
Resolution CM/ResDip(2020)1 on the award of the European Diploma for Protected Areas to the Regional Park Gallipoli Cognato (Italy)

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 23 September 2020
at the 1384th 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;

Taking into consideration the expert's report presented at the meeting of the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma for Protected Areas on 18 and 19 March 2020;

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

Solemnly awards the European Diploma for Protected Areas to the Regional Park Gallipoli Cognato; recognises the European significance of this area, which has remarkable landscapes, rich and diverse flora and fauna, exceptional geological features and ethnological, anthropological and archaeological interest;

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

Places the aforesaid area under the patronage of the Council of Europe until 23 September 2025;

Attaches the following two conditions to the award:

1. the regional authorities should ensure by 2022 a substantial increase in the budget presently allocated directly to the park to enable enough means for a stable management and a long-term consolidation of what seems now to be a very efficient but vulnerable structure;
2. the regulations for the pre-park area are to be adopted by the regional government before the expiration of the first five years of the European Diploma (2025);

Attaches the following five recommendations to the award:

1. enhance the present management of the forest towards a greater natural character, with more diversity of ages of trees, as at present parts of the forest in the park are formed by trees of a similar age. It would also be advisable to leave on the ground – without removal – some trees that may have died as a result of wind or other natural or biological processes so as to favour saproxylic fauna;
2. enhance the control of non-native trees, in particular conifers planted during the 1970s and re-forest, with indigenous trees, the relatively small areas affected;

3. enhance the repopulation of the park with new releases of the Italian hare *Lepus corsicanus*. The numbers of animals so far introduced do not ensure the long-term viability of the population due to inbreeding depression caused by the founder effect;
4. monitor closely the effects of the introduction of the roe deer *Capreolus capreolus italicus* in the park, particularly in the forest. The low density of its only possible predators with the exception of man, the wolf, might lead to an explosion in numbers, which should be avoided;
5. consider carrying out studies on the effects of climate change on the flora and fauna of the park.