The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas:

“good for parks, good for people”

Charter Award Ceremony 2015

European Parliament, Brussels, 7th December 2015

The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas, new perspectives

Stefania Petrosillo
Charter Award Ceremony 2015
THE QUESTION:
Is it really impossible to reconcile conservation and tourism?
or ... conservation and tourism could be *allied* ?
That’s the point!

But... how?
It is a matter of...

communication and listening to each other
It is a matter of...

commun vision
and coordinated actions
It is a matter of...

commitment at personal and institutional level
It is a matter of...

concreteness
It is a matter of...

economy and prosperity
and

it is a matter of...

Love,
Responsibility,
Taking care...
A possible answer

A practical management tool for Protected Areas to develop tourism sustainably
The story:

1993

EUROPARC Working Group on the effects of tourism in protected areas:

A tool is crucial!

LOVING THEM TO DEATH?
The story:

1996-1999

LIFE Project of EUROPARC Federation

Steering Committee (Leader: French Regional Parks Fed.):

• 10 pilot parks in 6 European Countries
• representatives of Tourism sector
• representatives of International organizations of tourism and of environment

Result: concept of the Charter
Today:

146 Charter Protected Areas in 17 countries

636 local tourism businesses in 39 Charter Areas

Pilot actions in France and Spain to award tour operators
Looking to the future:

Same aims

Renewed structure

New guidelines

Same procedure

Revised forms
The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas is a practical management tool that enables Protected Areas to develop tourism sustainably.

The Charter remains a tool to help an improvement process:

- it attests a commitment,
- it doesn’t certify a standard.
Be smart with your tool !!!!

A tool is useful if we are capable to use it!
The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas remains structured in three parts:

• The first and main part is for sustainable destinations – primarily around a Protected Area. This is awarded to the protected area authority and covers a specifically defined Charter Area which may be wider than the legally designated protected area.

• The second one is for sustainable local tourism businesses within the Charter Area

• The third part is for sustainable tour operators bringing visitors to protected areas
Quality Sustainable Tourism will be good for Parks and good for People

Sustainable Tourism in European protected areas provides a meaningful quality experience, safeguards natural and cultural values, supports local livelihoods and quality of life and is economically viable.

Through awarding the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas, EUROPARC seeks to safeguard cultural and natural values by stimulating quality sustainable tourism, engendering partnerships to support local livelihoods, increase awareness of the need for sustainability, and promote international cooperation.
Principles

1. Giving priority to protection
2. Contributing to sustainable development
3. Engaging all stakeholders
4. Planning sustainable tourism effectively
5. Pursuing continuous improvement
Components:

- Sustainable Tourism Forum
- Strategy and Action Plan
- Evaluation
- Monitoring and Review
- Partnership and Communication

Assessment of the current situation:
- Natural, historic and cultural heritage; tourism and recreation infrastructures; current visitors and potential future markets; impacts of tourism.

Strategic direction:
- Defining clear strategic objectives concerning nature conservation, economic and social development, improving quality of life of locals and quality of tourism.

Action Plan:
- Description of each action: timing, resources, partners for implementing, monitoring proposal.
Principles, key topics and actions:

The principles govern how tourism is developed and managed in a Protected Area. The principles over-arch the key topics and the associated actions that are the core of the European Charter for Sustainable tourism in Protected Areas.

1. Giving priority to protection
2. Contributing to sustainable development
3. Engaging all stakeholders
4. Planning sustainable tourism effectively
5. Pursing continuous improvement
1) Protecting valuable landscapes, biodiversity and cultural heritage

2) Supporting conservation through tourism

3) Reducing carbon footprint, pollution and wasteful resource use

4) Providing safe access, quality facilities and special experiences of the protected area, available to all visitors

5) Effectively communicating the area to visitors

6) Ensuring social cohesion

7) Strengthening prosperity in the local community

8) Providing training and capacity building

9) Monitoring tourism performance and Impacts

10) Communicating actions and engaging with the Charter

Priority Area: 2.3 Training

Strategic Objective:
To increase expertise on specific EUROPARC programmes to deliver the present strategy

Action:
2.3a- Training to support the EUROPARC products, such as Charter
Priority area: 3.1 Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas

Strategic Objective:
EUROPARC will consolidate the European Charter network and promote the ECST as a tool for the sustainable tourism development at international level
Actions:
3.1a - Consolidate the network of ECST parks, with tourism Partners and with travel agencies

3.1b - Promote a common platform with other awarding schemes for Sustainable Tourism Destinations based on Protected Areas in order to lobby effectively for at European and international levels

3.1c - Gain international recognition of the Charter as an efficient tool for sustainable tourism development and disseminate it outside Europe
Priority Area: **4.2 People power - Human resources**

**Strategic Objective:**
Develop the potential of human resources across the EUROPARC Federation network

**Actions:**
4.2b -Support Sections through capacity building and jointly attracting resources through project proposals

4.2d -Support working groups as think and do tanks and project development units for contributing to the work of the Federation
The EU and the Charter

- From the first LIFE (1996-1999) to several LIFE, INTERREG, ENPI-MED, other programmes...

- Constant dialogue between EUROPARC and the European Commission, the European Parliament and the other European institutions

Thanks to European Union for its support!

Charter Award Ceremony 2013, European Parliament, Brussels
The Charter is a process...
Thank you for your attention!

www.european-charter.org