



**EUROPARC Federation
Report to Council
21st October 2012**

Title:
Working Group's Report

Summary :
Update on activities
Proposing for a new 2 years mandate

Recommendations :
❖ To note the report
❖ Approval of new 2 years mandate

Working Groups -New Mandate 2012

Working Groups of the EUROPARC Federation are set up to serve a theme or topic of interest to members of the Federation. Guidelines for the creation and management of EUROPARC working groups was approved by the general assembly in 2010.

A working group's mandate comes from the EUROPARC Council through the agreement of a remit and work plan, linked to the EUROPARC strategy. Terms of reference would be agreed with each group.

The functions of the groups would be some or all of the following:

- to address a given theme of interest to protected areas of Europe,
- to provide analysis,
- to propose and develop policy,
- to develop projects that deliver outputs of relevance to protected areas,
- to investigate and develop funding streams to resource projects

The following working groups were mandated by the EUROARC council Health and Protected Areas, Sustainable Tourism, Wilderness,(The Wilderness working group is one in which EUROPARC participates along with a number of other organisations) and Economics and Ecosystem services. The Council also asked that the STEC to split into the STEC as a standing committee and a Transboundary Working Group.

A report of the working group activities has been submitted to the General assembly and has been reported in the annual report for 2011.

Three working groups now seek a mandate from the council to continue their work for another two years.

Health and Protected areas.

This group chaired by Maati Tappinen (fi) have shown great enthusiasm and commitment, with strong support from EUROARC Nordic Baltic and Atlantic Isles sections. Their full report is contain in annexe 1. In summary their main objectives for next two year period

- Study good practices from Baltic countries (this is not yet done)
 - ✓ update from Atlantic Isles and Scandinavia
- Workshop / Posters / presentations in next Healthy Parks, Healthy People World Congress
 - ✓ launch of a EUROPARC message
- Build up better connection to EUROPARC Strategy (delivery and next update of Strategy)
- Green Exercise Partnership (Scotland) – connecting with Area Health Boards to improve greenspace around hospitals. Connecting with doctors and voluntary sector to promote healthy outdoor activity – also relating to mental health (introduction and discussions)
- finding expertise and support from Health Sector to WG work

- work in cooperation with IUCN Health Task Force (Matti Tapaninen/WG is a member of Task Force)
- new EUROPARC seminar on health and nature. Continuation of Maribo seminar organized by Nordic-Baltic Section. AI and N-B Section organize together.
- launch of www.hphpcentral.com webpage to EUROPARC network
✓ if idea is supported by EUROPARC Council
- Further study about the idea of health Charter

The following have indicated their willingness to be a part of the working group which includes one non member organisation

Matti Tapaninen, chair	Metsähallitus, NHS Finland
Nele Sober	EUROPARC Nordic-Baltic Section
Richard Blackman	EUROPARC Atlantic Isles Section
Bridget Finton	Scottish Natural Heritage, UK
Jan Woolhead	Region Zealand, Denmark
Lynn Crowe	Sheffield Hallam University, UK
Rolands Auzins	Europarc Council representative

EUROPARC Working Group 'Health and Protected Areas' is willing to continue its work for next two year period and asks Council permission to do so. WG understands increasing resource limitations of EUROPARC Federation. The idea is to continue the work with the same method as 2010 – 2012 period with strong support from Nordic-Baltic and Atlantic Isles Sections.

Economics and ecosystems services working group.

This group has continued at a lower level than they had hoped for with. Meeting face to face has been a challenge . Their full report is contained in annexe 2.

The most active members are, Paul Leadbitter UK , Helen Noble UK, Jaqueline Groen NL, Peter Pasman NL, Jan Veenstra NL and Hans Schiphorst NL, although there is some interest from Italy and Slovenia

Based on the previous mandate given, they have that the original 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.

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 a financial source to fund nature-conservation and management of those protected areas.

In order to progress the work of the working group the chairman indicates that 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.

It was not possible to offer working groups space in Siggen in 2011, due to the need to meet with Eurosite, however it is anticipated this should be available for some working groups to utilise that facility in 2013.

It is not clear what exactly the work of the group is and what they are seeking to achieve, be it a funding application, research or exchange and gathering of information. It may be for council to provide some input to give direction and focus.

Sustainable Tourism Working Group

The Sustainable tourism working group have been a powerhouse of activity for the past two years. Their achievements are listed in annexe 3.

Members of the groups are

Lasse Loven, Finland, Metsähallitus
Richard Tyler, UK, Brecon Beacons NP;
Mike Pugh, UK, Forest of Bowland AONB
Josep Maria Prats, Spain, La Garrotxa;
Stefania Petrosillo, Italy, Federparchi;
Monica Herrera-Pavia, France, Parc National du Mercantour;
Hans Schiphorst, Netherlands, Weerribben;
Barbara Engels, Germany, BfN

Representative from EUROPARC Federation

Paulo Castro, Portugal,

Representative of EUROPARC Consulting

Richard Partington, UK,

External expert

Ricardo Blanco, Ministry of Tourism of Spain, the Segretaria General de Turism

In the following two years they seek to

- to develop the necessary criteria for the EUROPARC co-operation with the Tourism operators
- To develop the Charter guidelines about the minimum standards for the content of the Charter Sustainable tourism Strategy and the Action Plan
- To further develop the monitoring method for the Charter Part I and Part II

- To negotiate and possibly draft the mutual commitments for co-operation and possible integration of European Charter for Protected Areas system, PanParks certification and Geopark certification.
- To introduce more practical tools to develop sustainable tourism in the condition of climate change
- To organise a dissemination seminar on sustainable tourism development models in protected areas.

In details the ECST system development shall include the following items:

- Define and perform a Business Plan approach to plan revenue and costs for the Charter entry and renewal
- To identify and demonstrate benefits to Charter PAs - support - e.g. training, promotion, marketing, networking, etc - to ensure loyalty and retention of existing as well as recruiting new candidate PAs
- To further develop Charter Part 2 Methodology for Charter Partnership agreements in the light of:
 - changes in national standards and practices on quality assessment and eco-label accreditation.
 - in the face of increasing number of competing 'brands' - national and global and EU - for Sustainable Tourism

Although the Charter for Sustainable tourism is a core element of the work of the working group, it has been sometime necessary but important to maintain the group's focus to the wider sustainable tourism field of work in order that we see the Charter of which we are all rightly proud in the wider context of what is being discussed in sustainable tourism, to ensure the Charter stays relevant - to our principle constituency - protected areas .

Transboundary.

Unfortunately no report has been submitted . Martin Solar has stepped down as the STEC chairman but wishes to remain a member of the STEC, that is currently composed of

Martin Solar (SL), Chair
 Arnold Boer (NL),
 Handrij Härtel (CZ)
 Arto Ahokumpu (FI)

Leo Reyrynk (NL) and Hans Kiener (D) have expressed interests in participating either in STEC or in a working group.

Following the TransParcNet meeting in Pasvik INari in 2011 others within the network could be approached to join the working group.

Member of STEC and other involved in TB work will be meeting in Genk to discuss their future and a report seeking the formation of a new working group will hopefully be submitted for the council meeting in January/February 2013.

However the Directorate recommend the original decision of the council to seek this split as the opportunities and workload in transboundary work need to be better focused. The STEC should remain the with the Transboundary programme its development and application. A working group can take charge of the TransParcNet and look to project work and building relations with others working in transboundary such as IUCN.

Decision

The council should consider these request and decide if a new mandate based on the proposal submitted ,or with any additonal comments from council members. It may be worth considering the context of working groups in the light of any changes that may arise from the decision to form one organisation with Eurosite.

Carol Ritchie
EUROPARC Federation Director
Sept 2012