

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate release

What: EUROPARC's 1st International Youth Conference

Youth Conference - looking to the future it's in our hands!

Who: EUROPARC Federation

Where: Debrecen, Hungary

When: 9th to 13th October 2013



“When you teach your son, you teach your son's son...” (Talmud)

Europe needs societies to understand the importance of nature and biodiversity. Europe needs young people to stay connected to nature. Connecting youth across Europe through environmental education programmes is one of the pillars of the EUROPARC Federation's work and this idea is deeply framed and set up into the Junior Ranger Network for young people 12-18 years, which has been running for over 10 years. But what after the Junior Ranger stage? For the first time EUROPARC extends the youth environmental education to inspire “older” young people, 17-21 years, to stay re-connected to nature and continue learning about the importance of Protected Areas. And why?

For the first time the EUROPARC Federation is running a Youth Conference parallel to the EUROPARC's biggest event of the year, the Annual Conference, celebrating 40 years of nature conservation in Europe. Approximately 20 youngsters, aged 17 to 25 will be arriving at Debrecen on Wednesday 9th October to attend the conference hosted by the Hortobágyi National Park Service. More than thirteen European countries will be represented in this 4 day event.

The Youth conference will overlap with the main EUROPARC conference, bringing together different age groups and youth participants will be able to meet those who are currently making decisions in nature conservation and our protected areas across Europe. As this current youth generation will be making the decisions in the future... the theme of their conference is “Looking to the Future – it's in our hands”. As well as joining in with the main conference, they will have their own educational and interactive sessions looking at their role in protecting Europe's natural heritage.

The culmination of the Youth Conference will be the presentation of the “declaration by the young people” to the main conference, to encourage them to think of how they can ensure the involvement of young people in nature conservation over the next 40 years. One of the organisers said “It will be a great opportunity for the young delegates to meet like-minded people”. The young delegates should go home after the Youth Conference full of thoughts and ideas about the future of parks and protected areas. Hopefully those who are currently making the decisions will listen to those ideas and act upon them.

-END-

373 words



Notes for editors:

About the EUROPARC Federation:

EUROPARC is the umbrella organisation for Junior Ranger programmes 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 Junior Ranger programme. 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 400 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.

Interview opportunities:

- Alan Smith, Conference Organising team
- Janice Burley, Conference organising team
- Thomas Hansson, President
- Carol Ritchie, Director

Contact

Dea Mijakovac

Communications and Marketing Officer

E: d.mijakovac@europarc.org

S: dea.mijakovac.europarc

T: +49 (0)941 599 35 983

For more information visit our websites:

www.europarc.org

www.europarc2013.eu

www.european-charter.org

Stay connected on our EUROPARC Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/EUROPARCConference>

Stay connected on our Junior Ranger Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Europarc-Junior-Ranger-Programme/266313873379549>