



EUROPARC
F E D E R A T I O N

EUROPARC Council Election 2017

Election candidate information

Name: **Michael Hošek**

Nationality/Citizenship: **Czech**

Member organisation: **Krkonoše National Park (CZ)**

Position to be elected for (council member, treasurer, president): **Council member**

Nominated by: **National Park Bohemian Switzerland**

Current Position:

Coordinator of international relations and a member of the Scientific Advisory Board at Krkonoše National Park Administration

Coordinator of the EUROPARC Central and Eastern Europe Section

Councillor of the International Union for Conservation of Nature - IUCN (representing East Europe, North and Central Asia in 2012 – 2016 and 2016-2020 period)

Entrepreneur (DHP Conservation Ltd.)



Please introduce yourself in a few sentences, your background, interests and experience.

I have been working in nature conservation since graduated in ecology (M.Sc. – Landscape Ecology and Management) in various positions. Started at the Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic as an officer (2002 – 2004), I continued as a head of regional branch (2004 – 2005), deputy director (2005 – 2013), and a Director General for Nature Conservation at the Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic (2013 – early 2014). It provided me with a great chance to gain an experience both at a local (regional) and a country level, and thus to contribute to nature conservation not only in the Czech Republic. At a country level, I was responsible as a coordinator for Natura 2000 designation incl. establishment and maintenance of monitoring habitats and species, and development of Czech Nature Conservation Information System, and research in general (2005 – 2014). Thanks to the aiming to the EU Nature Directives implementation, I was also representing the Czech Republic in the European Commission bodies (Habitats and Ornis Committees, Coordination Group for Biodiversity and Nature), and cooperating as an expert with the European Topic Centre on Biodiversity. At 2012, I was elected as a member of the IUCN Council.

Regarding the EUROPARC Federation, I was the president of the Czech Section (2011 – 2013), and a co-opted member of the Council representing sections. Since 2014, I serve as an elected member of

<p>the EUROPARC Council and Vice President. Since 2015, I have been a coordinator of the EUROPARC Central and Eastern Europe Section.</p> <p>I am interested in an international cooperation as one of the most efficient ways how to improve knowledge and capacity in our sector. Therefore, I have also been working as an entrepreneur in foreign countries focused mainly on implementing EU nature legislation, and setting objectives and measures for protected areas (nowadays mainly in South East Europe).</p> <p>Married, two children (daughter and son), enjoying (excluding my family) reading, running, beekeeping, and exploring new places.</p>
<p>Experience relevant to the EUROPARC Federation. Check the list of candidate requirements here.</p>
<p>I already have an experience as a Council member of the EUROPARC Federation as well as from other organizations (IUCN, and some national), so I can imagine a kind of work and challenges the Council deals with. As I have also been for quite a long time active as a member of the Federation and in the Czech and the Central and Eastern Europe sections, I know well the organization from the bottom to the top.</p>
<p>Languages spoken and level of fluency (basic, moderate, good)</p>
<p>English – good Rusian - basic</p>
<p>Personal statement (please answer the questions below as concisely as possible)</p>
<p><i>The EUROPARC Federation needs a group of strong leaders in the Council who are willing to invest time in taking the organisation forward and raising its profile and who will represent it at national and European level.</i></p>
<p>What is your relationship to the EUROPARC Federation and what is your motivation for becoming a member of the EUROPARC Council?</p> <p>As written above, I have been working for the EUROPARC Federation at various levels – Council, section, and as a member representative (manager of protected area). As the elected Council member for 2014-2017 period, I am aware about the main challenges the EUROPARC Federation is facing now. I do believe that I can support appropriate changes using my experience. I would like to take advantage of that and continue in the Council as an elected member for the second period. There are process we have started during the last period, e.g. integration of sections, and I would like to continue to work on them.</p>
<p>What do you think you can offer the EUROPARC Federation and its members?</p> <p>Long term experience in both national and international nature conservation as an expert, manager, and leader with inclination to push things forward in order to improve them.</p>
<p><i>The Federation was founded for its members. It works hard to be the voice of these members on various levels and to facilitate their work on the ground.</i></p>

How do you see the role of the members in the Federation and how would you stimulate and encourage their contribution?

The EUROPARC Federation as a member based organization, so it exists as a wish of its members. Therefore, the role of the members is the most important. Some of them are collaborating (as individuals, sections, through working groups, etc.), some not, waiting for the action from the other side. But in such a type of the organization as we are, the members cannot expect to gain more than they put in to the Federation as the Directorate and the Council have very limited sources. In my view, we can increase member contribution by:

- Implementing the Strategy (2015-2021) properly in necessary cooperation with our members, using significantly their capacity e.g. via projects;
- Continuation of strengthening the role of the sections within the Federation;
- Further development of our knowledge products;

The sections, as a well-organized and geographically focused group of members, have a great chance to increase the capacity of the Federation, if contributing.

The Strategy is also crucial in the process of stimulating a contribution of our members. We shall be strong in our effort to achieve all we set in the Strategy, as the significant part of goals is directed to our members and opportunities for them.

How would you develop the internal communication and cooperation within the Federation?

I do believe in a strong position of sections within the Federation. Having almost 400 members, we (the Directorate) are unable to efficiently communicate with all of them directly. We have already started re-establishment of our communication model and incorporate the sections more. They would overtake some responsibilities and thus to make both strategic and daily work easier (i. e. more manageable) to the Directorate.

EUROPARC is an organisation that is constantly developing and that needs to stay on top of the political agenda whilst thinking about the needs of its members.

What should the principle functions of the EUROPARC Federation be in the coming years?

1) Representing visibly as a united body protected areas in the Europe.

The EUROPARC Federation is the biggest network of protected areas managers with a great experience, representing protected areas not only to our partners, but also to a society. We have been strengthening our position in this.

2) Maintenance and development of unique products we offer (Transboundary Parks, Tourist Charter, etc.).

We have developed a set of products that are very important for a continuous development of protected areas management in the Europe. Nobody did it before, incl. national governments and the European Commission (e.g., Transboundary Parks), and nobody will continue in this without us. Newly, we should be a part of the introduction of the IUCN Green List of Protected Areas in Europe.

3) Sharing and building our common expert capacity and offering it to the partners where appropriate.

The experience of the Federation through our members is unrivalled. So far, we do not use this appropriately. Sometimes, members (or other bodies) even compete against each other with in applying for a projects or financial sources. We should stop this practice. Good step in this is a merger with Fedenatur.

In what areas, e.g. lobbying, funding, does EUROPARC need to maximise its external relationships and with whom?

1) Closer cooperation with other expert (or decision) bodies in nature conservation (if possible, project based) with the European Commission, IUCN, WWF, and other members of the Habitats Forum. We need to show our strong expertise at technical level as the Federation, not individual members mainly;

2) Lobbying to the European Commission directly as well as indirectly. We have been in a good position in relation to the European Commission. In some topics, we should stand alone as an expert body. In others, we are more efficient as a part of already existing bodies, like Habitats Forum is.

3) To establish through our members (sections), where appropriate, closer relations to the national governments in order to address more specifically our knowledge products. In some countries, it works very well, in some not at all.