implement projects in the interests of the National Natural Landscapes (NNL).

The aim of the association is firstly to increase the value of protected areas in the eyes of politicians and the general public and secondly to continuously improve the quality of protected area management. To ensure these aims are completed the Section produced an Action Plan in 2004, based on it's strategy from 2000.

**Nationale
Naturlandschaften**



Key activities 07/08

Quality criteria for German protected areas

In 2007, the results of the research and development (R&D) scheme, 'the development of quality criteria and standards for German National Parks' were released. The standards, criteria and monitoring process that evolved during the project are, with the support of the state, to be used to evaluate national parks in Germany until 2010.

In 2005, under the title 'Nature Park Quality Offensive', a catalogue of quality criteria for measuring the quality of nature parks in Germany was published. The number of parks that have been recognised through the scheme, implemented by the Association of German Nature Protection (VDN) and the German Section, has risen from 26 in 2006 to 53 in 2007.

National Natural Landscapes

The majority of German protected areas in the three protected area categories national parks, biosphere

reserves and nature parks now operate under the brand 'National Natural Landscapes'. The NNL celebrated the labels second birthday with a very successful parliamentary evening in Berlin.

Volunteers in parks

The NNL voluntary programme celebrated its fifth anniversary in 2008. It was awarded both the 'Active Citizens of Europe Award' by Volonteuropa and declared an official project of the UN Decade 'Education for Sustainable Development' in 2007. The programme unites 29 NNL's all working on and improving schemes involving professional volunteer management.

Placement for the Environment

In 2007 the 'Placement for the Environment' was also declared an official contribution to the UN Decade 'Education for a Sustainable Development' and 50 interns gained valuable practical experience as they exchanged their classrooms for an NNL. The Commerzbank will be continuing its engagement in 2008.

Potsdam Climate Conference

Approximately 150 representatives from the fields of politics, nature conservation, science and the economy came to the Potsdam Climate Conference in November last year. Seven speakers showed how innovations for climate protection and adaptation can positively contribute to the unavoidable consequences of climate change. In addition, the potential of Biosphere Reserves as model regions for climate protection was explored.

Publications

A conference documentation 'Experience nature without barriers from mudflats to Watzmann' was published. The publication contains best practice examples as well as tangible information about public relation work and fundraising.

Success and challenges

The NNL's received particular support from the German government's March 2007 resolution entitled 'National Natural Landscapes – chances for nature conservation, tourism, environmental education and sustainable regional development'.

This means that large German protected areas are being successfully marketed together with support from the government across political parties.

At the beginning of 2008 the first report on the development of the NNL was produced. It clearly showed that there is still a lot to regarding the long-term protection of biological diversity in German protected areas. There is not enough staff in the most important fields in parks, such as education, communication and regional development, due to insufficient funds and in several parks the way in which rangers are able to work has deteriorated.

The year ahead

As well as continuing its work in the area of quality management and with the umbrella label EUROPARC Germany will be implementing three new projects over the next 6 months.

In the summer the national Junior Ranger Programme 'Come Be A Junior Ranger' will kick off. Funding from the WWF will help to develop and link existing initiatives. In addition, new ideas concerning the Junior Ranger Programme will be developed and other parks will be encouraged to get involved in the initiative.

The project 'National Park Partnerships in Germany' will also commence. Through this initiative German national parks will start new kinds of cooperation with regionally based businesses, companies, associations, societies and individuals in order to strengthen the link between nature conservation and tourism in the parks.

August will hopefully see the start of the project 'the development of National Natural Landscapes to one functional protected area system in Germany'. In this scheme two neighbouring protected areas from 10 regions in Germany will create and implement joint activities, which should lead to tangible improvements in these areas whilst strengthening the NNL brand at the same time.

Italian Junior Rangers 2007
Picture: EUOPARC Italy



EUOPARC Italy

In Italy approximately the 21% of the country is covered by protected areas. In addition, 24 marine protected areas have been created, covering 2,5% the ocean around Italy. These areas are currently represented by two organisations the Italian Section of EUOPARC and Federparchi (Italian Federation of Parks and Natural Reserves).

The association was founded in Milan in 1993 and it was created to become a point of reference for the EUOPARC Federation in Italy; to promote a more active involvement of the Italian Parks toward international projects and the initiatives of the European Community; to collaborate with other protected area organisations to ensure the dissemination and promotion of knowledge concerning nature protection and to enhance the exchange of experiences.

Key activities 07/08

Changes in EUOPARC Italy

During the last few years the partnership and collaboration between the Italian Section and Federparchi has intensified. This cooperation recently led to a decision to merge the two organisations, a process which was completed on 7th June, to form a new Italian Section 'Federparchi – EUOPARC Italia'. This means that the number of protected areas in Italy under the EUOPARC umbrella increases from 25 to around 120. Steps are currently being taken to finalise this change.

The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism
Four new Italian parks applied for Charter status this year. The Italian Section defined the promotion of the European Charter as a priority for 2007/2008,

- The international conference: 'Sustainable Tourism is the future: the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas', in April 2007.
- Federparchi formed partnerships with the University of Siena's 'Observatory on Sustainable Tourism' and the National Agency for Energy and the Environment aimed at starting new projects, which emphasise initiatives from protected areas

- A scientific committee was also created to define a common strategy for Charter application in a selected group of Italian protected areas.
- An agreement is ready to be signed by the Ministry of the Environment, which will support and strengthen the work of EUROPARC Italy regarding application for the Charter in Italian national parks next year.
- The development of the project 'Tourism Tools', which promotes the application of a common sustainable tourism strategy in Mediterranean protected areas.
- A strategy for the participation in other projects in the Central Europe and South East Programme is also underway.

The Junior Ranger Project

The pilot Junior Ranger project ended in 2007. The project, funded by the Regional Agency for Environmental Protection of Sicily and managed by EUROPARC Italy, was a huge success! The project involved three regional parks; the Regional District School Authority; the Regional Forest Service; the Provinces of Agrigento, Caltanissetta, Catania, Enna, Messina, Palermo, Ragusa, Siracusa and Trapani; 43 schools; 57 teachers; and approximately 1300 children and their families. The project has also been included in the national initiatives for Countdown 2010. In December 2007 a seminar was organised to evaluate and analyse the experience and planned to extend the project in 2008.

The Junior Ranger programme was also extended to the Adamello Brenta and Prealpi Giulie Natural Parks. Here 78 children became actively involved in the environmental education project 'Traditions and Culture – Junior Ranger' making them official Junior Rangers. Over the next few years the children can improve their knowledge about the parks and gain the titles 'Junior Ranger – Expert', 'Junior Ranger – Guide' and 'Junior Ranger – Advisor'.

Volunteers in Parks

The necessity to start a national strategy and to be linked to an international network where voluntary work in parks is concerned in Italian protected areas has been realised. Accordingly the Italian Section are about to sign a specific agreement with the Ministry of the Environment, who will support a volunteer programme across the Italian network of National Parks.

In addition, the Italian Section has started an official partnership with EUROPARC Germany to intensify co-operation in the field of volunteer management and between the Sections' national volunteer programmes. On this basis an international project application, has been submitted to the Grundtvig Programme 'Learning Partnerships'. The project also involves other Sections and will promote the subject of volunteering and volunteer management in parks and thus raise the profile of protected areas at a local and national level.

The year ahead

The most important fields of work for the Section over the next 12 months are: increasing the number of Italian protected areas applying for the European Charter; the promotion of the 'Junior Ranger' project; and the development of the activities mentioned above for volunteers in parks.



*Junior Rangers taking a rest in Adamello Brenta Nature Park
Picture: EUROPARC Italy*

Excursion to
Fuglsang at the
Health and
Protected Area
Seminar in March
Picture:
EUROPARC



EUROPARC Nordic-Baltic

The EUROPARC Nordic-Baltic Section 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 Nordic-Baltic Section 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 Laura Jukame, whose position is funded by Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Service (Fin), the Swedish Environment Protection Agency and the NPB, coordinates the Section's activities.

At the end of May 2008 the Nordic-Baltic Section had 32 members in the following eight countries: Denmark (2), Estonia (2), Finland (9), Iceland (1), Latvia (4), Lithuania (5), Norway (3) and Sweden (6). Membership of the Section is free of charge

Key Activities 07/08

Over the last year the Section's activities were carried out according to the sections current work programme. The Sections work focuses on three main areas: informing members about the effective management of protected areas, the Natura 2000 network, transboundary cooperation and sustainable tourism in protected areas and encouraging participation in EUROPARC projects and programmes.



Maribo Nature Park, Denmark
Picture: EUROPARC

Two Section meetings took place over the last year. More information about these meetings can be found on www.europarc-nb.org.n addition, the Section organised two seminars on relevant protected area management issues. 21 people from six countries attended the first one on 'Infrastructure for Disabled People in Protected Areas' in Latvia, in August 2007. The second seminar took place in May at Maribo Nature Park, in Denmark under the title 'Public Health an Experience of Nature – the Role of Protected Areas'. 52 participants from eight countries took part. Presentations from both seminars can be found at www.europarc-nb.org.

A further seminar on 'Local Participation in the Management of Protected Areas – How Can Protected Areas Become a Resource to the Local Society?' will take place in Dovrefjell-Sunndalsfjella National Park, Norway, in August 2008

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.

Finally, in the last few months the NPB submitted a project application to Grundtvig Learning Partnerships on behalf of the Section. The project aims to encourage the international and national exchange of experience between and arrange training and seminars for people wishing to organise volunteer programmes in protected areas. The leading partner in the project will be EUROPARC Germany.

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 Hanson will be approved as the president by Section members during a Section meeting at the EUROPARC Federation Conference this year. The SEPA will be responsible for initiating new projects and arranging any events next year.

EUROPARC Nordic-Baltic seminar delegates, Pictures: EUROPARC Nordic-Baltic



Parque Natural
Sierra de Cazorla,
Segura
y Las Villas
Picture:
EUROPARC
Federation

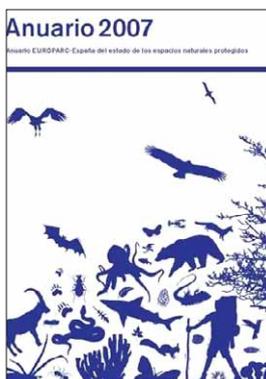


EUROPARC Spain

The Spanish Section of the EUROPARC Federation was founded in 1993. Members of the Section are state public administration offices (The Ministry of Environment), regional (17 Comunidades Autonomas) and local level (6 administrations) whose activities are based around the fields of planning and protected area management. There are currently 24 members who meet on a voluntary basis and fund and support the activities of the Section.

The Spanish Section does not have its own legal status due to restrictions in the Spanish law and so is championed by the Fernando González Bernáldez Foundation, an independent institution, via an internal agreement.

The Spanish Section has a Council, General Assembly, and a Technical Office. The Council had 9 members who are elected by the General Assembly for a two year term. 7 employees run the Technical Office, which is located in Madrid.



Anuario 2007
EUROPARC Spain

Key activities 07/08

The activities promoted and developed by the Spanish Section are defined according to six strategic objectives.

In 2007/2008 the Section prepared a work programme for Spanish protected areas for 2008-2013. In addition, the Section started a project funded by the organisation Fundacion Biodiversidad, aiming to improve access to information in protected areas; published four manuals on topics in the field of protected area management; updated and collated information about all Spanish protected areas for publication in the Section's Annual report at the beginning of 2008; and organised the Sections Annual Conference, ESPARC 2007, in Tenerife.

The members of the Council and the staff of the Technical Office attended a total of 40 meetings in Spain and abroad in the last 12 months, including meetings with other EUROPARC Sections and the EUROPARC Council.

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 2007.

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 2008-2013'. This programme will be the backbone of all the Section's annual plans.

*Picos de Europa
Picture: EUROPARC Spain*



Financial Report

BALANCE SHEET

	2006	2007
AKTIVA		
Assets		
Total fixed assets	1 743,00	2 210,00
Total current assets	325 768,86	346 048,09
Total Assets	327 511,86	348 258,09
PASSIVA		
Profit Reserve	203 590,85	249 736,55
Liabilities		
Provisions	33 120,74	32 683,78
Accounts payable	90 800,27	65 837,76
Total Equity and Liability	327 511,86	348 258,09

NOTES

*¹ 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.

*² 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

	2006	2007
Income		
Membership fees	289 618,68	286 005,00
Grants		
non fee paying members	-54 692,40	-14 609,49
EC core grant	0,00	118 609,00
project grants	164 046,40	293 673,51
Other income	44 631,07	-3 965,81
Total Income	443 603,75	679 712,21
Expenditure		
Personnel costs	253 510,33	315 596,95
Office costs		
grafenau	26 081,74	31 250,50
brussels	0,00	4 928,43
Travel and Subsistence		
council travel	21 443,29	27 552,10
staff	21 443,29	27 552,10
others	27 583,46	35 044,96
Memberships		
IUCN, FAIB, EHF*1	725,97	986,01
Projects - Direct Costs**		
Transboundary Parks	8 468,79	4 562,40
TACIS	24 772,96	4 481,00
Project Development Task Force	5 353,60	0,00
Alfred Toepfer Scholarship and Medal	2 974,04	6 799,69
Youth and Education *3	4 184,65	39 176,23
Working for Nature	0,00	16 521,32
WWF Danube- Carpathian	0,00	13 615,75
Natura 2000	1 959,91	0,00
NNP Natura 2000 Networking Programme	0,00	73 256,21
Pupils experience nature	0,00	3 388,90
CharterPark	6 981,08	13 309,32
Other costs		
Professional fees	9 947,00	10 228,05
Depreciation	2 687,10	2 366,92
Insurance	1 401,36	2 949,67
Total costs	419 518,57	633 566,51
Overall Summary		
Total income	443 603,75	679 712,21
Total Expenditure	419 518,57	633 566,51
Result	24 085,18	46 145,70

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Together Zusammen Ensemble

FEDERATION

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