



Adoption of the “Pisa Declaration”: Anticipation and Innovation at core of the future action of the European Diploma for Protected Areas

Strasbourg, 1 June 2015 – On 21-22 May over 100 European delegates from 26 countries gathered in the Regional Park of Migliarino, San Rossore and Massaciuccoli (Pisa, Italy) to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the [European Diploma for Protected Areas](#) (EDPA). Through the adoption of the “Pisa Declaration”, participants collectively committed to continue to Protect our Nature and Preserve our Future.

Awarded by the Council of Europe’s Committee of Ministers, the European Diploma for Protected Areas celebrates the role that protected areas play in the sustainable use of natural resources and in improving human well-being. Setting and raising standards, Europe’s longest-standing protected area certificate recognises the contribution that the 73 awarded sites, representing all landscapes, make to the quality of life of all Europeans. As reservoir of nature these Diploma awarded areas ensure that the natural and cultural heritage is protected and respected on the long-term, thanks to the EDPA assessment system providing an on - going measure of achievement.

A workshop was prepared to celebrate 50 years of excellence in caring for Europe’s shared natural and cultural heritage, and coincide with the International Day for Biological Diversity. The occasion enabled government representatives, protected areas’ managers, and NGO’s to further plan for future, reflecting on how we can better together protect European common natural and cultural heritage.

The successful workshop “[Protected Areas in Europe: the next 50 years](#)”, organised by the Council of Europe with the sponsorship of the Ministry of Environment of Italy and of the Tuscany Region, and in cooperation with EUROPARC Federation, highlighted the need to react with innovative and specific responses to societal and technological changes, as well as to existing and new challenges threatening biological diversity.

Participants committed to use the EDPA to trial innovative nature conservation management and demonstrate novel approaches, working with communities to find creative mutually beneficial nature-based solutions. They further called on responsible governments, national and local authorities, local communities, nature conservation NGOs, and the Council of Europe, to ensure that the European Diploma for Protected Areas continues to receive the necessary political and financial support for the further development of its network.

On 22nd May 2015 the participants adopted the “[Pisa Declaration](#)”, which contains the EDPA vision for future and identifies a series of management improvement needs.

Contact: Ivana d’Alessandro ivana.Dalessandro@coe.int
Tania Braulio Tania.braulio@coe.int