

EUROPARC Federation
Council Meeting Minutes, 15th May 2014

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| Location: | Reims/ Ay, France | | | |
| Date: | Thursday, 15 th May 2014 | Start : | 9:30 | End : 16:30 |
| Attendees: | <p>Council Members Present: Thomas Hansson, Rolands Auziņš, Ignace Shops, Gábor Szilagy, Giampiero Sammuri, Marian Jager-Wöltgens, Dominique Leveque, Co-Opted Council members present: Eric Baird, Paulo Castro (Treasurer), Kaja Lotman (Nordic Baltic Section President – Section representative) Others Present: Carol Ritchie (Director), Meldra Langenfelde (Executive Administrator, minutes), Wilf Fenten (EUROPARC Consulting), David Cameron (Internal Auditor)</p> | | | |
| Apologies | - | | | |

| Agen da Item | Notes | Decisions Taken | Actions |
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| 0. | The president opened the meeting and welcomed all participants. | | |
| 1. | Minutes of Ballater Council meeting | Decisions Taken | Actions |
| | | Minutes are approved. | |
| 2. | Matters arising | Decisions Taken | Actions |
| | Governance report issue – David Cameron clarified some issues about the report he has to submit. | Council is going to wait for the finalised report until the next meeting. | |
| 3. | Membership report | Decisions Taken | Actions |
| | <p>After the presentation of the report the reasons of the Metsähallitus membership change request were discussed. Thomas Hansson and Carol Ritchie had contacted them and received a very good explanation (see Annex 1). The number of members stays the same (as two members resign, but two new apply for a membership), but the total amount of received membership fees will decrease.</p> <p>Regional membership is a priority to Metsähallitus. They would like to strengthen the regional representation on a structural way. Their reorganisation is one of the reasons for the proposed changes in the</p> | <p>Council officially approves the new members: Professional Association <i>Swiss Rangers</i>, Switzerland; Vätsäri Wilderness Area, Metsähallitus, Finland; Syöte National Park, Metsähallitus, Finland</p> <p>Council notes the resignation the following members: Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services, Steering</p> | |

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| | <p>membership by EUROPARC.</p> <p>Kaya Lotman would like to get more information concerning the sections, especially about resignations and membership issues, from the Directorate.</p> <p>National Trust is reconsidering the membership.</p> <p>Giampiero Sammuri reports that Federico Minozzi took part in the GA of Italian members. In September several members could return to the Federation. He has had private problems and therefore could not ensure his presence at several meetings. From now on the Italian members shall have a better financial situation. A letter has been sent from Federparchi to the members with an explanation of membership issues. In 2-3 months the situation shall improve.</p> | <p>Units; Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services, Archipelago National Park</p> | <p>Directorate to inform sections representative on matters related to the sections, to send a list of members resigned (in order to ask the sections those members to remain otherwise they need to resign from sections as well).</p> <p>Directorate prepares a list of non-paying members and sends to the Council before the end of May 2014.</p> <p>Welcome of Giampiero Sammuri to improve the membership incomes level from Italy.</p> |
| 4 | Treasurer´s report | | |

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| | <p>Treasurer reported according to the report. Financially membership income is on schedule. Costs and incomes are in balance to date. Membership payments are done on regular basis and similar to the previous years. The NGO Grant instalment has not yet been received, but shall be transferred in the next weeks.</p> <p>Discussions on NGO grant proposal – how to make it more realistic to the situation of incomes. Proposal was discussed – first to plan a budget and then to put into the NGO grant and see that NGO grant income makes a 25% income.</p> | <p>Council noted the report.</p> | <p>Treasurer and Director need to consider how to prepare a more realistic annual budget plan for the next year.</p> |
| <p>5.</p> | <p>Directorate report</p> | <p>Decisions Taken</p> | <p>Actions</p> |
| | <p>Carol Ritchie confirmed the willingness to cooperate with EUROSITE. A bid for the bio-geographic project is being prepared. EUROSITE and EUROPARC will go together for a new application with ECNC. Deadline is the 10th June. Discussions about the budget will take place. It will be a commercial activity and therefore Federation will be taxed for this.</p> <p>Gábor Szilagyi added that in the bio-geographical meetings just ministry representatives, NGO and scientists take part and not the PA managers that should change in the future.</p> <p>Project proposal perspectives for the Federation were listed. Possible financial donors – BfN (Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, DBU (German Federal Environment Foundation) and ERASMUS for youth projects. Project proposals are in preparation.</p> <p>Dominique Leveque suggested that project proposals could be given over to EUROPARC Consulting in order not to lose the opportunities.</p> <p><u>David Cameron</u>: The Council should remember this when discussing</p> | <p>Council notes the report.</p> | |

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| <p>new structures that EUROPARC Consulting could take on these jobs as it would make accounting cleaner and not reduce the Federation NGO grant. The question should always be who can do things best and who brings most benefit to the Federation in the long-term.”</p> <p>Comments on the new design for the EUROPARC WEBSITE Ignace Shops pointed out that it could be useful to design home page according to the suggestions expressed during the of consultation process for future developments. He also proposed to keep a separate section for the needs of the annual conference on the Federation’s homepage.</p> <p>Eric Baird added that ATS support shall be mentioned so that the members get to know about it.</p> <p>PANPARKS Question – how to response to the Federation members within the PanParks? Federation is open and there should be a financial proposal for that – financial model how to support 20 members without receiving any financial incomes for the services.</p> <p><u>Ignace Schops</u>: Federation should attract the ones from PanParks who are not members of Federation. <u>Paulo Castro</u>: Their certification approach can be easily adapted to the Charter methodology. <u>Thomas Hansson</u>: Contact to them could be established through existing members and not necessarily by the Directorate. It should not be automatic and with a fair economic result. <u>Carol Ritchie</u>: Wild Europe is also interested in the PanParks network. <u>Paulo Castro</u>: It is necessary to wait because of the ongoing bankruptcy</p> | | |
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| <p>process. Out of all PanParks members just one is a Charter Park.</p> <p>CONFERENCE 2014 Conference 2014 – a deal for accommodation is being organised for the council and staff. Programme and WS will be managed by the Directorate. Irish colleagues have hired an events management company for the organisation of the conference.</p> <p>CONFERENCE 2015 Due to the fact that there is no certain proposal received yet, instead of a big conference an international meeting for Charter most probably will take place in Portugal. But there is no final contract signed, the news shall follow in a one week´s time. There is also an possibility that a smaller one day meeting could take place in Brussels or Regensburg.</p> <p>Consultation with a lawyer A meeting with the German lawyer is planned in June to discuss about the legal situation for a <i>Verein</i>, especially about possible and necessary changes in some governance procedures of the Federation.</p> <p>World Parks Congress</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. There will be a Europe led event in one of the pavilions. What is our message?2. A short speech in plenary sessions should be provided.3. Side events. Will EUROPARC host a side event? Action – investigate possibilities and costs. <p>European emergent items of the future – EUROPARC could lead the discussion. Four submissions for the programme have been handed in.</p> | <p>Council decided to proceed with planning of a one-day annual meeting if a negative answer received from Portugal.</p> | <p>Marian Jager-Wöltgens proposes to discuss within the consultation meeting a proposal to organise a workshop during the conference for the planning of the next GA.</p> |
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| <p>Answer to be received in the beginning of June. DG Economy and DG Environment are going to fund the event at the WPC. EUROPARC is investigating possibilities of being involved in that event, but it is not yet known how much finances are available.</p> <p>Discussion about the number of people that shall participate in the Congress was held. Final decision: if financially viable two persons should attend the event as this is a high level meeting. It must be decided what shall be the outcomes of the participation in order to justify the costs to members.</p> <p>EUROPARC Conference 2014 workshops Council members were asked to express their readiness to facilitate one of the Conference 2014 workshops. A remark from <u>Eric Baird</u>: Sentence in the WS 6 description about the outputs covers with what WG has already done, therefore it shall be changed. Carol Ritchie replies that the work of the WS is going to be added to WG.</p> <p><i>The current situation with the workshops:</i></p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">WS1 – ?</td> <td style="width: 50%;">WS8 – ?</td> </tr> <tr> <td>WS2 – Ignace</td> <td>WS9 – Irish</td> </tr> <tr> <td>WS3 – Rolands</td> <td>WS10 – Irish</td> </tr> <tr> <td>WS4 – occupied</td> <td>WS11 – ?</td> </tr> <tr> <td>WS5 – Carles</td> <td>WS12 – Dominique</td> </tr> <tr> <td>WS6 – Richard Blackman</td> <td>WS13 – Paulo</td> </tr> <tr> <td>WS7 – Gabor</td> <td>WS14 – Thomas</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>WS15 – Dea</td> </tr> </table> | WS1 – ? | WS8 – ? | WS2 – Ignace | WS9 – Irish | WS3 – Rolands | WS10 – Irish | WS4 – occupied | WS11 – ? | WS5 – Carles | WS12 – Dominique | WS6 – Richard Blackman | WS13 – Paulo | WS7 – Gabor | WS14 – Thomas | | WS15 – Dea | <p>The council decided that Ignace Schops and Carol Ritchie will be the representatives of the EUROPARC Federation during the World Parks Congress.</p> | <p>One page of analysis shall be prepared by both representatives beforehand for the council and members with expected results of participation at the WPC.</p> <p>Eric Baird and Marian Jager-Wöltgens to agree about the facilitation of one of the Conference WS.</p> |
| WS1 – ? | WS8 – ? | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WS2 – Ignace | WS9 – Irish | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| | WS15 – Dea | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>6. Feedback from President and council members on EUROPARC representation, including feedback from WG</p> | <p>Decisions Taken</p> | <p>Actions</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| <p><u>Ignace Schops</u>: 05.03.2014 – meeting with the SLOW Food International 01.04. in Brussels – Forum for Agriculture (FFA) – Quality of Life and Nature – prepared key-note statements.</p> <p>06.03. Meeting with Civil Scape (Dirk Gotzmann) – network grown out of a project – organisation of landscape management organisations that would like to have a MOU with EUROPARC Federation.</p> <p>Participated in the establishment of the Low Countries section on 25.03. in Antwerp. Had a meeting with a Polish delegation. Polish PA managers would like to discuss membership of the Federation.</p> <p>03.04. – The Hague – international conference on city biodiversity – gave a key note speech for the Federation.</p> <p>06.05 – participated in the IUCN Gland meeting on WPC and Green list.</p> <p>26.05. – San Francisco – Goldman Environmental Prize – representation of the Federation.</p> <p><u>Kaja Lotman</u>: Communicated with sections. Concerning the Nordic-Baltic section – facilitated the Skype meeting on membership consultation and took part in the meeting with Nature Conservation Agency of Latvia. There are common plans about a cross-border certificate.</p> <p><u>Marian Jager-Wöltgens</u>: Participated in the members consultation meeting in Berlin. Not a good attendance there from the side of members, as well as nobody present from the board of EUROPARC Germany.</p> <p><u>Gábor Szilagyj</u>: Conference report 2013 published.</p> <p>A Junior Ranger project has been initiated last year in Hungary. It has been successful so far. There is an ongoing contest for youngsters throughout the year. The winner shall attend the Conference in Ireland.</p> <p>He attended the EAI meeting on membership consultation.</p> <p>Facilitated the Hungarian focus group meeting. Together with Federico Minozzi prepared a presentation for a meeting with the EU Commission Natura 2000 WG. Additionally sent a position paper to the council members.</p> <p><u>Eric Baird</u>: Worked on the report on Health working group’s work that has been finalised; input for home page would be necessary. Facilitated the EAI meeting on membership consultation.</p> <p><u>Paulo Castro</u>: Participated in the Charter Verifiers training, in a meeting on organisation of the meeting for Charter areas in Portugal. Recently he has done several Charter verification visits.</p> <p><u>Dominique Leveque</u>: Participated in the French section meeting and in a meeting on Charter.</p> | | <p>Directorate to contact Civil Scape about a possibility to sign a MOU in future.</p> |
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| | <p><u>David Cameron</u>: Submitted EUROPARC Consulting report and discussed it at the EUROPARC Consulting board meeting in April.</p> <p><u>Rolands Auzins</u>: Participated in the re-elaboration of the guidelines for TB areas, as well as in the membership consultation meeting on Skype with the Nordic-Baltic section members. Worked on the process of official cooperation establishment between the Nature Conservation Agency of Latvia and the Environmental Board of Estonia. Took part in a ProPark project meeting in Lithuania in April.</p> <p><u>Thomas Hansson</u>: Regular contacts with Carol Ritchie on Federation management issues.</p> <p>Visited Brussels office of IUCN together with Federico Minozzi.</p> <p>Provided Charter presentation in the Outdoor Research Conference in April.</p> <p>Represented Swedish members' opinion in the consultation process. Took part in the EUROPARC Consulting board meeting.</p> | | |
| 7. | EUROPARC Consulting report | Decisions Taken | Actions |
| | <p>Report commented by Wilf Fenten.</p> <p><u>Wilf Fenten</u>: The last six months of 2013 have been financially bad for the company. This year has started on a more positive note. There is no extended travel budget available right now; just participation in council and board meetings can be financed. EUROPARC Consulting business plan has to be revised. Finding partners, who can do pre-financing, is being carried out.</p> | Council noted report. | |
| 8. | EUROPARC Consulting and Federation – Internal Audit draft report | Decisions Taken | Actions |
| | <p>David Cameron gave a short insight in the contents of the report.</p> <p><u>David Cameron</u>: Things do not necessarily need to change, but rethinking of the structures of the EUROPARC Federation shall be taken into consideration. What is the right structure is in terms of the financial structure? If we do we have a consulting – several aspects need to be thought over. It is necessary to go through the strategy process and keep that in mind.</p> <p><u>Wilf Fenten</u>: A revised Internal Auditor's report had been tabled before</p> | Council noted report. | |

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| | <p>the Council meeting, after an earlier version of the Internal Auditor's report had been discussed at the Consulting Board meeting in Brussels in April. However, the report David Cameron sent was the earlier version and not the revised version which included all the comments by the EUROPARC Consulting Board members.</p> <p>Wilf Fenten added that EUROPARC Consulting very much welcomes the report and hopes to be fully involved in the strategy discussions. David Cameron will send that latest version immediately after the Council meeting.</p> <p><u>David Cameron</u> added that the governance report is ready for the GA.</p> <p><u>Carol Ritchie</u> informed about the proposal of the candidacy for the next Internal Auditor – Mr Roger De Freitas who has NGO and international work experience.</p> | <p>Council agreed to the proposed candidacy of Mr Roger De Freitas.</p> | <p>David Cameron and Roger de Freitas shall meet and discuss some issues after the council meeting.</p> |
| <p>9.</p> | <p>Low Countries section</p> | | |
| | <p>The Low Countries sections statutes were approved by the Council.</p> <p><u>Ignace Schops</u>: Section would like to receive right to vote if possible in future. The section could attract 15 – 20 new members to the Federation in five years time.</p> | <p>The Low Countries sections statutes approved by the Council.</p> | <p>A letter about the approval of the statutes prepared and sent by Directorate.</p> |
| <p>10.</p> | <p>Recommendation of Alfred Toepfer Scholarships 2014/2015</p> | | |
| | <p>In total 25 applications have been received and there are 7 outstanding ones. The jury has evaluated them and proposes the final candidates.</p> | <p>Council approved following ATS scholarship 2014 holders:</p> <p>Joss Ratcliffe, Scotland, UK – (key issues: peat bogs and climate change, carbon sinks, woodland, involvement of people)</p> <p>Milene Matos, Portugal – (key issues: alien species, not just how to radiate them, but more stress on</p> | <p>Directorate to inform the scholars and the ATS, as well as to inform the other applicants about the results of the contest.</p> |

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| | | philosophy behind it and communication process) Natalya Yakusheva, Sweden/Russia – (key issues: implementation of the EU Biodiversity strategy) | Directorate should secure continuity, by showing the results of the realised study trips afterwards to the council and to members. |
| 11. | Awarding of Alfred Toepfer medal 2014 | | |
| | No nominations received. | Council agreed to keep the nominations open for the next year. | |
| 12. | Consultation <i>Our Future dialogues</i> update | | |
| | <p>Thomas Hansson pointed out that position papers and proposals for the meetings shall be sent in advance and distributed by the Directorate.</p> <p>It is agreed among the council members to prepare a common opinion and to discuss the issues with the section representatives the next day.</p> <p>A question – How the strategy is going to be elaborated? <u>Carol Ritchie</u>: The council has asked for a task force on the consultation. What is the role of the task force now? No answer received from the council members.</p> <p>The next stage of the process – the questionnaire material has to be reviewed in order to prioritise the actions. During the meetings the priorities shall be discussed and chosen. After the meetings work of the strategy drafting committee will start. From the membership 4-5 forward looking people will be invited who are fluent in English and can represent various regions. Carol Ritchie will oversee the whole process. The drafting process will take place 3-4 days in June. On 21st June it is necessary to distribute a draft paper with priorities in it. Action plan will</p> | | <p>PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE of further steps of strategy preparation – see Annex 2.</p> |

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| <p>be elaborated until September. This document first will come to the council. Sections consultation will be done afterwards. Section representatives need to transfer the message further to members. Final draft shall be approved during the General Assembly. Carol Ritchie gives a summary of consultation process results.</p> <p>Council members expressed their opinions on priorities. <i>(copy from the flip-charts follows:)</i></p> <p>Work priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work priorities provided to members feedback<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Practical management for PA's emphasis• Good lobbying to EU• Mutual communications<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Improve to get results• Better incorporation of Federation into day to day work of section and members• Be clear no why we do – communicate better <p>Council to address during the joint meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sections – representations• Council – more transparent and low visibility improved• GA• Lobbying – representations• Extending the membership• Improved organisation and structure/governance• Feel less alienated – better representation / structure governance<ul style="list-style-type: none">– better process / GA• What are our deliverables and what structure is then needed<ul style="list-style-type: none">– exchange good practice– better network to deliver sustainable tourism | | |
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| <p>Ignace Schops put several points for discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Definition sections?<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Geographical area's?– Today we have 8 → future ???• Situation President<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Directly elected by GA– Elected within the Council• Introduction Vice-President(s)• Co-opted members<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Voting rights in the council or not?• Members >< sections?<ul style="list-style-type: none">– How many members are represented in sections today?<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rate: 60 % members are represented in sections /40%• Integration staff of sections in staff HQ<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Cost (who is paying?)– LAT-relation?– ...?• Increase the Brussels (EU) footprint• Broaden the network → increase members <p>Discussions about the election process and proportion of section representatives in the council took place.</p> <p>The main discussion points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• It should be defined what the council wants the sections to do in order to make their existence more legitimate.• 5-7 key roles of the council have to be agreed with section representatives in order to be proposed at the GA to the members.• Each member of the council should have a function; there should be more specialists and fewer representatives.• There should be representation of all sections at the council.• The geographic aspect should not be more important than the one | <p>Council agreed to provide the co-opted positions open for the section members already for the upcoming GA.</p> | |
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| | <p>of different interests and competencies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is necessary to have a look on the list of tasks of the council – if it is still up-to-date.• Proposal for the future composition of the council – 1 president, 3 members elected, 3 proposed by sections.• After discussions with section members, it is necessary to look for a possibility to have an extraordinary GA in order to save time.• It is necessary to contact the members after the meeting directly, not just after the GA. It will be too late after the last council meeting before the GA as too complicated things shall be discussed.• A week before the GA there should be a presentation of the council for GA prepared to be agreed on. | | |
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