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CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

**Group of Specialists
on the European Diploma of Protected Areas
24 March 2014, Strasbourg**

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**ANNUAL REPORTS 2013:
Analysis of the 2013 annual reports submitted by the
European Diploma holding areas**

*Document prepared by the Directorate
of Democratic Governance*

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INTRODUCTION

Resolution CM/ResDip(2008)1 on the revised regulations for the European Diploma of Protected Areas stipulates in its Article 7 that *“The Group of Specialists shall examine the annual reports and may submit an opinion or recommendations to the Committee or its Bureau, which shall be forwarded, through the Committee of Ministers and the central authorities of the state concerned, to the authorities responsible for managing the area awarded the Diploma. The Group may also identify some problems encountered in one Diploma site or common to several Diploma areas and make proposals aimed at remedying them.”*

The Resolution further states in its Article 8 that: *“Should there be a serious threat, significant damage to the area or serious difficulties in implementing the conditions attached to the award or renewal of the diploma, the Secretary General may appoint an independent expert to assess whether there is in fact any real danger and to carry out a further appraisal in accordance”*.

And the Article 9, paragraph 2 specifies that for the extension of the period of validity of the Diploma: *“the Secretary General of the Council of Europe shall appoint an independent expert to carry out a fresh appraisal, particular attention being paid to information provided every year in the annual reports. The new appraisal is aimed at taking stock of the state and development of the area, having regard to the conditions and/or recommendations formulated previously, and proposing, as appropriate, new measures for the coming period”*.

The purpose of this document is to examine the 2013 annual reports received, and more specifically the information submitted by the managers of the diploma holding areas on measures implemented to comply with the conditions and/or recommendations for the award or the renewal of the European Diploma.

As a result of this analysis, the current document highlights the issues encountered by the areas, due to a delay or a difficulty in the implementation of some conditions/recommendations addressed to them. It further makes suggestions of possible action to be taken by the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma to the Bern Convention. The positive developments achieved by some areas are as well underlined. Additionally, the Secretariat draws the attention of the Group on possible issues which require further attention and preventive measures.

Only the Diploma holding areas which have submitted their 2013 annual report are detailed below. When the section of the annual report which informs about progress in the implementation of the “Conditions and/or recommendations for award or renewal” (chapter III) is missing, this is clearly stated in the document.

The analysis is presented in the following way:

Terminology used	Explanation
Issues	Problems already identified
Warning	Possible issues
Assets	Positive developments achieved
Suggested action	Action suggested - open for discussion

1. CAMARGUE NATIONAL RESERVE - FRANCE

Resolution CM/ResDip(2011)5 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 6 July 2011 attaches one condition and seven recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Camargue National Reserve.

The 2013 annual report submitted by the area does not provide information in chapter III on the Conditions and/or recommendations for award or renewal.

2. PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK - UNITED KINGDOM

Resolution CM/ResDip(2011)11 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 6 July 2011 attaches as condition to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Peak District National Park the completion of the review of the national park management plan and the continuous implementation of the plans and strategies it contains.

Assets

The 2013 annual report informs that the National Park management plan is completed and the strategies are aligned accordingly.

Suggested action

The Group to welcome the completion of the National Park management plan.

3. KRIMML WATERFALLS NATURAL SITE – AUSTRIA

Resolution CM/ResDip(2012)7 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 20 June 2012 attaches eight recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Krimml Waterfalls Natural Site.

The annual report for 2013 submitted by the area does not provide information in chapter III on the Conditions and/or recommendations for award or renewal.

4. LÜNEBURG HEATH NATURE RESERVE – GERMANY

Resolution CM/ResDip(2012)5 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 20 June 2012 attaches thirteen recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Lüneburg Heath Nature Reserve.

Issues

The 2013 annual report does not directly inform on the implementation of the recommendations, but stressed on several issues the reserve has met.

The authorities of the reserve are concerned about the project of the Volkwardingen Wind Park. The project consists in seven wind turbines up to 185 m to be erected only 1-2 km east of the reserve boundary, which would spoil the historic cultural landscape of Lüneburger Heide.

The report points out the recent agricultural developments within Lüneburger Heide nature reserve and neighbouring areas which resulted in severe problems concerning scenic quality and ground water extraction for field irrigation (linked to recommendations 1 and 7).

Besides, the annual report alerts on funding problems (recommendations 2, 3, 4). Discussion is open in Germany to eliminate heath land from the list of agricultural lands defined by EC which benefit from EC agricultural subsidies. The report also underlines that Federal State of Lower Saxony denies owners of heath land the right to apply for the European single payment scheme (“Betriebsprämie”).

The reserve asks for assistance of the Council of Europe and its representatives to “safeguard and defend the last coherent heath land habitat of central Europe from further negative effects of recent agricultural policy, bureaucracy and large infrastructure projects”.

Suggested action

The Group to discuss the possible actions to be taken and assistance to be provided, and to evaluate whether sending an official letter from the Council of Europe, stressing that the possible negative impact of the planned development project should be carefully assessed, could be helpful.

Ask for more specific information on the implementation of recommendations through the 2014 annual report.

5. MUDDUS NATIONAL PARK – SWEDEN

Resolution [CM/ResDip\(2012\)2](#) adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 20 June 2012 attaches seven recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Muddus National Park.

The 2013 annual report submitted by the area does not provide information in chapter III on the Conditions and/or recommendations for award or renewal.

6. SAREK AND PADJELANTA NATIONAL PARKS – SWEDEN

Resolution [CM/ResDip\(2012\)3](#) adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 20 June 2012 attaches eight recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Sarek and Padjelanta National Parks.

The 2013 annual report submitted by the area does not provide information in chapter III on the Conditions and/or recommendations for award or renewal.

7. SWISS NATIONAL PARK -SWITZERLAND

Resolution [CM/ResDip\(2012\)6](#) adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 20 June 2012 attaches six recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Swiss National Park.

Warning

The first recommendation requires to “take all necessary measures to fulfil the UNESCO condition that the national park, which is the core zone of the “Biosfera Val Müstair/Parc Naziunal” biosphere reserve, is entirely surrounded by a buffer zone”.

The annual report acknowledges that the regional organisation Pro Engiadina Bassa has assumed responsibility for the buffer zone, and a solution could be found on the basis of the “Nature-Landscape-Tourism structural plan”. The solution is time consuming because of the required political negotiations, to be followed by a local referendum organised by each municipality questioning local populations whether they want to be part of the Biosphere Reserve. There is no deadline available yet for the end of this process.

The deadline given by UNESCO for the fulfilment of its conditions had to be extended.

Assets

The authorities of the Swiss National Park keep being very enthusiastic on the award and renewals of the European Diploma to their areas.

In 2014, the Park is celebrating its 100-year jubilee. The main celebrations will take place in Zernez on 1st August and plans include an open-air spectacle with performances throughout the summer, a touring exhibition throughout Switzerland, a jubilee exhibition, TV coverage and various publications. An organisation committee is responsible for overseeing and implementing all the jubilee projects throughout the year.

All these manifestations also contribute to increase the visibility of the European Diploma of Protected Areas.

Suggested action

The Group to welcome the activities organised in the frame of the Diploma holding area 100th anniversary. Ensure presence from the Secretariat of the Bern Convention and the Group of Specialists to at least one event organised.

Keep progress on the achievement of recommendation 1 under observation through the 2014 annual report.

8. ABRUZZI, LAZZIO AND MOLISE NATIONAL PARK - ITALY

Resolution CM/ResDip(2012)10 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 20 June 2012 attaches two conditions and eight recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Abruzzi, Lazio and Molise National Park.

Issues

The first condition requires that the PNALM National Park management plan is finally adopted before the meeting of the Group of Specialists in 2013.

In its report dated on 22 May 2013 to the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention (Doc T-PVS/DE (2013) 10), the Group has already stressed the difficulties encountered for the adoption of the new PNALM National Park management plan.

The 2013 annual report mentions that the Abruzzi, Lazio and Molise regions would open a public consultation on the incidence of the plan adoption on the environment and biodiversity of the area. The conclusions of this evaluation should be available by the end of 2014.

Concerning the regulations on hunting, which take into account the need to minimise disturbance to bears during the autumn (part of condition 2), the 2012 annual report highlighted progress which was not relayed by the 2013 annual report for the 2013-2014 hunting season.

The 2013 annual report also makes reference to a redefinition of the zones of the Park where the livestock farming would be prohibited. This seems to be in contradiction with the condition that “the regulations prohibiting livestock farming within zone A of the National Park are applied absolutely and without delay”.

The annual report mentions that there was no progress with regards to recommendations 4 and 5, concerning “substantially increase [of] the human and financial resources earmarked for scientific activities in the PNALM” and “the possibility of instructing all technical personnel to record any violations of the PNALM regulations”.

Suggested action

The Group to request more and precise information concerning the adoption of the management plan, the progress on the regulations on hunting and the definition of the zones where the livestock farming is prohibited.

The Group to discuss the possible actions to be taken and assistance to be provided, and to evaluate whether sending an official letter from the Council of Europe could be helpful.

9. WOLLMATINGER RIED UNTERSEE-GNADENSEE NATURE RESERVE - GERMANY

Resolution CM/ResDip(2009)2 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 21 October 2009 attaches six recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Wollmatinger Ried Untersee-Gnadensee Nature Reserve.

Warning

Four recommendations should be kept under observation for the next annual report:

2. Tentative of suspension of fishing in the particular sensitive core areas: while it was not yet possible to halt the legal fishing activity for an experimental three-year period, it is nevertheless positive that the Regierungspräsidium endeavours to find a consensual regulation between the concerns of conservation and fishery;
4. Harmonization of cooperation between Switzerland and Germany: during the year under review, no direct contacts to harmonize cross-border cooperation were made on the State level;
5. Perform compensation measures to the disturbing of the nature reserve due to the roads building: several measures were implemented; however, the completion of greening measures including near-natural wildlife crossing systems will take several more years;
6. Clarification of the future of Wollmatinger Ried Nature Conservation Centre: the work on the planned new Nature Conservation Centre has not yet begun. Positive point nevertheless: the funding is available.

Suggested action

The Group to encourage the German authorities to approach their Swiss counterpart in order to install a dialogue for co-operation, in line with recommendation 4 of Resolution CM/ResDip(2009)2.

10. BOSCHPLAAT NATURE RESERVE - NETHERLANDS

Resolution [CM/ResDip\(2010\)9](#) adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 16 September 2010 attaches five recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Boschplaat Nature Reserve.

Warning

The 2013 annual report calls attention to the available budget, particularly the budget for monitoring, which is under pressure. The sufficient financial resources which “need to be available on an ongoing basis in order to safeguard the interests of the Boschplaat’s natural environment, especially monitoring, staff, public relations and communication” is subject of the first recommendation.

On the other hand, the 2013 annual report does not make any reference to the implementation of the other four recommendations. There is no reference either in the 2011 and 2012 annual reports, if not to stress on not having enough qualified staff for activities.

Suggested action

The Group to keep under observation, through the next annual report, the progress in the implementation of the measures. A special attention should be given to the budget for monitoring.

11. SIEBENGEBIRGE NATURE RESERVE – GERMANY

Resolution [CM/ResDip\(2011\)10](#) adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 6 July 2011 attaches one condition and seven recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Siebengebirge Nature Reserve.

Issues

Remark: In 2013, the Secretariat was warned about the construction of a large retail shopping centre in the immediate proximity of the Siebengebirge Nature Reserve and of the negative environmental impact these developments could have on the reserve.

As the authorities of the area have not sent the annual report for 2013, the Secretariat requested them further information on this issue. In addition, the Secretariat asked for information on the drawing of the management plan for the reserve (condition of the resolution) and on the progress in the implementation

of recommendations 4 and 5, concerning the possible construction of new roads and the disturbance caused by traffic on all roads.

The answer received from the authorities informs about the disasters of heavy rock falls and rainfalls the reserve had to face in 2013, which oriented their priority and efforts to solve the tremendous troubles caused.

Concerning the large retail shopping centre in the city of Königswinter, the answer acknowledges that a Factory Outlet Centre (FOC) should be erected, but this area is not included in the nature reserve. Yet there are certain problems that the municipal administration recognises and debates intensively, as for instance if the location complies with the guidelines of sustained area development; if a such large area within the city borders is ecologically justified; about the traffic volume, the emissions and, above all, the requirement of parking lots. The authorities of the reserve arranged a meeting on 19 March 2014 with the municipal councillors to distinctly unfold their position, with emphasis especially on traffic and ecological aspects.

Assets

The answer received from the authorities informs on the progress done with the management plan which should be adopted in 2014.

It also appraises that no more roads or hiking trails have been built, nor are they planned, within the reserve. On the contrary, according to the new Nature Protection Decree of the Bezirksregierung Köln coming into effect on 1 March 2014, the length of hiking trails has been reduced with about 50 km.

Suggested action

The Group to appreciate the continuous good management of the area and to follow, through the 2014 annual report, the adoption of the management plan.

Keep under observation the developments on the retail shopping centre, and the (possible) problems occurring for the reserve from its proximity. The Group to evaluate whether sending an official letter from the Council of Europe, stressing that the possible negative impact of the planned development project should be carefully assessed, could be helpful.

12. KUŞCENNETİ (BIRD PARADISE) NATIONAL PARK - TURKEY

Resolution CM/ResDip(2011)6 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 6 July 2011 attaches four conditions and three recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Kuşçenneti National Park.

The same information is provided by both the 2012 and 2013 annual reports.

The report informs that the Lake Manyas (Kuş) Management Plan is being implemented properly (condition 1).

There is no reference to the recommendations to increase the staff due to the park enlargement and to set up a small wardening unit on the southern shore of the lake.

Suggested action

The Group to welcome the implementation of the Lake Manyas (Kuş) Management Plan and to ask for updated data in the 2014 annual report.

13. MINSMERE NATURE RESERVE - UNITED KINGDOM

Resolution CM/ResDip(2009)9 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 21 October 2009 attaches seven recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Minsmere Nature Reserve.

Assets

The 2013 annual report brings to the fore the progress done in their implementation. The last management plan was extended and the new Management Plan 2014-2019 is in progress.

Suggested action

The Group to welcome the development of formal and informal learning activities. This positive experience could be used as best practices for other areas playing a role of demonstration site for a wide range of audiences, especially formal schools.

Keep under observation the advancement of the new Management Plan 2014-2019.

14. PURBECK HERITAGE COAST - UNITED KINGDOM

Resolution CM/ResDip(2009)10 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 21 October 2009 attaches two conditions and eight recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Purbeck Heritage Coast.

Assets

The 2013 annual report lists the progress done to comply with the Resolution. The two conditions are positively under control and work was done in 2013 to meet the recommendations.

Suggested action

The Group to appreciate the continuous good management of the area.

15. FAIR ISLE NATIONAL SCENIC AREA - UNITED KINGDOM

Resolution CM/ResDip(2010)10 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 16 September 2010 attaches one condition and two recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Fair Isle National Scenic Area.

Issues

The condition requests to “establish the protected marine area which has been called for in successive diploma renewals. A new protected marine area should be in conformity with the Fair Isle Marine Action Plan (FIMP)”.

Marine Scotland announced that it would not be assessing the Fair Isle Demonstration & Research Marine Protected Area proposal until the first half of 2014. The year 2013 was devoted entirely to consultations with the Scottish fishermen’s associations, and the Scottish government has also put out a series of consultation documents under the general heading “Planning Scotland’s Seas”.

Despite all the deployed efforts, there is a real difficulty to involve the main stakeholders.

It is nevertheless positive that the Fair Isle Community and the National Trust for Scotland are very keen to retaining the status afforded by the European Diploma and continue to make efforts to comply with the condition.

A petition was sent to the Scottish Parliament to “urge the Scottish Government to implement a condition of the Council of Europe Diploma to Fair Isle by designating Fair Isle waters as a Marine Protected Area”.

The Shetland Marine Spatial Planning Advisory Group had lastly produced a draft Shetland Marine Spatial Plan which includes details of the proposed Fair Isle Marine Protected Area.

Suggested action

The Group to evaluate whether an exceptional visit of an expert on the site, in the frame of Article 8 of the Resolution CM/ResDip(2008)1, could be relevant and helpful to move forward. The possible mandate of the visit could be to ensure mediation between the actors involved.

Keep under observation the advancement of consultations with the stakeholders and the progress on the establishment of the Marine Protected Area.

16. DOÑANA NATIONAL PARK - SPAIN

Resolution CM/ResDip(2010)13 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 16 September 2010 attaches two conditions and seven recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Doñana National Park.

Assets

The 2013 annual report carries on with the 2012 annual report in stating the progress done in their implementation. The project of development of the Port of Sevilla, which gave rise to questioning in the first condition, has been so far adjourned. The second condition and the recommendations are in progress.

Further to the implementation of the recommendation 7, concerning the co-operation with other European Diploma sites which are deltas, the annual report communicates on the exchanges between the Doñana National Park and the Camargue National Reserve (France).

Suggested action

The Group to greet the fruitful exchanges between the Doñana National Park and the Camargue National Reserve (France).

Continue to keep under surveillance the possible restart of the Port of Sevilla development project.

17. BAYERISCHER WALD NATIONAL PARK - GERMANY

Resolution CM/ResDip(2011)4 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 6 July 2011 attaches six recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Bayerischer Wald National Park.

The 2013 annual report submitted by the area does not provide information in chapter III on the Conditions and/or recommendations for award or renewal.

18. ORDESA AND MONTE PERDIDO NATIONAL PARK - SPAIN

Resolution CM/ResDip(2008)13 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 2 July 2008 attaches five recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Ordesa and Monte Perdido National Park.

The 2013 annual report submitted by the area does not provide information in chapter III on the Conditions and/or recommendations for award or renewal.

19. STORE MOSSE NATIONAL PARK - SWEDEN

Resolution CM/ResDip(2008)14 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 2 July 2008 attaches five recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Store Mosse National Park.

The 2013 annual report wrongly communicates the progress done in the implementation of recommendations of the old Resolution ResDip(2003)7 concerning the renewal of the European Diploma to the Store Mosse National Park until 13 June 2008!

Suggested action

The Group to request the 2014 annual report updated with the progress done in the implementation of recommendations of the current CM/ResDip(2008)14 Resolution.

20. BULLERÖ AND LÅNGVIKSSKÄR NATURE RESERVES - SWEDEN

Resolution [CM/ResDip\(2008\)15](#) adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 2 July 2008 attaches four recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Bullerö and Långviksskär Nature Reserves.

The 2013 annual report shortly lists the updates on their implementation.

Talks with the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency about making the Bullerö nature reserve a national park (recommendation 1) are on-going.

Suggested action

The Group to keep under observation the updating of the management plans for the two nature reserves.

21. WURZACHER RIED NATURE RESERVE - GERMANY

Resolution [CM/ResDip\(2009\)4](#) adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 21 October 2009 attaches six recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Wurzacher Ried Nature Reserve.

There is little progress reported by the 2013 annual report on their implementation.

Suggested action

The Group to keep the implementation of the recommendations under observation.

22. ECRINS NATIONAL PARK - FRANCE

Resolution [CM/ResDip\(2010\)14](#) adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 16 September 2010 attaches ten recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Ecrins National Park.

Assets

The annual report informs on the implementation of the recommendations, and also on the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the park in 2013. The latter was the opportunity to organise cultural, artistic and sportive events and exchanges which gathered together the staff of the park, the local population and visitors.

Suggested action

The Group to greet the managers of the area on the work on the implementation of the recommendations, as well as for the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the park.

The recommendation 9, which requires to better reconciling the return of major predators with stock-keeping activities, was not referred to by the 2013 annual report. The Group to ask for information on the implementation of this recommendation in the next annual report.

23. MAREMMA REGIONAL PARK - ITALY

Resolution [CM/ResDip\(2012\)9](#) adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 20 June 2012 attaches seven recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Maremma Regional Park.

Assets

The 2013 annual report points out the progress done in the implementation of the recommendations.

Suggested action

The Group to welcome the fact that “the Park works daily to improve and to develop this protected area, which represents one of the most important parks in Tuscany and the main protected area in the Provincia of Grosseto”, as mentioned in the annual report.

Keep under observation the finalisation of the extension of the Park in order to include the marine environment under conditions which should be decided in agreement with local players (recommendation 2).

24. SELVAGENS ISLANDS NATURE RESERVE - PORTUGAL

Resolution CM/ResDip(2012)4 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 20 June 2012 attaches one condition and six recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve.

The 2013 annual report acknowledges the fulfilment of the condition to the renewal: “the legal status of the Reserve has not been changed and there are no perspectives that such changes will occur, even considering a far future”.

Suggested action

The Group to keep under observation the advancement of the recommendations implementation.

25. WACHAU PROTECTED LANDSCAPE - AUSTRIA

Resolution CM/ResDip(2009)11 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 21 October 2009 attaches eight recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Wachau Protected Landscape.

The 2013 annual report carries on with the 2012 annual report in stating the progress done in their implementation. No problem is mentioned.

26. OKA NATIONAL BIOSPHERE RESERVE – RUSSIAN FEDERATION

The Resolution CM/ResDip(2010)2 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 61 September 2010 attaches one condition and five recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Oka National Biosphere Reserve.

The 2013 annual report informs that there were no changes in the ownership of the reserve and thus, no changes in the reserve’s current protected status (condition).

Information is also provided on the approval on 25 May 2011 by the Minister of Natural Resources and Ecology of the Russian Federation, of the basic document which regulates main activities on the territory of the reserve: “Ustav of the Federal State Budgetary Organization, Okskiy state nature biosphere reserve”.

Suggested action

The Group to keep under observation, through the next annual report, the progress of the measures implementations. Ask for information on the implementation of the recommendations concerning the Desman habitats (recommendations 2 and 4).

27. IPOLYTARNÓC PROTECTED AREA - HUNGARY

Resolution CM/ResDip(2010)15 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 16 September 2010 attaches five recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Ipolytarnóc Protected Area.

Assets

The 2013 annual report informs on the work done and the positive progress in the implementation of the recommendations.

Suggested action

The Group to follow through the 2014 annual report the implementation of recommendation 3: the replacement with an underground cable of the power line which runs between the village and the visitor centre.

28. SZÉNÁS HILLS PROTECTED AREA - HUNGARY

Resolution CM/ResDip(2010)16 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 16 September 2010 attaches eight recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Szénás Hills Protected Area.

Assets

The 2013 annual report informs on the progress in the implementation of the recommendations.

The report highlights the arrangements done for receiving and informing the public, as for example the use of three local newspapers to keep the population aware of the conservation problems and the heritage of the project site.

Suggested action

The Group to greet the good information policy for visitors.

29. BEREZINSKY STATE BIOSPHERE RESERVE - BELARUS

Resolution CM/ResDip(2010)6 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 16 September 2010 attaches one condition and five recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Berezinsky State Biosphere Reserve.

Assets

The 2013 annual report acknowledges the fulfilment of the condition and the progress in the implementation of the recommendations.

Suggested action

The Group to welcome the co-operation with other international bodies, especially to promote the Reserve image and to attract additional finances, and also in the framework of international projects.

30. DE WEERRIBBEN NATURE RESERVE - NETHERLANDS

Resolution CM/ResDip(2010)8 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 16 September 2010 attaches one condition and seven recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the De Weerribben Nature Reserve.

The 2013 annual report wrongly communicates the progress done in the implementation of recommendations of the old Resolution ResDip(2005)15 concerning the renewal of the European Diploma to the Weerribben Nature Reserve until 11 September 2010!

A new visit of an expert on the site, in the frame of Article 9 of the Resolution CM/ResDip(2008)1, will be organised in 2014 to carry out a fresh appraisal for the renewal of the European Diploma. The new appraisal should take stock of the state and development of the area, having regard to the condition and the seven recommendations formulated previously, and proposing, as appropriate, new measures for the coming period.

Suggested action

The Group to request, during the on-the-spot appraisal planned to be organised in 2014, that particular attention is paid to the implementation of the joint management plan within the framework of the national park (subject of the condition).

31. SEITSEMINEN NATIONAL PARK - FINLAND

Resolution CM/ResDip(2011)8 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 6 July 2011 attaches one condition and five recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Seitseminen National Park.

Warning

The 2013 annual report, as the 2012 annual report, do not inform on the implementation of the new master plan, subject of the condition.

There is no information either on the results of the management effectiveness evaluations (Report on the state of the parks) which should be made at regular five-year intervals (recommendation 1) and on the restoration plans for both mires and forests (recommendation 2).

Suggested actions

The Group to ask for more and precise information concerning the implementation of the management plan and the possible need of a new updated management plan (condition) and on recommendations 1 and 2.

32. BIALOWIEŻA NATIONAL PARK - POLAND

In its report dated on 22 May 2013 to the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention (Doc T-PVS/DE (2013) 10), the Group reminds the suspension in 2007 of the award due to the non-completion of the procedure for adopting the management plan.

The Appendix 14 of the document CM(2007)115 presents a draft resolution on the non-renewal of the Diploma to the Białowieża National Park until two conditions and seven recommendations have been satisfied.

Issues

The 2013 annual report communicates that the project of the Decree of the Ministry of the Environment concerning the management plan for the Białowieża National Park has been completed and was being analysed by the Government Legislation Centre and by other Ministries of Polish Government. The plan would be then available for new public consultations before being accepted by the Minister of the Environment and sent to the Secretariat of the Council of Europe to be reviewed by appointed experts.

After request from the Secretariat for additional information on the schedule of this process, the park authorities indicated that the management plan should be approved by the Minister in the course of 2014.

Assets

The annual report highlights the progress done in the implementation of the second condition and of the seven recommendations.

Suggested action

The Group to appreciate the developments done and to keep under observation the progress on the adoption of the new management plan.

The Group to decide whether an on-the-spot visit of an expert, in the frame of Article 9 of the Resolution CM/ResDip(2008)1, should be organised after the adoption of the management plan, to carry out a fresh appraisal for the renewal of the European Diploma. It should be reminded that the renewal of European Diploma has been suspended since 2007.

33. BIESZCZADY NATIONAL PARK - POLAND

Resolution CM/ResDip(2012)18 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 20 June 2012 attaches one condition and five recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Bieszczady National Park.

The 2013 annual report informs on the progress in the implementation of the condition and of the recommendations.

Suggested action

The Group to follow closely, through the 2014 annual report, the final adoption of the Protection Plan of the Bieszczady National Park for years 2011-2030.

34. DOBROČSKÝ NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE - SLOVAKIA

Resolution CM/ResDip(2012)11 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 20 June 2012 attaches one condition and two recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Dobročský National Nature Reserve.

Assets

The 2013 annual report wrongly refers to the progress done in the implementation of the condition and recommendations of the old Resolution CM/ResDip(2008)19! Hopefully, the two Resolutions attach identical condition and recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma, so the 2013 annual report is not meaningless.

The annual report underlines the work done for the 100th anniversary of protection of the National Nature Reserve Dobročský prales and the National Nature Reserve Badínsky prales, which was first declared by a legal act in 1913.

Suggested action

The Group to welcome the developments done and the work for the 100th anniversary of protection of the National Nature Reserve Dobročský prales and the National Nature Reserve Badínsky prales.

35. TSENTRALNO-CHERNOZEMNY BIOSPHERE RESERVE - RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Resolution CM/ResDip(2012)12 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 20 June 2012 attaches five recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Tsentralno-Chernozemny Biosphere Reserve.

Assets

The 2013 annual report lists the progress done in their implementation.

The annual report also points out the expansion of the “*zapovednik*”s (natural reserve’s) territory with the creation of a biosphere range “Steppe” of 463 hectares in Kursk area (recommendation 3), and the selection of the Reserve as one of the 4 pilot territories chosen throughout the Russian Federation for the Steppe Project (recommendation 4).

Suggested action

The Group to greet the expansion of the “zapovednik”’s territory with the creation of a biosphere range "Steppe" in Kursk area, and the selection of the Reserve as one of the 4 pilot territories chosen for the Steppe Project.

36. DE OOSTVAARDERSPLASSEN NATURE RESERVE - NETHERLANDS

Resolution [CM/ResDip\(2009\)6](#) adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 21 October 2009 attaches one condition and six recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the De Oostvaardersplassen Nature Reserve.

Issues

The 2013 annual report mentions the continuation of the development in Flevoland, which includes the expansion of Lelystad airport. The authorities of the reserve sent a letter to the Public Consultation Centre asking them to conduct a very careful examination and reconsideration of the proposed departure routes that would pass directly over the Oostvaardersplassen nature reserve, and urging them to conduct a detailed examination of the alternative flight path plan they proposed in 2009. They stressed on the importance of protecting and sparing the reserve as protected area.

Suggested action

The Group to request further information on the implementation of the condition and of the recommendations.

More specifically, follow closely the expansion of Lelystad airport and its consequences on the reserve. The Group to evaluate whether sending an official letter from the Council of Europe, stressing that the possible negative impact of the planned development project should be carefully assessed, could be helpful.

37. DANUBE DELTA BIOSPHERE RESERVE - ROMANIA

Resolution [CM/ResDip\(2010\)17](#) adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 16 September 2010 attaches thirteen recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve.

Warning

The project proposal on the Joint Operational Programme Romania-Ukraine-Republic of Moldova 2007-2013 (recommendation 1) is still under evaluation, what was already the case in 2012.

Assets

The report informs on progress in the implementation of the recommendations, more particularly in the financing of new projects, as pointed out by the 2013 annual report for the development of recommendations 10, 11 and 12.

The implementation of the recommendation 6 could also be mentioned, confirming that no hunting activities were developed during 2013 (as well as during 2012) in the protected areas.

Suggested action

The Group to encourage the efforts to move forward with the evaluation of the proposals and to build up the required international co-operation in order to implement recommendation 1. This should be kept under observation.

The possibility to reactivate the co-operation with other European Diploma sites which are deltas (Camargue National Reserve (France) and Donana National Park (Spain)) (recommendation 2) should also be explored.

The Group to acknowledge the efforts deployed by the authorities of the Reserve on fund raising (recommendations 10, 11 and 12).

38. PODYJÍ NATIONAL PARK - CZECH REPUBLIC

Resolution [CM/ResDip\(2010\)4](#) adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 16 September 2010 attaches eight recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Podyjí National Park.

Assets

The 2013 annual report informs that the management plan for the period 2010-2019 was already adopted (recommendation 2) and its implementation is in progress.

The “Working group to reduce the negative impacts on the nature caused by fishery on the Czech side of the river Dyje” continues its work (recommendation 4); furthermore, the work of this group is also mentioned in the 2013 annual plan of the Thayatal National Park (Austria).

Warning

The Secretariat of the Bern Convention at the Council of Europe has been informed about the development plans of the Austrian Federal Forests (Österreichische Bundesforste), aiming at the construction of a large wind turbines park in Northern Austria. The construction plans concern an area situated in the close vicinity of two National Parks Thayatal and Podyji, respectively in Austria and the Czech Republic.

The range and location of the construction plans raise concerns over their possible negative impact on threatened species and habitats of the two European Diploma holding areas, including wildlife in the migration corridors of the parks.

Suggested action

The Group to appreciate that the management plan for the period 2010-2019 was already adopted and that its implementation is in progress. The Group to also greet the efforts of the Working group to reduce the negative impacts on the nature caused, by fishery on the Czech side of the river Dyje.

The Group to keep under observation the progress of the negotiations with the owner of hydropower plant Vranov, started in order to ensure ecologically bearable flows under Vranov reservoir (recommendation 1). Additionally, follow the co-operation with the Thayatal National Park to harmonise the fishing regulations within the two parks (recommendation 4).

An exceptional visit of an expert on the both sites of National Parks Thayatal and Podyji, in the frame of Article 8 of the Resolution [CM/ResDip\(2008\)1](#), could be considered in order to help identifying the possible negative impact on threatened species and habitats, due to the construction of a large wind turbines park planned in Northern Austria.

39. THAYATAL NATIONAL PARK - AUSTRIA

Resolution [CM/ResDip\(2012\)17](#) adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 20 June 2012 attaches five recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Thayatal National Park.

The 2013 annual report wrongly refers to the progress done in the implementation of the recommendations of the old Resolution [CM/ResDip\(2008\)5](#)! Hopefully, the two Resolutions attach identical recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma, so the 2013 annual report is not meaningless.

The 2013 annual report informs about the starting of a project which includes research on the connectivity according to the water framework directive and the European diploma recommendations for both parks (i.e. Thayatal National Park and Podyjí National Park).

Warning

The Secretariat of the Bern Convention at the Council of Europe has been informed about the development plans of the Austrian Federal Forests (Österreichische Bundesforste), aiming at the construction of a large wind turbines park in Northern Austria. The construction plans concern an area situated in the close vicinity of two National Parks Thayatal and Podyji, respectively in Austria and the Czech Republic.

The range and location of the construction plans raise concerns over their possible negative impact on threatened species and habitats of the two European Diploma holding areas, including wildlife in the migration corridors of the parks.

Suggested action

The Group to appreciate the co-operation between the two parks in the framework of common goals and to incite them to go forward and undertake to translate into action the proposed measures of the study on the ecology of the Thaya River and how it is affected by the Vranov Dam operations (recommendation 1).

An exceptional visit of an expert on the both sites of National Parks Thayatal and Podyji, in the frame of Article 8 of the Resolution CM/ResDip(2008)1, could be considered in order to help identifying the possible negative impact on threatened species and habitats, due to the construction of a large wind turbines park planned in Northern Austria.

40. MATSALU NATIONAL PARK - ESTONIA

Resolution CM/ResDip(2012)16 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 20 June 2012 attaches four conditions and five recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Matsalu National Park.

The 2013 annual report lists very briefly the implementation of a couple of them, among which of the conditions 1 and 2.

Suggested action

The Group to ask for further information on the implementation of the conditions and of the recommendations, more specifically concerning the funds availability for the management of the national park (condition 3) and the possible development of private open land (condition 4).

Ask as well for details on the help to the local people within the park's boundaries developing activities compatible with the aims of the park (recommendation 2) and on the monitoring of potential external threats from industry, agriculture, tourism and development (recommendation 3).

41. THE VOLCANIC PHENOMENA OF THE TIHANY PENINSULA - HUNGARY

Resolution CM/ResDip(2012)15 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 20 June 2012 attaches ten recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the volcanic phenomena of the Tihany Peninsula.

Assets

The 2013 annual report informs on the progress done in the implementation of all the recommendations.

Suggested action

The Group to welcome the positive developments and to encourage carrying on with.

42. NAARDERMEER NATURE RESERVE - NETHERLANDS

Resolution CM/ResDip(2009)7 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 21 October 2009 attaches one condition and four recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Naardermeer Nature Reserve.

Warning

The 2013 annual report wrongly communicates the progress done in the implementation of recommendations of the old Resolution ResDip(2004)12 concerning the award of the European Diploma to the Naardermeer nature reserve until 5 May June 2009!

However, the 2013 annual report informs that there are no changes in the implementation of the old recommendation 6, concerning, as the condition attached to the current Resolution, the projects related to the motorway connection (A6-A9), which would have negative effects on the diploma holding area.

Besides, the 2013 annual report brings up the risk that further purchase of land is difficult (in order to create a buffer zone around the core area) which may lead to a partly fragmented Naardermeer-area.

Suggested action

The Group to ask for 2014 annual report updated with the progress on the current CM/ResDip(2009)7 Resolution.

The Group to urge the authorities to respect the integrity of the open polder area surrounding the Naardermeer, as specified in the condition.

Specific attention should further be given to the completion of the nature restoration and development around the Naardermeer core area, to the finalisation of the Naardermeer recovery plan (recommendation 3), and to the regional planning processes which should avoid further habitat fragmentation in the corridor landscapes (recommendation 4).

43. PIATRA CRAIULUI NATIONAL PARK - ROMANIA

Resolution CM/ResDip(2011)2 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 6 July 2011 attaches as condition to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Piatra Craiului National Park to complete the process of preparing and approving the new management plan.

Assets

The annual report 2013 acknowledges that the new management plan, submitted by the Park Administration to the Government for approval in 2011, was finally approved in December 2013. The report informs as well on the progress done in the implementation of the 6 recommendations attached to the renewal of the Diploma.

Suggested action

The Group to welcome the approval in December 2013 of the new management plan and the progress done in the implementation of the 6 recommendations attached to the renewal of the Diploma.

44. CENTRAL BALKAN NATIONAL PARK - BULGARIA

Resolution CM/ResDip(2009)1 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 21 October 2009 attaches three conditions and four recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Central Balkan National Park.

The 2013 annual report informs on the creation and the work of the Public Advisory Council for Central Balkan National Park (condition 3) and on the management of the mountain pastures in the Park (recommendation 3).

Suggested action

The Group to discuss the results of the on-the-spot appraisal (document Doc T-PVS/DE (2014) 4). The renewal of the European Diploma to the Central Balkan National Park is on the agenda of the meeting of the Group of Specialists on 24 March 2014.

Attention to be given to the implementation of all the conditions and recommendations of the Resolution CM/ResDip(2009)1.

APPENDIX 1: TABLE PRESENTING THE EUROPEAN DIPLOMA HOLDING AREAS AND SUMMARISING THE ANNUAL REPORTS RECEIVED FOR 2013

N°	Country	Name	Expert	Award date	Next visit	Annual report
1	Belgium	Hautes Fagnes Nature Reserve, Belgium	De Molenaar	29.03.66	2020	
2	France	Camargue National Reserve, France	E. Kuijken	29.03.66	2020	22.11.2013
3	United Kingdom	Peak District National Park, United Kingdom	H. Lethier	29.03.66	2020	26.11.2013
4	Austria	Krimml Waterfalls Natural Site, Austria	C. Stauffer	27.10.67	2021	29.11.2013
5	Germany	Lunebourg Heath Nature Reserve, Germany	A. Forment	27.10.67	2021	04.03.2014
6	Sweden	Muddus National Park, Sweden	J. Mayol	27.10.67	2021	25.11.2013
7	Sweden	Sarek and Padjelanta National Parks, Sweden	J. Mayol	27.10.67	2021	25.11.2013
8	Switzerland	Swiss National Park, Switzerland	C. Stauffer	27.10.67	2021	13.11.2013
9	Italy	Abruzzi, Lazio and Molise National Park, Italy	P. Hunkeler	27.10.67	2021	26.11.2013
10	Germany	Wollmatinger Ried Untersee-Gnadensee Nature Reserve, Germany	E. Kuijken	29.11.68	2018	26.11.2013
11	Netherlands	Boschplaat Nature Reserve, Netherlands	E. Idle	02.07.70	2019	29.11.2013
12	Germany	Siebengebirge Nature Reserve, Germany	C. Stauffer	22.09.71	2020	e-mail on 03.03.2014
13	Germany/Luxembourg	Germano-Luxembourg Nature Park, Germany/Luxembourg	C. Stauffer	26.10.73	2017	
14	France	Vanoise National Park ¹ , France	P. Hunkeler	19.03.76	2020	
15	France	Parc national des Pyrénées, France		S 1991		
16	Turkey	Kuşçenneti National Park, Turkey	F. Roux	15.03.76	2020	04.12.2013
17	Germany	Weltenburger Enge Nature Reserve, Germany	D. Daske/J. Haslett	03.03.78	2017	
18	Greece	Cretan White Mountains National Park, Samaria, Greece	J. Mayol/ F. Urban	13.09.79	2018	
19	United Kingdom	Minsmere Nature Reserve, United Kingdom	J. Lundqvist	13.09.79	2018	29.11.2013
20	United Kingdom	Beinn Eighe National Nature Reserve, United Kingdom	J. Lundqvist	22.05.83	2017	
21	United Kingdom	Purbeck Heritage Coast, United Kingdom	J. Lundqvist	22.06.84	2018	28.11.2013
22	United Kingdom	Fair Isle National Scenic Area, United Kingdom	J. Mayol	23.09.85	2019	03.12.2013
23	France	Scandola Nature Reserve, France	J. Mayol	23.09.85	2019	
24	Italy	Sasso Fratino Integral Nature Reserve, Italy	JC. Lefeuvre	23.09.85	2019	
25	Spain	Doñana National Park, Spain	H. Lethier	23.09.85	2019	29.11.2013

¹ Gran Paradiso National Park (Italy) and Vanoise National Park (France) have seen their European Diplomas jointly renewed in 2011 and consider them as “twinned” Diplomas.

26	Germany	Bayerischer Wald National Park, Germany	C. Stauffer	19.06.86	2020	25.11.2013
27	Spain	Ordesa and Monte Perdido National Park, Spain	C. Stauffer	13.06.88	2017	29.11.2013
28	Sweden	Store Mosse National Park, Sweden	P. Hunkeler	13.06.88	2017	29.11.2013
29	Sweden	Bullerö and Långviksskär Nature Reserves, Sweden	P. Hunkeler	13.06.88	2017	28.11.2013
30	Italy	Montecristo Island Nature Reserve, Italy	J. Mayol/ JC Lefeuve	13.06.88	2017	
31	Germany	Wurzacher Ried Nature Reserve, Germany	D.Daske/ J. Haslett	18.06.89	2018	25.11.2013
32	Spain	Teide National Park, Spain	C.Zimmer/ EFG	18.06.89	2018	
33	Germany	Berchtesgaden National Park, Germany	D. Daske	18.06.90	2019	
34	France	Ecrins National Park, France	A. Froment	18.06.90	2019	10.01.2014
35	Italy	Maremma Regional Park, Italy	P. Hunkeler	18.05.92	2021	14.11.2013
36	Portugal	Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve, Portugal	F. Roux	18.05.92	2021	29.11.2013
37	France	Mercantour National Park, France	A.Froment/ JP Ribaut	03.05.93	2017	
38	Italy	Maritime Alps Nature Park (formerly the Argentera Nature Park), Italy	A.Froment/ JP Ribaut	03.05.93	2017	
39	Austria	Wachau Protected Landscape, Austria	C.Stauffer	05.09.94	2018	31.10.2013
40	Russian Federation	Oka National Biosphere Reserve, Russian Federation	P. Hunkeler/ G. Spiridonov	05.09.94	2018	19.02.2014
41	Russian Federation	Teberda National Biosphere Reserve, Russian Federation	P. Hunkeler/ G. Spiridonov	05.09.94	2018	
42	Hungary	Ipolytarnóc Protected Area, Hungary	J. Renault	07.11.95	2019	25.11.2013
43	Hungary	Szénás Hills Protected Area, Hungary	J. Renault	07.11.95	2019	14.01.2014
44	Belarus	Berezinsky State Biosphere Reserve, Belarus	P.Hunkeler	07.11.95	2019	27.11.2013
45	Netherlands	De Weerribben Nature Reserve, Netherlands	E.Kuijken	07.11.95	2014	20.12.2013
46	Finland	Seitsemien National Park, Finland	E.Kuijken	19.06.96	2020	28.11.2013
47	Finland	Ekenäs Archipelago National Park (Tammisaari), Finland	E.Kuijken	19.06.96	2020	
48	Belarus	Belovezhskaya Pushcha National Park, Belarus	M. Castroviejo Bolivar	30.09.97	2017	
49	France	Port-Cros National Park, France	J.Mayol	30.09.97	2021	
50	Poland	Białowieża National Park, Poland	C.Zimmer	30.09.97		10.12.2013
51	Ukraine	Carpathian Biosphere Reserve, Ukraine	M. Broggi	30.09.97	2021	
52	Slovakia	Poloniny National Park (Vichodme Karpaty), Slovakia	C.Zimmer	18.09.98	2017	
53	Poland	Bieszczady National Park, Poland	C.Zimmer	18.09.98	2017	29.11.2013
54	Slovak Republic	Dobročský National Nature Reserve, Slovak Republic	M. Broggi/ JP Ribaut	18.09.98	2017	05.02.2013
55	Russian Federation	Kostomuksha Strict Nature Reserve, Russian Federation	H. Lethier	18.09.98	2017	
56	Russian Federation	Tsentralno-Chernozemny Biosphere Reserve, Russian Federation	H. Lethier	18.09.98	2017	16.12.2013
57	Netherlands	De Oostvaardersplassen Nature Reserve, Netherlands	E.Kuijken	09.09.99	2018	28.01.2014
	Slovak Republic	Biele Karpaty Protected Landscape Area, Slovak Republic	C.Zimmer	Rejected		
58	Czech Republic	Bílé Karpaty Protected Landscape Area, Czech Republic	C.Zimmer	21.06.00	2019	

59	Czech Republic	Karlštejn National Nature Reserve, Czech Republic	D.Daske	21.06.00	2019	
61	Romania	Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve, Romania	H. Lethier	21.06.00	2019	25.11.2013
60	Czech Republic	Podyjí National Park, Czech Republic	D.Daske	21.06.00	2019	30.11.2013
62	Austria	Thayatal National Park, Austria	D.Daske	28.05.03	2017	07.11.2013
63	Estonia	Matsalu National Park, Estonia	J.Sultana	28.05.03	2017	28.11.2013
64	Hungary	Volcanic phenomena of the Tihany Peninsula, Hungary	J.Renault	28.05.03	2017	26.11.2013
65	Slovenia	Triglav National Park, Slovenia	P.Hunkeler	05.05.04	2018	
66	Netherlands	Naardermeer Nature Reserve, Netherlands	E.Kuijken	05.05.04	2018	06.11.2013
67	Italy	iarino, San Rossore, Massaciuccoli Regional Park, Italy	P.Hunkeler	15.06.05	2019	
68	Italy	Gran Paradiso National Park ² , Italy	P.Hunkeler	27.09.06	2020	
69	Romania	Piatra Craiului National Park, Romania	H. Lethier	27.09.06	2020	11.02.2013
70	Romania	Retezat National Park, Romania	P.Hunkeler	02.07.08	2022	
71	Bulgaria	Central Balkan National Park, Bulgaria	P.Hunkeler	21.09.09	2013	22.01.2014
72	Ireland	The Burren region, Ireland	J-W Sneeep	10.07.13	2017	
73	Armenia	Khosrov State Forest Reserve, Armenia	H. Lethier	10.07.13	2017	

² Gran Paradiso National Park (Italy) and Vanoise National Park (France) consider their European Diplomas as “twinned” Diplomas.

APPENDIX 2: EXTRACTS FROM THE 2013 ANNUAL REPORTS

Note: The extracts below only concern the areas whose 2013 annual report informs about progress in the implementation of the “Conditions and/or recommendations for award or renewal” (chapter III of the report model form).

1. Réserve Nationale de Camargue – France

2. Peak District National Park – United Kingdom

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Peak District National Park (United Kingdom) until 28 March 2021;

Attaches the following condition to the renewal:

1. Complete the review of the national park management plan and continue implementation of the plans and strategies it contains. **NPMP completed and plans and strategies aligned.**

Attaches the following eleven recommendations to the renewal:

1. Secure and enhance the management of existing important key conservation habitats in farmland, especially hay meadows, wetlands, limestone dales and remaining areas of lead mine rakes, particularly through advice and brokerage of agri-environment schemes in conjunction with appropriate partner organisations. **See sections 1 and 5 above.**
2. Halt and reverse the past degradation of heather moorland and blanket bog through moorland management plans, agri-environment schemes and with help from the Moors for the Future Partnership; **See sections 1 and 5 above**
3. Step up measures to address the decline in breeding populations of priority bird species, particularly lapwing, curlew and snipe on farmland; **This is being addressed through the Wader Recovery Project in partnership with Natural England.**
4. Negotiate agreements to secure appropriate management of ancient and semi-natural woodland sites; **Work has focused on the area of the Dane Valley and clough woodlands in the Derwent Valley**
5. Implement with partners programmes to achieve the targets and objectives set out in the Peak District Biodiversity Action Plan, 2011-2020; **See section 5**
6. Maintain at least 95% of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) land in favourable or recovering condition on land owned by the National Park Authority; in addition, implement measures on authority-owned land to maximise its contribution to nature conservation and cultural heritage objectives. **See section 4.2**
7. Carry out conservation and community work at a landscape scale through an integrated area-based management approach; **A signature theme of the National Park Management Plan. Landscape scale work has continued through the Dark Peak NIA, Peak District Local Nature Partnership Moors for the Future Partnership and The Sheffield Moors Partnership.**
8. Implement the Cultural Heritage Strategy for the national park and continue to work with partner organisations, local communities and English Heritage to achieve targets; **see 2.1.1 above**
9. Continue to provide encouragement to small-scale economic schemes linking conservation of the environment of the Peak District to economic benefit; **See reference to the Environmental Quality Mark above.**
10. Only authorise new mineral extraction or extensions to existing mineral operations to meet essential national needs, for example, if the minerals are not available elsewhere or to provide traditional building materials in the park; seek restoration of mineral quarries to enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the national park; **Policies set out in the LDF Core Strategy document.**

11. Continue to develop tourism activities in a way that protects and enhances both the interests of the community and the environment and supports the local economy; ensure that the National Park Authority meets the requirements of an application for the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism; increase the proportion of visitors using sustainable methods of travel. **Work to develop a new PD Sustainable Tourism Strategy has started with Visit Peak District and other partners.**

Section 1:

1. NATURAL HERITAGE - STATE OF CONSERVATION

1.1 Environmental and Natural Beauty

Climate change actions focus on low carbon communities, adaptation to climate change on a landscape scale, a sustainable approach to land management and engagement with the public on issues and solutions around climate change as well as our own carbon management plan.

Key aspects of the Landscape Strategy & Action Plan continue to address issues such as mitigating the impacts of road signage, undergrounding of electricity wires (over 5km in 2012/13) and work at a landscape scale through partnership projects. Our landscape character assessment underpins our plans and strategies and is referred to in planning decisions, policies and land management actions.

We continue to work with the Environment Agency, Defra and Natural England on natural resource protection, particularly through agri-environment schemes, programmes such as the Moors for the Future Partnership and the Catchment Sensitive Farming Scheme, which is part of the measures to improve water quality by 2015 in accordance with the EU Water Framework Directive.

A partnership of organisations is drawing up proposals for restoring perennial flow to the River Lathkill.

Large-scale revegetation work by the Moors for the Future partnership addresses some of the most significant impacts of natural resource protection, including the role of moorlands for carbon storage and water management to reduce downstream flood risks. Additional projects on the Derwent catchment involve native woodland creation and moorland restoration to improve water quality, biodiversity and landscape.

1.2 Flora and Vegetation

50,087 ha (34.8% of the National Park) is designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), of which a further 157 ha were brought into favourable or recovering condition during the year, bringing the total to 97.6%. As anticipated progress with bringing areas fully into favourable condition is slow due to the timescales required for recovery of many of the upland ecosystems.

Fungal pathogens remain a concern with several cases of *Phytophthora ramorum* affecting Larch (*Larix spp*) and Rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*) in the South West Peak. Appropriate action was taken to contain outbreaks. No cases of Ash Dieback (*Chalara fraxinea*) have yet been reported but its arrival is considered likely over the next few years. A range of appropriate responses is being agreed with partners.

The importance of the Peak District for grassland fungi continues to be highlighted, with the waxcap *Gliophorus reginae* described as new to science from 6 UK sites of which 3 are in the PeakDistrict.

1.3 Fauna

Monitoring of key birds of prey in the Dark Peak recorded 6 nesting pairs of Peregrines (*Falco peregrinus*) of which 3 were successful rearing 5 young; 16 pairs of Merlin (*Falco columbarius*) of which 14 were successful, rearing 45-49 young- one of the best years recorded; but an absence of Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammea*). At one site in the South West Peak a brood of peregrine chicks disappeared under suspicious circumstances.

Volunteer surveys across part of the Peak District moors found a minimum of 85 pairs of Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*) breeding, suggesting a likely total breeding population of well over 100 pairs in the National Park. Previous surveys in 2004 recorded just 67 pairs with a 26% decline since 1990, so

Section 2.1.1:

2.1.1 Archaeology

Historic Environment Record (HER) data continues to be used as the basis of advice for conservation of the historic environment. The Selected Heritage Inventory for Natural England (SHINE) database continues to be used for the national Environmental Stewardship Scheme and to inform the Authority's work. The Moors for the Future archaeological protocol informs moorland restoration work.

The Authority's Cultural Heritage Strategy provides the strategic basis for cultural heritage work across the National Park. Up-dating the strategy awaits the outcome of a review of this strategic approach. The existing Strategy continues to inform our partnership work and achievement of targets.

The £1.8m Calver Weir Restoration Project concludes this year, having successfully conserved the weir and delivered environmental, education and outreach works and extensive community engagement programmes.

Projects continue with English Heritage (EH) for the management and conservation of Properties in Care through Local Management Agreements between the Authority and English Heritage. A major phase of the EH-funded Ecton project concluded in August with a monograph publication. Surface survey and excavation and underground survey included identification of Bronze Age copper mining at only the second location on England. In 2013 the Authority produced the tenth edition of Archaeology and Conservation in Derbyshire, in partnership with Derbyshire County Council (DCC). This free magazine reported on a range of historic environment projects and issues. It was launched in January 2013 at the Derbyshire Archaeology Day, an annual event (in partnership with DCC and Chesterfield Borough Council) that regularly attracts over 400 members of the public.

Section 4.2:

4.2 Changes in Ownership and Property Management

The Authority owns 4,919 ha of land within Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) of which 1,566 ha (31.8%) is in favourable condition and 3335 ha (67.8%) is recovering. 7.9 ha (0.4%) remains unfavourable and not recovering.

The Authority is currently reviewing its assets and the management of its properties including woodlands. In April 2013 the Roaches Estate (394 ha) was leased to the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust. A decision was made to retain the North Lees Estate (526ha)..

Section 5:

5. SITE MANAGEMENT

5.1 Improvements Made

The Peak District was awarded Local Nature Partnership status by government in Autumn 2012 (1 of 48 LNPs). The Partnership has identified strategic conservation priorities and is supporting the development of funding bids to address these.. Practical work is being implemented through the Dark Peak Nature Improvement Area (NIA), 1 of 12 government pilots over 3 years and the only upland area. The Authority is a key partner in the NIA.

5.1.1 Ecological Action

Woodland management is mainly covered through forest plans, felling permissions and Forestry Commission grant schemes. Support to the Forestry Commission's Woodland Bird Project continues.

Natural England and the Authority, with support from the Forestry Commission and the Environment Agency, continue to work together as the Peak District Land Management Advisory Service. This is a first stop shop advisory service for farmers and land managers in the Peak District for environmental land management advice, sources of grant aid and signposting for diversification and business support. It includes a one day a week drop in centre at the Agricultural Business Centre, Bakewell. Natural England and the Authority continue to raise awareness and understanding of national agri-environment schemes.

Advice was given on over 100 Environmental Stewardship Entry Level Schemes including Uplands Entry Level and 40 potential Higher Level Schemes, resulting in 35 Higher Level Scheme applications and further care and maintenance on over 20 existing Higher Level Schemes. There were also a number of enquiries relating to the Catchment Sensitive Farming Scheme (CSF) and the England Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS) particularly in relation to the development of Clough woodlands. Capital grants enabled the restoration of over 3,500 metres of walling. The potential restoration of over 100 traditional buildings has been explored through agri-environment funding. A further 6 buildings have been restored and work to progress a further 10 is on-going. However future funding may now be limited.

The peak district wader recovery project has secured favourable land management practices and farmer support in key areas across the park, resulting in a stabilised colony of 130 lapwing across two hotspots in the dark peak and a 30% increase (2009-2013) in curlew populations in the southwest peak. In other areas of suitable habitat, practical applications, research and monitoring together with land manager liaison is helping to inform which strategies will best facilitate a reduction in predator impact.

Ecological surveys of metallophyte grasslands within the lead mine ore field has been completed and an inventory of key leadmine sites (ecological and archaeological) has been produced.

The Dane Valley Diamonds project continued to engage with landowners to secure better management of areas of ancient and semi-natural oak-birch woodland in and around the Dane Valley- the most extensive of these woodlands in the SW Peak; to manage the impacts of deer; and to establish new areas of native woodland.

Within the Moors for the Future Partnership the major project has been continuing restoration of the most eroded blanket bog landscape in Europe. MFF continues to work with the water authorities to carry out significant works over their moorland estates... The Moorlife project is delivering extensive blanket bog restoration works. The Moors for the Future Partnership continues its focus on monitoring and is carrying out extensive vegetation and hydrological monitoring across the whole Dark Peak Landscape.

Moors for the Future conservation works achievements include:

- MoorLife (the largest EU conservation project ever funded in Britain of £7.5m)
- Yorkshire Water (YWS) SSSI Recovery Project;
- Making Space for Water Project;
- Natural England Conservation Plan Project
- YWS non-owned catchment Project;
- South Pennines Commons Project;
- Clough Woodland Project;
- Peatland Restoration: Rivers Alport and Ashop (Catchment Restoration Fund).

In addition, the Private Lands Project will commence this autumn.

The majority of the works in all of these projects continue to be remediating large scale areas of bare and eroding peat, although other significant works (such as upland pathworks and sward diversification) are present.

5.1.2 Protection against the Elements

There have been 9 reported moorland fires this year with the largest being 5.6 ha at Warslow Moors.

The Peak District Fire Operations Group have hosted two more Moorland Wildfire Incident Command Training Courses this year, training 54 fire service personnel. These courses are held for officers who will be first in command of a moorland wildfire incident in the Peak District.

5.1.3 Approaches and Thoroughfares

The Authority has been closely involved with the implementation of Rights of Way Improvement Plans with the constituent Highway Authorities, seeking ways to provide a more joined-up path network for all users, specifically disabled people, horse-riders and cyclists. The Authority undertakes (in conjunction with Highway Authorities) a programme of construction, signage and maintenance work on Rights of Way, boundaries of open country, and concession paths, incorporating a 'least restrictive' option and consideration of heritage and conservation concerns. For 2012-13 the % of public paths that meet the 'ease of use' test was 91%

The Authority continued to focus on the issue of motorised recreation on unsurfaced roads and off-road, by seeking to identify sustainable routes, and improving management of unsustainable ones, and working with the police on tackling illegal activity. Since April 2013

- consultations on proposals for vehicle regulation on 2 routes
- the making of a traffic regulation order on one route
- repairs on 3 routes
- volunteer working parties on 2 routes

The Authority has worked with horseriders to devise and promote the 'Kinder Loop' a long-distance route for horseriders, cyclists and walkers. Physical works include the resurfacing of a concession bridleway and 3 new gates.

The rights of way network has been improved by completion of 2 public path orders, with 1 more on-going.

The Authority is the Access Authority for its open access land and during 2012-13 continued its on-going review of access land restrictions, seeking to increase land publically accessible.

The Local Access Forum continues to provide valuable community input into the strategic management of Rights of Way and Access, via its quarterly meetings, sub-groups and training events.

5.1.4 Field Equipment and Study Facilities

Losehill Hall has now been leased to the Youth Hostels Association but an environmental learning team continues to operate.

5.1.5 Waste Management

Policy presumes against new waste facilities in the National Park and no sites will be allocated. However local, small-scale community-based waste projects which deal exclusively with the waste arising from that community may be supported.

5.1.6 Use of Renewable Energy Systems

The Sustainable Development Fund continued to support projects aimed at reducing carbon dioxide emissions..

The National Park Authority and local authorities continued to look at ways of reducing carbon dioxide emissions, including efforts to reduce transport related emissions from local authority estates and the

continuation of energy efficiency schemes available to residents within the National Park. Work to restore eroding peat bogs continued.

5.1.7 Mineral Development

Policy is focused on working towards the continued gradual reduction of aggregates and other land-won minerals from the National Park, although the ability to achieve this is limited by the high level of extant permitted reserves. The policy seeks to implement this approach by not allowing new sites or extensions to existing sites other than in limited exceptions. There remains 39 active mineral sites within the Park at the end of September 2013, a reduction of 6 sites following completion of the restoration and aftercare periods at those sites

5.2 Management

5.2.1 Administration

The Performance and Business Plan for 2013/14 reviews progress against the Authority's stated priorities and sets the direction for the future. See Appendix 1. The Authority is working with a reducing budget over the next 3 years following a cut in resources from Government from £8.2m in 2010/11 to £6.4m in 2014/15.

16 Councillor members of the National Park Authority represent authorities with a combined population of over 3.9 million. 6 parish members represent the 38,000 local residents and 8 Secretary of State members represent the national interest. In 2012/13 we won £3.5m in external funding and earned over £1.6m in revenue income.

5.2.2 Internal Policing Measures

No change.

5.2.3 Infringement of Regulations

The Authority is the local planning authority for the National Park and is responsible for enforcing planning legislation. Breaches of planning law can lead to enforcement action by the Authority. In June 2013 the Authority's Planning Committee adopted a Local Enforcement Plan.

3. Krimml Falls – Austria

4. Lüneburg Heath Nature Reserve – Germany

Stiftung Naturschutzpark is still extremely concerned about the recent agricultural development within Lüneburger Heide nature reserve and neighbouring areas. Funding for bio-gas plants and high subsidies for maize cultivation resulted in severe problems concerning scenic quality and ground water extraction for field irrigation.

In 2013 owners of four biogas plants in Bispingen Community, few kilometres east of Lüneburger Heide nature reserve, applied for planning permission to extend production capacities. This will intensify land use and the amount of energy crops grown further.

Stiftung Naturschutzpark appeals to the Council of Europe to use its influence to make agricultural policy in Europe more environmental friendly. VNP demands from EC agricultural policy:

- Grants for ecological farming and conservation projects in NATURA 2000 areas must be raised to a level that allows farmers to compete with the recent profits derived from energy-crop farming. VNP is concerned that otherwise maize cultivation within the NATURA 2000 area will even more be extended.

It is crucial that heath land (Calluna heath on sandy soils or bog) remains on the list of agricultural land defined by EC. Discussion is going on in Germany to eliminate heath land from this list. This would be the end of EC agricultural funding for heath land, as only defined agricultural land is entitled to benefit from EC agricultural subsidies:

- The elimination of heath land from the list of agricultural land would be disastrous for all heath lands in this area.

The Federal State of Lower Saxony denies owners of heath land the right to apply for the European single payment scheme (“Betriebsprämie”). Other EC countries like Great Britain define heath land as agricultural land and all farmers in GB are allowed to apply for this basic and extremely important agricultural funding. In Great Britain: “Eligible land is defined as any area of your holding taken up by arable land and permanent pasture, except for:

- Forested areas,
- Areas used for non-agricultural activities”

(<http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?itemId=1082224051&r.i=1082224313&r.l1=1081597476&r.l2=1082184851&r.l3=1083731939&r.l4=1082215665&r.s=sc&r.t=RESOURCES&type=RESOURCES>)

Farmers using heath land for sheep grazing in Lower Saxony are severely discriminated in relation to their European neighbours. VNP demands:

- Heath land must be put on a par with other agricultural categories and derive the same agricultural subsidies, particularly “payment entitlements” (“Zahlungsansprüche”) as grassland and other forms of grazing land.

VNP asks all European experts of nature conservation and all politicians to safeguard and defend the last coherent heath land habitats of central Europe from further negative effects of recent agricultural policy, bureaucracy and large infrastructure projects.

VNP would very much appreciate the visit of agricultural experts and influential European politicians to inform about the severe problems in Lüneburger Heide nature reserve. VNP needs the assistance of the representatives of the Council’s institutions to safeguard Lüneburger Heides’ future.

5. Muddus/Muttos National Park – Sweden

6. Sarek and Padjelanta/Badjelánnda National Parks – Sweden

7. Swiss National Park (SNP) – Switzerland

We are delighted that the European Diploma has been awarded to the SNP until 2022. We shall do all that is within our means to ensure that the quality of our institution is maintained and guaranteed in the years ahead.

By 2014, when the SNP will be celebrating its 100-year jubilee, it should be in excellent shape in all respects. With the inauguration of the new National Park Centre and the expansion and revision of the Biosphere Reserve designation, two main projects have already been implemented. The publication of the “Atlas of the Swiss National Park” (see above, page 1) is a significant event. Furthermore the jubilee year will give us the opportunity to intensify public relations and further develop the work of our institution. Besides the main celebrations taking place in Zernez on 1st August, plans include an open-air spectacle with performances throughout the summer, a touring exhibition throughout Switzerland, a jubilee exhibition, TV coverage and various publications. An organisation committee is responsible for overseeing and implementing all jubilee year projects. Their most important task has been to raise the necessary funds to cover the budget of 3 Mio. CHF; in the meantime this goal has been attained.

Page 1:

The new “Atlas of the Swiss National Park”, which was published in October 2013, provides extensive information about the development of our institution during the first 100 years of its existence. The atlas is available in German and in French. Furthermore it exists in digital form: www.atlasnationalpark.ch. When consulting this work it can clearly be seen that the continuous strict protection of processes has

proved to be successful and offers a unique field for scientific research in both nature and environmental education.

8. Parc National des Abruzzes, Lazio et Molise – Italy

Suite aux deux conditions de la Résolution CM/ResDip(2012)10 concernant le renouvellement du Diplôme européen des espaces protégés les mesures prises sont indiquées de suite.

Condition 1).

Suite aux lettres envoyées par le Parc au Ministre de l'Environnement, le Ministre a écrit aux Présidents des trois Régions concernées par le Parc pour solliciter les Régions à adopter définitivement le plan du Parc et à créer les zones périphériques.

Les Régions Abruzzo, Lazio et Molise nous ont contacté pour nous communiquer que l'adoption du plan nécessite de l'évaluation environnementale et donc le Parc a créé un groupe de travail pour préparer la documentation nécessaire: le rapport sur l'incidence environnementale.

Puis les trois Régions ouvriront les consultations du public concerné par le Plan et des autres autorités concernées. Tous les avis du public seront pris en considération par les trois régions avant l'adoption du Plan. Chaque Région a une différente procédure de consultation du public et donc l'évaluation environnementale aura sa conclusion à la fin du 2014.

Condition 2).

Pour l'institution des zones périphériques la lettre du Ministre de l'Environnement a poussé Région Abruzzo et Région Lazio à reprendre le chemin de l'institution. Nous avons de nouveau envoyer les cartes des zones périphériques du parc et la Région Abruzzo a fixé une réunion avec le Parc et les autres Régions concernées, dans laquelle prendre des accords pour l'approbation du document d'institution des zones périphériques.

Pour l'interdiction des activités pastorales dans la zone A nous avons continué la surveillance des zones critiques.

Dans le même temps dans le projet pour la rédaction du Plan de gestion des Sites Nature 2000 l'Université de la Tuscia nous a fait le plan de gestion des pâturages du parc. Ce plan comprend une analyse sur la production des pâturages, une prévision de la quantité de bétail que chaque pâturage peut soutenir. Nous allons discuter ce plan avec les élus locaux et avec les éleveurs concernés. Après nous allons décider les zones interdites aux éleveurs parce que destinée à favoriser la présence du chamois ou parce que critiques pour l'ours. Depuis nous allons changer, en accord avec les municipalités, le règlement de chaque mairie pour la gestion de pâturages.

Pour la fermeture des voies d'accès avec le Life on a, jusqu'aujourd'hui, fermé sept routes.

Suite aux recommandations de la Résolution CM/ResDip(2012)10 concernant le renouvellement du Diplôme Européen les mesures prises sont indiquées de suite.

- 1) Le Ministère de l'Environnement a convoqué l'Autorité de Gestion du PATOM, dont le Parc fait partie, deux fois pendant l'année 2013. Le 12 novembre 2013 on a eu la première réunion du Table Technique du PATOM convoqué par le Parc qui a le rôle de secrétariat du Table. Le 15 novembre 2013 le Ministre de l'Environnement a convoqué chez lui le Parc, les trois Régions concerné par le Parc, le Corp Forestier, les Préfets de L'Aquila, Isernia et Frosinone pour discuter la situation de l'ours brun marsicano. Il a souligné la nécessité que chaque Région prend sa responsabilité pour la sauvegarde de l'ours et nous a annoncé sa décision de rendre l'Autorité de Gestion du PATOM une autorité responsable de signaler et résoudre tous les criticités émergents pour la conservation de l'ours. D'ici jusqu'au moitié de décembre viendra écrit un document qu'indiquera les criticités prioritaires et les systèmes pour résoudre ces criticités. Tous les composants de l'Autorité de Gestion du PATOM seront obligé de signer ce document et de le rendre exécutif.

- 2) Pour l'inclusion des secteurs limitrophes au Parc nous avons produit une cartographie à l'intérieur du plan du Parc
- 3) Le Plan de développement économique et sociale est terminé. Le Plan a été approuvé par la Communauté du Parc, a eu l'avis positif du Parc et a été envoyé aux Regions et au Ministère de l'Environnement.
- 4) Pour la recommandation 4 rien de nouveau à signaler
- 5) Pour la recommandation 5 rien de nouveau à signaler
- 6) Nous avons complété l'étude sur l'interaction entre cerf et chamois. Les résultats plus significatifs sont :
 - la présence du cerf à l'intérieur des zones occupées par le chamois n'est pas aussi significative de nuire au chamois et à sa dynamique de population
 - dans le Parc existe un équilibre dynamique entre plusieurs espèces d'ongulés sauvages et domestique. Les espèces vivent tous ensemble dans le même habitat
 - intervenir sur la population du cerf aujourd'hui signifie programmer la capture et le déplacement d'un certain nombre d'individu de cerf pour créer un nouvel équilibre, artificiel, peu justifiable du point de vue biologique. Ce type d'intervention est aussi peu justifiable du point de vue économique.

Le Parc poursuivra le monitoring du cerf et du chamois pour contrôler la situation

- 7) Pour le soutien au tourisme rural le Parc a demandé aux opérateurs de travailler ensemble et proposer de paquets touristiques présentés aux foires internationales à Paris, Londres, Amsterdam.
- 8) Pour l'année 2013 nous avons vu une réduction de la présence de points de nourrissage pour les animaux domestiques créés par les éleveurs locaux.

9. Nature Reserve Ried-Untersee-Gnadensee – Germany

The European Council has linked extension of the European Diploma to November 28, 2019 to six recommendations. The following progress has been made towards implementation of these recommendations during the year under review:

Implementation of the individual recommendations:

1. Self-perpetuating development of the shallow water zone:

During the year under review, no new attempts were made by the fishing lobby to intervene in the self-perpetuation development of the shallow water zone.

2. Tentative suspension of fishing in the particular sensitive core areas:

Due to the repeated events disturbing birdlife caused by legal fishery in the protected shallow water zones (cf. chapter 5.2.4), NABU and the Lake Constance Ornithological Bird Group have resumed the discussions with the Conservation Administration. The Regierungspräsidium endeavours to find a consensual regulation between the concerns of conservation and fishery and will call rounds of talks in this respect also in the year 2014.

3. Documentation of moulting and elimination of potential disturbances:

The importance of the reserve as summering and moulting grounds for water fowl is documented by the extended water fowl counting (cf. chapter 1.3). The close cooperation between volunteers in the protection and observation station "Netta" and the Waterway Police is an efficient instrument to reduce disturbances by outdoor activities, in particular boating. Even fishing in proper form and overflights of the Zeppelin-NT have a disturbing effect on the moulting and breeding activities (see No. 2).

4. Harmonization of cooperation between Switzerland and Germany:

Again during the year under review, no direct contacts to harmonize cross-border cooperation were made on the State level within the framework of the International Lake Constance Conference (IBK) with a view to improving protection of the shallow water zone of the Ermatinger Basin.

5. It is not admissible for road building measures to disturb the nature reserve – compensation measures must be performed as a priority:

Construction of the Westtangente arterial road has been completed, construction on the B33 continues: Road building-related impacts on the nature reserve are being minimized by the construction of suitable barriers. Construction of the green bridge has been completed. However, the completion of greening measures including near-natural wildlife crossing systems will take several more years. Along the new construction sections, noise shielding walls and splash water protection guards have been set up to better protect the nature reserve against the damaging impact of road traffic. The next construction stage of the B33 will be the construction of a motorway-like junction-free road linking the Kindlebildstraße with the bridge over the railway directly adjacent to the nature reserve.

6. Clarification of the future of Wollmatinger Ried Nature Conservation Centre:

Due to legal wrangling around the issue of land ownership, the work on the planned new Nature Conservation Centre has not yet begun. Funding is largely assured with grants set aside from the State of Baden-Württemberg and from NABU totalling 1.8 million €.

Chapter 1.3:

1.3 Fauna

Birds (Aves)

The monthly counts of water fowl were continued in the winter months as previously in 2012/2013. The total population, by contrast to the pre-winter period, was above average over the whole of the season despite the unusually high water level: A maximum of 51,000 individuals during December 2012. The daily values recorded for the following water fowl species once again achieved national and international significance: 5,500 **gaswalls** (*Anas strepera*) in December, 490 **pin-tailed ducks** (*Anas acuta*) in January/February, 4,400 **red-crested pochards** (*Netta rufina*) in September, 20,300 **common pochards** (*Aythya ferina*) in October and 11,500 **tufted ducks** (*Aythya fuligula*) in January. Up to 13 **Bewick swans** (*Cygnus bewickii*), 151 **whooper swans** (*Cygnus cygnus*) and around 200 **Eurasian curlews** (*Numenius arquata*) returned to take up their traditional overwinter quarters.

The monthly water fowl counts from May to August were also continued. Up to 14,000 moulting water fowl were recorded spending the summer in the nature reserve. The reserve provided a particularly significant habitat for 3,500 **red-crested pochards** (*Netta rufina*) and up to 900 **gaswalls** (*Anas strepera*). Up to 11 specimens of the **ferruginous duck** (*Aythya nyroca*) which is threatened by extinction were encountered in the reed beds at the Reichenau Dam during the moulting period.

Already in April and May, the water level was higher than for many years, and at the beginning June rose within three days by 76 cm. This abrupt rise in the sea level proved challenging for many water fowl broods. A large number of duck egg clutches, in particular, were inundated. 19 families of **red-crested pochards** (*Netta rufina*) were counted with 87 young (2012=15 families). Surprisingly, a successful brood of **ferruginous ducks** (*Aythya nyroca*) with two young was verified, and one family each of **gasswalls** (*Anas strepera*) and **garganeys** (*Anas querquedula*) were registered. The **black-necked grebes** (*Podiceps nigricollis*) managed only 10 families with 17 young (2012=26 families), the **great crested grebes** (*Podiceps cristatus*) 186 families with 257 young (2012=271 families) and the **little grebe** (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*) 9 families with 20 young (2012=15 families).

In the main, the populations of breeding birds in the reed bed area achieved the same high level as the previous year: The **little bittern** (*Ixobrychus minutus*) 17 territories (2012=16), **great reed warbler** (*Acrocephalus arundinaceus*) 46 territories (2012=42), **Savi's warbler** (*Locustella luscinioides*) 17 territories (2012=26) and the **bearded tit** (*Panurus biarmicus*) 52 territories (2012=49). 5 territories were registered of the **little crane** (*Porzana parva*) (2012=7), and the **spotted crane** (*Porzana porzana*) had an unusually strong showing with 17 territories. Once again there was suspicion of a breeding **purple heron** (*Ardea purpurea*). On the three **common tern** (*Sterna hirundo*) rafts, after initial failure 59 pairs successfully bred young (2012=42). - - 4

Dragon flies (Odonata)

In a count of the **Siberian winter damselfly** (*Sympecma paedisca*) commissioned by LUBW, during two walking inspections in September, Holger Hunger succeeded in verifying of 32 individual specimens in the Kindlebild area and a total of 57 individual specimens in the Frohnried/Giehrenmoos area.

Butterflies (Lepidoptera)

As well as a phenology of caterpillar host plants, a complete count was also carried out of the three large blue species (*Maculinea* spec.) verified in the area on a total of 28 recording days. Between June 25 and July 7, Jennifer Fleischer counted a total of 411 specimens of the **scarce large blue** (*M. teleius*) and between July 2 and July 30, a total of 201 specimens of the **dusky large blue** (*M. nausithous*). Only two butterflies of the **alcon large blue** (*M. alcon*) species were counted on August 1, while the number of eggs counted on August 29 was 278.

Chapter 2:

2. Cultural heritage and socioeconomic context

2.2 Socioeconomic context

The only legally run commercial use in the Wollmatinger Ried is fishery. As we have emphasized in the previous reports, this kind of use entails adverse effects and disturbance of the avifauna (cf. Chapter 5.2.4.)

However, fishing in the Wollmatinger Ried is carried out on the basis of an international convention with Switzerland.

Chapter 5.2.4:

5.2.4 Infringement of regulations and damage; legal action

Once again illegal campers disturbed the site, mainly in the vicinity of railway stops. Thanks to the well-attuned line of action of police, aliens authorities and municipal administrations, the camps could be removed faster than in the past once they were discovered. However, it is not possible to completely remove faeces and dispersed waste.

The number and dimension of perturbations caused by Zeppelin-NT-airships flying across the area was much smaller in the year under review than in the previous years. But since no existing legal regulations are injured thereby, the only remedy is to continue the intensive contacts with the Zeppelin shipping company.

The legally operated fishery as well caused repeated disturbances even in the sensitive core zones of the reserve.

10. De Boschplaat Terschelling NL – The Netherlands

The recommendations of the Council of Europe are added to this report as Annex 4.

With regard to Recommendation 1:

The budget available, particularly the budget for monitoring, is under pressure. Cuts have been made to the periodic (6-yearly) basic mapping of breeding birds and the deployment of permanent employees. As a result, a shift to using more volunteers has occurred in recent years. In practical terms, having volunteers helping with the inventories has yielded insufficiently useful findings.

Annex 4: Council of Europe recommendations 2010– 2020

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS

**Resolution CM/ResDip(2010)9
on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas
awarded to the Boschplaat Nature Reserve (Netherlands)**

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 16 September 2010
at the 1091st meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)*

The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Article 15.a of the Statute of the Council of Europe,

Having regard to Resolution Res (65)6 instituting the European Diploma for certain protected landscapes, reserves and natural features, as amended by Resolution CM/ResDip (2008)1 on the revised regulations for the European Diploma of Protected Areas;

Having regard to Resolution Res (70)25 on the award of the European Diploma to the Boschplaat Nature Reserve (Netherlands);

Taking into consideration both the discussions held between the Secretariat and the site manager and the advice of the Group of Specialists of the European Diploma of Protected Areas;

Having regard to the proposals of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention,

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Boschplaat Nature Reserve (Netherlands) until 30 June 2020;

Attaches the following five recommendations to the renewal:

1. sufficient financial resources need to be available on an ongoing basis in order to safeguard the interests of the Boschplaat's natural environment, especially monitoring, staff, public relations and communication;
2. measures should be taken to restore the original dynamics in the eastern part of the reserve. The present function of the "Stuifdijk" (artificial sand dike) should be taken into consideration. New insights based on recent scientific research on restoring natural dynamics should be included in the management plan, including the consequences of the current rise in sea levels;
3. communication with all those involved in the measures to be taken (which are still being contested locally) requires maximum attention and the deployment of the necessary resources;
4. annual shipping incidents in the North Sea to the north of the Boschplaat are a real concern for both people and the natural environment. Better guarantees of safety with regard to the transport of hazardous substances and oil should be instituted;
5. the number of motorised vehicles on the beach should be reduced.

11. Siebengebirge Nature Reserve

12. Kuşçenneti National Park (Birdparadise National Park) – Turkey

A regular observation program for the Lake (including recharging hydraulic elements) hydrochemistry was initiated in summer 2008. The program continues without a problem.

Following the activation of the Manyas Dam the hydrological conditions became more healthy. The harmful effects of the wet 2013 season could be prevented by use of the dam.

The Lake Manyas (Kuş) Management Plan is being implemented properly.

13. Minsmere Nature Reserve – United Kingdom

The following progress has been made with the conditions stipulated when the reserve's Diploma was renewed:

- 1. Bracken control** – With Asulam being given `emergency use` approval by the EU for the control of bracken for the 2013 spraying season, efforts continued to selectively control bracken by spot-treatment on areas (37.1 Ha) that had been controlled in previous years. Full records are maintained within the reserve filing system. Particular attention was paid to areas where bracken was growing amongst heather stands that would prohibit cutting as an effective future management option. These actions have helped with the designation, by Natural England, of one heathland SSSI unit, where we have been controlling bracken for a number of years, now being classified as being in favourable condition.
- 2. Sea level rise issues** – EA Minsmere Sluice and embankments project recommenced in August 2013, completion is expected by the end of February 2014. The Minsmere Sea Defences Project has increased the standard of protection for important reserve habitats south of the North Wall. However, it should be seen as the first stage in the process of adapting the reserve to the threats posed by rising sea levels. Global warming is also resulting in increased “storminess” and this is reflected in the increase in incidents of freshwater flooding at Minsmere. Both sea level rise and flooding have an impact on access along public rights of way and reserve visitor trails, as well as directly affecting important habitats and species.
- 3. Management Plan** – The Management Plan 2008-2013 remains in place following consent from Natural England to extend the existing plan to March 2014. All scheduled priority one projects were implemented. Writing the new Management Plan 2014-2019 is now in progress.
- 4. Land purchase** – None this year.
- 5. Monitoring and control of alien species** – Pirri-pirri-bur continues to be sprayed regularly, Control of American mink *Mustela vison* continues.
- 6. Demonstration site** – Formal and informal learning activities are developing rapidly, new activities arising from the Discover Nature project included several overnight stays by schools and other young people's groups at the Discovery Centre. A programme of Employability Skills training for twenty students from four local Secondary Schools was completed, the students participated in practical conservation, education, visitor engagement, retail and catering tasks to develop their skills. We have liaised with colleges and other further education providers and developed programmes offering new learning experiences including practical conservation work for these audiences.
- 7. Scrape fallowing project** - West South compartment was fallowed this year, with a good coverage of annual vegetation growth achieved. Wet weather in Autumn meant it was not possible to rotovate the fallowed plot, the vegetation was left instead to decompose naturally and for the seed to be available to wildfowl. All islands were turned over and some shallow channels added between islands to provide some more topography.

14. Purbeck Heritage Coast – United Kingdom

Renewal of the European Diploma was granted in October 2009 for until the 20th June 2019 with the following **conditions**:

1. The terms of the agreement between Dorset County Council and British Petroleum are being strictly adhered to, and BP continues to work to the highest standards.

Perenco have been granted permission to extend the operation of the oilfield for another 25 years. The strictest operation criteria have been applied and a significant compensation fund has been committed to ensure positive impact on the area's biodiversity and landscape quality.

2. The extension of existing quarries or the opening of new quarries conforms to the 'exceptions' principle that they should not be permitted unless they do not impair the character of the Heritage Coast as a result of any one or a combination of the following:
 - their scale and length
 - their negative impact on the landscape, wildlife, the enjoyment of the area by the public or local communities
 - the practical impossibility of achieving satisfactory restoration and aftercare within a period of five years following the cessation of work.

A new minerals plan has been prepared by Dorset County Council, the competent authority. All quarrying policies and proposals within this document strengthen controls which will benefit the Heritage Coast.

In addition, renewal is subject to the following **recommendations**:

1. Attention should be paid to ensure that the scheme for restoration of the site after gravel extraction at Wareham is completed.
2. Work should continue on the inventory of Natural Areas calling for more adequate protection and research on these sites, particularly in the marine reserves where the periodic inventories of fauna and flora should be continued.
3. Any progress will be welcomed to reduce intensive arable use on the immediate edge of the cliffs.
4. Work should continue to restore eroded paths by using local stone in an innovative way as done at Lulworth Cove.
5. Efforts to promote the use of more sustainable methods of transport to visitors (bus and train usage, improved use of cycling and walking and riding) should be increased.
6. Measures should be taken to address risks of oil pollution from shipping.
7. New resources should be made available to ensure the integrity in perpetuity of the newly designated World Heritage Site and its effective presentation to the public.
8. Appropriate management should be exercised and sufficient resourcing for this should be ensured, for the proposed South Purbeck National Nature Reserve.
9. The Heritage Landscape Management Plan for the Lulworth Estate should be implemented.
10. Co-operation and the establishment of partnerships in management planning, action and exchange of information between all major bodies involved with conservation and management should continue as it is a key method for future management of the Coast.

We believe that these conditions and recommendations have met during 2013 (see text).

15. Fair Isle – United Kingdom

The considerable efforts taken to meet the requirements of the diploma are detailed in 4.1 above.

The Fair Isle Community and the National Trust for Scotland are very keen to retain the status afforded by the European Diploma of Protected Areas and continue to believe that the determined and forward looking approach to custodianship and management of the island only serves to builds on the Diplomas core principles.

Chapter 4.1:

4.1. Changes in legislation or regulations

Marine Environment

Marine Protected Area (MPA)

Marine Scotland has announced that it will not be assessing the Fair Isle Demonstration & Research MPA proposal until the first half of 2014. This was because 2013 was devoted entirely to consultation and further evidence gathering for the Nature Conservation MPAs.

In the meantime the community has attempted to engage with the various Scottish fishermen's associations, considered by Marine Scotland as "main stakeholders" in the Fair Isle marine resource. The community has developed an outline plan which seeks to involve the fishermen in the process. The basis of the plan is not to exclude the fishermen but to steer them towards management measures which address the issue of sustainability and recovery of the resource. The isle believes that such measures would have long-term benefits for all stakeholders, including the fishermen.

To this end, the Fair Isle community Chair, Fiona Mitchell, issued invitations to the Shetland Fishermen's Association (SFA) and to the Scottish Fishermen's Federation (SFF) which acts as the umbrella organisation for the various Scottish fishing groups. As both the resource and the community are located at Fair Isle, the invitation was for discussions to be held on the isle. The SFA accepted but the SFF declined, arguing first that the meeting should be held on the Scottish mainland as Fair Isle was too distant and expensive to visit; then, when it was pointed out that it was a community invitation and it would be impossible to take an entire community to a mainland meeting, that there was plenty of time so date and venue could be determined later – in other words, still no commitment to engage with the community on the isle.

The meeting with the SFA has also not taken place. Dates were arranged but on each occasion genuine attempts by the SFA to visit were defeated by weather disruptions to transport.

In late October the isle was informed by Marine Scotland that stakeholder meetings had to happen by early spring 2014 at the latest. So from stalemate, the timetable looks like rushing forward. The community's response will be to issue renewed invitations to the fishermen's organisations for the early part of 2014.

Fishermen's meetings: challenges ahead. Initial written responses from the various fishermen's organisations demonstrate the task in hand. Orkney Fisheries stated that their policy was "access to any waters that their licences allow them legally into." Leslie Tait of the Shetland Fishermen's Association replied that the SFA cannot form an opinion about the proposal without further details but that "we are not generally in favour of additional restrictions on access to established fishing grounds". The Scottish Fishermen's Federation indicated that it was willing to meet, but it would host the meeting. On the merit side, Alistair Sinclair of the Scottish Creel Fishermen's Association said his association is happy to support the MPA proposal "in principle".

Shetland and Orkney are pushing the line that there is not enough detail in the Fair Isle proposal for them to take a view. Those who have studied the proposal may disagree! However, it is likely to be the

prevailing view of the fishermen's groups. Nick Riddiford has written to point out that the proposal outlines the aims and objectives and makes management suggestions; but it requires Marine Scotland, in conjunction with scientific bodies, to develop the protocols and measures required to achieve those objectives. Riddiford also pointed out that this presented an opportunity for the fishermen to participate in the process.

Support

Official support for the Fair Isle MPA proposal has come from:

- The Shetland Marine Spatial Plan Advisory Group (SMSPAG), minuted with follow up letter from its Co-ordinator to the Chair of the Fair Isle Community Association.
- The Shetland MSP, Tavish Scott, verbally and publicly in The Shetland Times newspaper.
- The Chief Executive of the Shetland Islands Council, Mark Boden, who indicated to the SMSPAG and the Fair Isle community that he wishes to see progress towards a positive outcome.

Messages, verbal and written, have also been received from a number of people and organisations copied into the Fishermen's correspondence, including the Blue Marine Foundation, fauna & flora international (ffi) and the RSPB. All have been supportive.

Petition to the Scottish Parliament

The Fair Isle petition to the Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee received further hearings in March, June, October and November. All four meetings were deferred, the committee deciding it would wait until Marine Scotland was in a position to consider the proposal.

Prior to the October hearing, Nick Riddiford sent advice notes to the Committee outlining the efforts being put into engaging with stakeholders and the failure of the SFF to respond favourably.

As a reminder, the wording of the petition was: *"calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to implement a condition of the Council of Europe Diploma to Fair Isle by designating Fair Isle waters as a Marine Protected Area"*

Scottish Government consultation

The Scottish government has put out a series of consultation documents under the general heading *Planning Scotland's Seas*. It is full of brave words which mirror closely the aspirations of the islanders; but of course there is a gulf between the rhetoric and reality. The Fair Isle Marine Environment & Tourism Initiative (FIMETI) team has responded on behalf of the isle emphasising various points, not least the need to widen the assessment of economic benefits to include the many values that a healthy fully sustainable resource brings to Scotland and particularly to coastal communities such as Fair Isle. Official statements regarding economic benefit still tend to talk exclusively of fishing, oil and green energy resources.

The consultation documents can be found via the web link: www.scotland.gov.uk/marineconsultation.

Fair Isle Marine Environment & Tourism Initiative (FIMETI)

A travel grant from the Blue Marine Foundation allowed various members of the Fair Isle community to attend meetings, conferences and events during the year with the express aims of widening the profile of the isle's MPA aspirations and engaging in MPA developments.

In May, James W Stout and Nick Riddiford met with Food Certification International consultants in Lerwick, Shetland, to raise the issue of the imbalance between the low impact activities of the resident, licensed, creel fisherman and the occasional intensive exploitation of the local stock by visiting boats. The consultants had come to consider whether Shetland's sustainable shell-fishery certificate, issued by the Marine Stewardship Council, should be renewed. The consultants informed the islanders that lobsters

were not being considered for certification – which spoke volumes about the stock pressure in the northern isles!

Also in May, Stewart Thomson (Quoy) and Nick Riddiford attended an event at North Atlantic Fisheries College entitled *The Business of Fishing*. The main feature was a video of this title but there were also speeches. The message was that the fishing industry is concerned by recent negative press and the video was to show them in a more positive light. This was a learning exercise for the Fair Islanders. The isle feels that the fishermen would not only benefit but get good publicity if they chose to work with the isle on the MPA.

In July Nick Riddiford joined a discussion panel at an event in Edinburgh entitled *Ocean of Life*. A brief summary of the isle's MPA efforts was well received by the 200+ attendees. This was part of the isle's public awareness drive.

In September, Neil Thomson and Nick Riddiford accepted an invitation from the Blue Marine Foundation to represent Fair Isle at a *Managing Marine Protected Areas* conference at the National Sailing Academy, Portland, England. It gave the opportunity to raise the profile of the Fair Isle initiative amongst a number of influential contacts; and to interact with inshore fishermen working with Blue Marine on sustainable fisheries along the English south coast.

And on the Isle

Fair Isle's efforts to get sustainable measures for its marine resource prompted a visit in August by "Cape Farewell". Cape Farewell is formed by an international group of artists and scientists promoting a cultural response to climate change. The group "works in partnership with scientific and cultural institutions to deliver an innovative climate programme of public engagement". Their visit was to find out more about the isle's marine initiative and was partly prompted by the work of Fair Isle musicians Inge Thomson and the late Lise Sinclair on the cultural and natural values of the isle's marine resource.

FIMETI, dissemination

FIMETI again kept all interested parties informed through its website www.fimeti.org.uk, at quarterly Fair Isle Community meetings, other meetings, through correspondence, word of mouth, poster displays at the Bird Observatory and during cruise ship visits at the Hall. Issue 10 of the FIMETI newsletter *Making Waves* was published in March 2013, distributed widely and placed on the website. FIMETI received some support funding from the National Trust for Scotland; and help with travel expenses from the Blue Marine Foundation. A lot of additional work and effort is done in a voluntary capacity by various members of the Fair Isle community.

Shetland Marine Spatial Planning Advisory Group (formerly SSMEI Shetland pilot study)

The SMSPAG has now produced a draft Shetland Marine Spatial Plan which includes details of the proposed Fair Isle MPA. The Plan lists the various natural and cultural designations held by Fair Isle and an outline of the MPA proposal including its objectives and statements of the benefits this would bring to Fair Isle and to Scotland. The Plan also links through to the FIMETI website and proposal document for those wishing further detail. For the full text please see Appendix 1 of this report.

16. Parc National de Doñana – Spain

Conditions de renouvellement:

Les autorités espagnoles doivent continuer à adopter toutes les mesures nécessaires pour garantir que les projets de développement du Port de Séville n'aient pas d'impacts environnementaux significatifs sur les écosystèmes de Doñana. Toute décision doit être conditionnée par les résultats de l'étude complémentaire au rapport de l'Étude d'Impact Environnemental.

Il ne s'est pas produit de modifications en rapport à ce qui a été signalé l'an dernier. Le projet est actuellement suspendu.

Le gouvernement andalou, responsable de la gestion du parc et aussi de la gestion de l'eau, s'assurera de la bonne qualité de l'eau qui entre dans le Parc National et de l'élimination de l'extraction illégale des eaux souterraines. En vue de la Directive Cadre sur l'Eau, il faut surveiller l'état de l'aquifère souterrain du Parc National et des terres qui l'entourent, les niveaux d'extraction d'eaux souterraines et la qualité de l'eau.

La nouveauté la plus importante à ce sujet est l'approbation en mai 2013 par le Conseil des Ministres du **Décret Royal sur le Plan Hydrologique de la Démarcation Hydrographique du Guadalquivir**. L'objectif de ce plan est d'obtenir la meilleure satisfaction possible au sujet des demandes en eau et d'équilibrer et d'harmoniser le développement régional et sectoriel, en augmentant les disponibilités de la ressource, en protégeant sa qualité, en économisant son usage et en rationalisant ses utilisations. En ce qui concerne Doñana, le Plan limite la surexploitation de l'aquifère Almonte-Marismas et contemple des mesures pour augmenter la protection du Parc National. Il établit ainsi une augmentation du personnel de garde pour le contrôle des extractions; il révisé les autorisations donnant droit à l'utilisation de l'eau des nappes existantes; il ajoute un programme d'étude et de recherche des masses d'eau souterraine et quantifie (15 hectomètres cubes) les nécessités d'apport de nouvelles ressources superficielles pour remplacer en partie les extractions de la masse souterraine d'Almonte-Marismas pour améliorer les écosystèmes qui en dépendent.

Quant au Plan Spécial d'Aménagement des zones d'irrigation situées au nord de la Couronne Forestière de Doñana, nous avons étudié tout au long de l'année 2013 les allégations présentées (plus de 3.800) et les réponses correspondantes apportées à chacune d'entre elles, ce qui a impliqué un long travail d'une grande complexité technique. Son approbation définitive est prévue pour les premiers mois de 2014.

À ce sujet nous signalerons l'importance de la **Résolution du 25 octobre 2013, du Secrétariat d'État à l'Environnement, où est formulée la déclaration d'impact environnemental du projet "Amélioration et consolidation de l'irrigation du Groupement d'Agriculteurs El Fresno, région du Condado, Huelva"**. L'objet du projet est la consolidation de 858 ha d'irrigation pour le Groupement d'Agriculteurs El Fresno vers le bassin du Guadalquivir au moyen de l'installation d'un réseau de tuyaux enterrés, pour remplacer le ravitaillement en eaux souterraines de l'Aquifère 27 (Almonte-Marismas) par des eaux de superficie du système Chanza-Piedras. Le projet aura des effets positifs car il soulagera la pression qui est exercée sur le système hydrogéologique qui alimente les environs de Doñana. Le présent projet devra s'adapter à ce qu'établira le Plan de la Couronne Forestière, une fois qu'il aura été approuvé définitivement.

Recommandations pour le renouvellement:

Tous les efforts doivent être faits pour restaurer le bon état écologique du fleuve dans tout le bassin, dans le sens stipulé par la Directive Cadre sur l'Eau, et toutes les mesures appropriées qui doivent être adoptées pour faire usage de l'eau et pour d'autres activités dans ce bassin, en particulier l'agriculture, devront être compatibles avec cet objectif.

Il ne s'est pas produit de modifications par rapport à ce qui avait été signalé l'année antérieure.

- 1. Le plan spécifique d'urgence pour l'Espace Naturel de Doñana doit être préparé et doit intégrer une carte des risques naturels.**

Il ne s'est pas produit de modifications par rapport à ce qui avait été signalé l'année antérieure.

- 2. Les plans d'action pour la conservation des espèces emblématiques, et en particulier le lynx ibérique et l'aigle ibérique, doivent continuer à être appliqués de façon active; il faudra mettre en marche de nouveaux plans d'action pour d'autres espèces menacées quand on le considérera nécessaire.**

Nous renvoyons aux résultats exposés plus haut pour ce qui concerne le lynx ibérique et l'aigle ibérique. En outre, une nouvelle édition du Projet d'élevage en captivité, financé par l'Organisme Autonome Parcs Nationaux, a été approuvée et mise en marche à partir de mars de 2013, et devra rester en vigueur jusqu'en 2017

3. Quant aux projets de développement du Port de Séville, les autorités espagnoles doivent rechercher le meilleur conseil scientifique international chargé de porter conseil sur l'amélioration des conséquences du développement et aussi travailler en étroite collaboration avec les conventions et organismes internationaux pertinents comme la Convention de Berne, la Convention de Ramsar, l'Organisation Mondiale Convention sur le Patrimoine et la Commission Européenne, l'Agence Européenne de l'Environnement;

Nous renvoyons à ce qui a été dit antérieurement.

4. L'actualisation du plan de gestion (Plan recteur d'Usage et de Gestion) doit commencer en 2011;

Une fois arrivée à son terme la période de vigueur de ces documents, nous travaillons actuellement à la rédaction de nouvelles éditions qui, pour la première fois, devront concerner la totalité de l'Espace Naturel de Doñana et respecter les normes des différents organismes internationaux, ainsi que ce qui est spécifié dans le Réseau Natura 2000 pour les Zones Spéciales de Conservation qui s'y trouvent. Une première version est actuellement rédigée, aussi bien pour le Plan Recteur d'Usage et de Gestion que pour le Plan d'Aménagement des Ressources Naturelles. Ces plans font actuellement l'objet d'une révision de la part de l'Espace Naturel de Doñana et devront être présentés lors de la prochaine Assemblée Plénière du Conseil de Participation qui sera célébrée en décembre 2013.

5. Il faut réaliser l'élargissement du Projet Doñana 2005H à la végétation riveraine, à la correction des problèmes d'érosion ou à l'agrandissement de son domaine d'application aux zones adjacentes de marais agricoles.

En ce qui concerne la Reprise du Projet Doñana 2005, après avoir exécuté le "Premier Examen détaillé des Projets d'Actions n° 6 (phase II) et n° 7 : récupération des fonctions du bras de La Torre et perméabilité des marais du Projet Doñana 2005", les administrations impliquées travaillent actuellement à l'élaboration et aux démarches administratives concernant la proposition d'un "Second Examen détaillé" du projet original, afin de continuer ces travaux qu'il faudra développer entre fin 2013 et les premiers mois de 2014.

6. La possibilité de développer la coopération avec d'autres sites Diplôme Européen qui soient des deltas (Camargue la Réserve Nationale, Réserve de la Biosphère Delta du Danube) devrait être étudiée.

L'activité la plus remarquable au sein du jumelage avec le Parc Naturel de la Camargue (France) a été l'invitation qu'a reçue l'Espace Naturel de Doñana à participer au Concours National des Prairies Fleuries, organisé par les Parcs naturels régionaux et nationaux de France lors de leur édition de 2013. Le 8 avril une équipe technique du Parc Naturel de la Camargue dirigée par Stéphane Arnassant, Chargé de mission "Natura 2000", a visité Doñana pour l'inspection et l'évaluation des trois parcelles sélectionnées par le Département de Conservation pour les proposer au concours. Finalement l'Espace Naturel de Doñana a été primé avec l'une des récompenses donnée par l'organisation.

17. Bayerischer Wald National Park

18. Parc National d' Ordesa et Mont Perdu – Spain

19. Store Mosse National Park – Sweden

Progress with measures taken in order to meet the conditions and/or recommendations defined during the award or renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas.

1. Actively pursue the hydrological survey, review and complete the management plan on the basis of the results obtained.

The hydrological situation in the park is measured continuously. The new management plan will be based upon the hydrological survey.

2. Encourage more actively scientific research in the Park, for example through a Life program

The restoration project Life to ad(d)mire has shifted from preparatory investigations to field actions. In September-October 2012, tussocks and remaining stumps were cut down in the extended rich fen area under restoration at Björnakullakärret. In late winter, clearing of invading pine trees in the degraded raised bog areas (former peat extraction areas) started. About 300 hectares of degraded bog will be restored in this Life project, much owing to the repeated urge for restoration that has been stated in previous European Diploma revisions. During spring and autumn 2013, seminars and field excursions have been arranged in order to inform the public about upcoming restoration actions in the area, even though lowering of dry ridges in the peat mining area is not planned until the beginning of 2014. Finally, in September 2013, we were for the first time able to perform haymaking in the extended part of Björnekullakärret rich fen. Traditional usage of horse proved to be successful for cost-efficient raking and hay removal, as the ground is too wet for modern farming equipment.

3. Monitor the impact of peat digging in the outer edges of the Park and make provision to restore the area close to the park in due time.

The permission for the peat industry outside the park is under revision and the park management is closely watching that issue.

4. Establish a buffer zone around the park with the objective of covering the entire hydrological system that influences the park.

The process of establishing a nature reserve of a large part of the hydrological system outside the park has taken a considerable step forward during 2013. Negotiations with land owners are in progress and a suggestion for resolution will be sent out during 2014.

20. Bullerö and Långviksskär nature reserves – Sweden

1. The management plans for the two nature reserves have not yet been updated.
2. Talks with the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency about making the Bullerö nature reserve a national park are on-going.
3. The proliferation of toxic algae in the archipelago is being assessed on a regular basis.
4. The sources of disturbances in the reserves and the bird sanctuaries are being supervised.
5. The efforts to limit the mink population continue.

21. Wurzacher Ried Nature Reserve – Germany

Re. Recommendation 1:

The Peat Museum, the peat railway and the peat educational trail enjoy a high level of demand and have become important building blocks of the educational work carried out in the Wurzacher Ried. A long-term plan is in place to supplement the offering to visitors to include a viewing tower.

Re. Recommendation 2:

An increase of staffing for the Nature Conservation Centre team has not yet been achieved.

Re. Recommendation 3:

As the national road traffic planning is a lengthy procedure, no results can yet be reported.

Re. Recommendation 4 + 5:

Endeavours to acquire land will be continued as the financial circumstances of the State and existing offers from private land owners allow.

Re. Recommendation 6:

There are no new results to report regarding regarding the demolition / underground laying of high-voltage conductors in the Wurzacher Ried area.

22. Parc National des Ecrins (PNE) – France

Recommandation de la <i>Résolution CM/ResDip(2010)14</i>	Projets – Etudes préalables	Réalisations en cours	Résultats opérationnels	Poursuite des actions engagées antérieurement
Rec.1 « Politique partagée de préservation du patrimoine, avec communes et territoires de projet	5.1.3	2.2 / 5.1.3 / 3.1.1	2.2 / 3.2 / 5.1.3 / 5.1.4. / 5.1.6	2.2 / 5.1.3
Rec. 2 « recueil permanent, catalogage, diffusion des données patrimoniales – et valorisation de l'expertise»	1.1 / 1.3 / 2.1	1.1 / 1.3 / 2.1 / 3.1 / 3.2	1.1 / 1.2 / 1.3 / 2.1 / 3.1 / 3.2	1.1 / 1.2 / 1.3 / 2.1
Rec. 3 « Sentinelle environnementale _ Réchauffement climatique »		1.1.1	1.1.1	1.1.1
Rec. 4 « Insertion environnementale des activités_ appui méthodologique et évaluation »		5.1.1 / 5.1.3	5.1.1 / 5.1.3 / 5.1.6	5.1.1 / 5.1.3
Rec. 5 « Partenariat Forêt - Gestion multi-fonctionnelle exemplaire et échanges de données»		5.1.1 / 5.1.3	5.1.1 / 5.1.3	
Rec. 6 « Sensibilisation aux évolutions des paysages et suivis physiologiques »			2.1 / 5.1.4	2.1
Rec. 7 « Suivi de la fréquentation, sensibilisation des usagers et APN *»		3.1.2	3.1.2 / 5.2	3.1.2
Rec. 8 « Gestion des survols en cœur de parc »		3.1.2	3.1.2 / 5.2	3.1.2
Rec. 9 « Grands prédateurs et activités pastorales _ actions de coopération et de solidarité »			2.1	2.1
Rec. 10 « Charte et conventions d'application »	4.1	3.1 / 4.1 / 4.2	4.1	4.1



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23. Parco Regionale della Maremma – Italy

Progress with measures taken in order to meet the conditions and/or recommendations defined during the award or renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas.

We have realized and we are realizing a sequence of actions concerning the nature conservation and the socio-economical develop of the area:

- The project which has been started at the end of the month of October 2010 against the coastal erosion for the protection of dunes, the pine wood and the marshes is the largest of its kind undertaken by the local authorities, to protect the coastal areas and all the areas of environmental relevance characterizing the sea front.

After a phase of monitoring we have an excellent result about the rehabilitation of the wetland areas. We have a partial rescue of the pine wood too. On the 4th November 2013 the final phase has begun, we are building the sea “brushes”, we will finish in March 2013. In the future we consider to monitor the situation, every five years, to evaluate the effects of the erosion on the coast line, the Flora, Fauna and the ecosystems.

- The “sustainable mobility” project experimented during 2007 and repurposed in the summer 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 is an excellent managerial model aimed to encourage people to use free public transport rather than private cars. This project, combined with the cycle path from Alberese to Marina di Alberese and the automatic system of the parking area, represents a low environmental impact system of access to the beach and an innovative sustainable model of great importance for a protected area. For the last three summers the Park has done a big sacrifice, because there wasn’t any financing from the Region, a symbolic price of 1,00 and 1,50 euro for the bus ticket has been asked to visitors.

It’s the third winter we have the “shuttle bus on call” service to visit the Maremma Park. The shuttle bus is used only if there are people who want to visit the Park. That is a way to economize and to respect the environment

- The opening of two new itineraries in Collecchio area (C4 and C5), opening of a new part of the A7 – Foce del Fiume Ombrone itinerary and the opening of a new connection way from the Services Centre in Marina di Alberese to the beach. Opening of new horseback itineraries, a new canoe itinerary and a new chariot itinerary in the area. The taking out of the fence of San Rabano abbey and contemporary the installation of a cameras system to control the area, all to offer a better enjoyment of the visit.

All to promote and increase the tourist offering. This is very important to increase the economic condition of the different companies in the territory which work with the tourists.

- The success about the reintroduction of osprey and the project to include Elba island in Tuscany and Tavolara island in Sardinia.
- The hybrid wolf project about the check of wolves of the Park to understand if they are genetically pure or contaminated by dog’s genes. The project foresees the capture of animals, the blood test and then the reintroduction of pure elements. All thank to a European funding project.
- We have created an application for I phone and android smart phone about the different locations of the Park and the identification of animals and plants of the Park by the simple visitor and by the researcher, using a European Italy – France Maritime funding project.
- The Park’s Festival, organized each year, represents an important tourist project about trekking and cultural events in different parks in Tuscany, to celebrate the institution of the first Park in Europe. It has been organized in the Maremma Park the last week of May 2013 with a lot of activities: canoe, trekking, horseback, bicycle excursions, tastings and folk show. The result has been a great success about the number of visitors. About the Maritime Walking Festival (old Walking Festival), for this year the Park has taken part only organizing some guided itineraries.
- “Estate nei Parchi” didactic project organized in collaboration with the Tuscany Region: a didactic holiday of a week, for students, with didactic laboratories and trekking, canoe, bicycle etc. excursions.
- Building of the ecological station for the separate collection of rubbish in Marina di Alberese. It’s a very important project, overall for the collection of rubbish during the summer, when there’s a lot of tourists.

We can assume that the Park works daily to improve and to develop this protected area, which represents one of the most important parks in Tuscany and the main protected area in the Provincia of Grosseto. Therefore it represents an important instrument for the economic and sustainable development of the territory in general, ever in according to protect the environment.

24. Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve – Portugal

Regarding the condition to the renewal of the grant

- the legal status of the Reserve has not been changed and there are no perspectives that such changes will occur, even considering a far future.

Regarding the recommendations to the renewal

- Most of the drystone dykes of the plateau are now well preserved and maintenance efforts are considered one of the priority duties of the nature wardens of the Island.
- All the alien species are now eradicated. Although the yellow-legged gull (Atlantic form) *Larus michahellis atlantis* should not be considered an alien species, there is a constant effort to prevent their breeding on the islands (S. Grande and S. Pequena). Due to the remoteness of Selvagem Islands and to their characteristics this is an easy and forward task.

25. Wachau - Austria

Guarantee for the sustained conservation of the Jauerling-Wachau Nature Park

Current projects and meeting were already mentioned in the chapters before. The current financing of the park's management could be prolonged until the end of 2014. Discussions on the time after have already started.

Maintenance of the current state of the Danube and conservation of the floodplain forests

Currently, no risk concerning the recommendation can be identified, although two project proposals in this field have failed to be chosen for financing, unfortunately.

Restoration of the terraces and integration of the irrigation devices

No changes to the previous year.

Strict standards for river cruise tourism

No changes to the previous year.

Solution to the Spitz quarry problem

This year, it looks better than in the previous years that a solution for the problem might be found. Negotiations with the Environmental Advocat (Umweltanwalt) of Lower Austria about widening the tunnel under the railway in front of the quarry have taken place. This is necessary to allow trucks to enter the quarry to take away the produced material.

At the same time, a potential exploiter has shown up. Negotiations about the plans on how to stabilize the quarry by additionally exploiting it will take place in December.

Control of the moufflon population

No changes compared to last year. The agreements found in 2010 are executed as planned.

Conservation of the apricot orchards

No changes compared to last year.

Flood protection in consultation with local authorities

As mentioned, all flood protection systems built so far have worked fine during the centennial flood in June 2013. This is why the so far unprotected villages will soon start drafting their respective plans for building similar devices. Since it is the local municipalities who are in charge of drafting these plans, it is assured that all flood protection devices can only be built with a strong link to the needs of the local people.

26. Oksky state nature biosphere zapovednik (reserve) – Russian Federation

The diploma of the Council of Europe was appropriated to reserve on September 5, 1994. In 2009 the reserve visited Hervé Lethier - the expert of the Council of Europe for preparation of justification of extension of the Diploma for new term.

Recommendations about improvement of the OGZ natural complex are given in 2005 (the letter of the General Secretary of SE V. Shvimmer from 2.2.2005). Work on paragraphs proceeds. The detailed report is given in the annual report for 2005.

27. Ipolytarnoc Fossils Nature Conservation Area – Hungary

The Resolution CM/ResDip(2010)15 on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Ipolytarnóc Protected Area (Hungary) (Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 16 September 2010 at the 1091st meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)

renewed the Diploma to Ipolytarnoc Fossils until 11 September 2020 and attached the following 5 recommendations to the renewal:

- 1. Recognising the site's high potential for further discoveries of geological interest, research – especially the palaeontological excavations – should continue; all appropriate measures should be taken to preserve and, if possible, exhibit the natural resources; the results of scientific research should be made publicly available;*

Action taken by the site to comply with the recommendation:

A new area with fossil footprints is under excavation along the geological study path. The site provides high-tech interpretation techniques of the prehistoric habitat, gained scientific knowledge is on display and new papers have been made accessible and downloadable on the site's website.

- 2. The site should take an active role in the management of the Slovak-Hungarian transborder Novohrad-Nógrád Geopark, in order to preserve and interpret the natural assets of the region and to become a focal, multilingual information point for geotourism;*

Action taken by the site to comply with the recommendation:

The trans-boundary Novohrad-Nograd Geopark with the essential endorsement of the BNPD, became member of the European and Global Geoparks Networks in 2010. Since the scientific centre of the geopark is at Ipolytarnoc, it is a driving force in order to preserve the geological heritage of the whole geopark and advocate its resources to the visitors. During the special Geopark Week (the turn of May) diverse programs, like the very successful and traditional volcano day served this purpose this year.

- 3. The entrance to the protected area should have an appropriate gateway displaying information in order to control tourism within the site and the buffer zone; the buildings along the geological trail should be further integrated into the landscape; the power line that runs between the village and the visitor centre should be replaced with an underground cable;*

Action taken by the site to comply with the new recommendation:

In front of the new entrance gate a new panel was emplaced, QR code and old Hungarian script alphabet are used beside Hungarian, Slovak and English languages to inform visitors about the site. Due to fire-protection restrictions vegetation cover of buildings can not be adopted. the newer buildings are more

organically blend into the landscape. No new developments with the power line's replacement, although a draft plan focuses on the laying of underground cable.

4. *The gradual replacement of the exotic trees with indigenous species should be continued by assisting the natural succession process through ecologically sensitive land management practices; the control of game – causing considerable damage to vegetation and protected animal species – should be continued;*

Action taken by the site to comply with the recommendation:

A larger scale forestry activity continued this year covering some 10 hectares. The former acacia forest section's transformation by indigenous tree samplings is going well. Game management is an ongoing activity throughout the year, since the whole area is a specially designated hunting area managed by the BNPD.

5. *The balance between open spaces and wooded areas on the western side of the conservation area, close to the nearby settlement, should be maintained to preserve the mosaic structure of the landscapes there;*

Action taken by the site to comply with the recommendation:

Effective animal husbandry, racka sheep grazing and hay cutting activities manage the mosaic-like structure of open spaces with forested areas in the border zone, where tree thinning on forest edges also maintains the mixed vegetation cover of the landscape.

28. Szénás Hills Protected Area – Hungary

1. the management of the area should be carried out in close co-operation by the Danube-Ipoly National Park Directorate and the Pilis Forest Company; the activities of the finished LIFE Programme, such as the conversion of Black pine forests, reduction of game populations, visitor management, guarding and monitoring, should be continued jointly; the area should be provided with human and financial resources commensurate with the site's national and European importance;
 - We renewed the agreement of cooperation has been prepared by the Duna-Ipoly Nationalpark Directorate and the Pilis Forest Company in order to carry out conservation management within the area together.
2. inside and near the area, permission should be given only for such game population management operations as are strictly consonant with the nature conservation objectives assigned to the area, particularly as regards eradication of the moufflon and reduction of the populations of large herbivores to a level compatible with the preservation of the dolomitic grasslands and natural woodlands; these population control operations should be planned on the basis of accurate population monitoring;
 - The game population management is part of the agreement of cooperation between the Duna-Ipoly Nationalpark Directorate and the Pilis Forest Company. Changes in numbers of big game populations, resulting from fence building and the operation of game traps, are monitored also in the frame of the agreement.
3. the fence enclosing the protected area must be maintained in good condition to prevent technical sport activities from encroaching upon it and also to raise the effectiveness of game population regulation;
 - Maintaining of the fence in good condition is part of the Agreement of cooperation between the Duna-Ipoly Nationalpark Directorate and the Pilis Forest Company.
4. visitor reception capacity should be increased by organising guided tours outside the most sensitive zones, to make the public more aware of the importance of preserving the habitats in the area; measures should be taken to prevent motor vehicles from crossing the area;

- See 3.1.
 - more renovations of the visitor centre at Pilisszentiván were carried out in 2013 (building of a new pavement)
 - one of the information boards of Nagyszénás trail was changed
 - conceptions and plans of reconstruction of the visitor centre were carried out in 2013, which aim at improving exhibition and increasing of reception capacity
 - we plan to change the track of official trails in the area to regulate walking visitors more effectively
5. regulations must be worked out for horse riding paths in the area; also a mountain bike trail should be designated so as to avoid the fenced and strictly protected area;
- We've started negotiations with the local governments and horse riding organizations.
6. the protected landscape status of the two areas adjoining the special protection area, which were also the subject of the diploma application, should be maintained to keep them functioning properly as buffer zones; construction in these areas should not be allowed;
- The enforcement of this recommendation lies with the new authority (the Közép-Duna-völgyi Environmental Protection, Nature Conservation and Water Management Authority).
7. urbanisation pressure must be handled properly; any new development plans of Nagykovácsi, Pilisszentiván and Piliscsaba should be examined carefully;
- The enforcement of this recommendation lies with the new authority (the Közép-Duna-völgyi Environmental Protection, Nature Conservation and Water Management Authority).
8. co-operation with volunteers (schools, non-governmental organisations, local governments, scouts) must be continued, as well as with local residents, police and civil guards.
- See 3.1.

Chapter 3.1:

3.1. Visitors — Information policy

3.1.1 Arrangements for receiving and informing the public

- The nature educator has a weekly nature conservation course for local school children.
- The nature educator regularly guides groups to the area and interprets the natural assets. The most frequently requested tours are to the “Jági” and “Nagy-Szénás” nature trails, in May to the Dolomitic Flax, as well as hydrobiological studies for children and study tours for students.
- Large-scale events were held on World Water Day (23/03/2013) and International Bird Watching Day (05/10/2013). The following programmes were held at these events: hydrobiological tests for children, pond cleaning, free guided tours on the nature trail, open-air market of nature publications, bird ringing.
- Field exercise were held for university students (one week).
- We have our own column in three local newspapers, whereby we have published articles about the conservation problems and the heritage of the project site. Publishing articles in the local newspapers seems to be a very effective way of making people understand our goals.

New conception and building plans of reconstruction of the visitor centre were carried out in 2013, which aim is improving exhibition and increasing of reception capacity – with creating accommodation for guests (students, researchers or visitors).

29. State Nature Protection Institution "Berezinsky Biosphere Reserve" – Belarus

Conditions and recommendations attached to the renewal are observed and implemented in stages for a 10-year period:

- Protection regime of the reserved area is carried out in accordance with the current nature protection laws and stays unchanged.
- The reserve constantly widens its international contacts to promote its image and attract additional finances. On the Reserve's wetlands the Common project of APB (Akhova Ptushak Batskaushchyny) - BirdLife Belarus, Michael Succow Foundation (MSF), Germany and Royal Society for the protection of birds (RSPB), UK named «Restoring peatlands and applying concepts for sustainable management in Belarus – climate change mitigation with economic and biodiversity benefits» is being implemented.
- Berezinsky Reserve is included in the work of EU/UNDP Project «Support to the development of a comprehensive framework for the international environmental cooperation in the Republic of Belarus».
- Implementation of the following parts of scientific and research work are continued: «Assessment of seasonal and long-term changes in the structure of theriological complexes at the Berezinsky Reserve», «Seasonal and long-term dynamics in structure of ornithological complexes at the Berezinsky Reserve».
- Tourism development is controlled effectively on the basis of scientific research. With the consent of the scientific department a new bicycle and water route “To the Upper Berezina” has been developed.
- The research programs «Dynamic characteristics of the phytocoenosis floristic composition in association with changes of weather and climatic conditions» and «Dynamic assessment of meadow and bog phytocoenosis under the influence of natural and anthropogenic factors» are being executed.
- New proposals to the State development program of the protected areas system in the Republic of Belarus for 2015-2019 have been worked out.

30. The Weerribben and the Wieden Nature Reserve NL – The Netherlands

Progress with measures taken in order to meet the conditions and/or recommendations defined during the award or renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas.

Increased efforts are needed in the realisation of the ‘wet axis’ between the Weerribben and the Wieden reserves, connecting both reserves along a wide corridor to be developed as part of the National Ecological Network.

- The Province of Overijssel had decided that the wildlife corridor (N333 – Roomsloot crossing) between the Weerribben and the Wieden would definitely be implemented.
- In the meantime, an implementation plan was being prepared, which would be carried out in 2013. This work is currently in progress

A twinning programme is to be promoted between the Weerribben and the Wieden reserves.

- No changes

The stand-still of the recreation infrastructure (lodging, embarkation points, canoe rental stations) being a high priority is to be combined with further strict limitations as to the access of boats and canoes in vulnerable canals and core zones (e.g. temporary closure of some routes in the breeding season); further zoning of recreation requires continued monitoring of leisure developments

(number of boats, canoes, bikes) and must take this data into account with the elaboration of permanent impact assessments.

- Within the framework of the planned land usage across the municipality and the province, new cycle paths have been laid out around the Weerribben and the Wieden.. The Staatsbosbeheer and Natuurmonumenten nature conservation organisations have had a voice in the planning to avoid a decrease of natural values. Compensation measures were carried out at some locations.

Through the NAC (Nature Activity Centre), a campaign to coordinate boat rental via one central agency (Kalenberg) is needed to inform all users about the vulnerability and the international importance of the nature reserve.

- See 3.1.

Studies to reduce the frequency of larger yachts and boats passing through the Kalenbergergracht will be continued.

- No changes

The further establishment of a Blankenham – Nederland bicycle route, making use of the dike owned by Staatsbosbeheer, is to be reconsidered in order to prevent or minimise disturbing effects in remote areas where, up to now, no public access has been possible.

- No changes

Staatsbosbeheer needs to investigate whether actual agreements with reed cultivators could be transformed into less rigid contracts for periods shorter than six years. Enabling stricter integration in management priorities and needs; reed cultivators need to be convinced that biennial Phragmite-vegetation is necessary for specific breeding birds, which is to be achieved by cyclic mowing of plots or strips (these detailed localities are to be included in the annual management plan).

- Every year, at least two tenant meetings are held in the Weerribben under the auspices of Staatsbosbeheer. There are around 120 tenants.

Chapter 3.1.:

3.1. Visitors – information policy

The Weerribben Outdoor Centre of Staatsbosbeheer in Ossenzijl was given an important face-lift in 2012. The main reason for doing this was to make the Centre financially independent, because Staatsbosbeheer is no longer receiving any government subsidy for educational services.

In 2013, the planning was started for a new Centre in close collaboration with the municipality of Steenwijkerland, the National Park and a local entrepreneur. The first step is to draw up a business case and a marketing plan.

3.1.1. Arrangements for receiving and informing the public (premises, booklets, maps, cards, etc.)

In collaboration with Waterrijk Weerribben-Wieden (marketing and promotion) and entrepreneurs from the area, an increasing number of sustainable arrangement are being developed. Staatsbosbeheer and Natuurmonumenten are also increasingly organising sustainable excursions, usually in collaboration with the local entrepreneurs in the National Park.

The second water taxi was launched this year. These electrically-driven vessels offer tourists new sustainable transport between the various villages in the National Park. The social media have become increasingly important in using them. Both the Visitors' Centre in the Wieden and the Outdoor Centre in the Weerribben have their own Facebook pages, which attracts an increasingly wider target group. Some National Park wardens also have a Twitter account.

3.1.2. Numbers of visitors and behaviour (number, distribution in time and space)

No changes

3.1.3. Special visits (VIPs, groups, etc.).

Foreign visitors

- A group of German journalists for an NDR Nature Programme shoot.

Politicians and government authorities

- Ms. M. van der Tas, Mayor of Steenwijkerland
- Municipal Executive and Members of the municipality of Steenwijkerland
- Supervisory Board of Staatsbosbeheer
- Natura 2000 Programme Executive
- Supervisory Board of the Rural Area Department (DLG)
- Supervisory Board of the Ministry of Economic Affairs
- Mrs C. Dik-Faber, Member of Parliament for the Christen Unie
- Prof. Dr. Elbert Dijkgraaf, Member of Parliament for the SGP
- B. Boerdam, Member of the Provincial Executive for the Province of Overijssel, (Christen Unie)
- T. Rietkerk, Member of the Provincial Executive for the Province of Overijssel (CDA)
- Members of the Provincial Council

Other

- Business Club Kampen
- Fellow managers.
- Dutch TV: NTR, EO, VARA and RTV East for nature and cultural programmes.

31. Seitsemien National Park – Finland

Actions taken in order are explained in sections I/3 and I/5.

Section I/3:

3. Education and scientific interest

3.1. Visitors — Information policy

3.1.1. Arrangements for receiving and informing the public (building, booklets, maps, cards, etc.)

The yearly changing theme of informing public was mires. Several guided tours and exhibitions were organized for the public, as a part of the Boreal Peatland LIFE-project. One object of the project is increase the public awareness on the natural values of mires. Actions of the project are directed to the several mire areas in Southern Finland.

The provincial co-operation in environmental education was not very active during the year, due to limited resources of the participants of the environmental education network.

3.1.2. Frequentation by visitors and behaviour (number, distribution in time and space)

Estimated number of visits to Seitsemien Visitor Centre is 29 500 and Kovero Crown Tenant Farm 8 400 in 2013. In client groups provided with guidance were over 7000 participants.

The number of visits to Seitseminen National Park will be approximately 40 000 in 2013.

According the visitor survey and the customer survey (made at year 2012) the most popular visiting places are The Visitor Centre and the Kovero Crown Tenant Farm. Most of the visits are made between May and October, but winter season is also important.

3.1.3. Special visits (distinguished persons, groups, etc.)

Cooperation with local entrepreneurs and tourism operators was active. The partnership agreements were made with five new entrepreneurs. “The Heritage Day” –event was arranged again together with local entrepreneurs and first time with “The Martha Organisation”. Natural Heritage Services has began cooperation with “Marthas” by arranging events together. “The Marthas” is a Finnish home economics organization, which promote the quality and standard of life in the home, cultural and civic education and environmental protection.

“The Heritage Day” –event achieved a new record -over five hundred visitors became familiar with the demonstration of traditional skills during one day.

Environmental education at local schools was continued by arranging lectures for pupils. With the funding of the Boreal Peatland LIFE three guided tours was arranged for disabled people and 1000 kindergarten children and pupils for 5 and 6 grades were taken to the mires of Seitseminen.

3.2. Scientific research

3.2.1. Current or completed research (observation, experimentation, etc.; identification or inventory of the species listed in the appendices to the Bern Convention, etc.)

3.2.2. Scientific publications

Section I/5:

5. Site management (management plans, budget and personnel)

5.1. Improvements made

5.1.1. Ecological action affecting the flora and biotopes; controls of fauna

5.1.2. Protection against the elements (fire, water regime)

5.1.3. Approaches and thoroughfares (paths, roads, car parks, signposting, fencing, etc.)

5.1.4. Field equipment (hides and study facilities)

The reservable cooking shelter was completed at Soljanen region and a new skiing trail from the Visitor Centre to the Kovero area will be opened in winter. The new skiing route is not locating in the park area. Construction was funded by Regional Employment and Economic Development Centre.

5.1.5. Waste management

5.1.6. Use of renewable energy systems

5.2. Management

5.2.1. Administrative department:

5.2.2. Wardens' department:

5.2.3. Internal policing measures

5.2.4. Infringement of regulations and damage; legal action

32. Białowieża National Park (BNP) – Poland

Conditions:

1. The Białowieża National Park has completed works on the project of the long term protection plan. We would like to stress that the project of the Management Plan does not foresee logging in forest ecosystems. In order to maintain the regulations concerning allowances for local communities, mainly permits for mushroom and berry gathering, strict protection regime cannot be established, but timber exploitation will be banned. The project was also agreed with the General Directorate of the Environmental Protection as well as the Chief Inspectorate of the Environmental Protection with regard to protection and monitoring of the Natura 2000 Sites. The project was consulted with the General Directorate of the State Forest Administration. In addition, the project was consulted with the Institute of Nature Conservation of Polish Academy of Sciences. Presently, the project of the Decree of the Ministry of the Environment concerning the Management Plan for the Białowieża National Park has been completed and was sent to the Government Legislation Centre to be analyzed. Concurrently the project is analyzed by other Ministries of Polish Government and it will be available for public consultations again. Only after completing that part of consultations the Decree will be accepted by the Minister of the Environment. Finally, when the plan becomes legally binding the park's authorities will prepare English version of the principles and activities of the management and will send to the Secretariat of Council of Europe to be reviewed by appointed experts.
2. As to the second condition concerning enhancement of the protection of old-growth forests in the whole of the Białowieża Forest we inform that the Minister of the Environment declared that it is a priority for the Ministry to strengthen the protection of the Białowieża Forest. The decision of limiting timber exploitation from the Białowieża Forest managed by the State Forest administration was undertaken by the Ministry in October of 2010. A ten – year management plan for the Forest Districts of the Białowieża Forest was established and accepted by the Ministry of the Environment. It states that for the next ten years (2013 – 2022) the annual timber production cannot exceed 48,5 cubic meters. In addition, the ban on cutting the trees in treestands of over 100 years is continued. The methodology of defining of treestand age has been changed according to the recommendation of prof. Tomasz Wesołowski – 10 % of trees of any species in a given area older than 100 years is enough to classify a treestand as older than 100 years. Until now the dominant species of a given survey unit must have been classified as older than 100 years. Meanwhile, the 5-year management tasks for some nature reserves situated outside of the Białowieża National Park and managed by the State Forest Administration were elaborated. Activities planned include mainly: maintenance of tourist trails, roads, division lines and fences protecting young stands against overgrazing, monitoring of xylophages and cambiophages. It is also planned to shape the selected treestands according to Natura 2000 requirements, in accordance to the needs of priority species. The whole area of the Białowieża Forest is registered as Natura 2000 site according to Habitat Directive and Bird Directive.

A long-term management plan for the Natura 2000 site “Białowieża Forest” is in final stage of preparation. The project was presented for public consultations.

Recommendations:

1. Institutions involved in the management of the Białowieża Forest try to enhance the cooperation and consultation process on different levels. This is performed mainly by participation of managers, researchers and representants of local authorities in scientific councils and advisory bodies. The Director of the Regional Directorate of the Environmental Protection is a member of the Scientific Council of the Białowieża National Park. The Director of the Park is a member of the Scientific and Social Council of the Białowieża Forest Promotional Complex. The cooperation between the Białowieża National Park and the State Forest Administration is being enhanced by joint preparation

of the application to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre on changing the names, boundaries and criteria of inscription of the World Heritage Property “Belovezhskaya Pushcha / Białowieża Forest”.

2. The administration of the State Forests of the Białowieża Forest maintains the ban on cutting trees older than 100 years. As far as the BNP is concerned, wind fallen and uprooted trees which do not fall over the roads are leaved in the forest for natural decomposition. The quantity of wood sold was 659,28 m³ (including timber used by the BNP). In 2012/2013 BNP did not carry out sanitary logging in forest ecosystems. Most of the timber sold by the BNP comes from the Palace Park – which is subjected to landscape conservation and has the character of an English-style garden and it's character has to be maintained, as well as from the European Bison Breeding Centre where the safety of the animals is the priority so dead wood should be removed. In the Hwoźna Protected Area over 99% of dead wood is left in the ecosystem. The data of timber sold by the BNP are presented in the table 1.

Table 1. Timber sold by the Białowieża National Park

Felling type / Age class	SPECIES							Total
	Pine	Spruce	Ash, Maple, Elm, Oak	Hornbeam	Birch	Alder	Aspen, Poplar, Linden, Willow	
Improvement felling II age class [21-40]	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Improvement felling III age class [41-60]	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Emergency logging II age class [21-40]	0	0	0	0,65	0	0	1,3	1,95
Emergency logging III age class [41-60]	0	1,4	18,36	0	0	5,85	11,65	37,26
Emergency logging IV older age class [61-80 and older]	16,06	187,83	306,28	38,7	53	7,8	10,4	620,07
TOTAL m³	16,06	189,23	324,64	39,35	53	13,65	23,35	659,28

Table 2. Timber sold by the State Forest Administration

Species	Pine	Spruce	Ash, Oak	Hornbeam	Birch	Alder	Aspen, Poplar, Linden, Willow	Other coniferous	Other deciduous	Total
TOTAL m ³	10370	18306	1949	1266	8363	981	1405	4567	2034	49241

3. BNP's Education and Museum Centre provides educational programs to about 60 – 70 thousand people annually, either passive - educational natural science exhibitions or active (about 4 – 5 thousand people) participation in projects such as natural sciences or ecology education. Main activities are such as: educational projects for schools; outdoor activities for youngsters and adults arranged due to visitors' needs or Park's educational assignments; outdoor courses and trainings for teachers; periodical lessons for local schools' pupils and students; natural science knowledge competitions, art and photography contests related to natural science and culture; multiactive

exhibitions; museum exposition; educational pathways; publishing works. Visits of the official delegations are also treated as the opportunity for natural education concerning primeval forests and natural processes.

4. Number of tourists visiting the strictly protected area did not rise significantly during last years. Some fluctuations are observed but so far there are no reasons for applying additional regulations. No new tourist paths were created. The idea of revitalizing of a railway through the forest and the national park was dropped. On the Narewka and Hwozna rivers, within the borders of BNP, kayaks and canoes are banned.
5. The works on establishing the complete buffer zone around BNP including Białowieska and Masiewska Glades are being carried out. The administration of the BNP gives negative opinions on any plans of new infrastructure in the nearest neighborhood of the Park. The current surveys do not show signs of traffic increase within the area of the Park and in its neighborhood.
6. The border fence issue can be solved exclusively by the Belarusian State Party.
7. The agreement between the Governments of the Republic of Poland and Republic of Belarus concerning the environmental issues was negotiated and finalized. The agreement was signed in Białowieża, on September 12, 2009. It covers different aspects of cooperation between both countries. The English translation of the agreement was attached to the report of 2012.

In 2012 Polish and Belarusian partners submitted to the World Heritage Center the re-nomination dossier of the World Heritage Site, according to suggestions of UNESCO and IUCN experts. Almost the whole Polish part of the Białowieża Forest will be included into the boundaries of enlarged site. The change of criteria of nomination are also suggested. We suggest change of the criteria as we believe that as far as nature conservation is concerned, the criteria ix and x are much more adequate to the site which was one of the first protected areas in Europe, even before the concept of the national park was introduced in this part of Europe. The Białowieża Forest is known in the world mainly for its unique flora, fauna and unbroken natural processes which are studied carefully by the researches from all over the world. We believe that new criteria reflect better the outstanding universal values of the Site.

33. Bieszczady National Park – Poland

Condition 1

In 2013 the completed project of Protection Plan of the Bieszczady National Park for years 2011-2030 was filed in the Ministry of Environment. The Bieszczady National Park Administration is expected of final agreement of the document in 2013.

Recommendations:

1. The Park continuously uses legal opportunities, allowing us to control the wild game in the area managed by State Forests Office. The Park Manager expresses an opinion on the hunting plans for the hunting districts in National Park buffer zones and the area between the main Park complex and its enclave in the upper San river. In 2013 The State Forests organised the Forest Promotional Complex on the areas next to BNP which enhances the environment protection in buffer zone of the Park. The area of the complex is 24 234 ha. In the future, the importance of ecological education in the area will increase compare to decreasing wood gain.
2. Bieszczady National Park coordinates the scientific research concerning the population of the large predators on the area of the Park. The Park cooperates with the Polish Academy of Sciences. The Park staffs perform tasks concerning the large mammals and predatory birds monitoring. BNP realizes project funded mostly from Swiss Financial Mechanism in the area of protection of the large mammals, focussing mainly on the conservation of migration corridors.

3. Local governments have their respective representatives in the Science Council of the Bieszczady National Park. The work progress within the Protection Plan has been presented to them at the Scientific Council meetings.
- 4 and 5. Bieszczady National Park altogether with the partners from Slovakia and Ukraine is carrying out the tasks of trilateral Transboundary Biosphere Reserve "Eastern Carpathians". There are common protective zoning in the Reserve area in all the countries involved.

The Park participates in the broad cooperation of the natural heritage protection of the Reserve countries, and scientific institutions dealing with nature protection of the countries stated above.

This includes: organizing and hosting various conferences, seminars, research expeditions and the issue of the scientific journal "Roczniki Bieszczadzkie" (Bieszczady Annals) containing the articles of the Polish, Slovak and Ukrainian authors

34. Dobročský prales National Natural Reserve – Slovak Republic

By the **resolution No. (2008)19** on the renewal of the European Diploma for the Dobročský prales NNR, adopted at the 1031st meeting of the Committee of Ministers on 2nd July 2008, was renewed the European Diploma for the NNR Dobročský prales from 18th August 2008 to 18th September 2013. The resolution sets one condition and 2 recommendations:

1. Condition

Pursue the process of transforming anthropogenic forests into semi-natural forests, mainly in the buffer zone of the Dobročský prales NNR, in compliance with the management plan.

Process of transforming anthropogenic forests into semi-natural forests in the buffer zone of the Dobročský prales NNR continued in the reported period, the calamity timber was processed in a volume of 397 m³ (wind calamity – volume of 198 m³, infested by the bark beetle - volume of 199 m³).

In the surrounding forest stands, out of the protected area, prescribed interventions were carried out in accordance with the valid Forest Management Plan as well as the necessary sanitation measures under the current status of the forest stands with an occurrence of the bark beetle calamity and other types of calamity.

2. Recommendations

1. Promote awareness-raising activities, mainly:

- *updating the exhibition on the Dobročský prales National Nature Reserve in the cottage Pred Skalickou*
- *in co-operation with the forestry authorities, installing the information point on the Dobročský prales National Nature Reserve in the Forestry Museum in the Vydrovská Valley, near Čierny Balog;*

In 2013 within the fulfilment of the task of the second paragraph of this recommendation in the forestry open-air museum it was installed a panel that informs visitors about the importance of primeval forests. There is also a mention about the NNR Dobročský prales there. At the same time an information panel about the largest fir in the primeval forest named "Dobročská jedľa" was prepared. It displays authentic photographs, basic information about the fir and NNR Dobročský prales in Slovak and English languages.

Year 2013 was particularly devoted to preparations of the 100th anniversary of protection of the NNR Dobročský prales and the NNR Badínsky prales (protection of the both primeval forests was declared in 1913 by a one legal act). The most important task was to prepare documents for creation of a copy of the torso "Dobročský fir tree" in its actual size. During the reporting period it was made a construction and basic finishes of the surface (a material used was from the category of exterior epoxy resins). On the site

of the work of art (Forest Open Air Museum in Vydrovská valley) it was built a concrete base measuring approx 3x3 m. The author of a work of art is Mgr. Art. Martin Hudáček from Banská Bystrica.

The Poľana Protected Landscape Area Administration staff took part in the event Deň stromu 2013 (17 000 visitors) in the Vydrovská Valley, organized every year by the Forests of the Slovak Republic, State Enterprise. Its representatives provided information about the Dobročský prales NNR according to visitors' interest.

Relevant information is also in the sections 3.1.1.

2. *Implement other activities listed in the management plan, particularly research and monitoring.*

Monitoring of the status of the territory does not indicate any significant changes in comparison with the previous period. Monitoring of frequency visitors indicate a soft decrease.

The occurrence of invasive alien plant species has not been recorded. In terms of the Management Plan of the NNR Dobročský prales in 2013 a zoological research (by dipl. Ing. Peter Potocký from the Poľana Protected Landscape Area Administration) was carried out in the territory. It was oriented on invertebrate. The research will continue also in 2014.

The common maintenance of information objects was ensured by the Poľana Protected Landscape Area Administration and the area manager.

Relevant information is also in the sections 3.2.2.

Section 3.1.1:

3.1.1. Arrangements for receiving and informing the public (building, brochures, maps, postcards, etc.)

In the reported period there were no major changes in number and equipment of public information sites in the territory the Dobročský prales NNR except that the wooden floor was replaced and insulation against soil moisture added in the exhibition of the Pred Skalickou exposition.

All the basic information data about the Dobročský prales NNR is available for visitors of the open air museum in the information centre at the beginning of „Path of Forest Time“, and also on the website of the interest organizations.

Distribution of information materials about the NNR Dobročský prales is carried out by the NGO VYDRA - Rural Development Activity, the Forests of the Slovak Republic, State Enterprise (branch Čierny Balog) and the State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic.

Basic data about National Nature Reserve (NNR) Dobročský prales (primeval forest) states the civil association “Prales” on their website www.pralesy.sk.

The year 2013 was particularly devoted to preparations for the 100th anniversary of the declaration and protection of the NNR Dobročský prales and the NNR Bađinsky prales (protection of the both primeval forests was declared in 1913 by the one legal act). Preparations were based primarily on the implementation of the objectives of the project "Development of landscape protection and protected areas in the Slovak Carpathians" under the Swiss financial mechanism. The most important task was to prepare documents for sending copies torso "Dobročský fir tree" in the actual size (193 cm diameter in 1,30 m height and approx. 4 m height of the torso). During the reporting period it was made its construction and basic finishes of the surface (material used was from the category of exterior epoxy resins). On the site of the work of art (Forest Open Air Museum in the Vydrovská Valley) it was built a concrete base measuring approx 3x3 m. Static stability and load-bearing structural elements comes from a secure attachment of the torso artistically created to the substrate. The author of a work of art is Mgr. Art. Martin Hudáček from Banská Bystrica. At the same time a specific information panel dedicated to the Dobročský Fir Tree (authentic photographs, basic data, Slovak and English versions of the text) was placed next the

torso. The second panel informs visitors about the importance of primeval forests, and there is also mentioned the NNR Dobročský prales there.

To promote the NNR Dobročský prales a set of two new portable banners (content - basic information, photographs) and a bookmark (it also informs about the NNR Badínsky prales) were made. Their design and construction was ensured by the Poľana Protected Landscape Area Administration.

In addition, information booklet was published "100th anniversary protection Badínsky prales and Dobročský prales" with aim to record celebrations on 3th October 2013. Materials for its publication were prepared in collaboration with the State Enterprise Lesy SR, OZ Čierny Balog and OZ Slovenská Lupča (selection of photos, basic information about the forests, speeches of the director of the OZ Čierny Balog, director of the OZ Slovenská Lupča and director of the Poľana Protected Landscape Area Administration, program of celebrations).

To the promotion of a significant anniversary of protection of the NNR Dobročský prales contributed also a logo commemorating 2013 as the year 100th anniversary of protection of the Dobročský and Badínsky primeval forests. This anniversary symbol was used in an official written communication, promotional materials only during 2013.

In addition, in 2013, through radio and TV (RTVS, TA3 radio television stations) also the general public had opportunity to learn not only about the subject of protection, but also the reasons and processes that preceded the proclamation of protected areas in 1913.

Section 3.2.2:

3.2.1. Scientific studies and publications

Scientific articles in international paper:

GÖMÖRYOVÁ E., UJHÁZY K., MARTINÁK M., GÖMÖRY D. 2013: Soil microbial community response to variation in vegetation and abiotic environment in a temperate old-growth forest. *Applied Soil Ecology* 68: 10–19.

Chapter in foreign monography:

UJHÁZY, K., KRIŽOVÁ, E., GLONČÁK, P., BENČAŤOVÁ, B. & NIČ, J. 2013: Tree Species and Management Effect on Herb Layer Species Composition in Mountain Fir-Beech Forests of the Western Carpathians. In: Kozak J., Ostapowicz K., Bytnerowicz A., Wyžga B. (eds.), *The Carpathians: Integrating Nature and Society Towards Sustainability*, Springer, p. 239–255.

35. Tsentral'no-Chernozemny Region, Kurskaya Oblast' – Russian Federation

The Tsentral'no-Chernozemny Zapovednik was awarded with the Diploma of the Council of Europe on September 28, 1998. An expert of the Council of Europe Herve Lethier visited all sections of the reserve in June 2002. Taking into consideration his conclusions the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe made a decision to renew the Diploma till 18 September 2008.

In November 2007 an expert of the Council of Europe Jadviga Senkevich visited the reserve to clear up if the reserve could be given the Diploma for a new period.

Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas to the Tsentralno-Chernozemny Biosphere Reserve was adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 2 July 2008. The European Diploma was prolonged until 18 September 2013.

However, later it was found out, that the Diploma should be prolonged not on 5 but on 10 years according to new rules (Resolution CM/ResDip (2008) 1). The Secretary has prepared the project of the new Resolution which has been approved at session of Group of experts on February, 8-9th, 2012 and then it should be submitted to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. We do not have information

when prolongation of the Diploma by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe was approved.

The following recommendations to the renewal were given in 2008:

1. provide sufficient resources to ensure proper functioning of the reserve. Financial support is needed to carry out basic research and establish infrastructure for the development of ecological education, as well as for strengthening the Tsentralno-Chernozemny Biosphere Reserve protection capacity;
2. carry on systematic efforts to extend all the Reserve territories, especially their buffer zones and to establish and/or restore ecological corridors between these territories;
3. continue efforts to search for new valuable steppe territories which could be joined to Tsentralno-Chernozemny Biosphere Reserve or constitute stepping stones or ecological corridors between the existing territories of the reserve;
4. encourage further co-operation projects with international participation – such as the “Yaroslavna” project – in the sphere of nature and landscape conservation and sustainable development;
5. continue work on the optimisation of territory of the Belogorye Biosphere Reserve. This reserve might be expanded through incorporation of new steppe ecosystems, which would strengthen the interest of the diploma-holding area. Possibly consider the extension of the European Diploma to the Belogorye Reserve.

In accordance with these items, the Zapovednik’s administration emphasizes the following:

1. In 2013 according to the Steppe project the haymaking equipment for maintenance of mowing regime of meadow steppes for total amount more than 5 million rubles was acquired: tractor, hook-on mower, rake, press sorter.
2. The work has been continued on creation of a buffer zone of Poima Psla and Zorinsky sections of the Zapovednik. By present time Regulations about a buffer zone are developed and the approval of a part of land users is received.
3. In 2013 works have been continued on expansion the zapovednik’s territory and creation of biosphere range "Steppe" in Kursk area of 463 hectares.
4. Since 2010 the Zapovednik is involved in the Steppe Project which is financed by international organizations UNDP and GEF as well as by Federal Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of RF “Improving the coverage and management efficiency of protected areas in the steppe biome of Russia”. Only 4 zapovedniks throughout Russia have been chosen as pilot territories for this project.
5. The «Belogorye» Zapovednik is an organization with the separate administration and management; the Tsentral’no-Chernozemny Zapovednik can carry out works on optimization only its own territory.

36. Oostvaardersplassen Dutch Nature Reserve – The Netherlands

In 2013 there was continued development in Flevoland, which included the expansion of Lelystad airport. During the consultative procedure concerning the flight routes to and from the airport, Staatsbosbeheer sent a letter expressing its point of view. The letter stressed the importance of protecting and sparing the Oostvaardersplassen reserve as a protected area, and the need to maintain the other nature reserves in Flevoland (see Appendix 2).

Note Secretariat: content of Appendix 2 received separately by e-mail from the authorities:

Centrum Publieksparticipatie / Public Consultation Centre

Proposal to expand Lelystad Airport

PO Box 30316

2500 GH The Hague
The Netherlands

16 September 2013

View on the proposal to expand Lelystad Airport

Date J. Kuipers

Subject Sbo2013-2534-jku

Contact person

Our reference

Your reference

Attachments

Dear Sir or Madam,

I have been actively following the expansion of Lelystad Airport with close interest for many years. I am in touch and maintain cordial relations with the various administrative authorities and stakeholders involved in the process. My view on the matter is that it must be possible for the airport to expand, but that, in my capacity as the manager of a large number of nature reserves in the province of Flevoland, it is my responsibility to preserve the quality of these areas.

With regard to the proposal to expand Lelystad Airport, the Oostvaardersplassen nature reserve is my primary concern. This internationally renowned area plays an important role in providing habitat for many bird species in northwest Europe. This is why the area forms part of both the main ecological network in the Netherlands and the European Natura 2000 network. The area has also been designated as a Ramsar site and has been awarded the European Diploma for Nature Conservation by the Council of Europe. Each time the diploma is renewed (every 5 years) the Council of Europe conducts a critical assessment of the departure routes from Lelystad Airport and the possible impact of air traffic on the area.

In my capacity as the manager of the Oostvaardersplassen nature reserve, which includes responsibility for compliance with the legislative and regulatory requirements alluded to above, I would ask that you conduct a very careful examination and reconsideration of the proposed departure routes that will pass directly over the Oostvaardersplassen nature reserve.

In 2007 I asked the National Aerospace Laboratory of the Netherlands (NLR) to assess the likelihood that aircraft will have reached the threshold altitude of 3,000 feet when they pass over the Oostvaardersplassen nature reserve. NLR came to the conclusion that, while this is quite feasible from a technical point of view, interference caused by air traffic descending into Schiphol will make it highly likely that the vast majority of aircraft departing from Lelystad Airport will be flying at a lower altitude when they pass over the Oostvaardersplassen reserve. You draw the same conclusion in your paper, but you proceed on the basis of the assumption that this will apply to approximately 20% of all flights. There will need to be a fundamental change in air traffic control to create sufficient space for aircraft departing from Lelystad Airport in order to be able to guarantee that aircraft will pass

over the Oostvaardersplassen reserve at an altitude of 3,000 feet or higher.

It is also important to note that the threshold altitude of 3,000 feet is not unequivocally accepted. It is true that in many assessments it is postulated as an acceptable lower limit for disturbance, but, in reality, it is clear that factors such as the numbers of birds, the species, the time of year, the openness of the area, the weather, the type of aircraft and the frequency with which aircraft pass over an area all affect the level of disturbance. J. G. De Molenaar van Alterra discussed this point in the report he wrote in 2007 on the impact of the expansion of Lelystad Airport, which was commissioned by what was then the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries (LNV).

The suggestion that it might be possible for aircraft to pass over the area at an altitude of 2,000 feet deviates from the recommendation made by Mr Alders. The passage of aircraft such as Boeing 737 and Airbus A320 over the area at an altitude of 2,000 feet will incontrovertibly lead to significant adverse disturbance and is therefore an infeasible option since it fails to comply with the various legislative and regulatory requirements. Given that this is the case, I would ask that you reject this option.

In 2009 Staatsbosbeheer presented an alternative flight path plan in association with the Flevoland Nature Conservation Society (Natuur en Milieu Flevoland). This alternative was submitted to the Lower House of the States General as the 'Left Flight Path Route' by Minister Eurlings on 6 October 2009. (In your proposal this alternative is referred to as the 'Left Left Flight Path Route' ('linklinksom route').) I would urge you to conduct a detailed examination of this alternative as a possible solution and to regard it as a promising alternative.

Lastly I would like to draw to your attention the fact that the large numbers of birds in the Oostvaardersplassen nature reserve pose a potential risk to low flying aircraft. The Oostvaardersplassen reserve is home to tens of thousands of large waterfowl, such as cormorants, herons, swans and, above all, large flocks of geese. Greylag and barnacle geese are present on the reserve in large numbers throughout the year. These birds migrate both within the area and to other areas outside the Oostvaardersplassen nature reserve every day. They do this during the day and also at night. The fact that this is not simply a theoretical risk was effectively illustrated by the mid-air collision between a US Airways A320 aircraft and a flock of geese at an altitude of 2,800 feet in January 2009. This necessitated the execution of an emergency landing, which was successfully conducted.

I will be happy to provide a more detailed explanation and am also willing to contribute the thought process. I can also provide underlying data and reports on the area. If I can assist in this way, please contact me through my colleague, Mr J. Kuipers, who can be contacted on +31 (0)612 960 125.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

ir P. Winterman

Director of the East Region

On behalf of the Managing Director of Staatsbosbeheer

Regio Oost | Binnensingel 3 | 7411 PL Deventer | PO Box 6 | 7400 AA Deventer
| T +31 (0)570 747100 | F +31 (0)570 747111

37. Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve – Romania

Progress with measures taken in order to meet the conditions and/or recommendations defined during the award or renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas.

1. *The process of coordinating the ecological management of the delta system with the three countries concerned (Moldova, Romania and Ukraine) should be continued and strengthened and the possibility of establishing a cross-border protected area should be considered in the framework of the trilateral agreement signed by the three countries concerned, under the auspices of the Council of Europe;*

At the 2012 call for proposals under the Joint Operational Programme Romania-Ukraine-Republic of Moldova 2007-2013, DDBRA submitted the project proposal - The consolidation of the nature protected areas network for the protection of the biodiversity and sustainable development in the Danube Delta and Lower Prut River region – PAN Nature. This project is still under evaluation.

2. *The possibility of reactivating the co-operation between other European Diploma sites which are deltas (Camargue National Reserve (France) and Doñana National Park (Spain)) should be explored;*

During the year 2012 was finalized a draft Memorandum of Understanding for the collaboration between the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve, Romania and Doñana National Park, Spain. The Memorandum of Understanding was sent to the Ministry of Environment and Climate Changes, Romania, to continue the discussions with the partners from Spain.

3. *The monitoring of the ecological services and of the socio-economic activities carried out on the reserve (fishing, hunting, shipping, agriculture, forestry, logging, tourism) should be strengthened in relation with the carrying capacity of the natural ecosystems and the value of the reserve; special attention should be paid to the shipping activities (movement of boats and speeding) as well as to illegal fishing and hunting.*

The integrated monitoring programme of the reserve includes monitoring of the ecological services and of the socio-economic activities carried out on the reserve (fishing, hunting, shipping, agriculture, forestry, logging, tourism) and all the other aspects mentioned above. In 2012, DDBRA prepared a draft Governmental Decision regarding the rules for navigation inside the reserve. The legal document is under approval.

4. *Potential external threats should be continually monitored, especially the likely adverse transboundary impact on the ecosystem of the whole delta of the works related to the Bystroe canal in the Ukrainian sector;*

The integrated monitoring programme of the reserve includes as well the monitoring of the aspects on the impact of the transport activities from the Chilia channel, as a consequence of the functioning of the navigation channel Danube- Black Sea (Bistroe), built on the Ukrainian side of the river.

5. *The usefulness of banning hunting, or of managing hunting on a demonstrably sustainable basis, on the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve, especially in the most sensitive areas, should be studied;*

The Law 136/2011 foresees penalties for hunting inside the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve territory. No hunting activities were developed during the 2013 year in the protected areas.

6. *A system for better management of natural fisheries resources should be explored for the benefit of the local people, in order to reduce the categories and number of intermediary actors/stakeholders; the fish resources should be managed by the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority;*

Through the Order no. 44/1195 from 18 of February 2011, were approved the Rules regarding the access to the living aquatic resources from the State public domaine, for commercial fishing in natural fishing habitats from natural protected areas. The funds rising from the authorization of the industrial fishing activity will be incomes at the budgets of local authorities, to be used for projects for local development. By the Law

136/2011, the local population has the right of exclusiveness at the renewable natural resources use through traditional economic activities.

7. Information concerning access of boats to vulnerable parts of the reserve should be made readily available to the public;

This kind of information is available on the web page of DDBRA. The Ministry of Environment and Climate Changes, in collaboration with DDBRA, elaborated a proposal for a Governmental Decision to regulate the access and navigation inside the reserve territory. The Governmental Decision is under approval.

8. The Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority should continue to bring technical and financial assistance to the local populations, municipalities and private operators in different fields (land planning, water supplies, sewage treatment) and assist with information on organizing and developing activities compatible with the aims of the reserve, such as ecotourism, bird watching and handicrafts;

In 2013, the Operational Programme for Fishing 2007-2013, launched the first call for project proposals. The applications received so far are addressed to different kind of activities and stakeholders and beneficiaries, with the same purpose – to enhance the living standards and to offer new opportunities to local communities.

9. The restoration programme of the existing buildings should be continued, using traditional materials and natural local products; the cultural value of the reserve, especially the different ethnic roots of the populations, should be enhanced with the engineering and technical input of specialized institutes,

DDBRA surveys the ways that the objectives presented by the implementation of the Building Regulation in Reserve are followed.

10. An external review and assessment of the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve's Conservation Strategy (for example, priorities, management objectives, operational objectives and financial requirement) should be organized in 2010, ten years after its declaration, with the support of international expertise;

During the year 2013 were approved for financing new project proposals at the call for proposals 2012, under the Sectoral Operational Programme "Environment" 2007-2013: (i) Integrated Management plan for the Danube Delta area, (ii) Conservation of the Letea Forest strictly protected area from Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve, (iii) Restoration of the natural habitats and wild species inside the Natura 2000 sites: ROSPA0031 and ROSCI0065 from Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve. These projects implementation started in 2013 and will be finalized in 2015.

11. The necessary funding should be provided in order to improve the capacity/performance of the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority; a feasibility study on the creation of a financial mechanism should be undertaken so that all commercial activities and uses (not only tourist activities) contribute to the financing of the reserve;

In 2013 was approved the Law 216/2013 for the approval of the Governmental Emergency Order 127/2010 for the adoption of some measures foreseen for the economic-social development of the area "Danube Delta". This legal document offers a financial mechanism for DDBRA to use the funds from taxes, fees, permits and authorizations issuing. The Law 216/2013 brings as well some modifications to the Law 82/1993 for the establishment of the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve, to support DDBRA in its activity.

12. The adoption of the legal framework (master plan, Law on the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve, Law on the Protected Areas) should be accelerated;

DDBRA submitted a project proposal for Integrated Management plan for the Danube Delta area, under the Sectoral Operational Programme “Environment” 2007-2013 in 2012, and in 2013 was signed the contract for financing. The project implementation started in 2013 and will end in 2015.

13. Noting that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedure is in operation, the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority should continue to analyze carefully the requests for new wind farms in the neighborhood of the reserve.

Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve surveys carefully the development of wind farms in the reserve’s neighborhood area.

14. Wild horses in the Letea forest

In 2012, Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority submitted a project proposal at the call for proposals 2012, under the Sectoral Operational Programme “Environment” 2007-2013 for the protection of the Letea Forest. The project proposal was approved in 2013, and its implementation started.

15. The project of touristic development in Sulina: “Planning Sulina beach”

In November 2012, in Bruxelles, took place a meeting between the representatives of DDBRA, of the Ministry of Environment Romania and of the European Commission. The cause was not classified, but the European Commission asked DDBRA to fulfill two requests: to demonstrate, from scientific point of view, with documents, that the total surface of the Habitat 1410 inside the reserve is much more than 150 ha, as was mentioned in the book of Donita, and to be developed an appropriate assessment (environmental impact assessment) of the works. The Project “Integrated Management plan for the Danube Delta area”, financed under the Sectoral Operational Programme “Environment” 2007-2013, will offer the scientific document, having in view that one of the project results is the habitats mapping. The environmental impact assessment process was started, as well, in 2013.

38. Podyjí National Park - Czech Republic

Recommendations to the renewal:

1. To ensure, in collaboration with the operator of the hydroelectric power station at Vranov, that the negative amplitudes in the flow regime from the dam sluices are reduced and that a minimum residual flow rate is guaranteed;

New negotiation with owner of hydropower plant Vranov started. Its aim is to ensure ecologically bearable flows under Vranov reservoir. New permission of water usage (see chapter 5.1.2) is only one of more possibilities.

2. To secure the adoption and implementation of the management plan for the period 2010-2019;

Accomplished in 2012

3. To control the development of leisure activities, and in particular to avoid the use of the River Dyje for water sports;

Accomplished by keeping the rules declared in management plan for years 2012-2020.

4. To intensify co-operation with the Thayatal National Park to harmonise the fishing regulations within the two parks and reduce the negative effects of fishing in the core zones;

Working group to reduce the negative impacts on the nature caused by fishery on the Czech side of the river Dyje continues. The result will be available approximately at the end of 2013.

5. To develop relations with municipalities and the local community in order to encourage sustainable management of their land within the national park, in line with the principles and rules laid down in the management plan;

Implementation of two projects made by Institute of Landscape Planning (Faculty of Horticulture Lednice, Mendel University of Agriculture and Forestry Brno, Czech Republic) on request of local administrations has already started in Lesná and Hnanice.

National Park Administration also reached the agreement on future area plans of Znojmo and Vranov and Dyjí municipalities.

6. To pursue and improve the management of agricultural areas, particularly in the buffer zones;

See chap. 5.1.2 and 2.1.1 for implemented measures.

7. To grant funding to public authorities for water supply and purification within the park's perimeter;

The project for sewerage of communities in national park (there are 3 villages without sewer system left) was granted funding. Currently, the selection for the contractor is under way and construction should start next year.

8. To undertake research on the influence of the artificial barriers on the ecosystem of the Dyje River. Mitigation measures on the riparian ecosystems should be adopted.

ETC project started in autumn 2012, lead partner is the Czech Water Administration for the Morava River Basin (including the Dyje river); project partner is Province of Lower Austria; other partners are National Parks Thayatal and Podyjí. Research on the artificial barriers on the ecosystem according to the water framework directive and the European diploma recommendations for both parks is the part of this project. The project continues in its scheduled agenda. Research on migration barriers has already started.

Chapter 2.1.1:

2.1.1. Changes concerning cultural heritage

140 fruit trees were planted at 8 different locations in open landscape. All of them were traditional species once grown in Podyjí area.

Chapter 5.1.2:

5.1.2. Protection against the elements (fire, water regime)

Water regime

Proceedings for permission of water usage for hydropower plant Vranov was suspended till May 30, 2014.

Small hydropower plant Vranov 2 (immediately below the dam Vranov) is already operating. Minimal residual flow of 2.8 m³ / s - 3.4 m³ / s can thus be kept depending on water level in Vranov reservoir. Nevertheless, this minimal residual flow is not legally enforceable. Owner of the dam E.ON Trend, s.r.o. keep this minimal residual flow thanks to state subsidiaries for this kind of energy production. Podyji National Park administration would like to get for this minimal and but also maximal residual flow regulation legal ground in further administrative proceedings.

Soil erosion

Another 8.2 ha of arable land were grassed on several places in vicinity of Čížov. Other 3.2 ha of arable land was left for succession.

39. National Park Thayatal – Austria

Progress with measures taken in order to meet the conditions and/or recommendations defined during the award or renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas.

In the 2008 resolution of the Committee of Ministers seven recommendations were mentioned, which should be fulfilled by the applicant.

1. River ecology
2. Sills across the Thaya
3. The Vranov dam

A bilateral project started in November 2012 (3 years working programme) with special consideration of the water management in the Thaya River and the connectivity (see 5.1.1)

4. Wildlife

There a low number of beavers and the otters in the parks, population monitored regularly. Reserach on the wild cat continued (EU funded).

Research on otter, black stork and sea-eagle initiated for 2014/15

5. Natural and built environment

No changes. Planned windfarm recently postponed for further investigations.

Chapter 5.1.1:

- 5.1.1. Ecological action affecting the flora and biotopes; controls of fauna

Track mapping (continued, extended to CZ)

Combating neophytes (continued)

ETC project started, Lead partner Czech water administration for the Thaya river; project Partner Province of Lower Austria; other partners National Parks Thayatal and Podyjí. Includes research on the connectivity according to the water framework directive and the European diploma recommendations for both parks.

Working group to reduce the impacts on the fish stock caused by fishery on the Czech side of the river Thaya continued.

40. Matsalu National Park – Estonia

- *The land reform has not influenced the biodiversity of the area*
- *Fishing is still well controlled*
- *The regulation of alien species is going on*
- *Substantial part of semi-natural meadows is grazed and mowed continuously and many areas are restored every year*
- *Efforts are made to restore the water regime of key areas*

41. The volcanic phenomena of the Tihany Peninsula – Hungary

1. translate the management plan into more detailed and practical measures; »
 - The development of the management plan has begun, and it will be supplemented with special regulations in terms of Natura 2000. Furthermore, detailed proposals for good agricultural practices will be included.
2. strongly enforce the ban on new buildings on the site; »
 - The National Park Directorate could reinforce the ban on new buildings on the site with the help of the municipality and other state authorities.

3. pursue the planning and construction of the visitor centre near Lake Belső; »
 - The Lavender House Visitor Centre, the visitor centre of the European Diploma area, was opened on the 1st June 2011. The number of visitors has been over 85 000 so far.
4. continue to manage and control visitor pressure; »
 - We have tried to reduce damages caused by numerous visitors on the site by mapping out routes, by developing nature trails and small areas with many sights near the village. Several new routing boards have been placed on the European Diploma area in cooperation with the mayor's office and the tourism association of Tihany.
5. keep the balance between closed forested areas and open areas (meadows with hedges and bushes); »
 - Significant work has begun on the site as part of the project forcing back invasive weed species, subsidized by a state-tender (Environment and Energy Operational Programme). About 60 hectare special pasture land with oak-trees and wild fruit trees will be reconstructed.
6. encourage farming and wine-growing practices consistent with the conservation of natural and landscape assets; »
 - From the point of view of nature values good practises in farming and wine-growing have been encouraged by law and recommendation, too.
7. encourage the transfer of management rights on fishing in Lake Belső to the Balaton Uplands National Park; »
 - The management rights of Lake Belső was approved to the Balaton Uplands National Park by the state in 2013. Since then the National Park had a bigger opportunity to influence the fishing management, and to improve the ecological condition of the lake. The next opportunity to obtain the fishing rights will be in 2017, when the current contract expires.
8. encourage the transfer of state properties to the Balaton Upland National Park and pursue the acquisition of private land; »
 - Because of the very high land prices on the Tihany peninsula the National Park Directorate has not been able to buy new ground here.
9. continue to control invasive species such as the *Ailanthus*; »
 - The National Park Directorate won subsidies on a state-tender (Environment and Energy Operational Programme) to finance the forcing back of invasive weed species, such as the *Ailanthus altissima* (Mill.) Swingle and *Eleagnus angustifolia* L. The work began in autumn 2013.
10. develop co-ordinated management with nearby protected areas such as the reed beds on the shore of Lake Balaton and the Külső and Felső marshes. »
 - The National Park has managed the reed beds on the shore of Lake Balaton and Lake Külső and Felső marshes with the same method like other parts of the protected area. The project forcing back invasive weed species involves this area, too.

42. Het Naardermeer Nature reserve NL- The Netherlands

Progress with measures taken in order to meet the conditions and/or recommendations defined during the award or renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas.

Recommendations:

1. Long term improvement of the hydrological conditions of the reserve needs reduced pumping of drinking water in the Gooi hills and the separation of sewage water and surface water to increase quality of infiltration.

Ad 1. No changes or progress.

2. In order to complete all adequate actions of restoration and nature development it is of high priority that Natuurmonumenten gets financial support to complete the buffer zone around the core area of the reserve.

Ad 2. Complete acquirement of the purchase-areas in the reserve has already been difficult in the past, because of the informal character of the policy on this issue. The present policy of the government will make further purchase of land even more difficult and might lead to end this at all in the long term. This may lead to a partly fragmented Naardermeer-area and investments from “Brussel” could be partly seen as ‘devaluated’. No changes or progress since last year.

3. - The function of the Naardermeer as a core area in the ecological network (‘green main structure’) needs that all possible measures are taken to avoid habitat fragmentation in the corridor landscapes towards the IJmeer, the IJsselmeer, the Vecht River, the Ankeveense Plassen and the Gooi hills.

- in the regional planning the creation of the ‘natte as’ (‘wet axis’ or corridor with Naardermeer as a core area) between Amsterdam and Hilversum is to be promoted.

Ad 3. In October 2013 the ecological passage between Naardermeer and Ankeveen is completed.

The corridor to the North under the motorway A1 is still in preparation. Rijkswaterstaat and contractors are designing constructions for a 50m wide corridor under the motorway. Plans for two ecological corridors under the railway are elaborated. The west corridor has proven to be over-the-top for the species it was designed for. A new study on the ecological functionality therefore has started in July 2013. The construction of the east corridor has been taken over by the railway-company due to infrastructural works on this part of the railway.

4. - The establishment of larger ecological zones in the surrounding agricultural area enabling the further restoration of water levels is recommended, in order to avoid leakage from the reserve and further shrinking of peat layers.

- Restoration programmes transforming former polders into wetlands must be encouraged in order to link the Naardermeer with its surroundings; this needs agro-environmental agreements with the agricultural sector.

Ad 4. Currently talks are going on to purchase more farmlands.

5. The possibilities to improve the connecting corridor between Naardermeer and Ankeveense plassen by reconstructing the actual road on pillars (removal of a barrier) are to be considered.

Ad 5. Realised, see ad 3.

6. - In relation to the construction of a new motorway connection (A6-A9), the zero option, alternative routes and the possibility of underground passage NW of the reserve are to be duly investigated in a preliminary Environmental Impact study.

- The effects of widening of the A1 on the nearby reserve are to be minimised.

- Risks for pollution deriving from transport along motorways and railroad are to be minimised and carefully caught.

Ad 6. No changes.

43. Piatra Craiului National Park – Romania

The European Diploma was awarded conditioned by the following conditions:

1. complete the process of preparing and approving the new management plan by the end of 2011.

The Management Plan was submitted by the Park Administration to the Government for approval in 2011. It was analysed by all the ministries and it was approved in December 2013 through the Governmental Decision No. 1057/2013.

There were also six recommendations to the renewal:

1. secure the budget of the national park so that the national park administration is able to manage the park appropriately and has all financial resources needed in order to pay the staff on a regular basis;

The park budget is secured by the National Forest Administration (732.000 paid in 2013, 784.000 secured for 2014).

2. complete the construction of the headquarters and other infrastructure, especially the exhibition room and other tourist facilities, within three years and make particular efforts to raise the appropriate funds to achieve this;

The Park Administration has started from the 1st of March 2012 a Sector Operational Program Pillar 4 project, « The improvement of the conservation status of Piatra Craiului National Park's biodiversity by public awareness, information, visiting and monitoring »

The aim of the project is to set up the visitors sector of Piatra Craiului National Park Administration Headquarters from Zarnesti; to build an information point for tourists in Curmatura area; to build 4 information points at the main entrances of the park; to set up four thematic tourist trails, with information panels; to realize a printed thematic guide for the tourist trails with an attached map, and a guide for protected species and habitats; to realize 12 types of leaflets regarding the main elements of the park. The project contains also provisions for the fauna, flora and habitats monitoring.

In 2013 started the building works at Visitors Center in Zarnesti and Information Center at Curmatura. The buildings will to be completed in 2014.

3. elaborate and implement a specific high profile programme devoted to the promotion, preservation and restoration of the local architecture and landscape; this exemplary programme should be implemented with the help of relevant specialists and contribute to making this region a model for the preservation of natural and cultural heritage;

The architect from the Scientific Council, with the support of the Park Administration, elaborated a guide of how to build in order to preserve the local architecture and landscape, inspired also by the European Landscape Convention, and which will be published soon. The building rules were included in the Park Management Plan and encourage the use of local materials (timber and stone) for the new buildings and the preservation of the mountain village style with scattered houses.

The guide was distributed at the local authorities and the local communities.

4. pursue the scientific work and monitoring of biodiversity in every sector of the park; those activities should assess the status and trends of species and habitats, considering the national park as part of a functional ecosystem and consequently use appropriate methods and indicators to keep the national park administration aware of important changes to this ecosystem;

In 2013 there were monitored several species and habitats from Piatra Craiului National Park. 12 monitoring protocols are included in the SOP Project, including *Ligularia sibirica*, bats species from caves and bats species of European interest, capercaillie, chamois, birds of prey of European interest, forest habitats, bushes with *Pinus mugo* and *Rhododendron myrtifolium*, alluvial forest with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior*. During the winter there were monitored the bats hibernating colonies from the

caves to assess the conservation status. Most of the caves are closed and the bat population kept its number from the previous years. The large carnivores from the park were also monitored, using the snow-tracking method. During the spring there was monitored the capercaillie at the lecking sites. The search for more lecking sites is necessary, in order to estimate the population and the conservation status. At the end of spring and during the summer there were monitored several habitats of European importance (mountain hay meadows, bushes with *Pinus mugo* and *Rhododendron myrtifolium*, calcareous and calchist scree of the mountain to alpine level, alluvial forest with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior*) and also the birds of prey to assess the threats and the conservation status. During the autumn there were monitored the birds of prey species of European importance during the annual migration and also the red deer at the mating season. In October it was organized a monitoring action to evaluate the chamois population. At the end of autumn and beginning of winter there were monitored also the forest habitats to assess the conservation status and the trend of the clear-cutting areas and to prevent the illegal cutting of the Christmas trees.

5. regarding both central and local forest authorities, more attention should be paid to the enforcement of the forest law on the national park's fringe and in the surroundings of the park; the measures taken and the results obtained should be reported to the Council of Europe on an annual basis;

The Park Administration with the central forest authorities organized over 40 control actions to enforce the forest law, see the results at 5.2.4

6. pursue the efforts made by the national park administration to address the litter and garbage issues and to engage a new phase of activities facilitated by this administration; a detailed report on the results of those activities should be sent to the Council of Europe every two years.

In 2013 the Park Administration was involved in the "Let's do it, Romania", an awareness campaign for waste collection from all over the country. The areas included in the programme were Valea Raului-Prapastiile Zarnestilor and Plaiul Foi-Vala Tamasului. Another waste collecting action was organized in Magura village. There were collected over 150 garbage bags.

There were as well other 7 garbage collection campaigns, with volunteers organised by the Park Administration.

44. Central Balkan National Park – Bulgaria

Progress regarding to the conditions to the award:

Public Advisory Council for Central Balkan NP was established in 2010 as a result from the project "Model for Management with the Stakeholders Participation of Central Balkan – part of the National Ecological Network". The Council consists of 20 representatives of different stakeholders – representatives of municipal authorities and village mayors, chalet keepers, local tourism entrepreneurs, tour operators, artists, representatives of scientific and non-government conservation sector, users of park bio-resources, mass media, Ministry of Environment and Water, and state forest agency.

On the 25th and 26th of November was held a working session of the Public Advisory Council in village of Ribaritsa, near the Park border. This year in the meeting took part also members of Science Advisory Board of Central Balkan National Park. On the session, the members were aware with the results of implementation of the projects "Update of Central Balkan National Park Management Plan" and "Central Balkan – Park for everyone" funded through the Operational Programme Environment, 2007 – 2013. On the meeting were also discussed issues related to grazing in the park territory. Scientists and users of park bio-resources had the possibility to discuss together contentious issues related to the ways of use and loads of Park's pastures.

Progress regarding to the recommendations to the award:

After the accession of Bulgaria to EU there is an increased interest in the use of mountain pastures in the Park. In 2010 compared with 2006, for example, the number of sheep grazing in the Park has grown 12

times. The main reason is the implementation of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and opportunities for farmers to get compensatory payments from the various schemes of the CAP. Due to increased interest in the use of pastures, Park Directorate applies a step system of assessing applications and allocating eligible pasture areas.

During 2013, two-tier system was used again. On the first step, the Directorate provides pastures to those who wish to use the same areas as in 2012. This group includes farmers approved under sub-measure 4, measure 214 “Traditional practices for seasonal grazing animals” (Pastoralism) –, 2007-2013. On the second step, vacant pastures were distributed among remaining farmers. CBNPD is working on a proposal for changes in the said sub-measure of the Rural Development Programme for the next programming period (2014 – 2020) in order to eliminate some of the problems with the management of high mountain pastures.