

**EUROPARC Federation  
Report to Council  
21<sup>st</sup> October 2012**



Title:  
Director's Report

Summary :  
Update on activities of the Directorate, summary  
workplan for 2013, financial update for 2012/13.

Recommendations :  
❖ To note the report

## **Director's Report -Council Meeting 21st Oct 2012, Genk Belgium**

### **Update June - Sept 2012**

#### **Matters for information:**

#### **Conference 2013.**

The Director met with the Hungarian team in July 2012 and we considered venues for the EUROPARC conference 2013. Following the theme 40years working for nature, which will run through for all activities in our anniversary year.

Recently it was noted that the WILD 10 event in Spain is scheduled for the same time. After a chat with the Hungarian organiser we have decided to stick with the date we have chosen . It is the optimal time for the unique biodiversity of the region which will feature significantly in the conference programme. We think the audiences for these events are slightly different and any big agencies and parks wishing to attend both will send differing people. There is a bigger risk to the WILD 10 due to the financial situation in Spain, therefore our plans will continue.

There is a proposal to host alongside the main EUROPARC conference a youth conference, bringing together the oldest of our Junior Ranger participants , to look at leadership potential and build on the work on the Alfred Toepfer scholarships. We intend to approach the Alfred Toepfer Foundation to fund this aspect. However we cannot make any announcement until funds are secured.

#### **Italian Charter applications.**

Due to some excellent work by Federparchi Charter application within Italy are rising. This was what was somewhat anticipated last year when additional new Italian verifiers were trained. However some concerns were expressed within Federparchi about Italian verifier being used when they would prefer the experience of a non Italian. As much as the additional experience this can bring is appreciated , the need for language is paramount and the independence in selecting the appropriate verifier must be upheld. Further Federparchi have now asked that Italian applicants submit their Charter documentation in Italian. This eventuality is considered in the charter guideline quote:

*The application report should be submitted in **English, French, German or Spanish** (see also information on language in section 4 below). As long as the application report is in one of these languages, we can accept the rest of the documents below in other languages, if previously agreed with EUROPARC.*

*Ideally, the strategy and action plan should be presented in English, French, German or Spanish. If this is not possible, they may also be presented in your country's language, provided that your application report gives good summary responses to each question and clear cross-references to the precise location of details in the strategy and action plan. EUROPARC will try to provide a verifier who speaks your language. However, this may not always be possible. If any other language than the four languages above is to be used please consult EUROPARC in advance.*

In order to adequately verify documentation would require Italian speakers, therefore the opportunity for a non Italian verifier to verify Italian charter applicants, could be further decreased as we have a limited number of Italian speaking verifiers to cater for an increasing , if very welcome, demand,

Council need take no action, but need to be aware of the issue in order to reassure Italian members applying for the charter that the verification process must be managed at the discretion of EUROPARC , and that to further international ideas , experience and collaboration opportunities within the European charter network are available.

### **Martin Solar**

Chairman of the STEC and long time EUROPARC council member and supporter Martin Solar asked me to pass to you his official note regarding his inability to participate in EUROPARC activities .

Dear Carol!

- > I would like to sadly inform you that I cannot (after 18 conferences
- > "in line" without any absence since 1994) attend the EUROPARC 2012 in Belgium.
- > There are unfortunately other business and private obligations and
- > there is a hard budget cut in Slovenia in parks.
- > I have been involved in many EUROPARC activities in last 20 years, I
- > used to serve as a council member for five years and I had a pleasure
- > to be a Transboundary STEC member in last five years and I've chaired
- > the STEC since 2010. Finally we organised in this heavy year the
- > international Junior Ranger Park here in Triglav. I do hope that
- > EUROPARC is on a good way up and my Triglav NP will be allways its proud member.
- > As I informed you and my Transboundary STEC colleagues I will step
- > down as chair - I am ready to be a member of the group if my "transboundary"
- > colleagues and you the EUROPARC want me.
- > I'll do a few rest things for TB STEC in next days - do not worry about it.
- >
- > I wish you, your staff, president and the council and the all EUROPARC
- > family all the best!
- > Yours, Martin
- >

## **Directorate Update**

### **Project updates**

It has been an intense and busy summer period within the Directorate office where we have had to respond and react to rapidly changes circumstances. The affect of the financial crisis within Europe and the lack of NGO grant in particular, coupled with winning only 1 of 7 submitted applications, have created a set of circumstances as predicted that are having a serious effect on the federation's financial abilities.

The new Life project which we have started as indicated is EME Natura2000: Efficient Managers for Efficient Natura2000 Network in association with Pro Parks (Ro).

Due to some fortuitous information being received, an application for funding for the Bavarian Government Environment fund has been submitted for Junior Ranger work in 2013 , with barely two week's notice. If successful will also cover some salary costs. Further applications for German foundation and commercial funding sources have been identified and application will be submitted.

No further information has as yet been received from MedPan regarding possible project work we had investigated with them in marine protected areas of the Mediterranean. This followed a feasibility study completed earlier this year, ostensibly for Mava Foundation monies in collaboration with WWF. We continue to follow this up.

The application for the NGO core grant for 2013 will be submitted by the end of October. A month earlier than usual causing a significant workload issue for the Directorate staff in the run up to the conference !

The current BfN project will be completed in December 2012. BfN have indicated that it is unlikely to be offering grant in 2013 as these budget lines are closed. A meeting with BfN will be planned for November to discuss other options.

We shall also be approaching the Alfred Toepfer Foundation for some monies to enable us to undertake work for the 40th anniversary of EUROPARC.

Going into 2013, we will be involved with the Life project above and will continue with Grundtvig. The Grundtvig project led by EUROPARC Germany has itself had some serious criticism from the commission, principally as a result of deficiencies in the management by the principal beneficiary EUROPARC is seeking assurances and will offer support and assistance if needed to EUROPARC Germany to ensure this valuable project and the income from it is not jeopardised.

There is off course a huge time commitment and work needed by staff to prepare project applications. Therefore a minimum capacity of staff is needed in order to achieve this. Currently we have a 60% post until Dec 2012 covering project preparation work , with support from the Director. Ideally this needs to be a full time function if costs were identified.

## **2012 Summary**

The remainder of the work of the Federation has continued, and is summarised on the table presented in the General Assembly report annex 2.

In the interim the Junior Ranger Camp in July, Triglav National Park Slovenia, was a great success. The Director and Policy Officer attended and took the opportunity to discuss future project ideas with Rangers and well as enjoy the company of the inspirational Junior Rangers! The staff of both Triglav and Prelapi Guili parks were exceptional in their support and planning of the event.

BFN Value of the charter final project meeting was completed and the reports will be produced by the end of the year.

The President and Director also opened the EURAOPRC library in Klagenfurt and attended the advisory board meeting. It was a worthwhile meeting and good to re-establish strong links with this course. We will now have the opportunity to suggest course MSC possible these topics as well as assist students in seeking work placements. As Martin Solar was the previous EUROPARC representative, Carol Ritchie will now assume that role.

Meeting also took place with the Treasurer and Richard Partington of EUROPARC Consulting in order to address the issue of the management of the Charter and other tax issues related to the relationship with consulting. These are discussed in the Treasurer report.

## **Membership fees**

Project work is not our principle source of income which in fact comes from membership fees. Here it came to light over the summer months the impacts and difficulties some members have in paying fees.

Annexe 1 shows the amount of fees that remain unpaid in 2012, with Italy in particular having difficulties, showing 0% payment. Other countries too are well below their regular payment levels.

Overall fee income level are close to 60% of that invoiced. However as we anticipated (and budgeted for) only an 78% return (comparable to 2011). Yet the current income is only 70% of the expected income. So at the moment the Federation is operating towards large deficit. All income recovery procedures to obtain fees, have been followed including follow up calls as well as informing council members and sections to encourage as much as possible.

The last three columns of annexe 1, show 3 scenarios of fee recovery. Where scenario 1 would be almost full recovery, under which case we would not need to take anything further from the reserve since the shortfall in budget is almost entirely lack of paid invoices. Scenario 2 would require possibly a €35,000 drawdown on the reserves with scenario 3 requiring anywhere around a 75K withdrawal or more, from the reserves to end Dec 2013. This would leave our reserves seriously depleted to half their value, with little chance of returning the monies in 2013.

The initial prediction in Jan2013 was for a -56,000 result.

The Director under the terms of the reserves policy has already withdrawn 10,000Euros in Sept 2012 to ensure sufficient funds were available to cover the salary overrun for that month. Our reserves now stand at €137,797.

Given the procedures of the Federation allow for an additional year to pay back fees, most of those non-paying this year (unless they hadn't paid last year and therefore will be struck off), will remain on our accounts and be invoiced in January 2013. For the purposes of the NGO grant and other funding we are required to show the full invoiced income, which does skew somewhat the financial figures given since this is not the actual income. This was not such a problem before as the discrepancy between invoiced and actual was not as large, however I expect this now to be an ongoing issue. It will also mean adjustments having to be assumed in the potential Charter level of take up and re-evaluation. It will also have impact on sections who will or should lose members as a result.

However we do still attract new members, with 19 new members in 2012. Details are contained in the membership report.

As we move toward the year end of 2012, with still a larger proportion than usual of fees unpaid the final result can only be estimated, overall it is still likely to be a negative result not far from the original figure predicted. Cash flow, we need around €84,000 to come in to year end to ensure we do not take further from the reserves.

#### **Anticipated monthly costs till year end.**

<b>Oct</b>	<b>32,313 * conference and council costs final amount not known</b>
<b>Nov</b>	<b>20,000</b>
<b>Dec</b>	<b>30,713 8 possible redundancy payments and legal costs full amount to be formulated</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>83,026</b>

New revised end year  
Budget 2012

TOTAL INCOMES	331,863.54 € * an additional 56,000 is due before year end this is 3 years prefinancing of the life project. Although this will ease the cash flow it will not all be allocated to 2012 accounts.
Total Personnel	256,661.10 € this may increase due to redundancy costs
Total Travel	51,004.82 €
Total Rentals	22,660.00 €
Total ext Assistance	34,710.00 € this may increase due to legal costs
Total Other costs	19,800.00 €
Total Overheads	24,239.29 €
Total Project costs	11,228.50 €
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	<b>420,303.71 €</b>

## EUROPARC final assets and results 2008-2011

	2011	2010	2009	2008
final assets	353,722.70 €	278,056.59 €	313,459.94 €	432,040.59 €
results	126,212.18 €	-91,264.81 €	-12,075.65 €	22,011.70 €

### Workplan 2013

2013 will be an exciting and challenging year for the EUROPARC Federation. Following the establishment of the organisation in 1973, we will celebrate **“40 years – Working for Nature”**. It is anticipated that not only will the annual conference reflect on EUROPARC achievements but refocus our energies as a network on what we aspire to for the future of protected areas and the nature we are committed to conserve.

Off course there are some interesting developments too, the discussion for the creation of a combined network with Eurosite will come to fruition and off course the exact structure and composition cannot be foreseen at this time. Therefore the development of a full strategy and operational plan will await the outcome of these developments.

Given the theme of the year is **“40 years- Working for Nature”**, the Federation will seek to engage with members to participate in events throughout the year. A number of activities are being planned such as a special Junior Ranger Camp, Junior Ranger Conference, Thematic Enews throughout the year, a pamphlet detailing the history of the Federation, a human timeline of the Federation, a special European day of Parks, and Protected Area Insight. All of which will require additional funding to deliver.

In our other areas of work, the Transboundary manual and guidelines will be updated and a concerted effort to develop transboundary work across the membership. The Grundtvig funded project, Volunteer management in protected areas will continue, with further training programmes and a research on volunteering in protected areas in Europe completed. Additionally a new LIFE project - Efficient Managers for Efficient Natura2000 Network with Pro parks of Romania, will see the Federation work to develop a training programme and communications tool-kit for the management of N2000 site, which will benefit all members.

The Charter for Sustainable Tourism will benefit from the work undertaken in review and updating in 2012 with a refreshed approach in 2013 and more investment in the promotion of the charter at a European level.

Working through our working groups, EUROPARC will continue to develop new fields of work and seek further funding opportunities to develop these area of work , to benefit all our members.

Lobbying work, to identify the benefits member protected areas bring to the N2000 network , as well as seeking to influence areas of policy that would improve the management of protected areas, will continue with partners in Brussels. EUROPARC’s focus will be on focus on the CAP reform protected areas contribution to N2000 network, EU biodiversity strategy, sustainable development through the tourism Sustainability group of DG Enterprise, amongst other issues that are relevant and pertinent

to raise the status of protected areas in Europe. These are all identified in the lobbying and Advocacy strategy previously agreed by the general assembly.

Communications with members and on the members' behalf will continue with quality continually under review and improvements made. Special anniversary communication are planned throughout the year.

Finances remain constrained and additional efforts are being made to gain new and additional funds. Clearly, as public finances are increasingly difficult we are seeing the loss of some members as a result will require us to double our efforts to retain and gain new members and seek continual efficiencies and savings throughout EUROPARC operations.

As ever, I am indebted to the dedication and commitment of the directorate team, but also to the unstinting efforts of council members, working groups, sections and committee members who all work to take forward the work of EUROPARC to conserve and protect European natural heritage through international cooperation.

The provisional budget to reflect the outline workplan for 2013 is below. To achieve the workplan funds from the NGO Life grant will be necessary. Without this level of income, a reduction in staffing capacity may need to be considered in order to adjust to available income.

#### Work-plan 2013 provisional costs

Item	Estimate 2012	New headings	Estimate 2013	Updated estimate 2013*
Income				
Membership fees	261,268	Membership fees	260,000	217,420
EU NGO Life + grant	0	Project grants	149,000	160,000*
Project Grants	51,815.54	Other Funding	43,000	36,438
Consulting	17,500	Other income	1,000	
Appreciation in value, EP Consulting				
Other income	1,280	Donations		5,400
<b>Income total</b>	<b>331,863.54</b>		<b>453,000</b>	<b>259,258</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Personnel	262,070	Personnel	250,000	250,000
Travel	43,823.98	Travel	80,000	35,000



Rentals	22,660	Rentals	24,000	23,800
External Assistance	34,710	External Assistance	40,000	18,720
Other costs	19,800	Other Costs	13,000	11,040
Overheads	24,239	Overheads	24,000	23,750
Projects	11,150	Projects	22,000	22,000
<b>Expenditure total</b>	<b>418,452.98</b>		<b>453,000</b>	<b>384,310</b>

**160,000\*** This is the approximate amount required in order to make this draft workplan with some additional available for special projects and working groups.

Carol Ritchie  
 Director  
 September 2012