



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 2025

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

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Tel: 0049 6525 79 26 130

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Authority responsible for its management:

Name:

Address:

Tel:

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www:

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.

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>

Within the framework of the cross-border European cooperation programme “Interreg VI Greater Region (2021–2027)”, Andreas Kruppert, District Administrator of the Eifelkreis Bitburg-Prüm and Chairman of the Südeifel Nature Park Association, together with the Luxembourg nature parks Möllerdall and Our and the tourism stakeholders of the Greater Region, signed the cooperation agreement with the cross-border local association “International Sports, Cultural and Leisure Centre Ralingen – Rosport-Mompach” (ISKFZ), represented by Chairman Alfred Wirtz. The regional management for the cooperation area commenced its work in January 2025.

- b) In-depth analysis of the mandate, medium-term objectives and future structure of the GermanLuxembourg Nature Park

Further discussions took place between the nature parks in the cooperation area to design joint crossborder projects. The project application was submitted in autumn 2025 and approved on 25 November 2025. The project is entitled “*Cross-border Education for Sustainability in the Südeifel and Our Nature*”.

The focus will be on developing a new format in the field of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), namely cross-border “Nature Park Conversations” on nature park-related themes. The aim of these “Nature Park Conversations” is to create a new dialogue format that brings together actors from different sectors in the border region. These conversations will provide a platform for dialogue and discussion on current and future-oriented nature park topics, such as nature-based climate protection, climate adaptation, and the use of artificial intelligence in large protected areas. Actors may include citizens, experts, and political decision-makers. The aim is to address a broad audience and strengthen cross-border exchange among stakeholders.

- c) Definition of guidelines and a roadmap for drawing up an overall management plan for the GermanLuxembourg Nature Park, involving the nature parks located within its territory; preparation of the management plan before the next renewal of the European Diploma and securing the financing required for its implementation;

As part of the application for the cooperation area mentioned above, a joint strategic paper with an action plan was developed.

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

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;

The cooperation area of the Müllerthal, Our and Südeifel Nature Parks, established in 2024 under INTERREG VI A, is currently considered the most suitable form of cross-border coordination. A steering group has already

been established as one of the governance bodies of the cooperation area, and the regional management began work in January 2025. Implementation of the cross-border project between the Südeifel and Our Nature Parks will begin in April 2026 and continue until 31 December 2028.

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

The establishment of nature conservation stations in Rhineland-Palatinate is coordinated by the Ministry for the Environment (RLP). Following a pilot phase, the statewide establishment of these stations is scheduled to begin in 2026.

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.

The European Diploma logo is displayed and explained on the website www.naturpark-suedeifel.de. On the website of the Our Nature Park (www.naturpark-our.lu), the logo and its significance can be found under the section "Austausch über die Grenzen hinweg". On the website of the Nature & Geopark Mëllerdall, the logo with explanatory information appears 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.

The bridge "Schwarzenstein" in Irrel, which was destroyed by the 2021 flood, was rebuilt in October 2025. Construction of the Huwelslay bridge and boardwalk was also completed in October. In addition, the mindfulness trail in Irrel, which had also been destroyed by the flood, was restored in October. The Felsenweg 4 trail was severely damaged in 2021; this year, its waymarking was renewed and repair works were commissioned so that the premium trail can be recertified in 2026.

In 2025, a digital quality management system for the hiking trails of the Südeifel Nature Park was implemented. The digital trail management is carried out by the trail technician using the TourInfra software, including the entire defect reporting and action management process. Subsequently, training sessions were held to enable all relevant stakeholders—e.g. volunteer trail wardens—to submit their own reports in TourInfra, and for companies carrying out works for the nature park to update the status of their activities. Thanks to TourInfra, efficiency and transparency in trail management have improved significantly, with more timely reporting and problem resolution.

In 2025, the Südeifel Nature Park completed the content and technical development of its app together with the appointed agency fluxguide, and launched it on 3 September 2025. A special feature of the app is the push notification that appears on a smartphone when approaching a nature reserve. A simple click opens useful information on the respective protected area as well as applicable behaviour rules. The app highlights the key fields of activity of the nature park and the associated roles and tasks: experiencing nature, nature conservation, hiking, visitor guidance, education for sustainable development (ESD), and accessibility.

Within the context of the renewal and expansion procedure for 2025–2035 (nature parks in Luxembourg are founded for 10-year periods), the Our Nature Park successfully completed its detailed study for the next decade and officially presented it on 21 July 2025.

As part of the renewal and expansion procedure 2025–2035 for the Nature & Geopark Mëllerdall, the preliminary study was completed, along with various public participation workshops and surveys among the local population and tourists. The detailed study is currently being drafted.

Further key areas of work this year focused on implementing near-natural areas as part of the project "D'Naturparken zu Lëtzebuerg – (een) Insekteräich" of the three Luxembourg nature parks, which is entering its final year. Preparations are underway for scrub clearance, creation of near-natural structural elements, extensive dry stone wall restoration, and the enhancement of numerous green areas. An educational insect trail in the municipality of Waldbillig—intended to replace the existing bee trail—is currently being planned and is scheduled to open in June next year.

Additionally, work continued on developing regional training opportunities, such as further training for municipal technical service staff. The Nature & Geopark also contributed two guest articles to the publication

“Multifunctional and Sustainable Green Spaces” by Dr. Philipp Unterweger. These describe monitoring procedures and challenges in municipal green space management.

In the current year, more than 8.85 hectares—among them 4.9 hectares of agricultural land—were made insect-friendly in cooperation with farms, private individuals, and public institutions. The trapping programme for surveying insect populations was completed in 2025 after three monitoring years; results will be analysed next year using DNA barcoding.

Challenges persist, particularly due to competitive problem weeds, invasive neophytes, and difficulties attracting partners for large-scale measures—often because of concerns that implementing potential habitat areas may lead to additional conservation requirements.

As part of the agroforestry pilot project “Opportunities for a Future-Proof Agriculture in Times of Climate Change” of the Our Nature Park, six additional agroforestry plots were established in autumn 2025. On around 18 hectares of arable land and 17.5 hectares of grassland, plantings included fruit and walnut trees, valuable timber trees, sweet chestnuts, poplar strips, hedges, and shrubs.

Autumn also saw the second Agroforestry Colloquium of the Our Nature Park. Around 140 participants from agriculture, the private sector, public administration, and education met in Hosingen to exchange experiences and network. The focus this year was on nut trees in agroforestry—highlighting the diverse potential of walnut, hazelnut, and sweet chestnut for agriculture and the environment. Furthermore, the national agroforestry website was completed, and several awareness-raising contributions were published in specialist journals and magazines.

Since 2025, the Our Nature Park has also been authorised to offer agroforestry planning throughout the entire country, rather than exclusively within the COPIL Éislek area—an important step in the broader dissemination of agroforestry systems.

A highlight of the year for the École du Goût (EdG) was the launch of the Interreg Europe project FLAVOR together with partners from eleven countries. The project demonstrates how regional food culture can be used as a driver of rural development. The EdG contributes its expertise in sustainable agriculture, health, and social cohesion.

To promote local food culture and support the cultural heritage of orchards and their role in biodiversity within the nature parks, the EdG organised a variety of workshops: cooking workshops centred on apples and pears for children and senior citizens, sensory apple-tasting sessions for adults (in cooperation with SINGA Luxembourg and as part of the LUGA Exhibition – Luxembourg Urban Garden).

In addition, the EdG again offered the cooking module of the “Diplôme+” programme of the Ministry of Education’s Service formation professionnelle, where young people received hands-on introduction and basic cooking techniques for a balanced, regional, and seasonal diet.

Other activities included:

- further training for cooks, specifically oriented to the needs of elderly people—from flavour considerations to special diets;
- workshops for educational staff and nutritionists on promoting healthy snacks as part of “Journée GIMB – Eat healthy, move more”;
- training for cooks and educators on balanced snacks as part of the project “Natur genießen” of the three nature parks, with a focus on tips for making homemade preparations more appealing to children. A highlight was a two-day training on taste development, neophobia, and selective eating behaviours in children, conducted with the Institut du Goût in Paris.

Under the national “Nature Pact” instrument, which supports municipalities in implementing nature and water conservation measures and is implemented regionally by the Our Nature Park and the Nature & Geopark Mëllerdall, numerous initiatives were carried out in 2025.

A particular focus was the transition of several municipalities to more animal- and plant-friendly mowing regimes in settlement areas and along field paths. Detailed green-area plans were drawn up for each village in the Our Nature Park; in the Nature & Geopark Mëllerdall, these plans are still being developed. The initiative “Méi net am Mee” (“Don’t mow in May”) entered its second year, again with the participation of municipalities and private households.

At the beginning of the year, the new edition of the catalogue of municipal subsidies for households came into force, including a new subsidy for certified native wild perennials. In addition, surveys of arable wild

herbs were carried out in five municipalities (three in the Our Nature Park) to record their distribution and identify areas worthy of protection.

A highlight was the co-organisation of the national Nature Pact Day in Marnach (Naturpark Our, Clervaux). Alongside thematic presentations, site visits to implemented measures in the region took place.

A focus in the Nature & Geopark Mëllerdall was a training programme for municipal maintenance services on various conservation topics and management practices. In some municipalities, lease agreements between municipalities and farmers were adjusted to include conservation requirements.

Through the “Climate Pact”—a national instrument funded by the Luxembourg Ministry of the Environment, Climate and Biodiversity that incentivises participating municipalities to implement concrete energy transition measures—climate advisers of the Our Nature Park contributed considerably with their expertise. Again this year, several municipalities were awarded the “European Energy Award Gold” for their Climate Pact performance.

As part of the implementation of Natura 2000 management plans, the monitoring of the whiskered bat was continued in the Nature & Geopark Mëllerdall. Studies are conducted in cooperation with farmers in their livestock stables. The online platform www.kierfchen.lu, created under the project “Natura2000 verbindet” to connect stakeholders involved in orchard management, was expanded nationwide this year. The primary aim is to connect orchard owners with people looking for fruit; services and equipment (e.g. beehive locations, harvesting machinery) can also be offered or requested on the platform. In 2025, 500 fruit trees were planted and more than 700 standard fruit trees maintained. In addition, 107 m of dead-wood hedges, 69 deciduous trees, and 522 m of hedgerows were planted. Numerous nesting boxes—such as little owl cavities, large bat roosts, and various insect nesting aids—complement the measures.

As part of the “Wetlands” project of the Nature & Geopark Mëllerdall, which aims to create new wetlands, enhance existing ones, and improve migration corridors, the following measures were carried out in 2025: 15 new standing water bodies were created, and 6 are currently being implemented. Ten additional ponds will soon be upgraded. Moreover, an amphibian fence was installed, and monitoring and advisory activities—for example on near-natural gardens—were carried out. Monitoring of various amphibian diseases also remains an important component of the project.

As in previous years, the activity brochure of the Nature & Geopark Mëllerdall proved highly popular. The offered courses included training in pruning young and old fruit trees, dry-stone wall courses, workshops on insect-friendly garden design, guided hikes, and much more.

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

