



How can Parks contribute to human health?

By connecting people with nature, parks and Protected Areas are well placed to support health outcomes.

There is a range of good practice in Europe's parks and Protected Areas, which demonstrates how physical activity and contact with nature can help improve physical and mental health, whilst addressing social inequalities.

Europe's nature is a health-promoting asset. Compelling evidence shows, that access to the natural environment helps guard against, treat and manage key health issues. These include conditions such as depression, coronary heart disease and stroke, type 2 diabetes, obesity and dementia.

The contribution of parks and Protected Areas to health outcomes is strengthened through recognition in relevant policy, practice and funding at the European, national and regional level.

Our parks are valuable assets in many ways,
but we need to raise the profile of the network as
Europe's 'Natural Health Centres'.

Encouraging visitors through promotion, providing a welcome, along with high quality site management, are vital components for all Protected Area management. It is also crucial to engage with people and work in partnership with other sectors of society.

Realising the potential of nature-based activities to contribute to health outcomes requires **parks to work with the health sector** and reach out to those people in society, whose health needs would benefit the most from contact with nature.

EUROPARC has created the
"Health and Protected Areas Commission",
a group of specialists actively working in the field of parks and
Protected Areas, which is **compiling the most recent
evidence and practice, and developing tools
to support your work!**

www.europarc.org/health-protected-areas-commission

How can you make your park more of a 'Natural Health Centre'?

The EUROPARC Toolkit on the **"Health & Well-being benefits from Parks & Protected Areas"** is designed to help you think about:

- How to **enable people to achieve health benefits** as part of site management objectives- helping to deliver a sustainable nature; valued by people;
- How to best **plan, manage and promote your sites** to a wider range of people to improve their general health and well-being;
- How to **link your sites to the health sector** so that people at risk of or experiencing specific illness / health conditions can be supported to make use of your sites.



The EUROPARC Toolkit includes a valuable "Health Check List" to guide you through the entire process: from planning to implementation, including staff training, promotion and evaluation.

www.europarc.org/toolkit-health-benefits-from-parks



The EUROPARC Federation is the largest and most representative Protected Area network in Europe, comprising almost 40% of the Natura 2000 network.



www.europarc.org



Our members manage Europe's Protected Areas, covering almost every regional, national, European and international designation.

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