

**Resolution CM/ResDip(2008)1
on the revised regulations for the European Diploma for Protected Areas**

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 20 February 2008
at the 1018th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)¹*

Appendix 5: Model plan for annual reports

Annual report for the year 2022

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:

Address:

Tel:

Fax:

e-mail:

www:

Authority responsible for its management:

Name: Vereinigung Deutsch-Luxemburgischer Naturpark

Address: Ewerhartstr. 14 D-54666 Irrel

Tel: 0049 6525 79 26 130

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e-mail: info@naturpark-suedeifel.de

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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) Resume the work of the intergovernmental committee as soon as possible on the initiative of the states concerned;

Under the leadership of the Department of Spatial Development (DATer) of the Luxembourg Ministry of Energy and Spatial Development and the Rhineland-Palatinate Ministry of Climate Protection, Environment, Energy and Mobility, a cross-border working group has been entrusted with the task of defining common medium- and long-term development objectives since autumn 2020. The working group also includes members of the German-Luxembourg Nature Park, the Southern Eifel Nature Park and representatives of the Luxembourg Nature & Geopark Mëllerdall and the Our Nature Park. The working group was able to complete a spatial analysis in 2021, based on which recommendations for action were defined for the area in question.

b) In-depth analysis of the mission, the medium-term goals and the future structure of the German-Luxembourg Nature Park;

In order to implement the recommendations for action in concrete terms, the partners are seeking funding within the framework of the next Interreg program of the Greater Region (2021-2027). Thus, the European funding program will support the implementation of cross-thematic spatial development strategies for so-called cross-border "functional areas" in the new program period as part of its political objective "A Greater Region Closer to its Citizens".

c) Establish terms of reference and a roadmap for the preparation of a global management plan for the German-Luxembourg Nature Park, involving the nature parks on its territory; prepare the management plan before the next renewal of the European Diploma and ensure the necessary funding for its implementation;

In order to enable the eligibility of this area under the program and thus considerably expand the possibilities of financial support for projects, the Interreg A program partners of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the State of Rhineland-Palatinate have registered a corresponding functional area as "Cooperation of the Mëllerdall-Our-Südeifel Nature Parks" in the cooperation program. This functional area corresponds in large parts to the area of the German-Luxembourg Nature Park.

In order to be eligible under this program, a cross-border area defined as a functional area must have a holistic strategy as well as a management structure to implement this strategy. These framework conditions must be met within two years of the approval of the cooperation program by the European Commission (i.e. by the end of 2024).

In order to establish a sustainable strategy for the functional space of the cooperation of the Mëllerdall-Our-Südeifel nature parks and to set up a long-term administrative structure, the working group will be accompanied by an external service provider. The work can be based on the mentioned spatial analysis; however, due to the intended cross-thematic orientation of the strategy, the involvement of other stakeholders is also necessary, which is why the working group was expanded to accompany the study. The expanded working group met twice in 2022 and has already set the necessary workshop dates for 2023.

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.

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;

For the creation of a sustainable strategy for the functional space of the cooperation of the nature parks Mëllerdall-Our-Südeifel and for the development of a long-term administrative structure, the existing spatial analysis for the German-Luxembourg Nature Park is used. In a workshop in 2022, it was agreed to develop a common vision and cross-border goals and concrete projects for the area of the German-Luxembourg Nature Park in order to strengthen cross-border cooperation. Also in 2022, on the basis of the cross-border working group, the participatory process for the development of a suitable administrative structure in the sense of the appropriate reactivation of the interstate committee was initiated.

2. ensure that nature conservation management in the Zweckverband Naturpark Südeifel mirrors the practice and performance of the Luxembourg nature parks;

We read with great interest in the Rhineland-Palatinate coalition agreement that, in order to strengthen and expand nature and species conservation, the establishment of regional nature conservation stations and their needs-based funding are planned. In order to avoid duplicate structures, the existing actors are to be integrated. The Nature Park South Eifel has already expressed its interest to the Ministry in January 2022, the planned regional nature conservation station for the Eifelkreis Bitburg-Prüm to connect to the Zweckverband Nature Park South Eifel. Currently, the necessary preparations for an official expression of interest procedure are still underway at the Ministry of the Environment

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.

At www.naturpark-suedeifel.de the logo of the European Diploma is shown and its meaning is explained. On the website of the Our Nature Park, the logo and its meaning can be found under the heading "Exchange across borders".

On the website of the Möllerdall Nature & Geopark, the logo is 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.

Within the framework of the German-Luxembourgian project INTERREG VA - "Accessibility without Borders", numerous barrier-free tourist infrastructures have been created. These include, for example, the comfort trail in Ammeldingen near Neu-erburg, which has been certified according to the quality criteria of "Travel for All". At the end of the INTERREG project, the Southern Eifel Nature Park, in cooperation with the local community of Ammeldingen near Neuerburg and the project partners from Luxembourg, the Éislek and Müllerthal tourism associations, organized the "Accessibility Day for People with Reduced Mobility" on June 11. In her speech, Rhineland-Palatinate's Secretary of State for Economic Affairs Petra Dick-Walther pointed out the increasing importance of accessibility, especially in the tourism offer: "Accessible tourism is an important part of tourism policy and tourism promotion in Rhineland-Palatinate in the context of sustainable development. "It was a logical consequence not only to create barrier-free offers on the German side, but also to work cross-border with Luxembourg. That is why this INTERREG project is so important and good for the Greater Region," said Andreas Kruppert, District Administrator of the Eifelkreis Bitburg-Prüm. Lex Delles, Minister for Tourism in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, also emphasized the cross-border character of the project, which is coming to an end: "Accessibility is a priority for the government of the Grand Duchy." Visitors were able to find out about accessibility in tourism in the Greater Region at numerous stands, and the interactive offers were also in great demand. Sitting in a wheelchair and exploring the area thanks to a coupled train device with electric drive - a special experience for everyone! Due to the devastating flood in July 2021, among other things, many hiking bridges in the nature park were partly completely washed away, the others severely damaged. The flood caused damage amounting to several million euros. For the repair or reconstruction, the nature park has submitted an application to the state of Rhineland-Palatinate on the basis of the recorded and reported damage and submitted a list of measures via the municipal administrations and the district administration of the Eifel district Bitburg-Prüm. The Nature Park Southern Eifel coordinates in many cases the restoration of paths and bridges. The most prominent example is the new construction of a suspension bridge over the Irrel waterfalls. Also in 2022, the orchard office of the Southern Eifel Nature Park offered several events, including three fruit tree pruning courses and an information evening with a beekeeper.

On the Luxembourg side, the tourism association ORT Éislek acted as project partner of the INTERREG VA project - "Accessibility without borders". The Our Nature Park acted as a strategic partner.

In the course of the project, the following implementations took place on the Luxembourg side:

The installation of two Swiss-Trac outreach stations (towing devices for wheelchairs) at the Tourist Center Robbesscheier in Munshausen and at a hotel facility in Vianden for exploring the surroundings and trips along suitable hiking trails, such as the barrier-free hiking route "Ourdall Promenade" between the towns of Vianden and Stolzemburg in the Our Valley. In order to promote storytelling on the premium hiking trails of the Nature Hiking Park delux with the installation of so-called Mußeplätze with steles that can be driven under, such a Mußeplatz with information board could be realized on the Nat'Our Route 1 at the Kalborner Mühle. Two originally planned implementations could not be realized within the framework of the INTERREG project for different reasons, but these are now carried out outside the project:

Planned barrier-free exhibition in the recreational facility "Park Sënnesräich" in Lullange: The overall concept idea for the barrier-free experience area in the garden of the "Park Sënnesräich" with an adapted and barrier-free path and two new activity areas, are implemented outside of the project, because the site could not be expanded as originally planned. The ball tracks planned for the "Park Sënnesräich" will now be installed in the gardens of the Tourist Center Robbesscheier in Munshausen. They have already been produced and delivered. The installation of the ball tracks will be done by the Tourist Center. Barrier-free viewpoint "Belvédère" with tactile model near the village of Vianden: For cost reasons, this measure could also not be implemented as planned within the scope of the project. The reason for this was a considerable price increase caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, the project will be implemented by the municipality of Vianden itself. In addition to these listed implementations, a brochure that includes all barrier-free offers and hosts in the region with a map as well as a common flyer for the rental stations were realized. During the peak phases of the corona pandemic, high recreational use pressure arose in many natural areas. Conflicts arose, among other things, in the area of various designated nature reserves by mountain bikers. Against this background, the Natura 2000 COPIL Éislek suggested the development of a cross-border mountain bike trail concept for the Natura 2000 area Ourtal in order to better control mountain bike traffic in the future and to protect particularly sensitive natural habitats. The idea of developing such a concept was taken up by the ORT Éislek. In this context, a first meeting for the initiation/implementation of a mountain bike trail concept took place on 22.11.2022 in the premises of the ORT Éislek in Vianden. During the working session, ideas were exchanged and the further procedure was discussed and determined. On the part of the ORT Éislek the implementation of a mountain bike trail concept within the framework of a LEADER project is aspired. Whether the trail concept in the Natura 2000 area Ourtal can be developed cross-border, is not yet certain and depends on various factors and decision makers. Further working meetings are planned for 2023, at which the responsible representatives of the German side will possibly also be involved, in order to sound out the possibilities of a joint, cross-border implementation of a mountain bike trail concept for the Our Valley region. The ORT Éislek in Vianden is in charge of organizing the further working meetings. In April 2022, the Mëllerdall Nature & Geopark was accepted into the international network of UNESCO Global Geoparks. Mëllerdall is now one of 177 regions worldwide that are allowed to carry this label. The label also confirms the international importance of the geology, which is, among other things, the basis for the special biodiversity of the region. Within the framework of the German-Luxembourgian project INTERREG VA - "Accessibility without Borders", the ORT Müllerthal - Little Luxembourg Switzerland also purchased pulling equipment with electric drive for wheelchairs. As in the Southern Eifel Nature Park, numerous hiking trails in the Mëllerdall were repaired after the devastating flood of summer 2021. As part of the care of the Natura 2000 areas, an attempt was made for the first time to transfer broom moss from trees that had to be felled to others. This moss transplantation will be documented and observed in order to gain experience for future similar cases, if necessary, and thus contribute to the preservation of the enormous moss diversity in the region. For the protection of amphibians, new ponds for the great crested newt were created as part of a longer-term project. Within the framework of the "Natura2000 connects" project for the structural enrichment of the fields to strengthen the biotope network, numerous measures such as the maintenance and replanting of meadow orchards and the creation of reading stone heaps were also implemented. In 2022,

it was also possible to launch an extensive tree warden training program, which is intended to help improve the expertise surrounding orchard meadows and their care, and also to help improve the number and competence of professional companies in the field of fruit tree care. In 2022, a regional marketing plan was further developed to link supply and demand and improve fruit sales from mixed orchards. In addition, varietal marketing will also raise awareness of the very diversity of varieties. In 2022, the LEADER project "Prospect Cadastre", supported by Regional Initiativ Mëllerdall asbl. was completed. The aim was to create a cadastre of the viewpoints. With this working basis, the viewpoints that should be maintained in the future and those that should be left to nature were then selected. The evaluation of the viewpoints was carried out by a multidisciplinary working group, taking into account nature conservation, species protection and tourism criteria. Maintenance plans were also drawn up for the viewpoints. A total of 217 points of the cadastre were mapped in the field. In a further step, the POIs (mainly rocks) were uniformly marked so that they are recognizable as such for the guest. A first step was to agree on the correct spelling for the individual points with the "Zenter fir d'Lëtzebuenger Sprooch". Subsequently, several stencils with different letter sizes and distances were worked out and tried out together with a graphics agency. Templates were then produced for the individual viewpoints/POIs. The color combination used was the traditional "white lettering on a blue background" combination already used in the past. The multidisciplinary approach to maintaining the viewpoints and POIs is an important part of visitor management in the region and part of protecting the valuable rock vegetation. To raise awareness among the general public, the National Bat Day was held at Beaufort Castle Ruin in July 2022 with guided tours and workshops for young and old. With regard to water protection, the ecological continuity of various stretches of water was improved or restored, for example on the Ernz Noire: under the sponsorship of AGE - Service Regional Nord, measures were carried out north of the village of Müllerthal to renaturalize the Schwarze Ern. These included the removal of two weirs and the flattening or removal of bank reinforcements.

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 further informations.

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