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CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

Standing Committee

40th meeting
Strasbourg, 30 November - 4 December 2020

**Group of Specialists on the
European Diploma for Protected Areas**

18 - 19 March 2020
(*virtual meeting*)

MEETING REPORT

*Document prepared
by the Directorate of Democratic Participation*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Report of the meeting.....	- 3 -
1. Welcome and Opening of the meeting.....	- 4 -
2. Adoption of the draft agenda	- 4 -
3. General information on activities presenting an interest for the work of the Group	- 4 -
4. Pending draft Resolutions from 2019	- 4 -
5. Results of the advisory visits, discussion and proposals to the committee of ministers of the Council of Europe	- 5 -
6. Presentation of the reporting results by the Secretariat and the Group of Specialists	- 10 -
7. On-the-spot appraisal visits in 2020	- 13 -
8. Strategic development of the European Diploma.....	- 13 -
9. Any other business	- 15 -
10. Date and place of the next meeting	- 15 -
11. Conclusions of the meeting	- 16 -
Appendix 1 – Agenda	- 17 -

REPORT OF THE MEETING

The Group of Specialists on the European Diploma for Protected Areas met virtually on 18 and 19 March 2020. The Standing Committee/Bureau is invited to:

- Take note of the meeting report of the Group of Specialists;
- Welcome the award of the European Diploma to the Regional Park Gallipoli Cognato (Italy), pending adoption of the Committee of Ministers;
- Express its concern regarding the deteriorating situation in the Doñana National Park (Spain) and note the Group of Specialists' decision to postpone the renewal of its Diploma;
- Express its concern regarding the unresolved situation in the Scandola Nature Reserve (France), and note the Group of Specialists' decision to not renew its Diploma;
- Note that the European Diploma will not be renewed to the Ecrins National Park (France) at the request of the managing authorities;
- Consider forwarding the draft Resolutions renewing the Diploma to 13 areas and awarding to one new area (see document [T-PVS/DE\(2020\)12](#)) to the Committee of Ministers for formal adoption;
- Take note of the 13 on-the-spot appraisal visits planned to be carried out in 2020;
- Welcome the ongoing updates of the dashboard and the database of the European Diploma and the mapping of the multiple designations/certifications held by Diploma awarded areas;
- Take note of the outcomes of the discussion on a vision for the European Diploma for the next decade.

1. WELCOME AND OPENING OF THE MEETING

The meeting was opened on Wednesday 18 March 2020 by the Chair of the Group of Specialists, Mr Jan Plesnik (Czech Republic), via video-conference. He welcomed the participants and especially the two new members of the Group of Specialists: Panayiotis Dimitrakopoulos (Greece) and Pep Amengual (Spain). He excused the Austrian and Finnish members. He thanked the Group for their contributions as well as the Secretariat for the preparation of the virtual meeting and of the working documents, especially under the difficult circumstances of the global COVID-19 disease pandemic.

2. ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA

The Group adopted the draft agenda (see Appendix 1)

3. GENERAL INFORMATION ON ACTIVITIES PRESENTING AN INTEREST FOR THE WORK OF THE GROUP

3.a Short presentation of the report of the meeting of the Group in 2019 and of the activities undertaken during the last year

The Chair briefly wrapped up the outcomes and conclusions of the 2019 meeting of the Group of Specialists. He insisted that the European Diploma is a prestigious label whose importance is underestimated.

3.b Follow up by the secretariat on the conclusions of the 2019 meeting of the Group of specialists

The Secretariat reported on the follow up given to the decisions of the Group of Specialists in 2019. He highlighted that the Committee of Ministers had formally adopted the resolution renewing the European Diploma to 11 areas during 2019. Furthermore, 17 on-the-spot-appraisals had been carried out with the view to assessing the possible renewal to those areas in 2020.

The Secretariat had also continued to improve the dashboard of the European Diploma webpage and finetuned the database of Diploma holding areas. In the framework of the 40th anniversary of the Bern Convention, an exhibition on the European Diploma for Protected Areas, which reuses and builds on materials previously produced for the 50th anniversary of the European Diploma was produced and displayed during the 39th meeting of the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention. A new panel depicting a map of the community of areas was designed.

A slogan was also designed as a result of a consultation of the managers of the European Diploma holding areas and reads: "an award for exemplary management of outstanding European natural heritage" and was added to the exhibition.

The Secretariat also presented the list of decisions and adopted texts on the European Diploma for Protected Areas at the 39th meeting of the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention.

4. PENDING DRAFT RESOLUTIONS FROM 2019

De Oostvaardersplassen Nature Reserve & Weerribben-Wieden National Park

The Secretariat introduced the discussion by informing that following a joint on-the-spot appraisal to both areas in August 2018 (appraisal reports [T-PVS/DE\(2019\)11](#) and [T-PVS/DE\(2019\)09](#)) and the approval of the draft resolutions (document [T-PVS/DE\(2020\)11](#)) for renewal at the meeting of the EDPA Group of Specialists in March 2019, the Dutch authorities had requested that the resolutions be removed from the agenda of the meeting of the Committee of Ministers in July 2019, in order to reassess the conditions. The Dutch authorities were concerned that the conditions were impossible to meet following recent changes in Dutch law and wanted them to be modified or removed.

Ms Wilmar Remmelts, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality and Dutch focal point to the Bern Convention, stressed that the Dutch authorities believed that during the renewal process there was a missing step of informing the relevant Dutch authorities, via the Bern Convention focal point, of the pertinent

conditions to renewal. She noted that they had a problem with the 2nd condition as it was in conflict with their Natura 2000 Goals, and the 1st condition.

Ms Susan Bonenkamp, Site Manager, De Oostvaardersplassen Nature Reserve, expressed appreciation of the visit by the EDPA expert Maurice Hoffman in 2018, and she confirmed that the renewal of the EDPA held a high importance for the Reserve.

Related to Condition 2, the management believes it is very important to give space to natural processes, but this is not always possible - biolevel dynamics, landscape dynamics, big increase in large herbivore populations, etc. lead to a complex situation. Space for nature can be scarce in the highly modified, used and urbanized landscape in the Netherlands. There is also little natural predation of the herbivores. Further, large herbivores cannot move and disperse much, and low water level dynamics, marsh resetting also require sometimes interventions. Thus, the ecosystem, although aiming to be close to nature, needs some management.

Regarding Condition 3, while they agree in principle with the idea of connecting nature areas and creating eco-corridors, following the recent political decisions, the chances are very small that such concepts can be implemented in the near future.

Concerning Condition 1 on the airport, the current flying routes are not endangering any bird species. The park has agreed the conclusions of the Strategic Environment Assessment. It has looked very closely at how it can protect bird species and ensure its Natura 2000 goals they believe the Reserve will still manage adequately even with the airport.

Mr Maurice Hoffmann, the independent expert, explained that the new conditions he had drafted followed logically from those of the previous 2009 resolution. A key issue was the non-intervention in spread of large herbivores, despite no predator impact. As he had not noticed any change from 2009, he had again included these points in the three new conditions. Concerning the airport condition, it provided for future protection of birdlife, by anticipating future expansion of the airport and fly zones.

Following a discussion, the Chair thanked both the Dutch representatives for their very good presentation and reminded that the Reserve has been a very important European protected area. He summed up by noting that the Group of Specialists must either insist on the conditions, or take into account that national policies have changed, and thus the conditions should be modified, as it would be useless to have a condition that legally could not be fulfilled.

On the advice of the Secretariat, he also informed the Dutch representatives that, in order to avoid future communication lapses, each approved draft resolution of the EDPA Group of Specialists would be communicated to the relevant Bern Convention national focal points, before being presented to the Committee of Ministers.

As only two members of the Group of Specialists had attended the discussion and considering that the background document prepared by the Dutch authorities had been shared with the Group only the day before the meeting, the Chair suggested to postpone the decision of modifying or not the draft Resolution to the 2021 meeting, as the Group of Specialists needed more time to consider the new information of the Dutch authorities. This was agreed upon by the Group, and **the decision was postponed.**

5. RESULTS OF THE ADVISORY VISITS, DISCUSSION AND PROPOSALS TO THE COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

While 17 on-the-spot appraisal visits had been carried out in 2019, only 15 advisory visit reports were discussed by the Group of Specialists. The reports of the visits to the Desertas Nature Reserve and to the Cretan White Mountains National Park were shared with the members of the Group of Specialists electronically together with draft renewal resolutions as the Diploma of both areas were due in 2019. The Diplomas of the Desertas Nature Reserve and of the Cretan White Mountains National Park were renewed until 2029.

5.a Doñana National Park (Spain)

The independent expert, Mr Olivier Biber, presented the outcomes of the on-the-spot appraisal visit to the Doñana National Park (Spain) to the members of the Group of Specialists (report [TPVS/DE\(2020\)01](#)). Based on the findings he suggested the renewal of the European Diploma to the park for an additional period of 10 years.

Following a discussion which focused on several negative aspects of the Park's situation, including the fact that it is currently under legal proceedings by the European Court of Justice (ECJ), and has recently been subject to a World Heritage Centre Reactive monitoring mission conducted jointly with IUCN and the Ramsar Secretariat, **the Chair decided to postpone the decision** to renew the Diploma of the Doñana National Park

The Group of Specialists mandated the Secretariat in liaison with the Chair, to seek information from the European Commission on the status of the legal proceedings, UNESCO to obtain the report of the recent monitoring mission, and the Ramsar Convention on the justification for the Park still being listed on the Montreux Record. Once adequate information is gathered, the Chair may call an extraordinary meeting of the Group of Specialists to make a decision on the renewal of the Diploma of the National Park.

5.b Germano-Luxembourg Nature Park (Germany/Luxembourg)

The independent expert, Mr Olivier Biber, presented the outcomes of the on-the-spot appraisal visit to the Germano-Luxembourg Nature Park (Germany/Luxembourg) to the members of the Group of Specialists (report [TPVS/DE\(2020\)15](#)). Based on the findings he suggested the renewal of the European Diploma to the park for an additional period of 8 years.

The members of the Group of Specialists agreed with the expert's proposal and following their discussion endorsed a draft resolution attaching three recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma of the Germano-Luxembourg Nature Park as reflected in the document [T-PVS/DE\(2020\)12](#). The Group decided to renew the Diploma for 8 years – until 2028 – to be consistent with the duration of validity of the previous renewal.

The Group of Specialists entrusted the Secretariat with the follow up on the endorsement of the draft resolution by the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention and its possible official adoption by the Committee of Ministers in 2020.

5.c Berchtesgaden National Park (Germany)

The independent expert, Mr Robert Brunner, presented the outcomes of the on-the-spot appraisal visit to Berchtesgaden National Park (Germany) to the members of the Group of Specialists (report [T-PVS/DE\(2020\)02](#)). Based on the findings he suggested the renewal of the European Diploma to the park for an additional period of 10 years.

The members of the Group of Specialists agreed with the expert's proposal and following their discussion endorsed a draft resolution attaching one condition and eleven recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma of Berchtesgaden National Park as reflected in the document [T-PVS/DE\(2020\)12](#).

The Group of Specialists entrusted the Secretariat with the follow up on the endorsement of the draft resolution by the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention and its possible official adoption by the Committee of Ministers in 2020.

5.d Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve (Romania)

The independent expert, Mr Robert Brunner, presented the outcomes of the on-the-spot appraisal visit to the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve (Romania) to the members of the Group of Specialists (report [TPVS/DE\(2019\)18](#)). Based on the findings he suggested the renewal of the European Diploma to the protected area for an additional period of 10 years.

The members of the Group of Specialists agreed with the expert's proposal and following their discussion endorsed a draft resolution attaching eight recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma of the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve as reflected in the document [T-PVS/DE\(2020\)12](#).

The Group of Specialists entrusted the Secretariat with the follow up on the endorsement of the draft resolution by the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention and its possible official adoption by the Committee of Ministers in 2020

5.e Fair Isle National Scenic Area (United Kingdom)

The independent expert, Mr Robert Brunner, presented the outcomes of the on-the-spot appraisal visit to the Fair Isle National Scenic Area (United Kingdom) to the members of the Group of Specialists (report [TPVS/DE\(2020\)03](#)). Based on the findings he suggested the renewal of the European Diploma to the protected area for an additional period of 10 years.

The members of the Group of Specialists agreed with the expert's proposal and following their discussion endorsed a draft resolution attaching three conditions and four recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma of the Fair Isle National Scenic Area as reflected in the document [T-PVS/DE\(2020\)12](#).

The Group of Specialists entrusted the Secretariat with the follow up on the endorsement of the draft resolution by the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention and its possible official adoption by the Committee of Ministers in 2020.

5.f Regional Park Gallipoli Cognato (Italy)

The independent expert, Mr Eladio Fernandez-Galiano, presented the outcomes of the on-the-spot appraisal visit to Regional Park Gallipoli Cognato (Italy) to the members of the Group of Specialists (report [TPVS/DE\(2019\)14](#)). Based on the findings he suggested awarding the European Diploma to the Regional Park.

The members of the Group of Specialists welcomed the report of the appraisal visit to the Regional Park Gallipoli Cognato, the results of which confirmed the European interest and efficacy of existing conservation measures of the Park.

The members thus unanimously agreed to award the Regional Park Gallipoli Cognato with the European Diploma for Protected Areas, and endorsed a draft resolution attaching two conditions and five recommendations as reflected in the document [T-PVS/DE\(2020\)12](#).

The Group of Specialists entrusted the Secretariat with the follow up on the endorsement of the draft resolution by the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention and its possible official adoption by the Committee of Ministers in 2020.

5.g Regional Park of Migliarino, San Rossore and Massaciuccoli (Italy)

The independent expert, Mr Pierre Galland, presented the outcomes of the on-the-spot appraisal visit to the Regional Park of Migliarino, San Rossore and Massaciuccoli (Italy) to the members of the Group of Specialists (report [TPVS/DE\(2019\)15](#)). Based on the findings he suggested the renewal of the European Diploma to the park for an additional period of 10 years.

The members of the Group of Specialists agreed with the expert's proposal and following their discussion endorsed a draft resolution attaching ten recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma of the Regional Park of Migliarino, San Rossore and Massaciuccoli as reflected in the document [T-PVS/DE\(2020\)12](#).

The Group of Specialists entrusted the Secretariat with the follow up on the endorsement of the draft resolution by the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention and its possible official adoption by the Committee of Ministers in 2020.

5.h Vashlovani Protected Areas (Georgia)

The independent expert, Mr Pierre Galland, presented the outcomes of the on-the-spot appraisal visit to the Vashlovani Protected Areas (Georgia) to the members of the Group of Specialists (report [TPVS/DE\(2020\)04](#)). Based on the findings he suggested the renewal of the European Diploma to the protected area for an additional period of 10 years.

The members of the Group of Specialists agreed with the expert's proposal and following their discussion endorsed a draft resolution attaching seven recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma of the Vashlovani Protected Areas as reflected in the document [T-PVS/DE\(2020\)12](#).

The Group of Specialists entrusted the Secretariat with the follow up on the endorsement of the draft resolution by the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention and its possible official adoption by the Committee of Ministers in 2020.

5.i Ipolytarnóc Protected Area (Hungary)

The independent expert, Mr Maurice Hoffman, presented the outcomes of the on-the-spot appraisal visit to the Ipolytarnóc Protected Area (Hungary) to the members of the Group of Specialists (report [TPVS/DE\(2020\)05](#)). Based on the findings he suggested the renewal of the European Diploma to the park for an additional period of 10 years.

The members of the Group of Specialists agreed with the expert's proposal and following their discussion endorsed a draft resolution attaching twelve recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma of the Ipolytarnóc Protected Area as reflected in the document [T-PVS/DE\(2020\)12](#).

The Group of Specialists entrusted the Secretariat with the follow up on the endorsement of the draft resolution by the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention and its possible official adoption by the Committee of Ministers in 2020.

5.j Szénás Hills Protected Area (Hungary)

The independent expert, Mr Bev Nichols, presented the outcomes of the on-the-spot appraisal visit to the Szénás Hills Protected Area (Hungary) to the members of the Group of Specialists (report [TPVS/DE\(2020\)14](#)).

The members of the Group of Specialists agreed with the expert's proposal and following their discussion endorsed a draft resolution attaching one condition and eight recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma of the Szénás Hills Protected Area as reflected in the document [T-PVS/DE\(2020\)12](#).

The Group of Specialists entrusted the Secretariat with the follow up on the endorsement of the draft resolution by the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention and its possible official adoption by the Committee of Ministers in 2020.

Based on the findings he suggested the renewal of the European Diploma to the protected area for an additional period of 10 years.

5.k Karlštejn National Natural Reserve (Czech Republic)

The independent expert, Ms Ana Rainho, presented the outcomes of the on-the-spot appraisal visit to the Karlštejn National Natural Reserve (Czech Republic) to the members of the Group of Specialists (report [TPVS/DE\(2020\)08](#)). Based on the findings she suggested the renewal of the European Diploma to the reserve for an additional period of 10 years.

The members of the Group of Specialists agreed with the expert's proposal and following their discussion endorsed a draft resolution attaching eight recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma of the Karlštejn National Natural Reserve as reflected in the document [T-PVS/DE\(2020\)12](#).

The Group of Specialists entrusted the Secretariat with the follow up on the endorsement of the draft resolution by the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention and its possible official adoption by the Committee of Ministers in 2020.

5.l Bile Karpaty Protected Landscape Area (Czech Republic)

The independent expert, Ms Ana Rainho, presented the outcomes of the on-the-spot appraisal visit to the Bile Karpaty Protected Landscape Area (Czech Republic) to the members of the Group of Specialists (report [TPVS/DE\(2020\)09](#)). Based on the findings she suggested the renewal of the European Diploma to the protected area for an additional period of 10 years.

The members of the Group of Specialists agreed with the expert's proposal and following their discussion endorsed a draft resolution attaching five recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma of the Bile Karpaty Protected Landscape Area as reflected in the document [T-PVS/DE\(2020\)12](#).

The Group of Specialists entrusted the Secretariat with the follow up on the endorsement of the draft resolution by the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention and its possible official adoption by the Committee of Ministers in 2020.

5.m Berezinsky State Biosphere Reserve (Belarus)

The independent expert, Ms Blanca Ramos, presented the outcomes of the on-the-spot appraisal visit to the Berezinsky State Biosphere Reserve (Belarus) to the members of the Group of Specialists (report [TPVS/DE\(2020\)06](#)). Based on the findings she suggested the renewal of the European Diploma to the protected area for an additional period of 10 years.

The members of the Group of Specialists agreed with the expert's proposal and following their discussion endorsed a draft resolution attaching two conditions and five recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma of the Berezinsky State Biosphere Reserve as reflected in the document [T-PVS/DE\(2020\)12](#).

The Group of Specialists entrusted the Secretariat with the follow up on the endorsement of the draft resolution by the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention and its possible official adoption by the Committee of Ministers in 2020.

5.n Podyji National Park (Czech Republic)

The independent expert, Mr Peter Skoberne, presented the outcomes of the on-the-spot appraisal visit to the Podyji National Park (Czech Republic) to the members of the Group of Specialists (report [TPVS/DE\(2020\)13](#)). Based on the findings he suggested the renewal of the European Diploma to the park for an additional period of **9 years**, so that the renewal date would be aligned with the sister park, Thayatal National Park (Austria), and joint on-the-spot appraisals could be carried out in the future.

The members of the Group of Specialists agreed with the expert's proposal and following their discussion endorsed a draft resolution attaching seven recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma of the Podyji National Park as reflected in the document [T-PVS/DE\(2020\)12](#).

The Group of Specialists entrusted the Secretariat with the follow up on the endorsement of the draft resolution by the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention and its possible official adoption by the Committee of Ministers in 2020.

5.o Sasso Fratino Integral Nature Reserve (Italy)

The independent expert, Mr Peter Skoberne, presented the outcomes of the on-the-spot appraisal visit to the Sasso Fratino Integral Nature Reserve (Italy) to the members of the Group of Specialists (report [T-PVS/DE \(2020\) 07](#)). Based on the findings he suggested the renewal of the European Diploma to the protected area for an additional period of 10 years.

The members of the Group of Specialists agreed with the expert's proposal and following their discussion endorsed a draft resolution attaching seven recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma of the Sasso Fratino Integral Nature Reserve as reflected in the document [T-PVS/DE\(2020\)12](#).

The Group of Specialists entrusted the Secretariat with the follow up on the endorsement of the draft resolution by the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention and its possible official adoption by the Committee of Ministers in 2020.

6. PRESENTATION OF THE REPORTING RESULTS BY THE SECRETARIAT AND THE GROUP OF SPECIALISTS

6.a Analysis of the annual reports

The Secretariat reminded the Group about the objectives of the annual report and the Group's mandate, which are defined by the Resolution CM/ResDip(2008)1 on the revised regulations for the European Diploma for Protected Areas.

The Secretariat also recalled that it prepares nominative reporting templates integrating the conditions and recommendations of each area in the templates and sends the templates individually to each area manager, to facilitate more relevant and concise reporting.

In 2019, 62 reports were received from the 73 areas, equalling 85%, down from 96% in 2018.

The scoring system acknowledging the extent to which the Diploma holding areas comply with their annual reporting obligation had been updated accordingly.

4 areas have a red score. Hautes Fagnes had still not delivered a report despite the contacts taken with the focal point to the Bern Convention from Belgium. 2 French areas (Port Cros and Scandola) and one Czech area (Bilé Karpaty Protected Landscape Area) had also delivered less than 3 annual reports since 2014.

11 areas have an orange score (between 3 and 4 reports delivered since 2014).

The Secretariat and the Group of Specialists will monitor the evolvement of the scores in the future.

As in previous years, Members of the Group were involved in the assessment of the annual reports by using the assessment forms. The document [T-PVS/DE \(2020\) 17](#) provides the conclusions of the Group for each Diploma holding area.

The Group of Specialists welcomed the results of the 2019 annual reporting and thanked the managers of the Diploma holding areas for complying with the reporting obligation, the members of the Group of Specialists for their contribution to the analysis of the reports and the Secretariat for the huge effort in developing and running the effective and user-friendly European Diploma monitoring tools.

It also noted that a report had been received from the Ecrins National Park (France), although the Park authorities had informed that they no longer wished to hold the Diploma and it would be removed from the list of Diploma areas from 18 July 2020.

6.b Follow up on the areas identified in 2019 as requiring particular attention

- **Scandola Nature Reserve (France)**

The Secretariat recalled the particular situation of the Scandola Nature Reserve, reminding that following the expert, Olivier Biber's on-the-spot appraisal in 2018 (report [T-PVS/DE\(2019\)2](#)) and related recommendation, the decision to renew the Diploma had been suspended, pending the extension of the Nature Reserve and creation of a marine park by 31 January 2020 at the latest.

In May 2019 the Secretariat wrote to the managing authorities and to the Focal Point to the Bern Convention from France, informing them of the decision of the Group of Specialists.

Despite the commitment taken by the Focal Point to the Bern Convention of France at the 39th Standing Committee, the letter remained unanswered.

Furthermore, the expert had again visited the Reserve in July 2019, and concluded that no progress had been made, and the situation, especially increasing touristic pressure, was getting worse.

The Group of Specialists unanimously agreed not to renew the Diploma to the Scandola Nature Reserve, due to the considerable lack of progress and minimal attempts of communication with the Secretariat, despite several warnings by the Group over the past years. However, it mandated the Secretariat to continue the monitoring of the area, where possible in liaison with other organisations such as UNESCO's World Heritage Centre, and to report annually at the Group of Specialists meeting.

- **Lüneburg Heath Nature Reserve (Germany)**

The Secretariat reminded of the situation in the Lüneburg Heath Nature Reserve which is under scrutiny because the regional authorities (Landkreis Heidekreis) are planning the Volkwardingen Wind Park which would spoil the unique landscape and biodiversity of Lüneburger Heide, block an important migration corridor for the black grouse and black stork and destroy an important habitat for bats and birds.

In 2019, the managing authorities of the Lüneburg Heath Nature Reserve complained that they had been asking for the support of the Council of Europe since 2016 by means of their annual reports to prevent the development of the Volkwardingen Wind Park and calling for the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention to apply to the European Union to protect one of the oldest European Diploma holding areas by all legal means.

While the Secretariat invited the authorities to make use of the case file system under the Bern Convention to entrust the Standing Committee with an intervention mandate as well as to alert the EC of their concerns and explore the feasibility of a full assessment of environmental effects in accordance with the EU Habitats Directive, the miscommunication between the Council of Europe and the park management is obvious.

It was suggested to hold an on-the-spot appraisal this year instead of 2021 as initially planned, to re-establish the dialogue and reassure the managing authorities of the support of the Group of Specialists.

The Group of Specialists expressed again its deep concern regarding the still existing plan for a wind energy park. It agreed that an early on-the-spot appraisal should take place this year to take stock of the situation on the ground and give the Group more time to assess the problems and make a documented and objective decision regarding the possible renewal of the Diploma of the Lüneburg Heath Nature Reserve.

The Group of Specialists entrusted the Secretariat to organise an early on-the-spot appraisal this year taking into consideration possible disruptions due to the ongoing Covid-19 disease pandemic

- **Abruzzo Lazio and Molise National Park (Italy)**

The main issue continues to be the official adoption of a new management plan, due by 2013 and the management of the Marsican brown bear.

While the Group of Specialists had year after year urged the managing authorities to adopt the management plan, the 2019 annual report informed that the management plan was still pending the approval of the authorities of all the 3 regions.

Regarding the monitoring scheme of the Marsican Brown Bear, the managing authority reported having entrusted the University of Rome with the drafting of a new genetic monitoring protocol of the Marsican brown bear and that a budget of 360 000 € had been allocated to the Scientific Department of the Park mainly for the management of the Marsican brown bear.

The Group of Specialists expressed once more its concern regarding the delayed adoption of the management plan of the Abruzzo Lazio and Molise National Park and requested the managing authorities to report on the time schedule for finalising the adoption process.

- **Weltenburger Enge Nature Reserve**

The Secretariat reminded the members of the Group of Specialists that in the beginning of February 2019, because of the very dry and hot 2018 summer, the authorities of the Weltenburger Enge Nature Reserve were envisaging to excavate a gravel bank to allow safer ship manoeuvres in low water times on the Danube which would constitute a threat to rare fish species and wildlife species living on the banks.

While no excavations took place in 2019, flood water altered the gravel banks.

The expert, Robert Brunner, reported that in the last month clear cuts had been made both within the Diploma holding area as well as in the nature protected area recommended to be included in the European Diploma holding area following the on-the-spot appraisal visit carried out in 2016. He also informed the Group that new types of tourist boats had been put in place whose engines might impact the river ecosystems.

Considering the breaches of several recommendations (1 and 6) attached to the renewal of the Diploma in 2017, the expert suggested an extraordinary on-the-spot appraisal visit before the situation deteriorates further and more forest is cut down.

The Group of Specialists expressed its concern regarding the recent alarming information on the Weltenburger Enge Nature Reserve received and agreed to mandate an extraordinary on-the-spot appraisal this year, to evaluate the situation on the ground and assess the extent to which the recommendations attached to the last renewal of the Diploma are complied with.

The Group of Specialists instructed the Secretariat to organise an extraordinary on-the-spot appraisal this year, taking into consideration possible disruptions due to the ongoing Covid-19 disease pandemic.

- **Wurzacher Ried Nature Reserve**

The Secretariat reported to the Group of Specialists that in February 2020 they had been informed that a solar panel farm was planned in the Wurzacher Ried Nature Reserve. No reference to this project had been made in the 2019 annual report.

In case the project is confirmed, it could disturb the harmonious landscape and natural scenery of the area with technical infrastructure.

The Group of Specialists expressed its concern regarding the infrastructure development plans within the Wurzacher Ried Nature Reserve, the Diploma holding area and requested the managing authorities to provide comprehensive and detailed information including maps on the proposed solar panel farm.

7. ON-THE-SPOT APPRAISAL VISITS IN 2020

The Secretariat referred to the document [T-PVS/DE\(2019\)19](#) presenting the Diploma holding areas whose Diploma is due in 2021 and could therefore benefit from an on-the-spot appraisal visit in 2020. 10 visits (one combining 2 areas) were planned for 2020, as well as the extraordinary on-the-spot appraisal visit mandated for the Weltenburger Enge Nature Reserve (Germany) and the early on-the-spot appraisal visit mandated for the Lüneburg Heath Nature Reserve (Germany) from point 6.b above. The Secretariat reminded that due to the ongoing Covid-19 disease pandemic, the organisation of visits was for now on hold, the Secretariat would consider alternative plans and keep the Group updated.

The Group of Specialists agreed to carry out the on-the-spot appraisal visits to the areas listed in the document [T-PVS/DE\(2019\)19](#) as well as to the Weltenburger Enge Nature Reserve and the Lüneburg Heath Nature Reserve.

The Group of Specialists entrusted the Secretariat with the organisation of these 13 visits, taking into consideration possible disruptions due to the Covid-19 disease pandemic.

8. STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE EUROPEAN DIPLOMA

8.a Vision for the European Diploma

Mr Michael Usher, independent expert, outlined his vision for the European Diploma for the next decade (document [T-PVS/DE\(2020\)16](#)). The vision proposed that by 2030, the community of holders of the EDPA is recognised internationally, serves people's aspirations, demonstrates to all sectors of society, and is recognised as Europe's most prestigious award for protected areas.

His proposed actions for implementing the vision were as follows:

- Communication strategy
- Making information more widely available
- Focusing on the Pisa Declaration
- Topical meetings (An Area organising an event on a particular common issue, and inviting other area managers)
- Anniversary meetings
- Growing the community of EDPAs to reach 100 areas, and possibly limiting it at that number
- Re-branding the EDPA

The next steps for the Group of Specialists would be to agree on the wording of the Vision, decide on a strategy/roadmap, and implement it.

The discussion which followed focussed on the added value of the European Diploma. The uniqueness of the Diploma and its holistic approach covering complete ecosystems - species, habitats, culture and cultural heritage, the contribution of humans and local communities - unlike the other labels which cover a more

specific aspect was stressed. The adaptivity of the European Diploma to current or burning environmental challenges including climate change was also highlighted.

It was put forward that the relationship between the European Diploma and the Bern Convention should be strengthened even more since the European Diploma is almost the only connection of the Bern Convention with the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. The protection of habitats by the European Diploma should be made more visible in order to reinforce its link with the Bern Convention.

The Group of Specialists warmly thanked Mr Usher for his proposed vision and recommendations.

The Group agreed on the visionary statement for European Diploma proposed which reads:

By 2030, the community of holders of the EDPA:

- *is recognised internationally as an assemblage of Europe's most unique and important natural landscapes;*
- *serves people's aspirations to protect both the natural and the cultural heritages of Europe;*
- *demonstrates to all sectors of society how protected areas can meet the many environmental challenges of the 21st century, being models for other protected areas;*
- *supports the enjoyment of the natural and cultural features by both local people and visitors; and that the European Diploma for Protected Areas is recognised as Europe's most prestigious natural heritage award.*

A consultation of the members of the Group, the independent experts and the managers of the Diploma holding areas resulted in the selection of the following priorities to be further elaborated in order to implement the vision:

- making information more widely available by the means of a communication strategy or a newsletter;
- drafting a more focussed statement promoting the European Diploma inspired by the Pisa Declaration adopted at the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Diploma;
- topical meetings to meet other managers, discuss issues of mutual importance, or just to be part of the community;

These priority areas should be discussed at the upcoming Bureau to the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention within the frame of the post 2020 global biodiversity framework.

8.b Dashboard of the European Diploma

The Secretariat outlined the progress in the [dashboard](#) and webpage of the EDPA. In 2019, old archive documents had been digitalised and uploaded on the dashboard- this process was ongoing, pending the digitalisation of more documents from an external company- however as of now, the majority of documents had been uploaded.

The Secretariat also demonstrated a new initiative to add crosslinks via a logo to other organisation's label on the dashboard (World Heritage Properties and Biosphere Reserves). It was mentioned that those organisations could consider reciprocating the initiative on their websites, towards the dashboard of the European Diploma.

The Group of Specialists welcomed the extensive progress in uploading archive documents on the dashboard, expressed their full satisfaction with the initiative and visual nature of the external organisation's logo on the relevant Area webpage, and noted that consideration continued towards including maps on the dashboard.

8.c Database of the Diploma holding areas

In 2018 the Group of Specialists mandated the Secretariat to initiate the update of the database of the

Diploma holding areas with the view to explore with the European Environment Agency the addition of the database to the Common Database of Designated Areas (CDDA) and as the second step to the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) accessible through the Protected Planet webpage.

The results of a first round of consultation of the managers of the Diploma holding areas had been presented to the Group last year. The database was not yet complete as the tabular data from 16 areas and the spatial data from 51 areas were missing.

In 2019 a second targeted consultation had resulted in the update of the tabular data of 63 areas and in the submission of spatial data of 42 areas.

The database had been delivered to the EEA and UNEP-WCMC on 2 March and included data for all 73 Diploma holding areas. For the areas which did not update their tabular data, the existing data was considered. For areas which did not submit polygons, they were georeferenced with a central point. It is expected that UNEP-WCMC will display the European Diploma on Protected Planet in the course of the year.

The Group of Specialists welcomed the updated database very much and its potential use for raising awareness and for improving the visibility of the European Diploma holding areas. It expressed its great satisfaction that Diploma holding areas could appear on the Protected Planet website this year.

8.d Mapping of the multiple designations / certifications of the Diploma holding areas

In 2018, the Group of Specialists had mandated the Secretariat with the inventory of the other certifications and designations held by the Diploma holding areas.

After a first consultation of the managers of Diploma holding areas in the beginning of 2019 which resulted in a feedback from 57 out of 73 areas, a second targeted consultation took place later in 2019.

The document [T-PVS/DE \(2019\)7 revised](#) presents the current state of play of the mapping of the national and international certifications or designations held by Diploma holding areas. While 12 areas still had not provided any feedback, the document is now sufficiently elaborated to become a useful source of information. The mapping document now includes links to UNESCO's World Heritage sites and Biosphere Reserves.

The feasibility to add links to further designations will be explored.

The Secretariat also informed the Group of Specialists that a meeting had been held with colleagues from the World Heritage Centre to explore monitoring synergies.

The Secretariat of the World Heritage Centre has shown significant interest in formalising the cooperation by a Memorandum of Cooperation. Discussions on this are on-going.

The Group of Specialists took note of the state of play of the mapping of multiple designations/certifications, acknowledged its relevance and appreciated the efforts of the Secretariat.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was discussed.

10. DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The Secretariat, in liaison with the Chair, will notify members of the date of the next meeting, of which an extraordinary meeting may take place later in 2020 to discuss certain outstanding issues which were not concluded during this meeting.

11. CONCLUSIONS OF THE MEETING

The Chair thanked the members of the Group of Specialists, including the two new members from Greece and Spain, the independent experts, the management authorities of the European Diploma holding areas and the Secretariat for their huge efforts and declared the meeting closed.

APPENDIX 1 – AGENDA

		Documents	Expected results
Wednesday 18 March			
9.30	1. Opening of the meeting <i>Mr Jan Plesnik (Czech Republic), Chair of the Group of Specialists</i>		
	2. Adoption of the agenda	Meeting agenda T-PVS/Agenda(2020) 1 For adoption	Members of the Group of Specialists are informed of the aims of the meeting and adopt the agenda.
	3. General information on activities presenting an interest for the work of the Group of Specialists		
	3.a Short presentation of the report of the meeting of the group in 2019 and of the activities undertaken during the last year <i>Mr Jan Plesnik (Czech Republic), Chair of the Group of Specialists</i>	Report of the 2019 meeting of the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma for Protected Areas T-PVS/DE (2019) 13 For information	The salient points of the 2019 meeting of the Group of Specialists are recalled.
	3.b Follow up by the Secretariat on the conclusions of the 2019 meeting of the Group of Specialists <i>Presentation by the Secretariat</i>	Extract from the list of decisions and adopted texts on the European Diploma for Protected Areas, at the 39th meeting of the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention T-PVS/DE (2020) 10	Members of the Group of Specialists are informed of the follow up given to the outcomes and decisions of the 2019 meeting of the Group of Specialists.

		<p>List of renewal resolutions adopted by the Committee of Ministers in 2019 T-PVS/DE (2019) 20</p> <p>For information</p>	
	<p>4. Pending draft Resolutions from 2019</p> <p><i>Presentation by the Secretariat</i></p> <p><i>Members of the Group of Specialists are invited to exchange views with the authorities of Netherland regarding their concerns on the conditions attached to the draft Resolutions renewing the European Diploma to the De Oostvaardersplassen Nature Reserve and to the Weerribben-Wieden National Park</i></p>	<p>Report on the assessment visit to the De Oostvaardersplassen Nature Reserve T-PVS/DE (2019) 11</p> <p>Report on the assessment visit to the Weerribben-Wieden National Park T-PVS/DE (2019) 9</p> <p>Draft Resolutions regarding the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the De Oostvaardersplassen Nature Reserve and to the Weerribben-Wieden National Park discussed in 2019 T-PVS/DE (2020) 11</p> <p>For discussion and decision</p>	<p>Members of the Group of Specialists agree on a revised wording of the conditions attached to the draft Resolutions renewing the European Diploma to the De Oostvaardersplassen Nature Reserve and to the Weerribben-Wieden.</p>
	<p>5. Results of the advisory visits, discussion and proposals to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe</p>		
	<p>5.a Doñana National Park (Spain)</p> <p><i>Presentation by Mr Olivier Biber</i></p> <p><i>Members of the Group of Specialists are invited to discuss the conclusions of the on-the-spot</i></p>	<p>Report on the assessment visit to the Doñana National Park T-PVS/DE (2020) 01</p> <p>Draft resolution regarding the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the</p>	<p>Members of the Group of Specialists agree on a draft resolution renewing the European Diploma to the Doñana National Park which will be sent to the Committee of Ministers for formal adoption</p>

	<p><i>appraisal visit report and to exchange views on possible follow up.</i></p>	<p>Doñana National Park T-PVS/DE (2020) 12</p> <p>For discussion and decision</p>	
	<p>5.b Germano-Luxembourg Nature Park (Germany/Luxembourg)</p> <p><i>Presentation by Mr Olivier Biber</i></p> <p><i>Members of the Group of Specialists are invited to discuss the conclusions of the on-the-spot appraisal visit report and to exchange views on possible follow up.</i></p>	<p>Report on the assessment visit to the Germano-Luxembourg Nature Park T-PVS/DE (2019) 15</p> <p>Draft resolution regarding the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the Germano-Luxembourg Nature Park T-PVS/DE (2020) 12</p> <p>For discussion and decision</p>	<p>Members of the Group of Specialists agree on a draft resolution renewing the European Diploma to the Germano-Luxembourg Nature Park which will be sent to the Committee of Ministers for formal adoption.</p>
	<p>5.c Berchtesgaden National Park (Germany)</p> <p><i>Presentation by Mr Robert Brunner</i></p> <p><i>Members of the Group of Specialists are invited to discuss the conclusions of the on-the-spot appraisal visit report and to exchange views on possible follow up.</i></p>	<p>Report on the assessment visit to the Berchtesgaden National Park T-PVS/DE (2020) 02</p> <p>Draft resolution regarding the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the Berchtesgaden National Park T-PVS/DE (2020) 12</p> <p>For discussion and decision</p>	<p>Members of the Group of Specialists agree on a draft resolution renewing the European Diploma to the Berchtesgaden National Park which will be sent to the Committee of Ministers for formal adoption.</p>

	<p>5.d Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve (Romania)</p> <p><i>Presentation by Mr Robert Brunner</i></p> <p><i>Members of the Group of Specialists are invited to discuss the conclusions of the on-the-spot appraisal visit report and to exchange views on possible follow up.</i></p>	<p>Report on the assessment visit to the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve T-PVS/DE (2019) 18</p> <p>Draft resolution regarding the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve T-PVS/DE (2020) 12</p> <p>For discussion and decision</p>	<p>Members of the Group of Specialists agree on a draft resolution renewing the European Diploma to the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve which will be sent to the Committee of Ministers for formal adoption.</p>
	<p>5.e Fair Isle National Scenic Area (United Kingdom)</p> <p><i>Presentation by Mr Robert Brunner</i></p> <p><i>Members of the Group of Specialists are invited to discuss the conclusions of the on-the-spot appraisal visit report and to exchange views on possible follow up.</i></p>	<p>Report on the assessment visit to the Fair Isle National Scenic Area T-PVS/DE (2020) 03</p> <p>Draft resolution regarding the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the Fair Isle National Scenic Area T-PVS/DE (2020) 12</p> <p>For discussion and decision</p>	<p>Members of the Group of Specialists agree on a draft resolution renewing the European Diploma to the Fair Isle National Scenic Area which will be sent to the Committee of Ministers for formal adoption.</p>
	<p>5.f Regional Park Gallipoli Cognato (Italy)</p> <p><i>Presentation by Mr Eladio Fernández-Galiano</i></p> <p><i>Members of the Group of Specialists are invited to discuss the conclusions of the on-the-spot appraisal visit report and to exchange views on possible follow up.</i></p>	<p>Report on the assessment visit to the Regional Park Gallipoli Cognato T-PVS/DE (2019) 14</p> <p>Draft resolution regarding the award of the European Diploma for Protected Areas to the Regional Park Gallipoli Cognato T-PVS/DE (2020) 12</p> <p>For discussion and decision</p>	<p>Members of the Group of Specialists agree on a draft resolution awarding the European Diploma to the Regional Park Gallipoli Cognato which will be sent to the Committee of Ministers for formal adoption.</p>

	<p>5.g Regional Park of Migliarino, San Rossore and Massaciuccoli (Italy)</p> <p><i>Presentation by Mr Pierre Galland</i></p> <p><i>Members of the Group of Specialists are invited to discuss the conclusions of the on-the-spot appraisal visit report and to exchange views on possible follow up.</i></p>	<p>Report on the assessment visit to the Regional Park of Migliarino, San Rossore and Massaciuccoli T-PVS/DE (2019) 15</p> <p>Draft resolution regarding the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the Regional Park of Migliarino, San Rossore and Massaciuccoli T-PVS/DE (2020) 12</p> <p>For discussion and decision</p>	<p>Members of the Group of Specialists agree on a draft resolution renewing the European Diploma to the Regional Park of Migliarino, San Rossore and Massaciuccoli which will be sent to the Committee of Ministers for formal adoption.</p>
	<p>5.h Vashlovani Protected Areas (Georgia)</p> <p><i>Presentation by Mr Pierre Galland</i></p> <p><i>Members of the Group of Specialists are invited to discuss the conclusions of the on-the-spot appraisal visit report and to exchange views on possible follow up.</i></p>	<p>Report on the assessment visit to the Vashlovani Protected Areas T-PVS/DE (2020) 04</p> <p>Draft resolution regarding the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the Vashlovani Protected Areas T-PVS/DE (2020) 12</p> <p>For discussion and decision</p>	<p>Members of the Group of Specialists agree on a draft resolution renewing the European Diploma to the Vashlovani Protected Areas which will be sent to the Committee of Ministers for formal adoption.</p>
	<p>5.i Ipolytarnóc Protected Area (Hungary)</p> <p>Presentation by Mr Maurice Hoffmann</p> <p><i>Members of the Group of Specialists are invited to discuss the conclusions of the on-the-spot appraisal visit report and to exchange views on possible follow up.</i></p>	<p>Report on the assessment visit to the Ipolytarnóc Protected Area T-PVS/DE (2020) 05</p> <p>Draft resolution regarding the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the Ipolytarnóc Protected Area T-PVS/DE (2020) 12</p> <p>For discussion and decision</p>	<p>Members of the Group of Specialists agree on a draft resolution renewing the European Diploma to the Ipolytarnóc Protected Area which will be sent to the Committee of Ministers for formal adoption.</p>

	<p>5.j Szénás Hills Protected Area (Hungary)</p> <p><i>Presentation by Mr Bev Nichols</i></p> <p><i>Members of the Group of Specialists are invited to discuss the conclusions of the on-the-spot appraisal visit report and to exchange views on possible follow up.</i></p>	<p>Report on the assessment visit to the Szénás Hills Protected Area T-PVS/DE (2020) 14</p> <p>Draft resolution regarding the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the Szénás Hills Protected Area T-PVS/DE (2020) 12</p> <p>For discussion and decision</p>	<p>Members of the Group of Specialists agree on a draft resolution renewing the European Diploma to the Szénás Hills Protected Area which will be sent to the Committee of Ministers for formal adoption.</p>
	<p>5.k Karlštejn National Natural Reserve (Czech Republic)</p> <p><i>Presentation by Ms Ana Rainho</i></p> <p><i>Members of the Group of Specialists are invited to discuss the conclusions of the on-the-spot appraisal visit report and to exchange views on possible follow up.</i></p>	<p>Report on the assessment visit to the Karlštejn National Natural Reserve T-PVS/DE (2020) 08</p> <p>Draft resolution regarding the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the Karlštejn National Natural Reserve T-PVS/DE (2020) 12</p> <p>For discussion and decision</p>	<p>Members of the Group of Specialists agree on a draft resolution renewing the European Diploma to the Karlštejn National Natural Reserve which will be sent to the Committee of Ministers for formal adoption.</p>
	<p>5.l Bile Karpaty Protected Landscape Areas (Czech Republic)</p> <p><i>Presentation by Ana Rainho</i></p> <p><i>Members of the Group of Specialists are invited to discuss the conclusions of the on-the-spot appraisal visit report and to exchange views on possible follow up.</i></p>	<p>Report on the assessment visit to the Bile Karpaty Protected Landscape Area T-PVS/DE (2020) 09</p> <p>Draft resolution regarding the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the Bile Karpaty Landscape Reserve T-PVS/DE (2020) 12</p> <p>For discussion and decision</p>	<p>Members of the Group of Specialists agree on a draft resolution renewing the European Diploma to the Bile Karpaty Protected Landscape Area which will be sent to the Committee of Ministers for formal adoption.</p>

	<p>5.m Berezinsky State Biosphere Reserve</p> <p><i>Presentation by Ms Blanca Ramos</i></p> <p><i>Members of the Group of Specialists are invited to discuss the conclusions of the on-the-spot appraisal visit report and to exchange views on possible follow up.</i></p>	<p>Report on the assessment visit to the Berezinsky State Biosphere Reserve T-PVS/DE (2020) 06</p> <p>Draft resolution regarding the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the Berezinsky State Biosphere Reserve T-PVS/DE (2020) 12</p> <p>For discussion and decision</p>	<p>Members of the Group of Specialists agree on a draft resolution renewing the European Diploma to the Berezinsky State Biosphere Reserve which will be sent to the Committee of Ministers for formal adoption.</p>
	<p>5.n Podyji National Park (Czech Republic)</p> <p><i>Presentation by Mr Peter Skoberne</i></p> <p><i>Members of the Group of Specialists are invited to discuss the conclusions of the on-the-spot appraisal visit report and to exchange views on possible follow up.</i></p>	<p>Report on the assessment visit to the Podyji National Park T-PVS/DE (2020) 13</p> <p>Draft resolution regarding the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the Podyji National Park T-PVS/DE (2020) 12</p> <p>For discussion and decision</p>	<p>Members of the Group of Specialists agree on a draft resolution renewing the European Diploma to the Podyji National Park which will be sent to the Committee of Ministers for formal adoption.</p>
	<p>5.o Sasso Fratino Integral Nature Reserve (Italy)</p> <p><i>Presentation by Mr Peter Skoberne</i></p> <p><i>Members of the Group of Specialists are invited to discuss the conclusions of the on-the-spot appraisal visit report and to exchange views on possible follow up.</i></p>	<p>Report on the assessment visit to the Sasso Fratino Integral Nature Reserve T-PVS/DE (2020) 07</p> <p>Draft resolution regarding the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the Sasso Fratino Integral Nature Reserve T-PVS/DE (2020) 12</p> <p>For discussion and decision</p>	<p>Members of the Group of Specialists agree on a draft resolution renewing the European Diploma to the Sasso Fratino Integral Nature Reserve which will be sent to the Committee of Ministers for formal adoption.</p>

	<p>6. Presentation of the reporting results by the Secretariat and the Group of Specialists</p>		
	<p>6.a Analysis of the annual reports</p> <p><i>Introduction by the Secretariat</i></p> <p><i>Members of the Group of Specialists are invited to share their comments on and discuss the outcomes of the annual reports and exchange views on possible follow up.</i></p>	<p>Compilation of the analysis of the annual reports T-PVS/DE (2020) 17</p> <p>Link to the dashboard of the European Diploma for Protected Areas</p> <p>For discussion and decision</p>	<p>The compliance of the Diploma holding areas with the conditions and/or recommendations attached to the award/renewal of the European Diploma is assessed and possible areas at risk requiring a closer monitoring or even an exceptional on-the-spot appraisal visit are identified.</p>
	<p>6.b Follow up on the areas identified in 2019 as requiring particular attention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scandola Nature Reserve (France) • Lüneburg Heath Nature Reserve (Germany) • Abruzzo Lazio and Molise National Park (Italy) • Weltenburger Enge Nature Reserve • Wurzacher Ried Nature Reserve <p><i>Members of the Group of Specialists are invited to exchange views on the situation of Diploma holding areas identified as requiring closer attention and to agree on follow up actions in the light of the 2019 annual reports and the information received by the Secretariat.</i></p>	<p>Compilation of the analysis of the annual reports T-PVS/DE (2020) 17</p> <p>Report on the assessment visit to the Scandola Nature Reserve T-PVS/DE (2019) 2</p> <p>For discussion and decision</p>	<p>Follow up on the monitoring of Diploma-holding areas requiring particular attention is agreed on.</p>
	<p>7. On-the-spot appraisal visits in 2020</p> <p><i>Members of the Group of Specialists are invited to exchange views on the on-the-spot appraisal visits to be carried out in 2020</i></p>	<p>List of areas whose Diploma should be renewed in 2021 T-PVS/DE (2019) 19</p> <p>For discussion and decision</p>	<p>Diploma holding areas whose Diploma is due in 2021 and for which an-the-spot appraisal visit is to take place in 2020 are identified.</p>

	8. Strategic Development of the European Diploma		
	<p>8.a Vision for the European Diploma</p> <p><i>Presentation by Mr Michael Usher</i></p> <p><i>Members of the Group of Specialists are invited to discuss the vision for the European Diploma and exchange views on the possible follow up.</i></p>	<p>Vision for the European Diploma T-PVS/DE (2019) 16</p> <p>For discussion and decision</p>	<p>Members of the Group of Specialists agree on the follow up to be given the vision and priority actions for promoting the European Diploma.</p>
	<p>8.b Dashboard of the European Diploma</p> <p><i>Presentation by the Secretariat</i></p> <p><i>Members of the Group of Specialists are updated on the latest developments of the dashboard.</i></p>	<p>Link to the dashboard of the European Diploma for Protected Areas</p> <p>For information</p>	<p>Members of the Group of Specialists take note the state of play of the dashboard and suggest possible improvements.</p>
	<p>8.c Database of Diploma holding areas</p> <p><i>Presentation by the Secretariat</i></p> <p><i>Members of the Group of Specialists are updated on the state of play of the database of Diploma holding areas and of its contribution to raise the visibility of the European Diploma.</i></p>	<p>For information</p>	<p>Members of the Group of Specialists take note of the development of the database of Diploma holding areas.</p>
	<p>8.d Mapping of the multiple designations / certifications of the Diploma holding areas</p> <p><i>Presentation by the Secretariat</i></p> <p><i>Members of the Group of Specialists are updated on the follow up on the mapping of multiple designations/certifications initiated in 2019 and discuss ways to further streamline the monitoring</i></p>	<p>Map of the multiple designations / certifications awarded to Diploma holding areas T-PVS/DE (2019) 7 rev</p> <p>For information</p>	<p>Possible avenues to ensure a better coordination of the monitoring with the authorities in charge of the designations / certifications for protected areas overlapping with the European Diploma are identified.</p>

	<i>mechanisms of other designations/certifications for protected areas and the one of the European Diploma.</i>		
	9. Any other business		
	10. Date and place of the next meeting		
	11. Conclusions of the meeting		
17.00	<i>Thursday 19 March</i> End of the meeting		