

**Resolution CM/ResDip(2020)3
on the revised regulations for the European Diploma for Protected Areas**

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 23 september 2020
at the 1384th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)¹*

Appendix 5: Model plan for annual reports

Annual report for the year 2024

Annual reports should describe the changes that have taken place since the previous year in dynamic terms of management and function and not be limited to basic data. Any new text or map introducing a change in the situation of the area should be attached to the annual report.

State:

Name of the area:

Year and number of years since the award or renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas:

Central authority concerned:

Name: Vereinigung Deutsch-Luxemburgischer Naturpark

Address: Ewerhartstr. 14 D-54666 Irrel

Tel: 0049 6525 79 26 130

Fax:

e-mail: info@naturpark-suedeifel.de

www: www.naturpark-suedeifel.de

Authority responsible for its management:

Name:

Address:

Tel:

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www:

¹ As amended by Resolution CM/ResDip(2014)2 on 2 July 2014 at the 1204th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies.
Internet : <http://www.coe.int/cm>

1. Conditions: List here all conditions which were attached to the award or the renewal of the European Diploma. Explain either how the conditions have been totally complied with or detail the progress in complying with the conditions. Please also indicate any unresolved difficulties that you have encountered.

- a) At the initiative of the States concerned, resume the work of the Intergovernmental Committee as soon as possible.

As part of the cross-border European cooperation program “Interreg VI Großregion (2021-2027)”, Andreas Kruppert, District Administrator of the Eifelkreis Bitburg-Prüm and Chairman of the Zweckverband Naturpark Südeifel, as well as the Luxembourg nature parks Mëllerdall and Our and the tourism stakeholders of the Greater Region signed the cooperation agreement with the cross-border local association “Internationales Sport-, Kultur- und Freizeitzentrum Ralingen - Rosport-Mompach” (ISKFZ), represented by association chairman Alfred Wirtz.

The aim of the cooperation program is to promote cross-border cooperation in the Greater Region. Intensive cross-border cooperation has already existed for many years between the Südeifel Nature Park on the German side and the Luxembourg nature parks of Mëllerdall and Our, e.g. within the framework of the German-Luxembourg Nature Park established in 1964. In addition, there have been numerous local projects on nature and landscape conservation, the development of sustainable tourism and various water management aspects such as the renaturation of river courses.

In order to achieve the political goal of bringing the Greater Region closer to its citizens, the European funding program supports the implementation of cross-thematic spatial development strategies for so-called cross-border “functional areas”. To be eligible for funding under this program, a cross-border area defined as a functional area must have a holistic strategy and an administrative structure to implement this strategy. The regional management for the cooperation area began its work in January 2025.

- b) In-depth analysis of the mission, medium-term objectives and future structure of the German-Luxembourgish Nature Park

In order to implement the recommendations for action in concrete terms, the partners are seeking funding under the next INTERREG VI A program of the Greater Region (2021-2027).

Initial discussions have already taken place between the nature parks in the cooperation area to design joint cross-border projects.

- c) Establish guidelines and a roadmap for the creation of a global management plan for the German-Luxembourg Nature Park, involving the nature parks on its territory; develop the management plan before the next renewal of the Europadiploma and secure the necessary funding for its implementation;

A joint strategy paper with an action plan was drawn up as part of the application for the above-mentioned cooperation area.

2. Recommendations: List here all recommendations which were attached to the award or the renewal of the European Diploma. Explain either how the recommendations have been totally complied with or detail the progress in complying with the recommendations. Please also indicate any unresolved difficulties that you have encountered.

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| <p>1. pursue and develop cross-border co-operation and collaboration and explore the best adapted form of transfrontier co-ordination, including the formulation of common mid- and long-term development objectives and the reactivating of an intergovernmental committee, as appropriate;</p> <p>2. ensure that nature conservation management in the Zweckverband Naturpark Südeifel mirrors the practice and performance of the Luxembourg nature parks;</p> <p>3. make more extensive use of the European Diploma logo in all information material and brochures, and explain the relevance of the diploma wherever appropriate, first of all in the visitors' centre and on the website.</p> |
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1. continue and expand cross-border cooperation and collaboration and explore the most appropriate form of cross-border coordination, including the formulation of common medium and long-term development objectives and the reactivation of an intergovernmental committee, where appropriate;

The cooperation area of the Müllerthal, Ourtal and Südeifel nature parks established in 2024 as part of INTERREG VI A is currently seen as the most suitable form of cross-border coordination. A steering group has already been set up as a body of the cooperation area and the constituent meeting of the decision-making body is scheduled for early 2025. dafür zu sorgen, dass das Naturschutzmanagement im Zweckverband Naturpark Südeifel die Praxis und die Leistungen der luxemburgischen Naturparks widerspiegelt;

The establishment of nature conservation stations in Rhineland-Palatinate is being coordinated by the Rhineland-Palatinate Ministry of the Environment. After a pilot phase, the state-wide establishment of the nature conservation stations is set to begin in 2026.

2. to make greater use of the logo of the Europadiplom in all information materials and brochures and to explain the meaning of the diploma in appropriate places, especially in the visitor center and on the website.

The logo of the Europadiplom is displayed and its meaning explained at www.naturpark-suedeifel.de.

On the website of the Our Nature Park (www.naturpark-our.lu), the logo and its meaning can be found under the heading "Exchange across borders".

On the website of the Mëlldall Nature & Geopark, the logo can be found with explanations under the heading "The European Diploma for Protected Areas".

3. Site Management: List here any changes to the European Diploma holding site management, in relation to both terrestrial and aquatic environments (as appropriate), and in relation to staff and finances, since the last annual report was submitted to the Council of Europe. Please also indicate any unresolved difficulties that you have encountered.

On March 8, 2024, the official inauguration of the suspension bridge over the Irrel waterfalls in the Southern Eifel Nature Park took place in the presence of Interior Minister Michael Ebling. as of October 2024, 348,000 visitors had been counted.

In addition, another footbridge over the Prüm in Waxweiler was completed by the Zweckverband Naturpark Südeifel. The company greensolutions was commissioned in 2024 to set up a digital quality management system for the hiking trails of the South Eifel Nature Park, which can be used by both the trail technician and the volunteer trail wardens. In 2024, the Südeifel Nature Park continued to drive forward the content and technical development of the nature park app with the commissioned agency fluxguide. Additional features were included in the development process, e.g. the option to integrate elevation profiles of the trails and additions to the existing features to make the app even easier to use. The app is intended to represent the main focus of the nature park and the associated roles and tasks: Experiencing nature, nature conservation, hiking, visitor guidance, education for sustainable development (ESD) and accessibility.

In 2024, the activities of the Our Nature Park Watercourse Partnership (50% project management position) focused primarily on the implementation of the national water management plan, which takes up the objectives of the EU Water Framework Directive and thus also supports the concept of "free-flowing rivers". This year, three migration barriers for aquatic and benthic organisms were removed, another removal is planned for 2025 and a partial renaturation was also carried out. Through close cooperation with the Naturpakt advisors, the member municipalities of the Our Nature Park were made aware of this issue, as was the public by helping to plan a colloquium. The total expenditure in 2024 amounted to around €33,400.00.

As part of the "D'Naturparken zu Lëtzebuerg- (een) Insekteräich" project of the three Luxembourg nature parks to protect and promote the insect world, numerous measures were implemented and awareness-raising workshops were offered. The focus was mainly on the nature-oriented conversion and redesign of public and company green spaces. In cooperation with 21 different stakeholders, a total of around 4.2 hectares of green space in urban areas and open land were designed to be close to nature. An extension of the project until the end of 2026 was also approved. The expenditure on the part of the Our Nature Park amounted to around € 670,000 for implementation in 2024. The project is financed by the Environmental Fund of the Luxembourg Ministry of the Environment, Climate and Biodiversity.

Natura 2000 COPIL Éislek did not work on any new cross-border projects in 2024. The focus was primarily on the practical implementation of the two major ongoing projects "Source protection" and "Agroforestry project". As part of the agroforestry project, a large specialist colloquium was held in the Our Nature Park in November 2024, to which partners from the German border region were also invited. The colloquium was very well received and is to be repeated in 2025. The number of participants amounted to around 150 people.

In the area of awareness-raising, the highly successful scythe training course on extensive grassland maintenance, which has been offered by the Our Nature Park for several years, was also held for the first time on German territory in the Southern Eifel Nature Park.

The REMEMBER US project uses information boards to highlight the events of the Second World War in the villages of the region. In cooperation with political representatives, a plaque was renewed at the Dasburg/Brücke (D) site in 2024. The costs were borne by the responsible municipality and the Our Nature Park. As part of the celebrations in Luxembourg for the Battle of the Bulge and “80 Years of Liberation”, a new monument commemorating the first crossing of the German border by Allied troops was inaugurated in Stolzenburg at the border bridge to Germany on September 11. Numerous guests from Germany also took part.

The Möllerdall Nature & Geopark project approved at the turn of 2023/2024 for the improvement and creation of small still waters was started in 2024. One person is currently working full-time on this topic. In addition to the improvement of existing ponds and the creation of new ones, the aim is also to improve the environment of the stillwaters and improve the migration opportunities for amphibian species. The project is based on the monitoring results of the last 10 years for the great crested newt as well as potential studies carried out accordingly. The Natura2000 areas of the Nature & Geopark are hotspots for this European protected species. In the d'Naturparken - een Insekteräich project, the various measures to promote insects were continued. In addition to the measures with various stakeholders such as private individuals, municipalities and companies, two important implementations were started in 2024. Firstly, a golf course will be upgraded to make it more insect-friendly and secondly, a high-quality insect nature trail will be created in the municipality of Waldbillig. The second Geopad at the “Haupeschaach-Halerbaach” geotope was also inaugurated in 2024. Over 5 km, visitors can learn exciting facts about water, geology, flora and fauna using interactive elements. Further themed trails are planned for the future to raise awareness of the region's special natural and cultural heritage among locals and visitors. Selective stations along existing hiking trails will also be enhanced by various interpretations, for example at the Al Schmelz geotope in the municipality of Fischbach, where AR was used to visualize the iron industry that was once important there.

The Möllerdall Nature & Geopark activity brochure continues to reach many people. The range of courses on offer is also still wide: it includes pruning courses for young and old trees, workshops on insect-friendly design of home gardens, guided walks and much more.

The visitor guidance system, which, in addition to guiding visitors, is also intended to raise their awareness of the special values and help to better distribute large flows of visitors and avoid congestion, is currently being partially implemented. For example, the hiking signage was already adapted in 2024. The system will be further expanded over the next few years.

4. Boundaries: Give details of any changes to the boundaries of the European Diploma holding site since the last annual report was submitted to the Council of Europe. If there are any changes, please attach an appropriate map to this report. Please also indicate any unresolved difficulties that you have encountered.

No changes.

5. Other information: List here any other information about the European Diploma holding site which you consider should be provided to the Council of Europe.

No additional information.

The following sections of the form should only be filled in if your area is in the year before a renewal of its European Diploma for Protected Areas, i.e. year 4 after the award of the European Diploma or year 9 after its renewal.

6. Natural heritage (general abiotic description: geomorphology, geology and hydrogeology, habitats, flora, fauna, landscape) – State of conservation

- 6.1. Environment: changes or deterioration in the environment, of natural or anthropic origin, accidental or permanent, actual or anticipated
- 6.2. Flora and vegetation: changes in the plant population and in the vegetational cover; presumed causes
- 6.3. Fauna: changes in the sedentary or migratory populations; congregating, egg-laying and breeding grounds

7. Cultural heritage and socio-economic context

- 7.1. Cultural heritage
 - 7.1.1. Changes concerning cultural heritage
- 7.2. Socio-economic context
 - 7.2.1. Changes concerning the socio-economic context

8. Education and scientific interest

- 8.1. Visitors – Information policy
 - 8.1.1. Arrangements for receiving and informing the public (building, booklets, maps, cards, etc.)
 - 8.1.2. Frequentation by visitors and behavior (number, distribution in time and space)
 - 8.1.3. Special visits (distinguished persons, groups, etc.)
- 8.2. Scientific research
 - 8.2.1. Current or completed research (observation, experimentation, etc.; identification or inventory of the species listed in the appendices to the Bern Convention, etc.)
 - 8.2.2. Scientific publications

9. Site description (vulnerability, protection status, ownership, documentation)

- 9.1. Changes in legislation or regulations
- 9.2. Changes in ownership title (conversion to public property, rentals, etc.)
- 9.3. Extension or transfer, new uses (for example, conversion into total reserve)

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

- 10.1. Improvements made
 - 10.1.1. Ecological action affecting the flora and biotopes; controls of fauna
 - 10.1.2. Protection against the elements (fire, water regime)
 - 10.1.3. Approaches and thoroughfares (paths, roads, car parks, signposting, fencing, etc.)
 - 10.1.4. Field equipment (hides and study facilities)
 - 10.1.5. Waste management
 - 10.1.6. Use of renewable energy systems
- 10.2. Management
 - 10.2.1. Administrative department: changes made
 - 10.2.2. Wardens' department: changes made
 - 10.2.3. Internal policing measures
 - 10.2.4. Infringement of regulations and damage; legal action

11. Influence of the award of the European Diploma for Protected Areas

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