



EUROPARC Federation

Report to Council

21st October 2012

8_ Working Group's report

Annex 2 "Ecosystem Services and Economics"

EUROPARC working group on ecosystem services and economics

Aim of the working group as agreed by Europarc Council in 2010:

- 1) To bring together like-minded colleagues of protected areas to share and develop information and potential project ideas that demonstrate the economic value of protected areas through sustainable development principles and ecosystem services delivery and approach.
- 2) To take this topic forward within the EUROPARC Federation for the wider benefit of EUROPARC members

Working group membership

- Lots of interest from the wider membership. Confirmed interest from:

Francesca	Visintin	Centre for Theoretical and Applied Ecology	Italy	francesca.visintin@ceta.ts.it
Hans	Schiphorst	SNP (joint national parks in the Netherlands)	The Netherlands	snp@steenwijkerland.nl
Paul	Leadbitter	North Pennines AONB	United Kingdom	paulpeatscapes@northpenninesaonb.org.uk
Helen	Noble*	Causeway Coast and Glens AONB	United Kingdom	helen@ccght.org
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Jan	Veenstra	Staatsbosbeheer	The Netherlands	j.veenstra@staatsbosbeheer.nl
Morwenna	Parkyn*	EUROPARC	United Kingdom	m.parkyn@europarc.org
Peter	Glaves	Northumbria University	United Kingdom	peter.glaves@northumbria.ac.uk
Peter	Pasman	Dwingelderveld NP	The Netherlands	p.pasman@drenthe.nl
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*not active anymore, since spring 2012

Most active members are (so far) Paul Leadbitter, Helen Noble, Jaqueline Groen, Peter Pasman, Jan Veenstra and Hans Schiphorst

Working group contact for EUROPARC Federation:

Hans Schiphorst, chair of working group

What have been the main achievements in the past two years.

Until now the working group has not been able to meet with all members present, but meetings took place in November 2010 in Northern-Ireland (Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust) and in May 2011 in England (North-Penines AONB) . Main result of those two meetings was a Life application on a project dealing with peatland economics and carbon storage. In short the project deals with:

1. developing a model to calculate the carbon storage capacity in a peatland habitat
2. calculating the difference in storage capacity in a degenerated system compared with a habitat in good condition
3. calculating the economics involved in this
4. showcasing the possibility of the economics involved in carbon storage as a way to contribute to peatland management

Unfortunately the completely finished application could not be rendered to the national authority due to a last minute flaw in co-funding in 2011. The Life application will be rendered in 2012 now. Finalizing the application is taken over by IUCN UK in collaboration with CCGHT in Northern-Ireland and North-Penines AONB in England.

A third short meeting took place in Serbia as a side-meeting during the sustainable tourism conference in order to set the scene again for late 2011 and onwards. This resulted in a side-meeting during the Europarc conference in Bad Urrach in September 2011 were (among other issues) the Life application was presented.

In 2012 a total of 5 meetings took place. Unfortunately only the Dutch members participated. This resulted in two short papers on ecosystem services, send to the working group members and the organisation of a side meeting to be held at the Europarc Conference in Genk in October 2012 (programme in annex)

How much of your original plan have you undertaken and what are the benefits for members and their organisation

Looking at the original aim of the working group it is fair to say that the aims have been realized to a reasonable extend, but the amount of participation could be improved. Until now the main gateway to share knowledge and information are the side meetings at the annual Europarc Conferences. These meetings are not only attended by the working group members, but participation is open to the wider Europarc membership. Side-meetings have been attended by an average 20 Europarc members at every side-meeting. Apart from these side-meetings, the development of the LIFE application has been a major achievement of the working group

In what way has the working group implemented the EUROPARC strategy priorities

See above

What have been the limitations in taking your work forward

In order to keep the momentum going it is imperative that the working group can meet (preferably with its full membership) at least two times every year. One meeting can be held during the annual Europarc Conference. **It is strongly suggested** to facilitate the possibility for a second meeting at the Siggen Estate. This was mentioned by all working group chairs present at the Siggen meeting in spring 2012!

What is your main objectives for the coming 2 years (were the council to agree your plan)

By now there have been a lot of studies on the very positive economical impact of various ecosystem services. The challenge for the next period is to find ways and develop mechanisms to ensure that the generated positive economical effect of protected areas is also used as a financial source to fund nature-conservation and management of those protected areas. At the moment we face a situation where ecosystem services are generated in protected areas, but in most cases other parties, entrepreneurs or others benefit from these ecosystem services. To paraphrase Margaret Thatcher: "I want my money back!"

How do you hope to maintain the work of the working group given the increasing limitation of EUROPARC resources.

Until now Europarc resources to support the work of the working group have been fairly limited. As such a further limitation of Europarc resources will hardly impact on the work of the working group. However the support of the Federation to enable working group members to meet a second time face to face every year is crucial. Without this support it will not be possible to maintain the work of the working group. In effect it means that without the support to meet a second time face to face every year, there is not enough momentum to keep the working group going and as a result the group will cease to exist after the side meeting in Genk in October 2012.