

CAMP DESCRIPTION

16-23 July 2011

EVALUATION

Organisers

Rangers and Mentors

The general feedback from all Rangers and Mentors, was really positive. They all enjoyed the camp and said it was very well organised and managed.

Main positive aspects:

- Information, documents and pre-camp organisation, registration process were very clear, on time and useful;
- Location in camping was very good. Most are supportive of real tent-camping as a concrete experience more in direct contact with nature... A plan B must be ready in case of emergency. Where possible Tent Camping should be recommended for the International Camps.
- So many different and varied activities everyday made the camp very interesting. Participants had the opportunity to learn a lot about the environment, the landscape, discover plants and animals, and visit different parks and habitats;
- Very positive balance between the different kind of activities: nature, learning, games, visit...
- 7 days is the good duration for such event;
- Meeting with the Rangers were useful to exchange views and to know how things are managed in different PAs. But not always very productive... looking for some more concrete results. Meeting are also very important to get feedback on the camp development: problems and difficulties arising and to decide together possible change to the programme.
- Timing very good, and very good flexibility of the staff and camp management;
- Transport with mini-van was a very good solution

Some less positive (difficult to call them negative)

- The weather not always helped... so on the second day we had to clarify plan B and make decision for the camp management. But some participants waited to express their concerns...
- The camp was supposed to be alcohol-free but this was not clear enough for the mentors and rangers. A new compromise was set for the camp and for the future with the rangers and mentors. Rules for alcohol of the hosting country apply. In any case no alcohol to the JR. Rangers agreed that no alcohol could be drink in front of the kids and during the camp activities. In the evening, after the end of the activities, rangers and mentors are allowed to have a drink, respecting the spirit of the camp and with moderation.
- A bit more relax time at the camp would be good, also for the mentors... days are intense and quite long for the kids.
- Not very much attention to rubbish management/production during the camp
- How could we reduce/compensate carbon emission of the camp? Lot of travelling...

- Food, mainly dinner, could have been a bit more varied and adapted to weather conditions. Some time not very abundant.
- Weather forecast information would be useful to better prepare activities and wearing.

General comments/suggestions

- JR perceive garbage as the main environmental problem in their parks. The idea to develop a common and international project to raise the awareness on garbage/rubbish management with the JR was one of the main output of the camp. EUROPARC could promote it in partnership with the JR network.
- Rangers and Mentors suggested the creation of a webpage addressed directly to the Junior Rangers in the EUROPARC Website. That could become a nice tool to involve more the wider JR network and not just those who participate to the camps.
- Always consider plan B in case of rain;
- Could be better to have presentations also during the day, not just at night.
- After some discussion, considering the different sensitiveness of participants and different regulations in each country, rangers agreed that no alcohol could be drink in front of the kids and during the camp activities.
- Always useful to have a separate and closed meeting room for Mentors and Rangers.
- Rangers don't feel the need of specific training to support their work. They would need more support from their parks for managing the activities during the year. We need to work to persuade the Park managers on the benefits that the JR programme can provide for PAs. One of the difficulties is that frequently Rangers are more in charge of surveillance and nature management than education !!!
- Toilets shouldn't be too far from the camp site

Junior Rangers Feedback

My comments

The camp was in general very well organised, good timing and camp preparation well managed. The National Park, even if in a difficult financial period, found the resources to realise a camp of very high quality (Leader resources + other funding and sponsors).

Location in the camping area was perfect, with all the facilities and not too many people around. We had our camp space, even if we haven't spent much time at the camp. The coordination and lead of the camp was clear and very well managed!

The main objective of the camp was to raise the awareness of the participants about the connections between nature health and human health. Moreover many activities were focused to discover the National Park, its landscape, the biodiversity of the area, the challenges the park is facing, and to have a wider overview of the protected areas of the Netherlands. These goals were clearly reached thanks to the various actions in which all participants have been actively involved: excursions,

canoeing and kayaking tours, visits to 2 other national parks, visit to the local water pumping station, building a new wood path on the wetland near the visitor centre of the park, games in the forest, cooking, dinner and discussion at the McDonald's restaurant, discovering the life in the water, presentation of the reintroduction project of the Oyster in the park. Junior Rangers were also asked to present something from their park that they consider healthy and something non healthy.

The programme was very well prepared and varied, with a good balance of learning sessions, games, excursions, work and outdoor activities, where youth were actively involved and protagonist. The involvement of the JR of the hosting park in the organisation of the camp was a very useful and positive for both sides.

The inclusion of a file-rouge guiding the camp with the same topic has been very helpful and positive. We tried to involve a bit more actively the mentors and rangers in the activity and we planned together a game that was managed one evening. Positive but we should find good strategies to improve this process... not easy to have enough time for it.

Rangers and Mentors were satisfied of the meetings we had during the camp, to share experiences and exchange views on JR programme, even if they were not so much interactive, and some felt we do not make any progress from those discussions... We discussed mainly logistics arrangement for the camp management, but we also had an update on the network activities, on the recent project EUROPARC is developing, and on possible funding to finance JR activities.

Not enough time for the evaluation, which is always a good moment for the mentors to exchange views.

Suggestions/Ideas

The idea to involve more the accompanying Rangers in the camp programme was positive, but we haven't had much time to dedicate to work together. But to be replicated in some ways. (Ex to directly manage some of the activities instead of involving external people. Find a way to make them protagonists... Ask them to come one day before to prepare the camp? Every day give to one of the attending parks the time to manage an activity?) Otherwise better to have a camp just with JR...? (Ranger and Mentors are really useful to support the JR only when the JR are 12-13)

It would be interesting to do a research with the