PROTECTED AREAS IN A CHANGING WORLD

CONFERENCE REPORT
You can either react to change, embrace change or create change.

The natural world is in a constant state of change. Protected Area managers embrace that, examine it and explain it to others. However, change also exists at the organisational level, influenced by macro challenges such as climate, politics and social affairs. At EUROPARC Conference 2015 "Protected Areas in a Changing World", we unveiled some of these challenges and went further, reaching the individual dimension of change. After all, aren’t people one of the most important elements in protected areas?

In EUROPARC Federation we envision a Sustainable nature valued by people. The human dimension is always one of our main scopes of work: we help people to help nature. At EUROPARC Conference 2015, inspiring keynote speakers left us messages of hope and opportunities; workshop leaders developed our skills in different fields of protected area’s management; and the Marketplace gave us an excellent opportunity to learn and create new bonds with peers from our network.

By creating positive changes in ourselves and in our organisations we are able to deal with the direction of change in the natural world.
WELCOME

The EUROPARC conference is the most important gathering of the year, not just for members but for all protected area managers in Europe. In 2015, the lack of a member or country host provided us with the opportunity to try something different.

The directorate team prepared a smaller and even more intense meeting and welcomed all in EUROPARC’s headquarters city of Regensburg DE. While preparing the new format, we wondered if our members would still come to a smaller event. Well, we need not have worried as almost 200 people attended with representation from across the network.

We are ever grateful for the support!

The conference gave us a chance to consider the changing environment that we find ourselves working in, but too, to discover again the joys of networking, learning and finding solutions from each other.

Discussion of big scale topics such as European policy, climate change and natural capital were presented by the keynote speakers, with analysis of more specific workshops such as agri-ecology, transboundary co-operation, working with youth and professional development for protected area staff. It was great to see members and sections of EUROPARC taking the lead on these workshops.

It was exciting to see the input of our youth. Having just returned from the 2nd EUROPARC youth conference and camp in Aigüestortes and Estany de Sant Maurici National Park, Spain. They presented a video and message to protected area managers asking to be the “Voice of Nature” in protected areas. The youth declared “Too Old is Too late”, so give youth a chance to Take the Lead for Nature. EUROPARC responded by committing to having youth representation within EUROPARC and we commend our members to do likewise.

The EUROPARC marketplace was excellently supported by members providing a great information exchange point as well as a chance to taste products from across the network. We plan to expand on this idea in future conference.

The new award of the N2000 Communication showcased innovative and new ideas. The Alfred Toepfer scholarship for young professionals highlighted how study tours can connect protected areas to learn from each other. The Award is generously given by the Alfred Toepfer Stiftung. Finally the Alfred Toepfer Medal recognised the outstanding achievement of Jane Hodges at Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority. We had the chance also to launch the new EUROPARC video, celebrating the work of the Federation and its members. Watch it here.

With an informed and responsive member general assembly, the Federation passed new statutes and took forward its strategy as well as hearing from partner organisations, Wild Europe, European Network of Outdoor Sports and WCPA. Many members stayed on to take part in side meeting on Wilderness, Biomass, Professionalism in protected area managers and rebranding of the Charter.

The energy and enjoyment of the EUROPARC network is at its most prominent at the gala dinner, where friendships are made and new partnership sealed, a testament to the success of the EUROPARC conference and the useful chance for protected area managers from across Europe to come together at this unique, learning, inspiring and fun event. The conference ended with an invite to all EUROPARC members and friends, from their colleagues in the Swiss Network of Parks and the Jura Vaudois nature park in Switzerland to join EUROPARC for conference 2016 19th-23rd October. “We are Parks”.LINK to CONF. and We hope to see you there!

CAROL RITCHIE
Executive Director of EUROPARC Federation
WHO CAME TO THE CONFERENCE?

TOTAL NUMBER: 185

In 2015, EUROPARC Conference followed a different model from previous editions: it was shorter (only 2 days) and it was not held in a member Park. This is probably one of the reasons for a smaller number of delegates compared to the normal attendance around 300.

Nonetheless, the number of delegates surpassed the expectations and for the first time and we had also representatives from South American parks. This year, Germany, the Netherlands and UK were the countries better represented at EUROPARC Conference, probably due the proximity with the venue. Moreover, the majority European countries from EUROPARC Network were represented.

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WIEY EUROPARC CONFERENCE?

We wondered what are the main motivations for attending EUROPARC Conference.

The first reason, chosen by almost all participants, was “Networking”. Indeed, the Conference is the best moment for networking and getting to know peers from other European protected areas.

Curiously, delegates are more keen to “have fun with the European Colleagues” than actually “Find partners for future projects”. Therefore, activities such as the Marketplace and Euro-Party are highly recommended to be repeated in future Conferences, as they provide opportunities for both!

The second main reason is to “Learn new subjects with the keynote speakers”, which stresses the importance of having interesting subjects and renowned speakers.

“Participate in the General Assembly” comes as the third reason, followed by “Participate in workshops” and “highlight my project”, giving once more relevance to the Marketplace.

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Are Protected Areas passive passengers of climate change or drivers of sustainability?

“Climate change” and “biodiversity loss” were probably amongst the hottest expressions in 2015.

World leaders have finally reached a common understanding about the urge to reduce emissions to “safer levels”. At the same time, European citizens acknowledge biodiversity loss as a serious problem, as showed in the Eurobarometer 436 (2015), with 76% asserting “mankind is responsible for biodiversity loss” and 67% recognizing “nature is essential to tackle climate change”.

As nature protected areas, we also have a role in the climate change debate. All ecosystems store approximately 50% of all the carbon emissions and Protected area’s in particular store 15%. PA’s prevent further carbon emissions caused by degradation and, by being in the frontline of conservation, monitoring and evaluating, they sound the alarm of biodiversity loss.

WHICH OPPORTUNITIES?

The increasing land abandonment in Europe, nowadays estimated at 2 billion hectares, is an opportunity to reduce global warming, if smart planning and other measures like (re)forestation are taken. Give space to nature to give space to ourselves and the future generations. Further opportunities are to be better explored such as ecosystem services, green jobs and sustainable energy production. Let’s work towards a change:

“One day, son, this will all be yours”

“Think globally, act locally and change personally!”

IGNACE SCHOPS
President of EUROPARC Federation
Member of Climate Leadership Corps
Goldman Prize Winner
Focus

Protected Areas

The Change From Within

How can people in Protected Areas manage with seemingly endless organisational change?

DR. LAURA MEAGHER
Technology Development Group & Honorary Fellow, INNOGEN

One of the main legacies inherited by Charles Darwin was the concept of change as an ongoing and ever ending process. Change is as natural as inevitable for each living being, and yet, humankind often considers it an uncomfortable process.

FROM MICRO TO MACRO
Understanding change as an internal progression, through self-knowledge and auto-reflection, can help shaping and moderate the process. By analysing the reasons of discomfort and identifying possible solutions from which one can learn, creativity will emerge and positive outcomes will sprout.

At an organisational level, change can be faced by an interdisciplinary approach: a collaborative environment can lead to genuine creativity and innovation. Therefore, protected areas should consider possible partnerships and networks to develop solutions for the coming challenges.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

CHANGE IS NATURAL
What types of change are taking place or likely to be taking place within my organisation?

CHANGE IS UNCOMFORTABLE
Is something about a particular change making me, my colleagues, my unit or organisation especially ‘uncomfortable’?

CREATIVITY CAN EMERGE
While things are changing anyway, what opportunities are opening up or could potentially be identified and pursued?

COLLABORATION CAN ENHANCE RESILIENCE
What partnership or networking activities could help to protect the issues and professional responsibilities I care about?

“Change is uncomfortable, but collaboration can enhance resilience”
Focus

Protected Areas in a Changing Economy

Despite the worldwide growth of protected areas during the last decades, with over 15% of terrestrial and marine areas under some protected status, the actual coverage of protected areas is still weak.

In fact, according to OECD, 2013 “mean species abundance is projected to decline further to around 60% of the level that potential natural vegetation could support by 2050”. The problem is easily explained: critical decisions affecting ecosystems are made by finance ministries and chief finance officers, often to maximise financial capital.

To have a realistic hope of halting biodiversity loss and meet global demand for conservation funding, investable cashflows need to be 20-30 times higher than they are today, according to an analysis by Credit Suisse, WWF and McKinsey. This represents an extra $200-300 billion a year for nature conservation. In the meantime, budgets from national & sub-national governments are declining and there is a massive funding gap of $100 billion for PAs globally.

Natural Capital is the extension of the economic notion of capital (manufactured means of production) to goods and services relating to the natural environment. Natural capital is thus the stocks of natural ecosystems that yields flows of valuable ecosystem goods or services.

WHAT IS NATURAL CAPITAL?

“we need to develop measurable and verifiable products which provide conservation and financial returns.”

SOME MECHANISMS

- Area-based natural capital valuations and ecosystem services mapping;
- Payments for ecosystem services
- Green bonds / impact-based payments
- Biodiversity offsetting
- Investors and lenders policy change based on Natural Capital risk exposure
- Corporate natural capital accounting and disclosure e.g. Natural Capital Protocol
EU Biodiversity Policy: what are the challenges and opportunities?

ALBERTO ARROYO SCHNELL
Senior Policy Advisor
Biodiversity, WWF European Policy Office

European Union Biodiversity policy framework is based on the EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy and EU Birds and Habitats Directives.

In 2015, the European Commission started a consultation process to evaluate the effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, relevance and EU added value of the two directives. The “Fitness-Check” was sent to 47 EU level organisations, representative bodies, and 112 stakeholder organisations. The participation was impressive, with over 520,000 people stating the importance of EU Directives. The final results will only be presented in April 2016.

Furthermore, it seems that environment is not a high priority at EU level at present: It is not included in President Juncker’s 10 priorities and, for the first time in 25 years, there is no Commissioner just for the environment.

Nevertheless, challenges can always be seen as opportunities. This is the time for protected areas to highlight the positive, to provide good examples and to raise awareness on the benefits, services and return of investment of Europe’s natural and cultural landscapes.

“Let’s move from conservation victims to conservation fighters”
An increasing number of young people (aged 18+) previously involved in Junior Ranger programmes, are keen, motivated and passionate about their PAs and want to stay involved.

At EUROPARC Conference 2015 their message was clear: “Youth are not just our future leaders, they can provide a great support for the nature conservation in protected areas today.”

After participating in the first International YOUTH+ Camp, August 2015, 17 youngsters prepared the “Aiguestortes Declaration”, and assumed to be the voice of nature from and to young people.

Now, they are willing to have an active role in their protected areas, helping rangers on the development of educational programmes and voluntary activities.

“Too old is too late!”

“We just have to be asked to work to improve our parks, nothing else”
**Workshop 1**

**Young people in Protected Areas: Taking the lead for Nature**

organised by: [EUROPARC Federation]

A packed and participative workshop considered the challenges, solutions and changes that needed to take place if young people are to have a role in protected areas. The participants made personal commitments to take these issues forward and asked EUROPARC to take the lead.

The group shared ideas and projects from across Europe and identified some common issues.

**Perception** that perhaps parks staff do not see the value of youth being involved. Or that they think it’s too complicated and difficult. That youth think being involved in nature activities is not “cool”. There are time and availability constraints for both staff and youth identified. The groups saw great opportunities in showing good examples and informed communications via EUROPARC.

**Structures, processes and governance** Issues that the way protected areas are set up and run means working alongside them is not easy or accessible for youth (and indeed other groups in society). Young people in particle were seeking a place within the management structures of protected areas. The groups urged EUROPARC to raise this with PA managers to ensure the management systems of protected areas could be more flexible and that the value and benefit of working with young people for the parks be better communicated. EUROPARC repeated its commitment to bring young people into its management.

**Experience and evidence** no one denied the positive contribution youth can make to the work of a park, especially those with years of previous junior ranger experience. But new opportunities needed to be provided. The new YOUTH+ programme being developed by EUROPARC was noted as a good way to provide a structure and training for both young people and protected area staff, but gathering of case studies and other evidence of good practice was also called for. EUROPARC will maintain social media and other communication lines with youth and protected areas to manage the gathering and dissemination of this information and seek funding for a bigger project.

Further, the group was challenged to identify the learning opportunities for different PA’s staff, by bringing their personal experiences and good examples from their countries. The group highlighted different needs for senior managers, middle managers and rangers, and decided which were the most efficient tools / processes to obtain that knowledge.

By the end, all participants agreed on the importance of an ongoing professionalization of PAs staff, and defined a set of suggestions for EUROPARC Federation’s future trainings.

The participants were asked to identify prioritary actions to be implemented in protected areas’ territories, within EUROPARC Federation network.

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**Workshop 2**

**Professional development for Protected Area management**

organised by: [ProPark]

Do we really know what competencies we need to manage Protected Areas and how to identify the training needs of our staff? This was the starting point for ProPark’s workshop on “Professional development for PAs”, which lead the participants into a fruitful discussion and share of ideas.

Participants started by brainstorming about the learning process and identified four main sources of knowledge – training courses; self-directed learning (manuals, help files, etc.); learning by doing (practice, trial and error); and informal learning from others.

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**Workshop 3**

**Seeds of Growth: Multi-functionality of agriculture in Protected Areas**

organised by: [EUROPARC Section Francaise]

Seeds of Growth took a wide look at the multi-functionality of agriculture in Protected Areas discussing the concept of agro-ecology, the ways to combine better agriculture and biodiversity in protected areas to issue social, economical and environmental benefits.

The workshop explored the lessons learned from the great range of experiences lead by the French national and regional parks as: The flowered meadows program; Sentinel alpine pastures project; UNESCO World heritage project combining integrated landscape management and wine growing; biological control of pest; local products and direct sales.
Workshop 4
The Nature of cooperation: Managing Protected Areas in partnership
organised by: moderated by Martin Šolar and Handrij Härtel

The aim of the workshop was to identify the benefits of transboundary cooperation and of the EUROPARC Transboundary certification scheme. Then, to highlight the limits and obstacles of Tb cooperation and ways to attract more transboundary protected areas to join the TransParcNet.

Handrij Härtel introduced the subject with an historical background of the transboundary activities in European PAs. After, in order to share best practices and practical experience in Tb cooperation, 3 case studies were presented (covering both, certified and non-certified TB PAs):

(i) Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve (by Viorica Bisca),
(ii) Bavarian Forest / Šumava National Park (by Hans Kiener/Martin Starý) and
(iii) Julian Alps Transboundary Ecoregion (by Martin Šolar).

During the final discussion, participants focused on the TransParcNet (TPN), the family of certified TB PAs.

Every year, the network meets for sharing ideas and further developments in their TB areas, and in 2016 the TPN meeting will be organised by Saxon-Bohemian Switzerland (D/CZ) (7th-10th June). TPN members want to see the network growing, therefore, TB Certified parks were encouraged to approach individually potential TPN members in their region and to help promote the mission and goals of the Europarc’s TB certification scheme.

To raise awareness about TPN and find further candidates for the certification process, potential TB parks will be invited for the TPN meeting, as well as representatives from international bodies with similar focus, such as the WCPA/IUCN Transboundary Specialists Group. During the meeting, participants will explore synergies with other close initiatives (e.g. TB UNESCO Biosphere reserves) will be explored, and partners will discuss the possibility of having a stronger link between Charter parks and Transboundary parks. Also in future, TransParcNet will need a continuous support from the directorate.

Matthias Mossbauer, from the German Agency for Renewable Resources (FNR) and Volkhard Maier from the Sölktäler Nature Park (Austria) introduced practical experience from the EU project BioEUParks. 5 Protected areas in Europe are developing regional models for the creation of small-scale supply chains of wood biomass in their regions, working in straight collaboration with local stakeholders.

This year, the EUROPARC Conference offered again the opportunity to congratulate 3 of our Transboundary Parks for their commitment to cooperate across borders. All of them successfully passed the verification process by proving significant progresses and were consequently re-awarded!
Alfred Toepfer Medal 2015

Jane Hodges was awarded the Alfred Toepfer Medal as a recognition for her work with the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority and her astonishing contribution to nature conservation.

Recently retired from National Park Authority, a defining moment in Jane’s career came about in 1996 with the Sea Empress oil spill. Jane was a key member of the environment team in the Response Centre and the also task groups set up by the Sea Empress Environmental Committee in the aftermath.

Alfred Toepfer Natural Heritage Scholarship

Every year EUROPARC awards the Alfred Toepfer Natural Heritage Scholarship to young conservationists, with the generous support of the Alfred Toepfer Stiftung F.V.S. The scholars use the award to finance visits to Protected Areas across Europe to research a particular study relevant to Protected Areas management.

Agnes Balazsi from Romania, Eduardo Batista from Portugal and Roberto Piccirilli from Italy were the students awarded this year. They are currently developing their projects and soon their reports will be available at www.europarc.org.
Best Communication practices in Natura 2000 sites

The EUROPARC Federation and ProParks - Foundation for Protected Areas have been working together over the last few years to support and inspire managers in their communication efforts.

EUROPARC organised the first Natura 2000 Communications Award in 2015. The award aimed to identify best communication practices in Natura 2000 sites across Europe.

The quality of the case studies received was very high and the jury, renowned experts from the field of communication, the environment and sustainability, had a particularly hard time choosing the winner.

Besides the Award Winner, 5 case studies were awarded a Highly Commended Certificate:

- UK, Wales – Heather and Hillforts, Upland Landscape Partnership Scheme, Clwydian Range and Dee Valley
- PORTUGAL, Azores – Lands of Priolo, SPEA
- SPAIN, Murcia – Seahorses as flagship species for Mar Menor Coastal Lagoon Conservation, Asociación Hipocampus
- UK, Peak District – Moors for the Future – Partnership’s Community Science Project, Peak District National Park
- The Netherlands, Drenthe – “Together we achieve more” Communicating Drenthe-Frisian Border Region, Province of Drenthe

The award winner was Fundação Mata do Bussaco from Portugal, with their excellent project “Bussaco Digital – Reforesting Bussaco National Forest”, an excellent link between nature conservation (habitat restoration), community engagement and the use of new digital channels.

Nelson Matos, environmental planner at Fundação Mata do Bussaco, receiving the Communications Award.

Bussaco National Forest, run by the Bussaco Forest Foundation, lies just 20 minutes north of the World Heritage city of Coimbra in Portugal.

It is an area that encompasses an astounding natural and cultural heritage. In particular, it is renowned for its large number of beautiful ancient trees and patches of stunning old growth forest, which were severely damaged by storms in 2013 and 2014. After these storms the Bussaco Forest Foundation realised that it did not have enough funds to restore the damage done adequately. It decided that the best way to raise the money needed would be to turn to the public for help and therefore created the initiative Bussaco Digital.

Henk van Hooft and Catrien Scholten from the National Parks Drents-Friese Wold/Dwingelderveld receiving their Highly Commended Certificate with the project “Together we achieve more”
For the first time in the history of EUROPARC Conferences, members and sections were given the opportunity to share directly their experiences and give visibility to their projects and parks.

Delegates had the chance to travel across Europe and South America, with a rich and sensorial experience. In every stand, they got to know some of the most outstanding parks of our network, discovered innovative projects and tools, and were delighted by the traditional drinks and snacks from each country.

The EUROPARC MarketPlace counted with over 30 stands with organisations and initiatives from Europe to South America, it was an exciting and intense experience to be repeat in the future.

*What do you think about the Marketplace?*

"Market Place is a good tool"  
"Repeat next Conference, allocate enough time"  
“Continuity is important. Delegates should be encouraged to attend a number of Europarc conferences as relationships and trust are built.”

Information collected through an online survey sent to all Conference delegates

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Would you like to have a MarketPlace at 2016 Conference?

- [ ] Yes, to display information
- [ ] Yes, to visit
- [ ] I don’t know

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After the appetizers at the MarketPlace, the Bavarian dinner fit in perfection. Energetic, joyful and inspired, we would have danced until morning...

See more pictures of the EUROPARTY [here](#).
Brazil and Argentina: A partnership for conservation

By Anna Carolina Lobo, WWF Brazil

Anna Carolina Lobo is the coordinator of the Marine and Atlantic Forest Programme at WWF-Brazil, where she has developed a great number of projects for the implementation, conservation and effective management of protected areas, both terrestrial and marine.

The Atlantic Forest ecoregion is considered to be the hottest of hotspots. It encompasses three countries, 130 million people and unique conservation challenges in an area with some of the richest biodiversity on the planet.

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Argentina, home to more than 550 species of birds, 120 species of mammals, 79 species of reptiles and 55 amphibians. However, deforestation for agricultural expansion, pine plantations and cattle ranching has created a highly fragmented landscape, reducing the UPAF to 7.8% of its original size.

The region is the setting for one of the most spectacular natural sights: the Iguazu Falls on the border between Argentina and Brazil. Situated in the heart of the ecoregion, the two national parks that protect this area (Iguazu National Park, Brazil, and Iguazu National Park, Argentina) have been declared UNESCO Natural World Heritage sites. Approximately 1.5 million people visit each park every year, driving the local economy with the creation of new jobs and increasing regional income. Tourism is, however, still concentrated in the area around the waterfalls, with little spill over to other areas in the parks that are endowed with a similar biodiversity but which have a limited conservation management. The close vicinity to one another and the shared biome have helped create a good working partnership between the Brazilian and Argentinean parks. They currently work together on specific activities, mostly research projects, for example, work with the Jaguar (Panthera Onça), but this cooperation could be improved and lead to better conservation efforts in the region.

With this in mind, a partnership between WWF-Brazil, Fundación Vida Silvestre Argentina (FVSA) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) established the Biodiversity Conservation and Ecosystem Services Program in the Binational Corridor Iguazu/Iguazú National Parks (Brazil/Argentina). The programme is grounded in current principles of protected areas management, such as the ecosystem services approach and cooperation between protected areas located near international borders. It focuses on the binational corridor formed by both parks and works to engage social actors, such as managers and surrounding communities, for park management. The programme began in August 2014 and is already showing significant results. The products of local farmers and artisans are now being sold by the parks and are also being used as ingredients by park restaurants. This has helped to better distribute the benefits of tourism activities to communities located away from the waterfalls. Cooperation between both protected areas is also evolving positively. Meetings between the park staff take place on a regular basis and include participation in the EUROPARC Conference 2015 to learn about transboundary protected area management and collaboration.

This is just the start! The idea is to achieve much, much more together, including the joint promotion of the importance of conserving the Iguazu/Iguazu ecological corridor, stimulation of the regional economy based on the value of ecosystem services that the parks provide, and strengthening the cooperation between the parks.
The General Assembly 2015 opened with the official launch of the new EUROPARC Film: “Sustainable Nature; Valued by People”. The movie features some of the most iconic landscapes of our Parks and introduces the role of EUROPARC Federation.

The Minutes of the last General Assembly were introduced and voted, as well as the following reports: Council, Treasurer, Auditor, Directorate and the report on the Council Vacancy. With the new Council elected in 2014 General Assembly, the GA was asked to discharge the Council 2014. Changes on the Federation Statutes and Regulations were also approved.

During the members’ announcements, delegates got the latest updates on:

- EUROPARC partnerships with other organizations and lobbying and advocacy work in Brussels, introduced by Federico Minozzi
- Wild Europe and its recent activities, introduced by Toby Aykroyd
- European Network of Outdoor Sports and its cooperation with EUROPARC, introduced by Andreas Thoman
- IUCN/WCPA, the outcomes of the World Park Congress and on Little Sidney Conference, introduced by Andrey Sovinc
- ALPARC, the Dinaric Arc and the interest of protected areas of the Dinaric Arc to work on transboundary cooperation, introduced by Martin Solar

The President and Director hand-over the EUROPARC flag to the next Conference host: the Parc Jura Vaudois which will host the Conference and the General Assembly in Switzerland on the 18th-22nd October 2016.

We Are Parks

is the theme for the coming Conference. We will be looking for the human dimension of European Parks - governance, management, communication, stakeholders engagement, capacity building and much more.

We look forward to seeing you in 2016!
The conference was well organised

The content of the conference sessions was appropriate and informative

I missed the translation service

The conference staff were helpful and courteous

I was impressed and fully benefited from the conference’s social events, as I had the opportunity to network and make new contacts

I missed the help desk

The quality of speakers and range of topics covered were of a high standard.

The following graphics represent the opinion of delegates regarding the overall conference, staff and logistics.

As an overall perspective, delegates were very satisfied with staff, the conference organisation and keynote speakers.

Important to refer that translations and help desk are not considered absolutely necessary by the delegates who responded, but as this was a very small sample, further analysis of this aspect will necessary if EUROPARC events are to remain as inclusive as possible.

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Looking ahead...

“...The accommodation and the conference needs to be in the same venue in order to facilitate social networking for the entire duration of the conference.”

Do you plan to attend EUROPARC Conference 2016?

Topics to be explored for future EUROPARC events

- How to value the “human capital of the Parks”?
- Is there a need to measure, monitor and quantify the immense “human capital” that European Parks have?
- Why has the EU not formally recognized Parks yet (but only N2000)?
- Governance models in Europe
- Local stakeholders participation
- Citizen involvement in park activities
- Volunteer in park activities
- Involvement of local businesses in park activities

- Parkfriends’ associations and public participation
- Financing opportunities and mechanisms
- Social involvement in Nature conservation (examples of Associations, Universities, enterprises, etc, cooperation with Administrations);
- Social benefits of European Parks (Health, Intangible heritage, etc);
- Parks in the landscape matrix (“green infrastructure”, landscape planning, agriculture and rural development).