



**EUROPARC Federation
Report to Council
28th September 2014**

Title:

Directorate Report

Summary:

Update on activities of the Directorate

Recommendations:

- ❖ To note the report

Accompanying paper:

4a_Council decisions_2011-2014

Directorate Report Update May-September 2014

Administration Staff

Changes to staff contracts were made in light of the imminent departure of Meldra Langenfelde, she will be on maternity leave from December 2014.

The intern contract was extended to end November 2014, however no new intern was identified in the application process for 2015. We are considering other options.

Brigida Napolitano has gone from 60-80% time in recognition of the additional work of the charter and the need for further administration support. Heike Blankenstein will return from maternity leave in October on a 40% contract.

I am investigating outsourcing of the communication and administration work in 2015.

Change in the responsibilities of the policy officer, in relation to overall management of the Federation are also under consideration, and following the election of the president in Sept 2014 will be discussed then. Any agreed change will come into place in January 2015.

No overall change in personnel budget is anticipated in these changes.

All staff appraisal and development meetings took place and all work plans updated.

Charter contract

This has been undertaken relatively easily, with all payment to EUROARC Consulting undertaken, despite an ongoing deficit in charter income. This is expected in the next two months otherwise certificates will not be issued.

Projects

We still await final confirmation of the BioEUParks project in order that we can start work in managing and disseminating information about nature parks and biomass production. A meeting is anticipated in October.

We await information if our bid, in the consortium for the biogeographically seminars has been successful.

We have accepted the offer of partnership with VDN, our member in Germany who is the network body of nature parks. The project will look at the governance and practise of nature and regional parks in Europe and look to defining a new model. EUROPARC will coordinate the internal aspects of this work.

Work on the EME project, communication for N2000 managers continues, with the manual, toolkit and workshop programme completed. The 1st workshop will be organised in Dec 2014, with the 2nd in March 2015. This will be free to members.

"Increasing education opportunities on sustainable development for protected area managers in Romania" project with DBU and ProParks has commenced. This is looking at creating and piloting online training packages for protected area staff, which could be developed across Europe.

EUROPARC is also represented on the advisory board of a BfN supported project with ProParks, an assessment of the training needs of PA staff in Eastern Europe. This could have implications for wider Europe and results will be dissemination through the network. The meeting for this project has been postponed until April 2015.

A meeting took place in May as a follow up from the youth conference in Debrecen to develop the Youth + project and an ERASMUS project application is now in preparation.

An application to BfN for an international project is also in preparation on the theme of benchmarking and PAME.

The 2015 NGO call is now open, with a deadline of 10th October. We will be submitting and application, but have been advised that competition is greater than ever.

Communications

It has been an extremely busy period, despite the Summer holiday!

The principal activity the Directorate has been involved in has been the management and coordination of our extensive consultation "Our Future Dialogues", with the great support of sections. This has been the biggest and most comprehensive member's consultation of its history to date. Directorate have been involved in preparing the draft strategy, processing the feedback from the consultation, facilitating the council feedback and the final document. In addition all the GA and conference materials were produced and sent to members.

A redesign of the EUROPARC website is ongoing as we have identified our preferred bidder and hope to have a screenshot ready for the council meeting/GA to show the direction the website will go in.

Through the work of EUROPARC's Health and protected areas group a publication of good practise example of programme and initiatives developed by EUROPARC members is now available both on the EUROPARC and HPHP websites. Please disseminate through your own networks.

Council should consider the themes of any "conference" and EDOP for 2015.

Events

An excellent Transparcnet meeting took place in Hainaut cross-border Nature Park (composed of Scarpe Escaut Regional Nature Park, France and Escaut Plaines Nature Park, Belgium), more than 70 participants of which 33 from certified TB areas, from 15 different countries.

Our presence at European institutions continues with EUROPARC now a member of the large carnivores and human interaction platform.

The International Junior Ranger camp entitled "**Following wilderness across boundaries**" 30 Junior Rangers, 15 Rangers and mentors, coming from 13 countries and representing 15 different protected areas across Europe, met in the Czech Republic, in the fantastic scenario of the Krkonose National Park for the 2014 EUROPARC Junior Ranger Camp.

The Siggen Seminar "European funding for protected areas: Successful projects for effective Management" took place in June and was very positively received. EUROPARC focused its two

days residential seminar in Siggen on the new EU programming period 2014-2020 and EU relevant funding for the management of protected areas. Expertly led by Erika Stanciu and Giacomo Benelli the seminar tackled some interesting areas of locating and successfully applying for funding with tips and tricks for writing applications.

The workshop “Learning Landscape Partnership” supported by the Macaulay Development Trust, Alfred Toepfer Stiftung and EUROPARC, through the NGO grant, was delivered jointly by EUROPARC and the Hutton Institute (Scotland). It brought together Research institutes and PA managers, 13 representatives from 9 countries, and was extremely well received by all participants. A clear role for EUROPARC identified. Further report will be produced with project application to produce and test research guidelines for PA's proposed.

Representation.

Work continues in Brussels connecting to and representing the Federation at Commission, NGO and Council of Europe Events.

The policy officer, attended on behalf of EUROPARC the 2000 biogeographical meeting in Greece, leading to the submission of the bid to run the seminar in the future in a consortium with ECNC and others.

The Director attended the meeting of the new network of Norwegian parks meeting. An examination of the governance model of new parks being designated in Norway was very enlightening. The networking is considering how it and its members can become members of EUROPARC. A second meeting is planned for October.

The Policy officer, represented EUROPARC at the Working group meeting of DG Environment on Green infrastructure

EUROPARC attended the sustainable tourism conference in Monte Sibillini National Park , Italy. The Director and Treasurer attended a meeting of Charter park representatives in Madrid, with EUROPARC Spain in order to calm nerves and look for solutions to some issues regarding re-evaluation of charter parks in Spain. A report from EUROPARC Spain is expected to address these issues.

The Director met with representatives of VDN in Bonn to discuss the partnership in an international project looking at nature park governance, this will bring in new Norwegian and Swiss experiences.

Despite various attempts no meeting with CIVILSCAPE has been possible.

EUROPARC through the policy office, attended the Council of Europe meeting “Group of experts for protected areas and ecological networks”.

The Policy officer attend the Wild Europe meeting in Brussels with Erika Stanciu chair of the Wilderness Working Group, to discuss the future of the network and EUROPARC's role. The policy officer attended the French Section meeting on behalf of the Directorate. A letter from the French section, about the strategy, was passed to the President.

End of council term

An appendix of council business during the period of this council is appended to this report. This will be prepared to hand over to the new council once elected, any outstanding matters need to be identified in order that we can explain this adequately.

On behalf of the Directorate staff we would like to thank all members of the council for their work and support of these past three years and wish you well in your future endeavours.

Carol Ritchie
EUROPARC Director
September 2014