



**EUROPARC Federation
Report to Council
10th May 2013**

Title:
Council Operational Manual

Summary :
Last Update of Operational Manual

EUROPARC Federation

Council Operational Manual



<i>Date of Meeting</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Minute/ Council Decision</i>	<i>Actions</i>
02/02/2012	Alfred Toepfer Medal	<p>After the Bavarian Forest National Park had declined to deliver the laudation speech at the award ceremony, the Council discussed the possibility and opportunity to renew the present awarding system.</p> <p>The Council agreed to continue with the present awarding system for further 3 years.</p>	CR contact the Alf T to seek funding for the production of the medals, and continue with Medal award for further 3 years.
24/05/2012		There aren't any nominations for the Alfred Toepfer Medal in yet. Council will have to decide this electronically. If there aren't any new nominations coming in this year they will have to decide about the last year nominations which had been refused.	Nominations 2013 will be forwarded to council for electronically decision.
24/05/2012	Alfred Toepfer Scholarships	<p>The council members discussed the applications.</p> <p>Council decided to award the scholarships to: Mr. David Bogyo; Mr. Tilen Genov; Mr. Willem Laermans.</p>	
		The Council members mentioned that going through the application information is a lot of work.	The staffs will shortlist the Alfred Toepfer Scholarships applications.

		Council decides that Eric, Marian and Thomas will make the final selections of the ATS applications 2013.	Eric, Marian and Thomas will select three scholars and introduce them to the council.
24/05/2012	Bank	PC suggests evaluating the advantages of a financial application for the special reserve in a bank with a strong environmental policy. Council agrees to delegate the decision of which bank will be chosen to the finance management subgroup.	Financial management subgroup evaluates offers of German banks with strong environmental policies.
21/09/2011	Charter Methodology	In between Council meetings approval of Charter methodologies by the Council can be made via e-mail.	
21/09/2011	Charter Methodology, Italian and Baltic Sea Area	The Council endorsed the Italian and Baltic Sea Area Charter methodologies.	
24/05/2012	Charter Methodology, French	Council approves on the French Charter 2 Methodology.	
16/06/2011	Conference 2012	The Council unanimously agreed Belgium as the conference venue for 2012 but asked for the proposal to be revised to give it more content and depth.	
24/05/2012		The Council was informed about the status of conference's preparation. Since 23rd of May the Website is online and registration is possible.	Directorate will inform the members about the website and registration forms at the beginning of next week.
02/02/2012	Conference 2013	Council approved the Hungarian proposal of hosting the Conference 2013 in Debrecen.	
25/04/2012		The Council was informed about first planning of the conference 2013.	Carol checks in the Letter of agreement with Eurosite if there

		A letter of agreement was signed by both parties. CR visited the hosting organisations in April.	are any requirements regarding the planning of the annual conference.
02/02/2012	Council meetings	Council agreed to have their meeting on Sunday 21st October, afternoon before the conference.	
24/05/2012		Council agrees that next year's council meetings will be set in Dec/Jan, Apr/May, Sep/Oct according to the fiscal year obligations. PC offers to host the council meeting in Porto the end of January. Rolands offers to host the council meeting in Latvia in Apr/May.	CR will circulate the dates as soon as detached.
26/03/2011	Director's Report	As the Spring report spans two financial years and two work plans it is very labour intensive and in some ways incoherent to combine these in one report. It was therefore decided to provide quarterly reports to the Council instead, irrespective of Council meeting dates. Agreed to change reporting from the Directorate to quarterly reports. The current format will be maintained.	Quarterly reports from Directorate.
		Council members requested more detailed information on projects particularly with a view to finances and project development.	Directorate to submit a separate summary sheet on project development and implementation as part of the quarterly report.
02/02/2012		The council agreed to postpone the strategy consultation to 2013.	Report the change concerning the strategy to the GA 2012.
24/05/2012	EUROPARC Consulting	Council discussed about the advantage of having a fixed minimum recompensation from EP Consulting related to the European Charter	Financial management subgroup evaluates the EP Consulting's recompensation.

		<p>by the mid of the second semester.</p> <p>Council agrees to delegate the evaluation of the methodology of EP Consulting's recompensation from to the finance management subgroup.</p>	
29/09/2010	Eurosite	<p>Eurosite proposes a joint committee to work on the future of the collaboration of the two organizations.</p> <p>Asked GA for a mandate for the Council to proceed with the planning and decisions regarding participation in the joint committee. The proposal of Eurosite should be accepted by Europarc, but with the condition of a one year work plan for the joint committee.</p> <p>EUROPARC representatives on the joint committee that were suggested were (maximum of 3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Marian Jager-Wöltgens - Thomas Hansson - Directorate 	The GA unanimously gave the mandate to the EUROPARC Council to further discuss the future collaboration.
02/02/2012		<p>Council wishing to move on for further action, and having agreed that currently option 3 (merger light) is the only possible for EUROPARC, is mandating the JC to communicate to the Eurosite president, to ask for their legal advice and more clarity in their position. If no clear answer will be received by March the Council will take a final decision in May.</p>	

24/05/2012		All council members agreed that the outcome of the meeting in July and Eurosite subsequent response would inform the position of EUROPARC and the council must respond quickly in August to map a clear way forward.	Subject to the outcomes of the JC meeting in July: Europarc will prepare an explanatory statement to the annual general assembly regarding the processes and decisions about the merger. Directorate will prepare a draft of a statement for council to agree
29/09/2010	Federation Finances	<p>The finance report will be twofold in future as advised by the internal auditor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial statement / trading accounts - Cash flow accounts, since cash flow management is important <p>The current situation with very low membership income level shows the vulnerability of the Federation, which will increase in future. Ideas were discussed on looking for individual donors, management fees in projects, etc.</p> <p>Treasurer to give clear statement to GA: Invitation to members and sections to get more involved in project development.</p> <p>Council to assist Directorate in looking for funding streams other than EU funds.</p>	
21/09/20112	Internal Auditor	DC urged the Council to reconsider the role of the Internal Auditor.	Suggest review of role of Internal Auditor to new Council at the next meeting.
02/02/2012		Further discussion should be taken with David. EB suggests to consider the opportunity of	

		having an Audit Committee.	
		The internal audit report was postponed to the next council meeting	DC to present the internal audit report.
24/05/2012		Instead of having an Audit Committee David produces a handover document as soon as another Internal Auditor is elected.	
		The position of the internal auditor has to be elected by the EP General Assembly. David Cameron offers to go on supporting the council as an internal auditor.	The Council decides to recommend David Cameron for election as Internal Auditor at General Assembly.
29/09/2010	Lobbying Plan	<p>It was stated that the Council needs to get more involved in the Lobbying work for the Federation.</p> <p>Goals that should be reached: raise awareness on Natura 2000 stakeholders and making sure that EU recognizes the value and input of Pas managers for Natura 2000 sites.</p> <p>The action plan that was developed by the Federation and the French Section is reflecting mainly the preparation work for the lobbying work. Important connections with NGOs and other organizations (ELO, hunters etc.) have been established. The CBD has also a growing interest in the Federation.</p> <p>It was discussed that a 10 point plan/ reference sheet for speaking to EU and stakeholders might be useful for council and members of the Federation (a so called crib sheet) as a list of agreed ideas to be promoted in line with the</p>	<p>Council agreed with lobbying plan and the French summary of the lobbying work.</p> <p>French section to get together the core group for lobbying.</p> <p>President and Directorate to follow up on CDB MOU and possibility of EUROPARC being on the technical board of CBD.</p>

		lobbying strategy.	
25/03/2011		After a meeting with CBD representatives the president recommend not to take an active role in coordinating CBD PoWPA implementation without having resources secured.	
21/09/2011	Membership Update	<p>The German Section had submitted an application for membership as they felt that currently the role of the sections was not participatory enough and that – as a section – they had no direct input in the decision making of the Federation.</p> <p>Council cautioned that a decision would depend on the outcome of the discussions regarding the role of the sections.</p>	See “Sections” 02/02/2012
02/02/2012		<p>Council requested a membership list to be distributed</p> <p>IS recommended to list and contact potential new members across Europe.</p> <p>The council approved the new candidate members and accepted the resignations as listed in the paper distributed.</p>	<p>Council agreed with IS recommendation but the capacity within the directorate is insufficient to take this action forward at this time.</p> <p>The directorate will distribute an amended membership list to the Council.</p>
24/05/2012		<p>There were no new applications since the last council meeting.</p> <p>A request has been received by Wicklow Uplands Council, requesting a change in membership category.</p>	DC to stay in contact with Gorricko Nature Park of Slovenia on behalf of their resignation / change in membership category.

		<p>Further Gorrisko Nature Park of Slovenia wrote to prefer their resignation from the federation. However after contacting them to suggest instead they request a change to the lower membership category they are reconsidering their position.</p> <p>Council agrees on changing membership category from 585 Euros to 200 Euros in 2012 for following members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wicklow Uplands Council • Goricko Nature Park of Slovenia. 	
02/02/2012	NGO Grant	<p>When EP didn't received the NGO Grant for 2011 there was the idea of sending a petition from Eurosite, EUROPARC and WWF to EU. Eurosite and WWF didn't follow the idea.</p> <p>CR gave clarification concerning the 2010 application and that no letter was prepared. MJW indicated we needed to be more certain if we wished to bring MEP's into situations in future.</p>	No further action
02/02/2012	PAME	<p>MJ presented the project and the work done so far. There is lot of interest about the issue, but: which priorities, how much support from the Council? Which resources available for a follow up?</p> <p>Council agreed that the issue is postponed as cannot be a priority this year. Nevertheless the concept and ideas for project can be further developed with the support of EP Consulting. (EP Germany might be interested)</p>	MJ should report back to the Council on further developments after discussion with EP Consulting.

29/09/2010	Pescasseroli Declaration	The draft Pescasseroli Declaration was discussed and input given to CR and FM to change the draft.	The changed Pescasseroli declaration draft was approved to be recommended to the GA.
29/09/2010	Reserves Policy (N.B. adopted 25/03/2011)	<p>The Treasurer recommended the following reserves / savings account policy: within the next 5 years the Federation plans to build up savings for six months operational cost coverage as restricted reserves. Currently the restricted reserves are at 145.000 Euro.</p> <p>For the use of the reserves to cover losses and cash flow problems the following was recommended after discussions:</p> <p>Up to 10.000 Euro: The Director can withdraw the amount to cover cash flow problems, but has to put it back in when the cash flow problem is solved. Up to 20.000 Euro: The Director needs the Presidents permission to withdraw amounts Above 20.000 Euro: The Council has to authorize the withdrawal from the account.</p> <p>It was clarified that restricted reserves are different from ring fenced project funds.</p>	<p>Restricted reserves should be built up in the next 5 years to cover operational costs for at least 6 months.</p> <p>For the use of the reserves to cover losses and cash flow problems decisions can be taken as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Up to 10.000 Euro: The Director can withdraw the amount to cover cash flow problems, but has to put it back in when the cash flow problem is solved. The President should be informed - Up to 20.000 Euro: The Director needs the President's approval to withdraw amounts - Above 20.000 Euro: The Council has to authorize the withdrawal from the account. <p>The amounts are considered per year.</p>
21/09/2011	Risk Assessment	<p>The Strategic Risk Register was still valid and a good and comprehensive reflection on the risk the Federation could face.</p> <p>The GA 2011 was informed that a risk register has been prepared</p>	DC to add introductory paragraph to Risk Register pointing out that the risks are potential and not existing risks.

21/09/2011	Sections	<p>The Internal Auditor David Cameron concluded that only one of his 21 recommendations (see his report GA 2011) had not yet been implemented: the one referring to the role of the sections. This had not been progressed.</p>	<p>Role of the sections to become a key priority for the workplan of the new Council.</p> <p>Incorporate role of sections into guidance document to the new Council.</p>
02/02/2012		<p>An analysis concerning the role of the Sections following a request expressed during the sections meeting in November 2011 was done. The report, which was previously circulated to the Sections for comments, concludes that the current statutes are clear enough. No further feedback or comments were received from sections on the report.</p> <p>The Council fully discussed the issue, and decided that no further changes to the statutes or regulations are required as the role and positions of sections is clear.</p> <p>However sympathetic regarding the concerns expressed by some sections about double membership fee payments, the council recommends that this matters be resolved within the relevant sections. Support, assistance and guidance will be provided by the Directorate if required.</p>	<p>Circulate MH report.</p> <p>MH to communicate to the sections regarding the decisions of the Council.</p>
21/09/2011	Statute change	<p>The German section had submitted a statute change request, however it was submitted outside of the statutory deadline and could therefore not be processed for the current</p>	<p>See "Sections"</p>

		<p>General Assembly.</p> <p>The request was that members of the EUROPARC Federation that were also members of a section, had to become section members. The Council discussed this motion. The issue had been raised in 2008 and been rejected by the sections and membership then. Considerable efforts had been made since then to bring the sections closer to the Federation, e.g. giving the sections a seat on the Council, etc.</p> <p>Council members felt that the role and involvement of sections needed revising, particularly in the light of the recommendations of the Internal Auditor.</p> <p>The first step would be to raise the issue at the next Sections meeting in November in Regensburg.</p> <p>Council members agreed that this issue needed careful consideration at future meetings.</p>	
02/02/2012	Treasurer	<p>The Council accepted Gsi's resignation. The Council appointed PC as the new Treasurer for 3 years.</p> <p>GSi is no more the Treasurer of the Federation PC is nominated Treasurer.</p>	
24/05/2012		<p>AfterDC's suggestion in 2011, Council decided to create a finance management subgroup, which function is the discussion of concrete financial issues of EP Federation if needed.</p>	<p>Council suggests Giampiero to be the third member of the finance management subgroup. If Giampiero negates, Gabor will head</p>

		<p>The finance management subgroup consists of Treasurer, Internal Auditor plus one Council member.</p>	<p>in.</p> <p>TH asks Giampero to be in the finance management subgroup.</p>
29/09/2010	Working groups	<p>The working group guidelines were amended to reflect suggestions of members and to ensure that the working groups will have a revolving participation (i.e. different members participating after a few years). The road maps of the four approved working groups were noted by Council and Council was informed that the Economics Working group still needs to form itself.</p> <p>A discussion around the relation between working groups and evaluation committees arose. It was noted that members of the evaluation committee should not be members of the working group. The council further discussed :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Decision making regarding the award/re-award of the Charter and TB certificate - The re-evaluation periods of awards and the possibility to allow for evaluation gaps. 	<p>The working groups and their road maps and the council representatives for each of them were approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transboundary WG - PC - Sustainable Tourism WG - PC - Health -RA - Wildernis - ES - Lobbying Forum - DL/ES <p>Members of the evaluation committees cannot be members of the working groups and that this needs to be reflected in the guidelines. They can be invited as technical experts if needed to the sessions/work of the working group. The STEC and TB working group were granted an exception until the end of the first 2 year working period .</p> <p>Evaluation committees: should give recommendations to council about the award or re-award of certificates. The Council then takes the final decisions (Electronical discussion) about the awarding.</p>

			Re-evaluations are to be made after 5 years, even if re-evaluations are done later than the expiration of the certificate, the certificate will only be re-awarded for 5 years following the previous 5 years. No evaluation gaps are allowed.
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26/03/2011		<p>Sustainable Tourism Working Group: PC presented the list of suggested representatives and invitees, which was approved by the Council. STWG is still waiting for confirmation from WTO and IUCN, as well as from the German section.</p> <p>The Council also approved the work plan and noted that the first meeting is due to take place in May in La Garocha, Spain.</p> <p>List of representatives and invitees was approved and the Council gave the selected representative the mandate to carry out the work plan as suggested.</p>	
		<p>Ecosystems Working Group: The Council adopted the submitted Working Group road map. A member contact will not be appointed until after the elections. However current council members are welcome to participate in the working group, if they wish.</p>	<p>The submitted Ecosystems Working Group road map was adopted.</p> <p>Member contact to be appointed after September Council election.</p>
		<p>Natura 2000 Working Group: GS resubmitted his proposal for a N2000</p>	<p>GS to present a Terms of Reference for representatives and draft a</p>

		<p>working group. Recruitment from the sections proved unsuccessful and GS asked for an endorsement from the Council in order to set up the group.</p> <p>The Council asked GS to provide a person specification for representatives and draft a framework document for the group by the end of April. The Council will consider the drafts and discuss whether the sections would be approached for membership at the next meeting.</p>	<p>framework template until the end of April. CR to provide him with a template</p>
02/02/2012		<p>EC would be particularly interested on having positive feedback concerning the social and economic benefits of N2000, and the idea to elaborate an award was suggested.</p> <p>TH informed the Council that the celebration of 20 years of N2000 will take place during the EUROPARC conference 2012.</p>	<p>Directorate to investigate the possibility to make a project proposal about the social and economic values of N2000. (EB offered the support of Cairngorm NP)</p>
		<p>Charter Evaluation Committee The Council noted the resignation of Manfred Pils. Suggested replacements were Norbert Heukness, Xavier Font and Asnate Ziemele.</p> <p>To ensure diversity but at the same time continuity in the Evaluation Committee the Council resolved to change the appointment process to a fixed term appointment on a rotational basis. Details to be agreed after recommendations from CR and WF.</p>	<p>Appoint replacement based on recommendation from Directorate.</p> <p>Agreed to change appointment of Evaluation Committee members to be for a fixed term and on a rotational basis.</p>

02/02/2012		CR and FM introduced the idea, suggested by the French Section, to move out of the Conference the Charter award ceremony into a specific event in Brussels. The idea was welcomed by the Council.	Directorate to further explore the organisation of a specific Charter event in Brussels
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