

2016



EUROPARC FEDERATION

# ANNUAL REPORT





**EUROPARC**  
F E D E R A T I O N

EUROPARC is the voice of Protected Areas in Europe. We unite national, regional and periurban parks, nature and biosphere reserves, marine and landscape protected areas, together with a large number of Natura 2000 sites in 37 countries.

We want to see a **Sustainable nature: Valued by People** with Protected Areas being the substantial component to deliver that vision.

*Landscape Mümmliswil, Thal Regional Nature Park, Switzerland*

*Photo on cover: Parc Jura vaudois, Switzerland, Serge Goy*

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# President's remarks



Dear EUROPARC members and friends,

It is my pleasure to present you the EUROPARC annual report 2016.

2016 was again an exciting journey, where we experienced the beauty, the power and the resilience of the full EUROPARC constituency. We were financially more stable in 2016, our membership grew again and with the guidance of the Directorate, we were successful in our main domains: **representation and lobbying** with European institutions; **supporting protected area management**, growing the network of **Sustainable Destinations** with the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas, **promoting cross-border cooperation** with the Transboundary Parks Programme, and **inspiring new generations** with the Youth+ and Junior Ranger Camp.

Besides all these achievements, I would like to emphasize on a few highlights. Firstly, after a short but intense period of preparation, we welcomed FEDENATUR - the largest European network of peri-urban parks – into our network. It is a key step for our organisation and it resulted in a triple win situation: **we gained extra expertise, we strengthened our European leading position and we widened our family.**

Secondly, we made a big progress on the **governance structures**, where we deepened and opened our relationship with EUROPARC Sections, we evaluated our Council's work and we modernised the working groups into new commissions.

Last but by no means least, we came together as a "family"! With the theme "A Taste of Nature", the European Day of Parks was a mega-success, covered by media across Europe. And with an excellent conference in the Parc Jura vaudois in Switzerland we energised ourselves to take responsibility for a sustainable planet.

Together, for all the daily work you and your colleagues undertake in your parks and habitats and for your continued support working with EUROPARC, I, on behalf of the whole EUROPARC Council, Directorate and Sections, want to say a **huge thank you for making Europe a wilder, greener and healthier place to live.**

*Ignace Schops*

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*EUROPARC Directorate 2016*





**EUROPARC**  
F E D E R A T I O N

# Welcome to the EUROPARC Federation Annual Report

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The EUROPARC Federation Annual Report has a new look and structure, to provide a clearer view on how we are implementing the **EUROPARC Strategy 2015-2021**. Download the strategy in EN, DE or FR at:  
<http://www.europarc.org/our-strategy>

Travel across our four priority areas and discover the activities and projects we've undertaken in 2016. In particular, the work we do to **lobby on behalf of our member's interest is highlighted in blue throughout the report.**

*Each of our 4 strategic themes of work has its own section in the report, with the priority areas and relevant objectives shown. The associated activities are summarised for each area of work.*

As in the previous reports, this new Annual Report will also bring **updates provided by EUROPARC Sections**, in chapter 5, showing the work of the Federation done at a national and regional level across Europe.

We wish you happy reading,  
Your Directorate team.





# Working for nature

**Enhancing the management of places for nature, facilitating the exchange of good practice and promoting international cooperation.**

**In Brussels, EUROPARC works to ensure that Protected Areas have higher visibility at European level and greater recognition of their role and function.**



**Managing places for nature  
Making nature more connected  
Grow the protected area network  
Inspiring people**



# Managing places for nature

Protected Areas are better managed through international cooperation.

The European Union's target of halting biodiversity loss by 2020 remains a serious challenge. Europe's biodiversity continues to be dangerously eroded, with Protected Area managers being daily challenged with biodiversity loss, invasive alien species, climate change effects, pollution and lack of resources.

Learning from Protected Areas across Europe and implementing models that have already been tested by others, can save our members time, money and resources. Therefore, EUROPARC works to **promote best practice on land management**, and organises **networking events for members to exchange experiences**.

In 2016, EUROPARC established a **Commission on Natura 2000 management**. The Commission will be an **expert and communication platform for Natura 2000 site managers within our network**, to share their experiences and good practice examples.

## Biogeographical Seminar Process

Mapping the conservation challenges, identify relevant stakeholders, and develop new management insights is the aim of the Natura 2000 Biogeographical process, led by the European Commission. EUROPARC with ECNC and other partners, has been active in the process, with the organisation and facilitation of Seminars and workshops in different biogeographical regions.

In 2016, EUROPARC facilitated the **Second Atlantic Biogeographical Seminar** in Ireland, organised a Networking event in Morocco (see page 9), and contributed to the **Second Boreal Biogeographical Seminar**, in Lithuania.

## "Europe's Nature-Regional-Landscape Parks"

EUROPARC partnered with the Association of German Nature Parks (Verband Deutscher Naturparke e.V., VDN) in the project **"Europe's Nature-Regional-Landscape Parks"**. The project seeks to strengthen the aforementioned parks by gathering knowledge on their work, successes and challenges, supplying this information to all participating countries and promoting the park's value towards political decision-makers.

After an online form to Protected Areas and park associations (in 2015) and several study visits (2016), the results will be compiled in a book and presented at the final project ceremony in Brussels, 2017.

## Research and Protected Areas Working better together

**How much would our Protected Areas benefit with the scientific community and the Parks administration coming together and finding joint solutions?**

Establish a stronger and dynamic dialogue between park management and research is the aim of the Learning Landscape project. In 2016, EUROPARC gathered different experts to discuss a "set of standards" to test the model that was elaborated though previous workshops, and submitted a project proposal.



## Policy

As the voice of Protected Areas, EUROPARC was heard by the **European Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries**, Karmenu Vella, in a dedicated meeting in Brussels. The Federation presented the important role of Protected Areas to contribute to the achievement of the EU Biodiversity targets and laid solid foundations for the future collaboration between EUROPARC and the European Commission.

In 2016, the EU examined in detail the EU Nature Directives and confirmed they are **fit for purpose**. EUROPARC contributed to the **Fitness Check** consultation and will support members implementing the Action Plan, which will be announced by the EU Commission in 2017.  
<http://www.europarc.org/europe/natura-2000-fitness-check/>

To represent the interests of Protected Areas, EUROPARC is member of the **Co-ordination Group for Biodiversity and Nature – CGBN**, the **European Habitats Forum – EHF**, and the **EC Natura 2000 management Expert Group**. Nature and Biodiversity, EU Nature Directives, Green Infrastructures, Natura 2000 Management and Financing and Sustainable Agriculture are some of the topics EUROPARC is following within these groups.

More about the Biogeographical seminar process:

[www.europarc.org/europe/biogeo-seminars](http://www.europarc.org/europe/biogeo-seminars)



# Making nature more connected

Demonstrating the importance of green corridors in land use planning and promoting land connectivity in and around Protected Areas.

EUROPARC, as member of the **Green Infrastructures Expert Group** and the **European Habitats Forum Working Group on Green Infrastructures** (EHF WG), has been following closely the implementation of the EU Strategy in this field. In the course of 2016, a collection of case studies among Protected Areas started and exchanges and discussions were held with partner organisations and within the EHF WG **to elaborate future actions and initiatives on green infrastructures**.

EUROPARC follows the **periurban parks agenda** being now an active member of the cross-sectorial advisory council on green infrastructure of the Barcelona Metropolitan Region, replacing the position of FEDENATUR.

Moreover, EUROPARC contributes to the debate on the **coexistence of Large Carnivores and People**, taking part in the **EU Platform** on this topic. EUROPARC's focus is on collecting best practice in monitoring and management of large carnivores in Protected Areas, particularly **considering cross-border activities and conflict resolution between stakeholders**.

EUROPARC maintained its close cooperation with the **Council of Europe** contributing to the work on the Protected Areas Diploma, Landscape Convention initiatives and attending the meeting of the **Expert Groups for Protected Areas and Ecological Networks**.





Chasseral Regional Nature Park, Switzerland

### Integration with the Federation of Periurban Parks

The integration of FEDENATUR and EUROPARC was initiated after a meeting in Brussels between the two organisations. The basis of a good understanding and a realisation of common interest and mutual benefit between both associations were agreed.

The agreement reached was presented and agreed by the EUROPARC members at the General Assembly, in September 2016.

To give continuity to the work developed by FEDENATUR, a periurban commission was created with the aim of **proposing action lines and projects on the periurban agenda** for the next two years, and organise technical workshops for A representative of FEDENATUR was invited to attend EUROPARC Council meetings and the FEDENATUR staff member was incorporated in EUROPARC Directorate.

The merging process will culminate in 2017 at EUROPARC Conference (**6<sup>th</sup> September, Portugal**), when both organisations' General Assemblies will be held simultaneously and FEDENATUR will formally approve its dissolution and final integration within EUROPARC.

# Grow the Protected Area network

Enlarge and grow the Protected Area model, especially in the marine/coastal and periurban environment.

### Marine Protected Areas

To support the work of Marine Protected Area, EUROPARC participated in the **Forum of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the Mediterranean**. The event, organised in Tangier, Morocco, happens every 4 years gathering all relevant stakeholders to tackle the challenges MPAs face in the region. The **Tangier Declaration** was the main output of the Forum, setting up recommendations for the Mediterranean Sea.

EUROPARC, in strong cooperation with the European Commission Directorate-General Environment and MEDPAN, organised a specific **Focus session on Integrating Natura 2000 objectives in marine Protected Areas management**. The event gave important inputs for the Tangier Declaration, and was organised in the framework of the **EU Natura 2000 Biogeographical Process**.

### Policy

The preparation of the Workshop in Morocco gave the opportunity to hold several meetings with European Commission officials. There, EUROPARC highlighted the role of Marine Protected Areas for the effective conservation of endangered habitats. EUROPARC presented the expertise of our members in building successful partnerships with local communities, in the fishing and tourism sector.

**EUROPARC has an established track record on the promotion of wilderness in and outside Protected Areas.** In 2016, EUROPARC again, hosted in Brussels the annual meeting of Wild Europe, where the required actions for wilderness in different areas across Europe were discussed.



Torre Guaceto Marine Protected Area, Italy

[www.europarc.org/tangier-declaration](http://www.europarc.org/tangier-declaration)

<http://www.europarc.org/fedenatur-and-europarc/>



# Inspiring People

Promote the values and benefits of Protected Areas, through inspiring celebrations, European level programmes and Awards.



## European Day of Parks

In 1999, EUROPARC initiated the European Day of Parks (EDoP). Now, on or around the 24<sup>th</sup> May, hundreds of activities are organised to celebrate the valuable work of our parks, highlight their importance and show their connection across Europe.

**2016 was the biggest celebration ever**, with over 350 events in 23 countries being organised under the theme "A Taste of Nature". Thousands of EU citizens participated in tasting sessions, gastronomic workshops, guided tours and local markets and nationally broadcast TV, radio and newspaper reached huge audiences.

"A Taste of Nature" strengthened the link between Protected Areas and sustainable agriculture and promoted the value of a healthy nature for Europe's food security.

## Alfred Toepfer Medal

The Alfred Toepfer Medal is a recognition of those who have made a significant contribution to nature conservation in Europe. Nominated by members, the Medal is an opportunity to praise and value the work by peers from across Europe. At the EUROPARC Conference, the **Alfred Toepfer Medal 2015 was awarded to Giuseppe Antocci**, Director of the Nebrodi Regional Park in Sicily, Italy, in recognition of his strong courage in defence of nature, against organised crime. Read more about the winner on page 35.



[www.europarc.org/edop2016/](http://www.europarc.org/edop2016/)

[www.europarc.org/alfred-toepfer-medal](http://www.europarc.org/alfred-toepfer-medal)



International Junior  
Ranger Camp 2016,  
Gauja National  
Park, Latvia



<http://www.europarc.org/international-junior-ranger-camp-2016>

### Junior Ranger Programme

Every year, EUROPARC co-organises the **International Junior Ranger Camp**, Junior Rangers between 13 to 17 years old gather in one Protected Area to share experiences and meet new friends from all over Europe. They learn about nature and how other Protected Areas are managed but also to understand environmental issues and experience Europe's cultural diversity.

The 15<sup>th</sup> International Junior Ranger Camp "**Discover the diversity in Europe's Parks**" took place in Gauja National Park, Latvia, from the **10<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> of July** and gathered over 40 participants, coming from 13 countries.

International  
Junior Ranger  
Camp 2016,  
Gauja National  
Park, Latvia





# Helping people and organisations learn

**EUROPARC promotes collaborative work and capacity building of Protected Area staff, through networking meetings, technical workshops, use of new digital learning tools, and producing guidelines developed by members for members.**

**Collaborative work  
Staff development  
Alfred Toepfer Natural Heritage Scholarships  
Training**



*Isojarvi National Park, Finland, Timo Nieminen*





Workshop at EUROPARC Conference 2016, Parc Jura vaudois, Switzerland

# Collaborative work



Bringing people together, creating a stronger network.

## Transboundary Parks Programme

**T**he **Transboundary Parks Programme** is a special verification and certification system that aims to promote and facilitate **cross-border cooperation between European Protected Areas**.

**In 2016, two Transboundary Areas were successfully re-evaluated** and received their award certificate during the EUROPARC Conference 2016: Oulanka and Paanajärvi National Parks (FI/RU) and Krkonoše and Karkonosze National Parks (CZ/PL). These parks are a **model of collaborative working**, despite the many challenges they encounter, they strive for a common understanding and best practise in their work, resulting in **better management of their shared habitats and ecosystems**.

## TransParcNet: the Transboundary Parks Programme Network

**A**nually, the TransParcNet meeting gathers Protected Area professionals interested in Transboundary Cooperation to discuss and share good practice. **Visitor management in Protected Areas** was the topic of the 8<sup>th</sup> TransParcNet Meeting 2016, which took place in Bad Schandau (Germany) from 7<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> June, kindly host by the Saxon-Bohemian Switzerland Transboundary Parks (composed of Bohemian Switzerland National Park, Labské pískovce Protected Landscape Area (both CZ) and Saxon Switzerland National Park (DE)).

Over 80 participants coming from 13 countries (12 European and Peru!) shared their experiences in managing visitors in their Protected Areas and across international borders. Participants have shared methods and tools to improve information about and for visitors in Protected Areas.

<http://www.europarc.org/transparcnet-meeting-2016/>



Get to know the TransParcNet at:

[www.europarc.org/discover-our-transboundary-areas/](http://www.europarc.org/discover-our-transboundary-areas/)

TransParcNet 2016, Saxon Switzerland National Park, Germany



# Staff development

Promoting the exchange of experiences, information and ideas

Annually, the EUROPARC Conference is the main gathering of our members. Thus, it is the ideal moment to promote the exchange of experiences between members from across Europe, and organise capacity building sessions. In Le Sentier – Switzerland – we organised **15 thematic workshops and 9 tutorials**, on different aspects relevant to Protected Areas management.

Discover the outcomes of the workshops and tutorials with the Conference report and download all presentations at:  
<http://www.europarc.org/europarc-conference-2016/>

## Alfred Toepfer Natural Heritage Scholarship

Each year the EUROPARC Federation, with support from Alfred Toepfer Stiftung, awards three Alfred Toepfer Natural Heritage Scholarships (ATS) **to promising young conservationists**, who are committed to working for the benefit of Protected Areas. To enhance international cooperation and advance the quality, innovation and European dimension of Protected Area management is the aim of the Scholarship. Each is worth €3.000 and enables successful applicants to undertake a study visit on a particular theme to one or more Protected Areas in a European country.



## New digital tools for members

**M**aking use of digital and accessible tools to share information and develop capacity is at the core of EUROPARC's work. In 2016, EUROPARC LIVE was launched: a new series of video interviews to Protected Area professionals from our network, about relevant topics for Protected Area management, with information concise and accessible. These will be enhanced with further materials available as "toolkits" on the EUROPARC website.

More than a technical perspective, EUROPARC aims to share the **human dimension and personal experience** of those working behind the scenes of Protected Areas. Along this year, EUROPARC has produced 12 videos available here:  
<http://www.europarc.org/europarc-live/>

EUROPARC started the preparation of EUROPARC webinars, new web-based meetings that will enable members to exchange experiences at a very low cost way. Members will be able to join in the webinars that will be organised by EUROPARC in 2017.  
[www.europarc.org/europarc-webinars](http://www.europarc.org/europarc-webinars)



Workshop at EUROPARC Conference 2016, Parc Jura vaudois, Switzerland



Videos:

[www.europarc.org/europarc-live/](http://www.europarc.org/europarc-live/)

Discover the outcomes of the workshops and tutorials with the Conference report and download all presentations at:

[www.europarc.org/europarc-conference-2016/](http://www.europarc.org/europarc-conference-2016/)





## Get to know the 2016 winners of the Alfred Toepfer Natural Heritage Scholarships:

**Baiba Galniece** is *Senior Expert* at the Nature Conservation Agency of Latvia, working directly at the Kurzeme Regional Administration, Latvia. Baiba will focus on analysing projects of floodplain grassland restoration and analyse how **these project sites have been managed afterwards** by the Protected Area's administrations. Baiba selected **three Protected Areas** in Poland, Hungary and Estonia due to the similarities with Latvia's natural and socio-economic conditions.

**Bryony Thomson** is *Community Involvement Ranger* at the Peak District National Park, England. For Bryony, *People need nature and nature needs people* thus, her project is based on **visitor engagement: understanding visitor's motivations and finding effective methods to engage them**. Bryony will be **visiting 6 Protected Areas in 4 countries** (Estonia, Finland, Germany and Switzerland) and will make surveys to adult and child visitors to analyse demographics, attitudes and engagement.

**Tymur Bedernichek** is a *Researcher* at the M.M. Gryshko National Botanical Garden in Kiev, Ukraine and wants to **re-establish the Miloš Deyl Alpine Research Station on Pop Ivan Maramures, in the Carpathian Biosphere Reserve**. Miloš Deyl was a famous Czech botanist and ecologist who conducted detailed research on vegetation, soils and climate at Pop Ivan Maramures, back in the 1930s. Now, 80 years after, Tymur wants to repeat **Deyl's** studies on the same plots, to **evaluate the impacts of global climate changes on the most sensitive and fragile ecosystems** – subalpine and alpine tundra. He will be visiting climate stations in Poland and Czech Republic.

*Alfred Toepfer Scholarship winners awarded at EUROPARC Conference 2016, Parc Jura vaudois, Switzerland*



[www.europarc.org/ats/](http://www.europarc.org/ats/)



# Training

Increasing expertise on EUROPARC programmes and developing new training for Protected Area managers.

## European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas (ECSTPA) Verifiers Training

Following the recent updates on the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas methodology, EUROPARC organised a new training for **20 Charter Verifiers**, that took place in Gut Sigger, Germany, November 2016.



EUROPARC gathered experienced and new verifiers, to share the new principles and changes in the evaluation process. During the training, the Charter application and re-application forms were analysed in detail, with the guidance of the **Charter Evaluation Committee**. The information acquired will be used to assess and check the Charter applications, verify the veracity of the strategies and action plans, and seek to secure maintenance of the standards that are expected of a charter area. Many new and younger verifiers were welcomed to the team through this training, giving opportunity to both develop new skills and bring their perspectives into the system.



Transboundary Ecoregion Julian Alps, Prealpi Giulie Nature Park, Marco di Lenard



Charter Verifiers Training 2016, Gut Sigger, Germany

More about the Charter Verifiers training:

<http://www.europarc.org/charter-verifiers-training-2016>





## E-learning for Protected Area Managers

In 2016, the 3 year project „Increasing education opportunities on sustainable development for Protected Area managers in Romania“, that EUROPARC supported with ProPark, came to an end.

The project achieved the development, implementation and promotion of an innovative tool to increase knowledge transfer to Protected Area professionals. The project was developed for the Romanian context, but it is intended to elaborate the model so it can be replicated in other countries.

The existing curriculum for *Protected Area Specialists* in Romania was adapted, to be available as a **blended learning activity - combining e-learning with face-to-face meetings**. The innovative method is now more cost efficient than traditional trainings and offers learning possibilities for participants when it suits their schedule.

The first 45 officially certified *Protected Area Specialists (PAS)* in Romania were trained to become efficient administrators of Protected Areas in the country.

All training material (in Romanian) is available on a web platform (<http://www.proparktraining.ro/>) after registering, along with guidelines for participants and a manual for trainers on how to develop on-line courses (both in Romanian).

The project was funded by Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt (DBU) and the final project report can be found here <http://www.europarc.org/tools-and-training/education-opportunities-pas/>

EUROPARC will seek funding to develop this tool for Protected Area professionals across Europe.



**Parks are catalysts for sustainability and life changes at a local, regional and national level.**

# Promoting Sustainability

**EUROPARC seeks to mainstream Protected Areas as models for sustainable development, to deliver social, economic and environmental benefits: providing Parks, methodologies and quality standards and working closely with EU institutions to raise the voice of Protected Areas.**

**Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas  
Sustainable Agriculture  
Nature and Health  
Climate Change  
Future topics**



*Soomaa National Park, Estonia, Mati Kose*



# Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas

Sustainable Tourism is good for Parks and good for People.

## European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas

**The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas** is a practical management tool that enables Protected Areas to develop tourism sustainably. The Charter Network includes now **157 European Sustainable Destinations from 19 countries**.

The Charter methodology is a journey that encompasses 3 parts: **Sustainable Destinations, Sustainable Partners and Sustainable Tour operators**. In 2016, the Italian section started to work with Partners by involving two Protected Areas and businesses. Other positive developments of Charter were made, with 15 tour operators in France and 2 in Spain being awarded, highlighting their commitment to sustainability.

In 2016, a **Communications and Marketing commission was established to support the creation not just of a communication strategy for EUROPARC but also of a new plan for the Charter Programme**. TUI agreed to sponsor the new logotype, which will be introduced in 2017, as a celebration of the United Nations International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development.



## Charter Award Ceremony

The Charter Award Ceremony 2016 was again a great success, with 19 Sustainable Destinations awarded in a ceremony where the social and economic benefits of Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas were highlighted. The event gathered over 80 participants and was hosted at the **European Parliament** thanks to the support of MEP Ramon Tremosa i Balcells and the Region of Catalunya.

For the first time, EUROPARC awarded **two Parks from Greece** and a **Transboundary Region** – the Julian Alps Ecoregion (that encompasses Triglav National Park in Slovenia and Prealpi Giulie Nature Park in Italy). Following the Charter Award Ceremony, the Delegation of the Government of Catalonia welcomed all the participants and speakers for a special side event.

The Charter website was incorporated into the EUROPARC website. Now, it is possible to have an overview of EUROPARC Sustainable Destinations with a quick glimpse on the new map; and access all updates from the network.



## Policy

EUROPARC continued its advocacy work with the European Institutions to **ensure synergies between biodiversity conservation and sustainable tourism** and to share good practice and experiences from the parks.

EUROPARC maintains good connection and relation with Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) active in tourism within the **Transport and Tourism Committee** and in the **“Intergroup European tourism development, cultural heritage, Way of St. James and other European cultural routes”**.

Among several events in 2016, EUROPARC presented the experience of the Charter for Sustainable Tourism to the Intergroup and attended the **High-level Tourism Event “Towards a stronger tourism policy for European growth and jobs”** organised by the Intergroup. The **Charter Award Ceremony** at the European Parliament received also a great acceptance by Members of the European Parliament and European Commission, who have heard best practice from the Parks awarded.

Charter Award Ceremony 2016, European Parliament, Brussels





# Sustainable Agriculture in and Around Protected Areas

## Policy

### The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

In Brussels, a growing group of NGOs has come together in the **Sustainable Food and Farming Platform (SFFP)** to address the challenges around the food and farming system.

As a sub-group of this SFFP, the **CAP NGO** group has been looking more in detail at the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) as one of the policies that needs specific scrutiny. **EUROPARC is part of both SFFP and the CAP NGOs group**, with the aim to represent Protected Areas' perspective to the debate on sustainable agriculture and on the CAP modernisation and simplification.

### Promoting nature friendly agricultural practice across Europe

Among decision makers and the general public, it seems, conflicts between Protected Areas and agriculture are more known than the huge number of positive relations, collaborations and common initiatives in existence.

Thus, in order to reverse this tendency, EUROPARC created a **Commission on Sustainable Agriculture** to work on the promotion of a more positive dialogue and partnerships within the EUROPARC network.





# Nature and Health

Highlighting the benefits of nature for human health and bringing together Protected Areas and the health sector.

Parks make a significant contribution to human health and well-being. To follow up the work on this area, EUROPARC created a **Commission on Health and Protected Areas** that will work on policy development and showcase of best practice. The Commission is also in charge of delivering webinars and workshops at EUROPARC annual Conference.

## Policy

EUROPARC presented case studies on the **Health and Social Benefits of Biodiversity and Nature Protection**, a 2-days workshop organised by the Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP) and the European Commission, hosted by the Committee of the Regions (Brussels).

The work in cooperation with the **European Network of Outdoor Sports** is ongoing, to contribute to its policy studies on the health benefits of outdoor sports in Protected Areas and towards the definition of guidelines and code of conducts for outdoor sports in Protected Areas and N2000 sites.



*Krkonosze National Park, Czech Republic, Rádek Drahný*



# Climate Change

Supporting Protected Areas on climate change mitigation and adaptation.

## BioEUParks – Biomass in EU Parks

EUROPARC partnered 3 European Environmental organisations and 5 Parks in the BioEUParks project - **Exploiting the potentialities of solid biomasses in EU Parks**. Aiming at **finding local solutions for sustainable energy**, project partners developed and implemented different models for sustainable wood biomass exploitation in their regions, ensuring nature protection whilst bringing economic benefits for local communities. The report **“Socio-Economic and Environmental Responsible Models for Sustainable Biomass Exploitation in European Protected Areas”** is available for download, resuming lessons learned by the Project partners and guidance on how to implement small-scale biomass supply chains in Protected Areas. The project came to an end in 2016 and was funded by the IEE programme.

In 2016, EUROPARC organised the **International Mainstreaming Conference in Brussels**, where the results of the Project were presented and different perspectives on sustainable biomass exploitation in Parks were discussed. The Conference **“Solid Biomass in European Protected Areas: Sustainable Supply Chain Models”** was hosted by Committee of the Regions, March, and gathered over 40 participants. Case studies from the project partners were presented, and several interventions from NGOs and representatives of **EU institutions - such as the European Parliament, European Commission and Committee of the Regions** – were held.



Co-funded by the Intelligent Energy Europe Programme of the European Union

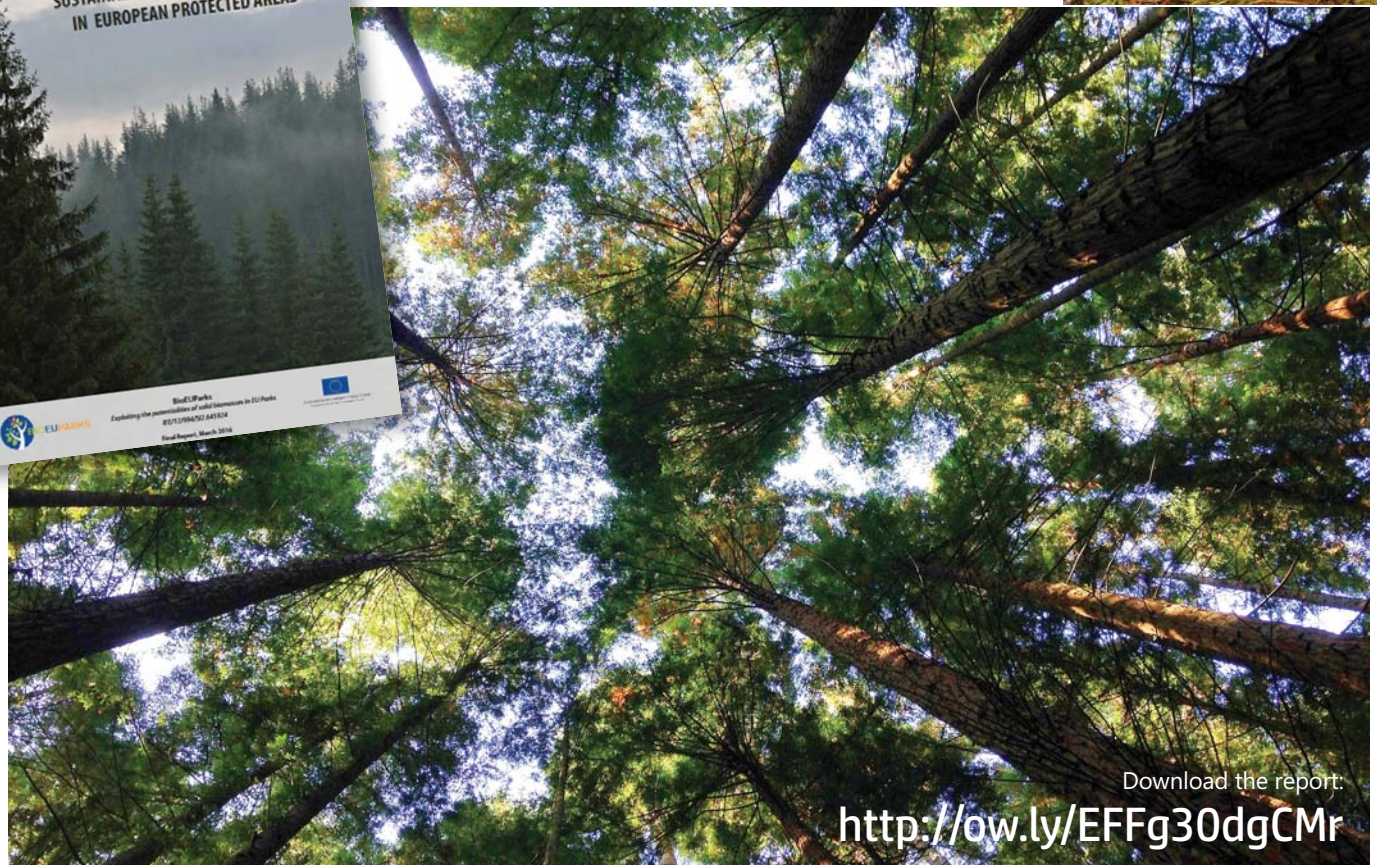
<http://www.bioeuparks.eu>



SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBLE MODELS FOR SUSTAINABLE BIOMASS EXPLOITATION IN EUROPEAN PROTECTED AREAS



BioEUParks  
Exploiting the potentialities of solid biomasses in EU Parks  
BIO1210647501 A01024  
Final Report, March 2016



Download the report:

<http://ow.ly/EFFg30dgCMr>





Thayatal National Park, Austria, D.Manhart

## Future topics

Exploring new topics to support Protected Area managers' contribution to sustainable development.



### IMPACT INTERREG Europe project

**E**UROPARC is the Communication manager of **IMPACT - Innovative Models for Protected Areas: exChange and Transfer**, an Interreg Europe project that aims at introducing new management models to balance conservation with sustainable use of natural assets in Protected Areas.

The project is organised in two phases: during Phase 1 (2016-2018), partners from Andalucía, Lithuania, Molise region, Romania and Regional Parks from Hauts de France will work on the exchange of good practice and prepare an action plan to adapt lessons learnt from the other partners into their respective regions. During Phase 2 (2018 – 2020), they will implement and monitor the action plan devised in Phase 1.



Handmade cheese in Sierra de Grazalema Nature Park, Andalucía, Spain

More information at:

[www.interregeurope.eu/impact/](http://www.interregeurope.eu/impact/)



# Working Together – building our organisation

**Being an effective and efficient network means looking for continual development in the fields of governance, human resources, finances and communications.**

**Governance – how we work**  
**People Power – human resources**  
**Federation finances**  
**Talking and listening**







EUROPARC Conference 2016, Parc Jura vaudois, Switzerland

## Governance – how we work

Improving the governance system of the EUROPARC Federation to meet good governance principles and increase efficiency.

### Structure and Governance

The members elect a President and a Council, to develop the strategic direction and oversee the work of the organisation.

Further, members elect an Internal Auditor who actively takes part in Council meetings and produces an annual report with recommendations for improving the governance processes within EUROPARC. He provides guidance to Council members and the Directorate to better perform their role in delivering the EUROPARC mission for the members.

Get to know the EUROPARC structure in the next page.

### General Assembly 2016

The annual General Assembly is the most important discussion point between the members, Council, Directorate and Sections; and is the final decision-making forum of the EUROPARC Federation.

In 18<sup>th</sup> October, in Parc Jura Vaudois, Switzerland, EUROPARC members gathered to review and agree on the activities during 2015, and to have an overview of the latest updates on the fields of lobby, programmes and communications.



EUROPARC Directorate developing new ideas for the Federation, Gut Siggen, Germany

Download all reports from General Assembly 2016

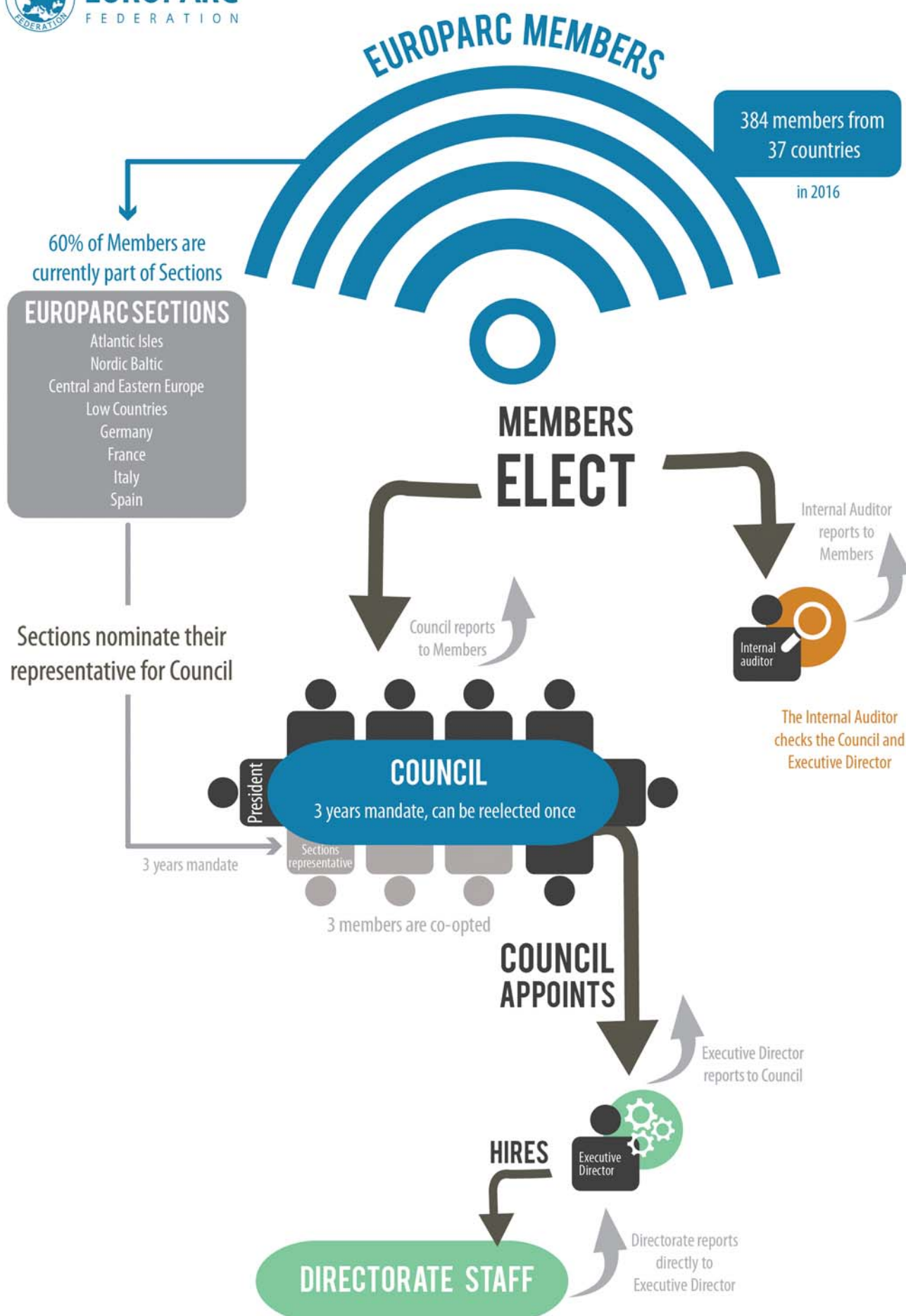
[www.europarc.org/general-assembly-2016](http://www.europarc.org/general-assembly-2016)



# EUROPARC Governance Structure



**EUROPARC**  
FEDERATION







Sections Partnership Agreement, signed at EUROPARC General Assembly 2016, Parc Jura vaudois, Switzerland

# People Power – human resources

Developing the potential of human resources and the communications flow between all components of the Federation.

## Historical Partnership Agreement between EUROPARC and its Sections

To ensure that EUROPARC is the strong and united voice for all nature and landscape Protected Areas, the Federation and its sections have signed a **Partnership Agreement**, at the General Assembly 2016.

The objective of this agreement is to strengthen the existing collaboration between the different sections that make up EUROPARC and it has been signed by EUROPARC President Ignace Schops and the representatives from 7 (out of 8) EUROPARC sections, namely Atlantic Isles, Central and Eastern Europe, France, Italy, Low Countries, Nordic-Baltic and Spain.

The agreement underlines and endorses the **collective commitment to find new ways of working together** within our organisation on behalf of our members. A common set of principles of cooperation was agreed and Sections committed to support the Federation pursuing its vision of a *Sustainable Nature, Valued by People*.

## EUROPARC Commissions

EUROPARC reviewed its previous working groups and defined new commissions, which are open to the participation of EUROPARC members. Two type of commissions were created: one-year commission, to better support internal processes of the Federation (Membership; Communications and Marketing) and four commissions that will be working for a period of two years and will be further developing priority topics for EUROPARC, namely Natura 2000, Health and Protected Areas, Sustainable Agriculture and Periurban/Fedenatur.

More Commissions will be created in due time.

## EUROPARC SECTIONS

- Nordic-Baltic
- Atlantic Isles
- Central and Eastern Europe
- Low Countries
- Germany
- France
- Italy
- Spain





# Federation Finances

Finding new ways for funding and sustaining financially the Federation's activities.

## EUROPARC Membership

**Being a member of the biggest network of European Protected Areas gives you a wealth of unique opportunities to support your work.**

From management tools and capacity building events, to experience exchange with like-minded professionals, as well as having your issues represented at a European level.

In December 2016, EUROPARC had **384 members in 37 countries**, who represent hundreds of authorities and thousands of Protected Areas. Despite the financial difficulties many European countries face, **EUROPARC gained 14 new members in 2016** from 10 countries – Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Russia and Switzerland. The new members balanced the 4 members that unfortunately resigned and the 11 members that were struck off, after not paying their membership fee for the last two years.



European Association  
Periurban Parks

In May 2016, FEDENATUR and EUROPARC Federation reach a productive agreement to integrate and strengthen Europe's leading Protected Area network (see page 9). The board of Fedenatur and the council of **EUROPARC have created Europe's largest organisation, representing parks from the city to the sea and from the metropolitan to the mountain tops**. The members of the combined organisations serve a constituency of at least 25% of the European population.

**So far, we can proudly say EUROPARC is the largest and most representative Protected Area network in Europe, representing 40% of the total area of the Natura 2000 network.**

## Membership Campaign

In 2016, EUROPARC initiated a targeted membership campaign in order to increase the network of Protected Areas represented by EUROPARC Federation.

The membership campaign is targeting Protected Areas and Natura 2000 sites administration bodies, as well as governmental authorities at municipal, regional and national level, responsible for the coordination of Protected Areas. It is being conducted by the Council members and EUROPARC Sections and for which new promotion tools were created.

## Membership Commission

In 2016, EUROPARC Council decided to establish a **Membership Commission** to discuss and propose a new revised policy for membership and its categories. The one-year Commission will be working to have a proposal of the new potential categories ready for EUROPARC General Assembly 2017.



Opening ceremony at  
EUROPARC Conference 2016,  
Parc Jura vaudois, Switzerland



# Financial Report

## Balance Sheet

	2016	2015
<b>Assets</b>		
Assets		
Total fixed assets	5 404,50	4246,40
Shares in affiliated companies (EP Consulting)	0,00	0,00
Total current assets	308 202,83	201 460,4
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>313 607,33</b>	<b>205 706,80</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Profit Reserve	176 313,67	164 364,66
Liabilities		
Provisions	20 388,5	19 533,46
Accounts payable	116 905,16	21 808,68
<b>Total Equity and Liability</b>	<b>313 607,33</b>	<b>205 706,80</b>

## Income and Expenditure

	2016	2015
<b>Income</b>		
Membership fees	273 378,50	297 117,00
Grants		
EC core grant	109 267,20	0,00
Project grants	117 297,64	54 722,00
Other income	105 989,68	147 526,96
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>605 933,02</b>	<b>499 365,96</b>
<b>Simplified Expenditure</b>		
<b>Total Personnel costs</b>	<b>350 698,06</b>	<b>273 784,78</b>
<b>Total Office costs</b>	<b>25 435,35</b>	<b>23 633,25</b>
<b>Total Travel and Subsistence</b>	<b>95 241,52</b>	<b>72 942,02</b>
<b>Total Other direct costs</b>	<b>17 862,32</b>	<b>17 855,84</b>
<b>Total Overhead costs</b>	<b>31 038,20</b>	<b>52 577,42</b>
<b>Total Project direct costs</b>	<b>9 318,97</b>	<b>9 339,43</b>
<b>Total External Assistance/ Professional Fees</b>	<b>64 974,59</b>	<b>47 172,27</b>
<b>Financial Assets Depreciation</b>	<b>0,00</b>	<b>118 000,00</b>
<b>Total costs</b>	<b>594 569,01</b>	<b>615 305,01</b>
<b>Result</b>	<b>11 364,01</b>	<b>-115 939,05</b>



# Talking and listening

Developing smarter communications.

## Talking, Listening, Engaging

Member's participation in EUROPARC programmes was excellent in 2016, with 19 charter areas awarded, 2 Transboundary Parks re-evaluated and over 40 youngsters participating in the Junior Rangers Camp and YOUTH+ event.

The EUROPARC Conference 2016 "We Are Parks", held in Parc Jura Vaudois, Switzerland from the 18 – 22<sup>nd</sup> October, was the highest moment of the network. Over 300 delegates had the chance to directly connect with their peers and share their best practice, projects and ideas.

Digital communication channels are becoming the preferred tool to exchange and access information. Hence, EUROPARC produces and updates **content on the website and social media**, on a daily basis, which includes latest news on Protected Areas management and EUROPARC project and programmes updates. Through the constant inputs on EUROPARC website, we have achieved a total number of **173,358 page** views during 2016. Regarding social media, the Federation got over 625.000 impressions on its posts (362.000 on Facebook and 263.000 on Twitter).

Moreover, in 2016 the Federation developed some new digital tools and started the preparation of new opportunities for our members to exchange experiences, which will be fully delivered in 2017:

- a) **EUROPARC interactive maps** were produced for the Transboundary Parks Network, for the ECSTPA network; Junior Rangers Programme and for the European Day of Parks activities.
- b) **EUROPARC LIVE** video interviews – 12 films have been produced, portraying the experience and opinions of different professionals of our network on different topics concerning Protected Areas management.

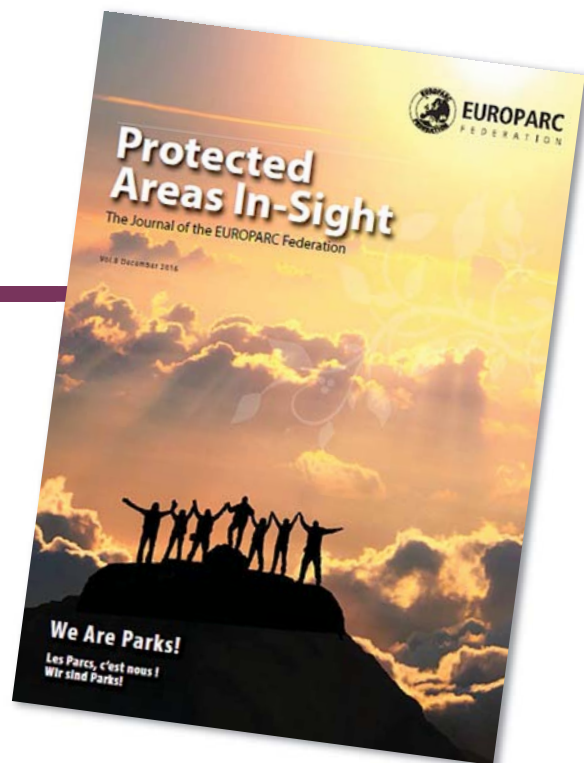


Mount Etna  
Etna Regional Park, Italy



- c) **Toolkits** started to be prepared, with the objective of responding to specific learning necessities. They will gather different resources (case studies, videos, news and others) on a specific topic relevant for Protected Areas management.
- d) **Case studies section** within EUROPARC website, which will be fully available in 2017.
- e) **Webinars**, in 2017 EUROPARC will launch a new cost-efficient opportunity to share experiences and best cases.

EUROPARC produced the annual **Journal of the Federation - Protected Areas In-Sight** that followed the topic of the Conference “We Are Parks” and delivered its bi-monthly e-News.



#### EUROPARC Communications and Marketing Commission

A one-year commission of professionals in communications and marketing from across EUROPARC network was created in order to support the Federation in the development of its Communications Strategy and Action plan for 2017-2021 and develop a Marketing plan for the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas.





# Our European Network

**EUROPARC Central and Eastern Europe**  
**EUROPARC France**  
**EUROPARC Italy**  
**EUROPARC Germany**  
**EUROPARC Low Countries**  
**EUROPARC Nordic-Baltic**  
**EUROPARC Spain**



**Over the years, the Federation has supported the creation of regional and national sections. The EUROPARC sections fulfill many of the Federation's aims, working to implement the strategy, whilst reflecting the priorities and characteristics of the areas they cover.**



# EUROPARC Central and Eastern Europe

The EUROPARC Central and Eastern Europe Section (hereinafter CEE) celebrated its first anniversary in 2016, since its expansion from the former Czech section in 2015. The CEE section network includes approximately 30 members from seven countries – Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia. The core areas of work remain **capacity building and transboundary cooperation through communication and experience sharing**.



*TransParcNet meeting 2016, Saxon Bohemian Switzerland (Germany and Czech Republic)*

## Key Activities in 2016

### Members Assembly of the CEE combined with a workshop on sustainable tourism

The Members Assembly of the CEE section took place in Hostětín, 'ecovillage' with a successful information centre operated by the NGO Veronica. The meeting was attended by more than 25 participants. Results are available at the CEE website [www.europarc.org/central-and-eastern-europe](http://www.europarc.org/central-and-eastern-europe).

'Small workshop' on invasive alien species organised by Hungarian colleagues in Hortobágy National Park in May 2016 was a successful example of information sharing among experts from the CEE countries. The advantage of the meeting is its low cost that allow a participation of colleagues from organisations with limited budget.

**TransParcNet meeting** was held in Saxon Switzerland NP, DE and co-organized by Bohemian Switzerland NP, CZ in June.

'Wilderness round table' Czech members organized a two round table meetings attended by 15 experts from the Ministry of the Environment, all four national park administrations, Czech Nature Conservation Agency and other bodies interested to clarify a natural processes protection in Czech Republic. The activity is a typical example of the CEE role in the region, i.e. to facilitate and support understanding among PA managers and other bodies.

**Other activities** are related to internal membership campaign (Czech Ministry of the Environment became a member of the Federation in 2016), and technical support (leading of two workshops during the annual conference, participation at the Bern Convention and the European Commission events).



## Successes and challenges

### Successes

Above listed activities show that the CEE has been enlarging its impact and technical support crossover the region. The work plan for March/2016 – March/2017 has been continuously implemented and regularly amended by new activities.

**Challenges** are mainly linked with the activity of CEE members. Still our challenge is how to energize all our colleagues to take an active role in the network.

Another challenge is a project cooperation. The idea to prepare a joint project from the INTERREG Central Europe or the INTERREG Danube failed. The reason is that the CEE section does not have a legal entity, and a majority of the section members are overloaded by their own projects.

*CEE Section General Assembly 2016, Hostětín, Czech Republic*

<http://www.europarc.org/europarc-central-and-eastern-europe/>

<https://www.facebook.com/europarccee>



# EUROPARC France

In 2016, the French Section strengthened links within the network and continued its activities on the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas (ECSTPA)

## Key activities in 2016

### Strengthening of links within the network

The French Section saw the 3 networks of Wallonia, Switzerland and Luxembourg being incorporated to trial a "French-speaking section" in 2017.

The French Section attended the annual conference in the Jura Vaudois Nature Park: Michaël Weber, President of the Federation of Regional Natural Parks of France (FPNRF), took part in a panel discussion on the roles of Park Presidents, and the Section organised a stand at the "Initiatives Market". Pierre Schmelzle, a co-opted member of the EUROPARC Council, volunteered to take part in the Sustainable Agriculture Commission.

Ignace Schops took part in the "Territorial Wellness" workshop and helped to man a stand for to foreign delegations at the Congress of Regional Natural Parks.

### Contribution to the work of the EUROPARC network on the ECSTPA

A report was produced on the first year pilot phase for recognising tour operators in Part 3 of the ECSTPA. The French Section worked on and discussed with EUROPARC an ECSTPA communication strategy. It also conducted promotional activities aimed at tour operators (trade fairs, fam trips, etc.)

### Participation in European and international lobbying activities

The French Section contributed to the study of natural parks in Europe. The Federation of Regional Natural Parks of France, along with the Montagne de Reims and Pilat Regional Natural Parks, welcomed the delegation from the German Association of Natural Parks (VDN) in May.

## Main successes and challenges of 2016

### Participation in the governance of EUROPARC

Dominique Leveque, President of the Montagne de Reims Regional Natural Park, Pierre Schmelzle, representative of Pilat Regional Natural Park, continued to serve on the EUROPARC Council. Olaf Holm, director of the Montagne de Reims Regional Natural Park, retained his role as Inter-Sectional Representative and Coordinator.

### Signing of the first agreement between EUROPARC and the French Section

### ECSTPA certification

In 2016 three regional national parks saw their ECSTPA diploma renewed: Alpilles, Livradois Forez and Vercors.

### 15 parks engaged in Part 3 with 300 tourism service providers

### 15 approved travel operators in this Part, of which three were new additions in 2016, first results:

- More than 80 stays co-created or approved with 13 Parks
- More than 2,500 customers and revenue of almost EUR 1,000,000



Cevennes National Park, France



<http://www.europarc.org/europarc-france>

Promoting Inclusive tourism  
with Joilette in French  
Nature Regional Parks





Giuseppe Antoci receiving the Alfred Toepfer Medal at EUROPARC Conference 2016, Parc Jura vaudois, Switzerland.

## Federparchi-EUROPARC Italy

Federparchi-EUROPARC Italy has been actively working in the promotion and activation of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas (ECSTPA) in Italy. By the end of 2016, Italy had 34 Protected Areas awarded with the ECSTPA and many other areas applying. At the Charter Award Ceremony in Brussels, December 2016, five Italian protected areas obtained the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas.



### Key activities in 2016

The new Charter parks are: Archipelago Toscano National Park, Cilento Vallo di Diano e Monti Iaburni National Park, the Torre Guaceto Marine Protected Area, the Monviso Regional Park and the Gole del Furlo Regional Reserve.

### Successes and Challenges

The ECSTPA reached another great success, thanks to the **lobbying and promotion activities promoted by Federparchi**. The new Italian Strategic Plan of Tourism defined by the Ministry of Tourism (Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism) and officially recognised by the Government clearly **affirms the importance of ECSTPA approach**. Special chapters of the Strategic Plan are focused on sustainable activities in protected areas because they produce and promote high-quality food, soft mobility networks and other advanced services as tourist attractors. For that, the Italian Ministry of Tourism Plan proposes the implementation of the ECSTPA approach and principles to other fields of tourism management outside parks and not only for environmental purposes.

One of the best news of 2016 has been the Alfred Toepfer Medal, awarded by EUROPARC to **Giuseppe Antoci**, President of a Regional Park in Sicily for his distinctiveness and success in Conservation.

Since he was appointed as President of the Nebrodi Regional Park Giuseppe Antoci's commitment has been addressed to guarantee the utmost administrative regularity of the Park Authority. Antoci is fighting the local mafia system that has spread in recent years and that allowed to receive European funds for the support of fake farmers and shepherds pretending to manage large areas of agricultural land.

Therefore, he has adopted a specific legality protocol with the Messina Prefecture which includes the anti-mafia certification (i.e. a check that there are no mafia infiltration in the farms management) for all the pastures in the park territory. The so called **"Antoci's protocol"**, is now recognized as a successful model that has been signed by all Prefects and the President of the Region, and extended to the entire island. Because of his daily commitment against the mafia, he received many life-threats and for this reason he is under protection since December 2014. In 18<sup>th</sup> May 2016, he was victim of an attack by the local mafia but thanks to the State Police, he miraculously survived. The results Mr. Antoci is achieving demonstrate how protected areas can play a crucial role not only for the conservation of biodiversity but also for ensuring a legal defence especially in those territories in which the local communities are victims, along with the environment and landscape values.

<http://www.federparchi.it/>



# EUROPARC Germany

Book "Bringing the  
Fascination of Nature to  
Life" by VDN and  
EUROPARC Germany

EUROPARC Deutschland can look back on 25 years of active networking to bring together the national parks, wilderness areas, biosphere reserves and nature parks in Germany

## 2016 is the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of EUROPARC Deutschland – for Nature and Society

Representatives from national and regional political parties recognised the association's 25 years of existence with a ceremony during EUROPARC Deutschland's general meeting held in the Black Forest National Park in June 2016. A special milestone in the association's history was the **integration of all protected areas in Germany using a single standardised corporate identity under the umbrella brand "National Natural Landscapes"**. Nowadays, the tricolour roundel logo is used by over 100 licensees and in almost every German federal state.

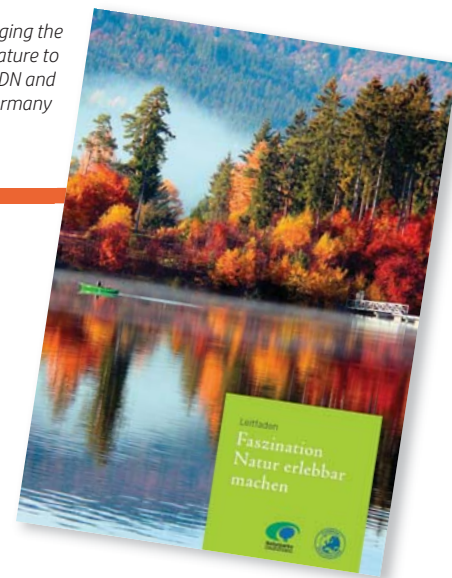


German participants at the study visit  
"Accessibility and Inclusion in Protected Areas"  
learning about practical examples in the  
Austrian Nature Park Kaunergrat, Tobias Wiesen

## Experiencing nature first-hand in the National Natural Landscapes

In 2016 EUROPARC Deutschland, in cooperation with the Association of German Nature Parks, published the code of practice "Bringing the Fascination of Nature to Life – a guide for the development and implementation of nature and adventure activities in the National Natural Landscapes"; its compilation was supported by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation and the Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety. The guide helps the administrators of protected areas and those involved in regional tourism to develop and market attractive, nature-based tourist activities in the National Natural Landscapes which consistently guarantee the protection of nature and landscapes.

Since 2008, EUROPARC Deutschland's programme "Partners of the National Natural Landscapes" has also been focussing on creating high quality offers to experience nature. In 2016 24 protected areas nationwide took part in regional partner initiatives. They cooperate with a total of around 1,000 businesses that have developed sustainable offers for overnight accommodation, catering, handicrafts, nature experiences etc. The partner businesses are classified according to standardised quality and environmental standards nationwide and are important ambassadors of the National Natural Landscapes.



## International study trips for staff from protected areas

EUROPARC Deutschland is contributing towards European cooperation on protected areas with its project "Stakeholders from National Natural Landscapes in an International Exchange of Expertise", known as ANNKA for short (duration: 2015-18). The project supports the international exchange of expertise, experience and methods of work through thematically specialised study trips to parks in Germany and abroad open to full-time staff and volunteers from protected areas. In 2016 six German participants spent a one-week study trip in Austrian protected areas on the topic of "Accessibility and Inclusion in Protected Areas". Another seven people visited British protected areas during a similar study trip which focussed on "Regional Development and Tourism in Protected Areas". Five further study trips are planned for 2017, in Germany, Holland and Finland. The project is sponsored by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation with funding from the Ministry for the Environment.

Additional fields of work of EUROPARC Deutschland, which continued to be developed in 2016, include, for example, Junior Ranger, Volunteer Management, Inclusion of People with Disabilities, Commercialisation of Ecosystem Services, Development of Quality Standards for Wilderness Areas and the Interim Evaluation of National Parks.

<http://www.europarc-deutschland.de/>

# EUROPARC Low Countries

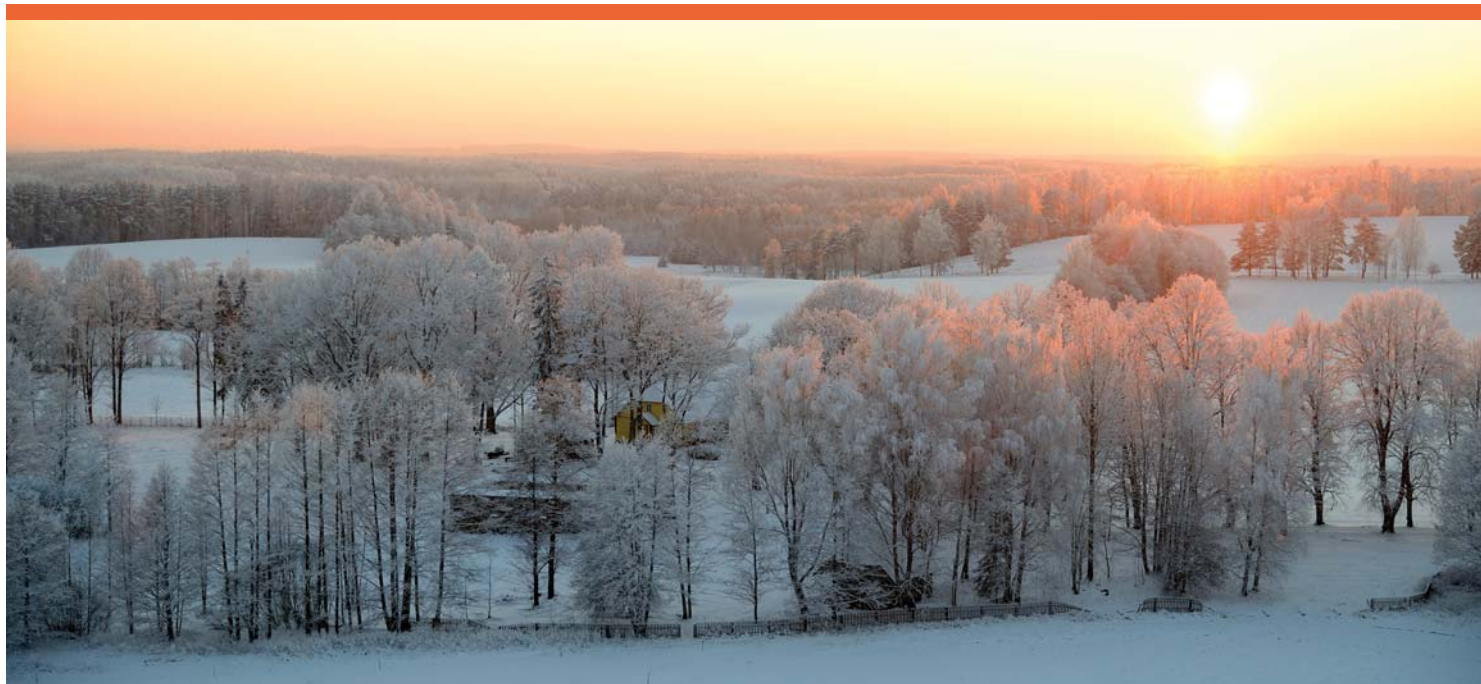
In 2016, the EUROPARC Low Countries met a few times, mostly in conjunction with activities related to the renewal of the National Parks in the Netherlands. The limited time available was mainly focused on that item. In 2017 we hope to broaden the activities of the section again.



**EUROPARC**  
Low Countries



# EUROPARC Nordic-Baltic



Karula National Park, Estonia, Janek Joab

## Key Activities in 2016

2016 was very calm and silent year for Nordic – Baltic section. In the beginning of 2016, the secretariat tried to organise a meeting for making plans for 2016 year, but everyone had so much work at national level that it was decided to do e-mail conversations and have a meeting during EUROPARC annual conference.

At EUROPARC annual conference, was decided that the Section will have a conference by the beginning of 2017, under the theme “scientific databases and how we use them in Protected Areas management.”

We also had a quite fun activity in Nordic-Baltic section: a photo contest “best winter photo”. The photos taken by Nordic-Baltic section members were shared on a facebook page and the picture that earned more “likes” won a secret prize. Out of 18 pictures, the “best winter picture” was taken by Janek Joab from Karula National Park, Estonia.

There is a lot of debate and conversations going about who should and can take the lead for the secretariat for the next period, which is 2018-2021, replacing Lithuania, who is currently encharged.

## Challenges that we faced in 2016:

- A lot of work has to be done at national level, so members donot have much time to dedicated international level work. Staff cuttings and re-structuring taking place in almost Member countries create several obstacles to international exchange (overloaded staff and personnel changes). Everyone has so many responsibilities, national projects, duties that it is hard to plan or attend international meetings and events.
- Dealing with governments. Finances is a huge problem for us all and we need to fight with authorities for that and look for other ways to get funding to create new ways to preserve nature.
- Communication between members is challenging. To connect with a neighboring country could be easy, but Nordic-Baltic section has 8 countries and around 50 members so it is harder to connect to each one of them. More and more, we rely on digital communication channels to share information.

## Things to look for in 2017:

- Conference in Lithuania “Using databases in PA management”
- New secretariat for 2018-2021 year will be announced
- Other fun activities (not decided yet).



<http://www.europarc-nb.org/home/>







ESPARC 2016 - EUROPARC Spain Conference, Alava, Spain

# EUROPARC Spain

The “backbone” of the activities promoted by EUROPARC Spain is the “Programme Society and Protected Areas 2020”, the Strategy approved by the 23 members of EUROPARC Spain. The Programme contains eight lines of action aimed to enhance the role of the 27% of terrestrial and 8% of marine Protected Areas from a wide perspective, including Nature conservation and benefits for Society.

## Key activities in 2016

Among the main activities during 2016 it can be underlined the following:

- Conference ESPARC 2016, held in Laguardia, Alava, June 2016, with 160 participants.
- Production of **Manual 12 EUROPARC-España - Guide to good practices for holding mountain races in protected natural areas 2016**. Available in English, Castellano, Catalan and Basque.
- **Workshop** to discuss the methodology of phase III of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Spain.
- Project “**Open catalogue of the intangible heritage of the Spanish Biosphere Reserves**” thanks to the support of the *Organismo Autónomo Parques Nacionales*. Moreover, a training course in CENEAM with 20 managers of Biosphere Reserves was organised in October.
- **New LIFE Project RED BOSQUES** “Knowledge and training networks for the effective management of Natura 2000 Mediterranean Forest Habitats in Spain”. More information can be found at: <http://www.redbosques.eu/english-version>

- **Project** “Integrating climate change adaptation in the planning and management of protected areas in Spain” financed by the Spanish Office of Climate Change (Oficina Española de Cambio Climático). In 2016, **two seminars were organised and a guidance document was prepared**. The criteria for incorporating adaptation to the Protected Areas management have been tested in four planning instruments.
- Support to members in specific projects: Cabildo de Tenerife (Limits of Acceptable Change in Parque Rural Teno), Aragón Government (participatory process in Sierra de Santo Domingo Protected Landscape).
- **Training**: collaboration with the 16<sup>th</sup> edition of the Master Degree on Protected Areas Management; organisation of 6 training courses on communication, conservation and public use of Protected Areas.

## Successes and challenges

One of the main successes of 2016 was **the final publication of the Programme Society and Protected Areas 2020**. This is more than a publication, it is the Road Map of EUROPARC Spain that aims to influence and involve not only “Parks people”, but also other people and institutions related to agriculture, tourism, forestry, fishery, landscape planning. This Road Map is the umbrella under which we find our challenges for the coming years. The document is also available in English. The book is dedicated to our dear companion and friend Salvador Grau, whose soul flies free over those pages.



[www.redeuroparc.org](http://www.redeuroparc.org)

[www.redbosques.eu/english-version](http://www.redbosques.eu/english-version)



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