

PRESS RELEASE

Embargoed for: Saturday 24th of May 2014



WHAT: European Day of Parks 2014

WHEN: 24th of May 2014

WHERE: Europe's Protected Areas

WHY: To raise public awareness about the mission and work of protected areas

European Day of Parks once again grows to a pan-European celebration day for Protected Areas

In 22 countries across Europe on Saturday, 24th May, national parks, nature reserves and other protected areas open their doors to visitors on the European Day of Parks 2014. This year hundreds of special activities connected to the theme "Parks for Nature. Parks for well-being. Parks for peace.": will celebrate the day, marking the 100th anniversary since the First World War.

Walks, excursions, exhibitions and more will be held by protected areas from Finland to Spain and from the Ireland to Romania. They will highlight the significant role that protected areas play in protecting an abundance of creatures across the continent. The diversity of events shows that parks use a nature-inspired creativity to address different groups of society, from tourists to children, from outdoor lovers to plant lovers.

More than 80 protected areas in 22 countries are promoting the day, which aims at being internationally recognized in 2014 for the sake of protected areas' status in European societies.

In 2014, the world marks the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of the First World War. By connecting EUROPARC's most important date to this important anniversary, EUROPARC wants to emphasize how our protected areas can have very different roles in people's lives. This initiative aims to raise the awareness of the wide public on the relevance and value of protected areas – including N2000 sites - for the conservation of nature and the peace among people and communities

EUROPARC President, Thomas Hansson, reminds us how important peace is, for us as people, for our nature and harmony around us. In this sense, we should not forget that through our protected areas we work together, crossing the borders and connecting people. He points out "Conservation work can make the world a better place!"

This year many parks will also be marking the first World Fish Mitigation day which occurs on the same day.

The European Day of Parks was created by the EUROPARC Federation, the umbrella organisation for Europe's protected areas, to raise the profile of these green gems and generate public support for their aims and work. Since it was launched in 1999 many protected landscapes have taken advantage of this opportunity and hundreds of themed events have been held each year on and around the 24th May. The date is significant because it is the day the first European national park was founded in Sweden in 1909.

More and more stakeholders in and around protected areas, in particular tourism enterprises, do recognize the added value of networking for this day. The European Day of Parks is a great chance to proactively collaborate to sustain the protected area systems that is fundamental to our wealth and health.

END (448 words)





Notes for editors:

About the European Day of Parks

European Day of Parks, launched by the EUROPARC Federation, has been celebrated every year since 1999 in protected areas throughout Europe. European Day of Parks aims at bringing people closer to nature and raising public awareness on the importance of the natural beauty preserved in protected areas and the importance of conservation and sustainable management of those places. Events on and around the 24th of May present a colourful range how people feel passion and love for nature.

About the EUROPARC Federation:

EUROPARC is the umbrella organisation for Protected Areas throughout Europe. The aim of the network is to facilitate the increase of new partners throughout Europe by providing interested parks with information on the most important aspects of a Protected Area Management. EUROPARC Federation is an independent, non-governmental organisation whose membership brings together organisations responsible for the management of most of Europe's Protected Areas. Currently it represents over 370 members in 36 countries. These include Protected Areas, governmental departments, NGO's and businesses who themselves manage the green jewels of Europe's land, sea, mountains, forests, rivers and cultural heritage.

Contact

Dea Mijakovac

Communications and Marketing Officer,
EUROPARC Federation

E: d.mijakovac@europarc.org

S: dea.mijakovac.europarc

T: +49 (0)941 599 35 983

- More information on the European Day of Parks including an event calendar can be found at www.europarc.org/what-we-do/european-day-of-parks
 -
- For more information, visit our websites:
 - www.europarc.org
- Stay connected on our EUROPARC Facebook
 - <https://www.facebook.com/EUROPARC>

