

2018



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

Lochan Uaine, Cairngorms National Park (Scotland, UK) © Visit Scotland by Damian Shields

Cover photo: Cairngorms National Park (Scotland, UK) © Visit Scotland by Jakub Iwanicka

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President's remarks



Today, across Europe, Protected Areas face challenges and pressures unforeseen by our enlightened predecessors. In response, parks of today and tomorrow must see nature, people, culture and community as part of the assets of the area.

We have continued in 2018, as the representative body of Europe's Protected Areas, to be the collective voice for all nature and landscape areas and we have continued to build a stronger, unifying, European network organisation that is better placed to support our members and to respond to these current and future challenges Europe's nature is facing.

In particular, we have continued to **engage with the European Commission**, providing a valuable platform to share directly member's management experiences, discuss policy developments whilst gaining the perspective of the Commission on the subjects relevant for Protected Areas and N2000 sites. The work of regional parks and particularly of periruban Protected Areas, has been central in these discussions.

EUROPARC too, made a big investment over the year to contribute to the Agriculture Policy development, which would inevitably have a relevant impact for biodiversity in the coming years. The debate over the sustainability of agriculture has also been growing within the Protected Areas network over recent years. A EUROPARC **policy position on agriculture** has been developed and published and we continue to develop a European tool for Protected Areas to support them

in building partnerships with the farming sector and to promote good practices for a more sustainable agriculture in natural areas.

Finally, a real highlight of the year was the launch of the **Youth Manifesto** at our conference in Cairngorms National Park, Scotland. The conference itself was peppered with the passion and enthusiasm of our youth calling for Protected Areas to take action in order to ensure young people can live and work in our rural areas, ensuring we retain the living working landscapes that is our European heritage. The Youth Manifesto was an excellent collaboration with youth representative from across Europe. Authenticity of the Manifesto comes from expression of need, issues and solutions being identified by youth. But credibility must come from EUROPARC members developing project plans and implementing actions through adopting solutions from the Youth Manifesto.

Let us rise to the challenge to ensure a future for our youth and for Protected Areas.

Ignace Schops
President



EUROPARC Directorate in Regensburg, December 2018.

From left to right,
standing: Carol
Ritchie, Teresa
Pastor, Katrin
Varnhagen, Eva
Schon, Federico
Minozzi, Gaia
Fermanelli, Neil
McIntosh, Olivier
de Sadeleer, Michaela Zeller,
Giacomo Benelli, Fernando Pinillos,
kneeling: Stefania Petrosillo, Bárbara
Pais, Steffi Burger, Monika Trojer.

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



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 achieve greater recognition of their role and function.

Penisola del Sinis Marine Protected Area (IT)

Managing places for nature

Protected Areas are better managed through international cooperation.

The Natura 2000 Commission, chaired by Michael Hosek, has worked throughout the year to support the work of the Federation identifying case studies, guidelines and good practices on various aspects of Natura 2000 management. The Commission contributed to the organisation of a webinar on Natura 2000 and Climate Change and managed a workshop at the 2018 Conference on Peatland management.

The EUROPARC website has now a new **section fully dedicated to Natura 2000**. It can be accessed directly from the main menu bar and is divided in five subsections covering different topics relevant for Natura 2000 managers.



<https://www.europarc.org/natura-2000/>

Learn more about EUROPARC work in Brussels

<https://www.europarc.org/europarc-in-brussels/>

Seminar Dialogue with the European Commission

In collaboration with the European Commission - DG ENV (Directorate-General for Environment), EUROPARC organised a **Seminar-Dialogue on European policies**. The Seminar Dialogue aims to bridge the policy and legislative work in Brussels with experience in the field from EUROPARC members.

About 30 participants from Protected Areas and representatives from the European Commission met in Brussels on the 7th December. The event looked at Natura 2000 management and capacity building, agriculture in Protected Areas, youth, and the connection between culture and nature, through the presentation of several case studies made by EUROPARC members; in addition, policy updates were shared by officers of the European Commission.

Putting Policy into Practice



Laura Peters, Youth representative in EUROPARC Youth Council, handing the Youth Manifesto to Humberto Delgado Rosa, from DG Environment during the Seminar Dialogue 2018

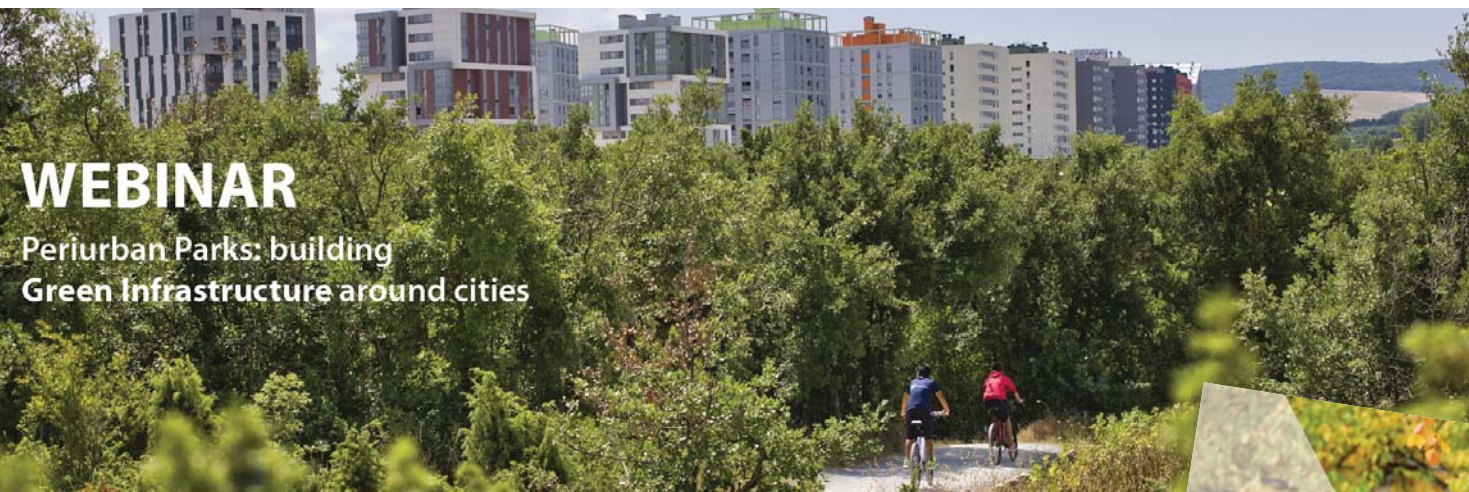
This year, DG EAC (Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture) was also involved. During the Seminar, the **EUROPARC Youth Manifesto** was presented to Mr. Humberto Delgado Rosa, Director of Natural Capital in DG ENV and by Laura Peters, EUROPARC's youth representative to Alessandro Senesi, Deputy Head of Unit, Dir. B Youth, Education and Erasmus+, DG EAC (Education and Culture).

The Seminar-Dialogue continues to be a great success, sparking discussion about European policies, how they are being implemented in and by Protected Areas and Natura 2000 sites and will be organised annually by EUROPARC and DG ENV.

EUROPARC is an active member of the **European Habitat Forum – EHF**. The platform gathers representatives from several European Environmental NGOs who are following – in close cooperation with DG ENV – the development and implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy. The principal working themes of 2018 have been: the Habitats Directive new methodological guidelines, the future EU Multi-annual Financial Framework and LIFE programme, Common Agriculture Policy reform, Green Infrastructures, the EU Pollinators Initiative and Brexit impacts.



EUROPARC and DG ENV Seminar-Dialogue on European Policies, Brussels, December 2018



WEBINAR

Periurban Parks: building
Green Infrastructure around cities

Making nature more connected

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

Periurban Parks

During the 2018 EU Green Week "Green Cities for a Greener Future", EUROPARC's Periurban Commission organised a webinar entitled "**Building Green Infrastructure around cities: From the protection of single Periurban parks towards the setting-up of a large green territorial system**".

At the Annual Conference, the Periurban Commission organised a workshop to discuss the **management of visitors flow in Protected Areas**. They also held a face-to-face meeting to review the document 'Periurban Parks, their place in EU policies' which was presented during the seminar dialogue with DG ENVI.

Putting Policy into Practice

EUROPARC Periurban parks are actively involved in **Green Infrastructure** discussions. EUROPARC has collaborated with the EHF platform and its dedicated working group to provide input to draft strategic guidance to develop a framework that further supports the deployment of EU-level green and blue infrastructure. EUROPARC also attended two workshops, organised during the European Week of Regions and Cities in October, on "EU level Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services in the decision-making process" and "Green Infrastructure in cities - promoting sustainable growth and social cohesion".

During the EU Green Week 2018, "**Green Cities for a Greener Future**" in May, EUROPARC supported DG ENV in the organisation of the workshop in Brussels, "Nature in the city", where different perspectives were shared. This workshop focused on how nature-based solutions and green infrastructure can provide solutions for urban challenges and increase citizens' life quality, health & social life.

Large Carnivores

EUROPARC is an active member of the **EU Platform for the coexistence between people and large carnivores**. The Platform is composed of NGOs, research institutes and European institutions. Information on the activity of the platform was disseminated widely with an article on our website with dedicated articles on the e-news and on social media.

A dedicated workshop was organised at the 2018 EUROPARC Conference: "Fear versus facts: effective communication for coexistence with large carnivores". EUROPARC also attended several events in the European Parliament related to the debate on cohabitation and conflict management between breeding activities and large carnivores' protection in Europe.

<http://bit.ly/europarcfearvsfacts>

The Webinar

"Coexistence with Large Carnivores" organised by EUROPARC and the EU Platform on Coexistence between People and Large Carnivores, looked at different management practices and prevention measures implemented in Estonia and Italy, both from a National government and an NGO perspective.

<http://www.europarc.org/webinar-coexistence-large-carnivores>

Wilderness

EUROPARC contributed to the European **wilderness** debate supporting the Wild Europe platform in discussing a possible future connection between projects on climate change and Wilderness protection and restoration there is an extra space here. The Wilderness Foundation of Scotland, participated at the EUROPARC conference in a workshop on "Outdoor Sports in Protected Areas: a tool for social inclusion". The

workshop presented experiences on the power of wilderness areas to transform vulnerable lives and empower people to conserve nature.



EU GREEN WEEK
#EUGREENWEEK
21 > 25 May 2018

<http://bit.ly/greencities2018>

Grow the Protected Area network

For several years, EUROPARC has created opportunities, specifically dedicated to elected or nominated representatives within European Protected Areas, to come together. This enables those attending to share, learn and explore issues and challenges involved in these unique and special roles.

The annual meeting of Parks' Presidents and Mayors has become an important moment during EUROPARC conferences. In 2018, the meeting focused on biodiversity and youth engagement - two crucial topics of high political relevance in Protected Areas. Park Authorities' Presidents, Chairs, Mayors and others were invited to share experiences, propose actions and initiatives for youth to get engaged and live better lives, by learning and working within Protected Areas in Europe.



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

Marine Protected Areas

The Marine workshop, "Unleashing people power for effective Coastal and Marine Protected Areas", was held during EUROPARC Conference 2018 and included a review of examples of coastal communities' involvement in Marine Protected Areas Management. It included the participation of experts from the Community of Arran Seabed Trust and Fauna and Flora International. Also, on December 5th, the EUROPARC Federation organised the webinar "Management Challenges in Marine Natura 2000 sites". The case studies from Italy and the UK, highlight the problematic and current status of Natura 2000 sites' management located in coastal and marine habitats.

<http://www.europarc.org/webinar-marine-n2000-sites>



Ballan Wrasse, Arran Coast © Howard Wood

Putting Policy into Practice

Marine areas and tourism: a difficult marriage! EUROPARC participated at the debate on "Building an integrated Maritime and Coastal tourism management model for the Mediterranean" – this took place during the International Workshop promoted by the MITOMED+ project at the European Parliament: "Towards a sustainable maritime and coastal tourism communities".

Over the course of two intensive days, EUROPARC also participated in discussions about the possibility to create a transatlantic network of MPAs as part of the final conference of "Towards a transatlantic partnership of Marine Protected Areas". A new concept of Atlanticism might be about to emerge, as it was concluded during the meeting: "an actual joint governance of Atlantic MPAs can only work if the human networks follow the ecological ones, as they were designed by nature".

<http://bit.ly/newatlanticism>



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 launched the European Day of Parks. Every year, hundreds of activities are organised by Protected Areas on and around 24th May. In 2018, following the European Year of Cultural Heritage, the European Day of Parks was an invitation to look at connections between our natural and cultural heritage. It aimed to highlight how our European cultural identity is deeply rooted in connections to land: land is the food we eat, the clothes we wear and the landscapes we live in.

To celebrate the European Day of Parks, around 350 events were organised in 28 countries. Thousands of visitors had the chance to explore their local parks and discover secret aspects of their natural and cultural heritage.

Promotional materials created in 28 languages helped to create an intense buzz and showcased the vital work of Protected Areas. EUROPARC achieved high visibility on social media and collected over **300 media articles in online and printed newspapers from 20 countries!** A huge thank you to all Protected Areas that made this celebration such a success.

The Natura 2000 Awards

As part of a biannual agreement, taking advantage of its extensive network, the EUROPARC Federation is contracted to promote the Natura 2000 Awards organised by the European Commission every two years. Launched for the first time in 2013, these Awards aim to raise awareness about the Natura 2000 network, showcase excellence and encourage networking between people working on Natura 2000 sites.



Ignace Schops, EUROPARC President, presenting the European Day of Parks during the ESPARC Congress, organised by EUROPARC Spain





Junior Ranger Programme

Every year, EUROPARC 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. In 2018, the EUROPARC Federation, EUROPARC Germany and Müritz National Park, Germany, welcomed over 40 participants to the 17th International Junior Rangers Camp. It was a privilege to have Dr. Till Backhaus, Minister for Agriculture and Environment Mecklenburg-Vorpommern to officially welcomed the Junior Rangers at the start of the camp and test their knowledge on species and habitats during the opening activity.

Müritz-Nationalpark



Young people were the clear, main ingredient for the success of the camp. They came together from 13 different countries (**including a delegation from Israel!**) and represented 19 different Protected Areas. They all presented their home parks and shared their experiences as Junior Rangers to their fellow participants.



They left, taking home many new friends, more confidence in speaking in English and in front of a wide audience, better knowledge about different species and the Junior Ranger programme experience in other countries. They demonstrated their interest for research, learning new songs and dances and much more. As every year, without the support and active contribution of the Rangers and Mentors from all participating parks, the camp wouldn't be possible.

Directly benefiting from their experience and knowledge, EUROPARC organised a specific workshop together to share experiences, collect inputs and discuss the future of the Junior Ranger programme and the development of the Youth+ programme. We would like to take this opportunity to thank once again the Müritz National Park Director, Ulrich Messner, and its team of Rangers (Johannes Herweg in particular) for their hard and successful work in organising and managing the camp. Special thanks also to EUROPARC Germany for the support given.

<https://www.europarc.org/2018-international-junior-ranger-camp>

*International Junior Ranger Camp 2018,
Müritz National Park (DE)*



Youth+ Programme

Young people, previously involved in Junior Ranger programmes, are now becoming youths (18+). They are keen, motivated and passionate about their Protected Areas and want to remain involved. To respond to this demand, and according to our Strategy, we are currently developing a new programme dedicated to young people over 18 years of age. In May 2018, in Finland, there was a meeting held with Rangers, Mentors and the youth in order to define guiding principles and the main structure of the programme. We aim to complete this work in the course of 2019 to officially launch the YOUTH+ programme.

<https://www.europarc.org/youth-manifesto>

The EUROPARC Youth Manifesto

"We are the next generation of people who will live and work in rural and Protected Areas. However, we are leaving. Leaving to find easier lives in the big cities – and with us leaving, our nature will begin to wither."

Across Europe, Protected Areas and rural communities face similar challenges: they struggle to engage meaningfully with younger generations. How can Protected Areas and Rural communities reverse this trend? What are the needs of new generations? How can we inspire their sense of ownership to safeguard our shared environment, our natural and cultural heritage?

EUROPARC with the Cairngorm National Park, Scotland and Finnish LEADER groups Rieska, Keskipiste, and Ravakka launched the Youth Manifesto Project to answer these questions.



Youth presenting the Manifesto at EUROPARC Conference 2018, Scotland (UK)



A diverse group of young people, aged between 15-25 came together, in two face-to-face workshops in Scotland and Finland. Between May and September 2018, they brainstormed on the challenges, discussed possible solutions, shared examples and worked hard to draft the "EUROPARC Youth Manifesto - A call for Change in Rural communities and Protected Areas". In September, they joined the EUROPARC Conference in the Cairngorms National Park, declaring to over 500 conference delegates. "We are ready to take action with you - now we need you to respond". The young people mapped out the challenges they face when living, learning and working in rural areas, and showed concrete solutions that decision-makers can take to tackle their needs. Together, Europe's youth want to co-create sustainable Protected Areas and resilient communities.



Youth workshop and field trip at the EUROPARC Conference 2018, Scotland (UK)

Helping people and organisations learn

*TransParcNet Meeting 2018
(CZ/AT) © D. Freudl*

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



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

Collaborative work

Bringing people together, creating a stronger network.

Transboundary Parks Programme

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

In 2018, we have successfully re-evaluated one transboundary area that involves 6 Protected Areas in 3 countries! The Pasvik-Inari Trilateral Park (Norway-Russia-Finland) has enlarged and embraces now: Øvre Pasvik National Park (Norway), Øvre Pasvik Landscape Protection Area (Norway), Pasvik Nature Reserve (Norway), Pasvik zapovednik (Russia), Vätsäri Wilderness Area (Finland), Lake Inari Natura 2000 Area (Finland). They were awarded in Scotland, at the EUROPARC Conference 2018.



<https://www.europarc.org/transboundary-parks-programme>

The Transboundary Task Force

The new Transboundary task force, composed of 9 members of the network supporting the Directorate in the promotion of the programme, met twice in 2018: at the TransParcNet meeting in June and at the EUROPARC Conference in September. They worked also online on the Transboundary strategy, identifying several priorities, including: communication of the programme, reinforcement, promotion

and enlargement of the network, including with informal contacts established from Transboundary areas with new potential members. This generated good first results: new communication material has been produced and there is a new candidature from an area in Italy/Switzerland (Nature Park Alpe Veglia - Alpe Devero/Landschaftspark Binntal), that will be assessed in 2019.



Participants of the TransParcNet Meeting 2018
© D. Freudl



Field trips during the TransParcNet Meeting 2018 © Silke Weich



TransParcNet: the Transboundary Parks Programme Network

Annually, the TransParcNet gathers Protected Area professionals interested in Transboundary Cooperation to discuss and share good practice. The meeting took place in June 2018, in the Czech-Austrian Transboundary Area composed by Podyjí National Park (CZ) and Thayatal

National Park (AT). Over 3 days, 70 participants gathered from 14 countries. The meeting included, 1 plenary session, 3 working sections, 4 workshops and a field visit, under the theme, "Bridges over troubled water – Nature protection of river landscapes".

<https://www.europarc.org/transparcnet-meeting-2018>



Partners of the Life e-Natura2000.edu in the project's kick-off meeting, Brussels (BE), June 2018

Staff development

Promoting the exchange of experiences, information and ideas

LIFE e-Natura2000.edu - Building capacity through innovative training tools

EUROPARC leads this innovative three-year LIFE Preparatory project in collaboration with our 5 partners: FUNGOBE, ELO, Kullaberg Nature Reserve, ProPark and TESAF. Commenced in 2018: it explores the **potential of building new approaches and learning methods to improve knowledge and practical capacity amongst Natura 2000 Managers** in both public and private land, across the EU.

In 2018, **LIFE e-Natura2000.edu** partners have analysed specific competencies required by a range of actors to manage Natura 2000 more effectively and commenced the development of an online training needs analysis tool. The project moves to a production phase in 2019 to test a mix of new tools, e-learning methods and approaches to delivering capacity building. The project will help EUROPARC members and colleagues to learn about what they need to know and how to apply it to improve Natura 2000 management practices.

A cohort of 60 participants will form the project's 'core group' of participants: this will be complemented and extended by a further target group of 500 'casual' users of the project's competence development materials. Participants will be drawn from the full spectrum of managers working with and involved in the implementation of Natura 2000. In this way, the project will proactively engage a representative range of Natura 2000 managers across the EU – site-based staff, private landowners, protected area staff, rangers etc. An online application form is ready and will be launched in late Summer 2019. Don't hesitate to follow the project on social media (#enatura2000) and our dedicated web space.



new project



Supporting e-learning and capacity building for Natura 2000 Managers



<https://www.europarc.org/life-e-natura2000-edu>

New digital tools for members

Making use of digital and accessible tools to share information and develop capacity is at the core of EUROPARC's work.

Webinars are a powerful and cost-effective tool to share experience among the network. In 2018, EUROPARC organised 8 webinars on topics ranging from coexistence with large carnivores to health in Protected Areas or management of Marine Natura 2000 sites. In total, 850 participants joined the webinars to learn together and share their experience.

If you haven't had the chance to participate directly, you can access the recordings of each webinar, read a brief resume of each or even download the presentations at

www.europarc.org/previous-webinars



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. The aim of the Scholarship is to enhance international cooperation and advance the quality, innovation and European dimension of Protected Area management. Each scholarship 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.

Get to know the 2018 winners:

Agnė Jasinavičiūtė works as Chief Officer of the Landscape Protection Division at the State Service for Protected Areas under the Ministry of Environment of Lithuania. Her main duties include the coordination of landscape monitoring in Protected Areas, assessment of the status of the values, preparation of strategic planning documents and implementation for landscape and biodiversity conservation and management. Her project will contribute to the topic **Sustainable development in protected areas**: contribution to a resource-efficient, green and competitive low-carbon economy.

Baiba Ralle works as a nature education specialist/Public Relations manager at Nature Conservation Agency, Latvia. Her everyday work is mostly connected with Kemer National Park. She is interested in new methods of educating park visitors and local groups, connecting them with nature. Her project will contribute to the topic **Parks for People**: Approaches and strategies to address local communities and how to involve particular groups into activities or management of protected areas.

László Patkó works for WWF Hungary as the Large Carnivore Programme Leader since 2018. Previously, he was employed by the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC). Having spent his early career in research, hunting and nature conservation led him to WWF Hungary where he manages the Euro Large Carnivore LIFE project. His project will contribute to the topic **Parks for People**: Approaches and strategies to address local communities and how to involve particular groups into activities or management of protected areas.

Alfred Toepfer Natural Heritage Scholarships 2018



<https://www.europarc.org/natural-heritage-scholarships>

Alfred Toepfer Scholarship Winners 2018 (from left to right) Ignace Schops, EUROPARC President, Agnė Jasinavičiūtė, László Patkó, Baiba Ralle and Andreas Holz from the Alfred Toepfer Stiftung F.V.S., at EUROPARC Conference 2018, Scotland (UK)

Training

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

Siggen Seminar

With the generous support of the Alfred Toepfer Stiftung E.V.S., EUROPARC annually offers a training Seminar in Northern Germany, **free** for EUROPARC members.

In 2018, as a celebration of the European Year of Cultural Heritage, EUROPARC invited Interpret Europe - the European Association for Heritage Interpretation, to jointly deliver the seminar "Interpreting natural heritage, as part of our cultural identity in Europe's Protected Areas". 26 participants from 14 European countries, gathered, to learn the basics of good interpretation skills, and were challenged to create new methods and techniques to connect people with their natural environment, landscape and cultural values.

The Siggen Seminar was one of the many activities that EUROPARC co-organised with Interpret Europe in 2018, during the year of Cultural Heritage, with the objective to promote a stronger connection between territory, heritage and history, and affirm how cultural identity is, indeed, rooted in our natural landscapes.

*Siggen Seminar 2018,
Gut Siggen (DE)*



Policy

2018 was the European Year of Cultural Heritage. EUROPARC attended and organised several events to celebrate the connection of nature and cultural heritage in Protected Areas. At the end of the year, EUROPARC and DG EAC organised a successful event "**Nature and Culture in Dialogue**". The event involved DG ENV, UNESCO, and Protected Areas representatives, to present the results of the year and possible follow-up. The key point shared by all speakers was that Nature and Cultural heritage are very much a living heritage, bringing multiple socio-economic benefits to society and helping to promote rural regeneration through tourism or product diversification and inward financial investments. The results of this event were presented during the Seminar Dialogue 2018.

<https://www.europarc.org/news/2018/12/nature-culture-in-dialogue-outcomes>

<http://bit.ly/siggen2018>





Participants of the Siggen Seminar
2018, Gut Siggen (DE)



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

Sustainable Tourism: Training for Tomorrow

The ERASMUS+ project "Sustainable Tourism: Training for Tomorrow" (STTfT) aims to increase the quality, supply and accessibility of training in sustainable tourism for Protected Areas stakeholders across Europe. The goal is **to jointly develop a European standard for Sustainable Tourism Training**, drawing from the experiences of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas (ECSTPA).

Throughout the project, there will be several opportunities for the EUROPARC network of Sustainable Destinations and members to participate with training workshops for Protected Areas staff, businesses and public partners (in Spain, France and Italy), and with a transnational "train-the-trainer" workshop and other multiplier and dissemination events that will be organized in the course of the project.

The Project, led by Hasselt University (BE), has as partners the University of Hull (UK), EUROPARC Federation (DE), the network of ecotourism professionals in Spain: Ecoturismo Espana (ES), 2 park authorities: Ente Parchi Emilia Occidentale (IT) and Montagne de Reims Nature Regional Park (FR). Federparchi and the French Federation of Regional Nature Parks are also engaged in the project as associated partners.

The partnership's main objectives are:

- to develop an innovative, open access, online training platform which will enable access to sustainable tourism training for PA staff, businesses, local/regional authorities and others;
- to provide high-quality e-learning and 'blended learning' opportunities, through the creation of a new, up-to-date curriculum, and supported by a training toolkit, based on end users' needs;
- to disseminate the training curriculum across European and national networks through a comprehensive programme of multiplier events and dissemination initiatives.

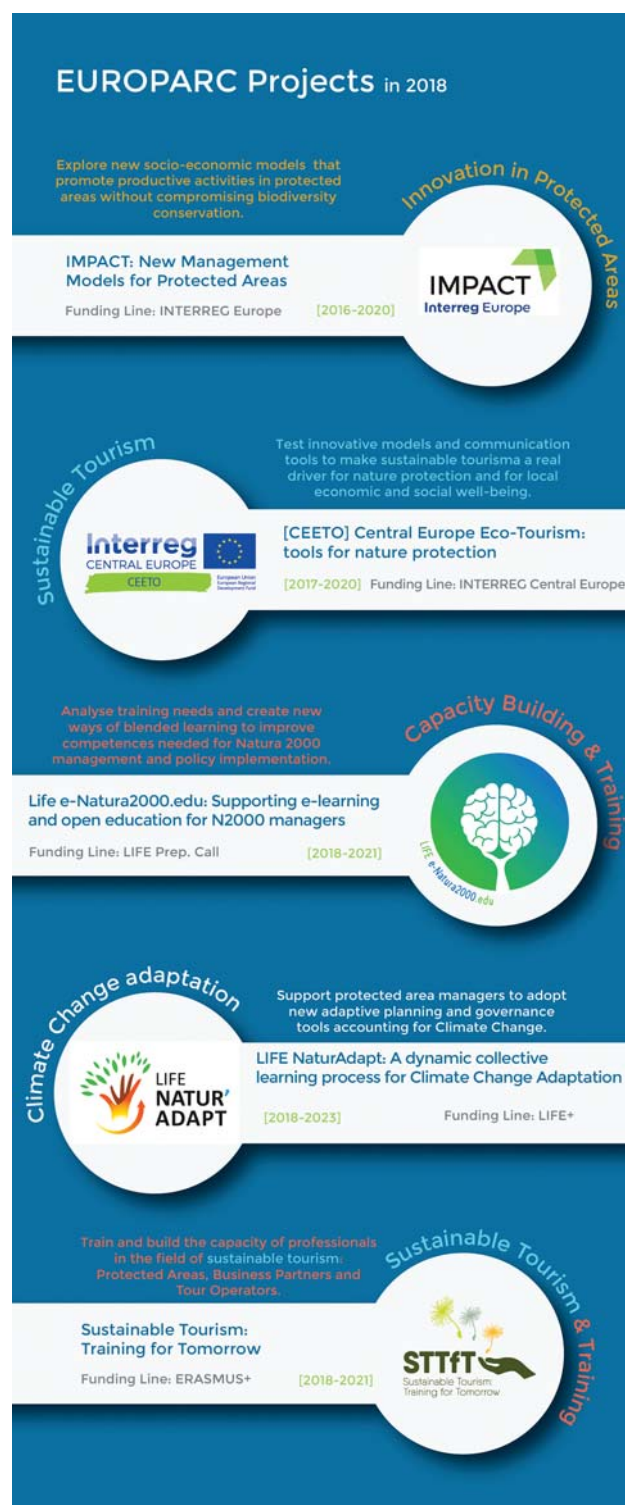
The project duration is 30 months
and will end in Feb 2021.

learn more about the project at:

<http://sttft.eu/>



new
project



Promoting Sustainability

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

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**

*Swabian Alb Biosphere Reserve
(DE) © Dieter Ruoff*

Sustainable Agriculture in and Around Protected Areas

Promoting nature friendly agricultural practice across Europe



The EUROPARC Sustainable Agriculture Commission continued its work on identification of a new EUROPARC tool to support the partnership between farmers and Protected Areas. This work involves using and adapting the experiences, not only of other EUROPARC programmes, but also of other institutions or projects already implemented by parks.

Workshops and case studies have been developed and showcased at, for example, the EUROPARC Conference 2018: *"Farmers and Protected Areas – how Protected Areas can preserve vibrant rural territories and living landscapes in partnership in particular with young farmers"*, as well as during the 2018 Seminar Dialogue 2018 with DG ENV.

The Commission plans to conclude its work in 2019 with a proposal of the new tool to test in several European parks by a possible pilot project.

www.EUROPARC.org/toolbox/sustainable-agriculture/

Download EUROPARC Position Paper at

www.europarc.org/sustainable-agriculture

Policy

The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

The European Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) takes up 40% of the EU's budget and has significant impacts on farms and farm holdings, including small and medium farmers. CAP involves the interests of industrial food production, European food production and is strongly related to external trade (including with developing countries). CAP affects land use, the quality of soil, air and water and natural resources: it affects nature and biodiversity, modifying the landscape and impacts local traditions. In addition, CAP relates significantly to sustainable development of rural areas, animal welfare, involves consumers for the price and quality of food, and public health. In short then, the European Common Agriculture Policy reform is not purely a technical topic to be discussed only among agricultural experts, but essentially requires inputs from all sectors.

It is clear that European Protected Areas are very concerned and have a significant stake in CAP reform. In June 2018, the European Commission published the new CAP regulation proposal. Subsequently, the European Parliament and the European Council (mainly the Ministries of Agriculture of Member States) have started the revision process of the EC proposals.

EUROPARC, together with many other organisations and NGOs, is very active in the debate of CAP Reform in Brussels, participating in platforms, working groups, conferences, meeting with DG ENV, DG AGRI and MEPs, to spread the following key messages:

- Protected Areas and Farmers can be allies, working for common solutions. Competitive agriculture needs a healthy environment and natural resources provided by Protected Areas. Likewise, a healthy environment and nature protection need farmers' engagement.
- Towards a more holistic perspective, the new CAP must be 'Good for People, Good for Nature'. The new CAP must ensure secure supply of food, respect for and protection of the environment and natural resources, a fair income to farmers.

These and many more ideas and concepts on sustainable agriculture, as well as good case studies and successful stories of partnerships between farmers and Protected Areas, are included in the **EUROPARC policy paper "Protected Areas and Sustainable Agriculture – Working in Partnership for Biodiversity and Rural Development"**, prepared by the Directorate and the EUROPARC Sustainable Agriculture Commission, and published in 2018.



Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas

Sustainable Tourism is Good for Parks and Good for People.

European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas

In 2018, 21 Protected Areas from 5 different countries (IT, ES, FR, DE, UK) applied for the award/re-award of the **European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas (ECSTPA)**, 17 as re-evaluations and 4 as new applications. The award ceremony took place at the European Parliament in Brussels: **19 Parks were successful and were awarded the certificate.**

The Award Ceremony was an excellent occasion to not only celebrate 19 outstanding examples of sustainable tourism, but also enabled the sharing of experiences and discovery of how each Park shares the same passion for their Nature and People, and for their natural and cultural treasures. To-date, the ECSTPA has been used at least once in 20 countries (since the start of the programme).

<https://www.europarc.org/charter-award-ceremony2018>

To further promote and distinguish the Protected Areas **currently engaged and implementing the ECSTPA**, EUROPARC updated the list of Sustainable Destinations that are working on their 5 years strategies and action plans. The updated list has been published on the website and the active Charter Network now includes 106 Sustainable Destinations.

<https://www.europarc.org/network-sustainable-destinations>

Awarding Business partners

In November 2018, EUROPARC organised with various experts on sustainable tourism a meeting to define and launch a new awarding scheme for tourism businesses and Tour Operators involved in the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism. The working group defined and drafted the "Star Awards: The Sustainable Tourism Partners Award" to promote the relationship between Parks and their Partners, to celebrate good practices, to recognise sustainable tourism actions &



demonstrate the impact of the ECSTPA and contribution to the sustainable development goals.

<http://www.europarc.org/star-awards-2019>

Marketing strategy and Communications Action Plan

In 2016, EUROPARC set up a Communications and Marketing Commission to work on the development of the new brand and marketing strategy of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas. In February, the Commission members and several representatives of the Charter Network gathered for one last meeting to draft the basis of the strategy and define the key actions of the plan.

The Marketing Strategy and Communications Action Plan was launched in June 2018 in Valsain during the annual gathering of all the Spanish Sustainable Destinations following the Charter methodology. The strategy defines the collaborative work of the Federation, Sections and Sustainable Destinations in promoting and increasing the recognition of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas until 2022. The priority actions include providing communications training and new tools to EUROPARC Sustainable Destinations and partners involved in Part II and Part III.

All professionals working with the Charter are invited to connect to the facebook group



www.facebook.com/groups/europarc.charter.parks/



<https://www.europarc.org/sustainable-tourism/>



Charter Award Ceremony 2018, European Parliament, Brussels (BE)

CEETO Interreg Project: Central Europe Eco-Tourism: tools for nature protection

EUROPARC was actively involved in the participatory planning workshop in Tamsweg (Austria) last June. The workshop involved project partners and Park technicians from 8 pilot areas in learning about a methodology and approach to participatory processes. As a result, they better defined the objectives and deepened understanding about the useful tools accompanying the implementation of the 8 pilot actions at local level in Austria, Croatia, Germany, Italy and Slovenia.

EUROPARC produced (with versions in EN, DE, IT, ES, FR) the film "**A Sustainable Journey**" – this film aims to raise awareness among travellers and local communities about the importance of Sustainable Tourism. On November 29th, at the European Parliament, the film was released to great excitement from a select audience – participants included a range of high-level speakers from the CULT Committee, Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, the Tourism Unit, Secretariat of the Commission for Natural Resources of European Committee and the Nature Protection Unit of DG Environment. Watch the film at:



To showcase the main features, touristic appeal and challenges regarding tourism management of the CEETO project's selected Protected Areas, EUROPARC produced 8 'teaser' videos. Watch the 8 teasers

Great visibility was achieved for the CEETO project within the EUROPARC Conference 2018, including presentation in a workshop and a dedicated stall in the Marketplace. Also, EUROPARC actively participated in the CEETO Mid-Term Conference in Opatija (October 2018).



The ECSTPA in Brussels

Several occasions in Brussels have been useful to collect information about EU tourism, to network and to present, when appropriate, the ECSTPA and the network of Sustainable Destinations.

Examples include a special meeting convened by the Tourism Task Force of the European Parliament (Committee TRAN – Transport and Tourism) to analyse the tourism sector's key results and trends in the EU in 2017 and to look at the main future challenges. Also, a workshop on Medical and wellness in tourism: experiences in Europe. Held in the European Parliament, to explore the potentials and challenges in health tourism destinations; and, as part of the International Tourism Day, a High-Level Conference in the European Parliament, with the theme of 'A European strategy to enhance the competitiveness of the tourism industry'. The presence of key representatives from all European and International Institutions made these events particularly interesting, affording EUROPARC valuable networking with several actors of the tourism sector.



Participants of the CEETO Sustainable Tourism Conference (HR)

More information can be found at
www.interreg-central.eu/CEETO

Nature and Health

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

The overall mission of EUROPARC's Health and Protected Areas Commission is to develop the agenda of Health and Protected Areas on behalf of the EUROPARC Federation. Throughout 2018, they compiled a suite of case studies and launched the toolkit "Health and Well-Being Benefits from Parks and Protected Areas".

The toolkit provides **practical advice to set up policy and activities in your Park**, brings the latest evidence, reports and other useful resources; and shares inspiring examples from across the EUROPARC network. It shows the work that Protected Areas and agencies in France, Latvia, Spain and the UK are undertaking in different health policy areas. A must-read for all Protected area staff (including planners, site managers, rangers, and wardens) but also to governmental bodies aiming to develop national and regional policy to leverage health benefits from natural areas.

<https://www.europarc.org/toolkit-health-benefits-from-parks/>

The commission met twice in 2018, at the EUROPARC Conference and in Finland, from where they presented the webinar **Parks as "Natural Health Centres"** which gave an insight into the *Healthy Parks, Healthy People* initiative in the East Bay Regional Park (US) and specifically focus on how to work with the health and education sectors to promote green exercise.

In addition, the commission facilitated a workshop at the EUROPARC Conference "Developing the European Approach to Healthy Parks, Healthy People – From principles to practice in delivering healthier outcomes for people and nature" with case studies from the UK, Australia, and Turkey.

Sport and Nature

Cooperation between EUROPARC and the European Network of Outdoor Sports (ENOS) has been reinforced during 2018 with activities such as the organisation of a dedicated workshop on Outdoor Sports in Protected Areas: a tool for social inclusion during the Annual Conference. The cooperation has been formalised with the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding between both associations at the EUROPARC General Assembly in Aviemore.



<http://bit.ly/enosmou>



The annual LIFE NGO Discussion Seminar 2018 was devoted to Climate change. This was a useful meeting for EUROPARC to present the NaturAdapt- LIFE project and to establish first contacts with DG CLIMA for ongoing and future activities on climate change and PAs.

Climate Change

Supporting Protected Areas on climate change mitigation and adaptation.

new
project

NaturAdapt – A dynamic collective learning process for Climate Change Adaptation

Climate is changing. Protected Area management must adapt to climate change.

In Europe, Réserves Naturelles de France, EUROPARC and eight partners have come together in a LIFE Climate Action project to transform this challenge into an opportunity to innovate. Over 5 years, NaturAdapt aims at triggering a transition towards the adaptive management of Protected Areas while laying the foundations of a dynamic collective learning process.

Concretely, our goal is to support a majority of Protected Area managers to adopt new adaptive planning and governance tools that take Climate Change specifically into account.

The main objectives of the project are: (1) to develop the methods, tools and services; (2) to facilitate the access to operational knowledge on climate change adaptation; and, (3) to support the emergence of a community of practitioners that will collaborate on innovations.

European Protected Areas will be integrated at all stages of the project through a series of actions undertaken by EUROPARC. The Webinar Facing Climate Change in Natura 2000 was introduced by Michael Hošek,

Coordinator of the EUROPARC Commission on Natura 2000. He briefly identified the main impacts of climate change on Natura 2000 sites and presented the EU Guidelines on Climate Change and Natura 2000 sites.

<https://www.europarc.org/webinar-facing-climate-change-in-n2000>



<https://www.europarc.org/naturadapt>

Future topics

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

IMPACT INTERREG Europe project

With the aim of introducing new management policies for Protected Areas, EUROPARC joined the IMPACT Interreg Europe, an interregional cooperation project. The aim is to test new models to move from conservation-focused management plans towards models that promote sustainable development in Protected Areas and their wider area of influence.

A dedicated article on the Protected Areas In-Sight Journal illustrates two different approaches from Lithuania and Andalusia. In addition, more than 30 good practices on this topic have been collected and 8 main actors involved in socio-economic activities in Protected Areas have been video-interviewed.



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

More information at:

<https://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.



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



Governance – how we work

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

Carol Ritchie, EUOPARC Executive Director introducing the Directorate Team, during the General Assembly 2018, in Scotland (UK)

General Assembly 2018

The annual EUOPARC General Assembly (GA) opened the EUOPARC Conference 2018 in the Cairngorms National Park.

The meeting provided a useful opportunity to focus more on the collective work of the Federation: sharing updates on current activities and projects.

The outline workplan and budget for 2019 were also presented and approved. During the General Assembly, it was also a pleasure to officially welcome the Agency of Protected Areas of Georgia among our members and to hear information on Protected Areas system and management priorities in Georgia.

EUOPARC Council

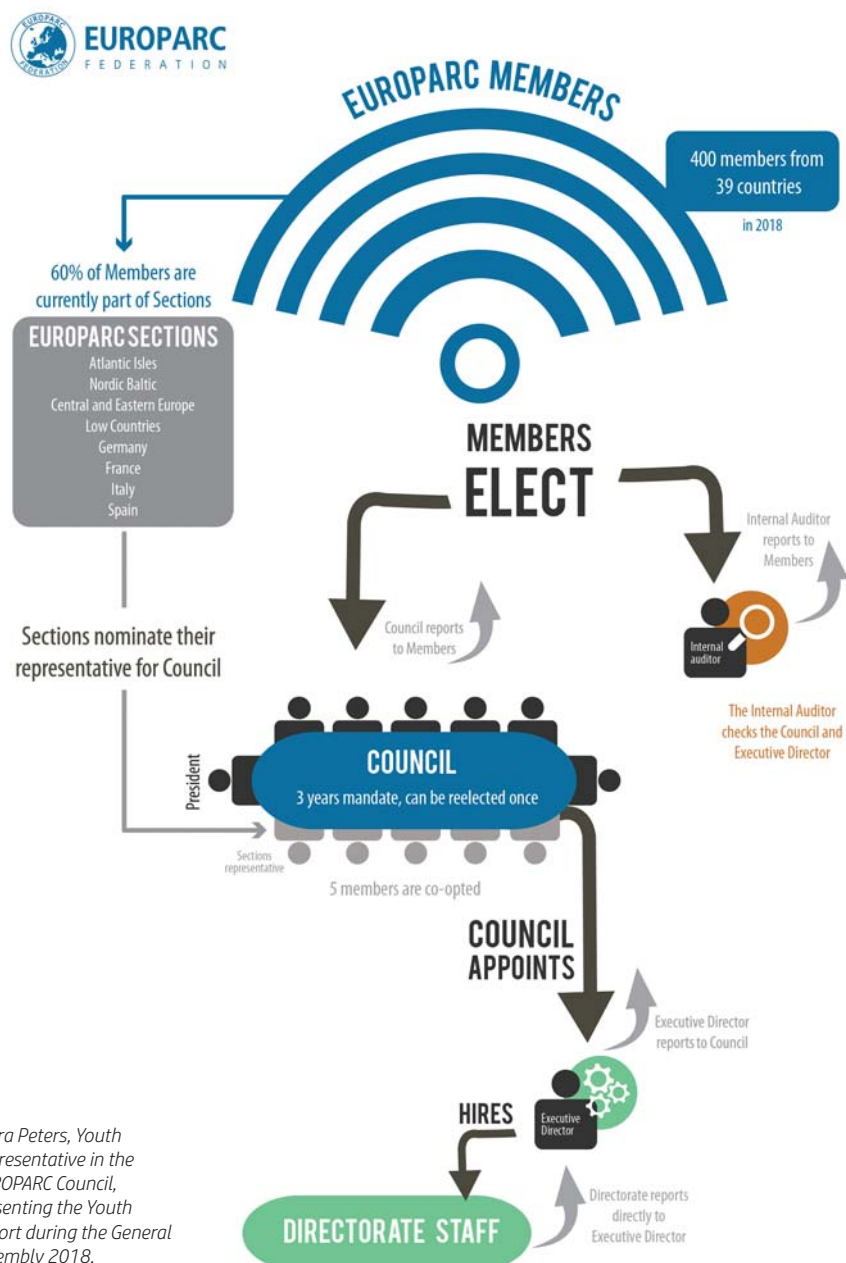
In the course of 2018, the EUOPARC Council continued its work to ensure strategic guidance to the work of the Federation. 3 meetings were organised, taking place respectively in the Federation's headquarters, in the Picos de Europa NP (Spain) and in the Cairngorms NP (Scotland). Two online meetings of the Council were also organised in 2018.

After the first 2 years mandate, Laura Peters was re-elected in June 2018 by her peers as Youth Representative. Laura will continue her work with the Council, representing the perspective of young people in parks from across Europe – backed up by the young people active in the EUOPARC Youth+ Council.



Laura Peters, Youth Representative in the EUOPARC Council, presenting the Youth Report during the General Assembly 2018, in Scotland (UK)

EUOPARC Governance Structure





Watten Meer (DE) © Martin Stock

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 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, each brings a flow of ideas, support and creativity to all aspects of protected area work.

In December 2018, EUROPARC had 401 members: including 1 resignation, 13 strike and earned 26 new members from 17 countries: Albania, Belgium, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, France, Georgia, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, Romania, Russia, Spain, Switzerland, UK



Bohemian Switzerland National Park (CZ) © Václav Sojka

Financial Report

Balance Sheet

	2018	2017
Assets		
Assets		
Total fixed assets		
Shares in affiliated companies (EP Consulting)	11 737,12	5 242,51
Total current assets	363 127,31	284 023,08
Total Assets	374 864,43	289 265,59
Liabilities		
Profit Reserve	185 346,95	183 071,08
Liabilities		
Provisions	18 224,39	18 166,00
Accounts payable	171 293,09	88 028,51
Total Equity and Liability	374 864,43	289 265,59

Income and Expenditure

	2018	2017
Income		
Membership fees	326 300,50	269 102,50
Grants		
EC core grant	156 850,83	157 231,95
Project grants	226 563,99	110 605,37
Other income	151 618,67	144 471,07
Total Income	861 333,99	681 410,89
Simplified Expenditure		
Total Personnel costs	509 070,82	428 315,46
Total Office costs	25 160,00	27 149,98
Total Travel and Subsistence	118 046,38	103 421,74
Total Other direct costs	84 522,06	27 979,61
Total Overhead costs	45 827,75	28 189,52
Total External Assistance/ Professional Fees	76 431,11	59 597,13
Financial Assets Depreciation		
Total costs	859 058,12	674 653,44
Result	2 275,86	6 757,45

Talking and listening

Developing smarter communications.

EUROPARC Conference

The EUROPARC annual conference is the biggest gathering Protected Areas and Natura 2000 managers in Europe. In 2018, the Conference was host by the Cairngorms National Park (Scotland) between the 18th – 21st September, **with 465 registered delegates from 42 countries and over 600 participants in the plenary session day**. Considering “European Parks, Inspired by the next Generation”, the conference focused on youth involvement in Protected Areas and resulted in the launch of the EUROPARC Youth Manifesto, which addresses decision-makers and rural area governmental authorities, to better include Youth in the governance processes and create conditions for them to live and work in rural areas.



and display in an improved way all the videos we produced: these are also linked with other resources we provide such as case studies and toolkits.

<https://www.europarc.org/videos>

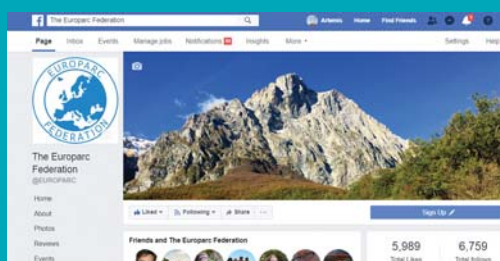
In 2018, as a celebration of the European Year of Cultural Heritage, EUROPARC monthly newsletters were introduced by a different member of the Directorate Team, who presented the month's highlights in his/her native language. The idea was to celebrate the European dimension and cultural diversity within the EUROPARC team. Working from 6 different countries and encompassing at least 8 nationalities, EUROPARC is, itself, an example of the European spirit of cooperation! All monthly newsletters and videos are available at

Participants exchanging experiences and promoting their areas during the Marketplace at EUROPARC Conference 2018, Scotland (UK)



Online presence

The EUROPARC website has been continuously updated with news articles and static pages to communicate the work of the Federation. During 2018, 51,294 persons visited 182,466 pages in the EUROPARC website. Furthermore, social media channels are another means of communication that proved to be very effective for our work. This year we reached 404,333 persons through Facebook, we served 220,496 impressions in Twitter and 203 followers were acquired in LinkedIn. If you are not yet connected with EUROPARC social media accounts, start following us online and never miss an update!





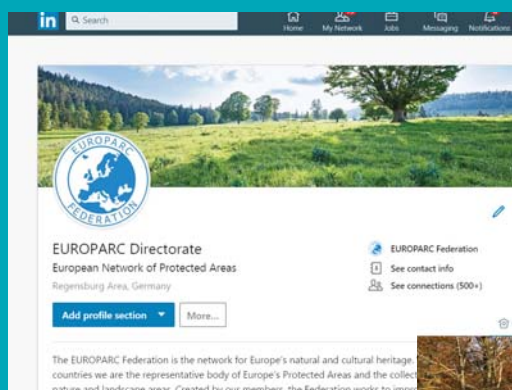
<https://www.europarc.org/e-newsletter-news>

Protected Areas In-Sight

In 2018, the annual journal Protected Areas In-Sight highlighted how "European Parks (can be) inspired by the next Generation"! We collected different views and projects of youth engagement for nature conservation and highlighted the EUROPARC Youth Manifesto. The Journal is sent to all our members, EUROPARC partner organisations and to several representatives of the European Commission and Members of the European



<https://www.europarc.org/pa-insight-journal/>



EUROPARC continues to make use of new technologies to provide members learning and networking opportunities. The EUROPARC webinars are one of the best examples. In 2018, we held 8 webinars focused on several topics relevant for the work of Protected Areas.

In total 850 participants joined the webinars, an average of 105 participants per webinar. If you did not have the chance to join the EUROPARC webinars, you can watch the recordings of the full sessions or download the presentations at www.europarc.org/previous-webinars



People Power – human resources

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

EUROPARC Directorate

With the kick-off of two new projects in 2018, EUROPARC expanded the team. We welcomed Neil McIntosh as Project Manager of the Life e-Natura2000edu project and Olivier de Sadeleer as Project Manager of the NaturAdapt project. To cover the maternity leave of Brigida Napolitano, Monika Trojer joined our team in October. Further, to support our administration and finance management, we opened two part-time positions for membership management and booking administration, welcoming in our team Eva Schon and Christine Demian.

EUROPARC and its Sections

Sections continued to play an important role in the success of the collective work of the Federation ensuring a better impact of activities and higher level of involvement of members at local/regional level. To ensure effective coordination of activities, Marta Mugica (EUROPARC Spain) represents the Sections within the Council, and the Directorate and Council ensured its presence at several meetings and events organised by Sections over 2018. Two online meetings with Section representatives were organised and a dedicated meeting between Section representatives and the Council took place at the EUROPARC Conference 2018.

EUROPARC Commissions

EUROPARC Commissions are groups of experts within the EUROPARC network, that are brought together to advance, study and develop a specific topic relevant for the work of Protected Areas. Discover the work of the Commission on Health and Protected Areas on page 22, the work of the "Protected Areas and Sustainable Agriculture Commission" on page 19, the "Periurban Commission" on page 6 and the Natura 2000 on page 5.

Smaller internal Commissions and Task Forces are also often created to deliver a specific output, which, after completion, are then dissolved. That is the case of the Communications and Marketing Commission that was dissolved after the ECSTPA Marketing Strategy and Action Plan. In 2018, a new internal commission was created to develop a fundraising strategy for the Federation. This Commission will be dissolved in 2019 after their recommendations are shared with members in the General Assembly 2019.

www.EUROPARC.org/EUROPARC-commissions/

<https://www.europarc.org/sections>

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



Marta Mugica presenting the Sections Reports during the General Assembly 2018, in Scotland (UK)



Our European Network

**EUROPARC Atlantic Isles
EUROPARC France
EUROPARC Germany
EUROPARC Italy
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.

<https://www.europarc.org/sections>

EUROPARC Atlantic Isles

Webinars

This year, EUROPARC Atlantic Isles pioneered the use of webinars and also had many programmes that provided new perspectives on building partnerships and current land management issue, especially Peatland restoration. Full details of programme and project can be found on our website.

This year EAI had over 250 attendees and over 300 further views of the webinar recordings on Vimeo. There are still webinars to come.

Erasmus + visits

In 2018, a group of eight people visited the Netherlands on a fascinating study tour around three of the Netherlands' protected areas and a group of five who visited three protected areas in the Jura Region of France and a single visit to Germany. Participants but came back to the UK with new ideas and ways of working, new contacts both in the countries they visited but also from the UK from within the group. The group who went to the Jura produced an excellent blog throughout their trip which can be found here



Further information about all the trips can be found on the EAI website

Governance

This year saw a reinvigoration of the board with a new chair David Butterworth from the Yorkshire Dales National Park and also new members from Loch Lomond and Trossachs, Brecon Beacons and the Peak District National Parks.

The main successes and challenges

<https://www.europarc-ai.org/>

EUROPARC Atlantic Isles is still going through a development phase and our major challenges are to engage with our government agencies in the 4 countries of the UK, and the uncertainty of Brexit.

We need to continue to find new resources to fund our activities, grow our learning programme for Protected Areas staff and continue to facilitate links into wider Europe.

In England, there is a major review of Protected Areas, the results of which will be published this year. EAI, being the only organisation that links all Protected Areas across the UK, will play a role in disseminating the results of the review.



EUROPARC
Atlantic Isles





EUROPARC France

In 2018, the French Section continued its activities on the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism (ECST), and was involved alongside EUROPARC in European lobbying.



Key activities in 2018

Helping to set up of European projects and networks

The Federation and the Montagne de Reims Regional Nature Park got involved in the Erasmus+ programme, which aims to develop and test multilingual training materials for the appropriation and deployment of the ECST tool.

In addition, the Federation attended the joint meeting of the networks of French-speaking parks (Switzerland, Wallonia, France) and German-speaking parks in Switzerland at the end of June 2018, in particular to draw connections with the conclusions of the study coordinated by the German network VDN and EUROPARC. In the autumn, Olaf Holm also attended a meeting of the regional nature parks networks, to consider the operational follow-up to be given in response to the conclusions of this study.

Participation in European and international lobbying activities

The Regional Nature Parks Federation shared the experiences of its parks network in a meeting with the European Commission to lobby for and promote nature parks. The meeting was held in Brussels on 7 December, with a speech by F. Drugmant on sustainable agriculture durable, and was also attended by Federation Director E. Brua.



Nature Regional Park Montagne de Reims (FR)
@Fanny-Husson

Main successes and challenges in 2018

Participation in the governance of EUROPARC

The Federation took part in the EUROPARC Conference in Scotland. It was represented by Dominique Lévêque, alongside a number of park representatives, including Council members Olaf Holm (Montagne de Reims) and Pierre Schmelzle (Pilat).

ECST label

The Joint Committee for the examination of applications for Part 3 of the ECST proposed the renewal of recognition for the seven candidate travel agents. Since they began their commitment, the agents have made efforts to adapt their activities and how they work to a sustainable tourism approach.

In 2018, **two regional nature parks and one national park had their ECST diplomas renewed:** the Scarpe Escaut and Périgord-Limousin regional nature parks, and the Guadeloupe national park.



EUROPARC Germany



Apple harvest in a meadow orchard in the biosphere area Swabian Alb - Photo: Arnold Morascher

EUROPARC Deutschland e.V. has a new Board of Directors. In accordance with the articles of association, Guido Puhlmann, head of the Biosphere Reserve Middle Elbe who chaired the association for the past nine years, resigned from the position. Peter Südbeck, head of the Lower Saxony Wadden Sea national park, will represent EUROPARC together with Eugen Nowak, head of the Biosphere Reserve Spreewald, Christian Unselt, Vice President of NABU and Hartmut Escher, head of nature park TERRA.vita.

Currently, 78 members from protected area administrations, support and nature conservation associations and foundations are active in the association. The aim of the association's work is to create synergies and reinforce the national natural landscapes. A twelve-member team in the Berlin office supports them. We are presenting two of the projects from 2018 here.

International study visits for protected area employees

The project 'Actors from National Natural Landscapes in the International Exchange of Competence' (ANNIKA) of EUROPARC Germany supported the exchange of expertise, experience and working methods between European protected areas. During one-week stays abroad, main and voluntary protected area employees visited the following target countries focusing on the respective topics:

- Finland: Alternative financing strategy
- United Kingdom and Germany: Regional development and tourism
- Austria: Accessibility and inclusion
- Netherlands: Education for sustainable development

ANNIKA - for the approximately 30 participants from German and foreign protected areas, this meant: Obtaining insights, changing perspectives, recognizing similarities and differences and learning from the

experience of others. On the one hand, the focus was on the above topics of relevance for practical work in the 'home' protected areas of the participants. On the other hand, the project offered far-reaching benefits: In addition to increased knowledge and competence, the proverbial broadening of horizons provided a helpful distance from one's own matters-of-course and habits, led to increased motivation through the experience of an international circle of colleagues and contributed contacts for future cooperation. The findings of the ANNIKA project were incorporated into the German-English brochure 'Wissen teilen - Sharing Know-how', which serves to disseminate the project results and is available at



International ANNIKA Study Group in the Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea National Park - Photo: Stephanie Schubert

Promoting biodiversity with nature conservation certificates

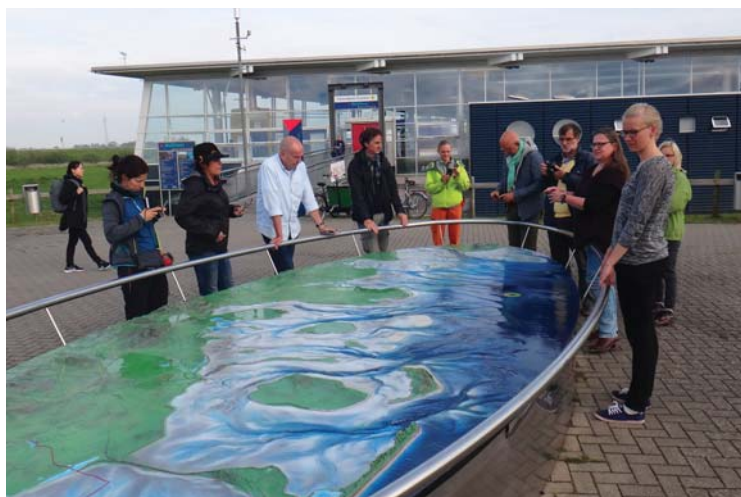
The primary objective of the project 'Valorisation of Climate and Nature Conservation Measures in National Natural Landscapes' promotes biodiversity in national natural landscapes thanks to a new financing mechanism. This is based on the support of certified nature conservation projects, which are realized with the marketing of so-called nature conservation certificates on an online platform. Orchards were in focus in 2018.

In the first step, assessors record the baseline condition of biodiversity on selected areas. Depending on the situation, individual action plans are created that contribute to the preservation and enhancement of biological diversity. Regional partners on site implement the measures. The surface condition is checked at regular intervals. Thus, certified conservation projects prove how significant they are to the preservation of biodiversity. The costs of implementation are covered by the sale of nature conservation certificates. One nature conservation certificate stands for the preservation of one square metre of biological diversity for one year. This facilitates, for example, new orchards, pruning or meadows where there are orchards.

Both projects are funded by the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation with funding from the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety.

Other focal points in 2018 included volunteer management, the interim evaluation of national parks and integrative monitoring. On the 40th anniversary of the designation of the first biosphere reserves in Germany, a transnational youth forum will take place in 2019 on the theme 'UNESCO Biosphere Reserves - Sustainable Living and Economy'. From 06 to 09 September, young adults between the ages of 18 and 25 from the biosphere reserves of Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Luxembourg will meet in the Rhön biosphere reserve.

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





Federparchi-EUROPARC Italy

The Italian Federation of Parks and Nature Reserves, founded in 1989, joins bodies managing national and regional parks, marine protected areas, regional and state nature reserves. Since June 2008, Federparchi has also been established as the Italian Section of the EUROPARC Federation, it involves most parts of Italian Protected Areas and Regions, Provinces, Municipalities and environmental associations .



Activities in 2018

In 2018, Federparchi (the EUROPARC Italian section) activities have been focused on the support given to the Italian protected areas their biodiversity and their capacity to manage efficaciously and effectively their targets. Moreover, the Italian section continued to lobby and engage national and local institutions, continuing studies, projects and services for members and partners.

In 2018, Federparchi held election of the assembly and board. Giampiero Sammuri was confirmed as President of the association: Italian protected areas appreciated his whole-hearted commitment for biodiversity and strengthening lobbying activities. Regular activities were successfully developed: dissemination and support in application for European Charter for Sustainable Tourism, retraining parks operators, enhancing and extending effective environmental education, collaborating in national and international projects.



Regarding Part 1 of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism, Federparchi supported new protected areas within the network and some of them were awarded during the Brussels Ceremony of December 2018

There are 3 National Parks (Parco Nazionale d'Abruzzo, Lazio e Molise, Parco Nazionale della Sila, Parco Nazionale della Val Grande) and 5 Regional Parks (Parco Naturale Regionale Dune Costiere da Torre Canne a Torre San Leonardo, Parco Regionale dei Colli Euganei, Parco Regionale Alpi Apuane, Parco Naturale Adamello Brenta) and 1 Marine Protected Area (Area Marina Protetta Porto Cesareo).



The year ahead, 2019 will see the celebration of Federparchi 30th anniversary - Federparchi has already begun to disseminate information. The celebration will be in May and Federparchi will profit from the Day of Parks for a special agenda of activities and initiatives.



Successes and challenges

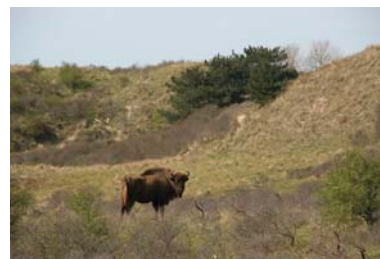
2018 has been a great year for the ECST Part 2 application in Italy: almost 100 local entrepreneurs have been awarded by Parks (5 National Parks and 1 Regional Park) and the total amount of awarded business companies reached the 200 all over Italy. Last December has been organized in Rome a big awarding ceremony during which all the new entrepreneurs were awarded by the Park Presidents and on behalf of the Federparchi President.

Another important success is the start of the implementation of the ECST Part 3, with the involvement of Tour Operators, during the last weeks of 2018 the Spanish methodology has been analysed, translated and adapted to the Italian context. In the following months it will be approved by the Federparchi Council and hence it will be sent for EUROPARC Federation Council approval. We are confident that the ECST Part 3 Italian methodology will be approved in spring 2019 and, by the end of the year, some Italian Tour Operators will be positively engaged by one or more Parks.

Low Countries Section 2018



In 2018, the EUROPARC Low Countries Section organised 2 meetings.



On the 17th of April 2018, the section met in Nationaal Park Zuid-Kennemerland, where the President Hendrik Oosterveld welcomed participants in the beautiful visitor centre.

After the meeting, a guided tour to Kraansvlak to meet the European Bison is on the agenda! We didn't have to look very long to get a glimpse of these amazing animals in the high sand dunes of the National Park. A great way to meet one of Europe's big animals!

The second meeting held with the section was organised on the 18th of September at the EUROPARC Conference in Aviemore in Scotland. The Low Countries Section was represented by many participants at the conference, also some young people were present, supported by National Parks. The preparation of the activities for 2019 was further discussed.



The main agenda points concerned 2 activities that are planned to take place in 2019.

- The first activity will be a one-day conference about the involvement of young people in National Parks and National Landscapes, making the theme of the EUROPARC Conference in Scotland more concrete. The Youth manifesto and EUROPARC'S existing Youth programmes will be discussed. This conference will be organised in Belgium in the Hoge Kempen Region in March 2019. Young people will also be present and involved in the meeting.
- The second activity that was discussed between the section members was about the case of drinking water companies and ecosystem services in relation to sustainability and the local economy. Section members agreed to organise a two-day event each year in April. This yearly event will be called Annual Low Countries Days. Each year another main theme will be selected.

The first edition will go ahead on 16 to 17 April 2019 and take place in the Netherlands in National Park De Biesbosch.



EUROPARC
Low Countries





EUROPARC Nordic-Baltic

The EUROPARC Nordic-Baltic Section started the year with the new presidency by Metsähallitus Parks & Wildlife Finland. Metsähallitus Parks & Wildlife Finland took the reins for the second time in the history of the Section.

A Members' Assembly and a Seminar was organised in Finland at the Finnish Nature Centre Haltia on 11 to 12 April 2018. The Section welcomed the participation of the EUROPARC Executive Director Carol Ritchie in the Members' Assembly and the Seminar. The Seminar was titled "Young People - Secret for Park Future", thus linking the theme to the EUROPARC Conference theme. The participants took a tour of the exhibition "Nature 2.17" at the Nature Centre Haltia. The exhibition was a unique experience, because its content and material were mainly created by 11-17-year-old ParkM8's (park mates). Altogether, 40 ParkM8s had been chosen to each one of the 40 national parks in Finland, and the youngsters were given free rein to document their outdoor experiences, incidents and landscapes. The exhibitions present all the laughs, food preparations, stumbles, outdoor trips and nightly experiences that the young ParkM8s endured with their friends.

In the Seminar, the members presented their experiences in working with youth, e.g. working with the Junior Ranger Programme.

The second get-together for the Section members was organised during the EUROPARC Conference 2018 in Aviemore, Scotland on 18 September 2018. It was a Members' Meeting, with Ms. Marta Múgica as our guest. Marta Múgica is the representative of the Sections at the EUROPARC Council and she gave us an insight of what that entails. In addition to Members' Meeting business, there were several presentations. One presentation continued the theme of young people as Ms. Madeleine Nyman of Metsähallitus Parks & Wildlife Finland presented a Wildlife Tutor programme that aims to inspire children and youth to nature experiences. The Section worked also in updating the Section guidelines for implementing Part II of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas. This work is led by Kullaberg Nature Reserve in Sweden.

The challenge continues to be how to engage more members in active Section work. There is a core of active members, but it has proven difficult to increase the core significantly. Despite this, the work continues, and finding new ways to activate the members will be one of the focuses of future work.

The Section is also proud that the next EUROPARC Conference 2019 will be held in Ķemeri National Park in Latvia!



EUROPARC Spain

The year 2018 was very special for the Spanish Section of EUROPARC: 25 years working in a collaborative way to improve the management of almost 2,000 protected areas, 28% of the territory of Spain. Thanks to the support of 24 members, it is possible to have a stable Technical Office managed by the *Fundación Fernando González Bernáldez* to catalyze the active involvement of thousands of people who make such a great network possible.

First edition of the awards "Inspiring experiences Programme Society and Protected Areas" during the Conference ESPARC 2018 in Picos de Europa National Park.

Key activities in 2018

- **Programme Society and Protected Areas 2020:** Promotion of the strategic programme. Launch of the first edition of awards, 51 projects received both from members and non-members.
- **Sustainable Tourism:** General support to the parks and enterprises involved in the Charter and specific support to Atlantic Isles National Park (Galicia) for the implementation of phase II of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism.
- **Carrying capacity:** Studies in Sierra Espuña Regional Park (Murcia) and Urdaibai Biosphere Reserve (Basque country) to support management decisions.
- **Health:** collaboration with the insurance company DKV in the project "Healthy Forests". Identification of 21 new healthy itineraries in protected areas, available at <https://es.wikiloc.com/wikiloc/user.do?id=3087415>
- **Climate Change:** project supported by the Fundación Biodiversidad to promote the adaptation in planning and management of protected areas. 2nd edition of a manual, development of a toolkit.
See also <http://www.redeuroparc.org/proyectos/adaptacion>.
- **LIFE RedBosques:** the project aims to improve the management of Spanish mediterranean forests included in Natura 2000. Among other results, a map with old-growth forests is being developed to create a National Network of reference forests. More info in www.redbosques.eu/english-version.



- **Rural development and Natura 2000.** Project funded by Fundación Biodiversidad, programme "EmpleaVerde 2017", to improve the use of funds from rural development in Natura 2000. Training actions in 6 Spanish regions (Andalucía, Aragón, Basque country, Castile y León, Castilla-La Mancha, Catalonia).
All info available here: http://www.redeuroparc.org/RN_y_Fondoeuropeos.
- **Training:** The main activity is the Master on Protected Areas, 18th edition: 32 participants, 10 from Latin America, field trip to Grazalema Natural Park in Andalucía. Other training offers available at <http://www.fungobe.org/>
- **Publications:** During 2018 we published eleven e-bulletin, two Journals, one Technical Manual and the results of the Conference 2018. All publications available in: <http://www.redeuroparc.org/publicaciones>.



- **Participation in European projects:** LIFE e-Natura2000.edu, coordinated by EUROPARC Federation, CERES (Sudoe programme), coordinated by Forespir (France). These projects started in 2018 and will be developed in the next 3 years.



Successes and challenges

The main challenge for the organisation is to keep giving support to members according to their current priorities (Natura 2000 development, sustainable tourism, sustainable socio-economic development) and to develop inspirational projects under the Programme Society and Protected Areas 2020, involving multiple sectors, particularly academia and municipalities.

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Imprint

www.europarc.org



Copyright/Publisher: EUROPARC Federation 2019

Editors: EUROPARC Federation Directorate

Translations: EuroMinds

Graphic Design: Václav Hřaba, atelier-hřaba@volny.cz

Many thanks go to all those who contributed to this edition of the Annual Report.



Funded by the European Union.

The production of this Annual Report has been supported financially in the framework of the European Commission's (Directorates General Environment and Climate Action) LIFE + funding programme of operating grants for European Environmental NGOs. The content of this publication does not reflect the official opinion of the European Union. Responsibility for the information and views expressed in the publication lies entirely with the authors.



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