

EUROPARC Federation, Council Meeting

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| Location: | Regensburg, Germany | | | |
| Date: | Friday, 25 th March 2011 | Start : | 9:30 | End : 18.00 |
| Attendees: | Council Members Present: Erika Stanciu (President), Eberhard Henne, Rolands Auzins, Dominique Leveque, Gábor Szilagyi Co-Opted Council members present: Marian Jager-Wöltgens, Johannes Hager, Paulo Castro Others Present.: Wilf Fenten (EUROPARC Consulting), Carol Ritchie (Director), Regina Schöfer (Executive Administrator) | | | |
| Apologies | Valter Zago, Pio Forte (Treasurer), David Cameron (Internal Auditor) | | | |

| Agenda Item | Notes | Decisions Taken | Actions |
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| | The Director welcomed all participants to the new Headquarter facilities and introduced Regina Schöfer, who has taken on the post of Executive Administrator during Cornelia Ehler's maternity leave. | The agenda was amended to accommodate an urgent discussion on funding opportunities. Items 11 (risk management and internal audit) were postponed to the next meeting. Any Other Business to include: Charter evaluation committee PAME project follow-on outline | Next agenda to include risk management and internal audit |
| 1. | Minutes of previous meeting | Decisions Taken | Actions |
| | The minutes of the previous meeting were discussed and a run through the action points was done (see Matters Arising). | The minutes of the meeting held on 29 th September 2010 in Pescaroli, Italy, were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting. | |
| 2 | Matters arising | Decisions Taken | Actions |
| | a) Reserves Policy b) Crib sheet for Council Members c) Aitkin Clark Fund: Despite several attempts a proposal and update could not be obtained. | The policy was adopted. The crib sheet was adopted. | Directorate to provide PowerPoint presentation of crib sheet. |
| | d) Funding streams: E-Grant, Swiss and Norwegian Cohesion Funds will be launched this year, which are country specific grants. Other suggested funding streams included Interreg and EU projects. | | Directorate to encourage members to access grants to promote EUROPARC in their countries. PC to pass EU financing contacts for international cooperation to CR. |

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| | <p>Directorate is working on a project draft with the MAVA Foundation.</p> <p>CR to make presentation in Denmark to two foundations. Contacts were initially through the Junior Ranger programme, but may also produce project opportunities.</p> | | <p style="text-align: right;">CR to make presentations to foundations in Denmark.</p> |
| | <p>e) NGO Grant: The Director informed Council members that the Federation had not received the NGO grant for 2011 and explained that this would have a major negative impact on the 2011/12 budget.</p> <p>The Council discussed the decision mechanism for NGO grants in Brussels and felt that the lack of transparency and justification called for action from those organisations who had not received the grant.</p> <p>d) Council Operational Manual Council members requested that long term decisions taken during Council meetings should be incorporated into the Council's operation manual as a reminder for action and to ensure continuity in the operation of the Council.</p> <p>e) Risk assessment and the internal auditor report. A final report had not been prepared by the auditor.</p> <p>Directorate carried out a risk management review during a staff meeting in December.</p> <p>f) The President had met with a CBD representative. She felt that the necessary resources to get onto the technical CBD board could only be secured through a new project. Therefore, the recommendation is that Europarc does not take an active role in coordinating CBD PoWPA implementation without having resources secured,</p> | <p>Directorate/Council to investigate process and write possible petition paper in conjunction with other NGOs.</p> <p>In future long-term decisions to be incorporated into the Operational Manual of the Council/Directorate, as appropriate. Action: RS</p> <p>Postponed to the June meeting.</p> | <p style="text-align: right;">Director to contact Eurosite.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Council members to contact NGOs in their countries and ask for interest in signing a petition for improved funding process/criteria.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">MJ to contact European Parliament to ask for funding policy and raise the matter.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Directorate to prepare letter on behalf of interested organisations, if any, and send to EU Commission.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Council members to send comments to David Cameron on the risk management report by early June.</p> |

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| | g) Best EUROPARC Project Award: | Postponed to the June meeting. | ES and FM to formulate proposal for the June meeting. |
| | h) EUROPARC 2012: France had declined; a decision was still outstanding from Belgium. | | CR to contact Belgium for their decision and, if needed, lobby with members for a possible venue in 2012. |
| 3. | Report from President and Members | Decisions Taken | Actions |
| | <p>Erika:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended Europarc/Eurosite joint board meeting in November. Agreed to draft common policy on closer cooperation and next steps to explore possibilities for working together. • Represented EUROPARC at Wilderness Working Group during the November conference. Also organized working group meeting last week on the definition of "wilderness". A draft definition is due in May/June. • Gave speech at a high level meeting in Kempen National Park in Belgium organised by Ignace Schops. Participants included the EU Commissioner and President. • Attended Europarc 2011 meeting in Stuttgart • EUROPARC promotion in Moldova • Presentation to Klagenfurt University • Personal performance evaluation of Director – CR had met all her objectives <p>Marian:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended Europarc/Eurosite joint board meeting in November. • Liaison including meeting in Berlin with EH on follow-up of PAME report. • Development of contact with Hans Schiphorst of SMP. <p>Gabor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended CAP seminar in Brussels. • Organisation of ministerial visit to Hortobagy Park on 29-31 May. Promotion of EUROPARC at event through brochures and information material. • Joint organisation EU Nature Directors visiting Hungary on 8/9 | <p>Council agreed to sending a questionnaire asking members of both organisations what they would need from a PA network.</p> | <p>Europarc/Eurosite Joint Board Meeting report at next meeting.</p> |

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| | June. EUROPARC will be invited to attend. | |
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Dominique:

- Attended “Towards seventh environmental programme” conference in Brussels in November.
- Attended CAP working group organised by EUROPARC in Brussels.
- Active promotion of EUROPARC membership to French parks.
- Informed Council that French section retained president despite three year rotation rule.

Eberhard:

- Liaison with Euronature foundation in Germany.
- Development of contact with EU Commission NGO representative in Germany.
- Setting up new biosphere reserves in Eastern Germany.
- Working on PAME project follow up with Marian.
- Regional work in own biosphere reserve.

Paulo:

- Liaison with National Park NP Serra Saõ Mamede over a possible Charter application.
- Liaison with Azores to submit Charter application and Federation membership. Met with Regional Director of the Azores and gave interview during opening ceremony.
- Investigation of alternative funding opportunities through e-grant and Swiss and Norwegian cohesion funds.
- Presentation on Charter to Metsähallitus board in Finland together with EUROPARC Consulting.
- Meeting with the Minister of Environment in Puglia where the regional government is committed to implementing Charter in all parks.
- Meeting with Federparchi regarding the Charter.
- Organisation and attendance of 7th CharterNet meeting in Serbia.

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with European colleagues re Life project application • Attended BfN Sustainable Tourism project kick-off meeting in the Sierra Nevada. | | |
| | <p>Johannes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was only recently appointed as section representative to the Council. • Preparing EUROPARC conference and General Assembly in Germany in September 2011. <p>Rolands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended Wilderness conference in Brussels in November. • Attending Nordic-Baltic section assembly. • Attended Baltic nature tourism conference in Riga. • Following progress of healthy working groups. • Attending Benchmarking event in Scotland next week. <p>Wilf:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closer cooperation than ever before with EUROPARC Federation. • Meeting with CR in UK. • Attended the Single Habitat Forum in UK. | | |
| 4. | Treasurer's Report | Decisions Taken | Actions |
| | <p>The Treasurer had tendered his apologies.</p> <p>The Council noted that due to personal circumstances the Treasurer was currently not able to contribute towards the financial management of the Federation. However, due to the recent budgetary developments the Federation needs an even more active involvement from the Treasurer than previously</p> <p>It was resolved that ES would contact Pio to establish future cooperation. Should he be unable to continue the Council would need to co-opt a replacement.</p> | <p>Resolved to contact Treasurer and establish future cooperation. Deadline to be established for the current report.</p> | <p>ES to write to Treasurer regarding future cooperation.</p> <p>Council to identify and co-opt a new Treasurer if Pio cannot fulfil tasks in due time for this year.</p> |
| 5. | Directorate's Report | Decisions Taken | Actions |

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| <p>Director's Report: The Director's report had been circulated prior to the meeting and Carol Ritchie updated the Council on the following:</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The Council noted the financial statement from the accountant. CR explained that the deficit of €91.000 was mainly due to a shortfall in membership fees, lack of income from EUROPARC Consulting and pre-financing of current projects. The latter would be offset in later statements.</p> <p>The Council noted that current reserves stood at €136.820, which allowed the Federation to continue with core business until the end of the year. However the loss of the NGO grant and some membership income created a big hole in the 2011 budget and unless project work could plug the hole, the Federation would run out of reserves by early 2012.</p> <p>The staff had been briefed on the situation and were ready to concentrate on project development. Council members requested more detailed information on projects particularly with a view to finances and project development.</p> <p>Highlights in 2010 included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased networking within the Federation. - The successful annual conference and general assembly in Italy. - The Living Parks Exhibition which covered 8000km and was now on its second tour of duty. It had been seen by over 10.000 visitors. <p>Membership Report: The membership report had been circulated prior to the meeting and RS gave an update as follows:</p> | <p>Agreed to change reporting from the Directorate to quarterly reports. The current format will be maintained.</p> <p>Directorate to submit a separate summary sheet on project development and implementation as part of the quarterly report.</p> <p>Since the last meeting on 29 September 2010 in Italy the following applications had been approved by email decision:</p> | <p>Decision to be reflected in the Operational Manual of the Directorate.</p> <p>ES to provide an example of table for adaptation/use.</p> <p>CR to provide copy of NGO report summary to Council members.</p> |
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| | <p>On 23 March €98.897,84 membership fees had been paid; this equates to 33% of the revised estimated membership income of €292.933,00.</p> <p>The Council noted a problem with payments in Italian parks. In 2010 only 78 (€60.356) of the 117 Italian members had paid their membership fees. This meant a shortfall in income of €19k from Italian parks.</p> <p>Should these payment issues continue in 2011, it would reduce the EUROPARC membership from currently 435 to 396. Including other strike-offs the figure could even be as low as 375.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kozara National Park, Bosnia-Herzegovina - Millevaches en Limousin Regional Park, France - Avesnois Regional Park, France - Marais of Cotenin and Bessin Regional Park, France - Mons d'Ardèche Natural Regional Park, France - Living Rhine Association, France - Haut-Languedoc Regional Nature Park, France - Regional Agency Harz e.V., Germany - Giacomo Benelli, Italy - Kurtuvenai Regional Park, Lithuania - Environmental and Sea Regional Secretary (SRAM), Portugal - Djerdap National Park, Serbia <p>The following new membership application was approved during the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Natural Regional Park of Pilat, France. <p>The Council further noted the summary of strike-offs and resignations for 2010 as well as the resignation in 2011 of Centre for Nature Protection Hessen, Germany.</p> | |
| 6. | Working Groups Update | Decisions Taken | Actions |
| | <p>a) 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>b) Ecosystems Working Group: The Council adopted the submitted Working Group road map. A</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>The submitted Ecosystems Working Group road map was adopted.</p> | <p>STWG meeting report at next Council meeting.</p> |

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| | <p>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>c) Natura 2000 Working Group: GS resubmitted his proposal for a N2000 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>Member contact to be appointed after September Council election.</p> | <p>GS to present a Terms of Reference for representatives and draft a framework template until the end of April. CR to provide him with a template.</p> <p>CR to liaise with Eurosite to see if they already have such a working group.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Agenda item for next meeting.</p> |
| 8. | Conference Brief | Decisions Taken | Actions |
| | <p>CR reported that EUROPARC Germany, the Ministry of Baden-Württemberg and EUROPARC Federation had been working hard to bring EUROPARC 2011 together. There is a meeting in Bonn next week to finalise the programme. Key note speakers had been invited and all but the European Commission had confirmed.</p> <p>EUROPARC Germany had delegated the organisation of the workshops to EUROPARC Consulting and members were assigned as moderators to workshops.</p> | | |
| 9. | EUROPARC Consulting Report | Decisions Taken | Actions |
| | <p>WF had submitted a report for the meeting and updated the Council as follows:</p> <p>WF explained that Consulting's chief source of income was project development, which was virtually halted when Aitkin Clark died last year. The current chairman, Richard Partington, will retire from his current job shortly and be able to commit more time to Consulting business.</p> <p>The plan was to reach an annual turnover of €500.000 over 5 years. The target for 2011 was €50k.</p> | | <p>Council members to feed back ideas of work for EUROPARC Consulting to Wilf Fenten.</p> |

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| | <p>Consulting was waiting to hear whether their tender for a large project in Macedonia had been successful. WF was hoping the Council could assist in establishing a future direction, which Consulting would take forward.</p> <p>There will be one board meeting in April/May and another at the end of year. After the next board meeting Consulting is hoping to contribute around €10-11k to the Federation. Should Consulting win the Macedonian project their contribution in 2012 could be €30-40k.</p> <p>EUROPARC Consulting was celebrating its 10 anniversary this month and will amend their logo to reflect this.</p> | | |
| 10. | President/Treasurer/Council Elections | | |
| | <p>Council members noted that nominations were now open for all posts and will end in July.</p> <p>The Treasurer will be nominated from within Council or co-opted and not elected by the membership.</p> <p>Dominique Leveque is the only current member whose post is not up for election, as he was elected in 2009 to replace Martin Lane. Those members eligible for re-election were asked if they would stand again, and MJ, JH, PC and GS confirmed that they would. GS declared a possible interest in candidature for the president's role.</p> | | <p>CR and ES to organise a strategic planning session in July in Siggen for presidency and possibly Council candidates.</p> <p>Announcement to be sent to members in due time for all potential candidates to benefit from this opportunity.</p> |
| 11. | Funding Opportunities | | Actions |
| | <p>Due to the loss of the NGO grant income needed to be generated through project development and Council members were asked to suggest funding opportunities that could be backed up with direct, personal links to funders. This would then be used as a work plan by the Directorate together with the existing list of funders to generate income.</p> <p>The following suggestions were made:</p> | | |

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Life + Communication Wilderness project. A communications project over 3 years lead by WWF DCP and WWF AT with EUROPARC, and PanParks as possible project partners. The aim would be to promote and support the concept of wilderness. The Spanish Government may be willing to co-fund.

LIFE+ Communication Charter project: Led by EUROPARC with the aim to develop the protected areas network. STWG could help with implementation and administration.

LIFE+ Farming and biodiversity project. Netherlands

Life+ CAP project: 4 partners (Polish, Dartmoor and Flemish PAs + Hortobagy). Mirror to show to Commission how CAP influences protected area management, i.e. researching and demonstrating good/bad implications of CAP reform.

E-grants, Swiss and Norwegian cohesion funds: Would need to be accessed through members in those countries.

Nordic Council of Ministries

Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt (DBU): in Germany are project funders. Funding available particularly for the Eastern part of Germany.

NATO projects: Funding only through national government sponsors. EF would need mandate to run a project on the sponsor's behalf..

Approach **Alfred Töpfer Stiftung** to appeal for funding.

Approach **sections** for current projects that EF could participate in or at least inform directorate which projects are running, so that they can be centrally coordinated/communicated. Send list of project proposals and funding authorities to EF.

Enrol the help of the sections.

ES and CR to follow up

ES and PC to look into list of countries and topics that are funded and send information to CR.

RA to check funding opportunities and feed back to CR

JH to contact and feed back to CR

CR to find out more from BfN, Barbara Engels.

CR to write to sections on Council's behalf explaining the situation and asking for a list of projects, proposals and funding authorities.

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| 10 | Any Other Current Business | Decisions Taken | Actions |
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| | <p>a) Charter Evaluation Committee</p> <p>The Council noted the resignation of Manfred Pils. Suggested replacements were Norbert Heukness, Xavier Font and Asneda ???,</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.</p> <p>b) PAME follow-on project:</p> <p>MJ suggested to use the results of the PAME project to devise a list of criteria to assess the effectiveness of quality management systems in protected areas and formulate a common evaluation system. Currently each European country is developing its own quality system.</p> <p>The Council expressed an interest in the project subject to clarification of the project concept, feasibility and funding options.</p> <p>c) Dates and locations for next meetings:</p> <p>Following a funding offer from the Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Consumer Protection in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern in Germany, it was decided to hold the next Council meeting at the Biosphärenreservat Schaalsee on 15th-18th June. One condition of the funding is to include the aspect of biosphere reserves within Germany and the EU in the programme, which was agreed.</p> <p>The Council meeting after that will be during EUROPARC 2011 at the Biosphärenreservat Schwäbische Alb in Germany on 21 September.</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. Details to be agreed after recommendations from CR and WF.</p> | <p>CR to send thank you letter to Manfred Pils.</p> <p>CR and WF to evaluate candidates and send recommendation for appointment to Council members. Decision will be made by email.</p> <p>CR and WF to suggest rotation model and term duration to Council.</p> <p>MJ, WF and EH to submit a clear project concept including funding options.</p> |

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Minutes
Regina Schöfer