

**EUROPARC Federation**  
**Council Meeting Minutes, 9<sup>h</sup> October 2013**

<b>Location:</b>	Debrecen, Hungary			
<b>Date:</b>	Wednesday, 9 <sup>th</sup> October 2013	<b>Start :</b>	<b>9:00</b>	<b>End :</b> <b>15:30</b>
<b>Attendees:</b>	Council Members Present: Thomas Hansson, Rolands Auziņš, Marian Jager-Wöltgens, Dominique Leveque, Ignace Shops, Gábor Szilagy, David Cameron (Internal Auditor), Paolo Castro, Carol Ritchie (Director), Meldra Langenfelde (Executive Administrative, minutes) Co-Opted Council members present: Carles Castell Puig, Eric Baird Others Present: Wilf Fenten			
<b>Apologies</b>	Giampiero Sammuri			

Agen da Item	Notes	Decisions Taken	Actions
<b>0.</b>	The president opened the meeting and welcomed all participants. Thomas Hansson also indicated that apologies were sent by Giampiero Sammuri. The council decides to start the meeting with the General Assembly Management issue.		
<b>1.</b>	<b>General Assembly Management</b>	<b>Decisions Taken</b>	<b>Actions</b>
	Council members express their views on organisation of voting on council recommendation to the General Assembly: <u>Paulo Castro:</u> The ODC has proposed that EUROPARC goes on the option 6. Council has to explain this to people why ODC proposes to accept this option. <u>Thomas Hansson:</u> Council has to explain clearly why option 5 is proposed instead of option 6. <u>Domenique Leveque:</u> The council decision is both – strength and weakness. It is against democracy. ODC gave two options, council chose none of them. Council has to explain that a new structure is going to be made. <u>Marian Jager-Wöltgens:</u> The legal advice came very late. That was a sort of deadlock. EUROPARC really needs a new organisation with a new structure. It has been discussed for three times and still it is so complicated. She is surprised about President's decision to do it in a new way. Nothing much has happened between August and now. Nobody has looked if risks can		

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<p>be mitigated. Risks are too big – decision of the council. She stresses that the problem is not the agreement, but the structure. There will be problems for EUROPARC. Also for Eurosite. They will look for new partners.</p> <p><u>Ignace Schops</u>: It is important to be very strong during the General Assembly. Council has evaluated on the decision of the ODC. In this case the explanation is very crucial. It is necessary to prepare a PowerPoint presentation.</p> <p>Bird &amp; Bird proposed two options. Council has evaluated the conditions and decided not to go on with a new organisation. It is necessary to show that EUROPARC has been a strong partnership for 40 years. This is a keystone that has been evaluated a lot. Voting on proposal is 'yes' or 'no'. If it is no – it will be a completely new situation.</p> <p><u>Paulo Castro</u>: It is necessary to agree on the content. It is necessary to show why option 5 is not a good option. What is wrong with changing the statutes? Do we dislike the new name? EUROPARC has to change because times are changing.</p> <p><u>Thomas Hansson</u>: There was the ODC meeting in July. He encouraged them to take a position. Bird &amp; Bird and ODC representatives were positively tempered.</p> <p><u>Eric Baird</u>: July meeting was the one when they admitted that they have just two options.</p> <p><u>David Cameron</u>: It is necessary to outline what council wants. The negatives of establishment of a new organisation would mean a German <i>Verein</i> again and would cost more. Costing more money for something that it is possible to have anyway. It is necessary to show the cost and benefit analyses.</p> <p><u>Domenique Leveques</u>: He describes the French position. There are doubts in capacity to change, to have a real network. There is not a real understanding that according to German law it is not easy to change statutes. If council stays on its position, it is necessary to prove that there will be changes, show engagements.</p> <p><u>Gábor Szilagy</u>: This is the hardest decision EUROPARC has ever taken. What kind of voting members are there? Some of them have made decision. Some of them know more or less the situation and have not decided yet. The third group has no idea that that it is a serious decision but do not know what to vote for. There will be debates going on. Most of them will not understand what is actually going on. Council has to propose plausible options but discussion must be very open. It is necessary to go through what has been done since 2008, to explain the situation and to propose several options instead of one option.</p> <p><u>Carles Castell Puig</u>: The position of the different Sections about ODC report is very diverse, from whole support to whole rejection. In any case, there is a common feeling that the paper of the Sections has been not taken into account enough. It is necessary to be very open-minded during the general assembly and to explain everything well in</p>		
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<p>detail. Sections would like to have a merger therefore it is necessary to make a positive proposal, that council's position is to go on and to merge, but under certain circumstances.</p> <p>Referring to the Spanish Section situation, he mentions that it is very risky to change any letter or change the account number – so many members can be lost. There are many practical things that must be taken into account.</p> <p><u>Paulo Castro</u>: The main risk is to lose memberships. It is necessary to show that with or without Eurosite, EUROPARC is going to change. If it is possible to be clear on that and to communicate it.</p> <p><u>Marian Jager-Wöltgens</u>: Asks if council believes in the ability to change. She is rather sceptic. EUROPARC is not an interactive organisation at all. If it is not possible to show that organization intends to change and to say it in a very strong way – it will dissolve anyway.</p> <p><u>David Cameron</u>: He outlines that the council needed to have a discussion on how the network should evolve and change. However, there had not been sufficient time available to put to this discussion as so much time had been dominated by discussions around potential options for integration with Eurosite. There is an ability to change but business time of the council has been used wrongly.</p> <p><u>Eric Baird</u>: It is essential to think about the presentation. Marian has chaired the ODC. She underestimated their ability to accept option 5. Their position was clear no. Council has to explain it to members, as well as the proposals have to be explained explicitly in GA again. It is necessary to point out costs of rebranding, the possibility to lose the funding of ATS. Evaluation has been done and it has to be shown at the GA. It is necessary to show the wish for change despite the fact that all the time it has been discussed about the merger and there was no time to think about the change. Council has to say exactly what is going to change; must explain the process – describe evaluation – make positive proposals.</p> <p><u>Thomas Hansson</u>: EUROPARC does more than Eurosite for its members. It is necessary to express better what EUROPARC is doing.</p> <p><u>Carol Ritchie</u>: Reminds that council paused on the strategy work with members. Directorate had everything ready, but nevertheless is ready to continue in 2014. She mentions that EUROPARC has one of the most active memberships – approximately 80% of participation. She sees a member network that is interactive, still a strategic focus is missing.</p> <p>She presents a new publication – history of the EUROPARC. In this story it is possible to see that organisation has changed already several times. EUROPARC has been and it still is very responsive to change. She mentions that it is an unclear statement – what</p>		
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<p>shall be changed. Nothing has been tabled from the council.  <u>Eric Baird</u>: He expresses an opinion the members say they feel not to be heard. It is necessary to show in the presentation that they are heard.  <u>Carles Castell Puig</u>: There are members involved in both organisations. These members can be our ambassadors in Eurosite. Message to Eurosite is not just we said 'yes' and now we say 'no'. EUROPARC has to change in a controlled way.  <u>Gábor Szilagyi</u>: He would like to see much more specific oriented projects, staff employed on project basis. He does not want to see EUROPARC as the project factory.  <u>Ignace Schops</u>: In the discussion the main focus is unfortunately on the good things of Eurosite and bad of EUROPARC. EUROPARC has to change, but also has to celebrate and confirm that the organisation will survive.  <u>Thomas Hansson</u>: It is necessary to present the risk analyses and costs of changes, as well as to present the activities. The next steps – what shall be changed – the future of EUROPARC. Most members are not touched by the question, but there are some who are. Their interest can be interest of everybody. It is necessary to handle situation as if it affects everybody.  <u>Ignace Schops</u>: Proposes to agree on the structure of the presentation and to decide who is responsible for what. Starting point for the presentation shall be the last GA. The next would be the decision making process. If members agree to the decision making process then it is possible to vote on the recommendation of the council. If it is 'yes' – discussion is open for opportunities.  <u>David Cameron</u>: It is essential to explain what the voting means. If the vote is 'yes' – it means to go forward with council recommendation. The voting on Paper 7 has to be the final vote. It is absolutely necessary to be sure that people understand what voting means.  <u>Marian Jager-Wöltgens</u>: It shall be put on one presentation slide what happens in case of 'yes' vote and 'no' vote.</p>	<p>Council agrees on following duties for preparations for the GA:  Ignace Schops will prepare the presentation during the council meeting.  Marian Jager-Wöltgens will assist Ignace Schops for preparation of the presentation.  David Cameron will check if it is understandable.</p>	
<p><b>2. Minutes of last meeting</b></p>		
<p>Paulo Castro: He mentions just one mistake in page 4 second line – widest and not wisest.  The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.</p>	<p>Council approved minutes of last council meeting.</p>	
<p><b>3. Matters arising</b></p>	<p><b>Decisions Taken</b></p>	<p><b>Actions</b></p>
<p>All "matters arising" were included in other agenda items.</p>		
<p><b>4. President's report</b></p>	<p><b>Decisions Taken</b></p>	<p><b>Actions</b></p>
<p>President gave a short abstract of the report. Additionally he is going to</p>	<p>Council notes the report.</p>	

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	mention those meetings at the assembly which have been attended by council members recently.		
<b>5.</b>	<b>Treasurer's report</b>	<b>Decisions Taken</b>	<b>Actions</b>
	<p>Treasurer gave a short abstract of the report. He mentions that meanwhile it has been possible to collect 18 000 EUR from Italian members. The biggest paying problems are with Italy and Spain. Many not paying members are Charter parks therefore it is important to keep them. Treasurer expresses hope that these members will pay their fees by the end of the year. Especially it is important in case of the Regional Park Conero – this area is on strike-off list.</p> <p>By 2015 with the new financial period of the EU the financial situation shall improve. Treasurer invites the council members to address the potential strike-offs personally and invite them to pay at least for one year or to change the status.</p>	Council notes the report.	Council members are asked to address the potential strike-offs personally and invite them to pay at least for one year or to change the status. By December 2013 the letter of strike offs will be prepared.
<b>6.</b>	<b>Membership report</b>	<b>Decisions Taken</b>	<b>Actions</b>
	<p>Director points out the issue that there are members of sections who are not members of EUROPARC.</p> <p><u>David Cameron</u>: This is very serious issue. From governance perspective point of view, sections are local representatives of members. Sections are almost semi-independent entities. In this case the letter of the EUROPARC Atlantic Isles represents opinion also of not members.</p> <p><u>Carol Ritchie</u>: Information about section members is asked annually. Feedback is given that Directorate has noted that there are section members that are not EUROPARC members. This must be more pointed out during the section meetings.</p> <p>She mentions that it has been explained to sections that they have not a member status, meaning that members of the sections do not automatically become also members of the Federation.</p> <p><u>Eric Baird</u>: He suggests that representatives of small organisations</p>	Council decided to send letters (emphasize the issue of fairness and legitimacy) from council with the relevant paragraph from statutes and attachment of organisations that are just members of sections, but not of Federation.	Letter to sections shall go out after the conference.

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	could become individual members. <u>David Cameron</u> : This is not acceptable that membership fees have not been paid to Federation but to sections. Fees should come to Federation.		
<b>7.</b>	<b>Directorate report</b>	<b>Decisions Taken</b>	<b>Actions</b>
	Director apologizes for the rather negative tone. She mentions the existing difficulties to plan work before decision of GA. Directorate would like to start the process of new strategy. Nevertheless, NGO grant application is being prepared. Indicative budget is less concrete. She informs about the visit of commission auditors. They have asked lot of detailed questions, especially a lot of governance questions, questions about pressures, plans. Commission has been informed about the concern of increase of personnel with administrative assistant. Finances for salaries are planned to be gained from Charter incomes. Detailed plan of the budget for 2014 will be carried out after the GA. Director emphasizes that the next year shall be a calm year of thinking. Directorate assesses a number of foundations, especially Dutch foundations, to apply for pan-European projects. <u>Carles Puig</u> : Expresses gratitude and wish that we have a calm year for strategic planning.	Council noted report.	
<b>8.</b>	<b>EUROPARC Consulting report</b>	<b>Decisions Taken</b>	<b>Actions</b>
	<u>Wilf Fenten</u> gives a short overview of the report. He emphasizes that the study tours have been very successful this year. EUROPARC Consulting is working on English – French project concerning sustainable tourism, in order to develop a toolkit for small business. Mr Partington will lead the project. He admits that there is very little input from sections or members. <u>Eric Baird</u> : Both sides – Federation and Consulting – should represent each other more. <u>Paulo Castro</u> : It is necessary to set up new system of the Charter, a way	Council noted report.	

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	to show that procedures have been changed. It would be a clear indication to sections. He also mentions that it is necessary to develop further the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Charter part – French private companies as soon as possible. <u>Carles Puig</u> confirms it on behalf of the sections.		
<b>9.</b>	<b>Economics and Ecosystem Services WG request</b>	<b>Decisions Taken</b>	<b>Actions</b>
	<u>Carol Ritchie</u> : She presents a request of formation of the Eurosite/Europarc working group on ecosystem services and economics. <u>Carles Puig</u> : Spanish section is very keen to work with them. <u>David Cameron</u> : This is a good way to connect the WG with sections. <u>Eric Baird</u> : He is sceptical of this concept. He is not clear what the focus of their programme is. <u>Paulo Castro</u> : It should be more conceptual. Workplan for two years should be produced. <u>Eric Baird</u> : Council shall support them and show positive attitude. It is necessary to provide support of direction of what EUROPARC needs. <u>Thomas Hansson</u> : This WG should be more explicit on protected areas.		Directorate shall forward the message that the WG shall strongly cooperate with sections and prepare workplan with focus on protected areas level. Deadline for submission of the workplan – ~ 2 months.
<b>10.</b>	<b>Conference: Council responsibilities / Programme General Assembly Management</b>	<b>Decisions Taken</b>	<b>Actions</b>
	<u>Ignace Schops</u> presents the GA presentation of the council.	Council decides to put full text of both options into the presentation; to stress that there will be changes in EUROPARC by any decision taken of GA. It will be mentioned in the presentation that the next year will be the one, when the new strategy is submitted. Headlines and reference to the ODC report	<u>Ignace Schops</u> shall supplement the presentation and make it ready for the General Assembly.

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	<p>Thomas Hansson invites the council to go through the order of the General Assembly and to agree on several organizational aspects. The candidature of David Cameron is proposed as the only one on behalf of the Council for the post of Internal Auditor. Discussion on counting of votes takes place. It is going to be a secret voting. Decisions shall be written on voting papers. `Yes` or `no` written on papers. If there is nothing written – it will be considered as abstention. In case GA votes against council recommendation, there is a requirement to organise an additional GA on dissolution of the Federation and a separate Council meeting shall be organised.</p>	<p>shall be included.</p> <p>David Cameron agrees to the proposal of the President.</p> <p>Ignace Schops is going to present the council presentation. Thomas Hansson will chair the procedure and discussion. During the discussions Ignace Schops shall support Thomas Hansson on the merger issue, as well as Eric Baird and Marian Jager-Wöltgens. David Cameron shall answer questions related to statutes, as well as to observe the counting of votes.</p>	<p>Council agrees to offer the candidature of David Cameron for the post of Internal Auditor at the GA.</p>
<b>10.</b>	<b>Intellectual property (EXTRA_EP_ intellectual property)</b>		
	Taken out of the agenda because of time reasons.		