



EUROPARC Germany e.V., September 2011

# Quality criteria and standards for German national parks

Nationale  
Naturlandschaften



# EUROPARC Germany

- Registered Non-Governmental Organisation, founded 1991
- First section of EUROPARC Federation
- more than 60 members: national parks, biosphere reserves and nature parks, NGOs, foundations etc.
- Areas of main focus: public relations work, project development, education, networking, policy advice, fundraising
- In 2009 commissionned by the federal government to **evaluate of all German national parks**



# Germany's National Natural Landscapes – 132 natural treasures

## 14 national parks

- ... protect natural landscapes
  - ... are landscape areas in which nature is left to itself
  - ... create reserves for wild plants and animals
  - ... create a unique space for environmental education and research and to experience nature

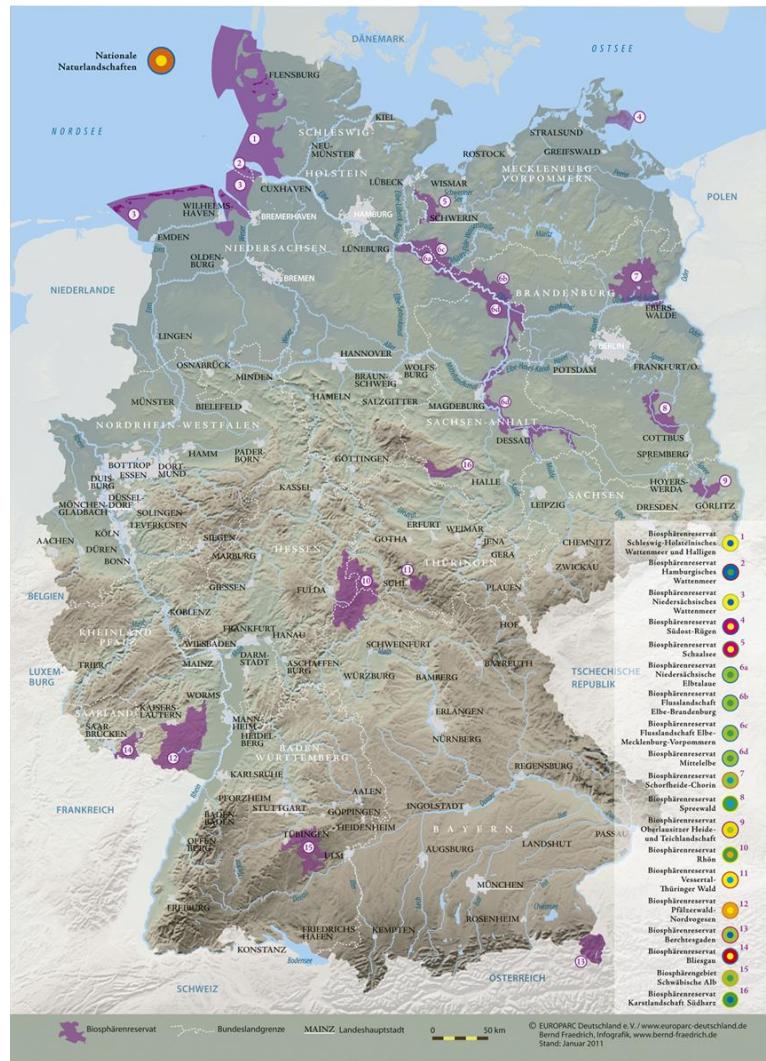


# Germany's National Natural Landscapes

## – 132 natural treasures

### 16 biosphere reserves

- 15 of them recognised by UNESCO
- ... protect cultural landscapes
- ... are model regions in which the co-existence of people and nature can be developed and tested
- ... ensure a balance between human use and natural cycles



# Germany's National Natural Landscapes

## – 132 natural treasures

### 102 nature parks

- ... conserve and develop cultural landscapes and nature
- ... support sustainable tourism
- ... promote sustainable regional development and develop environmental education and public awareness



# International and national commitments for german nature conservation

- Caracas, IV World Park Congress, 1992 (To do Action Plans)
- IUCN, Parks for Life, 1994 (Action Plan for Europe)
- 5th World Parks Congress of IUCN in Durban (2003)
- ‘Programme of Work on Protected areas’ of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD VII/28) in 2004 in Kuala Lumpur
- Resolution 3047 ‘Durban Action Plan-CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas’ and 3048 ‘IUCN Guidelines of Protected Area Management Categories’ at the World Conservation Congress in November 2004

# Measuring the quality of management...

**Standards of measurement** to evaluate the management of protected areas have been in existence...

- ... for biosphere reserves since 1996
- ... for nature parks since 2005
- ... and were developed for **national parks** as recently as 2008

Over a 2 1/2 year process (2005-2008) the **introduction** of a quality management system in the **national parks** was...

- ... developed by representatives from the national parks, the federal government, LANA, individual environment ministries of several German states, academic institutions, NGO's etc.
- ... approved by the highest German Inter-State Working Group for Nature Conservation, Landscape Management and Recreation (LANA)
- ... supported by the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN)

# Measuring the quality of management...

## How to do it?

- criteria, standards and indicators were developed for measuring the quality of management in national parks
- a suitable method for the inspection of the national parks had to be found

**Step 1:** find a common vision

**Step 2:** define central “fields of action“

**Step 3:** formulate criteria and standards

**Step 4:** produce a catalogue of indicator questions

**Step 5:** pre-test the questionnaire

# Fields of action, criteria & standards

## **10 Fields of action...**

1. Framework conditions (*6 criteria*)
2. Protection of natural biological diversity and dynamics (*6 criteria*)
3. Organisation (*6 criteria*)
4. Management (*8 criteria*)
5. Cooperation and partners (*3 criteria*)
6. Communication (*3 criteria*)
7. Education (*3 criteria*)
8. Experiencing nature and recreation (*2 criteria*)
9. Monitoring and research (*4 criteria*)
10. Regional development (*3 criteria*)

# Fields of action, criteria & standards

Appropriate **criteria** (44) were defined for all **fields of action** (10) to describe the most relevant aspects of management for the national park administrations.

Examples:

Field of action (10)	Criteria (44)	Standard (44)
4. Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Organisational structure</li><li>- Staff levels</li><li>- Ranger system</li><li>- Personnel management</li><li>- Financing</li><li>- Advisory boards and curatorship</li></ul>	(...) (...) (...)
10. Regional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Image</li><li>- Impulses for the region</li><li>- Impulses for sustainable regional development</li></ul>	(...) (...) (...)

# Fields of action, criteria & standards

Each **criteria** is defined by a **standard** which describes the best possible achievable state of a national park.

Examples:

Field of action	Criteria	Standard
2. Protection of natural biological diversity and dynamics	- Space for natural processes	“Over most of their area, national parks protect the natural dynamics of processes of nature with as little disturbance as possible. In general, this is ensured within a period of not longer than 30 years after an area has been designated a national park and for at least 75% of the national park area. (...)"
10. Regional development	- Impulses for the region	“The positive effects of the national park for the region are regularly measured, documented, communicated outwards, and developed further.“

# Implementation of the evaluation system

Since 2009 all national parks participate in a voluntary evaluation process using the evaluation questionnaire. This process takes place...

- ... with the financial support of the federal government
- ... with the approval of LANA
- ... with the involvement of a committee of experts, including representatives from:
  - BfN/BMU<sup>1</sup>
  - LANA
  - universities
  - the national park administrations
  - non-governmental organisations (NGOs)
  - EUROPARC Germany
- ... and is coordinated by EUROPARC Germany.

<sup>1</sup> Federal Agency for Nature Conservation/ Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety

# Why are we doing this?

Goals of the evaluation process are...

- to maintain and improve the quality of management in the national parks over the long term
- to make an important contribution towards the implementation of the Programme of Work on Protected Areas (CBD VII/28)
- to provide an example for other countries
- to strengthen the worldwide system of protected areas

# The evaluation process – step by step

- **Step 1:** the national park fills in the online version of the questionnaire
- **Step 2:** the questionnaire is interpreted by an external agency and ‘translated’ into a report
- **Step 3:** committee members study the questionnaire, the report and other relevant documents
- **Step 4:** two day visit to each park by the committee; members speak to the park administration and external stakeholders and go on a short excursion
- **Step 5:** committee members write a final report which compares the current situation to the desirable situation in accordance with the standards, gives an analysis of strengths and weaknesses and formulates recommendations
- **Step 6:** the final report is sent to the national park administration, the appropriate environment ministries of the German states and to the federal government (BMU/BfN)

# The evaluation process - for one national park...

Evaluierung Nationalpark xy in 2010

## F+E-Vorhaben „Anwendung von Qualitätskriterien und –standards zur Evaluierung der deutschen Nationalparke“

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... and for further national parks ...

# Current status of the project

As of september 2011:

- 12 of 14 national parks have been visited by the committee
- 5 committee reports have been finished and sent to the national parks, the appropriate environment ministries of the German states and to the federal government
- 2 committee reports are publicly available (Unteres Odertal and Eifel national parks)
- some recommendations have already born fruit: e.g. Unteres Odertal national park will get more employees to manage the park more effectively
- a workshop was held to discuss one very challenging criteria for all national parks regarding the management of wild ungulates

# Next steps and outlook

What's left to do...

- evaluate the last two national parks
- finish the remaining 9 committee reports and deliver to the relevant authorities
- cross-sectional analysis of all final reports to reveal the overall strengths and weaknesses of the German national parks
- publication of the analysis in German and English by the middle of 2012
- review of the national parks expected in ten years

# We would love to hear from you!

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