



EUROPARC Policy Advisory Working Group

Terms of Reference

Final Version - May 2026

Rationale

EUROPARC represents the interest and ambitions of Protected Areas at different European political and technical levels, especially through championing the value and benefits of Protected Areas for the society and developing and maintaining partnerships with key institutions. This policy focus emanates from EUROPARC's Statutes, where the "cooperation with and advocacy work towards the European Institutions, national governments, international and national non-governmental organisations and institutions in order to raise their concern and strengthen action for Protected Areas and to foster the aims and activities of the EUROPARC Federation", is one of its goals. A "[Policy and Advocacy Strategy to 2030](#)" was developed in 2023 (as foreseen in the [EUROPARC Strategy to 2030](#)), to be reviewed every 3 years. This Strategy foresees the establishment of a dedicated group to support its implementation.

The EUROPARC Policy Advisory Working Group (PAWG) was created in March 2026¹, when the new Working Groups of the EUROPARC Federation were approved by the EUROPARC Council. The current Terms of Reference are developed as foreseen in the Guidance for EUROPARC Members' Participation Groups (January 2026).

Goals

The overarching goal of the PAWG is

to provide strategic advice to EUROPARC's Directorate and Council to support general decision-making & the implementation of the EUROPARC Strategy to 2030, aiming to bridge policy and practice.

For this purpose, the PAWG

- supports the development, review and implementation of Policy Strategies,
- contributes to identify priorities and policy areas that require particular attention and helps the gathering of intelligence on relevant policy developments,
- provides evidence- and science-based advice, insights and expertise across different policy areas at EU, wider European and international levels,
- complements and supports the work of other Working Groups, and
- contributes to the delivery of targeted communication and positions.

¹ A previous EUROPARC Policy Advisory Group worked from 2024 to 2025.



Expected outputs

The challenging political environment at international, wider European, EU and national levels is mainly focused on security, defence and other strategic considerations. A direct consequence of this fact is that currently the environmental agenda is not a priority in the policy debates, with a declining political and financial support to environmental issues. Protected Areas are of course also affected by this situation, though their role as the basis of nature conservation together with the usually positive societal view of flagship Protected Areas such as National Parks, remain crucial and well recognised by society so they can be helpful in this context.

In this context, several policy files can be expected to take the attention of the PAWG, including the current environmental deregulation trend, the implementation of the EU, wider European and international protected areas targets, the review of the proposed EU budget for 2028–2034, sustainable agriculture, nature restoration, nature credits, health, links with energy policy (e.g. acceleration areas), sustainable tourism policy, climate change or links with security and defence policy, *inter alia*.

The specific outputs that the group can provide — always taking into account members' perspectives and needs — include

- suggesting to the Council priority policy areas that require particular attention, including potential strategic actions that EUROPARC could take;
- supporting the development and review of EUROPARC's Policy and Advocacy Strategy;
- advising on key policy and communication actions;
- providing input in the process of development of targeted policy and communication tools (such as briefings, positions or recommendations) — and especially advising on their strategic use (including their goals, target audience, timing);
- advice and recommendations on joining policy efforts of policy-oriented partner organisations or coalitions;
- facilitating the connections with Sections' members, at national, regional and local level, for the dissemination of policy work and support mutual coordination;
- linking, complementing and supporting the work of EUROPARC Working Groups for policy development and implementation;
- exchanging information and intelligence relevant to EUROPARC's activity;
- in coordination with the Directorate, occasionally attending international meetings and events to represent EF interests.

Timeline

The PAWG is expected to be a permanent EUROPARC Working Group, as the topic of policy is an ongoing activity in relation to Protected Areas. Priorities will be selected on an ongoing basis, according to the evolution of the policy debates and EUROPARC's needs.



Practical organisation of the work

The membership of the PAWG will include 6-10 key policy experts within the EUROPARC network, ensuring a balanced representation in terms of expertise, regional representation, gender, age distribution and other considerations, aiming to ensure an inclusive and functional group. The meetings will be attended by a Council representative, in order to align the PAWG work with the Council activities. External expertise can be sought so as to ensure the best advice possible, e.g. considering emergent policy areas. In any case, membership will be reviewed regularly by the Chair and the Directorate, considering issues such as potential expertise needs or active participation. The Annex to this document includes the list of members and their functions (e.g. Chair and Directorate's liaison) and will be updated as needed.

The PAWG activities will be coordinated and facilitated by the EUROPARC Directorate. The use of a communication platform will be considered in order to facilitate internal communication and online collaborative work.

In principle, one meeting every 2 months will be convened virtually, and the meetings will last one hour, always trying to be very strict with the time. If feasible, an in-person meeting annually will be explored.

It is foreseen to have a special focus on one particular topic during each meeting; the agenda setting will happen via email in advance to the meetings, and background documents will be drafted by the Directorate as needed.

Succinct notes from each meeting will be prepared by the Directorate, including decisions / agreements, action points / next steps, and sticky points. Such notes will be shared with the Council, as background information for the subsequent Council meeting after the PAWG meeting.

Potential opportunities to help advance EUROPARC's agenda, but also to highlight the work of the Working Group or present results or ideas (e.g. at the General Assembly or external events) will be identified and explored. In any case, while participating in external events as a representative of the PAWG is possible, an agreement in advance within the PAWG, and also with the Directorate, will be needed.



Annex

Members of the EUROPARC Policy Advisory Working Group

Name	Function
Michael Hošek	Chair
Humberto Delgado Rosa	Member
Hilde Eggermont	Member
Henrik Jansson	Member
Hayley Quarrington	Member
Ignace Schops	Member
Erika Vaida-Bela	Member
Alberto Arroyo Schnell	Directorate Liaison
Federico Minozzi	Member
Sanna-Kaisa Juvonen	Directorate Support