

EUROPARC Federation

Report to Council

24th May 2012



Title:

Director's Report

Summary :

Update on activities of the Directorate, summary workplan for 2012,

Summary of membership applications since last meeting.

Recommendations :

- ❖ To note the report
- ❖ To approve members change in category

Director's Report - January 2012

1. Staffing - For Information

Following the departure of Regina Schöfer and Morwenna Parkyn, new part time staff have been employed . They are supporting work in membership services, bookkeeping and general administration support. They have been employed as part of a special German programme the cost of these staff amount to 1500 E per month for a total of 30 hours work.

Additionally Elena Osipova has rejoined us after a short absence to complete her Masters thesis Elena will work 2 days a week and concentrate on Transboundary work.

Julia Schonharl has been employed as the Communications Officer with Heike Blankenstein joining us as Executive Administrator.

Heike Blankenstein will commence work as the Executive Administrator at the end of May/early June There will remain a period of adjustment as new staff complete their induction and begin to learn their new roles.

2. Membership Update

There were no new applications since the last council meeting

A request has been received by Wicklow Uplands Council, requesting a change in membership category. See attached letter.

Furrher Goricko Nature Park of Slovenia wrote to profer their resignation from the federation. However after contacting them to suggest instead they request a change to the lower membership category they are reconsidering their position .

3. Council and Internal Auditor elections 2012

With the change in statutes and subsequent (anschließend) chance in council composition there remains one council place whose election term end this year.

M Leveque (F) will require to stand down following his 3 year term, but has indicted his willingness to stand again for that council place,

EUROPARC will however indicate that vacancy to the membership and seek any further nominations. First notices will go out in the June e-news. If not nominations are received in the allocated time them M Leveque will stand for election unopposed.

Internal Auditor

Further the post of internal auditor is an annual elected position. Council offer a recommended person to the general assembly for that position who then vote to elect them. Currently discussions are on going with Mr Cameron whether he wishes to have his name put forward by council again, and enquiries are also underway to seek an alternative were Mr Cameron unavailable .

4. Project development

EUROPARC has learned of success in two project applied for.

One is a LIFE project with pro parks of Romania, developing communications tools for N2000 managers. This will help us create a model and tools that could be replicated across the networks and be of benefit to the wider membership.

The second was a Youth in Action partnership project led by EUROPARC EAI and includes other section and prominent members in the UK. This will look to develop further the Junior Ranger programme.

- EME Natura 2000: Efficient Managers for Efficient Natura2000 Network in association with Pro Parks. Commencing Sept 2012.

Projects completed.

- The Parks & Benefits and Steppa project have concluded and we await final payments. Reports are available on the website. All project reports are on the website, <http://www.europarc.org/what-we-do/steppa> and we will summarise project findings and publish their findings more fully to members in due course.
- The only two projects continuing in 2012 will be the Sustainable tourism destinations project funded by BfN, and the Grundtvig project Managing volunteers in protected areas. These collectively will bring in approximately 39K of project funds, of which approximately €15,000 should be salary costs. This is an inexact number as we only receive back what hours and costs we incur and although we are within estimates made at the time of the project application, I would rather err on the side of caution and underestimate this income.

Sadly we were unsuccessful in the submission (Vorlage) of the projects with COSV of Italy. These were Cross-border Programme Bosnia and Herzegovina – Montenegro with COSV in Italy. And the Junior Rangers, “Ambassador” for promoting sustainable development with COSV Italy.

Unfortunately we were also unsuccessful with the eco-innovation project

- Environmentally sustainable camps in Tourism, with Viaggi dell’Elefante s.p.a., a means to protect Protected Areas, contribute to the Climate Change and boost the stagnant tourism economy.

We do however await the result of the Central Europe application.

- Central Europe (CE) programme lead by Delta de Po in Italy, entitled FORCE, Fostering of healthy food productions in European protected areas with Slow Food International.

Applications in progress

Although we were unsuccessful with the previous BEST application BEST - Biodiversity and Sustainability in Macronesia, the Fortunate Islands, with partners in the Macronesian region. we are encouraged to resubmit in June.

A further Youth in Action, Junior Ranger application we intend to submit in November to ensure if successful we can include that in the 40th anniversary celebration of EUROPARC in 2013.

EUROPARC will of course submit a further application for the NGO grant for 2013. All financial documentation needed is now in place or in preparation.

5. Work-plan Overview

With the disruption caused by staff changes this year no annual workplan for the Directorate team was prepared. We are continuing with the objectives set in 2011 and individual staff workplans are in place. Further, we await the new strategy and priorities in order to develop further the workplanning for the team incorporating the sections and working groups

The following table summarises the activities to May 2012.

Most activities are showing ORANGE with progress on going. It is early in the year for most tasks to have been fully completed.

Table 1: Summary table of work undertaken against strategic headlines and objectives of the EUROPARC strategy.

EUROPARC Strategy Objectives		work plan 2012 update
Support the management of Europe's protected areas		
Indicate and share the benefits and values of Europe's protected areas		
To communicate the importance of protected areas in the adaption to and mitigation of climate change and biodiversity loss, and facilitate the sharing of best practice and expertise the management of protected areas in climate change and biodiversity loss	Lobbying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaison with other NGOs (ELO-IFOAM-IUCN, WWF, Bird Life). EU consultation responses on DG enterprise on sustainable tourism, CAP reform financing N2000, will continue. EUROPARC contributed to the Consultation on the proposal for a "European Charter for Sustainable and Responsible Tourism". We are also following the progress on the EU proposal for a EU tourism Quality Label EUROPARC will continue to play a role in the European Habitats Forum, subject to discussions with Eurosite. Meetings took place in April Gabor Szilagy will continue to represent EUROPARC on the N2000 expert working group. One meeting has taken place EUROPARC will be working with IUCN to seek to establish an protected areas working group within the European parliament's Intergroup on climate change, biodiversity and sustainable development Contribution to the report made by EEA on Protected areas across Europe Contribution to the WWF publication on financing N2000: "Our natural capital: a good investment in times of crisis"
	Meetings with commission and other bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federico Minozzi with EHF met with representatives of DG Environment High level meeting with DG Environment (Potocnik and Falkenberg) Director and Federico Minozzi met with Angelo Salsi and his staff to present our concerns about the changes in the LIFE+ regulations. We choose not to sign the letter circulated by members of EHF. Director and Federico prepared briefing notes for Gaston Franco MEP to represent our concerns about changes in the guideline for LIFE + projects. Mr Franco supported most of our views in his presentation at the ITRE Committee of the European Parliament

	Communications , Enews , articles, publications
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With the earlier start of the communications officer , we have resumed to monthly e-newsletters The annual report has been produced in pdf form . The protected area insight will be printed only if funds permit. The costs currently stands at almost 9000E <p>Press</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Press releases will continue to be sent by the EUROPARC Federation, in particular for the European Day of Parks, exhibition and conference. The Living parks exhibition will be hosted in Regensburg with local , national and European press targeted. Sponsorship was provided by the Alfred Toepfer Stiftung which has enabled us to host and excellent exhibition and provide new communications products as prizes and as gifts. <p>International work</p> <p>The international staff exchange programme with Parks forum has been launched and EUROPARC will coordinate enquiries from our members and endeavour to match with enquires from Australia and new Zealand.</p> <p>Transboundary update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A TransParcNet meeting is planned for June 2012. With Elena Osipova joining us part time for the next year we will be able to provide some support and update the transboundary manual. We have updated the list of transboundary areas in Europe and the working group will use this to promote the scheme more widely next year. WE have summarised the Transboundary "magic numbers" and distributed to the TransParcnet. Work of Transboundary Evaluation Committee and Working Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently the committee and working group are operating together, but they will split with separate roles in 2012.
To improve the management of biodiversity	<p>Communications articles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular promotion of Natura 2000 and of EU policies in all EUROPARC publications continues,, Brussels News updates and

management in Europe's Natura 2000 and protected areas network, and enhance knowledge of EU policies among EUROPARC members	<p>new Europe section in the E-News will be maintained.</p> <p>Lobbying work in Brussels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The application for a stand at the Commissions green week. Was successful However EUROPARC is unable to attend. The stall will be manned by Eurosite with material provided by EUROPARC.
To demonstrate the values and wider benefits of protected areas to their surrounding landscapes, regions and communities to increase knowledge and information about sustainable development.	<p>Charter for Sustainable Tourism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interest and application for The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism remain high, indeed we have a record year of applications. This is a challenge for Evaluation Committee who meets annually in June to assess the verification reports . The recommendation arising from the STEPPA project and the current BfN project have been considered by the STWG . We need to consider how to take the Charter forward With the continuing work of the BfN project working closely with the EUROPARC Directorate. A review of the charter process should be completed by the end of 2012 There are no definite plans for a Charter network meeting in 2012 . 2 Charter News will be sent in 2012 . One will be guest edited by Marja Van Loef, who will spend a few weeks with EUROPARC as a work experience. <p>Sustainable Tourism Destinations project (BfN)</p> <p>This will continue into 2013 and will undertake the gathering of the magic number data for all charter areas. We have received in total 50 questionnaires out of 88, which come to 57 %. Further an analysis of best practise examples in charter areas will be done and a publication produced . the Chart below is the list of parks selected. The ones bolded are the replies we have received.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority (UK) Cornwall AONB (UK) Clwydian Range AONB (UK) Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority(UK) Forest of Bowland AONB Partnership (UK) Weerribben-Wieden National Park(NL) Parc Naturel Regional du Pilat(FR) Parc naturel régional des Causses du Quercy (FR)

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Parc Regional du Verdon (FR) Parc of Volcans d'Auvergne (FR) Parc naturel régional de Camargue (ES) Parque Natural Hoces del Rio Riaza (ES) 13. Parc Nacional de Garajonay (ES) Comunita Montana Alpi Lepontine (IT) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additionally further analysis of the charter revaluation process including any updating of the charter application process itself will also be undertaken.
Raise awareness of the role that Natura 2000 sites and Europe's protected areas play as providers of opportunities for the promotion of public health and well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is anticipated that the Health Working Group will meet during 2012, looking at developing project concepts. Directorate will support where possible .
Illustrate the contribution of Europe's protected areas to the sustainable use of natural resources and their links to a range of other policy areas.	<p>The work of the Ecosystems and Economics working group will continue in 2012 with development of the Peatlands life application. Directorate will support where possible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wilderness Working group are continuing to develop the Wilderness register , ensuring the presence of wilderness in the EU Biodiversity Strategy and producing a standardized definition of wilderness and wild areas. A high level round table meeting took place in EUROPARC Brussels office in April
Develop the European Protected Area network	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EUROPARC 40th year anniversary is in 2013, a plan of how that will be celebrated should be developed with input for council, sections and members. .
Capacity building, training and education of staff and stakeholders of Europe's protected areas	

<p>To build capacity in and provide training for managers of Europe's protected areas on relevant aspects of EU policy, and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Slggen seminar in 2012 will focus on conflict resolution techniques for protected area managers. We are grateful to Council member Eric Baird for offering to deliver this workshop. ○ The Grundtvig project continues where we will continue to disseminate the communication in enews (in different languages), prepare a Workshop at the Conference and cooperate with EUROPARC Consulting on the research on volunteering <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The International Junior ranger camp will be held in Triglav National park , Slovenia with cross border involvement from PreAlpi Guilie Italy.
<p>To explore opportunities for partnership working and strategic alliances across all aspects of the Federation's output</p>	<p>Joint work with Eurosite –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the GA decision of last September - To build on the collaboration with Eurosite and for one organisation. The joint committee met in January and March. Reports and papers were produced • Communications between the respective directors will take place on a regular basis to exchange information to forward to the joint committee, as well as plan any joint project proposals • A joint communications plan will was drafted by EUROPARC but not yet finalised with Eurosite <p>Project development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We await news on projects submitted. Clearly as the success or otherwise of project applications is known the workplan will be amended accordingly. ○ Further project proposals will be developed once staff are in place. (BEST and Life on Volunteering for Biodiversity monitoring in N2000, mediterranean project possibly with Medpan)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<p>Organisational Development and Capacity Building</p>	
<p>To adopt and disseminate best practise in governance in the EUROPARC Federation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular calls to members will continue and data gathered in the members databases collated and produced. Which will add significantly to the lobbying information we produce. • A members questionnaire to guage the services provided by EUROPARC and satisfaction levels is in preparation and hope to have online by June. The results will for the basis of a membership recruitment and improved and targeted services by the federation • Translating e-mails into Fr, Sp, It and also send the e-mails to the members will also continue.

<p>To rationalise processes, seek efficiencies and develop capacity in the resources and management of the EUROPARC Federation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following the significant staff changes, a new staff structure and distribution of tasks will be put in place. An review of funding for the work of EUROPARC will be undertaken.
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Colour
code:



Some progress, ongoing work



No/little activity or change in activity



Achieved

Work-plan 2012 Update May 2012

- Following the successful request for sponsorship from the Alfred Toepfer Stiftung the Living Parks exhibition was officially opened in Regensburg on May 3rd by Obermeister Herr Weber. The event was well attended but sadly no local press present. A second evening with presentation by Herr Loibl Director of the Bayerischer Wald National park again was to a full house. We look forward to the remaining two event of the series. The funding from Alfred Toepfer Stiftung has also enabled us to prepare some EUROPARC merchandising material which were used as gifts and prizes during the exhibition.
- EUROPARC also has secured €5000 from TIU to enable us to produce a good practise guidance booklet on charter case studies. These are in the process of being gathered and edited .
- We further are preparing a new Junior Ranger booklet, to hopefully readvertise and revitalise the network. We will be able to make this as a pdf but at present cannot commit to a print version.
- The new EUROPARC strategy cannot be delivered by September 2012. A draft form should be produced internally with input from the joint committee, as the base line for the new merged organisation..

- The Sustainable Tourism Destination project will continue bringing to a conclusion the studies and issue recommendations. These will be in line with results of the STEPPA project, taking into account considerations from the STWG and changes to the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism.
- The Grundtvig project will continue to deliver best practice guidelines on the management of volunteering in protected areas. EUROPARC has contracted EUROPARC Consulting to produce the research report on the Impacts of Volunteering in protected areas. This should be completed in early 2013.
- An update of the Transboundary manual and guidelines, discussed at the verifiers training session in July 2011 will be taken forward.
- The third in the Siggen series of seminars will take place in May 2012, providing opportunity for members to analyse current aspects of protected area management. The theme for 2013 will be conflict resolution
- Preparations for the 40th anniversary of EUROPARC in 2013 will need to be planned. Input us being sought form sections working groups , council and off course members.
- Communications with members and on the members' behalf will continue with quality continually under review and improvements made.
- Lobbying work will continue with partners in Brussels, with a focus on the CAP reform and the contribution of protected areas, protected areas contribution to N2000 network and EU biodiversity strategy, sustainable development trough the Tourism Sustainability Group of DG Enterprise, amongst other issues that are relevant and pertinent to raise the status of protected areas in Europe.
- Working through our working groups we will continue to develop agenda on health, protected areas ecosystems, economics and wilderness. Funding opportunities will be sought to develop these areas of work further.
- Continual efficiencies and savings will be sought throughout EUROPARC operations with new funding stream and membership recruitment being a priority.

Carol Ritchie, Director

May 2012