

Resolution CM/ResDip(2018)14 on the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the Khosrov Forest Reserve (Armenia)

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 4 July 2018
at the 1321st 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 for Protected Areas;

Having regard to Resolution CM/ResDip(2013)2 on the award of the European Diploma to the Khosrov Forest Reserve (Armenia);

Taking into consideration the expert's report presented at the meeting of the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma for Protected Areas on 21 and 22 February 2018;

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

Noting that holding the European Diploma implies the maintenance of exceptional European interest, the continuance of exemplary management and compliance with the provisions of Resolution CM/ResDip(2008)1, especially with regard to the obligations to report annually and to give appropriate visibility to the European Diploma,

Renews the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the Khosrov Forest Reserve until 10 July 2028;

Attaches the following three conditions to the renewal:

1. by 2020, design and adopt a management plan for the long-term conservation of the area which will include strategic aims and targets, an estimated budget and a time frame for its full implementation, as well as a monitoring mechanism for the assessment of the implemented management measures; the management plan should also consider a strategic approach for the development of sustainable tourism compatible with the carrying capacity of the Khosrov Forest Reserve and the preservation of its integrity as a strictly protected area; the draft management plan should be submitted to the Secretariat of the Bern Convention prior to its adoption;
2. launch a political and administrative process aiming to sustain the preservation of the European interest of the area by means of expanding the territory of the reserve to better preserve the state of conservation of the key species (large carnivores and herbivores); removing the existing 11 enclaves along the border of the Khosrov Forest State Reserve; establishing a buffer zone with a clear protection regime and limits, minimising hunting and the effects of grazing on the reserve; addressing the issue of the "transit routes" that cross the reserve; and working to minimise their general impact on the natural assets of the diploma-holding area;
3. maintain and sustain the legal regime as a strictly protected area for the Khosrov Forest State Reserve in the future law on the protection of nature currently under discussion in the parliament;

Attaches the following three recommendations to the renewal:

1. as part of the new management plan, create and fund an awareness and training programme for local people, visitors and members of the staff of the reserve, in particular in relation to the management of litter and other waste, and to the development of sustainable tourism;
2. secure the Khosrov Forest State Reserve administration capacities in the future, with the support of the Armenian authorities and external donors; provide staff with specific incentives to foster their interest in the preservation of the reserve and its value;
3. assess the state of conservation of the wolf population (*Canis lupus*), both at national level and in the diploma-holding area, and adapt the current legal and administrative regime of protection accordingly; design a “wolf concept” providing a general legal and administrative framework for the management of this species in Armenia, in line with the Bern Convention and the regulation of the European Diploma for Protected Areas.