



EUROPARC 2011: Quality Counts – Benefits for Nature and People

Workshop outcomes

Over 300 delegates from countries all over Europe took part in the workshops of [EUROPARC 2011](#). The whole day on Saturday 24th September was set aside for the [15 workshops](#) that were organized by [EUROPARC Consulting](#). The topics of the workshops focused on quality in protected area management and looked at a plethora of subjects from interpretation to finances in nature conservation. Each workshop had a leader, responsible for leading and coordinating the event, and two presenters who provided background information and innovative ideas on the relevant theme.

As well as the presentations and discussions on the topic the workshop participants were asked to come up with some ideas regarding the question: 'What are the three priorities for action for this topic that should be considered in the new [EUROPARC strategy](#)?' The outcomes below reflect the answers that each workshop gave to this question. They will be used to formulate the new EUROPARC strategy which will be developed next year for the years 2013 – 2015.

Workshop 1+2: Quality in effective management /Benchmarking & assessment

- Create and overview of PAs with regards to evaluation systems, barometers, national level.
- Capacity building (training, mentoring, best practices).
- Create a website for the topic (links to relevant pages)

Workshop 3: Halting the loss of biodiversity - How protected areas can help

- Facilitate communication and bottom-up processes in protected areas to politics at national and European level. More lobbying/ and outreach strategy for: Politicians, the general public and stakeholders in PAs
- Promotion of green infrastructure including core areas (new parks) that are missing
- Valuing ecosystem services
- Innovative/new ideas for sustainable financing

Workshop 4: Increasing and managing biodiversity – Special action for special landscapes

- Involve land-users in protected areas in managing and increasing biodiversity through
 - recognizing them as skilled professional partners
 - providing them easy-to-use methods to share biodiversity knowledge and agricultural and other land-use practices
 - organising communication actions, e.g. farming competition, which promote their positive contribution to nature protection
- Enhance the Federation's lobbying activities on the EU political level, especially in the field of the Common Agricultural and Fishing Policies in order to have them more nature

EUROPARC Federation, Waffnergasse 6, 93047 Regensburg, Germany

E-Mail: office@europarc.org, Tel: 0049 (0)941 599 35 98 0

www.europarc.org

conservation friendly and tailored to the regional and local needs of habitat and species management.

- Establish and promote information and expertise exchange among protected area management organizations (including non-EUROPARC members) in the field of habitat restoration and species protection projects (methodology, good practice) based on the EU Biogeographical regions and on the lists of habitats and species of European importance, annexed to the two nature directives.

Workshop 5: Benefits of quality – How ecosystems work for us

- Improving communication related to values and benefits
- Benchmarking and finding best practices
- Link values and benefits of the parks with international agreements and programmes and policies of the EU

Workshop 6: Benefits of quality – Premium tourism products for premium landscapes

- Better communication (for the stakeholders as well as the visitors and tourists) about Protected Areas as a Sustainable Tourism Destination
- “The Value of Nature”: develop magic numbers about economical aspects of sustainable tourism (ST) in PAs
- Increase the number and the availability of good practices in ST for all EUROPARC members via the EUROPARC Charter site
- Develop exchange programs about sustainable tourism between EUROPARC members of PA staff and local stakeholders
- Encourage Alfred Toepfer Scholarships topic about Sustainable Tourism in PAs
- Develop training sessions for marketing as a visitor management tool (during the Sigger Seminars)
- Promote the creation of a EUROPARC Working Group about Marketing Nature Values in Protected Areas
- Redefine the role of EUROPARC as a Competence Centre for Sustainable Tourism in PAs

Workshop 7: Volunteering in protected areas – Benefits for all

- Support the creation of innovative partnerships (enterprises, banks, NGOs etc.) to develop more (and more relevant) volunteering in PAs
- Web-pages dedicated to volunteering and volunteer management (including guidelines, tools etc.)
- Collect the evidence of the values and benefits of volunteering and sell it better

Workshop 8: Quality in outreach and communication – Involving others and conveying the message

- Adopt the Junior Ranger programme of EUROPARC Germany, promote it and expand it to the rest of the network
- Create a facility for social networking on the web, e.g. “green facebook”, PA apps, forums, virtual teams

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- Formulate an IT Strategy! Draw on expertise from members and ask them for support
- Establish an international legal team
- Inter- generational communication, e.g. a youth conference linked to the international conference

Workshop 9: Quality in interpretation – Going beyond panels and leaflets

- Explore ways of setting up a European exchange on interpretation (staff exchange, platform for exchange)
- Help develop and promote best practice and quality guidelines and interpretation as a discipline
- Encourage implementation of interpretation into current PA management structures

Workshop 10: Visitor Management – Knowing where to go

- Visitor monitoring is underestimated. It can help to raise the profile of the importance of ecosystem services (tourism) as a potential new founding source for NPs.
- Raise the profile of the PA brand as a strong brand that showcases the quality of these places as tourism destinations
- Collect best practises of the subjects mentioned in the first points above in order to show collaboration between PAs and tourism entrepreneurs (European Charter)

Workshop 11: Partnerships for quality – Partners working for you, with you

- Develop quality checks across Europe - Germany is an example of best practice.
- Strong political presence – local, national and international
- Communication of a positive nature to the professional/business community, public - advertising ambassadors, politicians – European/all levels, the network – internal support
- Create a EUROPARC “Brand” message – use business methods
- Funding partnerships
 - Who is appropriate for the creation of such partnerships
 - Budget – know what we’re getting
 - Governmental support – reliable
 - Priority for environment – not a luxury
 - Value of environment – economic and health

Workshop 12: Financing quality – Good value for money

- Sharing knowledge: dissemination of good practice, with information database, to national, regional and local organisations; better networking amongst members (including sharing information on innovative technologies in nature conservation services)
- Strategic role in developing cooperation and long-term partnerships with multinational businesses; funding coming through EUROPARC to PAs, e.g. for species at risk, to make up for current deficit in private sector members.

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- Ecosystem services: Lobbying role for establishing green programmes with the role of PAs central; influence government at national and local level to re-invest in nature; lobbying re “polluter pays” principle.

Workshop 13: Intrinsic and spiritual values of protected areas – Getting to grips with the intangible

- Communication: learn ways to communicate about the resources; raise awareness by creating a positive image; increase awareness about the benefits of nature; education
- Think about finances – “get the money first”
- (Re)-connect people to nature – What is the value of nature? Use gardening as a connection point
- Bring the wild and the urban together including addressing rural and urban individuals

Workshop 14: Quality for regional development – How protected areas and their surrounding regions mutually benefit each other

- To identify the role and potential role of the PAs within the region through the:
 - need for a sound governance system
 - need for a standardised socio-economic monitoring system
 - PAs collaborating across their region
- To promote the important role of PAs in the wider green infrastructure by:
 - Enabling connectivity (biodiversity)
 - Enabling access: recreation and enjoyment, health, spiritual, ecosystem services, local produce/products
- To communicate the regional value of PAs using effective media to secure local engagement and political support

Workshop 15: New technology for quality – Surfing for nature

- Ensure that effective social media and new technology is a core element of the Communications Strategy for both internal and external audiences.
- Create a discussion forum/platform for communications discussions
- Create an electronic best practice “marketplace”
- Training on the above for members
- Create a communications Working Group to review communications strategy

[View and download the presentations from the EUROPARC 2011 workshops](#)

[More information about EUROPARC 2011](#)

If you have any questions or queries about these workshops or the conference please contact the EUROPARC Federation on office@europarc.org.

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