



EUROPARC Federation
Report to Council
8th June 2015

Title:

Working Groups

Recommendations:

To consider Working Groups need for the EUROPARC Federation

Working groups

Council members should refer to the Working Group Guidelines.

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 EUROARC working groups were 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.

Additionally EUROPARC maintains two verification groups. These "standing committees" currently verify Transboundary and Charter for Sustainable Tourism certificates. They are not considered working groups, but technical groups. They have an ongoing remit but with guidelines to ensure the development of the committees themselves.

In 2010 the EUROPARC Council mandated five themed working groups. They bring together experts from our membership and around Europe to focus on issues important to protected areas and N2000 sites across the continent. These working groups consider policy issues, bring together best practice, develop new methodologies and look to future agenda and development. Each working group is mandated to examine subjects of relevance to protected areas in Europe and deliver activities and output that would benefit the wider membership.

Over 40 members from countries across Europe are actively involved in working groups.

It is important that the work of the groups is closely aligned to the Federation strategy. As such all outputs need then to be reported to the Federation, its members and to funders. Therefore maintaining and strengthening communication lines with all parties involved is essential. As such there is an annual meeting of working groups, sections and Council as well as updates in annual report back to the general assembly and through other Federation communication

With the adoption of the new strategy it is important that council consider that is needed to deliver the objectives and actions. There is no requirement to retain or maintain the existing working groups and new mechanisms should be considered. What are the issues arising from the strategy, that need a working group, bearing in mind the expectations of support this may require. Indeed a review of the current guidelines may also be needed. An analysis of what has already been done by working groups and then what priorities now are needed from the strategy and put out a call for working groups, or other fora or e-groups, can then be made, on that basis. This is obviously tied to the whole governance and sections issues that were discussed in the Siggen meeting.

Former working groups' members have been seeking information and decisions, and council should communicate soon to clarify their position.

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Executive Director
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